

24 March 1973

Dear Harold:

Like you and Lil, we have some difficulty accepting the abrupt reversal of the waif's fortunes and look forward to whatever further explanations may be forthcoming. Not much more we can say, although there is one idea that has occurred to us which I'll deal with presently, but I wanted to get something brief off to you in reply to your 92 and 93 concerning her and Hoch.

The one thing that we can suggest as to a possible explanation for her dramatic bounce -- apart from the fact that she seems to be just one of these people to whom things happen, both good and bad -- is the possibility of a new assignment. It's only a possibility, of course. However the unexplained and quickly established connection with the Oilers may mean something. Perhaps I exaggerate this factor, but the pro athlete is a a very key element in the whole apparatus through which the mob is kept tranquillized in this country. When players like Dave Megyessey (sp?) and Chip Oliver defect and join the counterculture it's even more of a blow than when black athletes raise the clenched fist at the Olympics. Probably you were not aware of it, but last summer the pro football world went prettyx long hair -- not too significant in itself since straight business types look pretty shaggy these days, but as a sign of other forms of unrest beneath the well-heeled surface it may mean something. Suppose someone really wanted to measure whatever is going on under the surface among pro athletes. How better to do it than to plant a smart girl among them. These guys are very pampered, as youj know, well paid and usually plenty of girls provided on the road. So a flatchested girl would be no great big deal. But a really smart one probably could find out a lot. The point is, from what I was forced to do with sports at the AP I got the impression that the two defections I mentioned really shook up the sports power structure, who must realize that if such ~~members~~ members of the elite can split off for reasons of simple humanity, somebody had better find out what's really cooking.

As to Hoch, we know him so little that I certainly shall not try to advise you, and anything I say certainly should not be taken in that ~~right~~ light. Bear in mind that anything I say is on the basis of very fragmentary information, including what you have told us.

Since you did not explain the briefcase incident with Lesar we have no way of evaluating it, but we can say that while the idea of paranoia never occurred to us before it does not seem too much out of character. Bear in mind that we have seen him only five times, and on each occasion he said very little ~~and~~ to anyone and little if anything to either of us. Of the five times we have seen him, twice were here (you were along at least one of those times), once was at KCBS when he and Hal were on a Harv Margan talk show, a fourth time was at ~~Contra Costa Jr. College~~ a meeting sponsored by Christian where Hoch said practically nothing and scarcely spoke to us, and the last was at Contra Costa Jr. College at Richmond where Lane was speaking and where Hoch did not return our wave and looked away. He may be nearsighted and could have failed to recognize us.



At the time, I put this down mostly to our predominant impression of him as painfully shy and quiet, and to any natural reserve he as a scientist might have toward me as a newsman, which is perfectly understandable. Also, we are much older, and he could instinctively mistrust us on that ground alone. However, our unfailing impression of him is one of great shyness. Any number of things short of paranoia could explain this, but shyness and introversion certainly provide a good breeding ground for paranoia if ~~there~~ there is any natural tendency toward that. In any case, we have been conscious of this profound reserve on his part from the beginning, and for that reason never have taken any initiative toward him except to be normally friendly and cordial when we did meet. He showed no response, but we figured he wouldn't have shown any to anyone, possibly not ~~knowing~~ knowing how. At any rate, this is one reason why I never have made any of the approaches to him which you have suggested at one time or another, and this includes trying to make connections with Lesar through him when Lesar was out here. I figured that if Jim wanted to see us he'd get in touch; otherwise he had his own business to attend to and it was not up to us to offer a possible intrusion on his limited time.

The one exception to this general policy was at the height of the Melon controversy, when you were pawing the air and he seemed determined to go ahead with it. Hal happened to be here at that point and asked me what I thought of the whole thing. I said candidly that I could not judge the scientific element, but that from the standpoint of a news story, if Paul wanted to get himself laughed out of the country this might be a very good way to do it. Whether Hal relayed this to Paul I never learned, but the next thing we heard Hal said Paul was inclined to forget the whole thing.

As to his current suggestions, I agree with you that the 10th anniversary is no different from any other -- that is, there is nothing magical in the number 20 except in the minds of some cliché artist editors -- and that nothing should be done by the critical community at this stage until and unless some truly significant break occurs. The mass media will do the usual, and you are correct, in my opinion, in believing they will not give a fair shake to anything which disagrees with the official fairy tale to which they are committed.

On the basis of what little I know, if I were in your shoes I would be inclined to part company at this point for the various reasons you cite, but naturally leave the door open for future collaboration as you probably would do anyway. As to AO, if it's written and copyrighted you can tell him where to head in. If not, there's nothing you can do, that I can see, except to rely on his judgment as a colleague and fellow worker. If his character is such that he does not hesitate to use your material to duplicate your work, then there is nothing you can do that I can imagine. The fact that you cannot get it published is not, after all, his fault. This doesn't make right anything unethical he may be contemplating. The problem may be to make him realize that it's unethical, that he wouldn't like the same thing done to him by someone else.

Again, this is not advice. Just a superficial reaction based on only part of the facts. It would not have been offered if you hadn't asked.

94., all clips, just arrived.

~~best~~ best,

