

Js,

1/1/73

Holiday news makes TV an emptier wasteland. We generally dine to it. Diner was good, anyway. But my mind wandered, one of the items only being worth attention.

It occurs to me that the letter to "Allen", if it interested you at all, might stand some amplification, including about me, and I might make a few notes for the Journal file. Besides, I don't feel well enough yet for much of anything else.

The worthwhile item was the CBS (no NBC news tonight, not with the Rose Bowl Games) TV footage from Hanoi. Tel Taylor compared the Hanoi bombing with living through the London blitz. There are large expanses of no visible damage, but where we carpet bombed, nothing in London was ever like it. and the Yale minister saying how everyone, not just Vietnamese, asked him "why" and how he said neither then nor now has he an answer.

Eric Severied paid Dick Greggry the supreme compliment of lifting one of his lines, gruesome in context. Back some years ago when we were in a small group, Dick said Nero was a much-misunderstood cat. He was not heartless and indifferent to fiddle while Rome burned. He was celebrating: the world's first urban-renewal project. He was burning the slums. Severehead described our bombing of Hanoi and Hapihong as an urban-renewal project!

Allen Saylor, in com on with many of us, found that working for the Senate Civil Liberties Committee (Language of the resolution, Violations of Free Speech and the Rights of Labor, the line I carried at the top of each cover), found it made subsequent employment, especially in the McCarthy era, not easy. He went into TV repairing. (Carl Bernstein's father, Al, who had worked with "oil on several committees and the largest curse, helped Max Lowenstein with his book on the FBI, was one of several who opened laundromats. Carl doesn't recall it, but he was raised on my eggs and fowl.)

Bert Wheeler's daughter Frances worked for our committee, I think as a volunteer. To her it had more significance than the investigation her father ~~was~~ was then running, of the railroads, where Lil was assistant editor and indexer. Frances was a great girl. She was about my age, lived at home, and many a late night, when I could barely drag, I drove her almost to Bethesda only to then drive back almost to the Capitol, where I lived. Allen's first marriage failed. He and Frances then married. It was a fine marriage, despite the economic problems. Allen and all his inlaws got along very well.

He was kind of dismayed that I would not get a TV. Not only did neither Lil nor I want one, from what we saw when we visited, but we felt it was one of the things we needed least. We had an unfinished home and a plant to complete.

Suddenly Frances developed cancer of the lymph glands. She died at the National Institute of Health. Allen took it harder than I remember a man taking anything. His second family was small, i.e., the kids were young, one an infant. His octogenarian mother, who looked and acted 20 years younger, came down to take care of them all. They'd come up weekends, and the kids loved the farm. Even before Frances' trouble was diagnosed.

One weekend he pulled in with a TV, The Last of the Red Hot Zeniths, the best I ever had. The one with the round tube. One of the Wheeler sons decided to get a new set and Allen wanted us to have one, so that is how we got hooked to the "news". In those days there was even decent drama, if you watched the programs with care and perception.

One of the Wheelers bought a Phoenix radio or TV station, asked Allen to be his sales manager (after Frances' death), and Allen did well, but found it sterile. ~~So~~ So, he went back to college for an advanced degree and became a schoolteacher, beating whatever security charge the extremists brought against him. He is happily remarried again. We see him when he is east, for he looks us up more than those who live nearby and with whom Lil and I were both closer in those old days.

Idly thinking of the great waste that TV is, which brought this back to mind, and seeing Tel Taylor, which again reminded of those days, my mind got to wandering about them. I don't think I ever told you why LaFollete was so damned mad at me. And I've mentioned Pat Jackson without explanation.

Gardner Jackson, who had been publicity chairman of the Sacco-Vanzetti committee, was then legislative representative of Labor's Non-Partisan League, or John Lewis' lobbyist. Pat was or was close to an alcoholic. But a real gregarious guy, made for a lobbyist. Had a pretty good head, too. He once had a woman, Dode, as she was called, who had been Deborah Sachs, of Denver. Dode, as she was called, was never fond of me, always connecting me with Pat's carryings on and never knowing what I could not tell her, that I was the only from

her point of view good influence on him, especially summers, when she was away with their kids, on the Cape, more so after LaFollette got me.

