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SPECIAL INQUIRY

It started with the arrival of a telegram. Ever since the war, the thin slip of a letter had become permanently fixed in people's minds as a harbinger of death and disaster. Why Julia believed for one moment that it would be good news she could not recall—just that she had been so sure. The cable, which reached them in Bonn on Thursday, April 7, 1955, was addressed to her husband, Paul Child. The cursory message took the form of an urgent summons to Washington: REPORT SOONEST FOR CONSULTATION.

Julia had been over the moon. She knew exactly why Paul was being called stateside. They were going to make him "head of the department." She had even told him as much, her voice brimming with confidence and pride. Incapable of containing her excitement, she had been ready to celebrate then and there. It was silly of her, but characteristic, too. She had gone on happily speculating about the telegram the rest of the evening. Paul had eventually gotten caught up in her mood, his reluctant, mock impatience giving way to anticipation. This, at last, was his promotion, long deserved and long overdue. Then again, when had the State Department ever done anything in a timely fashion?

She supposed they should be grateful. Paul had never been particularly ambitious and because he had little patience with bureaucracy had remained mired in the middle ranks of the Foreign Service. He had never intended to pursue a diplomatic career and lacked the necessary instincts. He had simply been rolled into the State Department after the war and eventually found himself, along with most of his old department, reorganized into the newly formed United States Information Service (USIS).* His particular field, "visual presentation," which had once involved designing and running war rooms in such exotic locales as India and China, now encompassed such mundane matters as arranging press and special events for the agency's European missions. As Foreign Service jobs went, it was a somewhat unglamorous backwater, and it was unlikely he would rise very far. That suited Paul just fine, Julia knew. It meant he would have more time to devote to his artistic sidelines—the writing, painting, and photography that he found infinitely more satisfying. The job was just something he got on with, did well, and left on Fridays at five. Still, it was only right that after years of toiling under a succession of bores and simpletons (his current superiors were known to the staff as "Woodenhead the First" and "Woodenhead the Second," or WH1 and WH2 for short) Paul was finally going to get his due. Perhaps he would get to run his own show or, at the very least, be allowed to pick the members of his own team. There were few things more demoralizing, in Julia's opinion, than "working for people you don't admire."

It was just the morale boost they both needed. Six months earlier, Julia and Paul had been forced to leave their beloved France and, crueler still, an adorable apartment in the old port city of Marseille, because of an inane government decree that a diplomatic post in any given country could not exceed a period of four years. The three years they had spent in Paris directly after the war, followed by a fifteen-month stint on the southern coast, meant they had exceeded the limit. They had no choice but to pack up and go where they were told.

* The USIS is known domestically as the United States Information Agency (USIA), but for clarity and consistency will be referred to henceforth as USIS.

The transfer to Bonn could not have come at a worse time. Julia had been in the midst of testing recipes for a French cookbook she was contracted to write for the Boston publisher Houghton Mifflin with two fellow gourmands she had met in Paris. She knew that the new assignment for Paul not only would take her farther from her collaborators, but would remove her from the country in whose cuisine she should be immersing herself. As difficult as it had been for her to box up her kitchen in Marsailles, Julia understood that the move was infinitely harder on Paul. He had spent his formative years in France, and the language had become second nature to him, as had the internecine squabbling of the locals. The country had captured his heart long before it had taken hold of hers.

Leaving Paris for Marseilles had been a wrenching experience, but it was nothing compared to the jolt that Julia and Paul experienced upon learning they were being posted to Bonn. Paul was fluent in a number of languages, but German was not one of them. It was a poor use of his skills, and he was beside himself. While he had long since reconciled himself to the fact that few things in their government agency followed the dictates of logic, this yank of the chain was particularly galling. Julia could think of nothing to say to cheer him up. She had never set foot in Germany and was "horrified" at the thought. Her memories of World War II were too fresh for her not to dread the idea of settling in Bonn, which had temporarily replaced Berlin as the official seat of the government because it reportedly had less historical baggage. She could only hope she would think better of the new West German capital for having escaped the brunt of the Nazi boot. "To think of living in Germany," she grimly wrote Paul's family. "Will I ever get over the imagined smell of the gas chambers and the rotting bodies of the Concentration camps. Will we ever be able to learn the language in a couple of months?" *

Their first glimpse of their new home did nothing to lift their spirits. "Woe—how did we get here!" Julia scribbled in her diary on October 24, 1954, the day they arrived in Bad Godesberg, a drab residential dis-

* The eccentric capitalization and punctuation in all the letters are as they appear in the originals.

trict just south of Bonn. Flush with dollars from the Marshall Plan, the entire Rhine Valley had been rapidly rebuilt as part of the country's economic and industrial redevelopment, and it was full of blocky concrete office buildings and bristling with American soldiers. Julia and Paul were dismayed to find themselves back in the familiar embrace of the U.S. military, assigned to live in a segregated ("no Germans allowed!") compound called Plittersdorf on the Rhine, which its unfortunate occupants had dubbed "the Golden Ghetto on the Rhine." They had never cared for this part of army life—the rows of anonymous housing, streets crawling with jeeps and military policemen, and bars crowded with drunken young men in ill-fitting uniforms who wanted to be anywhere but there. Writing to her sister, Julia griped that she had "had enough of that meat-ballery during the war to last her a lifetime." Still, there were plenty of opportunities for escape. Paul's Foreign Service salary enabled them to live well, especially as the dollar was strong against the mark. Whenever possible, they fled across the river to Bonn, a picturesque university town that had been occupied by American troops toward the end of the war and had somehow managed to survive relatively unscathed, its medieval battlements and grand boulevards still redolent of Old World charm. There they could sample the solid regional fare, the sauerbratens and sausages, inevitably served with groaning plates of potato pancakes. Afterward, too full to go far, they would stop to recover at one of the pavement cafés along the banks of the river.

