

3/12/70

Dear Gary,

Your letter of the 7th arrived yesterday. I respond in the usual haste so that, after getting Lil to work, I can also resume it. Unless the mail impinges, I want to start working on Rhoads, first with a letter preparatory to the appeal he offered to expedite. The record that emerges from the summary of this file is one no decent man could live with. I intend telling him just that and daring him to review what he has signed. Perhaps the actual filing of the suit on the Ray stuff will stir him a bit, for it holds forth then prospect this record will be spread on a court record.

If there are things in your letter of which I do not comment, this does not signal disagreement. Merely time.

I am, in general, in accord with your medical observations. To a large degree they express my own beliefs. The one area, aside from still having no reflection of either the desire or intent to inform me, where I remain disquieted is there seems to be no exploration of the kind of thing that could cause such things as a sudden blood stoppage. This is the longest consultation I've ever had at Group Health. Normally they allow on 20 minutes for a "complete" physical. Had this not been a new doctor, on his first day, it would not have happened. His training also is different, as I could detect in his methods and the things he did that others didn't. He is an Indian, which perhaps explains it. I also feel there should have been a complete neurological exam.

Gary Short: after you read the letters attached to the complain, which is not all of them, perhaps you'd like to call his attention to them. I think there is enough there, again on the integrity of government. It makes little difference to me whether he wants to do a show by phone or not, but I have done one on this for Joe Dolan, and it stuns.

Say nothing about it, Bud Bud is now of Ray's counsel. He is informing his "associates", including Stoner! We'll see what ensues. I think a while back anyone would have called this impossible. I've been working on it for many months. I think it remains unrecognized, but aside from the content of my work in COUP II, which should be enough to get him a trial, this suits also holds that prospect, but not with the kind of counsel who had represented him to date.

Thanks for the postage. The things in your Mary letter deal largely with what I've not been in on. Sorry to hear of her son's illness. How serious is it?

I've had no answers on the Bonner letters and I didn't expect any. I merely wanted to let her know and make a record. However, if I could get a small band of young lawyers, I feel I could accomplish much with civil suits. I wrote an old friend now a successful lawyer in Chicago asking him to learn whether a suit against Hallberg could be fruitful. I have no doubt of the libel nor of the malice of intent, a current prerequisite of a libel action. The most dramatic, however, would be against the TV nets/FCC, with the possibility of both hearings and suits. ...Part of the current Ray Brown stuff is like a paraphrasing of parts of COUP.

My plans in the Ray matter do not end here, but I also think it expedient not to make mention of what I have in mind, in several areas. The hardest things for me in this kind of thing is patience, going slowly. Being alone and without means also makes it more difficult.

Best,

March 7, 1970

Dear Harold (ccPaul, Dick):

I am exhausted from two days of arguing with legal authorities, etc. over a girl they picked up for aggravated arson. She came into our free psych clinic in bad shape, and we were trying to keep her together and out of trouble, but due to a screwup in the regular psych service which should have been looking after her, we weren't enough. So she went out and set a fire. Despite the fact that she is clearly psychotic, even to a layman, they put her in jail. I warned them that she was potentially a suicide and also potentially assaultive, and pointed out that this (along with her psychosis) qualified her for the psych ward at general hospital. Well, they didn't do anything until 6 PM Thursday when they called me for advice after she assaulted a few people. I pointed out that I had predicted it as a virtual certainty. So, after another day of hassle, I got her into the hospital.

I have not seen the column on Garrison's alleged activities with a 13yr old which Paul mentioned in his letter to you of Feb. 28. If anything like that comes out Garrison will be nailed into a coffin based on allegations that he was persecuting Shaw for sexual reasons.

If Paul succeeds in proving that the JFK head movement could be consistent with a shot from the rear (a certainty would be impossible given the raw data we have, and also the lack of data on muscle tension and nervous reactions), it could not explain the knocking of blood back and the knocking of a skull fragment to the rear. Lifton mentioned this to me some time ago I think, although perhaps he was referring to the Riddle hypothesis about a high shot from the front accounting for both head movements. Another serious question which such a hypothesis will have to answer is the pattern of apparent damage to the brain. Admittedly, there is missing data in this area, but there is enough even now to make a better case, I think, for a hit from the right front. Remember, I postulated a double head hit very early based on the damage to the brain, not the Z film. There is, however, one interesting item in this case in regard to the possibility that shots came only from the rear: the possibility that the knoll was a diversion. The smoke on the knoll, for instance, is not very easy to explain, unless one postulates the use of some sort of firecracker rather than a rifle. If someone has a good explanation for the smoke--that much smoke (remember, they could see it on the overpass which is not that close--I'd like to hear it so I could set my mind at rest on this wild idea.

My statement about Dave Lifton getting all the testimony was probably in error--in any event, it was a slip on my part since I have heard no such thing. Dave did not get the testimony from any of us including Mary. It may have been mailed directly to him. Mary is probably not even in touch with Garrison anyway.

Your letter of 2/27 comments on the homosexuality section of Coup. Within my letter of Feb. 22 are some specific suggestions for how to handle it. You could write what I suggest at the bottom of page two of my letter and easily fit the space by writing a short summary of the top paragraph on page 3 of my letter. Once you leave out what I suggest there will be sufficient space on the page for enough discussion to get the point across. I feel strongly that some of what I feel should be cut out will greatly weaken your book and make it quite vulnerable to legitimate criticism. Things will be even worse due to the Shaw case and if anything on Garrison's sex life surfaces.