Bob Lamb in particular (his widow, Helen, married Corliss Belmont) of the senior and scholarly members of the staff wanted to investigate agricultural conditions in Calif., where the Okies and Arkies had gone, most of all the so-called Associated Farmers, the corporate bastards who were a combination agricultural National Association of Mfrs and vigilantes mixed. Bob, who had been a professor of something at Williams, and Helen, of whose background I recall little, were researchers. Sounded great to me as to Pat. Only neither LaFollette nor FDR wanted the investigation continued. We'd always gotten along on subminimal appropriations, as you might imagine. I scrounged a fair proportion of our supplies.

Except maybe for a couple of typists, I was the junior on the entire staff. And Brash!

I didn't give a damn what FDR or LaF felt about continuing the work. They had political considerations to worry about. I didn't. Pat, who had been active in earlier efforts to unionize agricultural labor in the south, felt the same way. So, we decided that the committee should be continued for the Associated Farmers investigation. FDR and the chairman were formidable opponents. (I never discussed it with LaF and never flaunted it. But I had no doubt he knew. And burned. For him it was by then a liability when it came to campaign contributions.)

We could do nothing about LaF's opposition, and he didn't dare let it be known publicly, for then Labor would have burned.

FDR was easy. I got Paul Y. Anderson to ask him the right questions at a news conference and FDR was hooked. It would have been safer to condemn motherhood in those days! So, he was on record in favor.

The real problem was getting the votes in the Senate. When I started working on this with Pat, who by then was staying drunk, his wife summing in Mass., LaF trumped up charges to fire me. Actually, he couldn't fire me because I was not on his payroll, but I didn't want to go back to Farm Security, where I was the administrative assistant to the Administrator, later Henry Wallace's campaign manager when he ran third-party, so I didn't even try. I spent full and unpaid time working with Pat. For the most part this meant point and priming him, thinking for him and keeping him from getting too drunk during the day. Each morning I'd pick him up at his Earle Bldg office (now I think the Warner Bldg. Ceres restaurant was in the basement, I think, in your day, if its name had not by then changed.) He would be pretty rocky from the night before. I regulated my drinking and Wil was very tolerant and understanding. First stop would be the liquor store on the other corner of 12 and E for a pint of Bacardi light he could pocket without it showing too much, then, generally, to the Hill.

He was good, he was effective, he was persuasive. He did a great job. But our count showed that despite everything we were short on the vote. There were two things that swung it. Had he not been too drunk when he did both, I'd never have been able to talk him into either. For a reason I don't now remember, he had a blood feud going with Bert Wheeler. (Montana, mines, remember? And miners?) I don't remember how I got him to do it, but he did bury the hatchet and Bert agreed to vote our way and help as he could. I don't know why we never tried to get Frances to help, but as I recall, we didn't. Still didn't look like we had it. So, I dreamed up the weirdest thing yet. I got Pat to make a serious PITCH, and I mean a real one, when he was hopelessly and objectionably drunk, to old Cotton Ed Smith, of South Carolina. If you don't remember him, I won't try to do justice to the old tootintotin racist orator now. We waited until just before the vote, when Smith would not have time to think or cool off. The fire and brimstone that poured out of that foul mouth! It was incredible, even in that day of that kind of vile oratory! Excessive beyond description. Wild, irrational, poisonous and virulently anti-labor.

There were some weak, pseudo-liberals, like Lou Schwellenbach, to whom FDR had dared give the word. We knew from Lou, who told us frankly the spot he was in. Well, after that Smith oration, nobody pretending to be a liberal of any hue dared align with him. Where he didn't make it politically too great a liability, he so turned stomachs that we got votes we were sure we'd never get, from Senators really opposed to the investigation.

I was about 24 then. This was still part of my education. It was a great experience. I learned much from it. And despite the purging of the staff (I was only the first) and bringing in a bunch of weak-kneed liberals and scholarly Wilquettoasts, despite the diluting

by all the many pressures, it was a good investigation. If you were away then, this is what Steinback handled so magnificently in Grapes of Wrath.

Then and later is when I got to know Harry Bridges, I think Lou Goldstein, a younger assistant, and a number of other west coast labor leaders, who came to Washington. We used to booze and dine together. I was usually the chauffeur.

