

Dear Jim,

12/17/73

The wind roars, the snow ~~surfs~~ ^{swirls} in great white clouds and the uneasy feeling of the early morning lingers, the disquiet discouraging any effort at writing. I've spent the day catching up, always a filler. I suppose part of this being unsettling is because I sort of anticipated it. We haven't had a really bad winter storm in many years and it was about due. Then, from watching TV weather reporting, I'd observed patterns, one of which is that when the lows coming up from the south are coastal, watch out!

Although I remembered clearly that once under similar conditions when I'd used the car to break a track and it got mired it stayed frozen in the lane for eight days, so firmly attached to the ground that after a thaw it took two large John Deere's two hours to break it loose, I decided that just in case I'd take a chance. It is downhill going out, the lane is straight, and I have built a shoulder on the low side. Slipping and sliding I did make it, did buck through the pile thrown against the end of the lane by the snowplow, which had been through, and did get back in by managing to stay in the same tracks. Felt good. Until late in the morning, when the wind got up and drifting started. About 2 p.m. the fuel-oil truck made it. Those great machines, with their dual rear tires and high clearance, can get around. He broke a new track and I walked out through snow by then two feet deep and found the snow did not deter the mail. Two hours later those tracks were completely obliterated. And by 8 p.m. there was one continuous four-foot drift as far down the lane as I could see with floodlights on. So, with the daytime temperature staying below freezing, I guess we'll be in for a while. It'll take a bulldozer or a backhoe to open the lane now and unless Lil's boss pays for it, his office will remain closed. And we snowbound. With another low off the Carolina coast, it may be through Christmas. Or longer.

With the big decision now past, I guess I can fill you in a little. About a year ago, right after Je xeroxed those Who's Whos, you may remember that all of a sudden many pieces started falling in place around here and I did the obvious checking, with startling confirmation and nothing else. During the interval I've been travelling only when I could not avoid it and then had more to do than I could each day. However, the day I was in that TV studio with Lane and there was no blood on the floor when we left, STM(E) went visiting for me and brought back a new message. You have the short notes on my overly-hasty following up. I gave the essence to Lesar immediately and we arranged to see Bud before he left for the day because it was apparent to us that he has a client who could have an interest, one I've never mentioned, Wolfson. It was to keep this date that my time was too condensed. Jim had told Bud enough, without disclosing enough for him to go off on his own or with his nuts.

Bud placed a call immediately, but it was too late in the day and the fellow lawyer he phoned down south did not answer the phone. Jim and I wanted him to make direct contact but he generally does things his own way and never remembers that events indicate we are generally right. No, I'm wrong: it was more than a week later. Jim told him enough without my being there and I did the checking next trip to town. Anyway, we lost more than a week, one that could have been crucial because there had been no vote.

It seems like that campaign of Ford's against Douglas, demanding impeachment, was not all that spontaneous. It began with a far-right book by a one-time-only publisher who is connected with everything since become important, The New Majority Book Club. Even the precisely correct phoney addresses. Caddy was the boss and stockholder and Hunt one of the incorporators. Mullen's office and Mullen's phoney address for a cover. Hunt still CIA. Nice? Author Alan Brownfeld, former Internal Security Committee, farrighter. Dossier on Douglas.

I had forgotten it, but in COUP I had correctly interpreted the campaign against Fortas as part of Nixon's fascist revolution. I've had no time to do the research on that campaign, which would be of greater southern interest today than Douglas. And while I have a copy of the Douglas book now, Jim having gotten from Library when I asked and xeroxed, I don't have time to go to the right libraries and study the debates and compare texts. Nor does Jim. We do not have the bright kids who could do this available, either.

Bud did speak to his counterpart the morning after I saw him. He then phoned me to tell me that Sherrill would probably be the one used to check me and my stuff out and that I would hear. I did get a call and it was encouraging. Then I got a letter telling me that Sherrill is tied up for a couple of weeks completing a book. Bud interpreted this letter as a brushoff. I did not and responded.

The man was away. When he returned he read my letter and replied, his letter getting here today. It apparently interested him more. He sent Sherrill a copy and said I'd be hearing from him soon.

I had not sent Sherrill a carbon not because I don't trust him but because a WG book is one he could be rushing to completion. And anticipating that he might be sent a copy, there was not much WG in my letter.

The Sherrill connection, I suppose, dates to his reporting days in Jacksonville.

The tragedy in all of this is that two or three years ago some help would have been available if Bud had not been the only one who could say anything. He did nothing rather than let someone else do what he could not. Someone connected with him, a pro who does some work for him, bumped into an old friend who asked what he was up to and told him. Old Fried said help could be had, how much could it take. Not knowing what to say, this guy reached deep and said maybe a quarter of a million. No eyes blinked. Possible. And there it ended.

When I was asked what I want, I said merely that I be able to continue this work and that provision be made for the subsequent use of my files, as a university archive, etc., which seems to have been one of the right things to say.

It may yet come to nothing. It is not yet close to something. Expressions of interest are without meaning in and of themselves.

However, it does seem that my normal approaches and reactions are the right ones for these people. I would not make glib promises, for example but instead, when confronted with the need for a spot opinion, immediately pointed out problems and broke them down into the easily possible and the probably impossible. I guess people used to soft soap go for honesty when honesty can be hurtful to the honest.

So, all I can now say is that whatever it is that might yet be is still alive.

If Sherrill has done a WG book and if I have what he does not, have seen and understood what he didn't, there may be problems. Sufficient unto that day...

Inherent in all of this is once again what the hell the FBI was doing when it was "investigating" Ford for the Congressional hearings on his confirmation.

I have written a chaoter on this on Gray/WG. It is the length of a short book.

This is the focus of earlier work of which you know and of unprinted work completed but you have not seen.

If Post Mortem could have come out and attracted attention when it was completed, the time of the Ned flap, there could have been a him-or-us situation between Hoover and the Kennedys, that is what is in it. And documented beyond even unreasonable questioning. The FOI suit in which I was my own lawyer and appear to have lost but actually won provided the missing link, in writing and official as anything can be.

But no liberals, no foundations, could ever be interested. A real try was made. Hutchins replied by giving me a free six month subscription to his center's publication!

(If I've been sending you ACLU carbons, perhaps you can now see the point of the needles, the honey not having been sweet enough.)

It would probably be safe to assume that there is much I do not know or suspect about The Writer and his past. However, by now I think it is apparent that I do know enough, do suspect enough and Jim and I both think-as do other lawyers who would not turn on, there being no immediate \$\$\$, like Hirschkop, who defended the Dallas Hunt brothers instead-have enough to go to court with on his illegal past. The potential is enormous. If I do not by any means have all, I have enough to show perjury and subornation, from what the ~~sp~~ papers did not use. Some is stamped not to be removed from the press gallery! People could not even give it away! The Congress is trying to cover this, almost overtly. That is the purpose of th Symington hearings, executive sessions. Thus they had to go after Andy St. George for his palpably improbable Harper's theory, the Martinez connection. When he took the expectable position they had all they need for a whitewash report. Besides, there was no need for an inside agent. So the report can be truthful anyway.

In all this skipping around, let me make another jump before I go to bed so that if I again waken early and feel clear in the head I can get back to work, let me leave another thought with you, the desire to read Compulsive Spy as soon as possible is not curiosity.

Post Mortem