

September 29, 1983

Dear Rudy;

I thought it was about time that I dropped you another note. I've been thinking about our conversation on the telephone more than a month ago.

So...you think a photo essay on the socio-political aspect of indigenous populations has potential? This little note, needless to say, is concerned with spurring discussions and plans on just such a project. Afterall, we'll have to begin talking about it if we intend to get it off the ground some time next year.... We have to discuss the focus, what populations will be covered (it's impossible to do them all), funding, time-frame, travel plans, translators, etc....not to mention publishers, etc...

Are you planning on coming-up to Canada, specifically Regina, in the near future? What has become of our planned meeting for the beginning of November?

The research on my book project is more or less completed. I now have more than 2000 frames shot and 60 interviews done. Everything from bankrupt farmers, to the largest and oldest co-operative in Canada, to super-ovulating cows and surgically transplanted embryos. I'm beginning to think that if I do one more interview on agriculture I'll be forever lost in the abyss! Early next week I'm planning on leaving for Calgary for about a month to bury myself in a darkroom. When I emerge I hope to have ( I will have) 100 photos completed and archivally developed and printed. Then I'll hide-out in the country and begin transcribing the interviews and composing the text, etc.

I'm hoping that by January I will be able to dig myself out of the drifts and ring-in the New Year with plans for the next episode of my life.

By the way...I was thinking about that list of names you have on observers for the conference in Mexico...if any organization needs a photographer that might be an added incentive for picking my name out of the hat. I could definitely provide that kind of a service....

Well, Rudy, other than that...all's well on this end. I have my work cut-out for me over the next few months but have managed to catch my breath long enough to look forward to the plunge.

For the first time in a decade I even have a pet. The other day when my father was stacking the bails he found a very young kitten. I've adopted it and for the last few days have been trying to make sure it survives...why do we humans seem to have so much compassion for the runt of the litter - the underdog - ... Try to visualize this... Lois taking time out from her typewriter to feed a kitten Enfalac through an eyedropper. I can't decide what to name it (I'm still checking for gender). It's a toss-up between 'Hayseed' and 'Compagnera' (I really do think it's a girl). Right now she's parked in my housecoat oblivious to the beat of my typewriter...and will no doubt begin screaming as soon as I remove her....do you think she'll grow-up thinking she's me... will she like the car ride to Calgary...will the smell of chemicals

in the darkroom make her sick....such are the trials and tribulations of picking-up strays.

Enough idle banter. The hour is fast approaching midnight... I have an interview in the morning...

I hope this letter has brightened up what must be a rainy, overcast, westcoast day.

Let me know what's up for our project. I'm keen.

Take care until we next touch base. If you have a moment drop me a note to let me know your thoughts on the potential book. If you need to call me...contact Gravelbourg and my mother should know where I am. The phone number of my friends darkroom is 403-269-8029. I'll be there during the day...most days.

See ya!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Rais', is written in dark ink on the page.