I remember one night we were in a favorite place, a bootleg Italian restaurant. No, not bootleg liquor, bootleg food. This was a great chef who was broke and a waiter. So, after he finished waiting table he had this three-room basement on 19th south of M, west side, in which he served the best Italian food. One night, when with the late Vito Marcantonio and a relatively large, for us, group, we were discussing how to fight some pending anti-labor legislation whose chances were better because of the "defense" needs, the Limey pulled a great line. He and Harold Pritchett, of the woodworkers (called Woodchuck) were in disagreement. Harry blew up and said to Harold, "You're the kind of Marxist who would use his political knowledge to make a killing on Wall Street." I forgot what was finally decided, but I know there was a strike. It was decided upon in my apartment. Marc was living with me, Lil then keeping a separate room for when he was in Washington.

I guess that deal on Cotton Ed was the beginning of the kind of approach I have since come to think of as "intellectual judo".

Marc, who with Taft, alone voted against Korea, was a close friend and a wise one from whom I also learned much. As a kid he had been LaGuardia's campaign manager. He came from the East Harlem Italian ghetto. Surviving it was in itself an accomplishment. He had an odd relationship with FDR, of which I know, because I drove him to and from the White House. Getting him up on time was a major project. He had diabetes, had to inject his own insulin, and then had certain times lapses before he required other things, of which I remember orange juice. He read all night, after drinking until the joints closed. (I have a long apprenticeship of sleeplessness!) I had to get him there. Even when I was not helping him, when I had my own work to do, I'd take him to the Capitol and we'd have breakfast together. I met many of the more prominent of that day. The kind of thing I often saw was, again, educational in how things work. Joe Martin, the GOP House leader, was as opposed to getting involved in Europe as Marc, but for different reasons. He'd get all kinds of stuff given to him and leaked to him that he didn't dare use. So, he'd feed it to Marc, who did use it....I did enough drinking, enough fighting, enough eating and just killing time, with enough rough, tough and wise old pols to learn a bit young. More fun when they were drunk. I usually avoided the last stage, for I generally drove. I could tell some hair-raisers, but they are not relevant.

Marc, who was gutsy as possible, and as smart, had no funds and no real staff. I was his investigator.

In those days Bill Powell was a big thing as Philo Vance. It wasn't long before Marc gave me the nickname Philes. This came from my personal files, which were the best private ones in town on native fascists of all hues and accents, and the things I did for him. The most spectacular was tracing a Dies committee report to its source, faithfully reproduced, with all grammatical error and plain careless typos, like my own. On the other extreme, he'd need material for persuasion.

Mike on the Lend-Lease debate.

I don't know if it makes any difference to confess that I don't recall ever holding any deep personal hatreds. If I did, however, the two men from whom Marc had to get his time would have been worth. Sol Bloom was Foreign Relations Committee chairman and controlled the pro-administration time. Ham Fish, of Dutchess County, FDR's Congressman, ranking minority member, the opposition's. He'd have been glad to give Marc all the time he wanted only there was great competition for it from the America Firsters. Marc figured he could work Ham, who enjoyed it when that East Harlem accent wound up and let go, and figured Marc might swing one or so votes from the liberal doubtfuls. So, Marc asked me to learn for him what he might want to know about Sol Bloom.

Personally, Bloom was prime candidate for chief of the Judenrat if this country needed any. He was a rotten, stuffed-shirt, rick-bastard Jewish fakir. Put out all those retreads of United States history, all in tribute to himself.

It wasn't a difficult job. He had a daughter Vera. He and she fancied her an artist. So did Mussolini, who found it no handicap when it came to awarding a prize that she was the daughter of the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. A nastier mind than mine-

or Marc's - might have considered it a bribe.

The debate was fiery, lasting long into the night. Marc had that must have been a record in time on such a debate, more unusual because ~~xxxx~~ he was the only member of the American Labor Party in the House. When he was unloading on Wendell Willkie as the barefoot boy of the utilities and his time ran, he looked at ~~him~~ ^{him} and got time.

He was passionate. And those who considered themselves liberal wanted to debate him.

After he finished I went around to the cloakroom to pick him up. We were having supper together. One of the older Democratic members whose name I can't remember, a very dignified looking gent, whose face I can still see, with his glasses - I knew him - was sitting near the door at which I was waiting. One of the two men to whom he gave the same advice I can't remember. The second was Gore, defeated as a dove Senator last election. He was then a youngish Congressman. "His old man said to him over and said, approximately, "Son, when are you going to learn never to ask Marcantonio to yield?" Gore said that he wanted to say something. Old man said, "Yes, but if you ask him to yield he will, and then where will you be?" Marc had mincemeated him and the other fellow.

