

6/25/70

Mary, Paul, Gary, Dick,

You lucky people, I've about 20 minutes before I waken Bill and Howard (who returns home today) so, with something I intended making a note about anyway, I write you.

Got a call yesterday afternoon from a NYTimes reporter, more to say thanks and ask a few questions than anything else, and I am under the impression that if they do a story he is not. He is, personally, happy that I filed under the Freedom of Information Act against Justice, which had lied to him and denied I had filed. He had a set of the Bay documents, given him by Justice and had read them.

I had known this was happening because a reporter on the Washington Post had phoned the day before to tell me, and he had known earlier that they were doing it because those very, very honorable men for whom he works had asked for them, their way of keeping the bargain I had made with them on this, instead of doing the agreed story, which might have done some good.

I confess being torn on this. I am glad we can force the bastards to stop at least some suppressions, but I cannot claim to be jumping with joy when they out me to all this trouble and expense and then give my hard-earned away and under circumstances that could hurt me. The book is now agreed to, verbally, with a small publisher. I do not particularly like being denied the first use of my work. And, of course, this is frustrating because it even denies me the opportunity to recoup any of the costs, small ones being very great to me right now.

I haven't seen the Post yet, and this guy promised to send me a clip if the Times carries anything. From his description, the govt did copy the entire file for those who asked for it. I'll be checking either his or the Post copy for this purpose, but I see no reason for them not to make it all available. Nor do I see any special story in the content for the press, the proceeding having been well reported and the contents of the file containing no real news for the standard press.

My proposal to this publisher, who was here about 6-7 weeks ago, was that they select out and edit down the King material from COUP (which will now require a new title) and give me, as an advance against royalties, enough to print the whole work or do that for me themselves, if they can do it at less cost. They are in accord, but the more I think of it and the more I look at the effects of our way of living on Lil, the more certain I become I just cannot afford this. First the hunk that will have to go for taxes will have to be salted down, then I think the rest will have to go on our indebtedness, which looms larger to me daily. I think that means that the other parts of this work will go without being printed, but perhaps with one of the processes Paul can draw upon, for the few who might want it enough to pay a large cost, copies can be available.

I am sorry Howard is leaving today, for he is a very bright, very helpful young man, mature for his 16 years, and a fine fellow in every way. Because he was here to help and had learned how my files are arranged and in those areas that interested him, he was able to find things for me while I wrote, and in the past two days I have drafted the coming two complaints for other suppressed (JFK) stuff. Again I focus on Justice and, as now drafted, them alone, not even with the Archives as co-defendant. (I think they should be but I'm taking Bud's advice. I'll argue this with him before revision). So, a guest like Howard doesn't cut down output, paying back the time he takes while he takes it!

Howard has done more than go over my files, borrowing what he wants, copying pictures of which he wants copies, and reading what interests him. He has prepared an index of my correspondence, to date, with the government, by subject. This will be helpful from time to time, in various ways, but I think especially in court. I have made up a duplicate file for this purpose, so I'll have everything with me on any suit. And I do expect the day to come soon when they do not cave in so easily. In fact, the next two complaints are not designed to make it easier for them to capitulate, though I'd not be unhappy if they do, for I haven't yet prepared the big one (for which I wish Howard could have been here, that being the area he did know, these being relatively strange to him).

So, as of June 25, 1970, with no trouble, I can tell any of you what I asked for, whether or not I got it (if accompanied by a covering letter), etc. I'll try and send him copies from now on, so he can update it at home.

Paul and Gary especially, this reminds me of something I think would be helpful, esp. in court. I think it would be good if I could have a file of your correspondence with the government, with what should not be disclosed under any circumstances so marked, and for this court purpose. I have some of it, but it is scattered by subject. In Paul's case, it should include Jim's. How do you feel about this, and about Howard reading and indexing all of it, at his home? He is on vacation now. He goes to Penn this fall, on a full scholarship, no mean accomplishment since he is a year or two early and has done all this work while earning a fantastic scholastic record.

You see, I hope he can be my research assistant in court, when I have hearings on these cases, so his knowing the material can be invaluable. He has a good memory, a sharp mind, and it is much fresher than mine. Besides, I'll have to be the lawyer, so my mind, in court, will be on other things. I'll take this up with him. I think he'll do it. I've just awakened him.

There should be obvious benefits to having a single source of knowledge of the major requests for material. It will be impossible to type this for the immediate future and, I think, it is premature right now anyway. And other things are more important.

We do have index cards on all my completed books, and if I can ever get a bright kid to come here for a while, I hope to consolidate them after the unprinted indexes are typed up. It would be good if we could run a few others in, like Sylvia's, especially.

The two drafted complaints are on the Ferrie documents and the spectro. Neither is a simple complaint. Each is designed to inform the judge, the government attorneys and the press. Neither tells all I know, but they are detailed. While these are designed to try and pry loose what I have long tried to get and still want very much and very seriously, they are also calculated to solidify the law by establishing precedents in several areas, which I do not take time to explain here and now. Each of these has such collateral purposes and in each case I have them in rather large lies I'll expose in court. In the Ferrie docs suit I have what they are withholding in several cases, neither meeting the description of their reasons for withholding and neither meeting any standard permitting it. There remains work to be cleaned up on these, including editing, getting together with Bud, who has promised to cast a legal eye on them, etc., then the filing, where even the fees will be a problem. Then I hope to get to the panel one.

I've awakened the others, so.... best,