

17 December 1977

Dear Harold:

Enclosed are what I've been able to collect on the FBI FOI disclosures. Plus a couple of odds and ends I thought you'd want.

Regarding your proposal about the Peninsula College business, you're right, I missed it and have no recollection of it. Sidney Cohen's name seems familiar, so I probably read something about it at the time and was unable to clip it. Mike (who?) eludes me completely. I don't place him.

In any case, I don't think I'm able to try to do anything about it, even if Cohen should want me to. Just too busy. I'm only beginning to clip very superficially the 10 months of NY Times which have piled up (the subscription ran out Oct. 30 and I'm not renewing) and have a good winter's work ahead in winding up the files Jenifer kept so faithfully and so much longer than she should have.

I want to get these into some sort of presentable and usable shape before contacting Wrone, who probably will get them in the end thanks to your excellent and generous recommendation. I've inquired discreetly with a friend at Stanford, and the Hoover Library probably would like them but I feel that's a splendid place for them to get buried or even burned once they had a good look at what they contain.

The only other possibility locally, Cal, probably would be another reliable route to oblivion, and aside from that I can think only of Oregon, which, as you'll recall, wanted your files. On the whole I think now I'd probably rather have them with yours, where they'd be as useful as they'd ever be for crosschecking if nothing else. So if you talk or write to Wrone, please tell him I'm much interested in his offer but am lying low until I see how well I can bring them to completion. You might mention to him too that we have somewhere between 200 and 300 books on the assassinations and Watergate and tangential subjects, including the WR and the 26 volumes, and does he want those too?

I don't think my Chinese files are suitable for anyone but Gil Mattos, who has asked for them, along with our Chinese books. If there's any order to them at all, they're merely chronological rather than organized by subject, and are the sort of fragmentary collection one with our specialized knowledge would not bother with rounding out with the vacuum-cleaner approach we used for the assassinations and Watergate.

I've been unbelievably busy, including a week spent on a trip to Arizona to see old friends of ours after I got to the point where I simply didn't feel like writing any more letters for a while. People have been very good about inviting me out, and I've begun to repay some of their hospitality in a modest way. Had a couple here for dinner the other night (he used to edit the Shanghai Evening Post and Mercury, was in Peking before I was, and our paths have crossed often during the years) and plied them with slow-roasted beef sirloin which was an astounding success. They wouldn't leave without the recipe, and no one can ask better praise even if it's done out of politeness.

The last 50 miles of the trip back from Arizona were in a driving wind and rainstorm, so I've had to stop everything else for several days to pick up the litter and do much-needed pruning and brush-clearing. This was our first big rain, and we've just had another, so at least the fire-hazard is laid for a while if not the drought. Marin's reservoirs are now 30 per cent full instead of 25 per cent, and if we can get some more rain perhaps we can forget about water rationing for a while. Maybe take down the "Poo do, pee don't" signs which are popular over Marin County johns. I've liked that, because it's quite Chinese in its terseness.

I'm also enclosing a photocopy of the thing I did for SAGA on acupuncture and UFOs. Unfortunately they turned a young editor loose on it, and he loused up the syntax, including removing vital commas in some places and inserting them where they weren't needed. So if it doesn't read well, blame him partly, at least.

I think that I shall wait until later to tell you the special things about Jenifer. It's a long, sometimes sad story, and should not be told in haste to someone like yourself who appreciated her. But I'll get around to it, and I hope it will give you a better idea of how she got to be what she was, a rare and unique person. It is clear from the letters I'm getting that she had a profound effect upon many people. They say such things as "meeting her changed my life," "brilliant conversationalist," (how she'd laugh at that idea) and "she was, in all the world, alone, absolutely unique."

Please tell Lil not to worry about writing to me. I'm most grateful that she wants to, sympathize with her feeling of helplessness concerning a person she never met, and assure her that thanks to Jenifer's own loving forethought, I'm doing far better than I ever expected to. Hospice holds every month or so a modest evening party where survivors can renew acquaintance with the staff and meet each other. There many poignant moments, but it's most rewarding because usually one is able to pass on some tip that's been useful. Among them all, I feel in the best shape emotionally in spite of my certainty that I alone have lost Jenifer. But in many ways I haven't. She's still very much here. Everything in the house represents a decision, or an acquisition, or a creation done together. It's most comforting, quite contrary to what I had expected. She's still teaching me.

I plan to go east in time to hit you as soon as possible after your April 15 liberation, if that suits you. I can't make it earlier for obvious reasons, and can't make it much later because Gil has to go to the Far East early in May. I'll keep you posted as to plans, and look forward very much to seeing you both. I'll be stopping along the way, both going and coming, to see lifelong friends strung out all all across the country. So there'll be some flexibility, and I shall depend on you to keep me informed of what time would suit you best.

The third class mailing came in today, but I've not had time to open it. Thanks anyway. The story of my life these days. Could be a lot worse.

Best to you both,

jdw