



JAPAN AND INDIA SAY YES

Hugh died early in 1951. What made his death particularly upsetting was that Margaret heard of it through friends. She wrote a frantic letter to Janet, but didn't receive an answer until weeks later.

Do forgive me for not having answered your very dear letter. I was so sorry the news of Hugh's death had to reach you so unsuspectingly & in such a way. It must indeed have been a shock. I should have written you sooner. For the weeks immediately following I was in a state of complete inertia. Bridget brought me here to Oxshott at once for a rest, and I meant to be back at Sand Pit by March.

I can't yet realize that Hugh has gone, but oh Margaret, it was a blessing that he did not linger. I couldn't have wished to keep him in such distress. He passed quite peacefully however, unconscious. Just a deep sigh & he was gone. I was with him alone, as I should have wished. He had a relapse in the beginning of November & then got worse & worse. Bridget & the children came for Christmas & he was able to enjoy them, but after that I just prayed that he could go.

Dear Margaret, let us keep in touch with each other. You meant so much in Hugh's life.

Having withdrawn from the drug for a while, Margaret went back to the comfort of Demerol, then wrote disconsolately, in her diary

So many old friends in England have gone—Hugh de Selincourt! Bessie Drysdale Also Kerr of the Malthusian I was deeply distressed over Hugh's death—also Kate Hepburn's death Such old faithful friends are too young to go so quickly

The world is in a condition of uncertainty again

She mourned for a month, then perked up

MacArthur has been "deposed" from his Ivory Tower & is now back in U S A The spring is lovely, a party of 14 to supper on the terrace last night This new modern fan-shaped house has been a house of entertainment Actually hundreds of people have come here The Woman's Republican Club of 300 came for their annual meeting & tea The Medical Center drive of 100 came for cocktails on the start of the drive & about 50 at the closing where \$500,000 was raised for the hospital

The Tucson Art Festival also had one of its meetings here The Planned Parenthood local drive also had one of its teas here So all this year there has been vast and frequent entertainment I've loved its space & light

But in July 1951, she had another brief heart attack Angus flew out to see her as he always did, and they planned an evening together in August when she would stop in New York on her way to England for a meeting of the International Committee on Planned Parenthood, the forerunner of the International Planned Parenthood Federation

Before she sailed, the *Reader's Digest* did an article on her It was a straightforward piece telling of her struggles for her cause, but it was enough to set off the Catholic opposition *Novena Notes* devoted its entire July issue to her

In the *Reader's Digest*, this month of July, there are two articles contradicting one another The first, titled "Acts of Faith for a Time of Peril," holds "man's greatest achievements come in years of darkness" and demonstrates how all forms of heroic success came the hard way through sacrifice Another praises a woman

who taught just the opposite, and advocated and succeeded in doing away with the laws of the land and more shamefully important the laws of God himself! Margaret Sanger is described as a noble character fighting poverty through murder of the unborn

Significantly in France she "found her first glimpse of hope," meaning a knowledge of contraceptive practices She introduced to Americans the very enemy that observers knew was then destroying France Years before Margaret Sanger started her ignoble Crusade, General Von Moltke said to Bismark "We need not kill the French they are killing themselves "

America's greatest enemy is not the Nazis and Japs of World War II, who destroyed more than a million American boys It is Margaret Sanger who worked from within killing off millions of potential American defenders at birth Thanks to Margaret Sanger and her ilk Stalin rejoices and bides his time Not too late if the present generation wakes up and realizes "birth control" for the cancerous sore it is Benedict Arnold is a harmless child compared to Margaret Sanger!

By now she was used to this kind of attack, but when *Novena Notes* made the accusation she hated the most—that she and her husband (they didn't even know he was dead) were in the movement solely to make a profit from manufacturing contraceptives—she wrote across the pages "Libelous!" and asked Morris Ernst to sue

Ernst agreed that the accusation that she was manufacturing contraceptives for profit was indeed libelous, but advised her not to sue It would only give the matter more publicity, he said More, a suit would be a great emotional strain He was right The excitement over the article alone was enough to set off another heart attack, one so severe it took Stuart four hours to relieve her pain "I have been ordered to take New York in my easiest stride with no tension or excitement or anything emotional (*God help me*)," she wrote Angus "Stupid & dull Even rather grim This picture (of me) may make you decide to postpone your New York trip & it will be sensible to make that decision But you must make it "

He decided to come as she might have known, and during the course of their evening together, she had some more mild heart pains so that they had a sedate visit instead of the active one they had originally planned But he made up for it by wildly circling his plane three times

over her ship as it steamed down the Hudson River Dorothy McNamee, her companion on the voyage, spotted him and they both waved happily back Margaret said it was one of the loveliest visits with Angus she had ever had

