

Dear Sol,

1/28/76

With the passing of the years it becomes increasingly warming to hear from old friends, especially compassionate ones. We hear from few now. We're unhappy not to have been able to see Kitty Clift. Charlie is in a rest home with arteriosclerosis. And since the summer memorial service for Cliff Durr in Washington, I guess that is all the contact. I saw Luke and we had a good visit in Washington 11/73, he talked again about coming up but hasn't.

I'm more pressed for time than usual because I'm going to write a new and different and fairly definitive book on the King assassination. However, I need help, there is a chance the friend interested in the book would advance the costs, but getting dependable part-time help here has not been successful. Yet there must be many former secretaries who would like a little interesting work while the kids are in school. But they are of a different generation, one with which we have little contact. Those with whom we do have been able to come up with none. This is necessary because Lil's tax work means much to her, as it should. She is truly superior and aside from the income, the only regular income, it gives her what she needs, a feeling of accomplishment. I tried to talk her into going into it on her own this year when she had a first-rate excuse, a cheap double-cross on her working conditions by a boss who does well because he has a monopoly, not because he is a good business man. He isn't. The net result will be to reduce what she can make for him and herself and perpetuate bad conditions she is getting too old and tired to continue tolerating. She'd do well on her own and would not exhaust herself. And I'd be freer to work within the limitations of the phlebotis. At my suggestion he built a small addition onto the office she manages for her to have as a private office and render what they call "executive service" at a higher rate and the more complicated returns in which she is the specialist, without all the distractions she had with the waiting room and the other employees all in the same small room. So, the klutz made the previous office into a waiting room and moved all the others into it. I was outraged. I told Lil that if she did not insist on keeping the bargain by her boss I'd simply refuse to provide her with transportation. There was a basis for this. I can't stand and I can't sit for long periods and there simply is no certainty under the old conditions now the continuing ones that I won't be there for an hour. But you know Lil. I think she felt an obligation to her boss. However, she is so good she trains his employees after he fails to prepare them fully. So some have developed an appreciation of and liking for her. Two of them who drive are providing her transportation. Fortunately it is only a little over a half-mile out of their way. They live farther out. They have declined to let her pay anything, too. Two nice married women with families. This means Lil will be working shorter hours, but don't be deceived. This still means long hours. And the real crunch hasn't started.

I had no more than started this when the reporter who interviewed me on the news show you saw called to arrange to call again Friday. They seem interested in a special. I am. I'm also working with Newsday, which soon will have a syndicated story based on my analyzing an exceptional situation correctly, developing the initial proofs without leaving here and turning them over to a reporter who has become a friend and is the old-fashioned kind of reporter. He has done remarkably well. He may edit the book if I can ever get to writing it. I got the first page done today and then the mail came and until it is cared for no more work. The mail also brings work and that can't accumulate or it becomes impossible. As it has with October and November material with which I can't now catch up.

Another friend is talking about getting me a subminiature pocket rather than small tape recorder so I can make notes and dictate writing while I walk and travel. It will be an asset because walking is the one exercise I'm permitted and it seems to be an indicated treatment. When the weather does not preclude, as yesterday and today, I walk up the mountain briskly, until I stagger, and then, at first carefully, walk back. But on a day like today, like WCBS said you are having in NYC, ice and snow, I could without feeling like a caged animal walk around in the house and dictate if I can get a way of getting it transcribed, your problem in a different way.

The medical part does worry me and with anxiety it sometimes gets like a self-feeding pile. I'm having to learn for myself what to do, what not to do, what probably doesn't mean anything, etc. I'm getting no real help from Group Health Association which by now is pretty clearly worried by a malpractice case. And there is a large one, going back and in the present. This developed because of their negligence. I reported the first symptoms twice and they were dismissed as another typicality of aging. Then they seriously underestimated the extent of the condition. More, they ignored the April illness, which may not have been pneumonia but a thrombosis. But if pneumonia, it turns out that phlebitis not uncommonly follows.

I don't know how you know so much about this illness but all you say is correct.

The friend with whom I'm engaging in a new book on the King assassination rather than about Ray arranged for me to see his internist. I was travelling to make a speech, used that getting to the airport and being part of the way to see Ray, then flew to New York, meeting this reporter in Nashville, worked until plane time and on the plane with him and was met by another reporter interested in JFK at LaGuardia. We worked in a bar until 2 a.m. The next morning I had breakfast with the book friend and then he took me to his internist. The obvious import of the questions he asked me shook me by telling what should have been done and wasn't. He also told me that I should have regular vascular consultations. GHA yesterday refused them. But I feel the need not only because as you remember I always was an ox but because now for the first time my hands and feet get cold and periodically I feel a little dizzy or unsteady. I've made an appointment with a local doctor and will have to let the protection we supposedly have from Group Health (at \$1200 a year!) go for the chance of getting real care. The NY internist wrote my doctor a letter my doctor had a week ago Monday. I wrote him a letter he had the next day. There was no response until he phoned me yesterday, with a real Nixonian stonewall approach. I presume they've gone through their counsel and have made their decision to admit nothing and do nothing, pretending that all is as it should be. I feel no remission and the NY doctor indicated the contrary. He is going to make a vascular referral after he consults those in NY he knows.

