

11 March 1976

Dear Harold:

We've little to send along this time, but I do want to acknowledge receipt of your 1st class mailing of March 3 and the 3rd class lot mailed on March 8, which latter came in today. Very thoughtful of you to supply the Belin and NY Times reviews of Anson's book, and also the long Sunday WX Post thing on the strike as well as the other clippings you had saved for us. You'll be interested to know that among the most valuable was an AP story from Kweilin which Lil rescued from the Frederick Post. We of course have uppteen stories from the Post, the Times, the Chronicle and many radio transcripts on that particular episode in Nixon's trip, but the writers all were too busy being slick and smooth to bother with facts. It took the plodding old AP, on its regional wire, to supply such pedestrian information as where Nixon was on each day, very important when arrayed in chronological order against what was going on in this country. He was sulky and sullen at Kweilin because Goldwater had suggested he remain in China and because Ford had let it be known that Gates was going to Peking as chief of the liaison office. Nixon may have heard this already the night before from Hua Kuo-feng before leaving Peking, but its being made public was something else. Incidentally, the chronology we've assembled indicates very strongly that Nixon began preparing for his trip early last November, shortly after the Chinese were insulted when Nixon recalled Bush to become the new CIA chief and failed to name a successor (which was not done until Nixon was about to leave China). The same evidence indicates that Nixon went along unwillingly but had no choice if he wanted to launch his campaign of rehabilitation through travel. Next indicated venture: Iran.

You make a good point when you suggest that Chinese support of the wrong side in Angola was more anti-Russian ~~and~~ than pro-u.s. However, in this case, although it WAS anti-Russian, it represented an uncharacteristic change for the Chinese at the time. The background is that for years Russia had been supporting the MPLA against the Portuguese, with the Cubans rallying along somewhat later. For even longer the U.S. had supported Holden Roberto of the PRLA, and then later extended the help to UNITA after it was formed. All this time the Chinese had lent moral support to all three elements and possibly even some technical and political advice. They did not withdraw their support of the MPLA ^{and UNITA} until after the U.S. began sending it quantities of aid through Zaire after the Portuguese cleared out last September. And it was at this time that the Russians and the Cubans responded by heavy arms and other assistance to the MPLA. Ordinarily the Chinese never would get themselves out on such a limb, and I find no explanation for their having done so except as a favor to Kissinger sometime last fall, when they still had some hope he and Ford would move toward implementing the Shanghai Communique in regard to Taiwan. Kissinger dashed that hope when he visited Peking last October, and Ford did nothing to revive it in early December. They needed a sign that the U.S. connection was alive and working, and Nixon was their answer. They've said nothing about Angola for months, indicating they are awaiting an opportunity to re-orient their policy along more realistic lines now that MPLA has emerged triumphant.

You are entirely correct, in our experience, in your preference for off-hour radio news. We find much the same thing true here. It's only after midnight, when radio editors are not under daytime policy guns, that they venture into the behind-the-headlines material that supplies some meaning to the headlines which are the slim fare of the daytime newscasts. Unfortunately, we do not have your choice of all-news stations out here. There's only one, really.

Best from us both, ~~and~~ jdw