

Dear Gerry,

8/27/90

Thanks for the picture of those two wonderful children! Glad Nick enjoyed the Indian fable. If he enjoys being read to, a story that may interest you (pl) and him.

When I was his age, living in the central part of Philadelphia, electricity was just coming into general use. Our house, old but solid, substantial and ample, had not yet been wired. I can remember when that was and out joy. It may also interest you to know that those row houses were built before inside plumbing, many, many of them, including ours. Wrong. They had water but not sewer connections for toilets. We had after the sewer connection a privy on the back porch. Well, each night when I was in bed my mother sat in my child's rocking chair under the gas light and read me that day's children's story from the Philadelphia Bulletin. It was by Thornton W. Burgess. He is the guy who invented the names, Farmer Brown, Peter Rabbit, etc. Then she turned the gas off, the gas light went out and I went to sleep.

If you were not familiar with it, the houses all had gas, in pipes, like plumbing, only about a quarter or an inch, small pipes. On a wall of each room a gas pipe came out of the wall, into a swivel joint, whence it went into a pipe about 10 inches long. At its end was an elbow and another piece of pipe about 2" long joint/straight up. At the end was an insert that was rather thin along a cut of about a quarter of an inch. The gas came through it and when a match was put to the flame we got light from the burning gas. It was controlled and turned on and off by a petcock near the swivel joint.

That house, by the way, still had a coal and wood cookstove. I can remember when my mother got a two-burner gas ~~stove~~ thing like a hot plate to use for cooking but not for baking. A flexible hose fit over the place where the flame was and went to this simple thing of two burners. Which is also the way one then had a library lamp.

Glad Greg ~~tone~~ reacted so rapidly. He's done well.

We get The Progressive and I read that article, thanks. It is consistent with my experience, only because he is a lawyer they didn't dare pull some of the stuff on him they did on me. They were worse with me and they used some of my litigation when they were before fink judges to extend the inclusiveness of the legislated exemptions. That has always been their method of fighting disclosure under FOIA.

Your fear that the Saddam crisis will delay or block much needed domestic programs is unfortunately only too justified. It also obscures awful scandals. But I fear that what Bush is doing is necessary for the world as well as for us. That kind of thing must be ended and with it violence as a means of seeking desired changes, whether or not justified changes. I'm sorry that once again we are playing games to the world and will bear just about all the enormous costs of all kinds.

At the same time the barbarity of taking hostages, so many of them in this instance, must not succeed and must be costly to Saddam so that it can be deterred ~~elsewhere~~ elsewhere and forever. Otherwise there will be chaos. I fear this goes back to Carter's desire to save lives, which saved those lives but cost others and told the bastards they could profit from it.

Our best to you all,

*Handwritten signature*

Dear Harold,

Aug. 23, 1990

Just the other day I received a packet of materials from Greg Stone regarding RFK. I have not had a chance to read it carefully, but it looks as if he has succeeded in uncovering some significant problems in the government's investigation. I look forward to reading this material in the near future. And thanks for mentioning me to him. I sent a brief thank you note to Greg Stone yesterday and told him a little bit about who I am and what I have been doing over the past few years regarding JFK and Martin Luther King.

The dreadful situation in the Middle East has been occupying much of my thinking in recent days. You are certainly right about the abysmal TV coverage. In recent days much of the reporting seems to be devoted to personal stories about the troops and their families, etc., but almost nothing about what is going on there or about any historical background to the conflict. Probably the most significant things I have read have been your letters and the articles you enclosed. One of my greatest fears is that all of this is going to delay and undermine efforts to deal with some very pressing domestic problems. Everyone will be wrapping himself in the flag and talking tough about what we should do to the Iraqis.

I am enclosing an article from the Sept. 1990 issue of The Progressive on FOIA. It appears to me to be an insightful discussion of how FOIA is being undermined in recent times. I wonder what your reaction to it is. Is it consistent with your experience?

Also enclosed are a few pictures from our visit earlier this summer. A couple others did not turn out well (too dark). The one of Nick and Claire in front of the globe was taken in the Smithsonian. I read Nick the Indian fable you sent. Both he and Claire seemed to enjoy it and I hope learned from it.

I hope you and Lillian are well. I will be in touch.

Best Wishes,

