

The Trials of Private Lewis Simon

The Fallout

There's a pattern here. The selected amnesia of my personal recollections of Safe Return's only two courts martial, Michaud's and Simon's, is virtually total. And I think I finally understand why. The superficial explanation is that I had no role to play in the courtroom. I was distracted elsewhere managing the logistical pieces all our actions demanded, while also herding and briefing the media. But the deeper inner forces that kept me from being a courtroom spectator on those occasions were the anger and intimidation I felt sharply in the presence of military authority. Especially the mid-level officers before whom I had repugnantly kowtowed, and sometimes defied, as a young lieutenant while serving in Vietnam.

These were the career majors and lieutenant colonels of the combat arms, mostly the Infantry, whose dominant military function was to drive men like Lewis Simon and myself to early graves, while, in the process, obliging us to kill other human beings designated as our enemies. If born or made, I cannot say, but such men took no position on whether just cause might sanction the slaughter they directed. I might have felt differently if it had; *they* were just following orders. But now I couldn't be around them. I still felt their creepy power over me. It wasn't Fia I was afraid would verbally assault the jury - it was me.

I took the brutal outcome of the trial as a demoralizing blow. From that day forward I never felt the same commitment to the amnesty movement, even while *amnesty* remained for some time a viable political medium for whatever righteous radical objectives Tod and I were - or imagined we were - pursuing. Safe Return would never again build a test case around the surrender of a deserter. The public's opposition to the war did not translate into any comparable

level of sympathy toward resistance in the military. Our national trait of individualism is much of the type where folks do what they're told, and are uncomfortable among non-conformists, especially when they're in the right.

The case for desertion-as-resistance, albeit utopian and unattainable, was itself a form of the resistance we advocated and supported. And I have no doubt that Safe Return's efforts around that premise contributed a modest share of the discredit our Movement relentlessly piled on the Vietnam War, its legacy and its architects. Our agitating among soldiers and veterans, for better or worse, was likely registered among the shrewder policy thinkers in the military academies and think tanks as cautionary lessons to analyze and insulate against for the future. But even in 1974, despite the rough patch of its transition from a draftee to a volunteer force, the Army - along with the other services - would be left to purge their problem-troopers free from the external political pressure or public scrutiny that we had sought to create.

If scholarship ever turns its attention toward this question, I suspect it will establish that many fewer resisters in uniform than we might assume suffered ill or long term consequences from their acts of wartime disaffection. And, if they didn't get on in life, it was likely owing to any number of other societal or individual deficits, or ill fortune, and not the stigma of a bad discharge, that did them in. Only among the most diehard apologists for Vietnam did a 'knife in the back' mythology ever gain the slimmest hold to cover American disgrace and defeat. It could never rise to defame the active opposition. Quite the contrary. There were great reserves of popular sympathy for the antiwar position, even in quarters where resistance itself was viewed with suspicion. Many more in the public were simply indifferent, and happy to move on.

The foul scent of failure, if not defeat, lingered with the arrival of a letter, which, whether by chance or design, was dated the same day as the trial; and, if design, was astounding in its suggestion that the agenda of the U.S. Secretary of Defense included taking news of the outcome of the judicial proceedings at Ft. Dix. The letter's signatory, the Defense Department Assistant General Counsel for Manpower, Reserve Affairs, Health & Environment, Frank A. Bartimo, conveyed that "Secretary Schlesinger asked [him] to reply to your wire of March 7," a telegram Tod and Hal Weiner had sent fully two weeks earlier to protest the Army's denial of Congressman Kastenmeier's request to have Lewis testify before the Amnesty hearings.

In the text that followed, this top level DOD lawyer elaborated a procedural that was slightly more refined than the prior official explanation for that denial, the Army's claim of a legal obligation to shield Lewis from self-incrimination, the argument Lewis himself had rejected in his pre-trial letter to *Times*. Rubbing-in the indisputable point that Kastenmeier could have issued a subpoena, and didn't, Secretary James Schlesinger's proxy punctuated his dig blandly noting that Congress doesn't much "interfere with a judicial proceeding" in the armed forces. The letter had no explicable purpose. There were no asses to be covered here. It merely restated information that was by then well known to us. We had not failed to grasp that we'd lost that Kastenmeier battle. Could it be that the letter's true purpose, assuming its author's knowledge of Lew's conviction, was to gloat over the fact that we had now also lost a more important battle?

What I have written above represents a retrospective interpretation, and was by no means the way I - or anyone else in our office that I know of - would have taken this letter at the time. True, we had not protected Lewis the way we had hoped to, and we fell short of the ultimate coup of having him appear as a star congressional witness. But on the other side of that coin we

had stirred enough public and media pressure to bring this case to the attention of the man who ran the Pentagon for the Nixon Administration, aided no doubt by the political atmosphere in which Nixon himself was being greased for the bum's rush for his Watergate crimes. This letter itself demonstrates that the radical political culture in which we operated still had the clout to, if not determine, at least to influence the thinking and moves of policy makers. To degrees both conscious and intuitive we continued to act ardently on that premise.

It can be reasonably speculated, moreover, that the public pressure built around Lew Simon's case, rather than aggravating its outcome, had brought forth some 'extenuation' in the military judge's ruling. If so, he admittedly tempered his mercy on the stern side. Seven months was preferable to the maximum penalty of a one year prison term, or worse, as had been inflicted on Dick Bucklin. But when you added the three months of pre-trial confinement Lewis had already served, that brought the total up to ten - a two month discount on a twelve month sentence. Even with a month off for 'good time,' Lewis would leave Fr. Leavenworth no earlier than September, and first meet his new born child already two months grown.

Each comrade at Safe Return was confronted in his own way by the stark dilemma facing Lewis and Fia, each momentarily staggered and demoralized. Ed Sowders chose an oddly Gothic word, "aghast," when writing one supporter of our reaction to "the severity of the sentence." And we truly were. "No one here," I lamented in a letter to our direct mail advisor Ken Coplton, "has felt much like working during the past week." I might have added that one member of our team disappeared entirely. It was exactly seven days after Lew's conviction when Tod opened the two sentence letter he received from John McGarrity. "Dear Tod: As you know I have not been to work since the 19th of the month. I regret to inform you that for reasons of personal health I will not be returning."

