

10/19/70

Dear Jim,

So many incredible coincidences are involved in your letter of the 16th, and in itself it is so interesting, I answer it first of the large mail today. My wife is doing some temporary work for a friend, which means I take her into town in the morning. I then pick up the mail at the post office and begin the day answering it rather than having the day interrupted later in the morning when it is left in out box. I cannot see the road from our secluded home, and often, if the mailman is late, I make several trips, each of 1,000 feet. While the exercise is good, it comes at a bad time, so when I can I pick up the mail. I noticed letters from several younger correspondents and was thinking about them driving home. In one case I was planning the anticipated needs of the reply, and they deal with a variant of the generation gap. In the second case, that of a first-generation American, there is an entirely different story I now cannot go into. Some day how when, hopefully, I am out there, perhaps it will interest you.

Recently I was visited by a radicalized young writer friend with a companion who'd gone to Cuba to help with the harvest. If you'd heard what I told them, without good reception, you'd know how closely we think. They are all one, without real understanding, only dedication. They were unresponsive to my criticism of his Bolivian futility, rejected my suggestion they read his diary and ask themselves if it was ever more than a futility (I was once an authentic Latin-America expert, good enough to call the turns in revolutions before reached), and challenged them to believe in Che's Bolivia venture and Mao at the same time.

I did not know of your China experience, but again you touch my past. It is I who resurrected Evans Fordyce Carlson from oblivion, when I was free-lancing. I'd been Washington correspondent for Click, Moe Annenberg's and then third-largest picture magazine. My exposes - I think I can without immodesty describe them as the best on the Nazi cartels - got Walter (Moe was in jail) in social difficulties with his Main Line friends and financial difficulties with the "America First" Chicago banks that held the Annenberg paper. Click got cleaned out and its scarce paper was used to start Holiday or Seventeen or something success, for the changed policy made a failure of the magazine that had, uniquely, made money on circulation alone. One of the stories on which I was working when the ax fell was Carlson's. I sold it to a small magazine, since folded, for \$100. They showed it to Readers Digest, which offered them \$1,000 for it if the Digest could plant it elsewhere. There apparently was some fear of leftist connections. The editor figured if it was worth that to the Digest it was worth that to him to build his magazine and turned it down. Result: the whole thing was plagiarized, including what came from it, the movie Gung Ho! (My title, too)...Almost the last thing I did for Click was a story predicting everything Japan soon did (appeared 9/15/42), with a single error - I predicted an attack on the Amur River line. This dated back to the very early 30s, when as a student I was a friend of a White Russian scientist who'd fled to China, where he'd become the equivalent of the Secretary of Agriculture. He was probably the world's greatest expert on soy beans. He had a copy of the Tanaka Memorial he gave me. I then did several pieces on it, one syndicated by the old Philadelphia Ledger syndicate, and remembered it at the right time. I then did an enormous amount of checking, with the help of the Chinese Embassy in DC, which was able to provide such things as old and more recent maps. It is simply beyond belief how old Tanaka was taken literally. The rest was analysis....I was doing radio news at the time Chiang fell (and was familiar with his earlier career and the other events from my own reading, like Malraux). What few people understand is that everybody wanted to get rid of him. As fast as we trained and equipped a division and sent it forward, it deserted, from top general to last private. I followed this closely then. Such things got bare mention, but they were reported-and missed...

Kaiser: I have read the condensation only.

