

BEACON
JOURNAL

February 15, 1971

Dear Jack,

You've heard of weeks one would rather forget.

Listen to my very own, starting Monday, Feb. 8:

MONDAY -- Snowstorm and blizzard. I couldn't get home, the streets being clogged with autos, so I slept on your office floor.

TUESDAY -- I struggled home on cowpath-width streets, to be told that the driveway scraper-outer had been there FOUR times since the previous afternoon (at \$3.50 per scrape).

WEDNESDAY -- Our once-a-week "maid" found the bomb on the front porch, put it down gingerly and raced home, saying nothing to anyone (until five or six hours after the device had been dismantled -- then she telephoned me to ask "What was it?") Meantime Jeanne had picked up the bomb.

THURSDAY -- The "maid" telephoned to say she didn't feel she could come back to work for us. She'd been with us for years.

FRIDAY -- Telephone call from John McGee at Charleston, W. Va., to say that my pen-pal Bill Graves had gotten drunk, beaten up his new wife, stolen a car, smashed up a couple other cars in his inebriated state. Then he'd talked a dealer out of another auto on a one-day rental deal and had fled Charleston with a buddy who had a long crime record. (Later, Graves was arrested in Greenville, Ala., on charges of stolen car, and driving while drunk). Up to then Graves had had a most exemplary record at ~~Charleston~~ *Charleston*

SATURDAY -- First letter I opened was from the bank. It told me the mortgage was going up quite a few bucks because of new taxes; also it warned there'd be still another hefty raise because of a tax re-evaluation. Went home, had lunch and turned on the tv set to watch a basketball game, suddenly noted that the durned thing was afire. Smoke filled the house before I finally got it disconnected.

SUNDAY -- We received eight relayed threats (the telephoners called other persons who in turn called us to warn) that (a) if I went out for dinner, I was going to be poisoned -- with strychnine; (b) another bomb had been placed at the house; (c) not only was our house to be removed by explosive, but that "56 sticks of dynamite had been placed in the West Hill area." Several of these calls went to the police station, and so Sunday afternoon and night the damned house was surrounded by policemen and detectives.

Oh yes, there was a ninth call -- to a fire station, saying our home was on fire.

I suppose the next question is: Are the Maidenburgs in a state of the quakes? Truly and honestly, no.

Aside from the nuisance of answering the phone and the added "embarrassment" of the cops being all over the area, the whole business hasn't bugged me. Neither has it bothered Jeanne.

Still, I must say that I was a lot more at ease in New Guinea and the NEI and the Philippines when I knew WHO was trying to plug me than with this business.

Sunnier side of the news: Larry McQueen is very well, and says he might even go down to Florida shortly.

All best wishes,

Sincerely,

Ben Maidenburg

BM:sjf

Mr. John S. Knight
The Miami Herald
Miami, Florida