

1/14/70

Dear Dick,

Unless Howard has been in touch with John (and of this I have neither knowledge nor reason to believe he has) I see no reason for worrying him with that sickening thing (I am sending a copy of this to Gary).

It has now been long enough for a delayed reply to have reached me. If you or I got such a letter, we'd have responded immediately. I recognize the possibility he is away, for from time to time he is.

This troubles me more than any of the other numerous thefts and it has the potential for more harm. Until you can see what I have going with the things I told John and gave him copies of on his word he would make no use in any way, confirmed in writing by him, you cannot imagine how important it is. I have taken one up with Bud, one with another lawyer who once worked for JFK. Bud says there is no more important thing we have, and I regard this as an understatement for too many reasons to go into. The other lawyer was, for the first time in his articulate life, speechless. Both of these are the product of an enormous amount of work (and cost) and cannot, really, be used except in terms of that work, within that context, for it is an inseparable part of it. John neither has nor knows and, so the best his thievery can do is fuck it up. That he is willing to do this, that he is not only willing but goes ahead and does it without even a with your leave, shakes me deeply.

If he does, he will force me to do something. I am not yet thinking of that, but he will make a serious mistake to consider that I cannot or will not or that it will be of no consequence. If it means his professional ruin, that will not stop me. The last thing we need is dilettantes on ego trips or those ready to steal at whatever cost, including the ruin of what they steal.

But do I have to tell you what he has demonstrated to be his capability when he copyrights what you sent him in his name and sends me copies forbidding me to use them in any way, even with credit? Knowing also that I worked on it with you? That we had seen and done what he had not? I knew John was kind of odd, but I never dreamed dishonest until he pre-empted the authorization so crudely. When I think of all the things I let go to do a lot of work for him, things I have not yet caught up on, and of even going to see him so he could use me to turn on his lawyers and other associates (when my baggage was intercepted and ruined, as was a brand new \$100 tape recorder), I get even sicker.

If you have any suggestions, I would like them. I'll take this up with Bud when I can get to DC again, but it will not likely be this week.

Sincerely,