

3/14/72

Dear Jim,

I don't know which if any of the enclosed will interest Bud. It seems like I did get under Georgie Pie's skin. He did phone me, of all things considering Priscilla's loot, at 6:30 this am and reverse, and when I said I'd accept the call but not the charges, the operator did have to say something several times before he uttered a long-drawn-out and badly-slurred "no". Jerry had just told me that George had told him by phone that he was going to beat me up. And you know damned well he didn't reverse the charges to Jerry.

Please read the letter to Childress with care. I think they have made a mistake in banning Jerry. I don't think that there is even an offense with the warden's knowledge and assent to the practise. On the other hand, he has been liberal and I think little is to be gained by making a fight of it. This does not mean that humanitarian considerations and things like that can't be raised, if you all or Jerry want to. Jerry haven't me no indication and I offered no opinion.

I will be going to St. Louis for a 5/7 appearance with Frank at least, and maybe also Stoner and Bevel. I plan to go a day early to permit conferences with both. I also think that going or coming I should see at least James and, if Stoner comes up with anything, go to Memphis. The 7th is a Friday, the show will run until midnight, so going to Memphis the next day does not seem promising. However, the extra cost on a trip to St. Louis should be relatively slight. And there is one important witness I did not have time for last time, thanks to the need for keeping Renfro out of your hair.

I hope you read James' letter to me with care. It marks a big step forward in three areas: he commits himself that Stoner is out of the case entirely, the civil part having been decided by the Supreme Court (if this isn't in the letter to me it is in the one he sent Esquire); he expressed dissatisfaction with Stoner for the first time (didn't do his work); and he is getting closer to my thinking in the part where he talks about what serves his interest. Considering everything, I think this combination can be considered as the beginning, at least, of a breakthrough.

Bud had not responded to my inquiry about asking to oppose Frank. Frank has added a qualifying epilogue to his book. This means I have shaken him a bit, as I suspected I had in New York.

On balance, although it is at this moment raining, I think things are a bit brighter. McM has to be really troubled, James is better, Frank is worried and has changed his line, the warden et al have gone too far. I think we should get together for a long talk soon. And if you and/or May want Lil's tax services, I volunteer them for a weekend. I can come there, but we always get interrupted.

Should you want to reach Jerry, he will be with Stoner until early May. Switch in plans. He probably left for Marietta today (Box 1211, 30060).

I tried to phone you and Bud at this point but neither was in. I'll try again before I go for Lil, and I'll mail this then whether or not I get you.

Marshall plans still a new switch of which I know. Not good. That also we should discuss. The advance stipulation is complete confidentiality. It is a bit hairy.

Best,