Julia and Paul, like most in their seasoned diplomatic circle, had always been guilty of a certain disdain for GI culture, but what had once been mild distaste had over time developed into a visceral aversion. They wanted no part of the martial fervor that arose in the shadow of the Soviet threat in East Germany. Bonn, the makeshift capital, seemed by virtue of its very impermanence to bring out the worst in its American occupiers, who were so conflicted about their objectives in the divided region that they appeared to be almost paralyzed. Caught between the menacing Soviet Union and Western Europe's fears of military vulnerability, Bonn was emblematic of the tenuous peace, and of the uncertain prospects for American forces and American dollars to achieve a united capitalist postwar Europe to deter the spread of Com-

munism. Writing in *The New York Times,* Julia and Paul's friend Stewart Alsop observed that the U.S. diplomatic mission in Germany was "a peculiarly depressing place for a peculiarly American reason" and, in its confusion and excess of caution, was substituting "dogma for policy and the official line for serious thought."

Within weeks of their arrival in Germany, Julia and Paul had picked up on the atmosphere of distrust and unease. The place was rife with closed-door meetings, simmering tensions, and subterranean plots. They were on the front lines of the Cold War in Europe, though Julia could not help feeling that the chill in the air had its origin in the "rampant right wingery" that had seized their own country in recent years. In Washington, the mood was so changed that on her last visit home she had scarcely recognized the city as the same place she and Paul had lived in those first happy postwar years.

When peace was declared, Americans had celebrated their achievement. The GIs had triumphed over Germany, over Japan, and, in the bargain, over the Great Depression, and in the first glow of euphoria that victory had seemed complete. The United States, with its great economic and military strength, seemed invincible. During the late 1940s, while based in Paris, Julia and Paul had watched as their country's ascendance as a global power led to a new confidence in its role in international affairs, as well as a greater sense of its responsibilities in preserving the peace and shaping the future, and the corresponding spread of U.S. policy-making agencies and legations around the globe.

As the rewards of war failed to meet the impossibly high expectations, however, the euphoria had quickly faded. New fears about the nation's security had gripped the public. The tone of political debate in Congress grew sharply partisan and bitter, with the Republicans making the most of charges of Communist infiltration of the Truman administration, as though that could explain the failure to foresee what had happened with the Soviet Union and China. In the spring of 1947, in an effort to protect his administration, President Harry S. Truman established the Federal Employee Loyalty Program, a broad measure instituting background checks and screening procedures for all incumbent and prospective government employees. But instead of reassuring

the public, the program helped legitimize the idea that international Communism posed a domestic threat. By the end of 1950, Alger Hiss was convicted of perjury, Klaus Fuchs confessed, and Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were arrested on espionage charges of passing bomb secrets to the Russians. Inevitably, in 1953, after years of relentless media coverage, the Rosenbergs got the chair. All of this seemed to confirm the existence of spies in every nook and cranny of government. Washington was awash in paranoia and suspicion.

Even more troubling than the hardening of ideology was the vicious Red-baiting of Senator Joseph R. McCarthy. To Julia, the whole government, spurred on by McCarthy's unscrupulous zeal, seemed consumed with hunting for subversives. Venting her anger in a letter to her family, Julia wrote that she could not help thinking that most McCarthy supporters, of whom she was afraid her "dear old Pop" was one, were "good-hearted but fat-headed people" who were hopelessly stuck in the past. For twenty years, her father's animosity had festered under the New Deal and the Fair Deal: "Roosevelt was, to him, the anti-Christ. Roosevelt was socialism. The enemy. He boiled and seethed with hatred." As far as she could see, McCarthy had tapped right into that source of hatred, fueling people's fears about the future: "Suddenly the new enemy is also Communism," she continued. "It is these nasty foreigners with their socialistic ideas, these nasty intellectual egg-heads, who *like* the foreigners, & who have always caused all the trouble. What we want is to return to 1925, when we had no world responsibility (presumably), and no truck with foreigners. We just want to live alone. McCarthy is the savior symbol."

The junior senator from Wisconsin's rapid rise to power was a recurring theme in the newspapers and Julia and Paul were riveted. They read everything they could get their hands on in Bonn, including the *Herald Tribune* and an edited version of the daily *New York Times,* and they beseeched family members to send articles from home. McCarthy had successfully made Communism a potent campaign issue, and he bullied President Truman into implementing an executive order to begin loyalty investigations of government employees. After the "fall" of China in October 1949, when the Communists led by Mao Tse-tung

proclaimed the formation of the People's Republic, McCarthy and his allies had stepped up their ideological attacks. On February 9, 1950, in a speech before the Women's Republican Club of Wheeling, West Virginia, McCarthy had announced his crusade against government employees suspected of being members of the Communist Party, who were nevertheless "still working and shaping policy in the State Department." Julia and Paul had seen the headlines that followed, all of which focused on McCarthy's claim that he had in hand a "list of 205" names of traitors.

