

Dear Jim,

5/11/78

Your letter is beautiful.

Of course I'm also delighted that you and the Wrones hit it off so well. I'm glad, too, to get your appraisal of Guth.

And when you can we look forward to the picture of Jennifer.

Lil, who right now is catching up on two days of copying, was quite pleased to get your letter. I'd been away for three days. When I got home yesterday she gave it to me, with a happy, satisfied look.

In fact if it were not for an epilogue to what took me away I'd probably not be writing you now, with a nightcap before bed.

After an hour and 45 minutes of Jerry Ray on the phone I need a drink!

The House assassins had John Ray and the sister, Carol Kepper, as secret witnesses. I won't take your time for all the authoritarianism and other evil. I'll just say that they make Joe McCarthy look good.

Carol, who had had a racist lawyer wished off on her in April, wanted Jim, who hardly had time and already represented John. Jim fought the committee in its executive session (all of them are executive sessions, believe it or not). They backed off and let him represent Carol. They claimed it would be a conflict of interest for him to rep. both. And they had done this before and gotten away with it.

I spotted something in a telegram they had sent Jim that led me to believe they would back off and I suggested a collateral attack on which Jim would have to back down - insisting on an open session or no testimony - and Jim did it.

I'd gone down for two days to help him. The third day was for one of my own suits. What then developed by way of now DJ stonewalling will keep me busy for a while when I have enough time continuously to work on it.

After supper I'd planned to get on it but Jerry phoned before we finished a late meal. (We'd both been working outside.)

The assassins are trying to build a case of the family conspiring with Jimmy. If anyone does not testify to what they want to believe the testimony is false or evasive to them. Incredible but actual.

You ~~sure~~ covered quite a bit of territory. Your observations on the people you saw and the changes are interesting. It is true in most places, I think. I saw it happening when we lived at Hyattstown.

Lil has just finished making a copy for Wrone of a chapter of Bert Andrews' book Washington Witch Hunt. Senator Mathias sent it to me. I'd been told it was coming Monday morning when I met with one of his people on the Senate Intelligence Committee. I don't recall that he had me in the book. He did in the stories for the Trib. But I'll be interested in reading it.

Hope you found everything in good shape, including in particular the ailing cat.

Best,

7 May 1978

Dear Lil and Harold:

You haven't heard from me before this because I can't read my own handwriting, much less expect anyone else to, and was too stupid to take a typewriter along. Anyway, I have been itching all the way to tell you how wonderful it was to meet Lil and get to know you both better, quite apart from the unstinting hospitality with which you made my stay with you so memorable. The landmarks you mention in your letters now mean something concrete rather than what I've imagined them to be.


By the time I reached you I had misplaced (I thought I had somehow lost them) a little album of photographs of Jenifer which I'd intended to show Lil. I found them only after I got back on the 3rd, and now will have a few color prints made up to give some idea to Lil of her appearance. Although I'm sure you'll agree with me that no photograph ever did her justice. As our old friend Mac Fisher put it, "Jenifer's beauty came from within, just Jenifer shining through." I'm still deeply moved by Lil's perception that she's still with me.

This was a most wonderful trip, all along the line. The Rabbit accumulated nearly 8,500 miles on the odometer, and every one was enjoyed. Special displays of snow and greenery in the northern deserts of Wyoming, Utah and Nevada, unbelievable shows of flowers and green mountains in Arizona. Much of the country I had passed through before, sometimes more than once. All is new and different. The country is much changed, with perhaps the most spectacular improvement being the liberation of rural people by good roads, electrification, and machine farming. The women are well groomed and sophisticated now. The men have lost the worried, haggard look they wore in my growing up days.

Your mailing of May 1 got here a couple of days ago, telling of the Wrones' reaction to my visit. It was mutual, I can assure you. Never have I experienced such instant and continuous rapport with two such delightful adults, nor have I ever been so taken with two such remarkable children, both so full of grace and beauty. If I seemed tired to Elaine it was simply that my voice gave out from the bubbling conversation that crackled among us from the minute we introduced ourselves. Not just the taping sessions -- it went on ALL the time, with both of them firing penetrating questions that brought out whatever perspective I might be able to contribute. One way to sum it up is to say that this is the first time I've ever entered a home as a complete stranger and been made to feel as I left that I'd been a lifelong friend who merely had been away a bit longer than usual.

I did meet DeLloyd Guth and his wife and was much impressed. He sat in on the taping sessions and asked some of the questions -- good ones -- himself. He is cultured, thorough, and I was impressed with the little I saw he is doing in assembling a bibliography as a beginning. He also is honest and candid. Dave probably has told you that he seems to have a good chance of getting a teaching job at the University of Tennessee -- he'd just returned from an interview session at Knoxville when I was there -- but I have no doubt that the beginning he is making at Stevens Point will set patterns and standards if indeed he does move on. His wife is a charmer, lovely and bright. I don't need to tell either of you what a smasher Elaine is, as keen as she is lovely.

There are many letters like this to be written, so I must move on. Thanks again for all you've done, not the least of which is providing Jenifer and me with the Stevens Point connection.

Best,  jdw