

6 August 1972

Dear Harold:

The various enclosures should be ~~self~~ self-explanatory, and this replies to your 19 and 20. We also have your unlettered 3rd class mailing containing the small book, Children of Longing, for which thanks, and a lot of clippings I haven't yet had time to go through.

We note your request for the return of a clipping on the firing of Art Geiselman, which we don't recall, but it may be among those I've not yet had time to go through. If it turns up we'll certainly send it to him.

To reply to some of your letters, I hadn't heard of Jerry Voorhis' role on the UnAmerican Committee, as that apparently took place while I was out of the country. However, I certainly can believe it and can suggest a reason. My impression, gained from abroad, was that American liberals at the time were amusing themselves by being militant and tough in the way they imagined some of the more militant communists in Europe and Asia were behaving at the time. Frequently this led to drastic things which ordinarily would not have taken place otherwise, and in many cases stemmed from a misreading of what the Europeans actually were doing. There was a lot of talk from Europe in those days about militancy, and some, actually, here and there, but the fascists were the ones who really were being militant and terroristic. Two or more communists rarely agree on anything, even on how to interpret the line that is handed them, and it was very much so in those days. There were exceptions, of course, but in the main there was far more smoke than fire except from the right.

In this general area, you frequently have described very well the erratic and unpredictable behavior of the Cuban refugee community. I've had no^{do} experience with any of them, but read this loud and clear because of considerable contact in China and Japan, and still even here now and then, with the White Russian community. I mean white as opposed to red Russians, not Byelorussians. Refugees who left Russia for Europe and Siberia for China and Japan following the 1917 revolution. There were some magnificent people among them, but both the communities in China and those in Europe (as ~~is~~ seen from China, where most news from outside was from Europe) were faction-ridden, highly volatile centers of intrigue, with many selling intelligence to non-Communist countries and competing with one another for any job or opportunity. I think on the whole they were not as far out as the Cubans seem~~x~~ to be, possibly because the possibility of a resotration was even more remote than it probably appears to the Cubans. And the Russians also were nearly all stateless, which makes a tremendous difference with respect to feelings of personal security and propsects for the future.

What I think they suffered from, and which the Cubans share, is the knowledge they cannot admit openly that they are relics of a corrupt and discredited society which brought about its own downfall through its own excesses. This is not only demoralizing but practically inescapable except through consistent self-d~~em~~ission and avoidance of reality.

If the Chinese have been less extreme in a similar situation, it ~~happens~~ is probably because they are more self-confident in themselves and their ~~socialist~~ society. Also the regime on Taiwan has provided a rallying point far more concrete than any either the Russians or Cubans have had. But this has been a minor factor. The big thing is that no Chinese, now matter how much he hates the idea of communism, has any doubt whatever that China will bend communism to her own purposes, and in varying degrees they all recognize that this is precisely what has been taking place since 1949. It helps to have a superiority complex.

You mention that Finley is sending you what I take to be a duplicate copy of the Parallax View. Yes, if you can send it 3rd class at little cost, and if indeed it's an extra copy as far as you're concerned, we'd be glad to have it.

We don't need the copies of the Vancouver paper's treatment of the Gervais incident, thanks. Our interest in that is more general than yours.

Some weeks ago, noting that you now lack a copy of the Billiken Courier, we asked a local paperback dealer to get us a couple of copies, including one for you. However he has not phoned, and I take it this may another occasion when he can't find what we've asked him to try to get for us. If it shows up, we'll forward.

Jenifer is happy that Lil liked her note about the sweater. We wouldn't mind being forward if we could think of anything that we need, but we can't. Please thank her for her kind offer, and assure here it is none the less appreciated. Can't even think of anything we'd LIKE to have.

Regarding your 7/29 note to Jim (Lesar?) regarding use of pictures, use of which is restricted by the source, with an appendix to a petition for habeas corpus, I have to say first that I have no experience whatever in this area. Everything depends on the precise understanding between you and your source and whether this included use in a court document. You say only "no public use, no copies to anyone...and above all no publication or use on TV."

The question this raises in my mind is whether your source understands they are to be used in a document to be submitted to a court. If he does, then he MUST know that as a matter of court record it becomes public property (unless appendices are exempt). This is all the thinking I can scare up on this question on the basis of what you say.

On the hour and a half of tapes you made in your long talk with Smith of the Post, yes, we very much would like to hear them sometime, but certainly don't have the time now. Do hang on to them, though, because we know only fragments of the things you spoke of, and some day will want to hear them and certainly will return them unless you send dubs. We'll let you know. I have a vacation coming up in October, and then retire Jan. 1, so there certainly will be time one of these days.

On the Martha-Loves-John drammer, we spotted that fairly early as a PR diversion from the Demo bugging embarrassment, partly because Mme. STM began keeping her devilish little chronology fairly early. (Incidentally, she says it's most uplifting to be credited with an STM when most of the time she has trouble remembering what day it is because of our erratic working schedule). As a PR job it was a skillful exploitation of the Martha image the press had developed on its own, and no doubt came in very handy at a time when something was needed very badly.