McCarthy's Red scare became a real cause of concern, alarm even, to State Department personnel. He had made the overseas information agency one of his targets and had vowed to root out "security risks." Hoping to appease McCarthy, President Dwight D. Eisenhower's new secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, had dismissed a number of high-level diplomats and had warned that anything less than "positive loyalty" from Foreign Service officers was "not tolerable at this time." Julia and Paul had been en route to Germany when they had heard about the flurry of coerced departures in Bonn. This had been followed by reports of books being removed from the shelves of libraries run by the USIS, known as America Houses, in a number of European cities. Dashiell Hammett's hard-boiled detective novel *The Maltese Falcon* was one of the many books McCarthy wanted "deshelved"—a neat euphemism for censored. In Berlin, a book entitled *Thunder Out of China,* written by their friend Theodore H. White, a *Time* magazine correspondent during the war, was found to be objectionable; it was removed and burned. Apparently White's sympathy with Mao and some of the Communist objectives made the book too dangerous for the eyes of impressionable Germans, the citizens of a country America was trying to turn into a unified democracy.

Julia and Paul learned from friends in Paris that Roy Cohn and David Schine, McCarthy's young assistants—the newspapers called them "the gumshoe boys"—had paid a surprise visit to the embassy there. Cohn and Schine had nosed around looking for dirt. Inevitably, they had rooted out a handful of employees who were disgruntled and interviewed them. One of Paul's former colleagues, Larry Morris,

the Paris cultural attaché, had happened on the two men in his office one Saturday afternoon, apparently making themselves at home with their feet propped up on his desk. Incensed, he had demanded they remove their feet from his desk and leave. They had gone quietly, but not before holding a press conference during which they made all sorts of unsubstantiated charges—"vague, but dirty," as Paul put it. Naturally, no official at the embassy was given the opportunity to reply. Then Cohn and Schine announced that the next day—Easter Sunday—they would be questioning the ambassador, and wanted to meet with all the top USIS officers at 3:00 p.m. that afternoon at the library to examine the books on display. Everyone canceled his or her holiday plans and assembled at the library at the appointed hour, but Cohn and Schine never showed. Finally someone called the Hôtel de Crillon and discovered that the "two young bloods" had just risen from their beds and were eating breakfast in their suite. As far as Paul could tell, the only investigating they did was "during most of Holy Saturday night, among the naked showgirls of Montmartre."

Paul had seen only trouble ahead. Rumors about where McCarthy's tactics of intimidation—the book burning and finger-pointing—might lead had spread like wildfire through the diplomatic community. Paul was unnerved by McCarthyism and considered the senator to be "a desperately dangerous, power-hungry, fascist-operating bastard." He was less than sanguine about the new president's ability to stand up to the notorious demagogue. "Eisenhower appears to be trying to save the Republican Party at the expense of the country," he wrote his family in March 1954. "Sweeping the pieces under the rug in the plain view of the public won't disguise the disaster. He better hurry up and act or he'll find himself . . . eating out of McCarthy's hand."

Julia and Paul had watched with sinking hearts as one after another of the career Foreign Service officers they had served with in China, among them some of their closest friends, had been forced out, while still others quit in disgust. Anyone who had departed from the official line in the Far East, or had had the temerity to write a critical report, was being labeled un-American and blamed for having "lost China to the Reds." Somehow Mao's victory was now being seen as part of a mas-

ter Kremlin plot, enabled by a band of Sinologists—known as China hands—who had conspired to undermine U.S. policy. "Quite a number of people were just ruined," recalled Julia. She and Paul had both served with the OSS in China and wondered if they should be worried, too. At the same time, it was difficult to judge to what extent some of the transfers and resignations being ordered from Washington were part of the normal changing of the guard and would have happened eventually, even without the buzz saw of McCarthy's Red hunt.

It was a point of personal honor with Julia and Paul that their colleagues could always count on their support. If loyalty was the burning question of the hour, they wanted to make it clear where theirs lay. When their old friend Haldore Hanson, a State Department official and longtime China expert—as a foreign correspondent in the 1930s, he had traveled the country by bicycle to cover the civil war—was accused by McCarthy of having "pro-Communist proclivities," they immediately sent him a note of encouragement. On his day before the Senate subcommittee, he denied any involvement with the Communists, stating repeatedly that he was "a loyal American." But as he later confided to Julia and Paul, he doubted whether his answer would "ever meet up with the charges." Even though the subcommittee found no evidence against Hanson, as a result of McCarthy's accusations his neighbors in Virginia had circulated a petition to drive him out, and one even labeled him a Russian spy. Hanson wrote to Julia and Paul that he had been "very touched" to hear from them, adding, "You have no idea what a few letters from friends can do for you in a time like that."

