

Dear Jim,

6/3/74

Beginning a little after 10 a.m. our time the phone got busy and stayed that way all the rest of the day, until after supper, with enough tapering off in the afternoon to let me do a long letter I had to and mail it when I went for Lil.

I was not surprised by the SC Ray decision. Lesar and LF figured they not dare do anything else. I was not surprised by the day because Lesar had spoken to the clerk last week and was given to understand that it might be handed down today. I thought at the time that the WG case might delay. But I completely forgot about it in writing that began early and was going o.k. It is too late to return to that now.

In the course of talking to LF I may have added to what you have been able to gather from the bits I've sent on what was afoot in Memphis and elsewhere. So, tape enclosed, with note. Also the envelope in which your 5/30 came. Do you always have so dry a mouth?

I do not attribute anything more than coincidence to it because cancellations are at point of origin, but by remarkable coincidence no single stamp in Saturday's mail was cancelled.

Read lead only on NYT 5/22, Tapes as answer to hush money. Looks valuable, thanks.

Back to Ray matters. While Bud is undoubtedly angry with me, he is coming here Thursday afternoon. I have asked Lesar to, with his PC40. We will get all that Bud knows and once again the dim light is penetrating too little too late. But the old saw, it is better late (still again) than never.

The next move they'll make is an investigation of Livingston's acts and we will blunt that somewhat if Jim files the motion we talked about tonight, asking the judge to order the delivery of the transcript of the deposition of Foreman delayed now two months. If we can keep taking initiatives we may get over than insanity.

We had five or more consecutive days of rain, so when I got Lil home I went out and started mowing honeysuckle and poison where I'd trimmed woods near the house. I was just pooping out and I was saturated with sweat when Jim Mason called and asked that I go on the air, his producer said as soon as he finished reading some commercials. Lil brought me a towel so I could mop myself, some iced tea, and I went on the air after not quite enough commercial-reading time to catch my breath.

News that is not news: confirmation that Lifton is trying to steal my "ing/Ray work or they seeⁿ enough in the book they bought for a deal of be set by the producers of Executive Action. Heard of it today. But I warned them in writing before they bought the books and I have their purchase in their correspondence. Thanks to LIFE it is legal fact that use in court does not take my copyright away. There may be some trouble over this but others now have an interest in suing because I have a verbal agreement with them and a written commitment both ways subject to agreement on final terms and such. If they stole Executive Action from SDMCE, why not anything from anyone?

I can't afford the Woodstein book but I may have to get it for the reasons you suggest. However, my slight treatment of that to this point is quite separate from that kind of account. I'm just putting together the case and on a few infrequent occasions have made non-specific references to refusals. I'm on the beginning of the hottest now, had begun with the interruption of the first call. If I can remember all I have that is relevant, I think it will stack without trouble, but there will be no comparison in attention, assuming I can get the book out, which is far from probable. I'm reserving weaving that together for an epilogue which will tick it all off with what you have enough copies of to know that the only really major media I didn't approach was ABC. After the case is put together and documented is the time, and if there is a publication and there is interest in reprint, I'd probably agree to having that cut out, thus the references, few as they are, where they fit. Any opinion? But I guess that when I can I'll have to get that book. Maybe I'll borrow one from someone like Lesar. He is bringing me McCord's Thursday. Bud never got and sent. As of now, my only intended epilogue ref to W & B will be re L&W and Mullen. Unless I decide to do it with Mullen and use Baker.

Your points about the little red book are, of course, valid. In one place understated. The criticism heaped upon it by those who have read it is worse.

I did not think this would be taken ~~as~~ ^{as} ridicule of that. The entire content will be ridicule of GL, if I have my way entirely or close to entirely restricted to facsimile reproductions of the transcripts and of those copies of official texts I've been able to get. This includes those of 5/22/73, press conferences 32-5, NAB, Chicago Ex Club, ~~AP~~ AP mg eds and a number of others.

Where people would connect the two, I think they would understand that the title is ridicule of GL, not of Mao. I feel, perhaps from prejudice in favor of the idea, that not even a nut would think that an entire nation would take the kind of content this would have as anything any people, no matter how blighted they may be believed to be, would pay the slightest attention, leave alone orient their lives around, this stuff of Nixon's, including the rape of the tongue. And when it is Nixon contradicting Nixon that will be bracketed, I this will be even more obvious.

I do believe that ~~while~~ while it is never written about, the average American now has a considerable respect for both Mao and the Chinese. Only the Buckley and Birch types are today exceptions. Of the many factors causing this, and I believe there are many, like the success of the regime along precisely the lines you tick off, one of enormous impact was the telecasting of GL's desecration of that ancient land. The TV coverage showed us for the first time what it really is and there is no amount of snide commentary that could change this. In my recollection, there was remarkably little that was prejudicial. Where it was, it was insignificant, like on people clearing snow. All the reporting was positive on the points you make and I don't think the average American has forgotten it.

Maybe I'm wrong, but I think the average person will see that Richard is nothing like the real chairman and comes off very badly with the comparison even if there is no single quotation from the real.

Please give this a little more thought because it does trouble me. The reaction you suggest is the last I'd want. And the only question is not whether the book would be a success. There are some ways one does not want success.

Especially if you can think of something that might make more apparent to the more unsophisticated that the title itself is a spoof of GL, saying he can't stand in the shadow of a real leader.

By the way, within the past week I saw some TV footage that seems to indicate that both Mao and Chou have aged much since the Nixon visit. Chou is still spry for a man of his years, but he seemed less steady about to me.

Perhaps a short preface expounding the obvious, that the American people will not be carrying these sayings of chairman Richard around and studying them to pattern their lives and build their society upon them? *show an apt quote from Mao*

We are temporarily delayed because Howard has to go to Gainesville to locate quarters for the coming school year. He needs inexpensive ones.