

9/29/70

Dear Phil,

Time was when I considered it a luxury to be sick, thus getting time to do so many things, especially reading, for which, ordinarily, there was no time. I'm surprised you do not report this delight of partial incapacity. But, I've had a miserable respiratory infection (a real rarity with me), and I also have not used the time I've not felt up to working for such things.

Your description of your situation, in which prolonger sitting up is uncomfortable, prompts me to a suggestion: get an inexpensive tape recorder and write. Today, for not more than \$35.00, you can get a simple cassette machine and a foot control for transcribing. The tapes are reaseable and can be had for about \$1.00 each. I don't know how it would be writing poetry this way, but is there not someprose that you might like to get down? Like notes on some of the people you knew in N.O., perhaps for future writing?

Your letter coming this morning is rather a coincidence. I had two dreams about N.O. last night. One was about someone you do not know and I've forgotten what the other was. They were on my mind when I awakened about 3. I returned to sleep and the unimportant details lost themselves. Perhaps the second was in some way connected with what I regard as a desperate situation there, extreme police provocation in the black community, which I expect to radicalize rapidly. With the well-to-well alums that you may recall, a conflagration like none other can rear out of control at any moment. There has been a police murder-the victim the son of a federal cop who promptly and publicly resigned some kind of N.O. police commission, calling them murderers. The NAACP has come to the defense of the Panthers, criticizing the mayor, the DA and the cop cops, and those who were besieged by the police are being held under \$1,300,000 bail. The white lawyer for the Panthers is convicted of contempt for refusing to breach the lawyer-client relationship, and four out-of-town Panthers who went there to organize are charged by Garrison with a crime of the voice-criminal anarchy - for daring to organize and, of all the incredible situations, the FBI is seeking them for Garrison (who is and has been hospitalized). These people, or two of them, went to federal court in DC yesterday and got a temporary restraining order to keep the FBI from picking them up for Jim. Now's that for a combination of switches? Not as you recall it, is it?

Your recollection of Ryder is accurate.

Newman is a right-wing fink, whose work is crap. He prevented publication of "WHITEWASH" in 1965, when an editor for a publisher who wanted to do it asked him, as a favor, to read it. He pronounced it inaccurate! I've not seen either his book or the contraction. DeMohrenschildt is the kind of character who can be written into a role in almost any kind of conspiracy. He is a free-living guy, with liberal sexual attitudes, former intelligence connections, etc. He even looks the part. I believe his most serious crime lies in feeling that Oswald had more than enough cause to whip his wife. He is the one who had anything less than denunciation to say of the dead accused. He was once a society boy himself, having been born to the nobility and married into that kind of family. He knew Jackie's mother. He was in some kind of deal with Duvalier at the time of the assassination, when he was in Haiti. But there are those who visualize assassinations by remote control. Newman seems like the kind who could believe it was all some kind of extension of voodoo.

To him, DeM might well be of the "left".

I didn't even know Muie had written for Esquire. He is a pathetic case, this enormous ego of a man who laid so large and so public an egg. It was the most professional incompetence. How a minor crook like Ray could have conned him I can't imagine. Nor can I buy his secret explanation (not in his book but in a deposition), that it was all Look and Helen Meyer (not named) of Dell who talked him into even thinking there might have been a conspiracy. The way he works and spends money, this must have cost him what for me would be riches. I know he got about \$75,000 from Look and Dell, but that was nothing to his costs. I doubt his book will make the advance, and his deal with Dell is that it is returnable. And that was only \$10,000.

My own book is complete and has been, save for a new final chapter (my writing is like Verdi, with finale ultimos all the time). Like all publishers, this one never kept his word, so instead of being out it is just being set. I have a short passage to do, a list of summary questions. I've got Justice going up all their walls, apparently, with my litigation (the new final chapter). The original work, an enormity, has been edited down to the King/Ray part that was then contracted. It will remain a very large book, and we plan an extensive appendix. I'll see if I can get you a review copy. My contract calls for only eight free ones. I doubt it will be out until after the first of the year, the fall lists all being made and salesmen working from them and nothing else. It is a hot book. The small publisher is quite turned on. He was here last weekend. I've retitled it FRAMEUP: The King/Ray case. Were I to send you the monster, which I can, you'd be missing part of the finished thing. Let me know if you'd like about 400,000 words to read during this convalescence!

