

December 22, 1977

Ed Harper
American Embassy
APO 09285
New York, New York

Dear Ed:

Many thanks for your lovely Christmas card. Also acknowledgements for the magnificent card of last year with the whole family pictured. It's not hard to imagine you two in your prime, and your kids in their bursting youth. We would expect your life in Madrid to be elegant as well as in your bucolic setting in Carinthia.

Things go generally well, though Nelly and I are still sufficiently plagued with back problems that we've been reduced to walking and a little cross country skiing. We have just returned from a guest lecturship "down under". Lucky Nelly returned via Tahiti for a week while I came back the long way via South Africa. We can certainly recommend New Zealand for a delightful holiday among alpine grandure and simple living.

Australia is a big brash country and I was particularly fond of Sidney where the jaza scene was exciting.

South Africa is, of course, hopeless for the long run and is being abandoned in droves by English-speaking professionals who have young children. I spent an evening in the home of Helen Sizman whose husband is a cardiologist friend and who has been a very courageous and often lone opposition parliamentarian for the past fifteen to twenty years.

I also spent time illegally in black sections seeing what they're doing without any white physicians. Then I had a marvelous three days in the Kruger National Park.

Back home I'm on a nostalgia trip for my "Roots" and I'm spending time with beloved old school teachers in north Florida (one runs the Florida Folk Festival and the Steven Foster Memorial) and some time with one child at a time systematically exploring the rivers and streams and forests and glades of what's left on Florida.

I don't know if you've heard from us since the change in John's activities, from a self-supporting and rather skilled mill-worker in New Orleans (with jazz piano on the side) to enrollment in San Francisco City College in Hotel Management after the loss of three fingers on his left hand in a joiner. He's adapting

Ed Harper

December 22, 1977

Page 2

reasonably well to the loss of vocation and avocation. Our youngest Heidi is 21 and is my one child looking through a microscope. She is much devoted to field biology both in desert and jungle and has just returned from three months in Costa Rica on a field project. She plans to work in biology a year or so and decide what sort of graduate school she'll be going to. Katia is the swinging chick, age 23, and graduating this year from Boston University in Broadcast Journalism. She has chances for graduate school in communications research at Stanford with friends of mine, and other opportunities. She writes well, organizes well and will probably become a tough cookie broadcaster. Nelly becomes less and less a housewife and more and more a full-time professional in her teaching and this seems to be the way it should go.

I'm beginning to enjoy my administrative role as I see a vigorous young staff, 12 of which are under age 40, clarify their ideas and compete successfully in the grant area and develop exciting projects, laboratory and field approaches to preventing the major cardiovascular diseases.

Right now we're getting heavily into health behavior in how to motivate small groups and whole communities to change it.

Harpers, when you get your home leave we hope you will seriously consider Minnesota again, winter, fall or summer. You may recall we have no spring. The North Country canoeing is great and the winter skiing is delightful and we have quite enough room for any part of your family, or the whole.

Thanks again for your card which I have left at home, but I will get out the old saxophone and see what you have composed on the front.

Love,

Henry and Nelly

HB/rs

P.S. The Chinese Ultimatum was terrific, plausible and frightening. What's next?