

FEB 1 1974

Dear Jim,

1/31/74

Your two fat and welcome mailings, one dated 1/28, the other including your letter of 1/25, came yesterday. I had a chance to read both ~~xxxx~~ while walking around in town on assorted chores, so they have been on and in the back of my mind for a day.

What an end there was to yesterday, with that new pinnacle in total dishonesty that is an unintended commentary on the true state of the nation. Each time I see him prove it all over again I find myself wondering that there can be a man as totally unaware of any truth or reality, as totally oblivious of everything he has done. It has the horrendous oppressiveness of Orwell and the spirit of all those orations at Nurnburg and the ~~Rizza~~ Rizza Palace.

Last night I had to stretch to six hours because I was getting too weary. This, of course, is the reason for all the typos and not reading what I do. I can't begin to do what I have undertaken and I can't leave go of what I'd like to abandon. Ray is an example. If I had the first time Bud doublecrossed me or Ray refused to help our first victory in the case, day before yesterday, would not have been.

I digress for this. In and of itself this victory means nothing. It is but a step, one. Psychologically it means much. As Caesar said, it was appropriate that Bud was in Switzerland skiing when it happened.

The victory took much of a day with Jim and more time after he left, including the enclosed letter to Ray, who has to do the right things the wrong way and is up to something like trying to screw up the guts to fire Bud and what that means.

Jim is not a kid but this is all new to him. He is good, very ~~right~~ bright but still without experience and hobbled by the legal education. So, I was on the phone on all the early calls, making a few suggestions. He picked it up very well and very fast and by the middle of the day was handling himself with the press better than Bud, with all his experience, does.

This made me reflect a bit. It may sound egotistical, but the few victories we have had in court were all mine. The first, the one that Garrison threw away, for the suppressed evidence, cost what ~~will~~ and I will never forget. It was like a sick novel. I had to fight everyone, beginning with Garrison and half his staff and ending with Salandria. Then I had to do the work of the "expert" (which is a book-length part of Post Mortem) and much of that of the lawyers. We won and Garrison abandoned it!

FOI you know. Now this. And I know of nothing that had been withheld from the Commission that any of us has that I did not get.

One would think that others would learn and be helpful instead of jealous and trying to hurt. Every once in a while Bud lets something slip to Jim and he, in turn, sometimes decides to tell me. (With him it is not a slip.)

Bud is hurt by the treatment he is getting from Ray. I rather suspect it would have come much earlier if it hadn't been for me. And Bud has kept the few things that could have had meaning from me. Imagine that! Well, I'm the self-elected heavy and I lean and every once in a while it produces something. Like the phone numbers.

Bud is also, secretly, hurt by his own incompetence.

Well, I had the beginnings on these numbers and I'd figured out what they mean long ago and had communicated that to Bud and Jim, so one of my worries is that when Ray finally gives the numbers to Caesar, is he giving feedback? Anyway, More than two years before we got this from Ray, I went to New Orleans and came back with a ~~pset~~ pset of pictures I took of the place the more ~~xxxx~~ provocative number was located. The one Foreman referred to as "disconnected." So, Bud asked Jim how the hell I could do it, for he remembered ~~xxx~~ I showed him the pictures and described the place and its history.

How did I do it? By not ignoring what he had ignored and had withheld from me! I had to get those leads from Ray and through censorship, which took quite some time and effort. And not a little guile by both of us. But it is a helluva way to work, a limiting and time-wasting way. The most terrible part is having to work around and to overcome the problems made by our own people, like the hungup Bud.

I am without doubt that if I had been able to see Ray more often and as often as I should we'd know much more. But Bud made it impossible and actually wasted vast sums in ego-tripping. Caesar and I had to do all the real work in spite of and over him. Jim did a first-rate legal job and unlike most lawyers, was willing to listen to the advice of

years or practical experience and some based on political thinking and considerations rather than be restricted by what he had been taught in law school and by what he knew Bud would prefer. It is to take nothing away from him to say that much of the legal thinking is mine and this part began before he was really on the case and even before he took his bar exams. The wording of the petition is his, not mine. I read only the first couple of parts after he revised them. I read and criticized all first drafts. (It was not time alone that motivated me not to read the revisions. I said what I had to say and he had to make his own mistakes and I was worried only about careless error, like happened in the first two hearings in Memphis, from which I'm sure he learned.) I do make an effort not to dominate the young, merely to point them and let them walk alone. They are the next wave, so to speak, and must be self-reliant.)

