

Dear both,

1/8/72

That today could not follow a planned schedule in a sense makes it a good day (cold but sunny, too). I slept later than usual, took my brisk walk, did a bit of editing, decided that with the mail always unpredictable on Saturdays, it would be a good time to gather and cut some of the fallen wood, and for a slightly tiring hour was a machatero. By the time I skimmed the mail it is near lunchtime, so not enough time to turn the lazy muses on.

Lil was busy with chores, the weekend being the only time she now has for housewifing. I read her your letter to both, and we enjoyed it together. I could tell from her face how much she liked it. (I also noted that she noted the difference between 2 1/2 and 4 and think I detected the faint whirring of mental gears.) It was kind of you to take so much time. We ebev enjoyed - particularly enjoyed- that strong recollection of so romantic a honeymoon. In time I suspect Jimmy, who seems all boy and real cute, will have something of his own, into which young Jo may grow.

Your explanation of the interference from Fluorescent lights makes sense. Some years ago I was a radio amateur and have recollections of such matters. But I'd just assumed that with mass-produced conductors, shielding would be complete. I have also decided that your apparent belief is correct, that the built-in mike is at least as sensitive as any other. It is better than the good tie-clip one I had attached to one of the cables you provided, at least as good as the old Sony ^{when used} mike on this machine, at least with respect to sensitivity, and until that happy day when I can afford the special little mike made for the TC-40, over which I drooled in Dallas, I think I'll forget about any external mike. Until I get to interviewing again I'll have no need for any external mike anyway. I was surprised at the compactness of that special little one. It requires a battery and has a built-in pre-amp.

Lil is just emerging for a long siege of feeling unusually lousy. Last night she ate normal food (trouble from hiatal hernia triggered, I suspect, but worries) so, what with working, I don't think she has tried on the trousers. Except for expressions of pleasure, she has said nothing. First time we go out I think she'll wear them. They look like a good fit. She held them up immediately, natch. She finds the Chinese clothing comfortable. When we went out for Sunday-after-New Years dinner she wore her older things.

Thanks for the offer on the tapes, but I have no immediate need for any. I remember fearing you might take some of my comments as hints and intended to write you so informing you. I have close to 20, and the two you sent will be preserved for interviews. It will have to be an exceptionally long one they can't hold and none are in immediate prospect. I'm going to try each of the unused cheap ones on taping TV shows and will attempt to return the defectives. I have found another bad one. Slowly the Sonys are getting around (with sensor, that is). The 60s are not in town. In time, I suppose 90s and 120s.

I've just laid out the fruit of Je's great labor and will go over it as I can. I did make a serious mistake in sending you the wrong carbon. It was to a NYC friend I'll now have to speak to by phone. I know the producer of the new Capp show and enough about Capp to anticipate a boobytrapping. He'll probably assume my purposes begin with the destruction of society. I'd asked this young friend to arrange a friendly claque, which always helps. Were it not that this makes possible a trip to NYC that is necessary and beyond my resources, I'd not be doing it for a dead buck.

I'm not looking up what I've forgotten about a younger Kennedy. BUT, if it in any way relates to problems I may face when the mixed whitewash of which I've written incompletely is applied (estimate, within two weeks and a NYTimes story not necessarily a whitewash sooner) please reconsider. I am aware of the problem you state. One problem is finding the proper fulcrum for the application of intellectual judo. To make this backfire. It can.

Thanks for the Ramparts masthead. I know some, but see no prospect. it helps explain their unending financial crises.

Check on the TV tapes. I was aware of your time pressures. I may let you know of the few things I'll be taping in case you should want in the future.

Thanks for list of stories on informants. Some seem new to me. I'll not ask for any because I have no immediate need. I have more than enough for the intro to AO and will want more only if I do I, SPY. If I do, with this I can ask. None seems to be a case I'd need for the intro, my immediate interest. Thanks esp. to the busy Je for the time it took.

RLK and sounding off: I think Krakow was real early. San F was famous last words. Not only a few weeks separation, as you say.

"oguchi: I knew of early firing from radright pressure, but he was referred to as former cornerer recently, I think on Cavett, who made a nothingness of that show. My opinion of his is high.

