

10/1/71

Dear Herrons,

Natural and adopted. How glad I would have been to hear from you if the envelope dated illegibly at Berkeley had not come today with no contents! Among its three post-office stamps are three reading "Received without contents at Berkeley, Calif, 94704" and another, "DAMAGED IN HANDLING IN THE POSTAL SERVICE".

It is badly crumpled, has black marks all over the front, almost like a heel, the back is torn and Scotch-taped together. The flap is entirely without trace of adhesive, and only half of that was Scotch-taped closed. A bit less than half.

Like old times!/  
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I've been wanting to hear from you just to hear from you and to get an address to which I could send a copy of my book on the King case (which will make Matt blush) by surface mail without it having to chase around after you. It has been a financial disaster, the publisher showing all the signs of having been reached (a true liberal) and having beaten me out of about half the "advance". So, by the time you get this, literally, we will be peniless. With the pre-existing debt, this makes our condition a bit less romantic than the garret-dwellers of the 20s.

I even wrote John Filger to get your address, but he hasn't answered. The book came out in February, got a few good reviews before the gangip started. The effort of the Sunday Times is probably one of their more forceful ones. And effective. As hatchet-jobs go, a model. All personal, by a fink who had made himself my enemy in '66 because I didn't fall over the Warren Report. He was, while doing this "review", also working for the USIA. They reached out to Stanford to find him. No incompetents in NYC or on the Times' staff.

Friends, you haven't missed a thing. If you wear sunglasses a few shades blacker, you'll think you were never away when you get back.

As I presume you would assume, I have continued with my work, the results, if not the economics, being gratifying. I'm finishing up what I think is the most definitive book by far, which is no forecast of publishability or success but of content. I've been filing suits against the Mitchellist, winningsome, even a loss sometimes being a victory, acting as my own lawyer, and I've wound up with a mite of what even Warren never saw. Exciting, but the endless work, the hours that have no beginning of end, the pauperizing and the loneliness of it all, added to the years that begin to accumulate more rapidly, are wearing and wearying.

Fast is, I've also got the next three books researched and partly written. If you hear of prizes to be offered for stubbornness, you should have a candidate.

I hear nothing from H.O. I'm satisfied Jim, sick or not, irresponsible or not, was framed, and I've sent Louis some stuff that he thinks will help. They still lack understanding and personalize everything. And there is no such thing as an investigator there. Only flatfeet, where they are probably okay. But that was not the need of the past and surely isn't of the present, when Jim's freedom is at stake. Fortunately, Bailey has taken the case. If Jim leaves him alone, I believe he'll be acquitted. That will require a major change in Jim. I hope he can make it. Infrequently, then in spurts, I hear from strange D, and still can't be sure when she is lying. But with the meaninglessness of what she writes, it makes no difference. She had been down in Braithewaite for a while, she said living with a policeman.

Hope you are all having a wonderful time. Let me know where I can send the book, after allowing for the time surface mail takes plus the time your letter will. And this one was edited, so don't hold that against me. The worst is where it was heaviest edited. Since then I've been to Memphis, and it was my easiest and most successful investigation anywhere. I've redundant and irrefutable exculpation aside from the book. I wish there were someone dependable and close-mouthed left in H.O., for there is much that can be done, should be, and I haven't the time of the \$\$\$ to go there. Your stuff is secure, no identities disclosed, as you'll see. Love you all, Hal