

Dear Jim,

9/20/74

A note on how the executive news (TV) mind works. Merely a record I share.

A month ago I took an almost complete xerox of WW IV to ABC News in DC. They were interested. The decided in NYC was to return after Labor Day. What they did not tell me then is that they have what they call an investigative man. They put him on it. They did not tell me this nor did he or they ask me a single added question. I could not put pressure on them and I could not let time fly without some reading. So, each time I could I contrived a legitimate reason for going there or getting JL to phone. No problem getting through. The sincerity of the interest on the news level is apparent. (My first visit, to have been maybe 5 mins., lasted over an hour.)

First I went back with the final pages, etc. That was also a very good meeting. Gave me an excuse to introduce Lesar. More silence.

There is a point in the text where I reason that one of the possible explanations for giving this transcript to me is Nixon's use, for his justification and the defense of his honchos. Last excuse was to ask Lesar to phone with page citations from Bantam transcripts Nixon's tapes (101, 163 as I recall). This led to their telling him what the present situation is. It apparently hangs on substantiation of my relations with Russell. The word he got is that bureau chief would call. He did, much later. I told him he was welcome to entire file but that copying it was beyond me. reminded him I'd asked him to send someone because there was so much that was also relevant. As we talked and I mentioned substantiation, apparently what they wanted was some proof that Russell didn't believe WR. They put it in exaggerated form. But I mentioned his pre-death Cox b'cast and said I had a Post report. Could I please send that? They couldn't phone Cox's DC office and get the text? Great investigators! They could not have been in touch with Russell's former adm. assistant in the past month? He is easy to find, a young lawyer in practise in Georgia who remembers as I do, or did last year. So, I copied that, a few other things, like Russell's break with LBJ and a few of his xxx letters to me and made a special trip into town to mail at the P.O. on the chance it would get out yesterday and be received today. And be satisfactory.

News indeed! They've been toying with what by any rational ~~standards~~ standard is several major exclusive stories for a month, meaning I'm hungup on any other electronic media approach meaning that I'll have to try for another if they don't now go for it when in effect the whole thing, except for my (legally) anthological use and own writing becomes public domain. Great time for sale!

Meanwhile, we still have no books. Two ruined sigs not replaced. No paper! Shortage and strike. Last word, yesterday, enough located out of town and to be trucked in.

Gutenberg had it easier!

HW