

/2/71

Dear Dick,

Glad to get your 28 this m... I've skinned it, ~~will~~ again, for I'm writing and had an unpleasant interruption today and want to return to it. Crookedness of publishers. Together with another effort to stop smoking - Coldturkeyed down to a total of four yesterday and as of after 12:30 today, I've used ~~but~~ one - kind of hard on the nerves.

Message Howard can send, may have, for I think I asked him to. He also has some of what has been tentatively doled out as possibilities. Until I see some effort by the officials, I'll just gather what others suggest. They are to have consulted Library Cong in some areas. If they are no more concerned than this shows, I also have other things to do. However, it is not a total loss. I have proposed a novel it suggests.

Used your home address because you said you were nosegrinding there. Only.

If you get a razor, check prices both places, for the Morelco comes from Holland and duties can be a large factor.

Computers is generally garbage. I've seen nothing recently, but there is a viable story in the Times reviews of JG (they'll not touch mine unless prompted, and I don't care except that any place makes a record. Jerry may do. He was here weekend.

You take too literal an approach to winning and losing. I hope I never have any greater loss than in the clothing suit, as you'll soon enough see, I hope.

There was TV reporting of Ronning, believe it or not, but I saw nothing printed press. I'd welcome copies anything you may have, suggest via Howard, who would also like. Disagree with you re: Ellsberg, think him now sincere and know there have been plans to jail him.

Envy you the bike. Too hilly here for me to try. I now take vigorous (for me) walk every a.m., not the way you did. I went two years ago but up the steep hill to the top of the side of the mt. It is about 4 miles both ways, and by the time I push up, coming down is not easy. And I do a mile in less than an hour, despite heat. Did. Two weeks ago dogs, vicious, too far and shortened walk. Now I'm having to fight it out with each owner. They just won't retrain, and they may be friendly to owners, but they are not to strangers. I've been carrying pistol and mace, hardly relaxation, and I've almost been bitten once in the past week. Wish I had a holster for that Savage 32, but can't afford. I do carry single-shot 22, loaded, few catrs., plus canister mace on belt, and hate every bit and minute. But how I'd enjoyed! And the challenge of going up so steep a m. after such long inactivity. My knees are getting better, after I've stirred around a bit. But I'd like to be able to bike. Only, ~~sucks~~ here? Only a few kids as mail these hills.

Be glad to see Rowe. Wish he'd adopt a more responsible format, tho. Tip me off on which nuts he is seeing, please. You can't possibly have steered him away from all.

Book about ready. I hope to finish, read and correct P.III by weekend, for Lil to start retyping. It'll be hasty and skimpy, but I think enough.

Best regards,

28 July 1971

Dear Harold:

Thanks for your recent mailing of several pages of material. Some of it is cryptic to me, other stuff not requiring my comment, so perhaps this letter will be brief.

By all means, send me the item that you say would be of interest to a classicist. I shall be away from Kingston during all of next week, so if you mail it now, it will be on my desk when I return. If the matter is complicated, as you say, it will be all the more interesting. Anyway, in this I may be able to offer help that others can't. So send it, and do not worry about using my time. It is your whenever you need it.

In future, continue mailing to my office address at Queen's. I sent my home address merely for your records, in case you may need it sometime.

Thanks for the advice about razors. I don't plan to buy one for a while (I have to get one for my dog first!), but eventually I shall. I heard the same good things about Norelco that you heard, but I have not seen them in this area. Perhaps I'll pick one up on some trip to the States. I go down to Ithaca every now and then to use Cornell's excellent library, and may pick one up while I am there.

My wife recently showed me a piece published in Computers and Automation. I meant to copy it, but forgot. No great loss, since it was pure garbage.

I have not been able to keep close track of Garrison's recent troubles, but even with little information I am inclined not to suspect federal harrassment connected with the JFK assassination. Bringing Garrison again to widespread public notice would seem at this point to defeat the government's already-achieved purpose of keeping things quiet in N.O. The publicity lid has been closed pretty tight since G lost the Shaw case. Things have been in such a state of lull since then, that I imagine any disruption of the lull-- even one discrediting G-- would be most unwelcome. However, as I say, I do not know much, and am guessing a lot.

I was very sorry to learn that you lost the clothing pix suit. I hope it goes good on appeals.

I recently bought the Bantam version of the Pentagon Papers, but have not yet started reading in earnest. I followed a souped-down version in our local paper, but did not bother with the Times articles, since from the beginning I knew that Bantam would be publishing the whole thing. I prefer to read them first in this form.