I went out of my way not to make the point that is obvious in the decision the text of which we have not yet seen. Jim will come to see it on his own. There are countless causes under the law for the hearing we ask. Most lawyers would pick one or two, those they felt strongest, and leave it at that, on the general theory that it is much work not to and that judges will resent the extra work great length requires. Jim listened to me and presented a book. Literally this length. I succeeded in getting him to see that our problem is not the law but making the position of the judges tenable. One aspect was to give them a means of doing what we wanted done without clobbering the State of Tennessee again. We had to give them a political out. This is what they accepted and ruled on.

But all this kind of thing takes enormous time investment. It is done at the cost of what can't be, for both Jim and me. This is but one of many cases.

(It comes at a good time for Jim, who has come to be regarded by their friends as some kind of nutty Quixote. And for long-suffering May, who was being openly needled by her professional colleagues over what her husband was doing. She has gotten a great lift from it, Jim says. I'll see myself Sunday when they come up with their papers for Lil to prepare their tax returns. With Bud's secretary, a fine and exceedingly proficient woman from the Philippines.)

Not that you need it, I'm attempting to explain the terrible haste with which I do everything. There are many things that I am certain can waste time that I feel I have to do. Last evening I spent an hour and a half on the phone when Policoff called me for the first time since our fight, his reason being that Lesar was not home. It gave me a chance to learn what that particular underground is up to and knows and I just felt I'd better take the time. This I learned that Lifton is not currently trying to steal anything of mine from him or through him. I suppose Lifton exhausted what he regarded as that possibility with Jerry long ago and is trying the new ones. This is current and was timely because of the Hollywood overtures I have had and because I had hardly finished talking to Jerry when the Hollywood-connected friend I had asked to act as my agent did, finally, call me back, 2-3 weeks after I had written him about the attempted plagiarism. He sounds hopeful.

However, I have read each graf as I wrote it, so I hope you won't have the trouble with this. The ellipsis is not as easy to explain.

You are without comment on some so I am without understanding of whether or not it was inscrutable.

In part I was talking about the uncharged but known. And about all who know and have been silent, including those with the responsibility of not being silent. The he-man in particular was doing what the mentor of the devilish interests wrote about for all the world as though it were heroism rather than hosebreaking.

Agreed on you Russell. In time this will become more clear to you. Sorry on the Senator. One of the problems here is that I can't remember what carbons I send. One the one hand I want to inform and to get feedback and on the other I want to avoid overloading.

Getting and sending The Coven is no sweat. I really think it would be more economical for me to get and mail than for you to take time seeking. Lesar says he thinks he can still get the others. I may get a dupe on one from Kabak. If he xeroxes the other, he can make 2. As of now, after reading it, I don't think The Sorcerers is important. It helped round the picture you'll get better in The Coven. Haven't cracked Diabolus. If you want me to get it it will take little time. I'll do it when I'm near the wholesaler's place of business, which is fairly often.

X

You owe nothing on the last xeroxing. There is a matter of something less than a dollar remaining. Not sure of the exact sum, but your bill overpaid the cost of both and I have repaid Cesar.

Check on PH. I'll carbon you. Thanks for the clear thinking.

Hope today will leave the time to go over all those fine enclosures. Last night I caught up on reading the stories I have been clipping for several days. I'll be waking 'til soon and will file them, go over the paper and clip and then, hopefully, benefit from your kindnesses in taking all this time. I would also like to hope that because of the commercial success of Executive Action, there may be some prospect of putting some of it to current good use. There seems to be some new interest and it is possible that I will have meetings with some of the people. My friend indicated the belief he will be able to arrange it when he returns from a coming trip to England, perhaps in part while he is away.

I got enough wood sawed yesterday to last several days so I won't be doing any of that after sunup. We have had exceptionally mild weather for January, which helps. But despite the heat wave some piles of snow remain nearby. It also takes time to feed the fire, especially with a large raised hearth (we could sleep on it in an emergency). But the economy, particularly with the 50% increase in fuel oil costs, makes it necessary. And I need the exercise. I haven't taken time to check the records, which would serve no purpose, but I am certain I have cut our consumption in half. I haven't even turned the furnace on this morning. I will in a moment, before I rouse Lil. And when I take her into town I'll turn it off again. It has been entirely off every night this winter. ~~Even~~ Even when the nights went to near zero. It can't be over 40° now but with a tight house the temperature was not far below 60 when I got up. It is not really too Spartan, in some ways it is helpful (no dry noses), and it helps us cope with the tough situation we have.