Glad to know postage scale set accurately.

Babuns: Je's f'note sounds likely. I have never been able to get the book turned out by the vets of the Bay Pigs. There are two, one by the assn the other by the class that went to Benning.

I missed refusal White House Corres. Assn refusal to support Post. I think UPI did. Agreed on pressures. But what is exceptional is the sharp change in TV news reporting, as I've indicated. This can be done within the cliches, and has been. It continues as of last night. I do hope the Post sweats it out. I suspect its biggest problem will be from the Times, because it can always have ~~whaxxi~~ the wires carry.

My first two impressions were yours re Ellsberg and PPapers, but soon I shifted to the belief he is sincere. He could, of course, have been turned on. But intellectually he is no Sirhan. I think the reason the papers come out this way is dual: Times selections and CIA and White House restrictions, that is, they didn't let their inner stuff out. A careful reading of what is in the Bantam version will show the thing that distinguishes the CIA is only its desire for success and its determination to try not to support what even a cretin should have known would fail. There is no brilliance in any of its statements or advice that I've read. It looks better because everything else is so gucky, a restatement of the official predetermination (reminds me of my youth and handling of captured German/Italian secret files, same crap, same hewing to official line in reporting.) Fierconess of prosecution of Ell. & Russo impresses with administration's seriousness. When E faces over 100yrs in jail, I can't think he finked. I once suspected adm. comivance in leak but abandoned that vy soon, too. It would hurt too much when they are forced to make enough compromise the military is having trouble accepted. Your analysis on non-withdrawal my one. Everyone forgets that our intrusion into SEAsia did not begin in SVN. Go back to Chiang, Thailand, etc. I've always felt Korea was contrived. Ross & Wise on Laos are more than enough, etc. (I was particularly please when I found my contemp. analysis of Gulf Tonkin incident for Howard when he was here. He appears to have found others in the boxes of SEAsia Files I've let him have, going way, way back, when nobody talked about it, not even the brightest kids. I spotted what the books since haven't and latched onto the jugular, even detecting the phoniness of the non-existent second attack. Makes me feel real good.) Anyway, Kissinger is too smart to take on the military, and they are the ones really exposed in the PentPapers. Some of the ignored stuff on the CIA is pretty rough on it. In State, only Ball has any decency. Both "undys, phttt. The anti-JFK stuff is arranged by omissions, as from the papers. Natrually it was siezed upon by the whores. (Sheehan, by the way, has not responded to my letter.)...I think the resumption of bombing means more than I indicated or you took from it. I agree with your formulation, but think it goes farthtur. What you say would be true of any large

bombing. This is larger than necessary for that. It can have many intents, ranging from the special US corruption of Keynes to another hope for successful intimidation. However, it also has been counterproductive from the electronic reporting, with pilots and prisoners' wives joining in the denunciation, and I mean pilots in it, on active duty there. It may have had the purpose of encouraging Chinese rejection of the visit, thus giving Nixon the best of two bad worlds -and less opposition from the right. And military. And nuts. I think the only real campaign issue he has yet shown signs of having is Democratic crookedness, something they have been working on from the first warning of Mitchell's seat. The most encouraging thing he has is both kinds of Demo. bankruptcy. He is genuinely unpopular for a president. He exudes no warmth to anyone (but Bebe?), seems to have no real friends of any kind.

What was leaked to Anderson -and it had to have come from high up - more than supports your comment on the India-Pak business. Every major power in some way profited from our goofiness and crudeness. The wierdest part is the State statement that India's recognition of NVN shows they are not "neutral"-when we've had a full embassy in SVN for so long. We are devoted to proving to the rest of the world that we hold them all in contempt and have to be crazier than any has ever considered us.

Process: I have no confidence in its relevance to any of the political assassinations. Bud seems to think otherwise, so I've followed what I could without too great effort. He has looked into it some. I haven't. Ray seems never to have heard of it. I doubt Birhan did. If Hanson did, that seems to be unrelated.

Now: I now have rap sheets on Charlie and Marie Stein. Both involved in drugs, which makes them more interesting. Ray told me he was certain Charlie was in pills. C seems to have disappeared, as Jerry Cohen told me. Marie is back near N.O., across the river in Algiers- and not talking even for money.

