

9/10/71

Dear Js,

Glad to get your 9/5s and the clips, which I'll be going over soon. Timing is excellent in valued comment on notes because I have to check but one more chapter to satisfy Lil's questions before getting to it. With luck, that will be this afternoon, evening or night. When I work at speed too great and am still carried away by my own indignation and emotion, it is good to have someone who can be critical. I had a question about one tree, but there seem to be others.

Probably I'll be repeating myself, but this doesn't call for you to do the same. I can understand what such a crazy schedule does to you, so don't take time apologizing for what I would take as abuse of a long-time employee by an inconsiderate employer. A similar thing cost me sleep last night, and that is a rarity. I had gotten up at 3 a.m. and kept going until a little after 11. I went to bed and couldn't sleep. All I could think of is the overdue check about which there is no argument from those bastards who did FRAME-UP and our urgent need. Normally, I am asleep almost as soon as I get into bed. I got up at one, smoked a bit, drank some wine, got my mind onto the writing I wish I were in now (I hate to have to go over what I've already gotten on paper because there is so much yet to record), then was able to get into bed and to sleep. I got about five hours, but it was thrice interrupted briefly when I roused, each time without any problem getting right back to sleep. But my point is that I do understand the rotten schedule you have, do much appreciate the time you take, and hope you do not take time you really do not have. The one thing that is disturbing when you are on this kind of schedule is wondering whether you have gotten what I send. There have been rather open intrusion recently, but restricted to ~~the~~ mail from two known fellow-critics. Apparently all the rest of the mail is undisturbed and in some cases service has improved. These were duplication of what in the detective business is known as rough shadowing, surveillance that is made obvious, the intent being intimidation. If my extensivemail has even been intercepted for any period of time, it resulted in an enormous waste of somebody's time. There is little in it that should serve even paranoid official interests.

Your comments on the Cold War era are interesting. I also recall something about that Byrnes speech. Your analysis of his getting the Secretaryship makes sense. Truman has little on the ball and depended on the intellects of others. I had experience with him when he was chairman of an important Senate committee and know how limited he was. But this again leads to the parallel in my initial curiosity, if we can assume for a moment that someone was pulling a few strings, the invitation to Churchill not only to make a visit but to make a speech at a small college, a ~~px~~ speech that was to determine the spin of the world for decades. I think that at some point there may be something on these things in somebody's writings. Although generally I am less conspiracy-minded than most of those working on the assassinations, beginning with the FDR dumping of Wallace and the selection of a nonentity when it wasn't necessary, a man of positiveness and stubbornness but one who more than most would have to depend upon others, I find myself wondering. Without answers. Politics alone can work this way. But when we consider what happened beginning with Truman, what happened at home and in foreign policy, only part of which is the perpetuation of a war economy, I find myself reluctant to believe it was no more than the working of an unsatisfactory political system.

In telling you of good things that are on TV, please understand that I am not needing you to get one. When the fare was better, we felt as you do and simply refused to get a set. We didn't have one until an old friend from Senate-investigator days gave us one a member of his family, a brother-in-law, son of Bert Wheeler, was exchanging for a newer model. This friend simply loaded it up and brought it out, with aerial, and installed it. In those days there was good drama, if one was selective, and Lil found time for and enjoyed it. Because we are not latched to the wierd schedule you are, it can be less of an intrusion into our present lives. We can breakfast at 7, when the CBS hour-long a.m. news is on. It begins with notice of the cities from which they have filmed reports, and I can judge from that whether the film will be of interest. I look at it, regardless, until I've eaten, and unless there is good reason to wait for what may be coming, as soon as I've finished I go

