

3/3/68

Dear Jonn,

Correction: I do not suffer frustration. I may be frustrated, but that's not the same. Aging and peoped though I be, I can still outlast the younger ones, witness sleepless last night and continuing work today. I leave for NYC in the early a.m. I expect to return Tuesday night. I may go south for a few days the end of the week.

I am in accord with the second part of your 2/28. You may recall I have been giving full credit and predicting

About Novel I can't tell you nothing save how strange it is that he has been totally silent about me. Last summer he sent me word (at the Ohio AP editors' annual convention, whose main speaker I was) that he'd like me to go there (Columbus) and speak to him. I sent word back I didn't engage in futilities consciously. He hasn't peeped about O in N.O. About the others I can explain. It is I who turned Howard on, after I left SF and after I saw Hell (also verbal LSD'd). It is not only that Howard "waived extradition". He had gone to court and successfully opposed Garrison's subpoena. What I talked him into doing was going down there entirely voluntarily, without even the protection of a subpoena! I suggested he go with Steve instead of me, and he did. He returned to praise Garrison and endorse the direction of "his" investigation. Thornley sent me word that he wants to talk to me. Well before Garrison called him (which he unsuccessfully opposed in Tampa court), I sent him the message he'd do well to talk to me or go see Garrison voluntarily. He now regrets he didn't. What Jim is doing follows my work and some of my investigation for him.

You'll possibly hear a few O'Connell tapes with me, too.

If Sparrow gets out there and gets some attention, see if you can arrange for me to give him the bird. Didn't make enough copies of my letter to Carl. How about showing it to Harv, please. After I finished, about 8 a.m., I realized that although not sleepy, I was too tired. However, there is too much to do to publish a letter to a fink.

I'll be writing a few more, making a record, including a few photocopies of what I really said and he misrepresented.

If any of your news pals want an exclusive taped and/or filmed statement by a witness charging he was intimidated and threatened by an FBI man the Bureau and AG prevented from testifying before the grand jury, I can arrange it if it happens very fast. Pens phoned me yesterday and wants me to come down with a reporter I trust. He has been refusing to talk meaningfully to G and tells me the FBI has been bugging him for 8 months, to the point that on his last flight he took a lawyer with him. What else he will tell me I can only guess.

Lil is limping around a little. She has had remarkably little bad pain, mostly discomfort. Hope your wife is doing well,

Best,

February 28, 1968

Dear Hal:

I suppose I'm suffering from that seemingly common malady amongst you critics: Frustration. While I subscribe to the New Orleans States Item, it arrives a week late, when it arrives at all; and while we've had a newspaper strike going on here for the past 54 days, the resumption (today) is no cure - they both avoid the subject with great consistency.

I have just completed reading the James/Wardlaw book; it has me confused and concerned, about the cast of characters down there, about the precariousness of the Shaw trial's current status. I cannot conceive that the trial can come off without a mistrial being declared at the very outset; as I told a friend last night, Garrison had better make his entire case a matter of public record in his opening statement (as against trying to save some surprises), because Defense counsel is going to move for a mistrial the first shot they get from the bench; and I suspect the grounds have been laid for just such a strategy.

Another peculiar turn of events is the change of minds of Novel, Howard, Thornley, etc. about waving the extradition procedures; the "company" must feel quite secure that they will not get bitten by their testimonies, assuming they will be candid.

I also listened to William O'Connell's critique on the local Pacifica: let's see, uh, phoney scripting, rhetorically bankrupt, hokey objectivity. O'Connell is indeed an actor - a very bad one. Silvia Meagher comes off as a pious frump, a pretentious spinster. This sounded more like a creaky return to the soap opera era, an injustice to say the least. Also, it was culminated with such an obvious pitch to Silvia's book as being THE works that the bit lost whatever bite was anticipated.

Never trust an intellectual with a huckster's tools.

Turned over the carbons to Verb last night, attended his class at SF State; the class is an interesting experiment and was well worth attending.

I have arranged for Penn Jones and Roger Craig to come up from IA to do the Dolan radio and TV shows this weekend. Jones now says he expects Garrison to get wiped out instead of Shaw. He says the trial will never come off.

No books as yet; those middlemen inspectors never give up I guess.

The "go" decision is still being held in abeyance by my people out here; they've requested I present them with a complete breakdown and timetable on what I (we) have in mind. I'm busy renovating our whole concept. I must let you know that they are deeply disturbed by the failure of the press to take an interest.

I'm pressing with all I've got out here; don't panic; my best to Lil.

Best Personal Regards,

John