

1/28/72

Bear Jim,

I much appreciate the time and candor. I have always been aware of the strong influence of my style of my childhood devotion of to old-timey writers and their long and involved sentences and of what you note, that my writing style has tended to mime that in which I speak. I was not, however, of the extent to which it obscures. I have corrected a certain amount of this in reading the roughs before Lil types them, but I now wonder how much or if enough. The passion I have long understood, it is just the way I feel it and having ~~few~~ few enough years left to complete what is an enormous undertaking, I can't take the time to try and write it other than the way I feel it and then lose myself in it when reading it because it is the way I think. This is why for years I have longed to be able to have editing in the roughs and have never been able to get it. I have had occasional readings, but little more. I have defanged some of the two earlier parts of PM and posted those corrections in the master there is so little chance of getting printed. I have not yet read the new last part. I am spending what time I can on putting it all together in case lightning does strike.

Unfortunately, I have forgotten what I wrote of Graham, but you have made the point that will stay in my mind for when I return to that, as before too long I will. I have forgotten, frankly, what I did write because I have been living this and other things and there have been so many developments, including from Graham.

Perhaps I failed in the intent with which I used the word urine. I was trying to ridicule. That the science of urology covers much more is certain, as is the fact that it does not address either the contract or any of the fact involved or suggested as involved in the assassination of its investigation.

You are quite right in suspecting that I am trying to cram much into this stuff. I still hear from people who are still finding new things in the first book. I am also aware that it would be better writing to limit content more. One of the purposes of long sentences is to say more without more words. But if it makes for obscurity, it fails in that, too. And part of the problem is, I think, not vanity, but reality. If I do not get this on paper I see nobody who will and as of now, painfully, nobody who can. If you have forgotten, I have on several occasions made my passion explicit to the reader and asked him to consider whether it influences the accuracy of what I report or the judgement. I am not unaware of it. I had perhaps underestimated its consequences and at about 59 just can't force myself to rework a book that under any circumstances, no matter how I do it, has little chance of getting printed when it is at the cost of completing another for which the prospects may be no brighter but which will at least get me closer to the end and with less on my back. However, with the epilogue for which I intended this, one the concept of which has changed with the new material available, I will see if in the writing I can reform a bit. Alas, I am a renegade in every way!..if my hand stays this way, more swollen than it was but without real pain, I'll have to postpone the writing as events for the moment require anyway. Thanks for taking the time and for the wisdom....Powell: I think he said that during the hearing on him. Wallace is well known hereabouts and has had much space in the Post. I'll be enclosing a story on the Kissinger/Church appearance in DC that hardly does justice to what was aired. Kissinger on TV was really something. He was so funny I am now sure he is even more dangerous than I had ever dreamed....later. I'm interrupting typing to reduce the jarring of the thumb and I've had to do too much typing today. I have given this more thought than shows in the end product, and recently I've begun to wonder if I am learning more of the cause if not showing any benefit. Few of those who think they know our problems have the faintest glimmer of their number and complexity, of which poverty is but one. I have been wondering of the frustrations of so many of these, beginning with the ruin of our farm and Lil's nerves by the helicopters, are reflected. Two years ago an anxiety complex was finally diagnosed in me when it was thought I was having a stroke or a heart attack. I got no sense from doctors or shrinks, so I've had to do much learning and thinking for myself, and I've learned from real experts not hung up as doctors are today, one a friend in a distant psychiatric institute and the other a clinical psychologist, one of our young friends who was here recently, Ned's friend. I have much of the whole thing yet to put together, but I have pieces and I am working with them. I have recently found, for example, that while I like very much and enjoy the visits of our young friends, those who intend to work and never do and those who do and do, I was feeling impatient because I wasn't getting work done.

Aside from liking these young people and wanting to help them --and taking much time for it -- if it amounts to little or nothing, they try to help us. Then I had two visits, one from a writer known earlier in correspondence and entirely different in character -- she has a remarkable sense of humor and wonderful anecdotes of Mexico and the Kaplan/Vidal case-- and I felt more relaxed, less tense. Then the psychologist friend, who is but 25 but quite mature, with whom I had a long talk about the Ned matter and other things. I was surprised and pleased, by the way, when he urged me to have little to do with the former critics who have abdicated and to spend less time trying to help the coming generation of critics, ahem!!! And to stop trying to put out all the fires, which for a horse accustomed to the engine is not easy. He reminded me that at a time of a particularly despicable campaign ~~made~~ against me of a particularly nasty and personal nature by some of the LA nuts led by Lifton, I had said I thought I'd do better to become a hermit. He persuaded me that I should have, that there are some situations that cannot be coped with and they are best ignored for those that can be. The odd thing is that beginning with the painful business of Ned I had begun to think this way again. It is foreign to my character and inconsistent with an activist role, but I suppose that on two scores it is sensible. It means I can get more work done, and in itself, regardless of the quality or lack of it, that is a kind of relief. And it reduces what I might term the active frustrations. Anyway, in the time I've had for thinking since he was here, I have been wondering if all this accumulation is what I show in the writing and what in some way I do not understand I address it in. To put it another way, am I reflecting more than one passion? Am I in this kind of writing fighting other things, other "enemies", more than just fighting a corrupt society? As of now I am more confused about it than I was

