

Jimmy

4/17/69

Dear Paul,

I am deeply disturbed, very deeply, at Hal's reported indiscretion. Perhaps if there ~~was~~ had been any remote possibility of any useful purpose having been served, I might feel less this way. I send you this copy of my letter to him in confidence, to go no further than Jim, and I ask you to consider whether the three of you or you and Hal should discuss this. We can hurt ourselves so much by this kind of at best foolishness. We must learn to practice reasonable security, not to be gafflies and chatterboxes. Do we not ~~know~~ know more than we need to of how fortunate we are to have survived some of our "friends"? They can be more hurtful than open enemies. Some have been.

I place no restrictions on you whatsoever. When you get the things I send you, I expect you to share with Hal and Jim what you think you should. Hal is great. He should know how I feel about him. But he simply must learn to button his lip and not to flash things around. I do insist that what I send be restricted to the three of you. I go further, if you think there is ever any reason to impose more restriction, please do it. I anticipate none. I do suggest that you ask yourself, from time to time, whether copies of the correspondence I send you really should be made, whether making them is in furtherance of a useful purpose. If not, generally I'd be inclined to think it should not be. He was careless with a letter to me from a man who could be most seriously embarrassed. This, in itself, could seriously embarrass me and jeopardize many possibly useful eventualities.

Possibly what bothers me most is that Hal knows better. That he does such things despite his better judgment is really potentially dangerous and a peculiar kind of vanity. One of the people involved is one who has gone out of his way to manufacture a dislike for me. And he has, really, damaged me, hurt my work and my sources - believe me, without reason. In the past I have gotten feedback of things I kept very close from Lifton, too.

One such indiscretion is enough to dry up all sources.

Those we oppose, or who oppose us, are powerful. We are the opposite. When we consider what they have been able to get away with and what they have done we should really be careful and not do what we must not - do only what is necessary. The few of us who are doing meaningful work must have a close relationship. But we also must be careful. The alternative is self-destruction.

If Hal discusses this with you, please encourage him not to try and learn how I learned, for that would merely make more mischief. That I learned should be all that he needs.

This is a distasteful thing, especially because of my warm feeling for Hal. But it cannot be ignored, must be stopped for it is very dangerous.

I must stop now and do other things, get my mind on other things, too. However, I want you to know that I have photocopies of Ray's letters to Judge Bettle. I have glanced at them in haste only (they arrived today). They do contain serious charges against Foreman. I'll go over them carefully when I can and go into it more. I also have a brash, very young, very sweet and willing girl in London who has gone to Scotland Yard for information for me. Any chores from you?

4/17/89

Dear Hal,

To the degree I can I try and keep you and Jim informed of as much as I can of what I am doing, who I am in touch with, what I learn. This sort of relationship is essential if we are to help each other. But there has never been any doubt that this has been in strictest confidence, to go no further than the three of you, for what I send to Paul he knows I expect him to make available to you.

It has now come to my attention that you have been carrying around and showing what you should not, under any circumstances, have been carrying with you. I would like you, as soon as you can, to inform me completely about this, what you have shown to whom and in whose presence. I regard this as important. If you knew and believed what I do you'd not have done it to begin with.

From what I have heard, the best I can say for this is that it was foolish, very childish, serving no constructive purpose. There is every reason to anticipate the possibility of a bad reaction. There is no possibility of any good coming from it, which is more than enough reason for it not to have been done.

Intent is not the important thing. It is not even a factor. I have no doubt of your intent, do not consider it possible you could harbor a bad one. I repeat, that is entirely immaterial.

I have been frank with you people about my suspicions of some of your friends. That I have been proven right is not the essential thing. You know the attitude of some of your people to me. This makes flashing my most confidential stuff to such people even less than inexcusable. You can have your own friends, as we all do, trust those you want to, with or without solid reason, in the presence of ample reason for doubt or without, but you have no right imposing your own judgment above mine where I am involved.