After Ft. Dix, Sailor had apparently had enough. I was not surprised. Movement factionalism, an integral component of our intense New Left politics, ran against Sailor's more laid back, and certainly more communal oriented personality. New York was too impersonal for him, and the very roiling political currents that Tod and I tended to gravitate toward and thrive in, swamped Sailor emotionally. "John tends to shut out things he doesn't want to deal with," Linda Alband would later confide to Tod. The conflicted feelings were evidently severe enough that he could not even face his former comrades, and deliver his resignation in person. Clearly he wasn't looking to be reconciled. Sailor lingered in the city for awhile, and it took Tod several weeks to finally track him down, a gesture of respect for the genuine friendship he and Sailor had sustained since the CCI days. That was the only real basis for Sailor's brief employment at Safe Return, never intended as anything but transient.

There's plenty of evidence in the record to suggest that we spent more time complaining about our wounds than licking them. And, but for the subtraction of Sailor's contributions, we had barely slackened our pace. The campaign on Lew's behalf was immediately redirected into established military channels to seek clemency on compassionate grounds. The initial phase, linked to another letter writing barrage from our supporters, was aimed at General Thomas Greer, the Ft. Dix commander invested with what the military called 'convening authority.' Greer had first dibs on jurisdiction, and would automatically review Lewis's trial record. He had the power to reduce Lewis's sentence, and we hoped to convince him to do so in consideration of Fia's pregnancy-intensified emotional vulnerability.

After the trial, Fia remained in New York for a brief period. She stayed with her in-laws and Lew's brothers in Queens, and was squired in the city on her rounds involving Lew's case by

George Carrano. Having known George well for some years as Lew's close friend in exile, she clearly depended at that moment on the steady presence of a familiar companion.

Within days of the conviction, at George's urging, Fia Simon submitted to an interview with the psychiatrist who had examined Eddie McNally. In the brief report addressed to General Greer, Dr. Marvin Nierenberg wrote that he found Fia "in an acutely depressed state, most distraught and confused about her future... The prospect of delivering her child in the absence of her husband is terrifying to her... with all this in mind I ask you to consider reducing Pvt. Simon's sentence to one which will permit him to be with his wife at the end of her pregnancy."

What I did not remember was that Fia actually met with General Greer. Given that George companioned Fia almost exclusively during her remaining days in New York, I do not recall seeing much of her. George, I suppose, would have kept us informed in his manner. So it is all the more fortuitous that, through a personal communication and only at this stage of my narrative, I have belatedly learned of the disgraceful behavior to which Fia was subjected when she went to Ft. Dix. From Lewis Simon's own words I can add the following detail, which neither memory nor the documentary record had otherwise provided me:

Fia was granted an 'audience' with the CG at Ft Dix sometime after my sentencing... It may also have been a follow-up of the letter from the psychiatrist. She remembers being harassed by the officer who was to show her to the general's office, with remarks like "my wife was alone while I was in Vietnam, so what are you complaining about?"¹

But, Lewis added, Fia could recall nothing of what transpired during the meeting with the General himself. She did recollect being interviewed at Fr. Dix that same day by Italian television, a far less threatening memory than being humiliatingly paraded before the authority

whose pity you must stir to gain your husband's freedom, with the cruel words of the general's wooden headed underling ringing in your ears.

The mundane tasks, the bill paying, the creation and reproduction of materials, the mailings, tending to correspondence and requests for amnesty bracelets, editorial preparations for the next issue of *Amnesty Report*, and, in an exercise Tod and I never tired of, scheming about what innovative initiative we might next put in play: these were the chores that sustained our infrastructure all the more when we were not in a period of accelerated action.

As for personnel: George Carrano, after Fia's departure, continued to busy himself drafting a foundation proposal for research on the military discharge system; Ed Sowders was briefly off to attend a seminar at Harvard organized by our old comrade Lou Font, the West Point resister we'd worked with on the war crimes issue. Tod took a break, and traveled to Key West with Francine, a new woman friend he'd met in his therapy group. I was drafting a proposal for an article at the behest of an eager editor at Penthouse magazine, though nothing came of it for the simple reason that neither Tod nor I could have then given a professional writing task the time it required. Such distractions, not to mention what was happening in my private life, may plausibly explain why I didn't get a real letter off to Lewis until the 10th of April.

This letter exemplifies my deep capacity for masking feelings that might more truly reflect my own inner turmoil. The writing demonstrates instead a disassociated thoughtfulness, bordering on rapture, about the "exciting time we are experiencing right now." From that baseline I launched my airy analytical voice under the assumption that Lewis was likewise receptive to this form of philosophical abstraction. To give the proper flavor of my semi-coherent rambling, as well as my take on amnesty's immediate prospects, I quote from the letter extensively:

Dear Lewis: It seemed that during the entire Vietnam “era,” History slowed to a very observable pace, revealing, as its dramas unfurled, many of its inner mechanisms... Now, in preparing for some new tempest, History has once more sealed off all the windows, leaving us to view its inscrutable surface. What a whirlwind. Things are happening so fast that even half-hearted and infrequent attempts to analyze and understand the “meaning” of the changes leave me perplexed and immobile.

One thing seems to be sure... that our analysis of where the Amnesty Movement would go after the first of the year was hauntingly prophetic. For two years amnesty was an emotional-gut issue, *almost* a mass issue. Millions of Americans, disgusted with the Vietnam chapter of our history - most notable of whom were the vets - accepted the presumption that the actions of deserters were right and necessary, even honorable. Amnesty had a *political* reality... manifest in the consciousness of awakening Americans in the millions because it was inherently logical. Opposition to the war led the heart, if not the more labile mind, to instantly grasp... the totally reasonable demand for a comprehensive amnesty.

From there I freight the narrative with a convoluted sports and class-based metaphor suggesting that, in the contest with Nixon, “our workers’ team...lost on points, but we went the distance and inflicted damage... showed we had the power to demand recognition.” But now, “the workers’ team is forced to battle in new arenas - inflation, energy shortages, wages, etc.” In other words, whatever emotional or logical capital we had accrued to momentarily sustain an *almost mass* amnesty movement for deserters - the workers as resisters - was now diverted to the

bread and butter economic challenges that came to quickly dominate the post-war years following the Oil Crisis of 1973.

This left Safe Return to

“...move on to new struggles while we continue this one. Some amnesty fiber has been woven into the fabric of the American gestalt. As we have editorialized, Liberals and Conservatives alike within their salons and councils agree the issue is a moral, a.k.a., a “middle class” one which must be fitted to the existing legal framework. The unresolved issue - whether or not draft resisters, for their impetuosity, will pull additional punishment. Thus spake the Ideology. Amen. And so, as during all periods of rapid transformation and anxious transition, many doubts arise. What was systematic and certain becomes erratic and tenuous.

