

6/4/72

Dear Js,

Over the years it has become almost a fetish with me to be on time. The more I have wanted to do without enough time the more aware I become of the preciousness of time, and with this realization I have come to regard the time of others, not matter how I think they spend it, as valuable to them. A friend was due here at 9 a.m. to help make a repair on the swimming pool. I was ready, with everything we might conceivably need in a waiting wheelbarrow, but he is not here. So, with the reading of Lansky completed last night (it has a few interesting things on Nixon, Dewey and friends) and the Sunday paper done with, a sort of update on N.O. and Gervais, aside from what I have sent in carbons, until friend comes.

I think I sent you notes of my observations as I read the excerpts from the affidavits as you sent them to me from the papers. So, you know my belief that Gervais had to have been under enormous pressure is not new. It is fortified, and because I think I know enough about him to form an opinion, which does not mean it is a correct opinion, I have come to think that his great reluctance from the beginning was not to protect the crooks but Jim, and he did to the degree he could. I can show this from the transcripts, I am sure. I also believe that when faced with a choice of unacceptables, whether or not he then anticipated doing what he has now done, he opted the only one he could survive. He could not have found that kind of survival a happy choice, but the alternative was not surviving except in jail, possibly for the rest of his life.

I also think that if the crooks he hurt think or consult their lawyers, there will be no hit on him. If they do not, he may be killed. But what he has done is lay the basis of a defense for them, and I think the only one possible, entrapment. Meanwhile, if they go after him, he can now defend himself and escape whatever it is they were holding over him. If they pursue him on perjury, if they got him to execute any kind of oath, he can counter with subornation of perjury and, I think make it stick in state courts. He is quite capable of walking into Jim's office and filing charges, and it would astound me if Jim did not accept them. Here his absolutely insane earlier performance could be interpreted favorably by judge and jury, even to the zaniest, asking for a change of venue.

New Orleans us sui generis. Thus Rosemary James, who actually held nightly meetings to indoctrinate the visiting press and plot the next day's assault on the prosecution in the Shaw case, is the one who is exposing the government and playing Pershing straight. And the TV stations that hated Jim are also playing it straight.

I have written about 8,000 words, intending to cut, and have just gotten to the point where I'll go into this affidavit case. In retrospect, the thought coming last night while not paying attention to the evening TV news and earlier, while mowing the grass to discourage an incursion of snakes, there is in this a book that could be profitable in N.O. alone if I had the means of paying for it. I could complete it in a week, it would be both honest and sympathetic while critical, could humanize the whole mess and make it comprehensible, and would be a solid blow against government corruption. I can't come out and ask a subsidy of it, but I have written a couple of letters that may make people think it could serve legitimate as well as defense purposes. Once it is written and edited, the major time required would be for the retyping for offset reproduction. The printing and binding would take less than a week.

What I had in mind in the writing I have done to this point is make a record that I could use in later writing, if and when I write about what happened in New Orleans, to use as the opener for that. I didn't include everything, didn't include detail I could (easily added were there to be a book). Yet to this point I have about 8,000 words, a third of a book. It is, I think, of entertaining content. You see, I have always visualized a movie and perhaps a TV series with Gervais as the prototype. In fact, I proposed it to him in April 1967. He declined it then on the ground it would get him killed (so much for his fearlessness, if he has less than most men or wouldn't be in what he is and has been). In fact, with what I had and what you filled in, for this I had enough. What now comes out will be more than a minimal need of the rest. As you can see, I have seen what the others missed in tracing the name, a policy involvement, not one of crime-fighting.

* Regardless of what else comes out, and WWL told me they'll have more and independently I learned that Rosemary James is out of N.O., so there should be more still, I have enough to put meat on the bones, my files on I, Spy and my own cases vs the DJ and Kleindienst in particular. With Kash or without, this is regmaine. It could be much more than the story of a fabout type and an entrapment/frame-up for political purposes. It could be a thoriughly documented expose of criminality in Justice. And the bestiality of its informant/activist informant programs.

In short, this is the rare case where an honest book legitimately defense probable crooks. Without moral judgements, as comparisons with national policy, it is legitimate. If I anticipate no possibility of subsidy for such a book, I'd not be unwilling to accept it for I'd make no compromises and the doctrine is set both in this writing to this point and contemporaneously in the spot analyses I did of the affidavits and the situation.

Louisiana News, which dominates what is available in N.O., has, if my recollection is not incorrect, its origin in such kind as are the defendants. I am without doubt that Garrison was not taking graft, and I have little or no possibility of addressing the pinballers except in terms of entrapment. And with Hoover having accepted the hospitality of their peers, even having a special squad in Miami to keep him from repeating the mistake of being photographed with them, no problems there.

With this kind of late start, I don't know if I'll be able to do as I'd planned later today, go to the annual booksellers' convention in DC. I have a tentative date from Thursday or Friday. I had other things in mind, but this is one I might propose if I find the right people.

Aside from informing you and making a record of the possibility, this also alerts your minds in case you get any ideas, and your eyes, in case you see anything.

I even have Partin stuff I can work in, the framing of Hoffa, an affidavit he prepared and then backed out on, a confession form which he could not withdraw. There was a court reporter, lawyers, etc, all the proper trapping, and I have a copy from my old friend Bill Lobel. And I have a first-person confession from one of the guys Walter Sheridan tried to reach on tape and another verbally and verbal confirmations from the two who set up the meeting. This become relevant because it was a different kind of framing of Garrison and because it figures in the State/Gervais-Sheridan thing in Chicago you might remember. And same judge as in State case, the guy who ran against Garrison, O'Hara.

Relevant contents limitless.

I have the more recent Lattimer writings if you want copies. I can probably get my friend Jerry to xerox and mail if you'd like. He'll be here next weekend, and hopefully, a friend whose fiancée is going to order a book I wouldn't know that can be sent from which I should get something the following week.

Two expert on swimming pools came at the point at which I stopped, had everything ready in 20 minutes, spent the next three hours learning that they had done the incredible, reversed the pipes, finally listened to the common labor and got it working. But only with the loss of water it will take a week to replace. Anyway, it'll be pure enough to use, whether or not as sediment-free as we'd like! Happy days! Lil's happy therapy and my cooling off. But no ABA today.

Best,