I have not kept secrets from any of you. I have entrusted you with what I have trusted but a single other person. If I have not sent you more, it is not mistrust, not selfishness, just the utter impossibility of doing it. I do not want this relationship to change. I do not want ever to feel that I cannot have limitless faith in the trustworthiness or judgment of any of you. However, without your word that you will under no circumstances show anything I send to anyone, never take it from your place, I will have to change it. If there is someone you think should have or be aware, ask me. As you know, I have sent an awful lot of stuff to an awful lot of people when I deemed it desirable. I am quite capable of showing to those I want to what I have. You had every reason to assume that those I didn't I did not want to have it.

Honesty is essential among friends, especially those thrown together by the kind of thing that unites us. Its very nature, however, should have imposed better judgment on you, especially, in a case where you knew my opinions and desires. In addition, you know my sensitivity in such matters, know some of the consequences to me and to us of the improper use of my material used by those who did not understand it and without my sanction.

If you have not done this, as I have every reason to believe you did, please so assure me and you'll have my apologies. If you did, will you for Christ's

seke tell me WHY?

There has never been a time when the work we do has not imposed strict concepts of security upon us. There also has never been a time when it has not required that we run calculated risks, that we might, on occasion, have to deal on a basis of trust with those instinct told us might not be trustworthy. I have done so, and it is possible I have erred in doing it. I was aware of it when I did it. It was not idle vanity that determined the decision.

As we advance in our knowledge, we get into more sensitive areas, and the self-imposed restraints must be stronger. This is so essential, so obviously a minimum requirement, it should need no emphasis or elaboration. With your political understanding, there is even less excuse for you.

I add two personal things: you know that the only possible chance I have of getting out of the frightening hole in which this work has buried me is by the sale of my work. Your giving it, under any circumstances, jeopardizes this. You know my plight and situation. I drop it there. Also, I have been the recipient of meaningful threats. The police take it so seriously they are studying the voice (I got one on tape). This was a sophisticated thing, not a casual, impulsive notion by a nut. Again, I say no more.

This disturbs me much, Hal. You know the consequences of misplaced judgement and idle vanity in the recent New Orleans fiasco. Can you not learn from it? Need it be drilled into you that we cannot engage in petty personal luxuries, impart no unnecessary trusts, and be constantly aware of the existing demonstrations of both the most inconceivably bad judgement and other untrustworthiness of those with whom we come in contact, socially or on work?

There is no one in the LA area with whom I am now in contact. There is no reason for me to be. As of now, I know no one working actively whose judgement I trust, without exception. Those I trust are doing no work. I have my own reasons. You have yet to find me wrong on such matters. That you have not had my experiences is to your good fortune but it in no way alters the inescapable meaning of these experiences, of which you know in sufficient detail. One of the people you showed what at best was none of his business has gone out of his way to hurt me, to your knowledge. How and why he did it are of no significance. But one thing is: that he did. Nothing else, counts. This you knew. Yet you put him in a position to do the same things all over again. He is capable of it. Next time you are here, I want you to read that entire file, of correspondence and consequences. It has done me/us immeasurable harm and cut off certain excellent, irreplaceable sources of information, aside from the personal harm it has done me. You will find there is but a single representation of the truth, regardless of what you may have heard. The fact is all recorded and is beyond dispute or different interpretation.

Stop and think, Hal: Idle chatter is enough. He is one of the most chronic blabbermouths - and he is also a coward. He further has bad relationships, of an intimate nature, with those he knows he should not and cannot trust (I'll show you his own letters on this!). They continue, despite his certain knowledge. One of those with whom he associates has threatened to sue me - God speed the day! But you should know this. While I cannot prove it, I think he has also turned off some of my sources. Again, there is evidence; you can see it.

I am sorry to feel that I must write you so, but I do. Please, as soon as you can, write me in complete detail, telling me what you showed, to whom, where and in whose presence. It may be very important, more than you think. Sincerely,