George’s recent behavior being just one bizarre example...

I will leave that thought hanging for a moment. Continuing the letter, my tone shifts abruptly to “a lighter note” about spring being in the air despite the fact that the city had been covered in snow a week earlier with its largest storm that year. I described the scene ironically, “people... rushing the season by wandering about in shirt sleeves with the temperature in the windy 50s... shedding that tense contorted look of winter.” Then, again tacking sharply, I mentioned that we had written Fia and would continue to do so, but, in not hearing from her in return, we fully understood she had more pressing preoccupations “with her studies, her health, and her concern for you.” I closed the letter expressing my sincere admiration for “the strength and dignity” Lewis had shown during his ordeal, but it was the elliptical reference to ‘George’s bizarre behavior’ that holds the clue to what sparked my reverie on historical impermanence.

Predating my letter by a week, Tod had written telling Lewis that he'd traveled south on March 21 leaving George "working actively on a foundation proposal." By the time he returned eight days later "George hadn't been heard from for a week." And then, just like Sailor, George announced his departure in "a two sentence letter of resignation." Tod admitted that Sailor's departure was "better for all concerned," but there was still "some friendly on-going contact" between the two of them. George had cut off contact entirely, having asked Sailor to inform Tod that he left over "basic differences." According to Sailor, Tod told Lewis, "George was quite upset."

The exasperation is apparent in Tod's reaction when he explains to Lewis that, where there had been "areas of conflict... over certain questions concerning your court martial... on those points George had his way." The fallout around Lew's conviction had now reduced our in-house team from five to three. Tod was emphatic nonetheless in assuring Lewis of our ongoing commitment to "do everything in our power to secure your early release." We would be sending Ed Sowders on a visit to the Kansas military prison sometime between the 10th and 12th of May to brief Lewis in person on our plans.

I had acutely registered George's departure both as a political judgment and as the loss of a sometimes kindred spirit. I realize that he could have never rivaled Tod for my friendship or loyalty, given the intense nature of that collaboration. But the fact remained that I had encountered few individuals within the Movement with whom I shared more intellectual common ground than George. His leaving straightaway cast a shadow over Safe Return's relationship with Lewis which intensified in a series of evolving melodramas that would unnerve all concerned over the next several months. But the other loss I suffered that spring cut far more deeply.

Ann by mutual agreement had moved out of our 9th Street pad. The cause was not entirely the elemental incompatibility that gradually unbound my heart from a woman I had truly desired. For our last weeks under the same roof we'd been at each other's throats. I was intolerable, I'm sure. Naturally Lew's case was another major source of tension, but in this at least I had an outlet for the energies I eagerly directed to my political life. Even at the time, I knowingly associated the unfamiliar sense of dread that so fully enveloped and darkened my moods with my impending thirtieth birthday. For reasons I have never fully understood, this was one of the most difficult passages of my life, the first cold brush with mortality, I suppose.

Beyond that, the forces driving me were not so different from those that made Ann run. We were equally steeped in the ideology of achievement, but differed as to the arenas in which we wished to make our marks and the coin in which that success might be measured. In my case I could no longer even imagine a life surrendered to a traditional career. But the relentless pull of a lifetime of indoctrination, the product of both home and school, maintained me in a state of ambivalence. The outer me had escaped while the inner, private me soldiered on. I could not live with Ann but I could not let her go. Many nights alone in that first month without her, I sat facing a downtown horizon on which the World Trade Towers now rapidly climbed indulging my self-pity by scratching despairing lines of doggerel on a pad of foolscap. I found a scrap of a poem, but can't say what it means beyond the anguished tone and apotheosis in the clear reference to "passing twenty-nine."

Tracing backward the patterns

of my self denial

Reaching cautiously for self-respect

for you, for others.

For me the consequences

of passing twenty-nice

have been elusive.

It was something of a balm during this period of despondent mood swings to escape for a weekend to attend my High School reunion. I was surprised when the announcement for the event found me, since I had lost contact with virtually all my boyhood friends from pre-college days, with the exception of Katie, who in any case, was two classes behind me. But whatever small degree of public visibility I enjoyed would have likely come to the attention of some of those from back home. It would be thirteen years since we graduated, but the organizers wrote that the reunion had been delayed “by the war.” It was a one evening affair at a seafood restaurant in Bay Shore, Long Island, near the landing for the ferries to Fire Island. We’d all attended the high school in Babylon two towns to the west among a string of communities along the Great South Bay. Many of us who were native to the area were born right there in Bay Shore, in South Side Hospital. Bay Shore was a bit of a shire town with an early shopping mall that catered to those like my parents in the growing suburban middle class. There was a Sears and Roebuck, a Gertz Department Store, and Thom McCann’s, the shoe store chain. It was also home to Entenmann’s, the mass producer of confections, which had been established as a modest German bakery in Bay Shore village at the end of the previous century.

I was strangely psyched about attending the reunion, as if I would be making the dramatic entrance of someone who was more daring and mysterious than the high school aged version of myself. That many of my classmates, grown conservative, would disapprove of my choices did not daunt me in the least. I’m sure I now felt, at least morally, that I stood above most of them,

and that my opposition to what was illegitimate in authority was a badge of personal courage. There was some of the old macho swagger among a few male classmates who avoided making eye contact with me, but no one challenged me directly. I sat with a circle of old friends I was glad to see again, all of them radically liberal in their politics, if not actually radicals. One woman, a next door neighbor on the other side of our house from Katie's, was now openly a Lesbian. And another young matron, with a child or two I vaguely recall, and recently divorced, showed enough interest in me that we later got together in the city several times, and had a brief fling, largely because I was flattered when she confessed to having a crush on me when we were sixteen, and I treated her like something of a groupie.

The ruckus over George's precipitous departure remained prominently on display in the on-going correspondence with both Lew and Fia. In a note to Fia, Ed Sowders, having first conveyed the innocuous news about Lew accidentally crossing paths with Dick Bucklin at Leavenworth, confided that he "was somewhat resentful of George's unwillingness to be more open with us." Despite our differences, he touchingly added, "we share one thing in common, our love and comradeship with you and Lewis." None of us knew at that moment that George had already made a mid-April visit to the prison where he would stir mischief into our campaign to free his friend.

