

31 August 1981

Dear Harold:

Thanks for yours of the 14th and 27th. Glad to have the rundown on Lifton, and will pass some of it along to Pete.

I went to lunch with Howard and his friend. They both were very pleasant and cordial but I doubt if they visualize using me in any way, not that I expected them to. One never knows, of course, but they know where I am and that I'm willing to help if they feel the need.

And I can report that the deck repair job is done, much to my relief as it was holding up various other maintenance projects I have accumulated. They did a beautiful job, dismantling a large laminated beam -- a 6x12 sandwiched between two 3x12s -- and rebuilt it with new lumber which supports the joists under the deck. I took up all the old decking, painted the new beam and all the joists with wood preservative, and helped nail down the new decking. Where the two master carpenters really shone was in figuring out how to shore up the joist structure in order to rebuild the big supporting beam underneath everything. The deck at that corner is about 15 feet off the ground, so there was considerable scaffolding and shoring to be done. But they did the whole job in a little over a day and a half. One couldn't ask for better performance.

I've just about recovered from the three days of working mostly on my knees during all the nail pulling, joist painting and putting down the new redwood deck surface. As always, the carpenters left a frightful mess of used scaffolding, bracing, shoring timbers and other discards. After three days I've just about got it cleaned up.

Your findings on all the new material for your new affidavit are quite fascinating, but I find that after all this time I have ~~difficulty~~ difficulty in seeing all the implications that I should. Anyway, I hope your press conference hits the mark and gets the attention it deserves. The Chronicle takes the Times-Post service but I frankly doubt if it will use the story if it reaches them. There's someone on their staff who usually makes sure that sharp stories on the assassinations are downplayed if used at all, but they generally play up the fink stuff. You know the pattern.

I have a new patient, a fine man in his 70s who has been fighting cancer for several years, including a brain tumor. He's a former psychology professor (Texas U) who later took a Housing Authority job in San Francisco up until he retired several years ago. He can still use a walker, and uses me mostly for companionship and to drive him various places. His wife is charming, and so I'm able to stay with him to give her a brief respite now and then. Like most people with cancer in the family, they have found their friends fall away, being unable to deal with the situation for which our culture does so little to prepare us.

Sounds like you've had a good, bearable August, for which I'm very glad. The month has been delightful here too.

All the best,

