

Leser

4/14/73

Although I did not expect to hear from Bud, and despite having started at 5 a.m., I didn't go to bed last night until midnight. I did not expect to hear from him this morning, but I again got up at 5 on the off chance I would, so that I could get some things in the mail, including the enclosed letters to John and Walter re James.

After looking at the 11 p.m. TV news I turned on the Chicago all-news radio station. Reception was poor, but at 11:30 I got the essence of the stories in today's Post and Times. Haven't gotten our paper yet and do not expect to go into town, so I won't get the Times. If this story was in the early edition of the Post, I suspect it would have been reported earlier, surely by the 11 p.m. TV news. So, I don't expect to see that today, because ~~maxx~~ only the early edition comes here.

It takes virtually no imagination to understand that the desperate and wily Nixon has boldly taken the initiative. Unless Ervin has more guts and imagination than he has yet shown, he has been finessed and the villain becomes the hero. This also was easily foreseen, and if I sent you copies, you know I did. (I find myself wondering if those directly involved in this ever take time to think ahead, to try to understand that might be the next thing they may face.)

So, doing something is now more urgent than it was when we spoke around 8 last night, when I would have thought that from Nixon's statement of the day before the need was apparent. Who can now do something, as I see it and based on the limitations of my knowledge, seems to be limited to Bud and Sheldon Cohen who, fortunately, is a friend of Bud's. Bud introduced us, so I know this. This is a strange situation that provides real opportunity, two friends representing opposite sides in the same case and having a common interest because of the unusual twist to events.

What I have in mind for Bud to do can be of immeasurable value to Cohen and his DNC client(s). Cohen can also do it for himself, but with Bud in the case and my having met Cohen through Bud (if Cohen remembers it), I feel I can't approach him. You know of my attempt with Williams.

Bud has a way of making easy things that should happen naturally the impossible. This has been hard for me to comprehend because he has a good head and I have no question about his intentions. The way his ego and ambition have taken control of him, it is not possible for him to reason, leave alone for others to reason with him, as I'm sure you've learned for yourself. This is why, for the longest time, I've separated myself from him.

However, as soon as I learned that he represented McCord, I did get word to him that I believe I can help and that I am willing. When I got no return message from the girl who answered the phone in Carmen's absence, I went farther and twice went into this with Bob, so I know Bud not only got the message, which the girl who answered the phone told me, but that he understood it. I'm sure Bob made it comprehensible.

What I heard nothing from him in the long interval is not because he did not have the time. He found time for Skolnick when he could have had others get from Skolnick anything he might have expected to be able to. This is but one example. But, incredibly, Bud is now taking depositions for which he is unprepared and in context means that he refuses to prepare for. Assuming that he inherited the Bennett deposition from Rothblatt, as you said, was that not all the more reason for knowing what he might be getting into? All the more reason for asking what should I be looking and asking for? I'd not be surprised if your call was your idea, not his. Bennett is a potential goldmine in the unexplored areas of all of this. I believe it will lead to added criminality in three general and broad areas and in some was an even greater scandal, except possibly for the Mitchell part. If it can be connected to that, then that is a much greater scandal. He was Attorney General at the time, so there is the connection of his having done nothing about overt criminality.

I am sorry you did not understand me about addresses. I did not mean what you remembered, the office cover. That had better be left entirely alone unless it is explored in depth, which is very simple but requires preparation Bud can't get without me. What I meant is something I told you and you did not recall. Bennett or Mullen, according to what Bob Woodward told me, is a Nixon neighbor at Key Biscayne.

I am aware that Bud makes things up that are congenial to what he wants to believe, then believes his inventions. So I can well believe your opinion that he would be afraid to have me and McCord in the same room. The fact is that I have never had any problems with any of the conservatives or the right extremists, as he should know from Dallas, where even Hunt offered me a job!, from New Orleans, where I've told him about some ~~it~~ of it, and from others he knows I've worked with. The fact is that when in 1966, as executor or something like it for the Wohlberg (China Lobby) estate, when Bill Buckley began a private investigation of the JFK assassination, I was asked to be chief investigator and was consulted on the rest of the projected staff. But Bud is not one to let fact interfere with fairytales he prefers. I can't do anything about that. When you have seen some of the stuff I've gotten from "inutemen" who know where I stand, you have your own reasons for knowing there is no basis for Bud's attitude insofar as it relates to me. I have no knowledge of McCord's attitude, but if he could go to Bud, he should have no trouble with being in the same room with me, especially when I may be able to help him.

As I told you, quite independent of Prouty's opinion or Bud's, I assume McCord is a pro and knows his business. My basis for this belief is simple: he lasted as long as he did in CIA. He could have gotten along with Hoover that long by simply not doing the wrong thing, but not at CIA. So, I assume that McCord could be helpful in carrying what I have further, to his and everyone else's benefit. I do not assume he has the knowledge, but I do assume that when he knows what I know he might be able to do or figure out things to be done and how to go about it. Despite his precarious position, he might even know people who could be helpful.

My own view is that Bud, having been unable to do anything of consequence in his own right, would rather fail where he need not than feel he has gotten more help from me. I'd like to be wrong, but I do believe this. So, I see nothing I can do. It is not easy to be rational with the irrational, and on this aspect of Bud's life, he is and has been irrational. That he still ever listens to Sprague is proof enough. If he wants help and I can give it, I will now as I always have and as I offered without solicitation I was right in feeling would not be made. More than this I can't do. He won't permit it anyway. And it is obvious that I have not bypassed him, easy as that would be.

What you told me of his looking for TV attention on Ray is another example of the impossibility of working with him. I told you I had a special reason for making a single approach to begin with, told you in general what I would do if by today or tomorrow I had had no response, and that I regard it as unwise for the lawyers to be taking the open initiative in this, with which you agreed. Now in that business there are no secrets, and by now I'm sure everyone knows of his efforts. I had no assurance mine would be successful, but what chance they had are now much diminished. Now if I do anything further, I risk being at cross-purposes with him. Not going to NBC was not enough. And it seems to me that he might at least have spoken to me first. My next step would have been to a producer whose private view on this general subject is not that of the net for which he works on a show that has time and space for in-depth treatment. The net attitude would have been the problem there. With the word to Jimmy that steps were being taken, there was no rush and there could be serious consequences if the lawyers

who are about to file motions should openly pressure the judge with publicity they seek on the very matter before that judge. This just is no way for people to work "together". I have never gone off on anything like this on my own. In addition, if as I presume word of what Bud did gets back to the guy I wrote, this has the effect of undermining me with him and breaking my inherent word. Naturally, I don't like either that or the way it was done, most of all because there was no real need. But this also is something I can't cope with. Besides, Bud has been around long enough for him to have known when he was doing it what the by-product would be.

I'm sorry for him and for his clients that he is a determined lemming. If there is one thing experience tells me it is that whether I am quiet and diplomatic or violent, the prospects of doing anything are slim. So, I'm not trying any more. If Bud wants to cooperate, I will. Even knowing that he rarely keeps his word.

Sincerely,