Gerold Frank's book is to get big bookclub play from what I've just heard. I think this will mean an even greater cash loss to Doubleday, which so richly deserves.

Many thanks,

5 January 1972

Dear Lil and Harold:

Jenifer is not yet through rummaging for some stuff she is looking up for HW, so I'll get to tell you how magnificently the blanket went over. It is something she wanted to do, but the job she undertook has taken more time than she expected, and she has deputized me to perform this plesaan task.

It arrived at a time when both we and the Mas were locked into holiday season schedules, complicated by such momentous events as Gilbert's mother getting married (his father died several years ago, and she is now happily married to a cousin of the father,) Gil himself about to take off to Seattle, and Lilly on the dizzy edge of making a trip to Southern California with her sister and both their kids, or rather the kids of both of them, I should say.

We were determined to have some first-hand part in the handing over of the blanket, for reporting purposes if nothing else. Somehow, we managed to arrange to meet Gil and Lilly in Berkeley one evening, the occasion being Chinese dinner at a good Northern restaurant, with Gil's principal teacher also on hand. He is a Father Serruys, a Belgian monk of a small order called Scheut which used to send missionaries to China. Father Serruys turned out to have been in North China during much of the same time I was there, and we had many mutual acquaintances, including one man, Pere Oscar Conard, with whom Jenifer and I stayed in 1934 on our honeymoon in Jehol province (we chartered a junk and floated down the Luan river 150 miles to the sea; it was manned by naked boatmen who were a delightful crew and who learned to play Old Maid without being able to read; we almost got held up by bandits and did get held up 10 days by floods near where the river flows through the Great Wall). Anyway, Father Serruys turned out to be a gay and delightful character, the kind who, when we had all eaten far too much, said, "Now we have reached the stage where we all just pick idly at our food." But no one really stopped eating, and no one really wanted to leave. I should have said that Lilly had been unable to come, having to stay with young Jimmy who had come down with a cold. We were much disappointed at this, of course, because for one thing she is such a delightful person, so typically Chinese and yet so delightfully American with her San Francisco upbringing, and also because we wanted a real womanly reaction to the blanket, not ~~just~~ just the reception of a mere male like Gil.

Anyway, it was in this crowded restaurant, with waiters flitting past with enormous trays of food, sort of threading their way by us, that we broke out the blanket literally in the midst of a mob of people very busy feeding themselves. Gil's response was as anticipated: he was enormously impressed with the Ma. Kept feeling the blanket and remarking how well-formed the character was. He stuffed it back into the bag with some reluctance as we left.

As I recall it, Lilly by that time was already on the dizzy edge of leaving for LA with her sister, but called up as soon as she was able. She loves the colors because they are muted and subtle. She too noticed the Ma first, but Gil told her, "Keep looking, there's more." She then discovered the Jenifer at the top, admired that and how it didn't leap out at the viewer, and again Gil had to tell her to keep on looking.

At this point she found the date at the bottom, and a feeling that this was the only blanket in the world of its kind and that it was made for their little girl had its effect. She loves it, and wouldn't change anything about it. It's so warm and cozy, and the little girl is warm and happy under it.

HOWEVER, young Jimmy learned about it, and despite being only 2 1/2, developed a vested interest in it and must have it whenever Jenifer isn't using it. He now has a routine of getting up in the morning, going to the play room and throwing himself on a couch and ordering "Cocoa." When Cocoa is brought, he consumes it, then lies down and issues the next order: "Cover." And it had better be Jenifer's new blanket, or a situation develops. By this time Jenifer has been awakened by the shouted orders, so she doesn't mind, and between them the blanket is in use in one way or another for almost 24 hours a day.

It is clear that nothing could have pleased the whole family more, and we were so delighted with its success that we just had to do something to show how much we appreciated everything about it. So we resorted to those mysterious caches of things that Big Jenifer keeps against just such emergencies, and made up the little package that we sent Lil. We hope the pants fit this time or can be altered, but if they don't they can be exchanged for the next smaller size. Lili has none larger. So we have reached one end of the line. That was the only thing we didn't already have, and as a matter of fact had gone into town the day or so before to pick up the pants, so even they were here when we were moved to DO something. While we were about it, we ~~includingz~~ included a couple of sensor-equipped tapes for Him who inspired this whole affair so He wouldn't be left out entirely. They will make his TC-40 squeal when they run out at the end.