Based on that, I'd say he is much better than an Epstein. I hope to find out soon for I've made two efforts to get in touch with him to offer him what I have that is, perhaps, relevant and may address what from the condensation he finds as voids in his case. If you read COUP I (which Hal has), you'll understand. This relates to the Duarte ploy and its ramifications, all the most extreme of the radical right. Walker, Margis, Bringuier, Pemabaz, etc. And I've a bit on the Arab right extreme in LA, including a wealthy one... I suppose most of us with some political understanding immediately conceived some form of the seemingly impossible. In my own and immediate formulation, I just figured somehow he'd been turned on at the right time, really before anything came out. Nothing else made sense. I was perhaps more shocked than most because I'd predicted Bobby's assassination, in writing, as recently as that January in a letter to Jess Unruh and it is my story that Mark stole and jazzed into the incredible with his "too many guns" bit. I got it not from any "emmissary" but from a Bobby man on a business trip, one I knew. I've come to understand a bit about "turning on" because of the flattering number of concerned strangers to whom I've done this, without intending it. One who I've never met, and a very right one, having asked and gotten this estimate of what I believed behind the Bobby assassination, sent me a novel that is, in some ways, closer than what we all thought of, the Manchurian Candidate. It is The Billikin Courier, by T.C. Lewellen (Random House/Popular Library). But your reporter's comment is, I think, very valuable, for it tends to confirm, as a qualified, experienced observer can... There is another part of my past that came to mind at the time of the killing: the great strength of this very small man. I spent several months during WW II guarding a locked ward in a very large mental hospital the Army had taken over. The soldier in that ward had the only key. Not even the nurse on duty when there was no doctor, not even the doctor, held the key. During all the hours I spent there, I never saw a man when he was violent, never had a single case of misbehavior to handle. However, one night just after my detail had been relieved, one of the soldiers, also a small man, probably the smallest and certainly, to my observation, the most docile, went of his rocker. Seven men, all strong soldiers and one a former regimental judo expert, couldn't handle him. He threw them and from the accounts take this literally, like corks. Then the nurse decided she had to try, a rather daring thing. (She was a pretty girl and a sensitive one who was also having an affair with a perfectly rational patient who was bucking himself a Section 8.) She walked up to this wild donnybrook and very quietly addressed the patient by his last name, chiding him just a bit. At the same time she asked the other to withdraw, and they did. She then just talked to this man, explained that what he was doing was bad - for everyone, including himself and what he had to help her do. Believe it or not, he assented to her lashing him to his bed with a device more restraining than a straightjacket, and she did it, entirely alone, without a bit of trouble.... At some point one of the younger of us, taking a doctorate at Mayo in psychology, will probably address himself to this aspect. I've not encouraged him to think of it now because he is working his way and his orals comes soon. He is the one to do it. I think he'll be able to come up with something... One other thing from the past (and another expensive plagiarism - I must sound paranoid!) comes to mind. The last thing on which I worked in OSS before getting an medical discharge was the secret history of its secret operations. I had the whole thing outlined, all the research done and the writing begun when I was civilianized and hired back as a consultant in a different part. That original work was done in a shop largely staffed with Hollywood people. The work was somehow taken, lock, stock and case histories, and appeared, with consummate fidelity, in O.S.S., in which Cagney starred. The part that was not movie material had to do with the unbelievable emphasis on psychiatry, psychiatric testing, etc. If you want to know the extreme to which this was carried, one of the teams jobs to which I was also assigned was the preparation of new school texts for the day when we had an Army of Occupation in Japan. To prepare us for this, we were supplied with all sorts of such stuff. One I still recall vividly was a scholarly dissertation on how the Japanese character is formed by what was represented as Japanese bowel habits! CIA had gone much further, from every indication I've been able to get... So, what I am saying is that immediately I had good reason to develop the belief I've

since seen no reason to consider impossible.

The radicalized writer to whom I referred earlier began and abandoned what might have been productive work on the Malcolm X assassination. He did get to the point where the official story cannot be accepted. I think this is one of the things that radicalized him. He began as a peacenik. He is very bright and a good investigator. He did very good things for me. The militant blacks took an oversimplified position. This fits some of your other comment. As one told me, "We know the CIA did it, so why waste time on it?" I do not for a single minute really believe that old Muhammed was behind it. I hope someday soon to be able to talk with one who was his secretary for years, a close friend of a close friend.