The first sign of a flap came in a phone call from Tod's co-counsel. Lewis had written Harold Weiner - at George's encouragement it appeared - ordering the lawyer to cease any efforts to appeal Lewis' conviction. Tod had by then managed to contact George Carrano after the latter's return from Leavenworth. Immediately following-up with a letter to Lewis, Tod commented on both Hal's "confusion" and the account he'd heard from George of Lewis' "fear that the appeal might somehow effect [his] chances for clemency." Tod was less concerned with

how this decision had been authored, than with seeking confirmation that, as conveyed to him by George, Lewis truly felt that the letter writing campaign we were circulating under Fia's signature "was not helpful to [his] case."

If Lewis wanted us "to desist from further letter-writing campaigns," Tod thought this unwise, given our conviction "that public exposure and pressure (if arranged in a low-key manner) cannot but help your case on review." If Lewis still thought otherwise, "we're not going to act further," wrote Tod with reluctant acquiescence. In making one last stab to illustrate the progress of our efforts, Tod offered to send Lewis copies of letters we'd received from supporters who'd already sent their petitions to either General Greer or Secretary of the Army Bo Calloway urging only that they show compassion and restore Lew's expeditiously to Fia's side.

As for the matter of the appeal, Tod was in complete agreement.

We had no intention of allowing any appeal to interfere with political and propaganda work around your case for clemency. As you may recall from the court martial, I was quite unhappy with some of Harold's behavior and lack of accountability. Therefore we are in no way pushing for an appeal, unless another group, most likely ACLU, would want to take it on... This is in no way unacceptable to us. I have written Weiner and told him to do nothing further on your case.

News of his demotion was undoubtedly a blow to Hal Weiner's private courtroom fantasies, but his emphasis on Lew's act of *conscience* over his *political resistance* to the Vietnam War never went down well at Safe Return, and we were happy to spare further expense on some legal crusade we had no faith in. Perhaps to leaven his tone, Tod did not hesitate in passing on a juicy bit of movement small talk at the expense of our old pal Joe Heflin in Paris.

In its latest issue *Zero* - styled by Tod as “the U.S. resisters’ voice in France” - had devoted a substantial amount of space “to an examination of the Reston book.” They attacked Jim Reston “for invading John [Herndon]’s privacy... about his drinking, etc... then featured an expose’ by Jeannette (including a photo with her child) in which she tells about how bad John was. Would you like to see a copy?”

I’m sure that, once he had dispatched these clarifications to Lewis, Tod’s assumption, shared by Eddie and myself, was that this fire had been quenched. At the same time we now had fair warning that George, acting in what he believed was his friend’s best interests and potentially at odds with Safe Return, was, from our point of view, unwittingly working at his friend’s expense.

It was now late April, and Tod and I went off to Boston for a couple of day on direct mail business, and to make a presentation before staff of the Whitney Fund for backing of our research project on less-than-honorable discharges, which they promptly rejected a month later. No doubt the foundation’s operational radar allowed their gate keepers to easily distinguish between fast talkers and genuine policy wonks.

Awaiting on our return in New York was a lengthy response from Lew Simon, hand written and barely legible over two sheets of unlined typing paper, covering both sides. His general tone was measured, a sincere effort to explain George’s disappearing act, while directing no overt criticism toward Safe Return’s practice or our handling of his case. He expressed being “saddened by the circumstances of George’s departure,” and admitted to “having earlier intimations that he was dissatisfied with certain aspects of SR’s ‘work-style,’ but never expected he would end his association with you so sharply.” Lew said his seven month sentence had been

“a blow” to George, aggravated by his strong disapproval “of Harold’s performance at the court martial.”

Fully half the letter is devoted to Lew’s analysis of George’s personality and “temperament.” He strongly disputes the baroque indictment of his friend I had slipped into my initial letter to him - albeit couched in diplomatically self-inclusive syntax - “the almost demonic instability and insecurity that possesses us all,” as “grossly unfair to George.” This brings forth a non-sequitur affirming George’s “sincere and deep convictions in the amnesty issue.” Whereas George’s affiliation with Safe Return, Lew now reveals, was from the start a compromise of his “values” where he “suppressed in a very disciplined way very basic aspects of his personality in order to work most effectively with the organization that has done the most valuable work in that area - Safe Return.”

Nothing Lewis wrote here in defense of his close comrade and companion of his dark years of exile, though doubtless of a certain biographical validity, came close to sufficiency in justifying George’s imposition of total silence after his precipitous withdrawal, the “bizarre behavior” I had written of. Certainly Lewis wished to see a reconciliation because this split was not only painful to him, but ill timed. And there’s no pretense on Lewis’ part to justify George’s exaggerated reaction, but he knows his man, and knows he is acting in character. At this point Lewis basically throws up his hands, because he can’t permit this latest amnesty movement side show to derail or delay his “more urgent concern to get out of here at the soonest possible date.”

Next Lewis restated what we by now already understood as his opposition to the appeal, and informed us of his having written Hal Weiner about that decision, suggesting Hal would play second fiddle if he stayed on the case. Lew appeared to believe that the appeal process might actually extend his period of incarceration, and delay his discharge from the Army. Neither Tod

nor I judged the appeal as potentially threatening in that sense. It was simply irrelevant to the struggle at hand of springing our friend. In the extremely unlikely event he could win a reversal, Lewis, even if imprisoned a full seven months, would be long gone from Leavenworth before an appeal would be heard.

Lew's alternative plan, following George's counsel - and which we supported wholeheartedly as I have already written - was to ask an ACLU heavyweight, Marvin Karpatkin, to represent him before the Pentagon mandated board that would automatically take up a review of his case, regardless of whatever action was taken by General Greer. In the short run, Lew's hopes remained with General Greer, who had to sign off on the conviction before it went to the review board. Lewis learned at Leavenworth that Greer had already reduced the sentences of two other long term deserters who had also been sentenced to seven months.

As he stewed over the odds that Greer would treat him with similar regard, Lewis's emotions and his daily routine at Leavenworth kept him in an unenviable holding pattern. He expressed his vulnerability openly, anguishing that "it frightens me whenever I let my hopes get too high, but I can't help hoping." To pass the time he was set to mopping floors, and promised more suitable work. But an offer to teach ESL to members of the prison's Puerto Rican Spanish speaking population was retracted, initially with a falsehood that the program had been cut. As it turned out, the brass hat who vetted such assignments thought better of letting a known radical agitator loose among a bunch of *independentistas* who had their own axes to grind against the *Ianqui* oppressor. His two pages filled, Lewis wound a final sentence up and around the margin, requesting that Eddie Sowders, when he visit, bring a copy of the book Captain Howard Levy, one of the Vietnam War's earliest and most celebrated resisters, had written about his own two year stretch at Leavenworth.

