

Notes 11/28/73

There is a consistent too-little, too-late history that characterizes just about all efforts at co-operations since the JFK assassination. Those with the capability of attracting assistance either don't or delay too long or do things their way, and I recall no case in which these ways worked.

It is now a week and a day since I came up with the Ford-Plumbers connection. I decided immediately to let Bud know enough so that he would be in a position to know what he was talking about in making approaches to anyone. Moreover, I told Jim what immediate checking would produce confirmation, where to get it, and the next day he did go and did get it. He did speak to Bud immediately and Bud did come up with a suggestion, Wolfson, and Jim called me and I agreed immediately, same call. So, to yesterday, Bud did nothing. Yesterday the Senate voted to confirm Ford.

I made it a point to be available to Bud over the weekend, at his CIA affair and at the party at his home. The first morning of his meeting I told him I'd be free except for the time I was on the stage. I stayed where I could be seen, near the registration desk at the front door. He saw me each time he passed, and that was often.

Not until last night did he phone the lawyer he had to call. Hil and I were in his office when he asked if he should and I said yes. By that time the office of the man he phoned was closed.

He knows and understands the nature of the evidence and the areas where it is not irrefutable and believes it to be enough to attract interest and have some effect. Had it been available earlier and used earlier, the effect could have been greater.

He knows there is more. These incidents illuminate.

There seems to be a general belief in Washington among those few to whom I spoke yesterday that a coup is possible if not probable. At one point Bud said, "I see a picture of Harold holding onto a briefcase, about to go down." I said, "And Harold's briefcase is lock and is going to remain locked and when he goes down he will have plenty of company unless there is a change henceforth." Bud said, "With 200,000,000 to keep him company." Together Jim and I said maybe not all 200,000,000.

Jim had to call his wife. I said to Bud, "Look back over the period you have known me and my work. Who else has done what I've been able to do, sitting up there on the mountain without the money to make a single phone call, without all the other things generally necessary for this kind of work. And what single part of what I've attempted to do have I not done? And now think for a minute about all the large sums of money that have been pissed away." Not to make this seem too pointed, because his is a major waster of large sums that, when we have been lucky, have not hurt, I then cited the use of Mott's money for a rehash of the part of what is public the lawyers he funded reprinted and the ACLU's new pamphlet of the same nature. He got the point and he did agree.

I then told him that while we were talking about this incomplete Ford stuff, the other I was not talking about would blow his mind and, had it been used before Nixon got the country used to the dropping of the next shoe, even looking forward to it, could have blown the whole thing. I said whoever gets involved in this should understand clearly that it was not merely tackling Ford, it was tackling Nixon as to date he has not been and not over Ford but because of what he, personally, would be tied to.

Earlier I said, politely, that the time has come where if people are to expect anything of me it is going to have to be possible for me to continue doing what I have been doing without the worries and problem that have had no end. I said that looking back over 10 years I see little anyone else has produced and much that could have been accomplished if there had been a means of utilizing what I have come up with. I then told him I had seen several other people yesterday, without mentioning names, and recounted the essence of what I had proposed to Elfin at Newsweek, which will follow.

Hil was sitting there quietly, knitting. Through all of this she didn't say a word. Nor did we discuss it later, driving home, when she seemed very weary. I don't know what was in her mind, but I do know that the cost of this past weekend of counter-productive silliness was more than a year of work would cost me. Jim is finally resigning

from CIA and Bob Smith looked on the point of eruption. He told me he has had it. Mailer and Bud have financed him from the time they decided on this affair. In addition to whatever they have paid him and over and above the registrations and other moneys they received, Bob says they are still \$3,000 in the hole.

Even Bud says it was a disaster.

"I guess you can't do anything about the crazies," he told me.

"Especially not when you have them on the program - and almost nobody else - and to say nothing of any value to those who make no difference," I shot back.

He winced. And agreed.

Earlier he had brought up the question of Democratic politicians raising funds and said they did only for themselves. I added that in this case it would be foolish to even make the suggestion when the GOPs are sitting on the results of their bugging of the Columbia Plaza cathouse frequented by Dem. Hq men. He acknowledged and wondered when this stuff would come out. The ACLU prevented it when Silbert tried in court.

At another point he raised the question of some of Douglas' wealthy friend getting interested and of telling Douglas personally. I nixed, saying that WG cases would reach the Court and he should not be in a position where he might feel in any way compromised. But this is separate from telling his friends.

