

16 April 1972

Dear Harold:

Somes odds and ends, replying to your mailings of April 1st 10 and 13.

Taking things as they come, I can think of nothing about the growth of the international corporate conglomerates that I've seen which ^{Karnow} is likely to have missed. If he can get at it, Stanford Reserach Institute serves a whole passel of them and has much information on them, including unconscious listings of interlocking directorates AMONG conglomerates, a phenomenon which makes it easier for them all to cooperate with one another as a matter of common interest. SRI serves as a sort of clearing house of information among them, as does a New York outfit called the National Industrial Conference Board which probably can be located in or near the Rockefeller Foundation. SRI at one time listed a book available (1966) which it called "Business Leadership for World Development" which might be a good place to start looking.

About the lack of investigative reporting: there is much less incentive for it today, and the penalties of reporting the wrong things are of course much more obvious. Quite apart from any endemic political trends, much of this is due to the increased commercialization and mechanization of the media. That is, a publisher is primarily a businessman responsible to a board of directors, and this is where his first responsibility lies regardless of how he feels about news. Inevitably he comes to regard news as a commodity useful for filling up the paces between advertising and little else except that it can be dangerous in view of the libel laws. The relationship of news to the truth therefore suffers and is the first to suffer. It suffers still further with more mechanization and automation, as the whole process is speeded up and the writer is reduced to a cog in a production machine. He not only has no incentive for investigative reporting, he has no time in most cases. If he finds time, as likely as not his work will be regarded with suspicion because it doesn't agree with official handouts, which are always safe, it is firmly believed.

Cossacks: Yes, I understand the allusion. Perhaps the Cold War is tapering off largely because no one ever was able to use an expression like Commie Cossacks and get away with it.

Headaches: Have you tried Miltowns? They reach the hypothalamus deep in the brain, which tells the adrenal gland to cool it and stop goosing the heart to work harder. Most migraine headaches appear due to tension due to this causal sequence and appear in many cases to be one manifestation of increased bloodpressure. Miltowns sometimes work in this situation. A doctor has to prescribe them, in this state anyway.

We're indebted to you for a small clipping about Lois Snow reaching Hong Kong en route to Peking. We hadn't known she was going. I imagine it's to gather material to complete the book he was working on, but that's just a guess. Anything you see about her we'd be very glad to have. We've talked to her on the phone, but never have met her. She sounds like a very fine person. His first wife, Helen Foster, was a well meaning but sad case in some ways, and not good for Ed, who was a great guy in every way.

3. IN LONDON
(T. G. ORAL)

Your mentioning of Sevareid being with Stevenson when he dropped dead on that street in London is most interesting. I suppose I knew that Sevareid was in attendance at the time, but had forgotten it. And I had not realized that the change in him dated from then. Most interesting. Perhaps he read it as the same signal that we did and altered his course accordingly. Did you also know that also walking with Stevenson was Mrs. Marietta Tree? Somewhere we have something indicating that she was the former wife of a certain agency man, I can't recall ~~whom~~ who. Anyway, she was supposed to have tried to revive him with artificial respiration.

On how the Chinese regard us: This is a mixed picture, of course, and there's always the ~~danger~~ danger of oversimplifying, but their view of us is probably not so much in terms of our inferior capability for imperialism at the time of empire building. I think they regard this -- empire building -- as a symptom of the western or European superiority complex and dynamic, and (as Communists) as a symptom of capitalism. Remember that the Europeans had been bombarding them with Christian missionaries for nearly 500 years before we got into the act and made Christian missions part of Big Business. Missions always were part of big business, of course, but no one ever overfulfilled their quota quite as much as we did.

In his July, 1949, "lean to one side" speech in which Mao turned toward Russia, he inserted an interesting qualification about something to the effect that American help to China in the past was unforgettable -- he used that word -- and that in spite of this China could not trust a capitalistic colossus to treat China as an equal.