I replied to Lewis directly. If there's a subtext to this letter, it resides most obviously in the several condescending statements with which I tar the character of his friend, a man who, in my eyes, has committed betrayal. This is not an accusation I openly express. In the psychobabble that was novel in those days, and has now become a commonplace, I associated George's actions with an "inability to express his emotions." As if, for example, Tod and I were. But George was also a burn-out, I suggested, and left the way he did because he feared "we would view his choice as a 'careerist' sell out." When I actually get around to damning George, I deploy the comments of third parties.

In a casual reference to Tod's and my recent trip to Boston, I slip in mention of "a chance meeting with one Alan Cohen," a former member of the exile community in Sweden well known to Lewis. Cohen commiserated with us about Carrano, I told Lewis, and "related similar episodes in George's exile experience," which, unfortunately, I did not bother to specify. In what I then described as my "final epitaph on George's departure," a judgment we had heard attributed to "his ex-girlfriend: 'He's like a book with all the pages stuck together.'"

It apparently did not occur to me that Lew might think I was laying it on a bit thick, and, given the circumstances in which he found himself, would not perceive how deeply my own feelings were involved, especially those mixed feelings of betrayal and rejection. I was in an alternately self-protective and aggressive state of mind, and could presume nothing as to where Lewis would fall in this dispute. Doubtlessly sincere, I expressed my hope "that these recent developments won't artificially alienate us from you or vice versa." Urging Lewis to "keep up your correspondence," and that "we would do the same." Optimistic in the belief my advice would be taken, I suggested to Lewis that he get access to a typewriter, because "your

handwriting is worse than mine.” That was not true. I’ve never really met anyone whose penmanship was more illegible than my own.

On the assumption that our political ties endured, I returned to the business of his case, relating how we had managed to string a line to Senator Alan Cranston of California, a crusty liberal Cold Warrior of the old school, who was nonetheless, at the urging of his FORA-affiliated constituent, inclined to support Lewis’ petition for clemency. This would require Lewis to write a Cranston staff member in the senator’s San Francisco office, and convey how and to whom the senator should express his support. “He says he will act immediately upon receiving your appeal.”

I suspected Lew would see the powerful Senator Cranston as a valuable ally, but that was hardly most important bit of news I had to communicate in my letter. We had just learned from his Army defense counsel, Captain Brown, that General Greer would review Lew’s case in two weeks, roughly by the second week of May. Clearly this left a rapidly narrowing window for intensifying any influence we might yet bring to bear of that outcome. And I was not yet convinced that our on-going efforts had Lew’s full endorsement.

So, just as Tod had done before me, I also posed the question directly. In anticipation of Greer’s review, did Lewis want us to do anything or contact anybody... or did he not? As with every letter we wrote Lew in those weeks this one ended on the same plaintive note about our failure to hear from Fia. Given the ripples of conflict now upsetting our relationship with Lewis, and the break with George, it was not difficult to discern why. Fia too didn’t know if Safe Return was in or out. All I could manage was, “tell her we’re here if she needs us.”

Whatever else transpired in the background over the next six weeks at Safe Return, the greatest demand on our emotions, if not our actual time, came from the spirit dampening efforts

at damage control to salvage the relationship with our incarcerated comrade. The next letter from Lew Simon was a bombshell. Lew was clearly exasperated, and intolerably drawn into a dispute among the comrades his very hopes depended on.

What seemed to have troubled Lew most immediately, a matter he addressed directly to Tod, was his “disappointment that you did not wish to discuss George’s departure from the committee any further. I thought that you would have sensed from my last letter... that this matter could not but affect my feelings about the committee and had left quite serious concerns unresolved in my mind. I guess I should have been more explicit.”

While I find no evidence that Tod had so starkly communicated an unwillingness to discuss anything - an un-Tod like characteristic if ever there was one - it is quite true that Lew himself had not been explicit in communicating the depth of his concerns, even as he now sought to correct that earlier oversight. Moreover, misguided as he was by considerable distress, he had shown no real grasp of how sincerely we were attempting to keep faith with him, and be guided by his interests and intentions.

My second letter to him was certainly still en route; both his latest and mine were dated April 25th. It might have inflamed him even more given the rawness of his mood. He was still bristling about the florid psychologizing concerning George from my first letter, about which he had already complained as “grossly unfair” to his friend. It had so annoyed him that he repeated himself here with even more emphasis than the first time. “I thought I had at least made clear that George’s dissatisfaction with the committee could not be shrugged off as ‘bizarre behavior’ or explained away with some sweeping statement about the ‘demonic instability’ of the times.”

Clearly Lew was at the breaking point. “I can’t take this kind of shit at a time like this,” the letter fairly screamed. He had given up any hope of reconciliation because “George’s

vehement opposition to having any further association with you is unabated.” Notwithstanding, Lew took pains to ensure us that he had “no complaints about the handing of my case,” that it had “fitted into a larger framework of goals” he shared. Lewis was now convinced that his “legal representation had become a point of contention,” which is true only to the extent that George had inflamed that impression.

I am easily persuaded that George, however far from the mark, sincerely believed that Safe Return’s continued involvement would somehow inhibit, even derail, what in Lewis’ emphatic repetition mattered “to the exclusion of everything else,” getting home to Fia before the birth of their child. And, while Lewis makes it clear he did not endorse this one-sided view of Safe Return’s sudden toxicity, he could no longer bear, along with all the other immediate tensions besetting him, the added burden imposed by this “unfortunate, but apparently irreconcilable dispute.” Given their “long and close friendship... the deep trust” they shared, Lewis found it impossible “not to side with George,” or conversely, “to not collaborate with [Safe Return] any further.” With stark finality he then demanded, “I want you to desist from further letter writing campaigns and/or publicity on my behalf.”

Lewis was particularly fearful about the confrontational effect “an uncontrolled flow of letters might have on General Greer and other military types who will decide on my case, especially irate letters from certain kinds of ‘principled’ anti-war types.” That this was the antithesis of the style we had taken great pains to establish at Safe Return seems to have momentarily eluded him. But the clearest evidence that Lewis was channeling the disaffected voice of George Carrano was inserted almost as an afterthought, by characterizing “the fate of FORA [as] a particularly sad case... the participatory aspects [of which] both George and I... took more seriously than you ever did.”

Leaving aside for a moment that all the principals involved in the creation of FORA understood both its purpose and its structural limitations, and that Tod, Eddie and I had and continued to put a lot more into the family initiative than anyone else, it was by no means clear in what could be exhumed from Lewis' words, whether it was George's 'vehemence' or some calculated political turn that lead Lewis to consummate this break. Whatever impulse pushed Lewis to this point, the double edge of George's blow was most keenly felt at Safe Return in Lewis' announcement that there was no point in Eddie or Tod coming to Leavenworth to visit him.

