

12/2/72

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Dear Jim,

On your Great Day! After reading your letter of the 29th I learn what you never made quite so explicit, more of why it is a great day. I knew things were bad in reporting, but to have this dedication to chickenshit over and above the political considerations and the all-pervading corruption! You are a male Griselda!

In all other ways your letter is a delight, so I respond immediately, to prolong the joy before getting to the unpleasant that will now be in the ascendancy for the immediate future. I hope it will permit enough time to do the little heeded to complete POST MORTEM and return to AGENT OSWALD, for which, without further inquiry, I have enough-and enough entirely new. The writing is the best therapy, and the more of it I can get done, the more I believe I'll be able to feel is off my back. Perhaps after AO I'll get onto TIGER TO RIDE: THE UNTOLD STORY OF THE CUBA MISSILE CRISIS. With a publisher who had and followed normal commercial instincts and practises, both of these could succeed and both have built-in gimmicks that are not gimmicks but are quite serious, ready-to-go FOI suits. Well, not read to go on TIGER, but ready to start, and the time to go is short. In both cases, under the law, automatic victory except for the expectable corruption.

The TIGER thought reminds me that when we are generally so completely in agreement I welcome a point of disagreement in this letter, an assessment of Khrushchev and his role in this crisis and his relationship with the USSR's power centers. I won't go into detail now, for that I'll be doing in TIGER. I think an element missing in what you say is the reading inside the USSR of what the passing of JFK meant, an accurate reading, I think. They had to switch policy, and this meant K had to go.

If Lil gets her head above water, I'm going to be a male chauvinist and ask her to put the welcome SU/BR clips in chronological order and use them as a respite from the personal unpleasantnesses of the damage suit, to which I'll have to devote most of the started weekend, to be ready for a long, rough day in Baltimore beginning early Monday. Fortunately, this can be spared her.

I find that dwelling on this is difficult, and that its effects seem to linger though pleasantnesses. Last night is an example. Lil was not involved in most of yesterday's session with the transformed (I hope!) lawyer. He was present, and that was enough. Less than a half hour after he left the McDonalds came, with their Australian terrier, Cobber, naturally, to leave him for the moon-shot/vacation period. He had a restless night and is generally unhappy today. Animals are wonderful in their love and devotion. Cris is a tonic for Lil, dinner was up to Lil's usual excellent standard, Ian and I had pleasant conversation while the women enjoyed theirs, and it was a fine, relaxing night. After they left I took the dog for a walk. Lil dozed off almost as soon as they left, sitting up and reading. It is unusual that she awakened as soon as she did. She said she didn't feel right and was going to bed. For togetherness I did, too, not falling asleep fast and then being periodically awakened as Cobber did his duty as he saw it, announcing and protesting the nocturnal visits of our wild friends, detected but unseen. After the usual early morning awakening at something after four I quitteed Cobber with a visit, returned to bed until after daylight, only to find myself weary. I guess this may be the concomitant of a longer than usual bedding for a body not used to it, but it is uncongenial.

It is in the context of the belief that we both reacted to the coming unpleasantnesses and the physical weariness which may not have physical cause that a jolly letter like yours can perhaps be understood as what I have described it. Lil has also read and enjoyed it, and there will be more on the end, the tax part. We've discussed it briefly.

I'd assumed you had no interest in the tapes on which you'd made no comment and reused some of them. I'm going to be taping less, only what I'm sure will be of possible use, not just interest, because of time pressures that will now increase despite what I hope is a shedding of the Ray burden. There is a large envelope from John that I've not opened.

Mithhell/Katie Graham: I forgot to ask Ian if he had the exact quote last night. He was my source, he said no paper carried it, and he was going to see if he has it. I'll try to remember when he is here Thursday or Friday to retried Cobber.

Yours may be a tropistic reaction to the sports statistics. Perhaps conditioned by an innate reluctance to concede the discouraging. I believe there is real interest in this kind of trivia, and that it is one of the things that diverts people from what is more serious that should occupy their thoughts. At the APs feed it, it was there all along.

I could spot them as a kid and there is no such things as a TV "news"cast that doesn't have a five-minute sge in which they ^{con-}predominate today-anywhere I've ever been. One of our substitutes for gladiators.

Your long graph on music (I was listening to the Brahms violin concerto when I read it in the car outside the grocery store) brings much back. Including a night I regret not spending as I was invited to. It was in "ovember 1967, a Saturday, the first day I'd met Dean Andrews. He invited me to spend it with him. "Dere' a cat comin' down from Cincinnati tuh blow a hot horn wid me." I should have been less diligent in pursuing the purposes of the trip and enjoyed a night of jamming, surely in places I'd not otherwise have been! One noight this week there were two TV specials on jazz. Lil spotted them in the TV listings and I read to them, when I wasn't watching. Benny Goodman with his originals, Basie, with unchanged style. (I have some originals of his early stuff on 78s, including Basie Boogie -I was a googie-woogie addict, too, and knew Pete Johnson, my favorite of the trio, Meade Lux Lewis and Albert Ammons, all of whom looked like your friendly neighborhood butcher, esp. Johnson. Also knew Lena Horne and Hazel Scott in the late 30s and a Kansas City Blues chouter, I think Joe Turner. They used to sing at a place that had an old 88-key piano that came from a Kansas City whorehouse.) Others of tge great of that era were on one special, made up of them, including Dizzy Gillespie, Ellington (rather sterile, I thought), Gene Krupa (caught him a couple of months ago in solo on a TV show and it was pyrotechnic, like old days), Ella Fitzgerald (no sparks this time),