Anyway, your honesty and candor comes at a good time. I think one of the lacks in our lives is genuine mature friends of our own years. We (I more than Lil) are spiritually closer to the younger ones and almost everyone near here is reactionary anyway. Those who are not plain stupid. As this thing unfolds I'll have moments I can think about how to handle and approach it. I am satisfied that I have slowed it down, but I am also satisfied that I have done no more, merely forced caution upon "them". So, when I can and as the light permits (I have shadows except in clear daylight that would show in offset photography), I'll proceed with the futility of preparing PM for the day that seems likely not to come and have that done before the epilogue. Lil has been too busy even to read the conclusions. ...Perhaps one of the things on which I've had to work will tell you part of what happened to ~~ESSE~~ Frame-Up, an edited work, by the way. They have been crooked as hell. After threatening to get a lawyer they finally sent me a list of the charges made for what they call author's alterations. It is taking hours to check, but more than \$300 is involved. To date I have found not a single legitimate one. They have charged me for their typos, the errors in their editing, for changes never made, for correcting their errors-- even for adding first names on first mention where they eliminated earlier mentions without adding the first name. This we could and did discover only in indexing. Because I recalled clearly that I had made no changes, anxious for speed, I had warned them of fraud. What is why it too the threat of going to court to get the "proof"--months and months of letter writing. It is fraud. Is it paranoid to ask why, with this history, they would dare it? If you were a publisher charged by an author with fraud, would you then prove it for the author by use of the mails? In this connection, knowing what I can expect from the federal government, I am fascinated by the interest of the NYC city district attorney in the Hughes/Irving case. If he can have a proper interest, there may be a faint ray of hope of doing something about it. I had thought that local courts could have no interest in interstate or international matters...The one mistake of mine that they corrected was a typo in Rickelshaus's name. Repeated five times only and with the contract calling for them to bear the first \$100 of legitimate author's alterations. This accounts for less than \$5.00 of that sum. The last one I found in working on this was where they charged me for the typo, "quesitons" (lit) the printer made!

So, again thanks. Best regards,

21 January 1972

Dear Hal:

It seemed I never would be able to read through your extremely interesting mailings from Jan. 9 through 13, but it finally has been done. You make an excellent case that a setup is being methodically prepared for use if needed. At this distance it is hard to develop a firm opinion, but I certainly find no gaps in your chain of thought.

Enclosed is the one small item we've found appearing locally on Lattimer since the one sent earlier. It's merely a photo and caption in the magazine section of the combined Sunday Examiner-Chronicle. We presume TV coverage was confined pretty much to the one day, but don't know; no one has said anything about it. On radio, as far as we know after the first day only Jim Eason surfaced with a brief, questioning comment on his talk show (we taped it and will be sending you a dub) clearly expressing doubt about Lattimer's conclusions and inviting comment. In the two hours remaining on that particular show none came in, or at least none was aired.

Since you asked it, here's a hasty opinion on your Lattimer add to PM, making due allowances for the fact that it's an unread draft. As an editor, I'd say it suffers from overkill. As a friend, I suggest you risk alienating some, at least, of those you seek to convince.

As I understand it, you want PM to be a record for history, whether published or not. This reads like a polemic phamplet, written to destroy Lattimer. The reality is that he's the recognized head of an important department in an important hospital, regardless of how he got there or how he ventures into other fields.

(10 Jan 72) There is much more to urology than urine, so I would not put myself in a position of trying to diminish him that way. (Your letter to him was far more effective, by the way. It made due allowances for all sorts of things and concentrated simply on backing him into his corner as a liar and sycophant.)

This is an unread draft, of course, but I find some passages almost unintelligible or so involved that most readers would skip over them if they didn't put the whole thing aside in favor of TV and a beer. In some places I'm not sure of your target and what you intend for it. You sometimes string too many ideas and images together in a single sentence for clarity to survive.

YOU know very clearly what you are thinking and what you want to say. On the page it's not the same, and the proof of this is the device we've developed when you throw one of these blockbuster sentences at us. We read it aloud, and it becomes clear. The eye apparently requires a different mode than the ear, and the effect is sometimes that of a transcribed speech.

We suspect that you get carried away with your own delight with a series of images and try to cram as much ammo into each salvo as possible to increase your punch. The law of diminishing returns sets in early here and results in clutter and blunted impact. This invites those who want subconsciously to forget the whole thing to do just that. This is the enemy. Why help him ?

I think the average person feels in this era of credibility gaps that if you really HAVE a good argument you don't need to resort to extreme language to get it across. If this has any validity, then the better approach is to let the facts speak for themselves as much as possible. Sharp language, pejorative expressions, impassioned statements, adjectives and adverbs in general, all tend to alert the reader to the possibility that you are working, possibly a bit too hard, to convince him. If you can take an even tone, avoid giving the reader the feeling that he's being indoctrinated, and lay some honest facts on him, you can achieve the best possible effect: permit him to feel that HE has arrived at the conclusion you desire by absorbing the facts you present in logical, uncluttered order. In any case your conclusions cannot become part of his convictions unless you can make him feel that they are his conclusions too.

As much as possible, let Lattimer, Graham, the Times and the networks hang themselves. They have made a good start. You have the not-too-difficult task of making clear how they have done it, pointing out how and from which class of widows and orphans they stole the rope, and perhaps giving them a little help here and there in fashioning the noose. This takes calm, relentless analysis, at which you excel. The slow burn lasts longer than fireworks.

If it is true, as you appear to believe possible for excellent reasons, that Lattimer was unleashed (or re-unleashed) in order to counter your own book even before publication, then you cannot afford, in fairness to yourself and to the effectiveness of your thesis, to risk being accused of a purely subjective reaction. The antidote to that is objectivity, which never hurt anybody.

(It's somewhat beside the point, but I still tend to feel that the Lattimer caper stems from a broader political need, although there is no reason not to think that the prospect of PM might have triggered it sooner than possibly intended).

As I said at the beginning, this is hasty comment, made from afar and made with reluctance appropriate to the distance, but I respond willingly to your own sense of urgency ~~about~~ about what is going on.

Sincerely,



jdw