I probably waited a day or two to reply. By sheer coincidence it was May Day. There would have been considerable discussion around the office before I sat down at the typewriter, on the consequences this unwelcome development would have, not only on Lewis' chances for early release, but on the trajectory of our on-going political work. In objective terms, I think we understood that the break would have little impact on our continued activism in a political culture where such twists and turns were commonplace. We had already proved that Safe Return was a viable vehicle for sustaining our activist commitments. But just because we didn't feel any disruption to our political lives, doesn't mean we weren't mightily upset by this latest act of abandonment by another comrade in whom we were invested, not just politically, but personally.

My letter to Lewis was a detailed rebuttal being written, not just for his eyes, but for the record. It's argumentative but not disrespectful; and not without an occasional rising emotion. There is no apparent anger or defensiveness in it. Nothing to regret. If anything the letter's dominant undertone is an appeal to fairness, the only basis on which I could expect to modify Lewis' position. I told him I was especially upset by the "inaccuracies" in his presentation of events.

The account I reconstructed was simple and, I believed, irrefutable. George had slipped out of contact with us after a close political association of several years without a single word of explanation. It wasn't that we were refusing, as Lew had misconstrued, to discuss his friend's grudges against Safe Return. The fact was that, beyond what Lew had shared on his feelings about FORA, only he was privy to George's larger list of grievances. In a line that almost feels as if I am reaching through the page to shake him, I reminded Lewis emphatically of the incontestable fact that, "We still *don't know* why George left!"

Sending Eddie to visit him, I argued, was concrete evidence that, far from wishing to avoid that discussion as Lewis had lamented, we fully expected to address these matters squarely and in person. It was very likely the case that we felt it best for all concerned not to pursue a discussion of George's indictments through the mail, although I still find no documented evidence of this. Already our exchanges with Lewis kept crossing each other, piling up rather than lessening the misunderstandings. And with this letter I came to the explicit conclusion that, henceforth, "it would be irresponsible to both you and ourselves to confront these questions through slow and imperfect correspondence." Moreover we expected "that George, in consideration of the pressures you are under, would not aggravate the situation by burdening you at this time with a vituperative explanation of our differences."

I then asked Lewis how he could have so utterly miscast our political orientation. "We have never been turned toward 'principled anti-war types,' as your own association with us should have told you." I emphatically reminded him that "we have scrupulously, even somewhat opportunistically, focused on the question of clemency for you as an 'individual of high moral character and sincerely held and expressed beliefs... The flow of letters has been anything but 'uncontrolled'... the tone reasonable and polite."

I seemed to have been particularly disturbed by the charge of exaggerating George's behavior as 'bizarre,' and now offered the disclaimer that this characterization applied only to the manner of his leaving Safe Return. As to my usage of the overwrought phrase, "demonic instability," I retreated once again behind the excuse that "I identify his insecurity with my own." The language had been clumsy and melodramatic, I admitted. But I had wanted to communicate "the enormity of my feelings about 'changing times,' and my inability to grasp the meaning of big and small events alike," in effect mapping my inner conflict on the people and events around me. Of course even if my conscious justifications were to be taken at face value, my choice of words could not be interpreted as anything but unflattering to George Carrano.

Regardless of how "bizarre" and inexcusable I had found our former comrade's lack of accountability, what I found even more intolerable was Lewis' "rejection of us" because of "the differences we might have with George.

I don't have to like all your friends, or even everything about you, to like and respect you. None of us wants to compete with George for your affection, but to have our relationship with you described in such detached politically categorical terms... In this sense, I feel personally let down by your... one-sided presentation of the facts. The question now seems to be... are you prepared to discuss these developments in a genuine spirit of solidarity and objectivity?

I'm fairly confident I now believed that Lewis' 'kiss-off,' like George's, was irreversible. That Safe Return's involvement with the case would be prematurely severed was sadly beyond our control. It meant that Safe Return would simply turn another page, although more quickly than we may have anticipated. We would willingly continue to help Lewis where we could, but only with his unambiguous approval, and that now seemed unlikely. It was therefore all the

more astonishing when, even as we were still recovering from the shock of his defection, Lewis executed a *volte face*, and was suddenly back in the fold.

It took approximately five days for Lewis to receive my letter “on evening mail call.” He replied promptly expressing regret for his “hastiness.” He had to be brief on account of learning just that morning that “Greer had approved my sentence, and I’m in the middle of a long and necessary letter to Fia.” Judging from his even tone, Lewis wasn’t blindsided by Greer’s vindictive ruling, and I suspect neither were we. Our own targets for clemency had always been at a higher level, where such favors are traded among the office-holding political elites, and where, unlike among the troop herding middle managers like General Greer, the Simon case might be viewed through a wider lens and with less hostility.

A valiant effort had been made to soften the general’s heart through our campaign, not least in a touching letter sent to General Greer by Hal Weiner, a portrait of the lawyer as Mensch. What betokens a streak of naiveté in gauging the impenetrable shell around the martinet he was addressing, was Hal’s long passage on the importance of the father’s presence at what was then described as a “natural birth,” to coach his wife in her breathing, and reassure her in her distress that all was well, and so on. The good counsel even described how he himself had been such a coach, “an experience bordering on the religious.” I bet they had a nice chuckle around HQ the day that letter was read.

There was another appeal mailed to Greer just days after he rubber stamped Lew’s seven month sentence, from the draft resister and author Roger Neville Williams, which fit to a ‘t’ Lewis’ fearful fantasy of an “uncontrolled letter.” As Lewis knew, Williams was a comrade whose morally elitist political style was anathema to Tod and I, and that battling such tendencies internally within the amnesty movement was a major distraction for us. Much of how Williams

argues for Lew's early release from confinement in his two-page letter is reasonable enough until he gets to ranting that "the military, to many civilians, is beginning to look like a collection of mindless, petty bureaucrats who would disembowel their own mothers if it said to do so in a rule book somewhere."

In his hurried and abbreviated letter, Lew nonetheless generously granted that our "reticence" to discuss the rupture with his friend "was mainly out of consideration for me, and bewilderment at George." Having now reversed course, Lew said he did want Eddie Sowders to come as planned on May 10th or 11th, and that he would put in a request to the Director of Custody for "a special visitor's pass." Eddie would need to present the credentials of a lawyer's representative, so "Tod should still be on the record as my appeal's counsel," Lew cautioned.

