

6/5- China update, beginning with 2
apologies, second for going out to
dinner tonight and first for not anti-
cipating what Martin Agronsky would do
on his local CBS TV roundtable show
last night.

We visited our most conservative
friends. I mean real conservative.
Ann called Lil and we went, I know with
some apprehension on Lil's part because
Ann is positive and articulate, and
China has happened since last we saw
them. Well, I think it is the first
time ever that we didn't have a single
argument when we got into politics.
Does that give you a measure of the
impact on conservatives?

Mike has a thing on the CBS show
"60 Minutes". So, he left the table to
see it and then I left just in case
Lil and Ann wanted to talk privately.
First part was a first-rate expose
of a major swindle/scandal, mobile
homes. Really good job. Morley Safer
did the whole show tonight, meaning
Mike Wallace had time off or is on
assignment. He wound up the show with
one of the more brilliant take-offs
that I'd have taped for you had I
been home. He presented himself as the
first reporter from the Peoples'
Liberation TV News to visit the land
of the western barbarians since their
revolution 200 years ago. From that
point, with appropriate footage, he
used virtually every cliché from the
reporting from China and showed how
apt it is when applied to use as we
applied it to them. The whole bit. I'd
forgotten there were that many. Every-
thing is grey, including the faces, and
and illustrative footage. Regrettably
tion. Really it was so good, so
clever, so complete and so effective
that while neither tape nor transcript
can begin to do justice to it, I
feel, because the camera work was
so excellent. Real self-ridicule,
too. But a marvelous lesson for so
many, including the media. I do
recommend that if you have it for
no more than fun you ask CBS for a
transcript. If you are going to
write about all of this some time, as
I do so hope, then even more will you
want this.

The Agronsky think had Sidey (
(he is sure there are secret provisos
now), Lisagor (still talking about
varnish remover, this time wrung out
of socks when a bottle spilled in a
suitcase), Nick Timminish, and Kil-
patrick (racists, former editor
Richmond News-Leader, now called not
racist but conservative). They were
baffled, poor souls, knowing what
is expected of them and, in K's case,
not being able to be rational about
it, and knowing what they now know.
There is, for a while, going to be
some danger of epidemic schizo. in
the New China Hands. All agreed that
it was a real spectacular in which
Chou took Nixon's medium away from
him. Can't begin to remember all the
good stuff that got on. One was a
Chou apology to Nixon for overdoing
some of the staging to make it look
good, a scene where in the freezing
cold all the cameras got happy kids

skipping rope while all the teenagers were listening to transistor radios (collected as soon as scene shot) and the older ones say around playing cards in this park. Like in SF's Chinatown. But I am inclined to agree it had to have been staged in that weather, snow and all. However, the part that I joined the reporters in relishing was Chou's gracious apology, in effect, we laid that on a bit too heavy. Nobody agrees on the communique, spoken or written press, as though it really makes any difference what it means. That is, what, according to the language it means.

Then there were a few minor scraps, like on whether it is regimentation that gets the streets cleaned. They are too young to know that is the way it used to be done everywhere, unless the older ones were born into rich families, who hired others to do it. Lisagor found that because everyone wasn't killing himself it was; on the one hand, unwelcome regimentation and at the same time a vast WPA project. "I haven't seen so much shovel-earning since WPA". Gotta be history's softest regimentation and easiest dictatorship is everyone feels he can goldbrick. That they didn't feel hot breaths on their necks was not understood, and I think some really doubted it when Sidey said it wasn't for their benefit, that it was universal...I think the first casualty is the by-liner. HW