Bjd is to make his call again this a.m., when that lawyer's office opens. Assuming he is not away and assuming he is interested and assuming Wolfson agrees and assuming there is enough time to show there is reason for help, the House should vote the nomination within a week, and what can then be done in this little time?

What is most distressing in all of this is that had anyone done the normal, perfunctory investigation, not what I did but what takes much more time - but could have been done by college kids in the library - this all would have come out. That is, the leads on Ford. It would have taken more and better investigation or some skill and understanding to cut through to the meaning.

Also, if my means were not so severely limited, if I did not have to waste so much time on just keeping going, I'd have had this in July 1972. I did get it the first time Wil or I were able to see my source after I made the request of this source, having seen the inevitability of its productivity then. (I had figured that the source would get in touch but this was not the case. This line in not followed to its end yet but now will be, I think.)

Last Tuesday, just at the end of the working day, I saw Virginia Texas, George Meaney's long-time secretary. Yesterday she was to have introduced me to Andrew Biemiller, who I knew slightly twice in the past, and the lawyer working with him on impeachment, Tom Harris. However, not knowing how long the annual medical checkup would take, I could make no date. When I got there she was in conference with Meany. She sent word out where to send me. Biemiller was away, as was Harris. Had I been able to do this as soon as Meany talked against Nixon, there might have been some results.

Earlier, walking from the clinic toward the AFL-CIO Bldg., I stopped off at the Newsweek Bureau. With Ben Crawford's departure, I know nobody there except Chuck Roberts. I asked to see Elfin. He was busy and his secretary tried to get me to see someone else. I said I'd wait for him for a few minutes and if ~~he~~ he stayed busy, I'd have to go about other business, that I was in town for the day only and had much to do. I asked that she give him my name and two words, "Ford" and "Watergate." As soon as he finished his phone conversation, Elfin saw me. He knew me, to my surprise, because we have never met and I had been in that office once only, in 1966, then to see Crawford, who I hadn't seen in almost 30 years.

Elfin began by remembering my assassination work. He then asked, "Didn't you once raise ducks?" and I told him I had farmed. I also told him what I had done earlier. I said that what I came for is what they did not normally do but that I believe I can give them what they want, including for competitive reasons. He asked about Roberts and I told him that kind of thing made no difference to me, that regardless of my opinion of what Roberts had done, that was a separate matter and I wasn't dealing with him. I raised the question of not knowing what they were working on and said I

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was willing to trust him and would tell him whatever he wanted to know, so he could know enough to talk about to those above him.

He asked what kind of money I had in mind and I said I had no sum in mind but a situation in which I could continue to do the kind of work I had been doing and they, for all their facilities and manpower, had not. I said there are foundations and others who should have some interests. He asked me about the Sterns and I ticked that off. Their investigative-reporting fund and I went into my experiences with Boyd and Anderson's hangups. I added a few others, so he saw I had gone that road. I said in effect that I regarded these as crucial times when these kinds of hangups could no longer be indulged unless there was to be capitulation. We then left this area void.

Suppose I asked you for some headlines, he asked. I replied, without having time to think it through, "Nixon Personally Involved." Then I said, "Ford Helped by 'olumbers?" Here he asked if I were talking about the Martinez' and I said no. I then said that immediately I was talking about a major new story for each of at least six weeks. If there is that time.

He got a phone call. When it was over I added, "CIA Criminality." He looked at me and I added, "Competitious and Known." There was more like this. ~~but it need not~~ He seemed to have heard not unwell of me, from whomever he spoke to in the past. I was surprised that there had been this kind of talk to him and that it had not turned him off.

He said his investigative reporter is Nick somebody or other. I did not get the name. He said he'd have Nick call me 7-8 o'clock. I said I was not sure that I'd be home by then, but it would be ok to call me later. He said he'd have Nick call today. I gave him my schedule for today.

I told him that I am writing a book, that because of the conditions of my work it is over-long, will probably be regarded as prolix and for commercial purposes is, that it is a series of books in one but organized to make separate books on separate aspects, a contingency I do not really expect, which dominates my writing, and that a) I see no choice and b) there now is no time, hence my presence. He said they have a book subsidiary. I said, "Great, first thing I want is a good editor." When I laughed, he did.

Because he was having a harried day, visibly, I am encouraged about him, personally. But it does no end with him.

I did give him an example or two of other materials I have and can deliver. He was interested but he said Watergate was the first story.

In asking me the nature of what I have he asked, "Switzeroand?" and I said no. I think the other was "Hughes" or "Repozoz" and I again said not. These appear to be where they are working. No, it was "esco." After saying "No" I told him the dope and Cotroni story I had just seen was not unrelated to work I had done on another case. I said not connected, provocatively similar. Enough to check further. We left it there.