In expressing his closing thoughts Lewis demonstrated how badly torn he remained between his loyalty toward George, and his desire to maintain his connection to Safe Return. After all, "it was George who initiated this split," Lew acknowledged. "I will try to influence him toward some reconciliation with you, but... it's too much for me right now. I know you understand that." He signed off, "Sincerely."

A modicum of calm and continuity was rapidly restored among this drama's key remaining players. At Safe Return it meant we could follow through on what we had begun, avoiding yet another unwelcome, morale-draining political rupture. The letter writing and telephone campaigns urging support for Lew's release would continue. Beyond that there was little more we could do. The case was in military limbo, awaiting resolution at a pace we could little influence. All our hopes depended on the caprices of a bureaucratic military clemency board hopefully made aware of certain arguments for mitigation that we and our supporters had managed to put before its members.

As scheduled Eddie Sowders had his mid-May visit with Lewis at Leavenworth. A fragmentary account of what the two men discussed is found in a letter Tod wrote to Lewis on May 20th, a couple of days after Ed's return. Tod's words have a wounded tone, he was "a little troubled," he told Lewis, to hear from Ed the vicarious allegation that George had left Safe Return over "problems with my personality." Tod cops to what he has learned about himself "in therapy for several years, some insight into how I affect and oppress others." But George never revealed his true "anger, criticisms, hostility," and Tod complains that he "can't shadow box with feelings that don't get expressed." Tod's mea culpa probably satisfied Lewis, which made it that much easier to simply confine George to forgetfulness. George, to my knowledge, soon thereafter withdrew from left wing politics, and returned to the New York Transit Authority where he cruised happily to retirement - or so I have been led to understand by informed parties. [TK note on GC's post-retirement success as a photographer]

Several days later, Ed Sowders was holding fort alone in the office. My absence from the office is noted in Ed's response to a letter from a FORA member addressed to me. "Mike is out of town," Ed conveyed, "and won't be back until the 29th." Specific details of this absence appear in another letter, one which Tod sent to Linda Alband two days after the date of my scheduled return. "We went to Jamaica for a week," Tod wrote, "Pam, Mike and I."

I well remember that trip to Montego Bay, although I'd long forgotten the contexts in which it took place. I met a woman there who taught at Rutgers, continuing a string of short lived intimacies over the next year or more before I again settled into a steady relationship. I'd been separated from Ann for a month at least. After the breakup, she and I had celebrated my thirtieth birthday with lunch at Lutece, and I showed up without jacket or tie, which the Maitre had to provide. It was, if I recall, a spectacular meal, a succulent cut of beef or lamb wrapped in

a delicate pastry. We made-out passionately in the cab heading back downtown, but Ann, wisely no doubt, refused my invitation to come upstairs.

From another comment in Tod's letter to Linda, a reference to his having seen Sailor John, I am reminded that Ann and I also maintained regular contact elsewhere. "Sailor's in a Capital class with Michael and Ann (formerly involved with Mike)." I have only a foggy recollection of that class, recall nothing of Sailor's presence, and can't fathom any longer why Ann wanted to take on Marx, unless for a clearer notion of how to criticize his theories, a practical tool for the Keynesian economist she was, and future business woman she would become.

There's another item of interest in Tod's letter which anticipates an intellectual-political alliance we would soon solidify with a San Francisco activist named Steve Rees, a prime mover in the publication of an antiwar broadsheet called *Up Against the Bulkhead* aimed initially at sailors and marines stationed in the Bay Area.² Tod expressed his support for Linda's decision to work with Steve on that project, and asked her to put forth a proposal that their group and ours exchange ideas and discussion papers calculating the on-going prospects for GI organizing.

Tod boasted to Linda that our circulation for the fourth issue of *Amnesty Report* would be in the vicinity of fourteen thousand, our growing 'house list,' and the life blood of our operating budget. Much of the latest issue of the newsletter was being assembled during the disruptions of the recent weeks, but it was now finally ready for the printer just before Tod and I opted to take our Caribbean vacation thanks, as always, to a cheap travel package Tod had somehow gotten wind of.

As May turned to June, there was ample time for catching up on the backlog of informational and bracelet requests, and for generally taking time to re-tool our program as we

entered another period of transition. Ed was slotted in mid-June for a three-week swing through the Middle West and West Coast to help ramp up Campaign '74, the grassroots vehicle we had designed to reenergize FORA, and tie amnesty to the next election cycle. We'd first announced this initiative back in February at a press conference in the Watergate Hotel, the same complex by the Potomac that housed the National Democratic Committee offices Nixon's *plumbers* had broken into - offering an obvious contrast we hoped both the media and the public opinion would not fail to grasp.

FORA had been dormant owing to the months consumed in the send-up for Lew, but was still viable to the limited extent it ever was. Only once did we hear a serious complaint from a resister relative accusing us of exercising inflexible control over FORA from New York. Tod addressed the criticism very patiently in his reply, explaining that affiliation was informal, and that any member was always free to take up activity locally at their own initiative under the FORA banner. From New York we could only function as a seed, he said. We could advise people on what to do, or steer them toward our own campaigns pitching in through a series of discreet tasks. But, and this was implied, FORA could never satisfy the expectations of anyone who imagined we could achieve the clout of the well-funded, government supported POW family organization on which the idea for FORA had been based. FORA had never been conceived as "organizational," but as a medium for generating publicity for the pro-amnesty campaign. In the end, we'd only found a few individuals related to resisters who had the interest or the staying power to act on their own; but when we put out the call, many in that network still responded, and participated as the action in question required.

One of these was Jane Hare, our FORA contact near LA. I wrote Jane that Ed was coming west, assuming she would be one of the members with whom he would coordinate a

meeting or a media event. There was a happy ending cited in my letter. I congratulated Jane on the news about the impending reunion with her own resister son, who had somehow managed to come home without penalties from Canada.

And we finally received a letter from Fia Simon, which I appreciated for its “friendly tone,” as I put it when I next wrote to Lewis. I’m sure I sighed with some relief when reading one sentence Fia wrote that “at least the exile ordeal is behind us,” which seemed to suggest she was in a solid place emotionally. The bulk of my short letter to Lewis was newsy. We would send a book with Abe when he came to visit; the print house had set the type for *Amnesty Report* at one point too high, so we were forced to trim a good deal of copy from the proofs to get our scheduled mailing out in time. The picture I presented was, as always, of a busy shop run with a focus and discipline few other New Left grouplets could duplicate, and most of whom, the purists certainly, would not have cared to.

