

7/13/72

Dear Larry,

Although your downstate man's availability or willingness are unknown, I send with a letter I have just received from John Ray one from Walter Rife. Both should for the moment be kept in confidence. With Rife, in the absence of any possibility of any investigation in and around Quincy, the simplest question is suppose it is all true, that the man who committed the crime for which he received so inordinate a sentence, comes forward and confesses, how much attention would it likely get? Next, do you have available a trustworthy lawyer who would simultaneously draw it all up in proper form in return for the exclusive? If the paper would not go for it, could you arrange a trustworthy lawyer, say the Guild's if there is not a personal friend?

With John it is again the morgue, this Flying Bank Robber. John had told me about the strange business of the man who suddenly appeared in his cell with this astounding knowledge of his personal life and started palsy questioning. There is some familiarity to the story, but I can't place it. I think it is around the plane wreck, but perhaps it is that it is similar to anti-Castro stories. With The Watergate Caper and its personnel and what I know of these Cubans, I am prepared to believe almost anything is possible. And I'll say this for John: Jim spent a day going over my interview with him and was extraordinarily impressed with the ring of truth to it. There are things John couldn't know of which Jim knows to confirm details, and that is without seeing what I have that confirms it and how in fine details three others interviewed separately and in no case knowing in advance what they'd be asked also substantiate.

John's legal situation seems more desperate than James' and through him one of the most repressive precedents is being established. I think it may in the future receive wider misuse in political than in criminal cases. And everyone is silent. The activist, supposedly, law students who were to help have done nothing to date except waste a lot of time for me. If they are not just lazy, I guess their view is that principles of law and freedom are established with SDS or Angola Davis defendants, not the Escobidos, Mirandas and Mallorys.

How's the health situation?

Best,