

5/5/68

Dear Jim,

There has been a change with Dione. I am not certain what it is, whether it will remain that way or what, but because of the letter I wrote you yesterday I am writing again. The mail can hardly be more public than my phone, and this was on it, with many other things mostly not relevant, from 2:15 a.m. until 4:15 a.m., not a typical suburban Sunday morning.

Jack Working was to have visited her but didn't, so I have no separate indications available.

With the failure of the tough-guy stuff tactics changed. She says she was visited by a smooth psych major known to her as a big wheel in the N.O. office. His name is Wilmer. He was thoroughly acquainted with all the psychological evaluations and appraisals of her and he quietly persisted in the line that he was there for her good and in her interest. What he said I don't know other than this generality and her description of it as phoney.

What seems clear is that instead of telling her that she would be prosecuted, he merely assured her that she could be. Simultaneously, I dare say, he recalled to her some of the things that have befallen those she knows like Their Man Godfrey, perhaps a few where she had some connection.

If I were to guess, I'd say they may have tried to settle for a stalemate as an alternative to a play that, no matter how spectacular, could have led only to checkmate. I'd say they achieved it, and that so far as they are concerned, this will be but a temporary condition. She told me she had gone off by a lake and thought this all out and weighed her decision that she had or would communicate. I felt it best not to press for it, especially as publicly as Mother Bell makes possible and because I believe I already had a glimmer of it.

She seems to have consulted a lawyer who told her that at 18 years of age her oath was legally binding. And I think she now thinks she will not be charged.

I will await what is in the mail and, unless I get other indications, will await our meeting in New Orleans. She began by saying she planned dinner with me the night she arrives the night before her trial. I said I'd planned that we'd be together every night. She laughed and said, "Well, several". I told her I'd have a car and would meet her at the airport. Agreed. I expect I'll be hearing from her about Wednesday again.

Taking this seriously as I do, I believe that one of the things inhibiting them is the fact that there must be many others with knowledge such as she has, some, without doubt, with more and more important. Doing anything to her creates possibly uncontrollable situations with the others - and there may be friendships that would arouse emotions or, who knows, perhaps one or two left who think they have principles.

Also bearing on it is the fact that I pretty openly offered a deal over the phone when I found she was in Carville. I never once pumped her for any company information in any of her calls and openly vetoed every investigation she offered to undertake. So, to a degree, I have established good faith by performance. For the moment, at least, I think she may be safe if her position is not. I think she also now has an abiding hatred... What a challenge, trying to cope with something like this over such great distance, in the face of power and terror-and mail lag, particularly when I must look out for what is most in her interest.