the brisk walk that good weather makes possible. Often I work into it, turning it on for Lil to hear as she goes about her things. Sometimes I eat at the desk (breakfast is a simple meal, an orange, a soft-boiled egg and coffee). The thing that is what most of our friends would regard as a cultural deficiency is something we got into when Lil's mother was visiting. She has a favorite soap opera which was thus inflicted upon us. I was astounded at the perfection of the performances and we got to watching it when we had lunch. Soon I was baffled at what was being aired, like all the fine families having bastards in them, all by respectable women of good family. I find sympathetic treatment of the desire of the young for freedom--all sorts of good messages slipped into the unthinking minds of probably millions of bored women. Now I find myself paying attention to the techniques. Before long I found a merit in looking at what, in terms of drama, is trash. It wrenches the mind away from what is on it for so long a day. If I would not recommend anything like this to another, I am unashamed of saying that it serves a useful purpose for me. And I note that when we

have young visitors, they see the same merit I do and wind up with the same question: if this is what the medium can do with trash, what could it not do given the freedom of the writers, actors and directors and producers to turn out and put on good stuff? There is an incredible amount of first-rate talent of all ages wasted. The talent is real and in itself I enjoy admiring it. We also sup to the evening news, unless we have company, which is not most of the time. Unfortunately, when it is good to be able to put the mind on something else for brief periods, there is little more of which I know that can serve this purpose. Once in a while an old and a good movie. Lil goes over the listing every Sunday and marks the few there are. Sometimes we do look at one. We never go to the movies. This dislike of them began before we couldn't afford them. Anyway, I'm not trying to encourage you to get a set, but I predict that if and when you do, you will be able to find, if you can get signals at all, infrequent presentations of what it is worth seeing. If we could get better signals on the educational stations, we'd know more, but our limited experience with it is discouraging. It has aired better drama, has given some attention to blacks, but we know of nothing else. It is just another net that does not live up to its potential or its concept.

I believe I told you I do have the Dave Smith LATimes 8/16 on the Sirhan case. I am getting occasional copy from the LA CNS wire. It carries what the wire services seem not to. One example is in today's mail, the 9/1 story on the press conference of a new RFA buff, Fernando Faura, who says what others are with different citations.

Sputnik: There are a total of three. Hal was going to send me June's. I have the next two if either of you wants. I can agree with what you say, but I go further, as I did in an unanswered letter to the editor of Aurora. I fear this means a larger policy step, a book that will be the one available in that enormous hunk of the earth's surface on the as assassinations. I would much prefer that when this is done what is told is truthful and real.

I'll be glad to get the Sony mike when you have time to send it. I bought a large supply of cheap (and I mean really cheap) cassettes and find they make a noise the built-in mike picks up mechanically. Where I always have pressing money problems, even though I know these cheap tapes are not good for the heads, when I can get 3 for \$1, I run the risks. Usually, my tapes are for making a record, not for frequent reuse. When I was interviewing in the field, I used known brands. I wish I have some way of knowing which of those are good for the next time I have to get some. Meanwhile, my expert who is a police expert has not come up with Sony plugs for me. He did recondition my two old and once very good Concord reel machines. And he did tell me a bit about the problems of ~~xxxxx~~ making clandestine tapes, something I rarely think of but infrequently wanted to be able to do. I expect Jerry may be here before too long. While I have no reason to believe he knows anything that I'll want to tape, it is always possible. And the need for field work now is real. The capability is lacking. There are now meaningful new things I have to follow up. If and when I can, I will. There is much new to be sought in New Orleans. Perhaps it will be possible for me to get there before too long. I represent certain values to some people who may make it possible. So, thanks for the mike, when you can get to it. Please, do not drop other things or push yourselves to do this, for it can't be right away. I expect Ivon this month and if it is going to be possible, it can't be until after then and I'd prefer to postpone until I've finished condensing and probably purging other two parts III.

Check on Wayne. He is a reporter friend from Memphis.