Hanson's letter depressed the hell out of them, but they kept it as a reminder of the perilous times they lived in. There was nothing they could do but keep their heads down and hope for the best. Writing to her sister, Julia confided her misgivings: "After the events of the last few years, I have entirely lost that nobility and esprit de corps. I feel, actually, that at any moment we might be accused of being Communists and traitors."

It was no wonder they seized on the telegram from Washington as a reprieve. Paul's orders to report to Washington meant that everything was going to be all right. He was going to get a promotion, maybe even

a new post. The Sunday Paul was scheduled to fly back to the United States, Julia and a party of friends decided to see him off. They were in a festive mood as they drove to the airport in Düsseldorf. The following morning, still feeling giddy, Julia decided to get dressed up and go to a reception in honor of James B. Conant, the high commissioner for West Germany.* Conant had overseen the end of the occupation and, as a last act before his office lapsed into history, was formally recognizing the beginning of rearmament. There would be champagne all around—even if many in the room, Julia included, felt it was a bit premature for the Germans to be given their army back.

On Tuesday, another telegram arrived. It was from Paul. The first words Julia read sent a chill down her spine: SITUATION CONFUSED.

Paul had landed in New York on Monday and caught the train to Washington from Penn Station, arriving late in the afternoon. He had wired her from the office first thing on Tuesday, after his trip was starting to look like a wild goose chase. He had spent an exasperating morning being shuffled from one office to another, where one bureaucrat after another expressed complete ignorance of and bewilderment at the reasons for his return. One official finally let it slip that he had been told to provide Paul with "a desk and telephone, nothing more." No one seemed to have a clue what Paul was supposed to be doing or how long he would be staying. Thoroughly disgusted, he had ended up going out for drinks and dinner with two old colleagues, Mike Barjansky and George Henry, and they had spent much of the evening talking over "the mystery" of why he had been sent for. Back in his room at the Graylyn Hotel, Paul could not keep his growing anxiety at bay as he wrote a long letter to Julia:

> I thought Barjansky would be able to clarify the mystery. But no. *On the contrary.* He was waiting for me to clarify it for him! Ah me—what a muck-up! He thinks it must be something special and secret, otherwise "they" would certainly have told

* James B. Conant was the author's grandfather.

> him. . . . Mike says there was a definite instruction to mind his own business. He then, naturally enough, assumed I was a CIA agent all the time and that my job as Exhibits Officer was merely a cover, and that I was being hauled back on a secret mission. We were both astonished when each of us learned that the other knew nothing.

By Wednesday morning, Paul had begun to work out that the thirty-six hours of bureaucratic confusion were not simply a matter of crossed signals, but were part of a convoluted procedure conveying him toward some kind of "security investigation." By then it was also apparent that the cable demanding his presence in Washington had nothing whatsoever to do with his career advancement but had been part of a clumsy effort to provide him with a cover story. Although the "how" and "why" of it were still beyond him, Paul wrote Julia, "It appears to be (if the above assumption is correct) that they are actually trying to protect my reputation (and their own too, of course!) by all this secrecy—having, perhaps, learned from the public blare of the McCarthy proceedings, and the consequent adverse criticism of his methods, that unremovable smirches can be rubbed onto innocent persons." The labyrinthine maneuvering, he theorized in a later letter to his superior in Bonn, was in case they had uncovered a mess: "It would have served the Agency's interests not to have it bruited about. The investigation hinged on the standard guilt-by-association gambit, with all the potentialities that could spring from such a situation."

Before facing the inquisition, Paul telegraphed Julia, summing up his predicament: SITUATION HERE LIKE KAFKA STORY. He was being drawn inexorably into a drama not of his devising, one from which there seemed to be no way out. All the time, in the back of his mind, he could not stop searching his memory for a name, an assignment, even the most "tenuous connection," that might have inspired enough suspicion to warrant bringing him back from Germany for a security inquest. Nothing made any sense. "Why in Hell am I here at all?" he worried in a frantic note dashed off at 10:00 a.m. that morning. "This is curiously fantastic, unreal, frightening, and preposterous;

and I couldn't wish more that you were here to give me your invaluable moral support."

Resigned to the fact that he would have to "walk the plank alone," Paul reported to the Office of Security, where he spent the better part of the afternoon and evening being interrogated by two special agents, W. H. Sullivan and A. W. Sanders. A secretary, silent as the grave, took down a complete transcript of everything said. The two agents sat across the table from him, staring over a four-inch-thick dossier that had evidently been assembled with great care over a considerable period of time. Paul was informed that he was the subject of a State Department Special Inquiry, an official investigation into his character, reputation, and loyalty. Friends, relations, employers, and associates—from the distant past to the present—had been tracked down and interviewed.

As it turned out, the association that seemed to most interest the FBI was with one Jane Foster, a former OSS colleague with whom he had served in Ceylon during the war. This assumption was based on the fact that "a number of relentless and tricky hours" were spent in grilling him about Jane. They had wanted to know where, when, and how he had met her. How well had he known her? How often had he seen her? What had they talked about when they were together? Who were her friends? Where had she lived? What were her interests? After an exhaustive examination of that relationship, the interrogators had moved on, questioning him about other friends in the OSS and the Foreign Service, only to return to the subject of Jane Foster again and again in the course of the night. "I gather from the way they talked about her that she had fallen under suspicion of a connection with Communism," he later confided to a close colleague, Joe Phillips, the director of public affairs for Germany. "So they investigated all *Her* friends and acquaintances. My name appeared among the latter."