Returning to Sirhan, I found what for me is a clue in his "defense". If he could, in that morass of "scientific" evidence that must have set psychiatry back 25 years, fairly be said to have practised self-hypnotism (and here again I refer to The Billikin Courier), what reason is there to believe it impossible or even improbable that another or others figured in this?

Paul's caution about the LA people is worth heeding. He was recently told by one of the more far-out ones that the story of the Dryer beating is a fake. I've had some dealings with some of the people Charach uses, and they are totally without credibility. Some are self-seekers and phonies. A trusted LA reporter who is a friend recently told me of speaking to Noguchi. He quotes Noguchi as saying that while there are questions that were not asked, they are not, really, that relevant. Reporter checked the available footage and find no confirmation of what Charach says. I have no doubt that the guard was as described, from my own previous, extensive experience with such types, accurately. But this is not the same as proof that he did what was alleged. I am willing to be lied to possible (I right now have a good source inside the Minutemen, so I am current with extremist thinking), but so are many other things. The thing that most impressed me about Charach's case is the Isaacs association with it. I understand, without details, that he cooled. And I am most concerned by the flocking to it of those who were not inaccurately described as out "marginal perinoids", those otherwise fine and balanced people who on this subject are our lunatic fringe.

I enjoyed your letter so much I'm taking too much time. On guerrilla warfare in the cities: do you visualize the entire city starved out to starve a small and mostly unidentified minority? ~~From~~ I think that whether or not the guerrilla warfare can accomplish a revolution, and here I agree with you, there is no possibility it will not succeed in the ruin that it intends. The left extremist attitude, as best I can understand it from very limited association with very few, is that this society doesn't deserve to survive and it will have to be utterly ruined so a new one can spring up from these ruins. They believe it... Yet they cannot cite a single spontaneously-arising, genuinely democratic or leftist government replacing any ruined fascist one.

We are all in accord on Paul; we agree he is not the sell-out type, and agree he is so wrong he has to know it. I don't know where this leaves us. From what he has been sent, there is no erect remnant of his structure. And he remains silent. I have never had any but the greatest respect for Paul and his fine intelligence. There is nothing consistent in this. I also have trouble believing he is off on what is becoming less uncommon, since Garrison and Lane, an ego trip. But, there have been too many little ones, including from those I'd have believed least susceptible, and there is current but unreported a major one involving ~~xx~~ a man of whom I'd not have expected it for several years. It is not entirely impossible, the mind being what it is. None of this addresses the essence, the potential for harm... If I do not always cope with these things successfully, I feel I must in each case make the attempt. In suggesting that what seems like coincidence with imminent federal distress may be other than

only coincidence, I did not have Paul in mind and I did Alvarez. In another foray into psychiatry (did the WC hold an amateur patent?), I suggest that Hiroshima guilt can express itself in many ways. On another approach, this is an arrogant, authoritarian man whose letters (and I have some) are not unlike a polite fascism. He regards himself as beyond questioning. Long ago Paul told me of this project. He accepted none of the suggestions or offers I made and rather ostentatiously ignored the ballistics expert I suggested he consult. Paul did not, until recently, indicate this project was Alvarez' concept, not his own. The bull head has not moved that far. I believe him. So, the question of coincidence involves Alvarez' connections and interests, not Paul's. I cannot conceive that they could coincide. If we were to regard this as a normal Alvarez-type reaction, then the last reasonable date for it is the Shaw trial, the most reasonable late 1967 or early 1968.

I do hope you again get a chance to "run along at this great length". I must get to other things. I'll be writing more on other things soon. Sorry there isn't time to correct typos. Best to you both,

Sincerely,

16 October 1970

Dear Harold:

First of all, on the chance that you might not otherwise see it, we're enclosing a copy of Fred Cook's review of two books in the current Saturday Review. Don't return it. We have another copy and have made still another for Hal when he gets back.

