

Dear Js,

12/16/74

This, I guess, will be my "Merry Christmas" with. One could wish well for the new years, but aside from personal considerations there is little prospect for a good year. The traditional way of power in reacting to troubles also is not a promising forecast. And I think there is little awareness of the extent to which Nixon fixed an added authoritarianism on the country. And an acceptance of it by the numbed. Who will be too concerned about immediate problems to care much.

I have to go to Washington today, so my schedule orients around that and my inability to sleep as long as I had wanted to. I've been carrying down wood up to the house, rather a late beginning, because the new saw was not working. I had it "fixed," it worked less than 10 minutes, so back to carrying limbs up the hills. I rather enjoy it and the stack is accumulating. However, this way I don't get what will last the night through. What I do get is aching joints, the reason I couldn't sleep well. Since Memphis I've been making a conscious effort to sleep longer and often I can. It was a very tiring ~~xxx~~ experience.

I've made three starts at reading and I think finishing the conclusions to the WG book and could not complete it. There isn't time this morning and I'm uneasy and don't want to read because I know I'll not be able to concentrate. Poor Mr. Miao caused one interruption. He felt his poor and exhausted wife was about to crack up and in addition to all his immigration/help problems the city has just decided to cut off his access to the main street, blocking him with a raised parking lot. The downtown needs it but it will ruin him. I'm trying to work out something for him because if the lawyers can and do - and I doubt it*-they'll clean him in the process.

I could have done the reading of the chapter yesterday, but I felt I had to write some letters on WW IV. I think I've included one or two. And I not only wanted to get wood up, I need exercise. Now that the orders have slacked off I have to try to sell more. However, there has been no day without some orders. I have 8 to mail this a.m. I think this is a rather encouraging sign because there have been no news stories printed and few sales from those that were, extensive as they were. I did a broadcast to Dallas on the 5th and got no single order from it. Neither did I from Honolulu. The last one before them was the 3rd, and I'm still getting orders from that one, on a straight station. The youth-oriented ones have produced virtually nil. Mae's two silly inquiries only, the second from the Sacramento rebroadcast. She didn't even give the price, which means letters to write if there are inquiries. It tells me she has no audience or at least only nuts who don't read and don't care about fact. If they did, would they listen?

Almost none of these is word-of-mouth orders. Not friend telling friend, which is one interesting ~~xxx~~ phenomenon. Another is that the orders still cite the stations on which I was heard. Now this means going back three weeks. Those stations are in conservative areas. Most of the so-called "buffs" have not ordered. Two have clandestinely, Sprague and Berkeley of Computers. Of those who have done serious work, aside from a couple I knew would want it, like Sylvia and Howard, etc, only one of the past, Marcus.

Not one of the chains responded to my advance offer of an added 10% discount if they would order for all their stores and save us the work of sending them individually, rather billing individually. I did offer to send. To give you an idea of what kind of business people they have become, one, from Lil's count as she finished the mailing list, has 44 outlets that have ordered individually. Most won't order without approval. Even in 1966 this was true, when the manager of the Washington Brentanos was not allowed to stock the book. Until after I made a success of it in NYC, where one of their stores sold 300 in ~~xx~~ one day. This of course makes it harder. Fewer privately-owned stores left.

Fortunately I've been through enough of this to feel no undue pressures from it. Or the existing ones make them unrecognizable! But I've been working ahead to arrange to reach other people and I'm hopeful or more than a return from the mailing list. A 2 1/2% return from it will mean no loss. Any over that, except for work, is profit over the costs. The National Star story is to carry the directions for ordering. I'm to be visited by the ~~xxxx~~ ^{xxxx} Tatler's expert, whose connections have all been nuts and who is interested in serialization, I think. That will be exposure if it goes through.

Two friends are trying to get the Bantam speakers' bureau to book me! I doubt it, not only from the past but from what I did to their v.p. legal in Memphis. But it is a good feeling that people try.

What anxiety I have is of two causes: Jim owes the money for the printer and there clearly is a change of attitude that I can't successfully exploit. To this day I've not heard of a nasty comment and I've received none. I've no doubt at all that in time this book will return more than the printer's bill.

Of course I'm also a little uneasy that the remaining talk shows of the past, like Eason and Spann out there and Jerry Williams in Boston have had no interest. They did sell many for me in the past and they do have an interested audience.

But I think the real cause of the uneasiness is what I've spent a lot of time trying to cope with, both Bud and the State in the Ray case. Bud could not respond to the hot charges I fired at him and didn't. Instead he went out of his way to do what he knew was wrong, lean on Ray. The typical coward's way. My problem with this is that I can't level with Ray as fully as I'd like. He wrote me a long letter including subtle reflection of his uneasiness with Bud and going out of his way not to agree with Bud on the no-interview position. He said instead that he left it up to the three of us. He understands some of Bud's in-court failures and mentioned a couple.

It for these and anticipated future reasons that I took all the time the enclosures represent. And for exploiting the certainty that the mail is still being intercepted. Let them get a few messages. I'll be taking up the cudgels with Haile tonight or tomorrow and laying a basis for going farther later.

Being a scoundrel is the only way Bud can scratch the prickling and itching of his conscience. He knows he was unprepared and hasn't met his obligations and knows that he both chickened out and fucked up. He could have ended the case in Memphis and feared the effort on a personal basis and the effect in Establishmentarian terms. He is not a boat-rocker, only a guilty liberal without courage. I think he also feared failure. But somehow Jim and I will sweat it out and through. I do expect more dirtyworks from the State.

If Playboy gets upset and Jim McKinley does a live story it may help some.

Part of the unease is that there is this renewed interest in the assassinations, the word being that 10 Congressmen will introduce resolutions, and I've heard from not one. This tells me that they are dealing only with nuts or at best those who are familiar with the initial writings only. The Times and Post attentio, if not a look into the field by staffers, should have been more than enough.

So, we draw to the end of a year with much accomplishment but not real success. If there were two Jim's I'd feel better and easier because we have much lined up, much past due, some cases where the statute may have run that he has let go to do this Ray work. We'll be filing money-damage suits over my FOI treatment and perhaps other matters. I've started new paths to new information under the law. As you and Martin say, I'm not winning popularity contests. But then there is a new year coming for that!

Best,