For reasons which I cannot explain, the whole PP thing sticks in my craw. I can't see it as anything different from what has regularly gone on in the past, with the national news media acting merely as the conduits of information that somebody in power wants released. The only thing different is that this time it is done on a more grandiose scale. I can't see it plainly as an effort to ruin LBJ immediately before the publication of his "memoirs", nor plainly as an effort to hurt the Democrats (although all of this comes into it), but the matter stinks of something very screwy. I wish I knew what. Perhaps it's a super-sophisticated stall, similar in kind, but not in degree, to numerous other stalls used previously to justify continuation of the war (I don't think that Nixon or those who control him have any intention or desire for the U.S. to get out of Vietnam, any more than LBJ did.). I don't

disparage the veracity of what the RP say, for what has been released was already known-- at least the salient features were known. What I wonder about is the motive for releasing them, for giving them widespread attention at this time. Ellsberg, I presume (at present) is a phony. Notwithstanding the sad truth of his pronouncements, I think, ~~xxx~~ at worst, that he is knowingly acting as the government's agent; at best, that he is being badly used by them. In any case, I cannot escape the feeling that the people have been "had", once again, on a grand scale.

The omissions, it seems to me, are significant. The lack of reference to JFK's express orders for his 15,000 troops to pull out (I believe the PP referred to these orders as an "option"-- which is pure crap), and the amazing revelations by Canadian diplomat and China expert, Chester Ronning. (I'll bet you don't know what Ronning revealed, since you depend on U.S. papers and the PP, which tell only the truth that they want you to know.) Ronning went to Hanoi and talked with top North Viet ~~officials~~
~~xxxxxx~~ officials-- I believe it was an official visit made with US sanction, if not encouragement. While Rusk (viz. LBJ) was lamenting that the only purpose of the bombing was to get North Viet to the conference table, the NV's told Ronning that if the bombing stopped they were willing, unconditionally, to confer. Ronning said he was knocked flat by that pronouncement, that he pursued this matter of unconditional negotiations, for he wanted to be sure that he had not misinterpreted. The NV's were explicit and emphatic that they would talk without conditions. Ronning delivered the message to US officials, confident that this was the big breakthrough, just what Rusk wanted. The US sent him back to Hanoi loaded with conditions that Ronning and (says Ronning) the US knew NV could not accept. Ronning said he was emotionally crushed, shocked by US duplicity. Shortly thereafter, bombing was resumed-- after all, the bombing halt had not had the "desired" effect of giving the NV's a chance to come to the conference table.

To me, these and many other things-- everything, really-- point toward the single objective of the VN war, to assure its continuation at a level acceptable to the US public-- the government wants not victory, not defeat, not even an "honorable withdrawal"; what it wants is an indefinite continuation of the war. If the government does anything to indicate some other objective, I'll be glad to acknowledge it. But I don't see it yet-- not even in Nixon's removal of some troops. I think he is just testing for the "right" level, which LBJ exceeded. When he needs a pretext for discontinuing the "withdrawal", he will find one-- or invent one.

Long ago I said that the troop level in VN would not fall much below 200,000 men. I still think that's the level they are searching for. As a kind of a one-sided bet, I'll send you \$5 when the number of ~~xxxxxx~~ US troops in VN falls below 200,000-- I should say "if".

Believe it or not, yesterday--that very day-- I finished painting the upstairs and downstairs parts of my new house! Finished-- really! In time, I'll go to work on the basement-- painting (yech!), paneling, fixing, and the like-- but the real crunch is over. The rest I can do at my leisure.

My new location allows me to ride to work by bike every morning. It takes about a half hour of hard peddling to get to

my office. The experience has been exhilarating, for I have not ridden a bike on a regular basis since I was a kid, and had forgotten the wonder of it. You see people and things that you often don't notice in a car, and it's great for getting one's thoughts in place at the beginning and end of a work day; it really mops out the cobwebs. I shall probably revert to auto when the weather gets intollerably cold and snowy, but I think I'll regret it.

Oddly, I had to drive in today, and-- after only a short week of peddling in-- I felt guilty at not taking the bike-- really guilty. I keep explaining to myself that I really had to use the car today, but my conscience is winning, for as I think about it it's clear that I could have gotten by nicely with the bike.

In a week or so, you may be hearing from a young Canadian movie-maker named Peter Rowe. He wants to make a movie based on speculation about the JFK assassination, and will travel around the US visiting people who think they know who done it, why, and the rest. I managed to persuade him that he will have to have a largely fictional story, so by now he will be happy with something plausible and, when possible, at least roughly in accord with what is known. Presently his plans are indefinite; one of the purposes of the trip is to help him form ideas. I gave him a list of various people, including some that I myself would pay little attention to. Since I shall probably see him after he returns, I may then be able to help him keep things straight. I have already cautioned him not to be credulous of those who claim to know the whole story, and he seems willing to listen with caution.

I saw him for a day several weeks ago, and will see him again tomorrow.

Must stop now. Be sure to send me the classicist thing soon.

Still,

Dick

cc. Roffman

P.S. I still have notes on things I planned to mail to you
So far I have not gotten to them yet. Will try to get
at them soon