The "second suspicious thing" from his past, he wrote Julia, appeared to be the fact that he had at one time given the name of Morris Llewellyn Cooke as a reference. An old friend of his brother's, Cooke was an eighty-five-year-old liberal Democrat who had been a dollar-a-year man during FDR's administration. As far as Paul could tell, Cooke appeared to be in "bad odor" with the authorities and a suspect

in some kind of right-wing "Republican-brand investigation." (Cooke was a member of the board of directors of the Independent Citizens' Committee for the Arts, Sciences, and Professions, an organization that the FBI listed as "Communist-controlled.") Paul told them that while he was acquainted with Cooke, he did not consider him "an intimate friend" and knew nothing about his political ideology. They worked away at Paul's connection to Cooke for at least an hour, asking about anything the two might have in common, including residences, work, ideas, projects, and travel. They asked if he was familiar with other colleagues of his brother and sister-in-law, and the FBI agents mentioned several names that meant nothing to him.

The third allegation Sullivan and Sanders had confronted Paul with was that he was "a homosexual." The minute the word was spoken, one of them rounded on him: "So, how about it?"

This caught Paul completely off guard. At first it had struck him as so absurd that he burst out laughing. Then he got angry. He demanded to know the name of his accuser. It was written in the Constitution, he argued indignantly, that he had a right to confront his accuser. The two special agents, whom Paul dubbed "the ultimate Kafkas," allowed as how they were not permitted to reveal anything. Paul was stymied. He had been a bachelor (more by circumstance than by choice, he liked to think) until the age of forty-four. Directly after the war, he and Julia, then thirty-four, had decided to throw caution to the wind and get married. As it turned out, their nine years of marriage did not amount to proof of anything. "Male homosexuals often have wives and children," the agents had demurred. Paul was dumbfounded. He found himself struggling to remain serious in what could only be described as a surreal situation. Finally, his voice heavy with sarcasm, he suggested that since he had a wife but *no* child, perhaps that let him "off the hook." The two agents remained stony faced. "If you want to have some verbal fun," he later wrote Julia, "try to prove sometime to two FBI guys that you *aren't* a Lesbian. How do you prove it?"

Unbeknown to Paul, a State Department investigation into his background in 1946, triggered by his application to work at the Pentagon designing intelligence installations, had raised questions about

his sexual orientation. The report advised that at times in the past Paul had "given the impression of being bisexual," and the charge was noted in his file, cataloged along with countless others that raised questions about his character, politics, and patriotism. The records indicate that he was one of identical twin sons born to Bertha Cushing Child, a singer from Boston, and Charles Triplet Child, a scientist from Virginia who worked at the Astrophysical Observatory in the Smithsonian. Three weeks after the twins were born, Charles Triplet Child died of typhoid fever, leaving their mother as their sole means of support. She resumed her career as a singer, and the twins and their older sister were raised in a musical environment: little Charles played the violin, Paul the cello, and Mary (Meeda) the piano. Money was tight, so they were soon earning their way as the "Mrs. Child and the Children" quartet. The boys attended the Wilbraham Academy in Massachusetts, Boston Latin High School, and then the Park Lodge School in Paris. After high school, Charles attended Harvard while Paul tried an extension course at Columbia College before taking off for Europe. In France, both during his school years and later, Paul studied art, sculpture, and woodcarving and, according to the report, followed a "bohemian mode of life." As a result of his many years in Paris, he was thought to have "a free and easy approach to morals." He and Charles worked for a time as freelance artists and were characterized as intellectuals, "exceedingly left-wing," and allied to people of similar beliefs. One former neighbor described Paul as a socialist of the French school, "personified by the beliefs and teachings of Léon Blum."*

When the war broke out, Paul tried to get into intelligence work but claimed he was disqualified because of a partly blind left eye, the result of a boyhood accident. Then came a call from Washington that he might be of use to the government because of "certain abilities,"

* Blum was a leading figure in French literary circles, a Goethe scholar, a socialist agitator, and one of the heroic Vichy 80 who refused to recognize the authority of the Nazi-supported government of Marshal Philippe Pétain during World War II. He was three times prime minister of France.

which he later learned referred to judo, which he had been studying since the age of twelve. (He was a third-degree black belt.) Ultimately it was his talent as an artist that attracted the attention of the OSS, which hired him in 1943 to make situation maps, charts, and diagrams. While there were countless references from friends attesting to Paul's loyalty and integrity, describing him as a "solid citizen" and person of "high caliber," there were an equal number of reports expressing hesitancy about his brother, a painter, who was generally viewed as less stable, prone to sympathizing with the "underdog," and someone who could become receptive "to movements of a disloyal nature." Some of those interviewed maintained that Charles Child and his wealthy wife, Fredericka (Freddie), were "Communist sympathizers," although the record states there was "no actual proof" of any such activities.