In our culturally deprived existence, we do not know the ins and outs of How the World Turns, but take your word for it, Ralph. And we were out of the country when John's Other Wife was flourishing on the raddio, but remember fondly something called Young Widder Brown. I remember the first time we heard it. We had come back to this country on home leave late in 1940 and were driving through Pittsburg, Kans., when we picked up Young Widder Brown on the car radio. We were laughing so hard that I ran through a red light and without even seeing it. We used to sample most of the soap operas now and then while they lasted on radio, just to keep our hand in and experience a little more plastic misery. They convinced us that my youthful hunch while growing up in a puritan society was correct: there is a Fifth Freedom -- freedom to SUFFER.

I suspect this is a fundamental need in our culture, not only the need to suffer but the need to make everyone else around you suffer. I can remember countless old ladies who made careers of it, and then, of course, there is that aspect in the popular image that has been spread of the Jewish mother. There's a delightful book written in the 1930s, a takeoff on the Forsyth Saga by a British woman named Stella Gibbons, called Cold Comfort Farm, in which a dowager dominates a whole tribe of rural British squire-type families and restricts their lives simply because at the age of five she saw something nasty in the woodshed. This rendered her so sensitive and withdrawn that, in effect, no one could cross her in any respect without precipitating a fit of some kind. There was another delightful character, an old man who washed the dishes, using a thorn to scrape the food off. This dismal old codger was at length persuaded to use an ordinary dish mop, to which he invariably referred as "my liddle mop," but in times of emotional stress would return automatically to his thorn. The mop was a technical advance he did not trust, and anyway he could feel sorrier for himself using a thorn. Cold Comfort Farm is a classic. It made me realize how underprivileged I had been as a child, having encountered nothing nastier in our woodshed than the kindling I was supposed to keep it supplied with.

No, we can't duplicate your fish pond experience. When I was growing up fish were still something to be caught and eaten, as rabbits were something to be shot and eaten, also squirrels. Meat was still scarce and expensive. We were all fond of animals, resting the horses in the field and talking to them, watching to see that their collars and harness did not chafe, carrying them to help keep their coats clean. My father always had at least one bird dog for hunting ducks and quail, and at one time had several hounds with which he ran foxes at night in the Ozark manner. And we had cats, which always seemed to me to be the most interesting and special of animals.

We had cows that had to be milked, pigs to be fed, chickens and sometimes ducks which my father used as decoys in hunting. They were fat domestically-hatched Mallards and could fly only awkwardly. My brother I used to harass them by taking them up on top of the straw-stack and tossing them into a strong wind. They flew fairly well, but always would crash land, not having the sense to go into the usual stall and settle.

It was the cats that got to me. It was a major victory when, as children, my brother and I persuaded my mother to let one in the house. This was not easy, and came only after we set special words to a song of the early 20s, "Oh, Say Can I See You Tonight," which was a paean of praise to a striped kitten of the period as we rendered it, accompanied by ukelele and in harmony, as my mother stood fixing dinner at the kitchen stove. She relented and let the cat in. He took over, of course. She became his slave and remained his most ardent fan until his untimely death, when she cried harder than any of us.

Having this thing for cats, it was inevitable that I wind up in Peking and meet a girl with a cat named Prudence. The STM was not really apparent at that time, although no doubt present but possibly obscured by callower considerations. Anyway, when it came to cats, we always let ourselves go. At one time we reached the amazing total of 17, counting kittens, this being possible only because we had servants to help take care of them. At this glorious peak period we were living in a house belonging to a former warlord which was very near the city wall. I would hate to estimate the number of times I climbed the damned thing to rescue a cat who had got up easily enough, but now was meowing piteously in fear of descending that near-vertical 50-foot face. Fortunately there was a series of steel handholds not far from the house. The servants did not dare go up, or said they didn't, so it was my lot to ascend, gunny sack in hand, and catch the cat and bring him or her down.

In Peking our most remarkable cat ~~was~~ was a white-and-yellow mongrel lady cat named Tip, who first convinced me that there might be something to reincarnation. This scunffy little cat had such an imperious disposition that the only possible explanation was that the old Empress Dowager had been busted by whoever decides these things and sent back in a lower order, so-called. Tip, just like Her Majesty Tsu Hsi, ate up sycophantic attention, and loved to be sung to. She would even allow you to give her a BATH if you sang to her. We learned of this one day when there was a disaster. She reached up at the tea table one day, pulled the cloth off, and was drenched with a dishful of jam. We bundled her quickly into the bathroom and dunked her into a basin of warm water, frantically trying to dissolve the sticky jam from her fur before she loosed her famous temper. At first she enjoyed the warmth, then glanced down and beheld that horrible stuff, WATER, and began shrieking and swelling up in a fury. "Sing," said the STM urgently. I broke into Jingle Bells, a song Tip was well accustomed to hearing with words that ran Tip Tip Tip, She's the Mistress of All She Surveys, and, recognizing Her Song, she settled down and began purring. After all, it was Her Song.

