

1 October 1976

Dear Harold:

A note to go with the enclosed and get them on their way. The murder of the LA private eye, Robert Duke Hall, may not mean anything, but anyone with a connection with Vesco can scarcely be overlooked.

Thus far we have heard nothing on the air from Lane, Freed or Mann, nor has there been anything in print that we've seen. We'll be alert, but we rarely listen to any of the talk shows because of their insipid nature and there is no way of knowing what they have coming up without wasting a terrible amount of time waiting for them to give some hint -- maybe. Nothing ever is announced in advance in a dependable way. Their idea seems to be that if they keep you in suspense you'll keep listening. It may work with some, but not in this household.

We never watch commercial TV news but do try to catch the MacNeil-Lehrer Report on PBS, at least to see what it's about. And although the local PBS News Room show, which is widely admired, is much better than the commercial fare, it still is so limited as to be worth little to us. Consequently we catch KPFA's 45 minutes of hard news at 6 p.m. and on most days tune in one newscast on KCBS at least once during the day. It's incredibly superficial, but you do get an interesting headline from them now and then. Otherwise we regard the local

electronic information fare as starvation diet and avoid it nearly all the time. Having said all this, we'll still keep an ear and eye open for anything on Lane et cie, but thus far not a peep.

Been busy at hard physical labor recently, helping our good neighbor dispose of brush on his new place in western Marin, and more recently both of us working on the carport, which proceeds slowly but at least is proceeding. Jenifer is still doing her best to keep up with her reduced work schedule, but is so painstaking and conscientious that the actual reduction is far from impressive. She's still doing very well with her irrigation chore and keeps a relentless record of all that goes on.

In your last 3rd class mailing there were several excellent things, mostly on China as I recall it, but one was most outstanding -- something on Maoism after Mao, by one Michel Oksenberg of the University of Michigan. He's the first academic I've encountered who puts forward the idea that always has intrigued me: that Mao succeeded because he applied Marxism only where it coincided with Chinese traditional values and ideas. I had thought of it in terms of his gratifying the Chinese passion for realism and common sense. Oksenberg makes a better case than that, and I hope he can do more and influence the right people to some extent. He thinks there will naturally be change after Mao (there would be in any case) but that it will be gradual and, barring outside intervention, without serious disturbance.

By this time you should have seen another round of doctors, and we hope very much your new symptoms will have been explained and something done about them. Meanwhile, Here's hoping for less discomfort and apprehension.

Best from us both,

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