My timing is bad on this because it is late. Perhaps I should have started something like this earlier, esp. when there was no interest in good Ford and Jaworski stories. Perhaps if I were mobile I might have, instead of plugging away at the writing until time for the CTIA meeting preceeded by the Kabak visit Thanksgiving.

There have been two good developments, yesterday and the day before.

When the doctor walked into the examining room yesterday morning, he said, "I know the end now. You look fine." After it was over he said it was as he decided on a glance, that I do look good and (he knows the conditions of my life and my work) particularly because of the unusual nature of my life. He says he thinks I must be more relaxed.

The day before I won the battle with Dutton/Outerbridge.

I waited a decent time and then wrote Whitson, Dutton vice president and counsel, saying it had been long enough for David's lawyer to respond and that he had been silent although he had a carbon and a letter asking him to be forthright. If we are going to court, I had written, lets just go ahead and do it and stop wasting time and enegry and costs. He phoned in response. We parried for a while and I then said

that had it not been for David's making it impossible for me to meet his lawyer, I'd have seen Hamilton in May, as the files he should have read show. I reminded him that instead of proving David's honesty and being honest with me, Hamilton had proved the opposite. I said the understanding was explicit and recorded, that there had been an agreement for a \$10,000 advance subject to confirmed figures dated prior to the signing and that they did not exist, meaning fraud, and this not the only one. I ticked off others, without demurrer from him. I added what I could also sue for and told him that I would not continue spending all the time I had with David and would not offer to make and send copies and dubs as I had, but they were available to anyone he sent. I said he should consider what my position would be if he called my bluff and I thought he should be willing to believe it is not bluff. I added that if he had read the file he had to know this. Or, I said, I believe that if we go to court I'll come out better financially but other considerations outweigh that. I added that whether or not it is true, it is inevitable that in court there will emerge a prima facie case of federal pressure and ticked off a few illustrations.

He asked what figure I was talking about. I told him (truthfully) that this gets me so upset I can't figure accurately but all I am now asking is what I had from the first agreed to settle for, that my word is good. I itemized the balance of the advance, the various small sums Hamilton has and David had earlier agreed to, saying I was not sure of their total, but they are not over \$500 but if they are I will, to get this over, limit to that, and the gross received for those books sold after I bought them, a sum of about \$300 as of the time of my meeting with Macrae, and I would accept their printout beginning 10/5/72, the date of purchase, and interest at 7 1/2% on all but the remainders from 2/8/71, the date all moneys were due at the latest under the contract. He said this was about \$5,500. I said whatever it came to I would agree to, that this was my offer and I was ready to live up to it.

He then took another tack, that he had to justify this to his people and show that it was less than the cost of suing. I corrected him politely, saying that he also had to tell them what the prospects were in court and that they might have the costs of litigating plus the cost of a judgement greatly in excess of what I was willing to settle for. Here is where I listed the things, and one, inevitably, would be the refusal to promote and the refusal to use natural promotions, which would make Dutton, not David, look bad. He got the point. I then added that I had explored this question and he should know that I knew he could not litigate this for what I was willing to settle for and suggested that he take this as a sign of good faith on my part because I was not, as I could, adding to what I had offered simply because I knew it would still be cheaper to them than litigating if I did add claims. (The round figure for the litigation is almost twice what I asked.) He said how soon could we agree. I said send me a signed letter embodying this agreement and it will be returned, signed, the same day. He said he'd call back. I said I'd have to leave in less than an hour. He called back in less than a half hour, with the agreement. If ~~xxxxxxx~~ it was not then too late for a steno, I should have the letter today. However, it was so late I was late getting Lil.

Lawyers! Ugh! "one of those I've talked to have even tried, and I've spoken to three friends on this one, trying to tell them collection was virtually automatic! It could have been thus in all the cases.

The toll of all these things on Lil, is heavy. She awakened me at 4:30 to get her the full dosage of her stronger headache medicine. This is the worst one she has had for a while and it is the first time she has awakened me to get her medication in many months. When we got home last night she said, wearily, "I thought we'd never get here" and went to bed as soon as she spoke to her mother and sister. Neither of us ate supper and I stayed busy, so before she went to bed she brought me a dish of cottage cheese because she thought I should eat something!

The Dutton check will let me pay back the two loans I had to make to meet the last two instalments on principle, complete what I owe on this year's, lay aside enough to pay the taxes on it and probably fix the roof. There will be nothing left to live on but it will help materially.