

2/21/71

Dear Jennifer,

Lil, for good and bad, has remained very busy, too busy for her, but, alas, the extra income that comes not from blood but from sleep and nerves is something we urgently need. She has been having to get to her office early to complete returns and bring them home nights, working on them some nights until 11 or later. So, she hasn't been able to write you (and she got farther behind typing those damned court papers). Although it should start slacking off a bit soon, until the deadline nears, she has a heavy backlog. So, because suddenly this afternoon, I decided to do none of my work, to take a break, she asked me to, first, tell you how much she appreciates your going to SHE for her and second to say that when you are near there again, she'd like one pair of each kind of trousers, if they still have two, and that for size the critical measurement is her waist, which is 30 inches. She has grown more there lately, as I have also, even though I seem to be eating little. But I've not gotten any exercise this winter. Usually I take trees down, saw them up, all by hand, carry the wood to the house and keep the fireplace going most of the winter. Not this year. The weather has been so grim it is only the past two days that I've gone for a walk. Half what I did briskly last summer gelatinizes the knees, but it is good for me and I enjoy it. Then, this afternoon, I did some painting in the cellar. It was not important, but I wanted to get it done, and I listened to what is called "news" on the radio, and thus, with somebody's leftover paint and one whole buck I have a brand new six-foot stepladder! Bought it in a drug store for the buck because it came through with the braces detached. And now I can take it outside and get a little of the clutter out of the cellar. I can't even get to the furnace to change the air filters! We've never finished moving in, and 10/1 was three years.

I'll be going to Memphis Tuesday afternoon, for the rest of the week. I had planned to be my own advance man on the book, make a few contacts, do some backgrounding, etc., and they were to ship me a carton of books at the motel. The first were due from the bindery Friday. Now they've postponed pub date and fear lifting will kill the scant chances for the subsidiary rights. They didn't believe me when I told them the attitude toward this subject and me, but they are learning. But they fear leaks in Memphis where they do not in New York? So, I'd written a state legislator who is talking of a state legislative investigation, told him I'd have a copy for him, and now I won't. I fear their p.r. and sense of p.r. are not promising.

My chief reason for going is the hearing Friday, but I'll attempt a few other things, too. I hope the again-repaired and little-used cassette machine on which the feebly lavished such attention will continue to work, for I'd like to tape some of the interviews I'm going to seek. I'd really like to have one of the new, mineralized ones that I could carry over my shoulder and under my jacket. It would be nice to have the voice of the officials refusing me the public evidence, which I anticipate. I'll be looking around for one that also has a self-contained mike for such purposes. And as I weary more, the smaller size for other purposes will be an asset. My attache case, as I used to carry it, weighed 35 lbs. It will not on this trip!, esp. because I don't have all that to use in appearances.

I didn't know if this hasty thing I sent a friend on the Wash Post would interest you or not. If you do not want it, I can use the copy. If you do, keep it. Whether or not Epstein has a formal connection is irrelevant. He serves that and only that function.

The newest SEAsia developments make Jim's estimate look depressingly accurate and my hunch less likely. They are raving mad.

Best regards, and thanks. Please let me know what the cost of the trousers is and I'll send a check for it and postage.