

8/4/71

Dear Js,

A dismal, hardly productive day leaves me not in a mood for any of the accumulated reading or for the writing I had to lay aside earlier when it was going okay, so before trying to get to bed a bit earlier, a brief note on scant reflection on the affidavits. I've probably said it all before, but other things have crowded into my mind lately and I forget. This was just a crummy day. Floods all around us but only much rain here. Weather was accomodating before 8 so I had what for these days was a rather good, brisk walk of just under an hour in a slight drizzle with nothing but shorts and sandals. And the thing I have come to hate, a can of mace and a pistol. These rednecks think thaty have to have vicious or vicious-behaving dogs to be secure, as do some of the more solid burghers. I had gotten to where I was doing fine, working up a real good sweat, limbering up as I tied, and with time to think yet each time seeing a pretty thing I hadn't noted before. I'd come home after an hour the first part steeply up, the return a bit easier, but not real easy with fatigue, then a dip, then, refreshed, back to work again. No, even when there is no meance, I can relax. An experience yesterday with an aggressive German police decided me today to get a holster so I can carry a decent pistol. Meanwhile, something else I also hate, I'm going to have the dog warden pick a few up. Rabes is not unknown in these mountains. The State is taking TV time to warn vacationers not to feed and to stay away from the wild animals. All all these supposed animal-lovers leave theirs runs loose on the edge of a very steep road where, should a sudden stop be necessary, a wreck would be difficult to avoid. Law requires dogs to be restrained. The single dog-warden picked up 57 yesterday alone, so yo can see the problem is not mine alone. But I had come to enjoy this exercise and to find tha while it tired the body it relaxed the mind.

Then I finally solved the problem of the Hermes. It is the impossible. The ribbon jumps o out of the carrier gadgets that also reverse it. Today each time the ribbon reach the end if seemed to go through, so I took the cover off and watched it. It does jump out, even with

the cover on. On one traverse it actually twisted itself twice, and I can't see how. So, it i back in the shop after much wasted time. Then I learned that Stoner has been stalling somethi for more than 5 months, and I can't help wondering if it is no more than his preoccupation with what to him is politics. James is now working in the yard, whatever that means. It includes being in the general population, of which I take a dim, very dim, view. So, the problem of trying to make Jerry see the possibilities when he is Stoner's mandicant.

But on the affidavits, I have some beliefs. This is far larger than shows. What else I can't guess. I am not prepared to agree with JG's story that the tapes were made up, but there is no doubt of editing. One of the mysteries is the absence of transcripts that would seem to have been natural. They may be holding them back, but they also cannot withhold indefinitely. It seems to me that on the basis of this stuff even outside N.O. reasonable doubt would prevail. They can do nothin without Cervais as a witness, and I have a notion he'll not make a very good one for the feds, or as cooperative as the tapes would make it seem. He is skilled and cunning, and he just didn't feed Jim any of the right lines at the right time. His one chance of survival is in being part of an operation that makes conviction impossible. Those pinballers were done anyway. The solid cases, vs Frey and Soule, are of no consequence. If the pinballers are big-timers, I think it likely they can't be convicted now whereas it would have been a very simple thing with observance of the usual norms. Which is to say that the government has assured one of two things: their acquittal in one form or another or a considerable stretching of the law as interpreted. This may well be part of the whole ploy. The only possibility of violation I can see attributable to JG is non-feasance once he learned Soule and Frey were fixed. The money to him is clearly for lobbying only at worst and I suspect that so far as he was concerned anything before that was for his investigation. His own records will show no secret accouts, no personal aggrandizement, no payments on his mortgage, etc. In short, no personal gain. He seems to have been strapped for years. And non-feasance is not, I think, a federal case....Total silence from his people is not subject to meaningful interpretation, they are often that way.

That Bailey took the case may be a good thing. I doubt he'll let JG tell him how to run it, but I don't doubt JG can deceive him and is capable, perhaps without realizing that he is deceiving. I have seen him unable to distinguish between what was and what he wanted things to be or mean. Meanwhile, of the prominent criminal lawyers who could have been available, I think he's probably best, esp. because of his anti-CIA experiences and handling of Sheppard, which is part of the precedent. His statement was a good one.

Taking it without fee is impressive, will be in N.O. and D.C. And there is a broad hint to JG's backers to come up with money for investigation. They do need that, but this one, I think, will revolve around research and analysis, after the real inside investigation, which is essential. It should not be too hard down there. Coming by the essential fact will, I think, turn out to be easier than determining the doctrine and intent. Time will tell. And I find myself wondering who those forecast by Chandler may be. I had thought Pitcher, but I had his role switched. He was part of the DJ play vs the state legislative committee (both sides rotten), so they'll not eat their own. Partin did less than level with Loeb's reporter, Art Egan, who is not incapable of confabulation but has done some very good digging. A natural is Jeff Parish, which is where Marcello is really in. Keeping up with all these things is, I guess, something I should do, but I'm going to have to do as little as I can so I can concentrate on writing, and editing on PM will be a big job. Unless I see something I have forgotten, in in penult chap. new stuff. Then I'll have to go over I and scissors and make a few adds to the first two. But instead of going over the files I'd laid aside for this moment, I regard the development as such that I must get the essence down first, in case I've not read a word of what I've done, but I estimate it about 25,000. I should be able to finish this part in 40,000, I think, which should mean the whole cut thing can be no more than 100,000 at best and no longer than 150,000 at worst. Plus appendix, I hope.

To make these days less easy, I've made an enormous reduction in my smoking. Where I was over 2phgs 100s daily, in the past four days I've not finished the first pack. I fear a real cold turkey. But this hasn't been real bad and maybe I'll make it this way.

Total absence reporting or comment on N.O. fascinating. I think it betokens press misgivings. And did you notice new shift at Post? And Harwood's rather honest admission that the SIA/Asia policy, uncritical, was old Wiggins and began to change after he left? No word from inside.

If you have any special reading of aff's, when you can find time I'd welcome disagreement, for I'm by no means certain of my analysis. I am certain that it is too exceptional to take straight. There is much more involved, not just JLN's vindictiveness.

Of course, I'm a little uneasy about the apparent switch of a trusted friend who has vulnerabilities. His wife still regards us as her adopted parents. They came here to get married. He tried to help Panthers, which couldn't work and could leave some bags being held. Was a good reporter as a kid. He's the guy who did the impossible, the only one to get that mine deep down into the Pa. mine several years ago where there was that bad cave-in or something. I'm surprised he even had enough cable. It was more than a third of a mile. Pretty enterprising, too.

Nothing new on other projects. Clippings not for return. Some may amuse. I do have the Partin addidavit, unsigned but before court reporter. Egan story is extra copy. If you want aff, it is 32 pages and I'd rather wait until I can get to a faster machine. It will be quite a thing if he sings, big problem being his credibility. But I doubt he will until Ho'fa is out. There seem to have been too many of Hoffa's own not unhappy about his departure before and after. Including some of his lawyers.

Best,