

6

Jan. 23, 1972

To Peter Osnos:

*file
OSNOS*

~~From Phil FOLKUS~~

6

Dear Peter:

A hasty note, and one long overdue. I've got to leave town for a few days tomorrow morning, and want to delay no longer in getting this out to you. Write me if you have any questions and I'll then have the time to write a longer more detailed letter.

Peter Jay is back and we have had a few sessions with him. He will be Harry Rosenfeld's assistant starting Feb. 1, I understand. Right now he is resting. He had many fine things to say about you, and none of them surprised us.

One of the things he said indicated that you were a bit up tight about the future. As I recall, you tend to be. I well remember that drive back from your apartment in London, the night Danielle van Royen and I visited you. So let me put you at ease.

First, you are on schedule to come back to us sometime in May. Nothing will change that. You've had a tough time, and you should come home when your time is up. More than that, we need you here. Tom Lippman is slotted to replace you. One of the reasons is that we've had a lot of luck with you "local types" overseas -- Hoagland, Morgan, Goshko, you, Jay and others. When you've got a good thing going, you don't change it.

You are scheduled to go back to Metropolitan for a time, whence you came. There are a lot of reasons for this -- all good. Harry needs you and wants you. He'll be writing you soon. Also, there are no foreign or national slots open as of the time you'll return, but that's a negative observation your reassignment to Metropolitan on your return is a positive decision, in the papers best interest and in yours. I understand your assignment will be an interesting one. I also think it very good for the paper to nail down the precedents of assigning abroad from Local, and vice versa. It helps break down these goddam barriers in the newsroom.

But since each department head is enjoined to safeguard the interests of his staff and his file, I must also say that you have done well abroad, and have ~~shown~~ also shown steady improvement. I see you going abroad again at some future date, and I want you therefore, as time allows, to keep up your interest and your studies (and your language). I talked with Bradlee about this, and he agrees. (Simons, your m.e. and mine, was sunning himself at a much-needed rest in the Virgin Islands, but I'd be surprised if he doesn't agree, too.) We are trying to advance-plan 2 or 3 years ahead, and your on that list. And before that, I may want you back on the Foreign desk for a while. I thought, by the way, that your Thai situationer that ran today (Sunday) was first-rate.

You asked about going it alone out there between now and your departure. We are fully confident that you can do it. But we've got another plan that should interest you. We are going to send two old pros out there -- George Wilson as of early ^{February} ~~March~~, Braestrup as of early April (sans familie, so ~~you~~ they will batch with you) on a very specific assignment timed in part with our forthcoming campaign oratory: They are going to take a deep long look at the military situation, what kind of a war is it, can the Arvin fight (they'll follow the Arvins closely) and so forth. I'll tell you more when we sorted it out, and I'd like your thoughts on this idea.

We're all looking forward to your return. Thanks for doing so well, and for being a trouble-free hardworking correspondent

Change

Phil