

21 April 1982

Dear Harold and Lil:

Thanks for yours of the 11th and the various enclosures, which I'lll get to in a minute.

Saw the eye surgeon again yesterday, 30 days after the operation and he found the retina completely reattached, ordered the medication stopped, and said come back in two more weeks for another look. He's now treating the other eye for slight pressure. Pressure in the eye that was operated on is now normal, and its vision is probably 95 per cent of normal and gets better day by day. When everything settles down I'll get my glasses re-corrected to conform with the new situation.

You're quite right, Harold: Joan Hitchcock's house was on Broadway, not Pacific Ave. I must have confused the location because the whole area often is referred to as Pacific Heights. The one time I was there she was not present, and I never met her, but many people have spoken of her, for all her unorthodox behavior, as a warm and generous person. One night at least 10 years ago Joe Dolan interviewed Penn Jones on Channel 44, an UHF TV station in SF. We went with Hal and some of his students to the program and afterward Hal took everyone out to the Broadway house where we gabbed with Jones and taped his speculations for an hour or so and then were treated to a thinly veiled warning by Christian not to ask too many questions or dig too deep -- others would stand for only so much, he implied. We both took an instant dislike to him, of course.

This is just a guess, but your mentioning that Howard found the books in a bookstore suggests to me that someone of Christian's general stripe may have found out that Howard had located them and was trying to get all copies available. I think it's quite possible that someone has leaned very heavily on Howard, or on someone else who's in a position to pass the pressure along, and that this could account for his silence. If something like that is at work, I'm sure you'll bear the possibility in mind.

Very interested in the WX Post piece on the Kaifeng Jews. I was there for part of one day in 1938 when the Japanese flew some of us from Peking when the Yellow River changed its course during the Sino-Japanese war. I looked and looked, but could see no one who looked the least bit Jewish (if there is such an appearance, which I doubt). When I was there in 1980 I looked again, and this time saw no features that could be ascribed to Jewish lineage but did see several cases of brownish or reddish hair. But even these could have come from other non-Chinese strains which have been present for hundreds of years.

It finally has turned warm here, and everyone is enjoying the balmy weather after the unusually long and wet winter. Hope you've warmed up too, and wish I could share some of your springtime explosion of greenery. How about a mess of poke greens?

Best to you both,


jdw