

Dear Jim,

Sidelights, new WG indictments

3/20/74

With a few minutes between the early-morning work and awakening Lil and the a.m. news, now that you have understood the news about Bernie, let me add to it the fascinating possibilities it and Rothblatt's representation of De Diego only holds because of the new indictments - and what is omitted from them.

Remember how loudly Rothblatt protested after Hunt subverted his first clients, all the Cubans. Remember also that he claimed to have had a viable defense and that he could not be part of their copping a plea. I assume that he had a reason and a basis. And I assume that this included knowledge of what you have understood and probably more, much more. And that this can hold considerable embarrassment for everyone else.

Remember also that his new client was part of those things. And has not been charged with them whereas they are at least as criminal as that with which ~~they~~ he has been charged. In some ways more so.

It is Rothblatt who presided over the interview with the NYTimes in which Barker started to say a little, the first public statements.

I have written earlier about the nature of some of Rothblatt's cases. I think it can be said that he has handled some of interest to a CIA faction, the right wing. I have been and remain interested that of all the good criminal lawyers available and in Washington or in Miami, these Cubans reached all the way to New York and got him when to begin with they had no way of paying him and when so many other lawyers were passed over in the process. Somehow or through someone (maybe Hunt) they were directed to him.

The odds are too much against the parlay, that Rothblatt of all lawyers would be the one who first defended all the Cubans and that of all lawyers he is the one upon whom De Diego fixed now. Or that De Diego has any way of paying him now. Now Rothblatt can't expect to get any hushmoney originating with CREEP. Or, he is not worried about getting paid or expects not to be. Either possibility is in itself fascinating, as is any clandestine payment, for all the possibilities seems to be limited.

This is to say that Rothblatt's clients are not limited to De Diego. He serves some undisclosed interest(s).

Whatever interest(s) Rothblatt serves, I would be willing to assume that he will put up a vigorous defense. But how can he defend a man caught red-handed, so to speak?

There seems to be only one way that holds any possibility of success. That one way also serves other interests. It is to tell not only the truth but the whole truth, including about crimes not charged. I think he will in one way or another defend De Diego by laying out in full what he can of the undisclosed crimes of the Plumbers at least insofar as De Diego if not all the Cubans were involved.

Here I see two things: that it can't hurt the spooks and that it can't but hurt Nixon and his former honchos.

Spilling the Chile beans, so to speak, would be just part. I am sure that on the way back from Fielding's they burgled the NAACP offices in New York City, for one example. And there are other jobs partly leaked and probably some not yet leaked.

One of the factors that should not be overlooked here is how simple it is to make out a prima facie case. All one needs is readily available: the airline tickets these guys had. The means of obtaining them and the one who obtained all are known. Checking could have been done by the FBI by phone. Whether they did or didn't it will be quite a story.

Out of time. In connection with this consider the ramifications of the Gray letter I sent you. If you want the enclosure, I'll send it.

Other relevant considerations include what John Dean can say, what has been suppressed about CIA (that I have), the St. Clair defense, which is openly the defense of the guilty, the open fight with Congress and last night's new developments in questioning, really pointed questions in tandem, indicating collaboration between CBS and NBC reporters.