Furthermore, Leslie Brady, Paul's superior at the American Embassy in Paris, while stating that he knew nothing derogatory about his moral character, indicated that he did not think he had "the proper temperament" to make a good public affairs officer with the USIA and considered him better suited to behind-the-scenes exhibit work. Brady explained that Paul found it difficult to deal with people who did not share his opinions, adding that Paul would become discouraged when he had to deal with foreign nationals who were not pro-American and "would make little attempt to influence these people to the American viewpoint." Brady described Paul as "moody" and "eccentric" and indicated that he thought he suffered from a "definite inferiority complex," apparently the result of having a twin brother who was a talented painter while he was "a frustrated artist."

As a result of lingering doubts about Paul's leanings, both political and sexual, it was recommended that his wife be investigated for anything of "a derogatory nature." According to her confidential file, Julia (or Julie, as she was known then) McWilliams was from a socially prominent Pasadena family, had attended school in California followed by Smith College in the East, and enjoyed an "excellent reputation." Her record was unblemished. Furthermore, she was known to be a close friend of the third Mrs. Harry Hopkins, formerly Mrs. Louise Macy, a fellow alumna of Smith College. Julia had been briefly employed at

Coast magazine in San Francisco, and in the advertising department of W. & J. Sloane in New York, before going to work as a file clerk for the Office of War Information in 1942. Her father, John McWilliams, recently remarried, was known to be a Republican, very active in civic affairs, and on the board of education. Overall, the family was considered to be "above reproach." A longtime neighbor testified that Julia; her sister, Dorothy; and their father were "as fine loyal Americans as possible." Investigators in Bonn turned up a coworker who reported that at times Julia could be more outspoken than her husband and had once referred to her father as a "Black Republican" and to members of her family as "stuffy middle class." The implication was that she felt her family had had "everything handed to them on a silver platter," had never done anything for themselves, and were therefore dull and uninteresting. However, the source did not consider her to be "left wing" and said he would classify her as a "Truman Democrat." As part of a routine "neighborhood check" in Paris, the concierge of the building where the Childs had rented an apartment was interviewed, and she reportedly stated that Paul and his wife appeared "devoted to each other and were always together." The concierge concluded by stating that she could furnish only favorable information about the couple.

Unfortunately, Paul's itinerant employment record, a long history of jumping from job to job, exacerbated the concerns about his character. It was, at the very least, suggestive of a troubled youth. One colleague in Bonn stated that Paul Child had once commented that he had "pretty much wasted his twenties" and only in his thirties had begun to settle down and apply himself. After dropping out of college, he had worked on the crews of freighters and tankers, picking up languages in the various ports of call. His linguistic skills led to teaching jobs, first as a tutor with a family in Asolo, north of Venice, and then at a boys' boarding school in France, in the Dordogne. The investigators could discover nothing about his life during this period. After returning to the United States, he worked briefly as an instructor in art and French at the Cranbrook School in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. While there had been no complaints about him at Cranbrook, and he had been "highly regarded" at the Shady Hill School in Cambridge, Massachu-

setts, there had been "various instances" of questionable behavior at the Avon Old Farms School, an exclusive boys' academy in Connecticut. During his five-year tenure at Avon, Paul had instituted a photography club, provided nude photographic magazines as exhibits, and even endeavored to obtain a live nude model. Avon's dean had classified some of the photo exhibits as "obscene," and the magazine subscriptions had promptly been canceled. Paul Child's conduct, the dean reported, was "completely out of place" in a school for adolescent boys. Although he could not cite any particular manifestation of "homosexual tendencies," he stated that Paul had "these tendencies."

All of this material, some of it going back more than a decade, gave Sullivan and Sanders ample cause to press their case. They had to ask Paul about his homosexuality, they told him, no matter how embarrassing it might be for all involved. The "Kafkas" resumed their humiliating probe of the most private parts of his life, repeatedly reading something suspicious into his long bachelorhood. Just when he thought the two agents had exhausted the subject of his "homosexual tendencies," they commanded, without warning: "Drop your pants."

Paul just gaped at them. Was he supposed to prove his manhood with some sort of demonstration? He was so outraged, and so adamant in his denials—challenging the flustered agents to take down their own pants to see if it was possible to tell by "just looking"—that they finally let it go. In spite of this, a half hour later they asked unprompted if he had ever sought out psychiatric treatment. When he demanded to know "what in God's name that would prove," they said they thought that perhaps, long ago, he might have requested advice about "some little homosexual leanings."

Paul later wrote Julia that he had stood up to his interrogators and had assumed from the outset that the homosexual ploy—which he considered "fairly dirty"—was designed to unnerve him and compel a quick confession. He remembered that when their friend Charles E. "Chip" Bohlen was Eisenhower's ambassador-designate for the Soviet Union in 1953, McCarthy opposed his nomination, and when his attacks on Bohlen's performance at the Yalta Conference proved insufficient, he got the FBI to leak some suggestive stories raising doubt about

Bohlen's sexual persuasion. Bohlen was confirmed anyway. But to Paul, it showed that McCarthy and his henchmen viewed homosexuality, on their sliding scale of perversions, to be just a hair removed from Communism, and any such admission would have surely sealed his fate.