Later. Man can't even enjoy the simple pleasure of writing a letter any more! First Cobber demanded a walk eh didn't really want and while we were on it the lawyer called to postpone my Monday trip, encouraging on several counts. First he is working, and it is a Saturday. And he was out last night, for he phoned his secretary to have her get and leave on his desk some formal wear he'd hired. Which also says he stayed longer than he had planned. And then, he has come to realize the extensiveness of the records I have ~~in~~ and to realize he can't swallow them without a time chaser.

It is not only in thee andme and Benny Goodman that there is this affection for the classical and the wild, I guess.

Before she got to be Big Time, Lena Horne was a consummate artiste. When I knew her and rove her to her Harlem apartment, she had three kids and was divorced. In those days she did Gershwin as I've never heard anyone do it. She was also beautiful to the eye and used her body as an accompaniement without distortion or exaggeration. Scott, fresh from Julliard and classical piano, was something else as she played and sang. Joy and youth and spirit. Adam Clayton Powell took care of all three.

If we ever get a record player again, I'm going to dubb all the old records I still have, all 78s. When I went into the Army I let my younger sister have what she wanted of my records and books. I know I had originals of Pine Top Smith, Leadbelly and some of those above, Woody Guthrie's first recordings, even such things as the original Paul Robeson recording of Ballad for Americans. (I used to ~~haha~~huffeur him around in Washington, and believe me, you've never heard a beautfful voice until you heard him speak, conversationally. Not his public but his private voice was the most magnificent I've ever heard.) think I've got spirituals by him and know I have a group I used to love, the Golden Gate Quartet, the first black singers I recall who commercialized gospel singing successfully and without commercializing their art. Lomax discovered them.

Never had any Hot Club du ^{ance}ance, but remember hearing of them.

At the time I developed a taste for Fats Waller I wasn't taking time for records, so I have none of his. I never really developed an Ellington taste, but I heard him in ~~xxxx~~ person often enough before he was real famous....These were among the advantages of the East in those days. Could do and go and see and hear.

Magazine writing was fun then, too. I remember one period when I took Lil to New York, we took in some show, I remember one Shakespeare matinee, satyed in an inexpensive hotel in or near the Village, the Albert, put her on the Kungsholm for a solo cruise to the West Indies, and then made enough money to pay of the accumulated debts of self-indulgence, buy a new car and pay cash for it, and have a bit left so I could again do things I wanted to do. And she came back with some 15¢ proof rum from Haiti, found for her by a native, at a cost of \$1.00 for a gallow and in a handmade jug, reed covered. Allan Chase, who now edits a medical journal, wqs then a managing editor for whom I worked. I remember tha when I picked this up on my next trip to New York, Allan had two slugs and got drunk. I had to stop what I was doing and take him home. And in Cuba she picked me up

a box of ~~king~~ cigars even better than Pierre du^f ont had served me, Por Larranagas, for practically nothing. Pleasant reminiscence!

Interesting that your cat felt the spirit of the old classicists in jazz. In about December 1968 we went to above Philadelphia to weekend with an older cousin, a writer/musician who had been fatherly to me between high school and college. While there I went with him to visit his sister. Joe is still a fine violinist. He is getting a bit old, but he still travels 300 miles some weekends just to play quartets with old friends. He is the guy I think I told you went to Elder's when I met you and took em to the Chinese dinner in fisco. (Last time I saw him he was in San Diego when I was.) Well, this kid was a pianist. He was playing some Beattle stuff when we got there and Joe expressed himself rather pointedly and with the prejudice I also held. The kid stood firm, said that of the day's popular musicians none traced so clearly to Johan Sebastian Bach, and then proceeded to demonstrate on the piano. I was so repelled I'd never listened to them-and still haven't. But once you get away from Elvis Presley I guess there is much of this we don't know because we don't care or don't have time for.

I don't think I knew of your expertise and interest in flying saucers. That you ~~share~~ share with Sylvia Meagher. Remember that Marty Singer, editor of Saga, is a bug on them when you think of writing, if you write about them. The last time he disucced this with me was in 12/66, when we had a few drinks at the Overseas Press Club in NYC. It was interrupted by my then agent, who was pressing upon me a clean \$500 for him in trying to get me to take an unacceptable offer from Bell for WWII. He went away, I held out and got an extra \$10,000 of which they couldn't cheat me, hence this house, that being the down payment. Well, Marty says less eruditely what you do. He was hung up on Hynek and spit out nasty things about him. Marty might well go for Spraguism on this, but he could also go for popular solid stuff. Trouble is I don't know what he has printed. 333 Johnson Ave., Brooklyn, N.Y. He'd gotten so fat since those days and June, when I saw him at the American Booksellers' Assn annual convention I don't know if he is otherwise the same kind of editor, but if there is no better market, he is worth a try. A historical treatment might attract him. I think that if you were to query he'd phone you if you asked. The better-known men's mags pay more. He paid me \$500 for that chapter of WW, plus \$1.00, because \$500 was the most he had to then paid, for some Hemmingway, and I insisted on a penny more as a joke and he stretched it to a buck.