Thanks for everything. Best regards,

5 September 1971

Dear Harold:

I hope here to clean up some odds and ends, unanswered questions and so on, from your letters dating back a month or more. That this much has accumulated is an excellent indication of how my work shift is affecting both of us. We've done it before, but we were younger and more resilient, and the makeshift devices we used then to cope with the incredible inconveniences and frustrations of living this way no longer work. It is affecting both of us about equally, slows us both up in many subtle ways and is beginning to take its toll on the way we feel. The point is, we shall continue to do our best not to neglect your questions, but the answers -- where we can provide them -- will take longer.

Your Aug. 3 -- whereabouts of Walter ~~Shrid~~ Sheridan and what he is doing. No clue. We're alert to this and will let you know anything that turns up.

Your Aug. 4 -- about any reading of the affidavits. Never had time to study them, really, but see no reason to disagree with your conclusion that something considerably bigger than JG is involved -- possibly a concerted move to discredit the whole Democratic Party apparatus in the South.

Your Aug. 9, last page -- your point that the whole Cold War anti-Communist stance of this country traces back to Churchill's speech at Fulton, Mo., where he lifted the "Iron Curtain" phrase bodily from Dr. Paul Josef Goebbels and set the whole American press off chasing Communists. As you say, this is the overt origin, and like you we'd like to know who swung that particular deal. However I felt this was standard British ruling class operating procedure at the time, ~~and~~ that is, to maneuver the United States into a mood so it would assume the main burden of countering Stalin in Europe and relieve Britain of the burden. In this connection, George Kennan's coining of the phrase "Cold War" was scarcely less influential, but I cannot recall whether it came before or after ~~Churchill's~~ Churchill's speech. What I am reasonably certain of is that Churchill was preceded by a speech by our then Secretary of State, James F. Byrnes, made at Stuttgart in which he said much the same thing about the danger of Russia without resorting to Goebbels for his argument.

Your Aug. 15 -- Bernard Kalb's interview with Fairbank on China. Yes, this is something we missed because we didn't have television, and we should like to have seen it. John is an old and valued friend, generally very sound on his subject. Some day, no doubt, we shall decide that the price we pay in not catching such things is less than we'd have to pay by watching for them.

Aug 16 -- On this day, a Monday, the Los Angeles Times has a long roundup by Dave Smith on the Sirhan Case. At one point you asked if we could supply a copy; then we both think we remember you sent along a note to someone else saying this other person had supplied one. In any event, we finally got hold of a copy and made another copy for you in case you still need it. Please say whether you do. If so, we have one for you. If not, we can offer it to Hal in case he missed it.

Your Aug 19 to us and Aug 21 to Hal regarding an article in Aurora translation and appearing in Sputnik. We haven't seen it. ~~If we can, we'd be interested.~~ *Hal says he has it and will provide.*

We suspect this may be a tentative Soviet reaction to Nixon's gambit toward China, which as you know has stirred all sorts of rather paranoid reactions in Russia. The Soviet New Times carried an article the other day arguing that China is basically expansionist and aggressive and bent upon empire. It's gone that far. I suspect the original article appeared in an obscure journal like Aurora simply because it was a trial balloon and could always be disclaimed if the reaction was too unfavorable. Translating it and planting it in Sputnik appears a deliberate warning to Nixon that the Russians know a few things too and might not hesitate to publish them if he leans too far toward China.

Your Aug. 26 -- We do have an extra mike with on-off switch that is usable with your Sony recorder. When we have time we'll pack it and send it along. Try it and see how it works. If it's no better than the built-in mike, send it back. If not, you're welcome.*

Your built in mike, by the way is what Sony calls an Electret Condenser mike, suggesting it may not be too much different from the condenser mike (with the single penlight power cell) we told you of, which the local dealer has. When we have an opportunity I'll try to find out whether this separate condenser mike is any better than the one you have built into your set.

*Or, perhaps your electronics friend could take the plug from our extra mike and connect it to your Concord mike.