Insofar as questions of contact between Lifton and the office, this would be a waste of time to pursue. The less we all are involved with them the better as far as I am concerned. The more I learn of the office and Jim the more disenchanted I become. They have cost us, especially you, invaluable and incalculable time, energy, and public support, and we may never recover all we have lost. We have gained virtually nothing as far as I am concerned, since everything they did is unfinished, and all needs to be independently checked. If someone in N.O. wants to send Dave transcripts then they have an admittedly short memory, or perhaps they are trying to assuage their guilt, or perhaps they are crazy, or perhaps they even are just simply letting by-gones be by-gones. I don't think that they really care about the case and so am not really concerned about who does what in

the office. In fact, the fact that they apparently sent Dave the transcripts he has may be the most direct suggestion that we have had that they are dropping out. Only if they are detaching could they not care who gets them. If they were seriously involved they would bear the normal human grudges, only probably more so after the loss of the trial. The only real concerns I have about Lifton would be solved if he would trust someone like Paul to go over his manuscript.

Matt's failure to respond is more likely Matt's doing than Jim's. His contact with Jim is mostly connected with Vince's visits there, and Matt is the worst correspondent I know. Besides, I sincerely ~~#####~~ doubt that Jim would influence him not to write me.

I'm afraid to say, as much as I would like to travel back East and make myself available to you that there is no chance of it. As it looks I have no vacation days until after October, and probably not even then! My Dallas trip ate up my vacation in advance.

My financial status has improved a bit since I got another raise at the clinic. They don't want to lose me to the Mayo Clinic I guess! I am now working full time every week.

I just don't have time to sit down with my disorganized files and explain what SS stuff I have wanted at various times. One thing I want very much to know about, however, is Puterbaugh's role in planning the motorcade, why he was in the pilot car, and where Wedemeyer (also in the pilot car) comes in. Anything on IRS man Sterling Powers?

Do not agree with any rose thorn hypothesis on the nicks in the tie. As an old conservation man, I too am all too familiar with the potential of thorns. More important, however, is that Jackie's roses undoubtedly had no thorns, unless Dallas was even more inhospitable than we would ever have imagined. By the way, too bad you had to cut down the multiflora roses--they are one of the best sources of wildlife food and shelter. I spent many a day, say 10 or so years ago, planting them. I'd better get off this subject--talk of the roses reminded me of what a pleasure it is to stay at your place.

You had filled me in before on the Armstrong exhibit, Ruby notebook stuff as it pertains to Crafard. I think that it is a very significant find.

I never got the Goulden thing from Vince. He just forgets such things. I don't have it myself. I'm sure the archives does. I have written Vince on 3 occasions about it.

On Shaw's suit, generally agreed. This further underlines my concern that he really has a strong case despite the odds against him beating Jim in this one. The possibility that someone else, perhaps just some prominent citizens, are footing the bill is a strong one in my mind. In any town there are many who would come to the defense in such a case. I myself am on his side, regardless of whether he is guilty or not, since we have no way of determining that. Garrison had no case.

I think that it might have been better to wait on that LOOK letter. It will undoubtedly put John up tight, which would be bad communication-wise if much of this is just a mistake. From what Dick says, he has no reason to believe that John has stolen from him. If this is an archives mistake, or even purposeful action, then we really may have been a bit hasty.

Agreed that Morey's prices were not too great. I wonder why we were each billed for different amounts. This is not relevant to the fact that he forgot to bill me for the whole business. What I want to know is that given that he billed us separately, why did he charge me twice the price. His work is not that great either.

I haven't gotten any further with the Betty Parent thing. I sincerely doubt even the present Shaw suit will get the N.O. office to do any real work. What about CD244: 38-40? I don't know what it is by number alone. Fill me in.

Good work with getting together with the SS. This was smart and incredibly productive. You should do more and more of this since it is something you are good at. This is the reason I hate to see you wasting time with the Nichols thing or Lifton things until they

really come to a head or the facts are 100% clear. All of the time necessary to try to understand their behavior, especially given that we cannot assume rationality, is a terrible loss, and you prove it to me with each letter. You accomplish so much more when you are working forward than you prevent them from ruining by looking backward that if you keep the work going ahead, we will move forward far more than if you take on the job of trying to keep our weak sisters in line. This is what I ~~mean~~ mean when I say that they are costly because of the time of yours which is wasted. Paul and I are limited by our academic commitments, and the only big advances to be made, save through luck at the archives, will have to be made by you. Furthermore, you are good at this and are probably capable of just about anything, so it is better to keep rowing than to patch the leaks. When the leaks are too big, and when there is no question where they are, then we can all patch them up. Let's worry less about anticipated trouble and set our sights on goals such as your marvelous direct approach to the SS. Given what we know of this case (at least in my opinion), what might be gained from direct approaches may be far more, or at least more important, than what we may stumble on in the archives.

On the medical thing, from what you have told me, the new doctor is doing the right thing. His manner, as you have described it, sounds like the manner of a competent man. Leave it all to him. You can't afford to worry about it any more. Give him a chance to get a feel for your case. Calming the anxiety, by the way, will make his job easier, since it will lessen the probability of anxiety-related things interfering with the tests, etc. and making them hard to read. I strongly suspect that most if not all of what you have described to me is anxiety related, and resulted from all the pressure you have been under. You must know that if I felt otherwise I would make certain, one way or another, that you got some sort of immediate medical attention, although I'm not sure how I could go about it.

If the Ray thing gets into court I will get you out here to speak. Gary Short at WLOL would like to see you again, and so would the others. We would need some sort of publicity angle though, at first, like Ray getting into court.

Well, I've got to go. Take care and give my regards to Lil.

*Gay*

PS: Coming under separate cover are tapes of Penabaz and Lulu Belle Holmes (aka Rita Rollens when she saw Vince) which I got from Hargis. I would like them back, but use them as long as you like.

*p.s.s. enclosed is return postage for the tape*