Unless it is in today's, you will note that WxPost has been silent about disclosures of CIA tapping even of WH conversations. Appreciate clips.

Later. I have written PH about Curry, thanks, and made other suggestions.

The 1/27 Chotiner clip was prescient. Nothing I saw in papers or heard on radio about his accident. And yesterday he went to that great public-relations man's dream in the great beyond where he will await so many!

Your 1/25 is entertaining, informative and persuasive. I have neglected the Taoist philosophy and it has this over Occam: it has been longer tested. So I do lend an ear to Lao Tze and his current disciple, to whom thanks for the time.

It is a real problem for me, in part because of my character and in part because the Occam simplification comes naturally to me. And there is a kind of invisible caution I do practise, for most recent example, in telling JL just day before yesterday to prepare but do nothing in public for another planned legal move. I said until I've cashed the check that is coming and the bank owns it as its own. (I also suggested that a small mortgage-burning party would be in order because I think that with what has been coming in from the books we'll be able to liquidate it entirely.) I think I'm probably less incautious than I may appear to be. However, I am also aware that I backburner these concerns as a general practise and in part because they tend to dominate thinking and preclude work. It is and was in consideration of the potential that I have duplicates off everything of consequence out of my possession.

I might add to your reasoning that unbalance in GL's present posture can in itself cause reaction. You may recall my forecast of the nature I expect his newest counter-attack to take. A natural for him.

I do need this kind of reasoning impressed upon me and I thank you for the time as well as the interest. I tend to not consider these factors and I should not ignore. I guess I have only a sub-conscious awareness of them and their potential.

The waif has again fallen silent, and the timing is interesting in still another way: much is going on there and I still don't know why she is where she is. It was interesting to me that atypically she was aware of current events in her former habitat. I am by no means certain that I know the reason for her departure from there. I did think you would find several entertainments in her last. In any appraisal, do not ignore psychological problems and an unusual intelligence. She is really sharp. And cunning, despite the outbursts. Some of them may be for my benefit only. However, they have the ring of her nature and ways.

I have made no effort to learn the secret recipe for the Boston Beans for several reasons. One is the silence of the initial introduction. I suspect there may have been a partaking and that may now be embarrassing. Another is there is no reason to believe interest in me. I do believe there is something in that oven, but I just don't have the time to indulge the curiosity or the means without the help that is not forthcoming from the friend of the past who was the one who referred or the newer one who for so long has not returned the valuable files he got.

There is another ingredient with the bean pot: I had a very sharp seasoning I did offer. There may be fear that it is too strong.

There is also a strangeness to the alternative literaries in that area. I see only a little, am getting a collection of selections (not from the pot, who'd promised), and believe it holds the possibility of the most sophisticated of the renegade-type ploys. This is to say, unrecognized renegade.

I have not considered any of the orders except one in the light you cast. Maybe a comple. but one in particular, with an odd (to me at least) letterhead and name. The response has NOT been followed by any orders. There has been a change in them recently. More from bookstores. Mailed four to a L.A. bookstore this a.m.

Your timing was good. This a.m. when he phoned for other reasons, I suggested to JL that he discourage the long calls from JP on the ground that they are not of real worth and do take time. He agreed. Meanwhile, I'll see if there is an increase in them to me.

Old players on new scene: it is remarkable. More than are well known, too. In large part I believe casting was from approval of previous performances. Those who can afford old pros may feel more secure with them. (St. Clair can be considered this way.) That Specter didn't get signed on can be because of local situations. He has his own troubles.

The list would grow if you apply the qualifications of your second P.S. graf, "expertise, experience, point of view." Take the period between the two Nixons and ignore the Commission and you have a monopoly, with the Commission even more so. The Hundley type. And what connections!

Your history of the Paracels is quite informative. I had only general knowledge. Your analysis of what GL is saying is right on the nailhead. It is his declaration of capability and disposition. It is also a kind of bribe: this is what I'll do if you do what you are talking about.

However, I also think we should not ignore the possibility of a military testing of the new GL.

And as a prelude to the newest of his hang tough periods, it is a particularly ominous incident. It also is if we have so little control over the Saigoneses for it means they can always trigger a new Gulf of Toking and that is always the last resort of the cornered ~~tyrant~~ tyrant.

Other comment separately.

Thanks,