It was quite a night. The bill passed. Quite a few of those who disagreed with Marc came up to him in the House dining room to congratulate him on his presentation. They were sincere. They didn't have to. "He was, small and Harlem accented as he was, lone in his party, a very effective speaker.

While I'm off on this foreign-relations lick, there is one on FDR I want to record. Marc had spent most of the night reading Sandberg's Lincoln. He was addicted to both. And people like Lovejoy. I got him up in plenty of time to keep his appointment with FDR at the White House. He begged to be allowed to sleep just 15 minutes. He pulled that three more times. The last time, hardly awake, he said, "I'll get 'im in the next round", and just rolled over. We barely made it, luck I wasn't stopped by a cop. "He must have been late when he got into FDR's office for I delivered him to the gate on the old State Bldg side at the minute of the appointment. He was there rather long. When he came out he was ashen. "He'd gone to see FDR on his fair-employment-practises bill. "Marc started that, and in the end, to avoid legislation, he got FDR to issue an executive order on it.

Unlike most of the times, he said nothing for a while. "He was stunned. Then he told me the story. FDR had opened by saying, "Mahk, yuah boy Mussolini is behaving himself. If he stays that way, I think I can guarantee him eritrea and Somiland". So, this was before Musso got too deeply involved in European fighting.

Marc was the staunchest anti-fascist. "He was called a Communist (he wasn't). His strongest opposition in his district was from the pro-Mussolini Italians. How FDR could have spoken that way Marc never understood. Nor can I.

There was one exception among the pro-Mussolinis of whom I know. Chiromello ran a small Italian pastry shop on the northwest corner of Second Ave and 116 St. Marc lived toward the west of it. He always stopped off for coffee before going home. There were a half-dozen marble and metal round tables. Chiromello was a staunch Marc partisan. And he had a brother who was one of Mussolini's bodyguards! C didn't speak a word of English.

1/2/73

In recent years I have avoided publicity unless another purpose was served by it, like promoting a book or some income. I guess all the others have consider this nutty. But it was based on contemporaneous observation, on the proliferation of really insane stuff that was undermining all credibility, and experience of the past. One of these was something that at the time I thought would have made an enormous difference in the vote on extending the House UnAmericans. It should have, then, now or anytime, but it didn't. I learned that there are some issues that can't be evaluated as others, as normally they could be, some of which politicians act differently than ordinarily they would have. Hoover and the FBI was to the end of of these, and the reason was fear.

I had been working on a book on the UnAmericans, I guess beginning toward the end of 1939, but I'm not sure of the date. I was in some ways pretty systematic. I had earlier done work that enabled me to zero in, fast. I got three housewives who were stenos or typists who wanted some extra work and I took them, with typewriters, to the office of the Clerk of the House, then a man named Shanks, and copied every damned expense voucher filed by that UnAmerican Committee. Every payroll voucher, etc. It was quite productive. And crookedness, cheap crookedness, emerged. Other things I've never yet used, like the "hearing" on Consumers' Union was no hearing at all. It wasn't even held; it was simply typed up. And according to his transportation vouchers, Dies was in Texas when he was supposed to have been at this hearing. They were that careless, that indifferent.

Another was getting the proof that the guy the Committee planted on me was in their pay at the time.

During this general period I was also working in the political-expeditives and income reports, got much on the fascist connections of the GOPs, went over all of Father Couglins, and gave that to Jack Spivack, leading to his Shrine of the Silver Dollar.

But in a way the most dramatic was an accident. Because of things I had done and some liberals were hollering, Dies had to make some kind of anti-fascist gesture. He could not do it against the natives, of whom he was one, also because they were his support. So, he issued a very thin report against Japanese activities in the US. A glance told me there was something wrong in it. And that it was familiar. So, I started going over my own files and damned if I didn't find a small, West Coast anti-fascist newsletter from which it came. Word for word, misspelling for misspelling, typo for typo. Not an single change at all.

About this time Marc was keeping after me for something hot for him to use in the annual debate on renewing the committee's authority. So, I told him of this and he went for it.