And so the questioning had continued, hour after hour. All the places he had lived. All the people he had known. All his colleagues since joining the OSS in 1942 and their names and addresses. There were more questions about his brother and sister-in-law: their interests and activities; the names of organizations they belonged to; the names of their friends and acquaintances. Questions about Julia's relations, etc., etc. His memory, not particularly good at this sort of detail in the best of times, occasionally faltered. Not that it mattered. He had nothing to hide. "They weren't brutal," he wrote Julia, "just very, very thorough." Their technique "was to take notes (in spite of the secretary), abandon a given subject for fifteen minutes, and then suddenly loop back and ask a question already asked, but in a different form."

Ironically, after having to defend himself against charges that he was sexually bent, he then had to convince them he had never bedded Jane Foster, despite the fact that she was an attractive woman—a high-spirited, golden-haired California girl who was reportedly one of the most memorable of the female OSS recruits to be flown into the Eastern theater during the war. Paul had spent an entire year in her company in Ceylon. Did he really expect them to believe that despite being billeted in the same barracks all that time he had never so much as made a pass at her? Paul patiently explained that while he and Jane were "very good friends," they had never been lovers. She was, in his words, a loose, warm, gregarious, and witty woman. Someone he found "fun to talk to." A "bold, free spirit" who was not regulated by traditions, the type of person "who might dine at six pm one evening and at eleven the next." He had escorted her to a number of dinner parties and dances on the post, and they had shared countless meals together, but that was as far as it went.

In the end, the two agents had just stood up, thanked him, and said goodbye. They were finished for the time being. They gave absolutely no indication whether they believed him or not. Their expressions gave

nothing away. Paul, who had maintained his poise for most of the interrogation, finally lost it. He had had all he could take and gave full vent to his fury. The whole charade, he berated them, had been handled in an "amateurish" fashion. All the subterfuge had been for nothing because they had "left him dangling" without information for days, and as a result "practically everyone in the outfit was aware something was screwy." Bringing him back to Washington, he added bitterly, had been a pointless exercise, not to mention a fantastic waste of the government's time and money. Looking supremely unconcerned, the two agents replied that, far from being useless, the interview had proved "extraordinarily valuable," certainly worth the inconvenience and cost. With that, Paul was dismissed. It was 9:00 p.m. by the time he got back to his hotel and his letter to Julia. At the conclusion of his long, harrowing account, he had scribbled wearily, "The shape of the immediate future is—at the moment—totally unclear."

At first, Julia was unable to take it in. "Paul is being *investigated*!" she noted in her diary on April 13, the enormity of what was happening finally beginning to sink in. The very idea of a Special Inquiry was "inexplicably weird." Although it was utterly absurd that anyone could suspect her husband of being a Communist, she realized they could not afford to take the allegations lightly. Paul was afraid he might be in the "same position" as an old friend and colleague, Leonard Rennie, who was among a group of employees dismissed by the State Department as security risks. Paul had spent the weekend with the Rennies at their country home, and while their sympathy was well intended, it was of small comfort. They knew all too well the damage that even a hint of controversy could do, let alone a full-blown inquiry. He had been advised by a high-level USIS official by the name of Parker May to say nothing and wait. Patience would be in his "own interests." Meanwhile, he was not to engage in any real work, but to try his best to maintain the fiction that this was one of those run-of-the-mill "government mixups." If the FBI did not turn up anything incriminating, he would be given a clean bill of health and sent home.

Paul, of course, had no intention of keeping quiet. "As soon as he got out that first day, he went howling to everyone he knew," recalled

Julia, who had stayed up till dawn on Wednesday reviewing everything Paul had told her with a senior Foreign Service officer whom she knew they could trust. Between them, she and Paul knew a number of important people, and they both spent the next few days working the phones trying to find a way to remedy his situation.

Although Paul was confident he had acquitted himself well in the security interview and was still a "*persona grata,*" he was not yet in the clear. He had been given notice that he could be reexamined at any time. He was not to leave town. The standard investigation lasted thirty days, and he had to sit tight until they were done. As a precaution of sorts, he asked Julia to make copies of his long account of his interrogation available to his two supervisors in the Bonn office. He wrote her daily. His affectionate letters, full of his usual chatty badinage about the poor food and soupy heat of Washington's Indian summer, belied his consuming doubt and anger. He cautioned her to postpone an upcoming trip to Paris in case she was needed in Washington at the last minute.

In one letter, he enclosed a *Washington Post and Times-Herald* article about the problems being caused by American postwar "hyperpatriotism," explaining that the extreme security procedures being put in place to safeguard against espionage were perceived by many leading lawyers and scientists as "harrying and constricting." The Washington attorney Harold Green, a former member of the Atomic Energy Commission's general counsel's office, also pointed to the government's "wobbly standards" in the present program: "Our criteria, for example, condemn the homosexual and pervert as security risks because of the risk of blackmail, but they are silent as to the married adulterer. We do not yet know who is the greater risk: the paragon of virtue who has a record of carelessness in locking classified material in his safe, or the chronic alcoholic who has a spotless record of security performance." Another story on the same page reported that the legality of the government loyalty-security hearings was facing a legal challenge in the Supreme Court because the proceedings "did not grant the accused the right to confront or cross-examine his accusers." At the top of each article, Paul scribbled "Julie! Julie!"

