

Dear Jim,

1/27/81

Lil's tax clients were coming before she finished the last of a series of affidavits I had to prepare in several of the FOIA cases. Since finishing them I've been catching up, as best I do these days, when I take so many things so much easier. And there are long periods taken up with trying to rebuild. I can't walk much but I've progressed to where, in the past week, I've exercised as much as a simulated 23 miles at a simulated speed of 23 mpg.

Your account of your trip to China was very interesting to me. Lil has it and with tax work already accumulated hasn't yet read it. After she finishes it I'd like to let the Maos and the Cesars read it, if I may. I think it would interest them much, although Jim's wife's family is Singapore. (His father, about 80, has just published a book on his family.)

It means so much more, particularly because of the background and prior experiences on which you drew. You did convey how meaningful it all was to you, too.

The little cards you sent with the Xmas card, all were beautiful. You must have wanted to carry so much more back from China than you could!

Not much new here. I feel OK but the leg still provides problems. I'm sleeping better but whatever happened when the clots went down to the foot deformed the little toe and before I realized it, it was irritated. This required that I not do what irritates it, meaning less than the little walking I was doing, thus the exercising. The local doctor thinks it will take an additional 6-8 weeks for this very minor irritation to heal. Which tells you something about the supply of blood there.

I'm impatient to be able to do more but I'm properly careful. The only things at all heavy that I do are bringing the firewood in and caring for the stove.

Never know with the feeps, but I've won a significant administrative victory in the JFK FOIA case, of there is any reasonable performance under it. In the King case we've given the judge new problems as a means of getting her to face the old ones she created. She made a frightful mess out of that case and she knows it and wants it off her back, by putting it on mine. So, where there was no compliance with parts of my request in that litigation, we filed new requests and when they were ignored for longer than the law permits we filed suit for these items. Naturally, with the similarity in cases, it was referred to her. So if she dumps the case now more than five years old and we have to go to the appeals court on it she can now see that she'll be getting her load back with additions. Maybe thentime will come when it will all work out. I'd like that and I'd like to be able to think of doing other things and to do them, particularly writing, even if I don't know what I'll do with it after writing.

I think I told you that Lil got me hooked on baseball (Orioles) toward the end of the season, and then I as an old Phillies fan enjoyed the playoffs and the series while in the hospital. I still have to soak my feet and Lil got me to looking at reruns of the TV show MASH. If there were more like it TV would not be a vast wasteland. It is remarkably well done, is an effective anti-war thing, and if aired out there and you have time, I urge you to take it in and get a pleasant experience from it. The show continues and is aired on the net Monday nights in the east. Aside from an occasional Archie Bunker and the news this is the extent of my expanded TV viewing. I'm doing more reading and enjoying it. The TV is fine for reducing the boredom of exercising, though. I do it to news shows, if you'll excuse the word, and Sunday to the football spectacular.

When Dave was here after Xmas he gave Lil and Amarylis bulbs. It is now almost 2' tall (largest of 3 shoots) and the blooms are beginning to open. Dave junior is measuring the rate of growth of theirs and figures at 1 1/8" a day. Fantastic!

Your taking a part-time job sounds like a very good idea, regardless of what the job is. You are used to being busy and doing anything worthwhile, anything that serves others, gives a good feeling, judging from the experiences of my neighbor Russell, the retired (arthritis) vet. Having no intellectual interests he suddenly found himself unable to continue with his life's work. First he developed and became incredibly good at a hobby—~~was~~ sewing. Despite the deformity of both hands. Then he got himself out and helping others by becoming a part-time driver for something calling itself "Home Call." Actually, he makes nothing out of it. But besides getting him out of the house it gives him a good feeling because he serves only older folks. They happen to be those who have



means, but that makes no difference. There are widowed farm wives in their 80s he takes to one special hair dresser, others he takes to doctors and dentists, etc, I'd never have thought of what he's doing but it is useful and it gives him a feeling of being useful. He drives people to the Washington airports and picks them up, all sorts of things that give him a good feeling, boy-scout ~~wise~~ wise, good turns.

From his experiences I've come to see that anything, almost, is useful to someone and thus worthwhile. This will vary with stages of our lives and with individuals, but underlying it all is the fact that we can all do something that has some importance to others and in this world that is fine.

Best of all, of course, is the great things you've been doing with and for Hostel. It is the same thing, but vast difference in significance.

Reminds me, you've had nothing to say about Libby since she cared for you when you returned from China. She is a wonderful person, I'm sure you are both very good for each other, and I hope you continue to see her, even if you say nothing about it. I also hope that she is overcoming her great loss.

Dave Lifton's book is finally out. It is monstrous, in all ways. More than 750 pages in size - yet he does not reproduce a single one of the records to which he refers. Worst of all are the deliberate dishonesties and they permeate. Where he has any fact at all, virtually all is from what published, and always uncredited. Most of it is Dick Daring, from the gutter. A pointless personalization of nothing, puffed up beyond comprehension. How Macmillan could go for that kind of indecent ego-tripping, based on a totally untenable theory, is not easy to understand.

You won't be getting it, of course, but I think you may remember him and his dubious earlier career, so I report this. I'll take no initiatives, but if the opportunity offers itself maybe I'll do him in.

He'll have problems for the rest of his life. He has devoted all these years to the book and now that it is out, nothing really remains for him. Particularly because whatever his emotional problems, he knows that his book is nothing and that all of those years add up to nothing except the most dishonest of dishonesties, using the work of others, more than just stealing it, as he always did.

I had a nice experience from it yesterday. A total stranger phoned from California to say he'd just finished reading it and he just had to call me and tell me how much he and so many of his friends feel indebted to me.

Sorry it took so long to let you know how much I appreciate your taking the time to give an account of your trip to China. Many thanks.

Best wishes,