Anyway, we thought you'd like to know just what happened at this end of the line in spite of great and seemingly insurmountable difficulties, how everything turned out wonderfully, raising the general level of West Coast consciousness of the enormous import of cottage industry on the East Coast, particularly in Maryland.

If we possibly can, we shall see the Mas at least once more before they move back to Seattle, and shall take color pictures of Miss Ma in her blanket. In the meantime, everyone concerned is scratching about for words to tell you both how very much it is appreciated.

Sincerely,



jdw

5 January 1972

Dear Hal:

This is an attempt to clear away a lot of underbrush that has accumulated since the last time we were able to write you a real letter, probably early in November. I shan't burden you with details, but it is simply that we had left many things to take^{care} of themselves too long and simply had to take time out and attend to some of them. This is, I think, the eighth weekend in a row that we have been almost entirely occupied with trying to catch up with some of the ordinary details of living. And, as you probably realize, weekends are about the only time we have to try to deal seriously with anything. Poor Jenifer is more than five weeks behind with the NY Times, if that's any indication.

You very kindly have offered to send us various and sundry tapes you have made of certain TV programs, including one of John Stewart Service, two NBC programs on Veet Nam and one CBS do on surveillance, possibly others. In any case we do not now know when we would be able to listen to them, so will pass with thanks. But we do appreciate your thought, especially regarding Service, who is an old friend. However I have seen several press accounts of his interviews and agree there is little new in them. This also goes for the NBC and CBS transcripts you mention -- no time, we'll just have to pass.

A couple of items from back in November. You mention that in taping Service you found you picked up a buzz from a fluorescent light nearby when you were using an external mike, but did not pick it up when using the built-in mike in the TC-40. I suggest this may be because while the cord to the external mike is shielded, it cannot completely filter out the buzz which a fluorescent lamp broadcasts. The built-in mike, having no cord, apparently does not pick it up. In this connection, the Sony 90 and 120-minute tapes we went in Lil's package have that automatic sensor at each end which will make your TC-40 sound a buzzer when the tape runs out. These are available here in case you still can't get them there. Last we'd heard, you could not find the sensor-equipped Sony tapes; that's why we sent them. If you need more, please say.

In a letter dated Nov. 11 you mention that you wish I could go further into a confidence from a younger member of the Kennedy family. I wish I could too, but there is too much danger of it's being traced if I told you more. Suffice to say I have every reason to believe it absolutely genuine in the terms I described it to you. In the same paragraph, you reply that I am correct on Bobby not mentioning the assassination until Krakow, but that I forgot San Fernando State. No, I didn't. He replied to questions at San Fernando only AFTER he had first done the same thing a few weeks earlier at Krakow.

Dr. Noguchi. I was extremely surprised to learn of your impression that he had been fired, and that it stuck. He was fired, of course, but his staff and friends raised so much hell they had to reinstate him -- a remarkable performance all round. To make sure, I checked with our LA bureau over a private line and the answer came back, no doubt about it, he's still coroner.

From a letter dated Nov. 8, you raise the possibility that some of your letters reach us with postage due. Nothing of the sort has happened. Your postal scale is okay.

Re the Paul Cook-KPFA interview, you appear to have gained the impression that Mancino is back in California. If so, we've heard nothing about it. As far as we know he's still being held in Nevada as a sort of courtesy to the California prison authorities. If there were any honest judges in Nevada, a good lawyer probably could get him out on a writ of habeas corpus, since he has committed no crime in Nevada and they haven't got a thing on him except that their pals in the California prison system want him kept on ice.

Re the 10-27 clip on court refusal to give George Jackson's mother his effects, we have seen nothing further on this, and we think we would have spotted anything.

