

14 September 1980

Dear Harold:

As I understand it, you'll be entering the hospital tomorrow for your operation, so I presume this will reach you there or after you return home. Your 9/4 carbon to Dave sounded full of calm and confidence about it, and I share fully what I'm sure is your delight at having fallen into such good hands.

Thanks so much for sending the Oriana Fallaci interview with Deng. I had seen only brief references to it, and the full text is most informative, especially just at this time when I'll be on the scene in less than a month. As you request, I'm sending it on to Dave in case he hasn't seen it.

Thanks also, I must add for sending the recipe for your marinade. There has been no opportunity to try it yet; when there is I'll give you a report.

Another thing I must thank you for is Jay Matthews' account of his visit to Yantai where his family had lived 60 years ago. Of all the correspondents whose stuff from China I see these days, he seems to be more perceptive and articulate than anyone else.

The tour group with whom I'll travel leaves here Oct. 4 and returns Oct. 25. We'll hit Shanghai, Chengchow (an industrial city on the North China plain), Loyang (an ancient capital), Sianfu (another ancient capital where most of the recent excavations have taken place), and finally Peking, where I went in 1932, met Jenifer in 1933, and which I have not seen since late 1941.

As you probably know, I made a brief flying trip to Stevens Point late in August, via Chicago. The excuse was that Dave wanted to "consult" on a couple of things he's working on. This we did, of course, with Dave exploring some of the perspectives Jenifer and I worked out through the years. I think the angle that pleased him the most was our feeling that no one should have been surprised at the role JEH worked out for himself if they had paid any attention to what went on the Peking during the last decades of the Manchu Dynasty. For 40 years the Grand Eunuch of the Imperial Palace, one Li Lien-ying, used his intimate knowledge of palace politics -- indeed of the whole country -- to keep policy in line with the interests of his patroness, the Empress Dowager, and his own. He had so much dirt on every official of any importance that no one dared cross him. He also grew enormously rich.

The rest of the time we spent just talking, all of us. The kids are fine. Elizabeth is beginning to use my father's violin, and makes it sound a much richer instrument than I remember. She's got to the point where her teacher is working with her on phrasing and dynamics.

So I had a fine time, and wish only that I could have continued on east and seen you and few other people. Next time, perhaps. This time it simply wasn't practicable. At Hospice we had just moved some of the offices into different suites, and even after I got back I still had a lot of fixing up to do. My work there continues, of course, with a slight increase in emphasis on helping take care of patients.

Here's all the best to you both,

jdw