

10 March 1982

Dear Harold and Lil:

Sorry to be so long about replying to your good letter of Feb. 10, but I've really been busy. Working with patients and attending the new refresher course on patient care and bereavement support has been complicated by a round of visits to assorted doctors following the discovery by my optometrist that I probably had a partially detached retina. I had gone for my usual bi-ennial checkup on my correction for glasses, and he sent me to an ophthalmologist who confirmed it. It's still small, and does not affect my vision in any way I can discern, but of course the only thing to do is to get it welded back on with a laser. Apparently what used to be a very difficult operation now is something of a breeze with the laser technique, with most patients discharged the next day after the operation.

I go into Ross General Hospital March 16, get the welding job on the 17th, and unless there are complications should be sprung the next day. Libby will pick me up and take me to her place (only a few blocks from the hospital) where I'll have left the car, and if I don't feel like driving will stay with her until I do -- that or make other arrangements if coming home should prove to be impractical for any length of time.

Gil Mattos is here and will look out for me as long as I need it, so everything is working out fine. I feel fine, have no heart or lung problems, and have every confidence in the ophthalmologist (he's also the eye surgeon) about whom I hear only good things from my professional friends. I'll keep you informed, of course.

I think the AP man who got involved with the Czechs was William E. Oatis, who came back to the AP staff at the U.N. and as far as I know is still on that job.

I've heard nothing from Howard. In the meantime something has happened that might contribute to his slugginess about the books. Joan Hitchcock, the lady in whose basement on Pacific Avenue in SF the books were supposed to have been stored, died about a month ago in a Mapa hospital of Cirrhosis of the liver, which means she probably was out of circulation for sometime before she died. She was only 49, but had lived a wild life as you no doubt know. So even had he been willing, Howard probably would have had difficulty getting the books. This of course says nothing about his failure to keep you informed after bringing up the subject with you in the first place. I'm inclined to agree with you that something else is in the picture but have no idea what it might be.

This isn't much of a letter, but I've been cleaning out and reorganizing old files most of the day (except for a brief excursion with a patient) and am about ready to hit the hay.

I'm in fine shape and feel completely confident about the outcome of the operation, so don't worry. I'll let you know how I make out as soon as I can get to a typewriter.

All the best,

jdw