

5 June 1979

Dear Harold and Lil:

Thanks for your good letter of May 27 and one or two before that which have come in since I last wrote. As always, it is wonderful to hear how you get through these new physical problems and still manage to maintain a remarkable level of productivity. I wish I had a small fraction of your energy and determination, as I could use them in disposing of what still amounts to a considerable accumulation of growth around this place. Each day I resolve to fare forth again and battle weeds and brush somewhere on this steep hillside (the total elevation from top to bottom is nearly 100 feet vertically) but just as often I succumb to the temptation to do a washing, or a houseclearing, ~~mix~~ or something else which involves less climbing.

The work with Hospice continues, of course. The latest wrinkle being three very simple carpentry jobs for the nurses. I had not realized how helpless these remarkably human, modern women can be -- there is nothing in their experience, it seems, to suggest that they, too, could wield a hammer and saw or a screw driver just as well as I. My sister, for instance, would have disposed of these items long ago, as I'm sure Lil would have too. At any rate the nurses appear to regard anyone who doesn't faint dead away at the idea of using simple tools as endowed with something akin to superhuman powers. Really quite funny.

This week I go for the third seminar on volunteer home care. It's getting heavy, as I expected it to, but it needs to be done, and provides an insight into the inner workings of the whole Hospice method which I need to know.

I was glad to have the clipping from the Frederick Post regarding the May 30 conference on forming a hospice there. Hospice of Marin has a training program for people at that stage, and I took the liberty of mailing a prospectus of their week-long seminars to the nurse involved in Frederick Memorial, a Mrs. Ervin. I picked her out of all the names involved because in my experience it's the nurses who deal directly with the suffering in cancer cases and who have the most acute knowledge of the desperate need for a better answer. If I hear from her I'll be surprised, but ~~ixxxxxxxx~~ I've been involved enough in these seminars to see how much people working at getting a hospice started get ~~mix~~ from HOM's experience.

And the clipping about Sidney Rittenberg was most welcome, another parcel of information about one of the important Americans in the Chinese revolutionary picture. Also quite important was the clip about Burchett teeing off on the Chinese and Cambodians. The background to watch for on that situation is the game the Americans seem to be playing, ~~mix~~ subtly promoting ~~Sinax~~ not only Sino-Russian differences but also Sino-Vietnamese tensions in what seems to be an unabashed attempt to imitate the classic British strategy of divide and rule among Asian communist regimes.

Not much in the enclosed stuff, but I included the LA Times piece by Robert Scheer on Ehrlichman largely because it bears out your long-standing opinion of Burger. Scheer was a very effective Berkeley activist during the 60s, and the LA Times seems to be giving him his head to a surprising extent.

Incidentally, I'm sending along to Dage the file you sent some time ago regarding Richard Call, as you requested. I've established only that there's no city directory in Marin County, and when I have an opportunity to go ~~xxxx~~ to that part of San Francisco I'll see whether the city library has one that's current and one for 1966. I don't get into town often during business hours, and with the gas situation it will have to be combined with other errands. But I'll not forget the name Richard Call, and sooner or later will see what I can find out about him.

Herewith a copy of Cleartime, the AP alumnus newsletter, containing a piece I did on my old chief of bureau in Shanghai, and which you asked to see. When you've finished with it, I'd appreciate getting it back.

And finally, a cork-and-mahogany spin-off of a small job I once did for Hospice of Marin. I've made quite a few of these, and they do well under a coffee pot or small casserole in case you're interested. ~~xxxxxxx~~ If it gets spotted or stained, just put on a fresh coat of any carnauba-based wax, such as Jounson's, Trewax or clear shoe polish.

Best to you both, and take care of yourselves.

  
jdw