As Cook indicates, the Newman book on LHO is rubbish -- at least 95 per cent. We have seen a copy and looked through it briefly. Cook accurately describes Newman's determination to prove that Oswald was really after Gen. Walker, etc. This is an expensively produced and printed book, and we can only assume the possibility that it was subsidized as a possibly useful distraction or red herring. Same publisher as Milton Brener's book on Garrison -- also an expensive job.

We have not seen the Kaiser book on the RFK assassination, but you will note the price of \$9.95, so the possibility of another subsidy job has to be kept in mind. Dutton, however, is a better known publisher and I would think less likely to be roped in on such a deal. If it IS a subsidized job (and I don't yet think it is, because I haven't seen it) I would say it could be designed to serve much the same purpose as Inquest in the JFK case -- that is, admit to some holes in the official story but not go all the way and in effect demarcate a new line of defense for those upholding the official story. I'm not saying Inquest was so designed, merely that it so served.

We are of course interested in the Kaiser book on Sirhan because it is built, apparently, around the same hypothesis we arrived at within a few days after the RFK killing. We mentioned it to no one until a rather sharp reporter from my office, not at all conspiracy-minded, came back from covering Sirhan's arraignment in Los Angeles. He volunteered what amounted to confirmation of our inferential impression that Sirhan was behaving in anything but a normal fashion, even for a Jordanian immigrant boy. "He's a strange little man," said the returning reporter. "Acts perfectly natural part of the time, and then will suddenly shift into a sort of trance-like state." He asked me what I thought, so I told him (and I'm sure he's long ago forgotten about it) that students of the assassinations had subjected the preceding three to analysis for the possibility of the Manchurian Candidate principle being present. Someone tried to fit Oswald into this pattern, but there was little in his behavior to suggest he was under hypnosis. As you pointed out, he blew his cover in New Orleans, and presumably was trying to make a comeback in Dallas, and so found himself set up as he himself said, as a patsy.

As for the Malcolm X killing, not very much really is known about that, but enough to conclude tentatively that a simple hired mob job ~~was~~ considered quite good enough to get rid of such an uppity nigger and that no one saw any necessity of calling in anything fancy such as someone under hypnosis.

Not was hypnosis needed to keep James Earl Ray in line. He was on the lam. He would do as he was told.

In the case of Sirhan, however, it appeared obvious from the beginning that something much more exotic and subtle was at work than in the other three cases. We considered every possibility we could think of, but always returned to the working hypothesis of hypnotic programming as the only one covering all the inherent contradictions in the known facts about the erratic behavior of this timid little Arab who was supposed to have pulled off all by himself such a violent and suicidal mission.

My friend at the office said nothing to all this, obviously out of courtesy, and has not mentioned it again. However, the more we hear and read about Sirhan, particularly since he has been up here at San Quentin, the more we are convinced that he is still under some such influence at times. If Cook's review of the Kaiser book is representative, it appears that Kaiser reached a similar conclusion -- on the basis of much more detailed knowledge of the case, of course -- BEFORE the two recent developments which greatly strengthen such a theory. These are the reported existence of more bullet holes and bullets than Sirhan's revolver carried, and the presence of the security guard trailing RFK who some claim could have fired the fatal shot at a range close enough to satisfy the coroner's report about powder burns. (Hal says the people plugging the security guard theory are suspect in the minds of a good many local students in LA).

On the last page of ~~the~~ your good letter of the 12th you discuss the imminence of guerrilla warfare, and you probably know that a good many people in the establishment agree with you on this, and that their answer is to get tough. You are quite right, the people in New Orleans are left only the unacceptable and the unbearable as a choice. It seems to me that the administration's answer is: So what? What can they do about it except commit mass suicide? So let them.

You are also right in pointing out that the young have no Mao or Che they can follow. I think the American Mao will appear at the right time, but he will have to have a different answer than either Mao or Che, one that suits American conditions, and I frankly cannot yet imagine what that answer is going to be unless there is a murderous depression that so wrecks the general standard of living that far vaster numbers of people are going to be in a revolutionary mood than at present. If I understand history at all, no revolution -- and particularly any revolution tinged with Marxism in any considerable way -- can get going until the majority of people see no other way out.

