Dear Ed,

5/29/81

Thanks for the selections from Wicker (I guess maybe I ought get and read that book) and Solzhenitsyn. I appreciate them but still think the applicability is exaggerated.

Although there is much in the modern Wocker to hide it, his growth and changing perceptions predate his timing in the book. I know this from personal experience.

In 1965 he tried to interest the Times in Whitewash. He read the ms, a very poor copy of it, and then sent it to Salisbury. Later, early in 1966, he tried to persuade Norton to publish it. They'd read it and had some interest. And I presume fears.

Thereafter, until Lift got started his behind-the-scene dirtyworks, the Times treated my books fairly. In news columns, not reviews.

Wicker's confession also interests me because he dates the beginning of LBJ's understanding of what the CIA was up to, the very earliest days of the LBJ administration. You don't suppose the CIA was going around confessing, do you? I presume this means that by then the FBI had begun to dump on the CIA. It did, later, and I have the records/proof.

I've been reading more and enjoying the change. Recently The Power and the Glory and The Pillars of the Post. Problem is I can't go the library and stand, nor can I in bookstores.

I'm glad you came out of your breakdown feeling good. I was not aware of the amount of self-understanding and knowledge that can result, but I'm sure, as you say, that the price is high.

I guess it is for everything. In my own case I compare with not being alive and conclude that the cost could have been much greater and still have been worth it. And I am pretty limited in what I can do today. If I can't do as much, I'll do what I can. And be reasonably content. I know more should be done and can be, but I can't now do it, so I don't worry about what I can't do because I can't do it and can't get anyone else to try.

We have to learn to adjust and adapt. I'm lucky not to have had to pay more to learn this. I've also learned that relaxation is more important and I get in ways I'd not have thought of two years ago. Like taking in the Oriole's ballgames, meanwhile exercising mylegs at the end of each inning abd on commercials and pitching changes etc. (All are on radio but only some on TV.) I visit with my neighbors of my age a bot more, too. Watch the birds more, too, when I'm resting, with the feeders located with that in mind. For all that is wrong it is still a wonderful , beautiful world, with many , many fine people.

Thanks and best wishes,

On Press, 190-3; Gulag, 524-5

5/22/81

Dear Harold,

I thought that you should have the Tom Wicker quotation.

The underlined Solzhenitsyn seems quite appropriate.

Nothing could justify your critical neglect but could anything explain it better than Wicker's concept of historical journalism and Wicker is, after a fashion superior to many of his compeers.

Take care of yourself. I feel good. When one has a breakdown (My own was called "schizoid") there is a point before you go over the edge. One goes one way or the other. Barnabas went the wrong way.

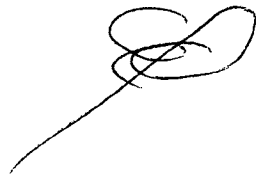
One day I woke up and "it" was over, like a fever that finally burned itself out.

Today I can hardly even recognize the memory of the "Kids" Ed Williams.

Was that really me I think knowing that it was indeed once.

Great deep knowledge is achieved but the price is too high.

Best Wishes,



ment, prophetically envisaged in the One True Doctrine.

The vessel of Soviet Law is ready for the sharpest turn. If orders come tomorrow to put millions inside again for their way of thinking, or to deport whole peoples (the same peoples as before, or others) or rebellious towns, or to pin four numbers on prisoners again—its mighty hull will scarcely tremble, its stem will not buckle.

There remains—what Derzhavin tells us, what only those who have experienced it for themselves can feel in their hearts:

"An unjust court is worse than brigandage."

Yes, that remains true. As true as it was under Stalin, as it was all through the years described in this book. Many Fundamental Principles, Decrees, and Laws, contradictory or complementary, have been promulgated and printed—but it is not in accordance with them that our country lives, and that arrests are made, trials held, expert evidence given. Only in those few cases (15 percent, perhaps?) in which the subject of investigation and judicial proceedings affects neither the interests of the state, nor the reigning ideology, nor the personal interests or comfort of some officeholder—only very rarely can the officers of the court enjoy the privilege of trying a case without telephoning somebody to seek instructions; of trying it on its merits and as conscience dictates. All other cases—the overwhelming majority: criminal or civil, it makes no difference—inevitably affect in some important way the interests of the chairman of a kolkhoz or a village soviet, a shop foreman, a factory manager, the head of a Housing Bureau, a block sergeant, the investigating officer or commander of a police district, the medical superintendent of a hospital, a chief planning officer, the heads of administrations or ministries, special sections or personnel sections, the secretaries of district or oblast Party Committees—and upward, ever upward! In all such cases, calls are made from one discreet inner office to another; leisurely, lowered voices give friendly *advice,* steady and steer the decision to be reached in the trial of a wretched little man caught in the tangled schemes, which he would not understand even if he knew them, of those set in authority over him. The naïvely trusting little newspaper reader goes into the courtroom conscious that he is in the right. His reasonable arguments are carefully rehearsed, and he lays them before the somnolent, masklike faces on the bench, never suspecting that sentence has been passed on him already—that there are no courts of appeal, no proper channels and due

procedures through which a malignant, a corrupt, a soul-searingly unjust verdict can be undone.

There is—only a wall. And its bricks are laid in a mortar of lies.

We called this chapter "The Law Today." It should rightly be called *"There Is No Law."*

The same treacherous secrecy, the same fog of injustice, still hangs in our air, worse than the smoke of city chimneys.

For half a century and more the enormous state has towered over us, girded with hoops of steel. The hoops are still there. There is no law.