

9/28/69

Dear John,

Got your message, but nothing else. D wrote me. Matter of fact, she does almost daily. I hope she is throwing herself into school as she says.

I'm writing for a different reason. At some time in the past six weeks I should have been there. Wasn't because I can't pay for the plane ticket, that simple. Something I should have done, something important, either will not get done or, perhaps worse, will be done less well than it could be. By now it is probably academic anyway. The person involved should, by now, be out of town.

There are also other reasons for my being there. Among these is doing something about Bringuier. I do not know if you have seen the recent stories in the papers. He has never served any papers on me, includes as in the spurious papers he files in court (which any nut can do for payment of the required fee), and thereby accomplishes a defamation. With the attitude of your papers, they greet this with glee.

Canyon didn't consummate their deal with him only because I assured them it would cost them more to defend the suit I would file if they did. You should have seen the wretched papers they were about to sign just to avoid the possibility of having to pay a lawyer. Law, fact, precedent were all their way. They were not at all concerned about libel. There was none. Aside from that, can one libel ~~not~~ Bringuier, known among his peers as "the stupidity"?

Grudgingly, the paper printed a half retraction, sent me a copy, then turned around & quoted him in what I believe is a clear libel, calling me a liar. You see, because they never served me, either fivovously, by mail, as they did Canyon, or in person, one of the many times I was in New Orleans, I was never, in fact, a defendant. The paper said the judgement was against me and actually believed it. The suit ~~is~~ fictitious, the decision meaningless, in any event. And the judge was indicted to Bringuier's counsel. His court had no jurisdiction, on top of that. I didn't know there had been a so-called trial until after it was over!

I have been wanting to sue that bastard anyway, making the U.S. Government co-defendant. The only reason I haven't is because I can't pay a lawyer and can't find one with both principles and the requisite courage. I thought I'd found one last trip but he has been silent since.

Now, if I am again in New Orleans, and am there very publicly, there is little doubt Bringuier will have to serve me. At that point I will either do the least desirable thing, act as my own lawyer, or ask the ACLU, also publicly, to defend me, on the very simple issue of freedom of the press (although there are others). Then we can begin to lock some horns. Instead of getting the case thrown out of court, which should be just about automatic, I'd like to proceed to the immediate taking of depositions, get him under oath, and begin to do things. If he perjures himself, it is as though he perjured himself in court. He will either have to say his testimony before the Warren Commission was false or commit perjury. This will be only the beginning.

Because he alleges I damaged his character, everything and anything, ~~statements~~ directly or indirectly relevant to his character, is appropriate. In practical terms, this means that almost no question can be ruled out on relevance. You should know what I have!

It has the potential of a memorable case and can do Jim a world of good. In addition to everything else, over and above the fact that what I said is in one's suit, it coming from the immune testimony, including his own, I at no point said what he alleges in his suit I said! Wild, unbelievable, but true!

As a matter of fact, if the ACLU declines to help me, I am confident an incredible thing would come to pass, Dean Andrews would. What a switch! I am largely responsible for his conviction for perjury, yet I am resolutely confident Dean would defend me! Wouldn't this be some kind of suit, no matter what happens?

So, I've got to get there, which is the real problem. There are also other reasons best not communicated by so public a medium as the confidential U.S. mails, and I am not speaking of personal ones. You took me to the home of a person illegally incarcerated, as I have discovered since leaving there, and this has to be handled very delicately. This is not one.

