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Js, HR only,

12/14/76

Strange ironies, strange coincidences, strange perspectives in the best of possible worlds - for some.

Jim saw Bud this afternoon. He phoned me at Bud's request to be John Alden. Chuckling all the way to the bank, if there is to be a ~~walk~~ walk.

The coincidence has two parts, one Bud's supposed friendship with Downing, the other that Downing still has a short while to redeem himself or in years to come to live with himself. With all the insanity I can't escape it, it was on my mind this morning, and I did write Bud hoping that he might get out of his own head long enough to see straight. I did this while awaiting the mail. It was not as late as usual for the Christmas season so I did not get to mail the letter.

So what is this big thing that Bud can't pick up his own phone and ask me about? Would I be willing to speak to speak to Tip O'Neill?

About how disastrous it would be for Gonzalez to be the chairman of the new committee in the coming session.

Of course, I said, if I do not have to invite myself in.

Bud must be desperate about Gonzalez. Impotent. Detached from all reason to think that the Speaker would be content to ask but one question on such a subject. Or that if asked - assuming I waited to be asked - the questioning would be restricted to but one question when the largest single appropriation for a committee in the history of the Congress also will be in the Speaker's mind.

Why did he not ask me himself?

Well, he thought it might be easier if Jim did it. Still chuckling with all chins.

I do not think it will happen. I think there will come a rational moment when Bud realizes that the odds are I will not have to volunteer anything, will be asked. On the other hand, he may have that much hate and care about ~~me~~ nothing else.

There was not a thing in the message to me except Gonzalez. A good question but for one of decent concern hardly all.

There is already a stink about the spending of \$1500000 in so short a period of time, also what I wrote Bud about. With nothing to show for it. I do mean nothing in the sense of worse than nothing. Except a few vacations, family visits, PSE and xerox rentals and the like. They have to be so diligent in wasting they are going to be without money for the payroll before the end of the session and then there will be a period before which any appropriation can be enacted - after the committee's life is renewed, assuming that. Grasshoppers! And for what?

I did talk to Gardner briefly today. He had to go up there for a press conference. Rather late in the day for one. Not that the news was worth evening TV but too late for if it were it. They have selected two subordinate chief investigators, in the sense of investigators, not lawyers pretending to be. Guess what - both black. Butter in blacks. Sprague told Jim and me that he would avoid the FBI types but would seek out retired cuty cops. In black that spells Tom. Not Sam ~~Spade~~ Spade. Almost certainly Sambo. Frightful, but the immobilizing of the black members. Unless they tumble.

George appears not to be aware of it but I told him that these people had no idea how to be Congressional investigators and would waste more than a good, definitive beginning would require in nothingness. There must have been a subliminal effect or an editorial directive. Today I asked him what they have to show for it. He came up with nothing. Maybe he'll follow that up. I did tell him to get the transcript of their one public session. He was out of town then. If he did not see a story I would show him one. I do not expect this but I did offer and I can produce. For whatever good that would do O'Neill, if he invites, or the Post it ~~prints~~. In a letter I received today it was spelled "weard." *ALL*