In the meantime there are lessons to be learned from both Mao and Che, and I'm not sure the young have learned them at all. Mao never even approached success until he forgot what he had learned from Russian Communism and based his policy on Chinese conditions. In case you've forgotten, the Chinese Reds tried to base their revolution on a rather non-existent urban proletariat in the 1920s, and this ended in the twin disasters of the battle of Ch'angsha and Chiang Kai-shek's betrayal at Shanghai in 1927. The reds retreated to the wilderness of south China, and there adopted Mao's strategy of basing the revolution on the area where the most people and human misery were concentrated, the countryside. Chiang realized what was up, waged relentless civil war in the early 1930s in which millions were slaughtered. He drove the Reds to the Long March, which took them to another wilderness in Shensi, where they re-applied Mao's ~~principles~~ principles of basing the revolution on the rural peasantry, where they built up their strength until in the wake of the Japanese occupation and World War II they could take over. The general atmosphere was one of such despair that their program looked better by that time even to city folk than the chaos in which they had lived for so long. Mao's principle is his familiar saying that revolutionaries must operate among the people as a fish swims through water. This was possible among the Chinese rural peasants, and it is why he succeeded. It is why Che failed, ~~because~~ because his shoestring band in Bolivia was a conglomeration of people from all sorts of Latin American nations, not just Bolivians.

The scene in the United States is wildly different. Rural America is of course vastly changed since I grew up on a Missouri farm, but it is no more capable of rallying to a revolution now than were the bourgeoisie of Shanghai in 1927. That leaves the cities, and while the young know and quote Mao's saying about swimming among the people, I see no indication that they realize its full implications. In the Negro ghetto, certainly, blacks can operate; but can this ghetto support guerrilla activity involving whites as well? And a city can quickly be isolated and starved out. That was the trouble with Mao Tze-tung. Assuming you could find him, you couldn't starve him out because he had the people with him, and you cannot isolate a whole flood plain or province or other large geographical entity containing a food-producing population -- at least Chiang Kai-shek never was able to do it after World War II because his troops just went over to the Reds sooner or later. We have a long way to go in this country before such general demoralization and chaos are reached, although it could be sooner than one would like to think.

Now to Hal. We have heard nothing further from him, but expect him back probably this weekend on the basis of a remark we think we heard him make about having two weeks vacation. We shall of course let you know of anything he has to say, especially if he does not stop and see you en route home.

Right here let me say how much we appreciate your confidence in us and assure you it will be respected. IN that vein, I think we should agree that neither of us should indicate to Hal in any way that this discussion has gone on. He could be deeply hurt by it, particularly if he should learn about it in some unfortunate way. He has access to our assassination files, so if you can remember to do so it would be well to put anything further you may have to say about him on separate sheets.

It's typical of him that he never has mentioned the brother to us, nor the existence of the older man from whom he is supposed to have enticed Cheryl. We have no idea who it could be, and probably would be none the wiser if we did.

If I were you I would not let Hal's silences in his present state bother me. As you know, he is capable of great and all-consuming concentration, and this facility is operating full blast at present, to say the least. He has not shown his present preoccupation to me so much -- although he has been quite frank about saying he is "serious", -- but in other ways has let Jenifer understand how fully he considers himself committed. There have been telephone conversations where he could talk of nothing else.

We think, both of us, that fundamentally he is greatly embarrassed and divided in his loyalties in the case of Paul Hoch. He finds it impossible to believe that Paul would be ~~an~~ in any way a party to a sell-out or snow job, and yet, he cannot dismiss your sharply defined criticisms. We ourselves share this to some extent, unable to conceive how Paul could lend himself to such an off-the-track enterprise, and certainly unable to dispose of your arguments. We think that if Hal has been slow to deal with this problem in his correspondence with you it has been due more to embarrassment and frustration ~~than~~ -- and, of course, something much bigger on his mind -- so that he has unconsciously delayed and proerastinated where ordinarily he would not.