How we'll finance it I don't know but we now have no needs, thanks, and I am sure in the end we can by litigation. This presents the typical problem of the man without means. I have a wonderful young friend who is just starting practice who is handling other matters and to whom I've turned this over. He needs help we can't find, experts in the various fields now including this specialty. He is trying to collect the money due me where possible, two New York cases, too. Dell, which refused to respond to me and gypped me extensively, has given him a non-response that in the end will be helpful. He agrees after going over my files that there are several fraud cases. But he does not know New York law and needs a New York lawyer who will let him file in his name. It can't be you because that would compromise you if it goes to court. With what I have Dell would be crazy to permit that but they are rich, powerful, used to getting away with crookedness, and in the end may continue to stonewall. There is a case in Washington that requires a ~~stony~~ courtroom lawyer to help him. Edward Bennet Williams let the statute of limitations run on our second helicopter suit. By insisting that he do what I want - and it worked with the judge on this - we were able to establish that the statute under my interpretation had not run on a minute fraction at the end. By simply saying "no" until I got what I wanted, they settled out of court for enough to pay our mortgage off and then under conditions that made it tax free. It came to \$20-25,000. Williams whistled when my friend Jim told him, he couldn't believe it. Jim negotiated, they offered a \$5,000 out-of-court settlement, we turned it down, and Jim and I are no more than one man each with so many other obligations. However, with help we could proceed and there should be a comfortable end. I'm not afraid of Williams before a black Washington jury with the work I've done on the King case. He started dragging his feet when he learned I was writing about the Warren Commission. Warren was one of his best friends. The lawyer he put on the case had been Warren's law clerk and now has a relatively high, subcabinet post. Or, the law and the facts are my way. Only Jim needs help and we have no means, he or I.

However, I do try to take care of myself, I spent 7-8 hours in bed. I do the other things of which I know and avoid what I shouldn't. Thanks and our best,

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Jan 27, 1976

Dear Harold,

Of course, I excuse - if any excuse is needed - your typing. My handwriting problem is one of comparatively recent origin - the last 10 or 15 years. It flows from my impatience with the slowness of my handwriting as a process of communication. At AOL I dictated everything - either to a stenographer or to a dictating machine - and that went at the speed of my speech - which was pretty good. Then I came to the Court to work and found - to my horror - I would be without a stenographer and that the typists at the Court resented working from a dictating machine and - deliberately, I think - gave me back unintelligible copy. So I am reduced to handwriting my draft opinions and memos for the judge and then having them transcribed by our typist who can read them. And I've had to become an expert in deciphering the Judge's scrawl - which - believe it or not - is worse than mine. He, too, does most of his work in his own hand - if you can call his then marks a hand.

Your comments about my getting to be age when personal tragedies - losses of dear ones to death - and health problems - the troubles of advancing age - do begin to multiply. Just November I had a severe beginning with laryngitis which I ignored that became an upper

Respiratory infection with fever which bedded me down for a week and then ran the course of stuffed nose, running eyes, hoarseness, three kinds of coughs, inability to sleep because of the coughs and respiratory discomfort and over a month's hoarseness, nasal drip, post-nasal drip, etc. that lasted over a month. And in the last two weeks Freda got it and it ran the course with her excepting only the week long fever. And there is the worry about the aging and aged deer ones who are lucky if they can live "independently". I'm now health and financial advisor for both my sisters, one 68 and the other 70. And there is my 89 year old cousin in L.A. who I helped get into an old-age home (an excellent one) in Nereseda, California and whom I've been bringing a visit every two months or so and I had to make it clear to her that there is someone who cares for her. In addition I phone her at least once a week to check up on the kind of care she is getting. She is alert and bright but her memory is beginning to go and she is getting progressively more feeble - needs an arm of someone to walk without tottering and danger of falling.

I am very troubled by your health problems. You were always such an ox in strength and never showed any illness. Phlebitis is not only a most painful and uncomfortable ailment, but it also signals circulatory maladjustments that need care and, if neglected, bad ill. Do take care of yourself and get reliable doctors! And do what they tell you must do to maintain mobility and avoid further complications.

I did see you on TV and was shocked. Keep up the good work on FUI. If you get me financial counsel, let me know. I may be able to be of at least small help. I enclose a check for \$21.00 for the last two items on your order form. Love & Regards  
Sol + Frieda