Given how much I’d taken to heart Lew’s shocking if short lived defection, I’m sure that the words with which his next letter opened were soothing to my much put-upon ears, not that Tod and Eddie were any less pleased to read them. “The most important thing to me,” Lewis wrote, still in long hand but now at least on lined paper, “is that my feelings and relationship to you are once again on a solid footing of trust and mutual understanding.” As for the prospects of an early and timely release, he told us he’d just gone before the Clemency Board, and was - indeed his breezy prose confirms this - “feeling optimistic. They seemed to be kind of guilty that someone of my ‘educational background’ had been pushing a broom since I got here.”

Lew expected to learn the Board’s decision in “four to six weeks,” enough time to be out by the middling days of July, still in the ballpark for Fia’s projected delivery date. For the rest, Lew said he was happy that Fia had written us, and he shared additional news that Fia had

successfully completed her course in nursing. He then volunteered that he'd "gotten quite a few letters from supporters," which I think would have made all three of Safe Return's remaining crew feel reasonably reassured, if not vindicated. We had never stopped trying to deliver, and to the extent we could, we did. How Lew's spirits soared in this letter! How the human mood can swing. He signed it this time "with warmest regards."

Lew's cause for optimism, as if by providential intervention, proved not unfounded. Only days after Lew had appeared before the Clemency Board, Tod was writing to express our collective joy about news we'd gotten from ACLU attorney Marvin Karpatkin that Army Judge Advocate General George Prugh was "going to recommend your early release." To what degree all the efforts we had directed in mobilizing political pressure points on Lew's behalf contributed to this development, is beyond my powers to determine. From the moment the Board approved the General's recommendation, given that nothing moves quickly in the United States Army, I can only imagine how Lewis must have chafed while negotiating the labyrinth of "out processing" that finally led to his discharge and freedom.

Lew wrote that he made it to Stockholm just twenty-nine hours before Fia gave birth, but I've long forgotten the date of his release, and could not find reference to it in the files for that month. News of the drama of his arrival came in a post-prison letter. So he began his travel home at least a handful of days before July 22nd when Tod's Sweden-bound letter expressed relief as much as congratulations to the couple. "We're very happy Lew was able to make it back in time," clearly implying that we knew already of his presence at the successful birthing. Single, self-involved men like Tod and I did not long linger on the miracle of a child's birth at that stage of our lives. Tod got right down to business by asking Lewis "to be Safe Return contact in Europe." Also we very much wanted him to write a piece about his experiences at

Leavenworth” for the next *Amnesty Report*. It was left to Eddie Sowers, more in-touch with his sweeter, nurturing side, to pop the bubbly, figuratively speaking, and in his letter welcome the arrival of Anna Maria. If I was silent on the occasion, I suppose I may have still been sulking in resentment over unjustly wounded feelings, ever blithely unaware of the havoc I myself can spread over the feelings of others.

In due course and after some cajoling, we received Lew’s abbreviated but valuable report of his life in the pen. We would only have an opportunity to circulate it, accompanied by a family photo of smiling mom and dad with baby, with the appearance of *Amnesty Report #5* early in winter before the New Year. Here is what appears in our newsletter excerpt:

My first week in Leavenworth was spent cramped together with twenty other prisoners in a single over-crowded cell-bay. A constant stream of military prisoners from across the U.S., Germany, Korea, and every corner of the U.S. military empire was in that stockade with me. We all had been tried by courts-martial - the most common offense being the “crime” of going AWOL or desertion.

Most inmates are put to work at menial, unskilled or - at best - semi-skilled jobs that only serve to support the functioning of the institution, rather than give the prisoner any useful skill for the future. Inmates at vocational training shops, such as wood working and upholstery, must often perform free work for high-ranking officers at the prison.

Instead of teaching English to Hispanic inmates - my initial assignment - I was given a job as “cell block janitor. “ When I asked about the promised job, I was

told they still needed a teacher, but the prison hierarchy decided I was too “political” for the job.

While prison officials deny the existence of political prisoners, they systematically take steps to isolate and intimidate any prisoner who has been involved in the fight for social change or racial justice. Likewise racial tensions were exacerbated in the cell-blocks by allowing military guards to intimidate with constant warnings to “stay with your own.”

By threatening to revoke “good time” and manipulating the parole system, prison authorities try to reduce each prisoner to a state of total acquiescence. These methods have replaced the corporal punishments of earlier times, but they are no less inhumane. In many cases they’re effective in destroying the prisoner’s self-respect and his will to resist the constant violations of his human dignity.

My very strong suspicion is that Lewis Simon defended his “human dignity” as well as anyone, and likely better than most, under those circumstances. His higher education made him - as he himself has emphasized - the exceptional inmate. His own self-esteem was perhaps less vulnerable to the petty harassments of the unschooled bullying toadies who guarded the prisoners, and to whom words spoken by an articulate man like Lewis might have had an intimidating impact of their own. To some extent Lew was shielded by class privilege, the small but not insignificant dosage allotted to the upwardly mobile who emerge from blue collar backgrounds thanks to an educational boost. And, of course, he also possessed a modicum of political celebrity, and the visible are usually treated more cautiously than the invisible.

In possessing the consciousness of someone with a healthy sense of self, Lewis perhaps derived the kind of courage that comes from acting on principle, not fear. Here again his profile

as a G.I. resister was exceptional when compared to most of his peers who, with a lesser sense of clarity, had fled war and military authority by deserting. But Lewis, in full sympathy with the political orientation of Safe Return, stood firmly in solidarity with the struggle against the greater degree of class exploitation to which most of these men had and continued to be subjected.

I might have wished that Lewis had provided more detail than this abbreviated, if elegant, sketch. But what mattered most to me, to Tod, to Eddie - and undoubtedly to thousands of other Americans who had learned of his case - was the happy ending. Lewis was home now, saddled with the responsibilities of fatherhood, and focused on helping to make a life for himself and his family. Whether or not Lewis was well-served in making his surrender political and public, is too tight a knot for me to untangle. On this question Lewis Simon would cast the only vote that counted: U.S. 0. Sweden 1.

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1. Personal email communication from Lewis Simon, October 29, 2013.
 2. “Up Against the Bulkhead: A Photo Essay with Text, in *Ten Years That Shook the City: San Francisco 1968-1978* by Chris Carlsson with Lisa Ruth Elliot, Ed. City Light Publishers, 2011.
 3. Note on GC’s post-retirement photography exhibitions,