We agree with you on the objective coincidence of the Alvarez project with the state of ~~our~~ your own affairs, and as you have said, this sort of thing has happened before. However, this would be an entirely new role for Paul, and until considerable more evidence is in I would file it among the coincidences, keeping a watchful eye on it, of course, and try not to let it worry me too much.

You mention how little we all know of Hal. This is certainly true of us, amazingly so, considering how long we have worked with him and how much we have been drawn to this most unusual young man from the start -- not merely because we happened to be interested in the same thing, but because of himself as a person. He just doesn't talk about himself ordinarily, presumably from long habit acquired either from his family background or from his Army experience. And I think the one thing he has told us which you might not already know is that in the Army he was in G2, explaining much of his analytical bent, possibly also some of his caution and unflinching correctness in conversation.

For instance, we had known him at least two years before he said something one day to let us know he was Jewish. Perhaps he had me doped out as a wasp -- it's true I come from wasp stock but it's also true I'm a third generation agnostic so a good deal of any inherent ~~waspishness~~ washpishness was suppressed as far as possible, and Jenifer is of course entirely cosmopolitan in her background and outlook. Anyway, we ~~were~~ had attended a meeting with Hal at which John Christian (the only time we've met him, and once is enough) engaged in one of his flights during which he insulted everyone in the room and also managed to insult Jews as Jews. I was fuming about this afterward and Hal asked, "What Jews?" I named those who could have been Jews, and he added quietly that he was Jewish too. We could have wished that he had told us this sooner, because it went far to explain his intelligence, his sensitivity and his guts.

He also said something once which led us to conclude that his parents had immigrated to this country, which I think explains a good deal of his seeming aloofness and reserve, even some of his tunnel vision in extreme cases and his singleminded devotion to whatever is on his mind. At first, we thought this might be a manifestation of the common American trait of narcissism -- in the sense that narcissism is a stage we all go through when we know only ourselves and know absolutely NO one else, and from which some individuals never emerge, but remain basically isolated from real contact with other people.

This of course is not true with Hal. He has more than a normal supply of empathy when it's turned on. I suggest he is a product of that generation gap so common among Nisei and second-generation Chinese in this country. They grow up in two worlds and under two value systems -- that of their parents in the immigrant home, and that of the world outside -- school, playground, society in general. Many never feel they belong to either world. I don't think Hal has been affected that much, but somewhere along the line he learned to be closemouthed about himself, probably because he got kicked in the teeth one way or another when he wasn't.

We hope very much that the Cheryl affair will not blow up on him, because we both sense he has been searching, since long before Cheryl. In regard to her, you'll recall I said early in this correspondence that she either was what she seemed -- a very nice, quiet girl, or a consummate actress. In view of the Kaiser book I now have to mention ~~is~~ one other and most unpleasant possibility, that she could be functioning under some influence which she may not be entirely aware of. I doubt this, and bring it up only because it seems conceivable and to neglect it could be dangerous. Certainly during the one time we saw her we saw absolutely nothing to suggest she was not behaving entirely normally. But objectively both the older man and Hal could be training assignments, let us say. The trouble is, of course, we know so little. Perhaps we'll know more and be in a better position to have an opinion when Hal gets back.

I apologize for running on at this length. You have the assurance that there is unlikely to be a repetition, since we're finishing up two weeks vacation during which we just stayed at home, taking it easy, and catching up on a few things. When I'm working at the office I have neither the time, the strength, nor the will to write at such excessive length. But we will try to keep you informed of anything relevant after Hal gets back.

Let's all hope for the best. He has great potential for love and happiness, and it would be tragic for it to be wasted.

Sincerely,



jdw