

8/6/70

Dear Russ, the letter you mailed last night reached here this a.m. Exceptional.

The Ted Charach stuff interests me so that I may keep a complete file on it only. I have deep doubts, not about his sincerity or his intentions, but about at least some of the facts and his witnesses and his associates. I also have no desire to undermine him, but a trusted friend of better than average judgement in the media and all our way has doubted and, I understand from a mutual friend, so, now, does the lawyer, who was the chief reason I initially was interested. Charach phoned me, I believe while you were here. So, while I'm glad to get the clippings and share his estimate of the deficiencies, if that is the word, of the investigation and the LAPD and most of all about the man in charge, I am not hopeful of a good end. Some of those involved are nuts, some charlatans.

However, the gusano bombing does interest me and I'd welcome everything you have on that. I'm not phoning tomorrow night because there is no rush. Let me take a few minutes before and expected and overdue phone call to try and explain. I almost sold a major publisher a book, BOMB BABY BOMB; The Country Will Burn, and the underlying theme being American violence is as American as cherry pie. This would show that official interest evolves only when there is violence from the disaffected left and discriminated minorities, who feel they have little alternative. It would then trace recent right-wing bombing and assassinations, about which little or nothing was done, show the degree of federal responsibility (plus state in some cases), reproduce defused rightwing manuals (I've gotten several more since you were here, and conclude that unless there is a major change in society by peaceful means it will be attempted by violence, there being no alternative for the young save acceptance of the unacceptable, abdication, etc. I have a marvelous single-days burden of news that only the insane could accept, the day I decided to do that providing one that could hardly be improved upon. As you know, there is such in COUP that cannot be in the commercial edited edition (I now expect the call is on negotiations on the contract).

I don't think anyone has drawn together the recent history of the bombings of the right, and they have been extensive. I've interviewed some of these characters and have enough on others. I think, especially if editing were promptly available for a rapidly-written book, it could serve a socially-constructive purpose and be commercially acceptable and successful. So did the vice president of a major house, which did not turn it down out of hand. He did consider it, seriously, and the reason given for the rejection, believed by the vice-president/friend, can be overcome, certainly by a successful initial printing.

This would be a very frightening book, for the comfortable unthinking, the complacent, the gradualists. I could do it with what I have, but would like all of the other things you now understand that are possible. I can await the indexing by your helper, then would welcome the clips. I place little faith in the Free Press, so if you get any establishmentarian stuff, or have ways of getting it from such organs as the LA Times, I'd welcome.

Have a good trip. We'll be here. Best, H

August 4, 1970

Dear Harold,

I'm finally going to write the answer to your query and put it in the mail first thing in the morning.

The only mistakes that I know of in recipes for home-made bombs were: The Weathermen put out a leaflet instructing how to make a ~~Molotov~~ self-igniting molotov cocktail in which they did not explain what chemicals could not come in contact with each other, and a mistake could have resulted in an accidental igniting of the ingredients; the Black Panther Paper printed a recipe for a self-igniting molotov cocktail, and forgot to stress that the self-igniting part (a sock soaked in chemicals) should not be put around the bottle until moments before it was thrown -- if persons had made them and stored them in their closets the results would have been disastrous; and the Black Panther Paper printed a recipe for a "Peoples' Hand Grenade," made from gunpowder and buckshot, but the design that they gave, if used, would have failed, because the buckshot would have put out the fuse. In all three cases corrections were printed a week or two after the mistakes were published, and as far as I know no one was injured as a result of these mistakes.

The problem is that my complete file of underground papers is in the hands of a young lady who's indexing it, and since I'm not entirely sure if these are the things you would need I'd rather not get them from her until I know. I think that we are going to be in Washington over the weekend at Howard University. If so we would be leaving at about 4 AM Saturday. If you think you do need these clippings you could call person-to-person collect Friday morning at home (412-441-2636) but make the call for Paul Boas. If we're going to Washington I will say that Mr. Boas is in Washington, and we could then drop the clippings off at your house on either Saturday night or sometime Sunday. If we're not going I'll just say that he'll be in later, and then I'll get the clippings and mail them to you. If you don't call at all I'll assume that you don't want them, but I'll call you from Washington and perhaps we can stop and see you on the way home. I'm sending you some clips from the LA Free Press that you may not have seen yet.

Lita sends her love.

Russ