He had in mind, I am sure, not only our role in defeating Japan but such gestures in the past as our turning back the Boxer Indemnity to finance Tsinghua University. Nor do the Chinese forget that most Americans, including a lot of Americans doing the work of imperialism in one way or another, usually wind up far more charmed by the Chinese than do most other foreigners. In spite of our racial hangups, in many cases we seem to accept the Chinese more readily as equals than do Europeans. The British are stiff, the French arrogant, the Russians uptight, and so on. John Stewart Service can write simply and without self-consciousness that Chinese food is the best in the world, and mean it, and not feel he is letting down haute cuisine or Mom's apple pie. No Briton would dream of saying such a thing. No Frenchman would consider the idea. No Russian could imagine it. Americans unabashedly like to eat. So do the Chinese. Potential pals.

I am delighted with your feeling that the rise of China is possibly the most important stabilizing force in the world today. This has been my feeling at least since Mao made it clear he was using the Russians, not the other way round, and probably even predating Mao. There is something about the way the Chinese look at the rest of the ~~world~~ world that makes it a little more difficult for others to behave quite so badly because it is clear the Chinese know perfectly well what is going on.

You'll be interested to know, if you don't already, that from the beginning the people now in Peking have planned China's future economy and industry on the basis of self-supporting regions, consciously avoiding when possible great concentrations of industry that would be bombed out easily. Their agriculture is planned along the same lines, to avoid famine, especially in the event of an invasion.

Each province or group of provinces will be able to carry on regardless of what happens in the others. This principle is carried down through both heavy and light industry. In the Great Leap ~~Forward~~ Forward of 1958, in what was regarded in this country as the absolute madness of the backyard ~~blast~~ blast furnaces, the techniques of making iron and steel from local ~~ore~~ ore and scrap were taught to ~~millions~~ millions of people. This is but one example.

You are entirely correct, Nixon will get nothing anti-Russian from the Chinese. Not until 1980, anyway. But I agree with you; they never have fought a major war with each other, and neither intends to.

McArthur: In my opinion he was misled by Willoughby simply because he was out of touch with the Chinese and the changes that had taken place in them. He had known them in the worst days of warlordism, when they were genuinely confused and leaderless except for Chiang Kai-shek (and that's leaderless, man) and simply could not conceive of their doing precisely what Chou En-lai said they'd do -- NOT stand idly by while McArthur's troops and bombers swept unheeding up to the border of Manchuria.

Many thanks, but don't bother with the Agronsky tape or Mike Wallace and Dita. We're got more stuff on that case than we can absorb, including the two magnificent pieces from the Post (including Karnow) which we've copied and are returning.

We're also sending under separate cover a tape we made of Banning Garrett on North Vietnam, prefaced by about 10 minutes from him on April 10 on the meaning of the offensive. Somewhat retraces the round covered with Schurmann in that earlier tape, but still very interesting because he shows the intensity of the reaction of the young in this country to what is going on. If you don't have time to listen to it, don't worry. It's your cassette anyway, and it's good to be able to send something back to you on it.

KPFB is a 50 watt station broadcasting the same program as KPFA (50,000 watts) for a certain area in the Berkeley hills which can't get KPFA clearly.

My present work schedule is from 11:15 p.m. to 7:15 a.m., ~~engxe~~ the graveyard shift. Looks like there'll be about a month more. We manage pretty well by not trying to shift back to a normal living schedule during the weekend. Main trouble comes from telephone calls in what are normal waking hours for other people, and from having to stay up late to do shopping.

I gather you have some prospect of appearing with Frank on Eason's show on or about May 1. If you get any firm word on this be sure to let us know and we'll tape it. Phone collect if you need to. For this we'll get up, put the tape recorder on the timer, and go back to bed. (415) 388 2426.

Please let us know whether you want the Chicago Daily News series on Ray returned. We would think you would and are holding them for you. Please say.

That's about it. Getting quite late. 9:15 a.m.