Here we have had an even more remarkable cat, named Tiger Doodle, who not only showed strong signs of being a highly sensitive telepathic receptor but was extremely fussy about music. He loved Mozart, in fact all baroque music. We would sit with no paws and listen to Mozart as long as we could stand to keep the hifi going. Anything later than ~~Beethoven~~ Beethoven, he'd get up, shake his paw, walk out and not come back until we came to our senses and stopped the record.

And if we played anything really modern, like Stravinsky^{v 5/}, he would get up, shake all four paws in turn, and flee the scene.

He lived to be 17, and in his last years had a kidney ailment which greatly restricted what he could eat. Which was a pity, as he was a notable gourmet with an unerring nose for the best and most expensive of foods. The vet told us how to recognize the terminal symptoms and provided us with a strong sleeping pill, and when they appeared we gave him the pill, put on his favorite Mozart symphony, the 39th, and petted him to sleep.

IN Peking we had dogs, including a most unusual mutt named Rastus whom Jenifer got out of the experimental pound at the Rockefeller Hospital where she worked, and who knew without being told how to run between the wheels of her ricksha. He was half Lhasa lion dog, and so dignified and sage that the servants unconsciously addressed him with the honorific "thou" instead of "you." His only defect was that he thought he was a big dog, and constantly picked fights with enormous German shepherds who of course would have chewed him to bits if it ~~hadn't~~ hadn't been for his excessively thick hair, which was long and covered his eyes like that of a sheepdog. In the summer he suffered greatly from the heat, and one year we clipped him. He nearly died of shame. Next year we sheared only his body, leaving him plenty around the head, and not touching his legs. He looked like a lion-headed cowboy wearing chaps, and was perfectly happy.

In this country we have not had dogs, but except for the three years in Washington always have had cats. Present population is three. Cinnamon Roll is 14, always has had a terrible temper, and now has turned up with the same defective kidneys Tigue had, so we're into the diet bit again. We have a grey striped cat named Sootyfoot about 5 who is a mighty hunter and keeps us well supplied with mice, gophers, snakes, lizards and an occasional rat, all of which he brings into the house through the swinging cat door, alive if possible so we can enjoy them too. We have a well worked-out technique of catching them with a cookie sheet and plastic bowl. The third cat is a youngster ~~cat~~ named Pokey, now two years old, who is pursuing an active career as a Scourge and a Nuisance. He's a striped cat with the innocent face of a tiger cub, and a brain to match -- the most transparent cat we've ever known. Jenifer put up a toy cowbell on the ~~pat~~ deck just outside the dining area and taught him to ring for admission. He sits up on the step, looks into the dining area through the glass door, and swats the bell in the best Pavlovian manner. Naturally the door is opened for him. There are times when he goes right out the cat door, drunk with power, goes around to the deck again and rings the bell again. Need I say that the door is opened? Pokey is at the highly intrepid stage where he is inclined to ignore factors that limiting ordinary mortals, like gravity. He loves to turn corners by bouncing off a vertical wall.

The local wildlife, in this redwood-bay, blackberry, crabgrass and poison oak ecology, is pretty limited. There are raccoons who raid garbage cans and get on the roof and beg at the door for food now and then. But not much else except the smaller stuff which keep Sootyfoot busy. Birds are few. Mostly jays, raucous, unlovely creatures which keep other birds away and spend most of their time scolding the cats.

Enough for now, Best,



How could he have forgotten the deer that come up to the front door, and stand outside the bedroom window looking in, and sleep about thirty feet from the house and in another place just below it? And the fawns, still very, very spotted, who play racing and leaping games below the house? And the raccoon mothers who bring their families in the evening to sit on the branch of the bay tree just outside the living room window, to watch us while we're watching them? And the bluejay who found out how to get in through the swinging cat door, by diving through it? And the jay who simply hopped in through an open door to the deck? And all the quail? (And the lost little quail chick I was able to catch and return to its frantic family, ~~my~~ by that time up on the road? Quail rejoicing was heard through the land.) And the time only about a week ago when I was clipping papers at the desk and found a quiet little fieldmouse on my foot? As for birds, ~~who~~ ^{how} could the tiny hummingbirds have been forgotten, or the wild canaries?

I could go on, but this should give you some idea of how "limited" the "local wildlife" is, according (spelling shows what time of night it is) according to your uninformed source.

Should explain, too, that the description of Tiger Doodle as "a highly sensitive telepathic receptor" means that I was able to call him in when he was out, by sending him a mental/emotional message. Worked almost 100% of the time.

Like other people who love birds, you (pl) probably haven't particularly enjoyed all this talk of cats, but we haven't had any difficulty with happy feelings about both. Lizards and snakes (which we have in abundance) I would find hard to love, but I do have a friendly feeling for them; spiders, too. On the other hand "secret documents" show ~~they're~~ ^{that flies are} all VC and our radar-guided, "smart" flyswatter seeks them out.

The already stuffed enveloped awaits, and besides, it's time for bed.

Je

If some non-communist flies get wasted it's to be regretted, of course, but they do all look alike.