Jenifer has just run a check and finds nothing further on the Babun brothers (this is in regard to Castro's "piracy" of two Panamanian-registered ships owned by some Cuban exiles. The name does seem to ring a bell here, as it apparently did with you. In this connection we heard a sort of second hand interview with a woman on KPFA who had telephoned someone in Cuba, and there is no doubt in Havana that these two ships were CIA sponsored.* It's apparently an article of faith there, if nothing else. We agree that Castro wouldn't have done what he did if he hadn't felt absolutely sure.

Regarding rechargeable batteries, no experience here.

We haven't seen the Rosemary James interview with Gervais. N.O. Mag has never appeared on any newstand that I know of here. It sounds interesting, but as of now I'd say it's doubtful that it would be worthwhile to send it to us, considering our present state of too much to do and not enough time to do it in.

Apparently I missed the story about the attempt to assassinate Cesar Chavez. Thanks for the date. I'll look up our files and see if we have anything on it at the office.

We heard on the news today that the White House Correspondents association had refused to back up the Washington Post on its policy of disclosing the sources of background briefings and leaks. Not at all surprising, and it's too bad that the Post didn't get a little more support. Leaks and trial balloons are such an established practice all over the world that -- the world we know, anyway -- that I doubt if the Post can maintain such a policy much longer.

Under separate cover we are sending you a mass ^{of} stuff, including several things you asked to have returned, the New Orleans file up through Dec. 28 (from the S-I only; we don't see the T-P) and a few clippings from local papers that may interest you.

Among them is a review from Saturday Review on the three versions of the Pentagon Papers -- the New York Times, Sen. Gravel's, and the Pentagon's own version. Haven't read it, but it might open up some possibilities to you.

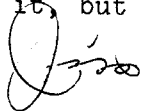
*The woman interviewed (whose name, alas, we do not remember) said it was known that the captains of both ships had been involved in the Bay of Pigs.

We have not studied the PPs, in any version, but my persistent impression is that the NY Times version, anyway, constituted a leak, especially when you consider that a) the CIA came off well relative to all others, b) so do Republicans in general, and c) there is that critical gap between the two assassinations in November, 1963.

One thing that puzzles me is the person of Ellsberg himself, not having even seen him on television and therefore having no idea of him as a person. At one time I entertained the idea that he might have been given to understand that nothing too terribly drastic would happen to him if he made it possible for the papers to be published. I am now wondering if he was used as Sirhan may have been used, unknowingly. One of the most interesting of all circumstances seems to be the fact that Fulbright had access to the same material and didn't bite. One is tempted to infer that someone was determined that their version of the Vietnam embroilment get out before some other version did.

I'm sure the same thing has occurred to you that has to us -- that Nixon, presumably with Kissinger's advice, is attempting to run a two-sided show: winding down the war for the benefit of the public which wants out, but not really winding it down for the benefit of the military (at least part of it) and others who have no intention of getting out of SEA or similar situations anywhere. In this sense he has to send up a continual stream of signals which mean one thing to the peace faction and quite another to what we shall call, for want of a better term, the hawks. I agree with you that the resumption of bombing was a drude example of doing something largely because no one could think of anything better, but it also could be reassurance that the show is not over by any means. It could, for one thing, stall off a possible assassination attempt, or ~~another~~ another Gulf of Tonkin incident which can be pulled out of the file at any time. If fact, as the time draws nearer, I begin to doubt more and more that as things are going, that Nixon will be allowed to make his trip to Peking. If he does, he will find that the bombing resumption and his cheap and transparent use of the POW issue is going to make the Chinese tougher than ever. They can read him like an open book. His vacillation and eventual swing -- too late -- to support of Pakistan is not going to make his stock any better with them, either. THEY supported Pakistan for their own reasons, to counter India and therefore Russia, but Nixon's bumbling ended only in weakening Pakistan, strengthening India and possibly giving Russia bases in the Indian ocean. About all this will do is strengthen the Chinese in their probable conviction that Americans know only how to support collapsing dictatorships.

This brings us up through your last letter received, dated Dec. 31. Inadequate replies, but at least I have the impression I've left nothing of importance unanswered. One last thing, on going back through the file I find your inquiry about the Process in LA. Never heard of it, but I'll keep an eye out for it. More elsewhere.



jdw