

Mr. Sol Rabkin
75 Henry St.
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201

1/19/76

Dear Sol,

Let's strike a bargain: I'll excuse your handwriting (which actually is less illegible than mine) and you excuse my typing. The reasons I'm pressed for time will become apparent.

I guess we are getting to the age when the kinds of personal tragedies and problems you report can be expected. Lil's mother and mine, for example, both well over 80, insist on living independently. For their desires for independence they are right. For the concerns of their children they are wrong. We have to hope that nothing happens, as with each in different ways it can.

For the first time in my life I'm seriously ill. This does not mean that I could not put in 22 hours one day last week, the kind of day that would exhaust a kid. But it does mean I should not have and did only because there was no alternative.

I may have phoned you in April, toward the end, when I was in New York to make a speech at NYU law school, got sick and had it read by my friend and wonderful human being associate, Jim Lesar, a lawyer just starting practice who has been to the Supreme Court four times without being before a jury. A New York doctor diagnosed it as pneumonia. I had only a few days earlier reported to my own what turned out to be typical symptoms and they were ignored. Otherwise I'd not have gone to New York at all. I spent two miserable, days in a hotel (not the best) unable to lie down and sleep because I also had pleurisy and was not told about it until I got home, and without a chair that came above the small of the back. I left twice before the New York doctor (a real bloodsucker) discharged me. I held a remarkably successful press conference with a fever of 102°. WCBS for example taped the whole thing. They used a selection each hour for the first 24 and after that I know only that they continued to use different excerpts for six days. In my own news experience something like this is without precedent. It was a week of more before I could get into bed. But as you may remember, I've always been pretty tough. If I never fully recovered my previous strength and endurance, I did take this as a sign to slow down and get more rest thereafter.

It now turns out that I have phlebitis - without the side benefits now associated with them in the popular mind. And on Saturday, when I was in New York to discuss a new book with a friend, I learned that I may have had a thrombosis in April rather than pneumonia. He is a friend and if there was in his mind the question should he make the investment with questions about my health I'd find this proper. However, he asked me to see his internists. He'd asked earlier if he could make an appointment with a specialist through his internist when I was there and I welcomed a second opinion because by then I'd developed concerns of my own. But one of two things seems clear now: I had a thrombosis then and my own medical insurer ignored it by sheer negligence; or by equally negligent care (for which we pay \$1200 a year) he ignored the well-known possibility of phlebitis following pneumonia. I reported the symptoms typical of phlebitis when he made a perfunctory and belated check on the pneumonia and he dismissed them as mechanical and a consequence of aging. His examination after I returned consisted of having the nurse take my pulse and blood-pressure and then his listening to my chest. Only when this apparently conscientious internist started asking me questions Saturday about the results of tests, none of which were made, did I begin to realize the extent of the negligence.

I did the last of the work in which I was indispensable in the printing of my most recent book when it was quite uncomfortable still believing that the lag pain was mechanical. They were hard and long days. The next day I phoned my doctor and saw him the following day. He was optimistic in diagnosing the development of the ailment and prescribed a drug that could not and did not work. Five days later he hospitalized me.

Despite what is heard so often the hospital people were wonderful. I rarely saw my own doctor and the intern was a great and compassionate human being. The nurses were like mothers or sisters. The care consisted of blood tests and injections of anti-coagulents. This meant that with instant sleep I could snatch at most three hours at a time around the clock. Aside from the normal examinations, which this intern did with commendable care and concern, the only testing other than of the level of anti-coagulant in the blood was what is called a vein scan, a disagreeable X-ray examination that the intern, not my own doctor, recommended. Fortunately the radiologist was an unknown fan of mine. When he found the left leg so tight he couldn't readily inject a preliminary saline solution he went ahead on his own and did both legs, which is how I learned I have it in both, severely and extensively in the left.

I was discharged barely able to walk, unable to drive (there are some wonderful college kids, the responsible ~~xx~~ type, who shepherded me and still do because I can't drive for an hour,) and without any preparation for what lay ahead except for the little I could extract from this compromised intern who had no right to tell me anything. But my own doctor didn't. In fact, he didn't see me for a day and a half after he OKed the discharge without the proper level of anti-coagulant having been established. It is three times what it was when he discharged me.