Let me confess that my one attempt at nature writing was a disaster. I took a beautiful story and ruined it. I wrote it as a catharsis, which was not the best way, and it shows it, in some ways very badly, and I didn't detect some of this myself. It is the true story of a goose who was considered himself a person, feared geese, indulged all sorts of fetishes (and I have this captured on film) and was, ultimately, kidnapped. He had him insured and the insurance company paid my wife for him, after a police investigation! With a good editing job, that would make a delightful book...I did this in 1965, when I was rushing to New York weekly to see publishers, and getting nowhere. It shows.

I had heard of Sōke Gakkai. The story is inadequate in not indicating the extent of their extremist belief. They are, for all practical purposes, fascists. When they were first starting there was some good TV reporting....I coined a description of our equivalents for COUP, "the dedicated wrong". They are as wrong as they are sincere.

Have you thought of seeking printers even cheaper than England? There may well be some in such places as Taiwan, where pirating, in English, is a good-sized industry. Or, have you considered a different format, where you can eliminate typesetting with an IEM machine, where you can change fonts yourself? You can buy fancy effects, like large caps, rather inexpensively, and do everything up to snooting the negatives at home. In fact, I think 3M has an inexpensive machine with which you can also make your negatives. If you think this might work out, there are printers in the southwest whose costs and charges are very low. Have you asked Bob Bonazzi (Latitudes) how he manages, where he prints? He can't have much money. Offset is a wonderful thing, if you are not familiar with it. I can tell you how to figure reductions and enlargements. It is simple and easy. But for good-looking work, it takes something like the IEM machine. Take care, get well quick. Best to both,

Boatright  
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25 Sept. 70

Dear Hal,

Thanks for yours of the 11th. Actually, the enforced inactivity is now bothering me more than the two busted ribs. I can't lift, push, pull, walk long distances, climb long flights of stairs, etc., etc., etc. Nor can I go back to work at the hospital, for fear of re-injury while restraining someone. Besides all that, even sitting up reading becomes uncomfortable rather quickly. Hell'va situation!

But ms. for Steppen. 4 has at least been finished and sent on its way to printer in London. A weight off my mind. However, inflation now hurting our arrangement with Villiers in England, too. Still cheaper there than in U.S., and much better workmanship, but if the situation continues to worsen (and there is no evidence at present to support optimism) we'll be hard pressed, I'm afraid, to continue much longer. So I keep telling myself: take one issue at a time, ole gray-head; if the time comes when you can't carry-on...then chuck it and join an expedition in search of the yeti. Yeah. And issue #4 is at the printer and paid for. All is not (yet) lost.

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Frazier & Cohen unknown to me by name, but I once wrote a whole series of short poems in a single night at the Ryder (on Rampart St. isn't it?) and read my work there, too. What were supposed to be coffins used for seats, as I recall...with candles on the tables... or maybe the coffins were supposed to be tables? Used to annoy me that the management would supervise passing of the hat for folk singers & musicians that would wander in to play & sing...but no such consideration ever given to poets reading their own work. Wasn't the money—there were no fortunes made by anyone—it was just the idea of the thing. You know what I mean. I might have met Frazier or Cohen at that time, but I don't remember them if I did.

Read condensation in Argosy Magazine last night of Albert Newman book on JFK murder. De Mohrenschildt seems an odd one. What do you know of him? Newman, however, didn't impress me much.

I still want to read your work on Ray, of course, when it is ready. Jean read Huie's article in June Esquire & tells me he has softened his attitude considerably since earlier Look articles. Ray now seemingly just another run-of-the-mill hood, at best a bit grandiose. His brother's involvement in the South may suggest another story though.

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You know, Hal, you ought to someday write a "nature" book. I mean it. You describe where you live very appealingly. Hope we can visit you one of these years. But if we did you might have some trouble getting rid of us, ever!

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Must go now—but wanted you to see this strange story on the Soka Gakkai (enclosed). Ever hear of it (them)?

—Best regards,  
[Signature]