

4 February 1976

Dear Harold:

We both want to thank you for your various notes and letters which you've probably unwisely taken the time and effort to write in order to reassure us about your health and the various communications you've had to send others regarding it. We do appreciate the great amount of effort this has involved, especially under the circumstances. Your three-pager of Jan. 31 is a good example. We don't expect such special treatment, certainly not when it costs you so much. But we're grateful.

Your Jan. 31 letter merely confirms the impression we already had formed from your letters to GHA and to people like Lesar and your friend in New York. From here it looks as if you're not only the victim of neglect or indifference at the least, but that your restricted diet and activities are taking their toll. If inexperienced, that is an honest opinion.

One reason we either have not dealt with this earlier or alluded to it only superficially is that Jenifer has a hard time ~~doing~~ doing what she feels is the barest minimum necessary, and I've been working against a deadline for the past month with a combined review of four books which add up to a clear and dramatic picture of what the new Chinese person is like after 27 years of the People's Republic. If it's used, I'll send you a copy.

But the bigger reason we have not gone into your health troubles is the feeling that from this distance it is dangerous and unwise to say more than the safest generalities about something so vital and important. It seems clear that your natural anxieties and the difficult circumstances that add to your problems all contribute to what would be a serious situation under the best of circumstances. It is not because of lack of interest or sympathy.

Today was the day you were supposed to go in to GHA and get a reading, not only on your condition but also on what they can or will do about it. The best news we've heard in some time is that you planned to take Lesar with you. It seems clear from this distance that with their record something new is needed in their picture of you, and an attorney could make a great deal of difference. In their minds they must have their own reasons for the way you have been treated. You have not been able to change that. Lesar could add a new dimension to their thinking.

Reluctant as I am to say it, we have the impression here that you are approaching exhaustion if not disablement. If you have to spend a spell in a hospital, don't resist it. You need rest and continuous attention, if your symptoms mean anything. It takes no expert to come to that conclusion. If you have to let your work slide, all or part of it, let it. Most of all you need the feeling that what can and should be done will be done, not that your problems are not being dealt with and the reasons withheld from you. No one can function in such a state of mind. You have to find out what has to be done, and then do what you can. To take care of it, we think.

This isn't advice, just the way it looks from here, at a great distance and with incomplete knowledge. But it comes from the depths of sympathy and concern.

Our very best,

jdw