Not until Saturday, after three months, did I even learn that I should not sit for more than a half-hour at a time. When I rest I keep my legs up. Also when I type. (Try it some time.) When weather conditions permit (and cold is no barrier) I take several forced walks a day, until I stagger going uphill. Only then do I turn around and ~~walk~~ walk home, mostly downhill. Day's ~~hill~~ works I get there early and do this in the flat. It is indicated. The idea is to force the blood and the veins to work, for the smaller veins to enlarge and do the work of the blocked larger ones. They are not prominent. I wear anti-embolism devices when I sleep-around the clock. Saturday I learned of an opinion other than my doctor's when I asked him, that they should extend to the crotch, especially because from the relative inactivity I have put on much weight. When I came to realize this was growing without excessive eating I started my own regimen to lose weight. It is now 3 p.m. So ~~xx~~ far today I've eaten an orange, a banana (to replace the potassium lost because of a prescribed diuretic, Lil's science not my doctor's) and an inch cube of cheese for protein. I'll have only a salad with an added source of protein for supper. But diet has not been discussed with me!

The New York doctor has written mine. I can imagine what will follow.

I've been interrupted by several phone calls, the second a long one and I've lost part of my train. I manage to function. I've three active FOIS cases in two district and one appeals court. I'm also forcing the FBI to disgorge suppressed King assassination evidence, some quite important, I think establishing a conspiracy against Ray and to obstruct justice. I've done more FOIA work (5 U.S.C. 552) than anyone else, never losing even when I "lose." I regularly prove perjury under oath, without ever being charged myself. The FBI's last response was that I could undoubtedly make and prove this charge ad infinitum because I know more about the subject than anyone in the FBI. How's that for an answer to perjury, counsellor? The fink judge told my lawyer/associate that we could be sued for saying such thing out of court. We offered to walk through the doors then and there, startled the judge, and that was the end of that. This is the case on appeal. I got much without compliance. It is in my newest book that it cleaned us to print. I'll enclose a list and you tell me which ones you'd don't have and want.

And another reporter called.

Our financial condition is about the same. Over the past year I've had a couple of consultancies for which I was paid. With what I got from these and what had come in from the earlier books I'd found it possible to print the newest. The one before that my lawyer friend, the ~~same~~ ~~same~~ ~~same~~ borrowed the money to pay the printer. We've paid

earlier books now close to out of print. I've just made a profitless arrangement with a distributor on all the books. It will get them out and take the time of packaging and mailing off of me. It is also an arrangement that does not encourage further indebtedness to reprint because he'll have all except the individual orders, all commercial sales.

But I have promises to keep and I hope many miles yet. And much writing.

This time of the year, while it brings other problems, finances are taken care of by Lil's tax work.

I'm as much as three ~~xxx~~ months behind in filing. What goes in the lower drawers mostly from when I had trouble bending. Now it is not comfortable and not impossible.

I hope I've remembered everything.

I was about to leave for Lil and take an evening walk on the level in the large shopping center in which her office is. Instead I'll hit the mountain again right now while there is a little sun. It is quite cold.

I'm sorry it did not work out for Nancy but over the years I've formed the belief that if it doesn't work out the sooner it ends the better.

Best to all we know,

sincerely,

SOL RABKIN
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Jan 13, 1976

Dear Howard and Ed,

I was going through some piles of paper which had accumulated on my desk for purposes of doing what I should have done some time ago or throwing out what was now past doing, and I came across an envelope containing your address. There was a glow of recognition accompanied by a twinge of conscience. Hence this letter.

First Freda and I wish you a happy, healthy and prosperous new year. Second, while we have read stories about Howard and his clings to money, injustice and even seen him once on a TV interview show, we still do not know as of now what is happening to him and to you, Ed. How are you? What is the situation? Is the economic problem solved or at least eased?

Second, we have had some troubles. My older brother, Morris, 2 years older than me died as a result of a fall in the subway. He fell Dec. 16, 1974. He was in the hospital three months until he died of pneumonia and heart failure on Feb. 9, 1975. Meanwhile, I, in addition to visiting him in the hospital every day and seeing to it that he got the care he needed had to help care for

his wife Rae, who was housebound invalid with Parkinson's, diabetes and circulatory problems and who could not walk without a walker. She died in her sleep on Jan. 29, 1975 just eleven days before Morris died. He was vocal and much of the time because of his fractured skull and meningitis. He never knew Rae was dead. The doctors forbade my telling him.

Then came the two month job of burying them and clearing out their apartment, handling their estates, paying off their bills etc. Morris' estate is now closed. And I inherited his job as family liaison which included caring for our 84 year old cousin in Los Angeles, getting her into a home for the aged then, visiting her taking care of her affairs, etc. So it's been a busy time and one full of sorrow.

Now the estate is near closing. Lucie still requires care and travel. We spent from Dec. 17 to Dec. 31 in the L.A. area visiting her at least every other day. And there are troubles in Nancy's marriage. She is divorcing Steve.

But otherwise all goes smoothly. Let us hear from you

Regards
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