Therefore, I am writing to solicit an invitation from you, coming through Preston, to make a speech, as universities ordinarily invite speakers. I'd like to speak on the integrity of our society, particularly as it relates to the college generation. To me, the story of the assassination(s) is part the issue of murder(s). The very guts of our society is involved. This is of special significance to writers, would be writers, teachers of writers. What has happened to me in New Orleans, only part of which is here indicated, in turn is only part of what has happened. I can and would produce evidence of interference with the mails. In two cases it prevented publication of my books, once here, once abroad. Manuscripts properly addressed and insured were never delivered. What a long list I can tick off, with receipts, letters, cablegrams, pictures - the school. You know about the interception of my luggage on route New Orleans in May. In this I would work in some of the New Orleans evidence, putting on an opaque projector some of the suppressed FBI reports, etc. I can give you as references some of the most conservative institutions in the country, where my audiences have been excellent, responsive and quite pleased. I speak quietly, do not exaggerate, ridicule rather than insult, and restrict myself to what is irrefutable. I left the elders of the Mormon church awaiting my return with a sword to lead them charging up Capitol Hill in Washington. The subject is and can be safe, though officials sometimes have misgivings. You and the school will find that I do not like lies, do not give glittering generalities, never use half-truths or other peoples materials or tell lies simply because no one dare respond. I will make a simple, comprehensible, solid speech, all fact, and if the kids do not flip and the administration is not satisfied, I'll pay back the fare and forfeit the honorarium.

Please try it. You'll be helping and you'll get your money's worth.

In fairness, however, I ought to offer the opinion that nut Bringuier will probably try and crash. If he does, if there is a moderator, why not let him, at the end, before a question period? Could be exciting! It is difficult coping with the irrational, but I think it can be done, with a moderator and a format, like he doesn't speak more than two minutes at a time and I don't. He can't tell many lies in that brief period, and I can nail them. The moderator also keeps it responsive.

Do this and I'll conduct seminars, too. I've done it often, always successfully. The only problem has been ending them and keeping them down to

manageable size. Vermont, which is certainly a conservative institution, says it was far and away the most successful thing the history honors course ever did. Wisconsin there must have been at least a half dozen, including one for specially-selected students after the main speech. Hobart, also quite conservative, they even organized impromptu ones, like at breakfast. Trinity, Catholic and conservative, in the midst of a blizzard. Such seminars should be particularly appropriate for political science and literary students. I could do a special thing on the possibilities - and special problems - of private publication, including the use of offset techniques.

From the scholar's position, these could be very worthwhile.

So, I've got the head. I ask you(plural) to provide the block.

If yours is a decent honorarium, instead of paying debts I might be able to get a lawyer!

Accept my assurances, John, there is nothing to fear but fear. The administration might be apprehensive, but not for cause. But, if they are so afraid their fear cannot be overcome, I can talk without going into the details of the evidence, without going into the New Orleans case at all. This would be wrong, but it is possible.

Do you realize that no college in New Orleans has ever done this? Is that not a commentary? Lena spoke once, but she knows nothing about the case. Of course, there could be nothing about Shan.

If you have a review coming out, is this not additionally appropriate? Would it not help the magazine? If the school will not do it, could the magazine?

I'm getting warmed up. Do you not have a law school? We could do a seminar on how a federal commission handles "evidence", what it can do with evidence and witnesses, what happens in a proceeding in which there is but one side. Remember my defense of the adversary system of justice in the first book (none of the lawyers or professors who wrote on the subject did this, only a writer!).

John, this could provide "safe" cement, the kind institutions like because it is in no sense radical yet to the students it is as though it were.

I leave 10/21 for a west-coast speaking trip. I can do it on the way out, on the way back, or afterwards. However, my tentative plans for the return are 11/5 to 8. The eleventh is a holiday. Thanksgiving is the 28th. I do not know what speeches I am making except the one that triggered it, at San Diego. I leave the rest to local friends. I have never gone out there without speaking at both Berkeley and UCLA, 1st time also SF State. As I do in D.C., when I go there to speak I also work. I have never gone to California without turning up new witnesses. I turn 'em on by radio, believe it or not!

How goes the novel?

Do you now understand why I wanted Carolyn to get everything from the papers on Bringuier? Wish she'd been able to do it. The papers still call him a "refugee". What happened to his citizenship?

By the way, for your novel, if you desire, I can give you good pictures I took of the munitions cache and pictures taken for me by the sheriff's office of one of the training camps, with dock, swimming pool, etc.

John, I think you know I am serious about the need for doing this. Otherwise I'd not be my own live bait. Thanks for an effort. My best to you all.