

Dear Clay,

4/29/98

I'll respond to your 4/19 in odds and ends of time. This morning in the few minutes before my early morning walking which is less these days because of a returned hip problem and some tenderness on a foot.

I worked for the Senate Subcommittee on Education and Labor (1936-9) that was better known as the Senate Civil Liberties Committee. I was first an investigator, then I was made its editor, and in between I prepared hearings. Then I returned to writing, freelancing and ^{was} also Wash. correspondent for what was then the third largest picture magazine, a monthly, CLICK. Most of my work for it, a largely girlie magazine, was a series exposing Nazi cartels. In the course of an expose of Japan that appeared three months before Pearl Harbor I predicted pretty much what it would be doing. When the America First banks put pressure on the owners of that magazine I did a little freelancing and then entered the army. I was an MP and it was as an MP that I was sent to Africa. Where my tour of duty was remarkably short because the outfit against us on the duty roster incurred the wrath of the commanding general and he switched us on the duty roster. So, instead of policing the invasion of Sicily my outfit guarded captured Afrika Korps prisoners back to the US.

When I could not get the overseas furlough that was my due and went over the hill to visit my wife and we drove up to see her mother, who was caring for a grandson child, we did not know it but he had the mumps that I caught. When I turned myself in sick they thought I was goldbricking and put me back on duty. After three days of duty when it was to have been ^{one} on, one off, I went over the hill again and on the instructions of the family doctor phoned the MP's in Washington. They sent an ambulance for me, I wound up in Walter Reed Hospital where I was for four months. I was at my insistence sent back to duty for we had just invaded France. The hospital sent me to the Mil. District of Washington personnel office and that is how I got into the OSS. It was their idea. Later. Made package of Brown with corrections and sending it slow mail because you have not finished with Hersh, at least corrected it is not here yet. Should make today's mail when we leave ^{of} so on for Lil's physical therapy appointment.

The title I carried on that committee's hearings describe its work: Violations of Free Speech and Rights of Labor. We exposed the labor-spy and strikebreaking businesses and as the result of our work some of the big corporations learned that what they were doing was not profitable and policies changed. Unions were recognized, etc. Helped get the Wagner Act and Social Security passed. The latter informally. Both.

We exposed Bull Connor and nobody paid attention. He was then in charge of the private police of the US Steel Alabama subsidiary. That was 1937. It was on

that job that I met Lil. She was the assistant to the editor of a different committee who broke me in. Before long I had the reputation of turning out the best of Congressional publications but my was that work!! What hours it required! Several times I went five days without getting in a bed to be sure that a report had no typos or other errors. Often I worked until 2-3 a.m. Had my own office before long, a rarity for a senate employee. It was under the stairs on the corner toward the Supreme Court building. Room 103. Senator Rush Holt was next to it and I remember that on the other side the man who had the use of the connecting office, and my staff and I took his calls when he was not there, was Francis Biddle, who later was the attorney general.

Gotta get going. Hope you finish with the Hersh and send it soon. I want to write an agent about it. More the next break. I had these few moments because I'd caught up on reading and correcting what I've written about Posner. Far from finished on that.

Later still when too tired to work.

In the OSS I was not a spook. I was an analyst but with the spectacular success of my first assignment, an investigation, I was also used as a trouble-shooter.

During World War II some soldiers dreamed that as farmers they could be free and independent. I became a chicken farmer and with the blessing of ignorance, which meant nothing to unlearn, became successful with a superior quality only to have low-flying helicopters ruin our farming. We still won every first prize *nationally* between us, raising them, cooking them (Lil) and barbecuing them, me.

We never had any children. I've often wondered if I'd have done what I have if we had kids. With a wife it was hard enough, enough worry!

My initial interest in the JFK assassination came from the total failure of the media to treat it as it should have and then with the Warren Report, which could not be believed. I suppose the energy came from the realization that under our system the assassination of any president is a de facto coup d'etat and in this country that is a great subversion.

From time to time affording this has been a problem. Much is sent me by friends, much that I use. But that Foreign Relations quote was from copies of those pages that were sent me.

I have not been consistent in marking books up. Lately I have been so I can be reminded by those marks. I also use a highlighter for that.

No publisher even sent me any prepublication copy but a couple have asked for and then ignored peer reviews. Very few, just a few.

I should have included above that what you refer to as the energy input

is in part from the fact that I am the first member of my immediate family ever born into freedom. Gives me a chance to pay back a bit for what became mine by my having been born here.

What you refer to as standardized news is one of the consequences of the political assassinations and the governments we had as the result.

I think our founding fathers, who were truly great ones, never anticipated what has happened to us. *Could not. Wish those greata had been able to!*

I should have perceived the changes when with a president assassinated there was no publisher who would think of doing a book critical of that official mythology. After I did it several told me they did not because they were afraid.

What sustained me? I have never stopped to think of that but I think it is not what Haliburton said he ^{climbed} ~~climbed~~ an Alp for, to spit a mile. I think that probably a feeling of responsibility, a feeling that it had to be done regardless of the odds. I suppose that later it included the character of what others were doing. Poor character.

I do not remember stopping to ask myself the answers to the questions you ask but I see nothing of personal courage in this. I'm old fashioned. It is the duty of a writer to ^write, to inform people, and if the system is to work that became an obligation.

While I do not remember ever giving it any ^{deep} thought it is probable that after Hitler, and I can remember his taking power, I may have wondered about relatives I never knew, never heard of, who did not emigrate as my parents did. But I suppose background has much to do with it. That and my belief in the superiority of what those great political thinkers conceived. And what they risked for it.

Perhaps I stayed too busy to think it all through.

The mail was early today so the Brown stuff will go tomorrow.

Many thanks and our best,

Harold