

2 March 1973

Dear Harold:

Herewith a small accumulation of stuff which should be on its way to you. There remains some stuff to be copied, but we've been preoccupied with other things and I have not yet been able to get to it.

To dispose of a couple of hanging items, I never have been able to think of anyone I know who would know the Trumbo address, but will continue to keep it in mind. However, I have been able to get what is supposed to be Stephanie Mills' residential address in Berkeley, 2904 Regent St., Apt. 2, zip unknown. Or, my source suggests, you might reach her through the Dean of Students, Mills College, Seminary Avenue and MacArthur Blvd, Oakland, 94613. No luck on the Point Foundation.

To give you a concrete idea of how nose-to-grindstone things have been around here, including completely to our taste, we found to our amusement that since quitting work Dec. 2 we filled the VW's gas tank twice in December (mad holiday rush), not at all in January, and once in February. We still have about a quarter of a tank on this second day of March. It's been simply wonderful.

Shocked by your note to Paul about the suicide. We infer that Jim is Schmitt and that Paul is Hoch. We never met Schmitt, heard of him only through Hal and yourself, and naturally are appalled at this waste.


No, a cassette tape that gets wound up on the capstan has nothing to do with a magnetized head or need for de-magnetizing. The capstan tangle appears to be caused by stretched or otherwise uneven tape or faulty reels or some other mechanical disorder, but I've never heard any real explanation, and will try to remember to ask again the next time I visit the fount of all wisdom, taperecorderwise.

As to de-magnetizers, there is no reason to assume you need one yet, but it could be so, and everyone says one needs one eventually to clear the recording and playing heads of charges built up by static electricity built up by friction from the tape. The de-magnetizer is a simple electromagnet, activated by plugging it into house current, which somehow erases this unwanted charge, which causes distortion in what is recorded or played back. This distortion, which can include fading and weak signal in addition to what sounds like static, cannot, of course influence the physical, mechanical behavior of the tape. The price you mention for a de-magnetizer sounds about standard, but should be on the order of 59 cents, they are so simple. I think I have seen them on sale at one time or another for as low as perhaps \$1.95, but usually they are up around \$5 or more. There also is a de-magnetizing tape, I think, but I know nothing of it and may be confusing it with something else. You might ask some dealer. All you would do with such a tape would be to run it through the machine, I suppose.

In your latest you have provided a number of new angles on your current mail and telephone correspondent which I want to mention. If assignment was possible in the first place, reassignment is equally within reason, shuimenwise. In this connection, your 79 and 81 came in a few days ago, and today 82 and 83 arrived, so we wonder if your numbering skipped a beat. We do not fall down dead to learn that you never

were harmed despite opportunities for it. Why the hell should anyone want that? You were the one person from whom it could be determined how far things had progressed. Harming you would have blown everything, drawn attention to where it was not wanted, and defeated the central purpose, which was to keep abreast of things. I am not saying that a ~~Democlean sword~~ ~~was built into the~~ ~~situations where you found yourselves together,~~ but I think that what may have ^{been} built in was the setup for the discovery of a compromising situation which never came off, possibly because it was not needed, let alone the fact that you ignored the bait. The great need at the time was for accurate information as to how far things had progressed, ~~in~~ in order to plan countermeasures. To control his flock, the shepherd does not ~~slay~~ slay a lamb. He ~~hells~~ bells the right wether.

I suggest that the inquiry a year ago about your ability to work puzzles reflects a continuing opinion that you are no lamb. If this is on the beam, a revival or reactivation of the earlier pattern is not implausible as a response to the attention you have been paying to what we might characterize as the shuimen phenomenon. If it served no other purpose, this revival has succeeded in getting you more involved than ever through an appeal to your avuncular sympathies and diverting you into elaborate and time-consuming activities to fill that role. Your long letter dated the 27th, filling ⁱⁿ much-needed background to the whole scene from the beginning, is most helpful. On the basis of it and everything else we have ~~seen~~ ^{seen} we have bigger doubts than ever. There are just too many coincidences showing knowledge of your movements and specific interests. The talk of actually having hurt you has to be taken seriously, whether you can think of anything that conforms or not. You may not be able to establish any connection, but so what? How well have things been going for you? The fact that you can't establish any connection does not mean there is none, or that talk of one is idle. And no matter how much checks out, how much of it actually meant a net addition to what you already knew or were bound to find out otherwise? As for what you are told now, much of it concerns old stuff and means, ~~basically, nothing, except possibly a thorough briefing.~~

The fact that the bum rap was laid on so soon after reestablishment of contact with you, which in turn came out of the blue after quite a silence, has to be questioned. It seems well within possibility that the bust was staged, regardless of how real it seemed to the victim, in order to get further into you. The props sound good, including the veteran dock boss, who could have been known all along to have been skimming or taking bribes, and who happens to be handy now for possible pressure. But as for the dusky villain waiting outside to catch the hens as they leave, this strikes us as a lovely local fairy tale only. It's based on the deadliest of all redneck myths -- that white female flesh is as irresistible to the black male as black female flesh is to the white racist male. No black in that neck of the woods is going to have any part of a myth that has been used against him for 400 years. He may be a crook, or today's equivalent of a slave, but he canNOT be that stupid and/or craven. We feel also that some of the alleged goings on inside the coop are laid on a bit thick, but otherwise it's a good show. We have to admit that, and it's wise anyway never to underestimate the opposition, but on the whole we feel our best advice has to be that you should make no move without Lil's concurrence. ~~Two~~ heads, etc. At the same time, we recognize that if there is renewed interest in you, there is the necessity of keeping abreast of it. In this respect, the \$35 phone call may be useful. There should be an offer to repay it, especially if the ambition to be your guest is realized, in which case, charge. If the guest shows up, don't worry about money. It'll be there, or can be got. Charge for everything, and if you let this character anywhere near your files, you're out of your mind. Best and good luck,  jdw

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P.S.

I have nothing to add to the ~~x~~ foregoing, since it's the result of a good deal of discussion by all of our top consultants here at STM/West.

As I read the three letters we've seen, just outside my line of vision on each side I had a strong impression of a great fluttering. A subconscious projection of warning flags?

My reaction is one of extreme uneasiness. Since I can't point to any specific thing as the cause it's very unfair to say it so positively, especially if the need for your help is real. Objectively, such a strong reaction isn't justified since it's based only on these three letters and what you've told us as background. On the other hand, my discomfort is so definite I feel I should say so.

We feel Lil's idea about the conditioning factor is in the right direction, although it seems far-fetched. But then nothing about the entire situation is exactly near-fetched.

About the anti-walker: we know now your desk top is plywood, and if it isn't really smooth the method may not work as well as it does here. Wanted to ask before we sent but didn't dare in case I gave the show away.

Je

STM/West Upheaval Imminent. Demotion Seen. (He forgot to say we'd like to hear the tape of your expensive phone conversation.)