Your Aug. 31, to someone named Wayne, including a clipping from an unspecified newspaper, datelined Atlanta, and assembled from news dispatches. We have not yet had time to check our own files for anything comparable with this. Certainly we remember nothing of the ~~xxx~~ sort from that time. However we shall make a careful check of our files and then return your clipping, as requested. In this connection, the AP here keeps only its own originating files, nothing from anywhere else unless it is directly relevant to something we're working on. So no hope there.

This is a very unsatisfactory way to deal with your most interesting letters, enclosures and clippings, but it is the best we can do under present circumstances. There are many things about which I'd ordinarily have more to say, but the fact is that both of us are in a sense stupefied by the violent wrenchings about our schedule takes us through. In order simply to live, we have to undergo each weekend the equivalent in hours of a jet trip to London or Tokyo, and back. A sensible answer would be to keep the same schedule and not make such drastic changes, but some are necessary in order to get to banks and stores. Any social life is out of the question.

One final thought -- reverting to the reference to your Aug 9 on page one about the origin of the Cold War. In my mind this is associated with the advent of Byrnes, who replaced Stettinius, who had replaced Hull. Getting rid of Stettinius was roughly coincidental with Truman's firing of Henry Wallace, who symbolized cooperation with Russia in foreign policy and the more radical innovations of the New Deal. It was during Stettinius' tenure that Dulles was wheeled into to State Department in a wheelchair, suffering from gout, as the GOP's consultant on foreign policy. I therefore suspect that this marked the beginning of a change in policy, away from cooperation with Russia and toward one of hostility, to Russia. The Southerner Byrnes may have been Truman's sop to the Democrats while letting

himself be steered toward such a policy of hostility, especially after he found Stalin such a hard old nut at Potsdam. In any case, Dulles already had his foot in the door, and it seems reasonable he already was plugging a harder line toward Russia for various reasons considered desirable by the interests he ~~re~~ represented, and which the British may have been eager to exploit. It is certain that Truman already was becoming baffled by the Chinese problem, and he only made it worse by agreeing at Potsdam to Stalin's demand that the Chinese sign a treaty with Russia which gave back ,to Russia all the rights they had held in Manchuria in Czarist days! Perhaps ~~xxxxxxxx~~ Roosevelt had agreed to the same thing at Yalta, I can't be sure at this late date, but the point is that things were cooking which Truman little understood and was prepared to deal with intelligently. J. Parnell Thomas was raising hell with the Un-American Activities Committee, and you may remember Alfred Kohlberg was functioning -- and had been since early in the war -- as a one-man China lobby who appeared determined to prevent any permanent, reasonable relations either with Russia or the Communists who already showed every sign of winning out in China.

Sincerely,



jdw

5 September 1971

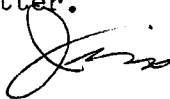
Dear Harold:

A separate note on your Aug. 26 note. We already had decided to say nothing to Hal unless he brings the whole thing up himself. If he does, we shall simply tell him the simplest truth, that his long silence toward you led to an exchange of inquiries from and to you in an effort to figure out what was going on, and that this was something we destroyed because it's an area we don't customarily venture into and which in no case merited keeping -- but that we neglected to include one of your postscripts when we took everything out of the file and destroyed it. But we don't think he'll bring it up, and hope that he doesn't. We shan't, of course.

In this connection, it would be helpful if you would put any comment on him on a separate sheet -- that is, anything you'd prefer his not seeing. This will guarantee no further slips on our part.

He called last night, by the way, to say that a friend of his named Haapinen or something like that was in town and he wanted to introduce him to us. He called at around 11 p.m., an hour we're normally up and functioning, but this time caught us in the ~~middle~~ middle of a dinner neither of us felt like eating but which we knew we must. So regretfully we had to turn him down. Tonight we have to sleep as late as possible, then have dinner before I turn up for work, at 11:30 p.m. That's how it goes. In the last two times we've seen him, by the way, he's mentioned Cheryl only once, and has said nothing of the new girl friend. He seems to like his job, and to be getting along well.

Best from us both. Jenifer will write later on still another matter.



jdw