This was before xeroxing, of course. The only copying means available then were photographic and photostating, which was expensive. However, I made stats of the entire original newsletter for Marc, and at the time of the debate he took the floor and had them in sitches. He'd read first from one, then from the other, and invite inspection. It was telling, but not in the vite. Of the few bitter-enders who tried to hassle him, I remember one oddball fascist, Clare Hoffman, of Michigan, a guy who would have no pockets in his suit jackets, who effected a Will Rogers haristyle, and was uninhibited. Marc pretended he was responsible and responsive for a couple of Hoffman's interruptions then pulled out of his head one of the better putdowns I've ever heard, with a smile.

"The Gentleman from Michigan reminds me of a tugboat on the East River near which I live. It had a four-inch whistle and a two-inch boiler. Every time the captain blew the whistle, that tugboat stopped. That is the way the Gentleman from Michinga is. Mention Dies and the Gentleman just stops."

There were others who spoke in opposition, and I probably supplied some of them. The vote never reflected the genuine feeling of the House, and many members who hated the idea, the actions and the personnel, never dared voted against them. However, even after this sensational exposure, even if the vite was to then the largest in opposition, as I now recall it was only 72 or 76 of the 435 Members.

I don't now recall if this Japanese thing was included in what the Hollywood Ten never returned. The one thing I remember with some clarity is a name, of a reporter, I think. Phon: Rafu Shimpo.

There were then men of courage in the House, on many if not all issues. But few on this one.

1/2/73 If I had the notion that these notes are deathless, I'd not be using left-over 3M "intermediate" sheets for a carbon to you. They may at some time be of some value in other ways, as if I live to a ripe old age and go in for other and lighter writing, not easy for me and no probable market. They are in part dictated by concern for the future, when all of everyone's work will be evaluated by others who will have little way of knowing whose word is dependable, who had valid experience to draw upon, etc. While the attacks on Garrison and Lane were louder, none ever daring to do it to my face and my work having attracted less public attention, the files of most of the "critics" will contain much that can have the effect of undermining future confidence in my work and judgement. The vigor with which I have undertaken some things will add to this, particularly to the ivory-tower lot. So in large part, addressing this long in advance is part of what I have in mind. Another thing is educating Howard to the way things are and work. He is exceedingly bright but divorced from the rough and actual contact with the kind of people involved in such events. The timing is easy to explain. It is more than we've both been under the weather. I have also had a series of new problems to face, all the result of dishonesty, negligence, etc., by others. The Williams defect, if it is that and is sustained in court, will be an enormous blow to us because there was as close as one can get to an open-and-shut case for damages to our poultry and farming operation. His silence of three weeks does not persuade that the government may not have a legal basis, for if it does, there is a fairly solid suit against him. I have no such thing in mind, but he doesn't know that. So, I have had the need to escape as reading would not permit, unless there were something to seize the mind, as for a short while The Plot to Kill the President did. (Lil finished it a sleepless night.) I look back now and realize that instead of digging all the time I should have done as Harriet Tucker later counselled, made detailed notes then. They could have served literary and historical purposes. But I'd write and sell enough to keep going and spend the rest of my time in such endeavors as those noted. Had it not been for the war and changing feelings of obligations, I'd have had a helluva Dies book. Now I can't even take time to find what survived. I know all my copies of the committee's vouchers the Ten got. I had carbons, but I gave some of them away earlier, to others, and I can only hope I had some filed by subject. In any event, don't feel you have to enjoy, approve or comment. I wanted to make the notes and get away from the more pressing things for a while, and dashing this off served that purpose, in itself worthwhile, if you know what the anxious feeling can do.... That was the damndest thing, that tug-boat story. You should have seen and heard the House that later voted the other way. It howled at Hofinan. Unlike the nastiness in the papers, his colleagues had both liking and respect for Marc. When Cannon revised his book of rules, Marc was one of the few he asked for comment before finalizing. I knew Cannon, too, and I was there. The GOP leadership of the day made a stalwart effort to get him to become an official Republican. (He was the first man to win nomination on three tickets, including theirs.) Lil was a secretary for him for a while. Wadsworth, then Minority Leader, wanted her to go to work for him when they finally gerrymandered and passed a law to get Marc at the same time. He'd make a great book, in which I could jot begin to say all I know. Some of the people are today the epitome of The Political Establishment, like Katie Louchheim, whose personal life is entirely her own. But I think she'd be embarrassed if stories of her entertaining a left-wing Congressman, a Rabelaisian priest and a major Mafia figure, known as such, were to be