The father of my trouble-ridden nephew was a barely-literate Carolinian cracker who was also a mechanical genius. He did for the PhDs what they said was as impossible as the flight of the bumblebee, a real problem to his survivors because of the dirty tricks they pulled to keep him from retiring when it was no longer safe for him to drive and they needed him. (Retirement only for his life, so his survivors get nothing now.) Well, when this flying saucer stuff was much news and he visited us once when it was in the news and I asked him about it, he said it was not fiction and that some of it was by us and he could not discuss it. He told me only not to dismiss it out of hand, and that there was no crap about the local sightings, meaning near Washington, in Montgomery County, if you remember, in the Laytonville area. He was with the Naval Ordnance Laboratory. So, aside from what little I heard from Sylvia and Marty, I had Colie's word that there is basis. I've never taken the time to conjecture about the source, not really. And I am aware of enough not easily dismissed, such as reports by the more solid observers, like airline pilots. What I was not aware of is the Forts, the friend who told you of the indications of the earlier destructions of the population, suppose, of the earth, the Hynek conversion, and the earlier history.

This aspect of official science is not strange to me. One of the things I gave the lawyer yesterday is the taking apart of two such "scientific" studies of the kind we are liable to face on rebuttal in trial. One is an Air Force study on the hatchability of eggs subjected to sonic booms (I call it "The Happy Eggs" and it was intended as ~~xxxxxx~~ a chapter in the serious writing I projected on aviation noise before JFK was shot). The other was the kind of treatment in WW on a large Univ. Chicago "study" of the guinea-pigging of Oklahoma City. Even in its corrupted form it says exactly the opposite of the interpretation. So, the WR approach was not new to me, either.

Guess I'd better get to work. Mil has taken Cobber out for a walk which will give her some air on a mild, sunny day, so I can't ask her more about taxes. If she has in her files some of the relevant forms I'll enclose them and she'll annotate them. She will be glad to

do your tax work and help you set up new books with two preconditions: there is no fee and it is before she gets into her really busy season, which begins toward the end of January. The first part of the month she generally takes work to the office because she is not busy. Once the season starts it is impossible for her to undertake anything outside the office.

From my own recollections, from before I had the free services of a tax consultant, I asked her a couple of questions. Yes, you can list the new Sony recorder as a business expense. You don't really have any other use for it and that is the reason you got it, not for The Jefferson Airplane or The Lead Zeppelins. You can charge the papers and magazines you get for writing, including research, purposes. You can charge a fair share of the part of the property used for free-lance purposes. (In our case, when we had a full-field IRS audit -and it WAS full!- we worked it out with the auditor, but what it came down to is his agreement that what we had allocated was fair.)

On the tax benefit of being 65 if Je isn't, it is only you, until she is. But this stuff can be for this year, because you begin before the end of the tax year. Ditto on your benefit from being 65, this year it begins.

Hal was once employed by a neighborhood tax consultant. That may not be the best apprenticeship -Lil holds them in low esteem based on the locals - but he may still have a general knowledge that could be useful. The laws have changed several times since this employment, including this year, which is why Lil is going to Block's school.

If you do not want to use the Lil facilities and if you were to ask an opinion of her, it would be that you go to Block. There can be great variation between the offices, most of which are franchised, but in her opinion they are probably the best. It is an advantage to go as early as possible for a number of reasons, one of which is the consultants are not as harried as they get. A plus for Block is also what I get from Sherman Kaplan, former IRA commissioner, when I met him before the Court of Appeals hearing on my spectro appeal. But there can be great variations between Block offices, including in any given territory, within any franchise area. My own opinion is that it would not hurt you to have Lil go over it after they do it, if you elect this, and before you file it. She is good, conscientious with all, including strangers, and more so with friends.

Don't be bashful about this....

Ed Williams has sent me "Local American Nazis claim Republicans paid them", from Freep ~~on~~ 11/3. Haven't read. May save Je time if she remembers.

Back to the disagreeable and then out to trim the lower branches of a dead Lombardy Poplar too close to the house to dare fell without topping, a wet-weather job. Film of snow on ground.

Afterthought: when you were slinging hash for a meal and singing, I was selling shoes every time I got disgusted and quit the paper, doubling as a professor's baby-sitter. If I had \$1,000 I could have spent the rest of my life as the owner of a had-to-be-successful radio station owned by a friend who got disgusted after starting it and couldn't get that much for it, which made him wealthy, for he did later sell it for \$450,000.

Happy day!