The waiting was agony, made worse by the fact that they were an ocean apart. She bombarded him with special delivery letters, telegrams, and telephone calls testifying to her unwavering love and support. "You are finer, better, more loveable, more attractive, deeper, nicer, nobler, cleverer, stronger and more wonderful [than other men]," she wrote. "I am so damned lucky even to know you, much less (or more) to be married to you." Privately, she felt fear bordering on panic. She was on pins and needles all the time. She was terribly worried about Paul's health. The FBI interrogation had been "a horrible experience for him." Every day he remained under suspicion was exacting a toll on him, emotionally and physically. He was having difficulty sleeping and was dependent on what he called his "goldfish"—tiny, brightly hued pills prescribed by a local doctor—for the little rest he got. His stomach, weakened by too many bouts of intestinal parasites contracted during the war, was in a dreadful state. She could not help thinking the worst. Paul could be fired or detained or dragged through endless months of loyalty hearings like some they knew. How was it that Jane Foster, of all people—smart, funny, talented Jane—had ended up on McCarthy's list of "Communists in the State Department"? Jane was a painter. She was not even employed by the government anymore. What, if anything, could she possibly have done to bring this calamity down on all their heads? The whole thing would have been laughable if it were not so terrifying.

On April 21, Paul was reinterviewed about Jane Foster, this time by one of USIS's own security officers. Paul again provided a detailed account of all his interactions with Jane while employed by the OSS in Ceylon, as well as every subsequent encounter. He again maintained that although the closest of friends they had never been romantically involved, and had kept up only an intermittent friendship. After the war, he had not laid eyes on Jane again until the spring of 1946, when he happened to run into her on the street in Georgetown and they stopped to have a brief conversation. That was the only contact he had had with her in the United States. He had next seen her in 1952, sometime after he had joined the staff of the embassy in Paris. At that time, he had met her husband, a Russian American named George Zlatovski. Over

the next few years the two couples had occasionally met for dinner, though Paul estimated it was probably not more than ten times. He had last seen her and her husband in the fall of 1954, when they had spent a few hours visiting together. Neither she nor George seemed to be particularly interested in politics, nor had they ever expressed any interest in his government post or in USIS policies. They had never even given any indication that they were sympathetic with the Communist Party. No, he had never heard any gossip to the effect that they were Communists or Communist sympathizers. No, he had never seen any Communist literature lying around their apartment in Paris. Paul observed dryly that he had always thought Jane was "too disorganized to become interested in any organization."

The only question that gave him pause was the last one: Would he recommend Jane Foster Zlatovski as a loyal American who could be trusted with confidential information? Paul considered this for moment. He felt boxed in by the loaded nature of the question. He wanted to be honest without being incriminating. He had "no reason to question her loyalty," he ventured, adding somewhat hesitantly that he did not think he could trust her absolutely. When pressed, he explained that Jane was "a glib talker" and "somewhat irresponsible." As much as he hated to say anything against her, he would not trust her with confidential information because of her "indiscreetness."

At all times during his questioning, Paul tried to be perfectly frank, and to show by his attitude that he had nothing to be ashamed of or to conceal. He felt "untainted," he wrote Julia that weekend, because he was "completely cleared and completely blameless." Still, he could not let it go. The whole business ate away at him, poisoning his gut. "I'm afraid I hate the system," he agonized, wondering if he would ever again feel in control of his career, let alone his life. "What the Hell are they investigating Foster for, anyway? Or was that really a dodge to investigate me? Damned if I know." What he wanted, above all, was an explanation that made some sense of the whole thing, that would tell him what had gone wrong, so he would know how to go on from there. How else was he to avoid the pitfalls ahead? And protect Julia, himself, and his career from further harm? But clearly no such enlightenment would be forthcoming. He was on his own.

Paul had cooperated fully. He had told them everything he knew, which amounted to precious little at the end of the day. When he finished, he requested that a written clearance be placed in his permanent record. When informed that it would take time to process his clearance because of the thirty-day requirement for Special Inquiries, he went straight to the head of the USIS Office of Security and demanded that the rule be waived. He was advised that it would be wiser to wait and stick to protocol "so it wouldn't look strange." Paul assured the security chief that it could not possibly look any stranger than it already did. He also told him that if they kept him in Washington another month with nothing to do, then "by God everybody and his mother would know what was going on."

As soon as he received a copy of his clearance, Paul wired Julia: INVESTIGATION CONCLUDED SUCCESSFULLY FOR ME. He told friends he believed he had "weathered the storm." He was "almost a virgin," he wrote Julia, "a monument of innocence." No apology was forthcoming, nor did he expect one. Perhaps to make it up to him, the powers that be had decided to send him to Brussels so that he could pick out the site for the American exhibition in the upcoming 1958 World's Fair. It was a minor perk, given what they had put him through, but it was nonetheless a token of their esteem and Paul appreciated it. On April 26, he wrote Julia of his Brussels assignment, fairly crowing with triumph. Furthermore, he had applied for, and received, permission to fly back via Paris. If everything went according to plan, he would meet her there at the end of the month. At which time, he added, "I shall allow myself to be congratulated by a thoroughly prejudiced woman of my acquaintance."

As far as Julia and Paul were concerned, that put an end to the Jane Foster affair. They had no way of knowing then that it was far from over.