

Dear Jim,

2/19/74

FEB 23 1974

If I can judge my own adjustment to adversity, I think that reconciling myself to those chores that mean interruptions and formerly frustrations had been important in leading me to where they seem not to worry me at all. There may be those who might argue that exploding is healthier but I find it easier and I think better to take it as it comes. I figure what time I have and what I can best do in that time and then try.

Today because of the phone I let the fire of green trash go out so often I have to sit by it and tend it until I have the stones hot again for I am determined to keep going without the furnace when Lil is not home. As a matter of fact, I feel a little good about having been able to do that this winter.

This is by way of saying that your two mailings, one with the Hearst dupes and the other with the valuable letter of 2/14, came today. I've read the letter and the clippings are in the file of them I now use as waiting-for-Lil work, after which I read the remainder in free moments. I've enough time for a letter.

As you clearly realize, I'm into a tricky thing that involves complexities ranging from preserving my integrity to being around if and when the right moment comes. It is in providing an independent and dispassionate judgement as you here do that you are exceedingly helpful. I'm pretty much alone on this because Lesar has offered no advice and when I've sought it he has merely said "OK" or something like it and I don't want to force. He is, of course, fully informed and in finding time for checking more than helpful. He has just bought a 1962 DC city directory for \$5.00, checked the things he knows interest me and may have come up with new materials. Do you know of a Near East report(s)? Located in a CIA building in central DC- 1717 H NW? (I suspect without my own checking until 1750 was built.) Lil persistently undervalues herself in these matters and prefers not to offer advice so I get no evaluation from her.

If you could not "tell from your reply just how you interpreted his note" then I feel that perhaps Hunt hasn't. In all you say you are right. There are a few instances in which I'm inclined to go farther. My last letter held a further testing. I rather expect he will now say nothing, leaving that to his lawyers unless they clear him. He seems to be under rather tight control (to me).

My belief that he has an ongoing deal goes back to his Ervin appearance. Your evaluation of his most recent photographs agrees. There is an added dimension if you caught his on-camera words and manner on TV from Florida right after release.

Try a little more subtlety on his remark on Szulc. It does mean what you say and silence since then confirms this interpretation. But can it mean more? STM(W)ish hint: can it be the answer he knows I want guised harmlessly. Can he be saying that Szulc was his internal adversary, of the opposing wing?

We agree on the unlikelihood of his not reading either Szulc or Woodward's review.

The only possible explanation I think has to be a shrink if it is true. He sure needs one! Deal or no deal, he has to know because of the possibility of civil suits, where there is no deal. And that will touch his god, aka \$\$\$\$\$.

In all of this, please do not lose sight of one quintessential thing: this man is in great danger. The only deal that is of interest and value to him is with GL. That one he surely seems to have and to be satisfied with. Aside from what he telegraphs, there is all that \$\$\$ so greatly in excess of fees through Bittman, an admitted \$75,000 in cash and delivered right after a threat. However, where he can hurt powerful people - and may have already-ought never be forgotten. We may tell when the grand jury returns indictments. He can put it on all the top CIAers, without possibility of doubt because I have enough and he has to have more. I'm not certain which he would want to get. Helms, yes but Cushman and Walters, I don't know. Perhaps GL's deal controls here. Perhaps that other sick man now wants to get his former friends who dared suggest what each suggested about him.

Time running. Appreciate fully lag in papers. Always that way with N.O, papers. Also appreciate much the value of what you take time for. I was pretty sure you were scanning Post first, thanks.

The Hearst material I'll use for a change of pace, and glad you have the extras so it represents no copying.

If you know anyone who wants a dupe of the Rolling Stone Life Without Father, I got a dupe today, so don't copy.

I'll be sending a third-class packet when I can do some copying. Not sure you will want to read but suggest one of you find time. If you are interested, I'll send you 1 1/2 hours tapes of conversation.

Now that Smilin' Sam has made abdication official, I'm tempted to write the agent whose response to my July forecast was "tendentious." Best,