Back in Tucson after the conference, she took flying lessons If Angus could learn at sixty-five, she could learn at seventy-two But flying proved far too strenuous, so she went back to painting and partying again

A particularly satisfying party was one she didn't want to give at first A convention of 300 engineers was meeting in Tucson, and Dorothy McNamee suggested she give them a cocktail party Engineers were not exactly in Margaret's line, but when Dorothy pointed out how exciting it would be for just the two of them to entertain 300 men, Margaret agreed She put on a gold lamé gown, arranged herself carefully on her brocaded sofa, and since she wasn't up to standing, received the men sitting like royalty, with Dorothy presenting them one at a time and Margaret basking in the attention

Margaret and Dorothy were trying to think of something equally satisfying when Juliet wrote begging her to come East to help her pack as she was selling her New York house By now Margaret was terribly afraid of winter cold because it might give her pneumonia or bronchitis, but when Juliet said, "Parting with my house after thirty years is like parting with a favored and beloved child If I can only hold your hand it may be some comfort through the ordeal," she flew to New York A new challenge was awaiting her in Tucson when she got home Ellen Watumill, whom Margaret had met briefly many years before, had recently returned from India Partly because she was affiliated with the Watumill Foundation from whom the Hindu birth-control leaders hoped to get a large donation, and partly because they knew she was an American, Mrs Watumill had been asked what could be done to spread birth-control information there Now she asked if it would be convenient for her and her Hindu husband to visit Margaret and discuss the matter They came to her fan-shaped house, and the three of them agreed that an Indian conference was in order Margaret said she would be glad to help organize one for 1952, starting to work on it a year in advance She began immediately, back in her element She dictated dozens of letters to Lady Rama Rau, the Indian woman most interested in birth control She suggested names of speakers and delegates, she ordered special stationery headed, *India World Confer-*

ence, *Margaret Sanger, Honorary President* She raised travel money for delegates who couldn't provide it themselves and even arranged secretaries for Lady Rama Rau As money was crucial, she wasn't above taking donations as small as five dollars, raising a total of sixteen thousand dollars from Tucson friends alone And since MacArthur was now out of Japan and she could get a visa, she planned to stop in Japan for two weeks on her way to India

The major plans made, she had another publicity-making idea She wrote to famous people, including President Harry Truman and General David Sarnoff, head of the National Broadcasting Company, asking if they would let their names be listed in the conference program as "official sponsors" of the event Some refused, but Eleanor Roosevelt, Mrs J Borden Harriman, Doris Duke, Albert Einstein, and Mr and Mrs DeWitt Wallace, editors of the *Reader's Digest*, all accepted It was an impressive list She remarked happily to Angus "This is like the good old days" Still she complained that she was lonely

I have only brilliant women for companions, or stupid males
But none of these are my ideal of a life of growth or development
& I want the equal companion in thinking, art, music, science, everything that's alive in the universe

She continued to have many male callers, however One, a teacher, stopped by to visit her every day to say things like "Let me gaze into your eyes It's long since I had such exquisite pleasure" He admitted later that he had a double motive, he hoped she would remember him in her will, leaving him Sleg's hand-carved bed or some of her fine Oriental rugs

Another caller spoke of her "girlishness and charm" but looked for a few slight remembrances, too A third didn't even want to wait, he was an expert wheedler Lisa, her maid, tells of serving him lunch and seeing him suddenly put his hands under his napkin He was wearing one of Margaret's handsome sapphire rings But whatever the cost, Margaret enjoyed their company and used her most potent charms to keep them coming

Yet to her family she could be a spitfire as well as a charmer Margaret II remembers that during a visit with her grandmother, at a house Margaret had rented for the summer on Fisher's Island near Grant's home, she and Nancy, her sister, aged eight and six respectively, decid-

ed one hot morning to walk over to Grant's house without asking permission. When they got back, they had a raging thirst and asked for water. Their grandmother flatly refused to let them have any. "Water ruins the appetite!" she said. Finally she admitted she was refusing them water as a punishment for their taking the walk without asking her permission. And when the old butler tried to sneak them some water, she commanded, "Take it away. It's not what *you* want, it's what *I* want." They had to go to bed thirsty.

Mainly, to be sure, Margaret acted this way when on drugs, at other times she could be as sweet as ever. But when her sharp temper and bad tongue did break out, they cut deeply.

She also had become extremely parsimonious. Her grandchildren once heard her talking with the boy who mowed her lawn in Tucson, arguing that since he worked for the famous Margaret Sanger he should work for less.

By the end of September 1952, Margaret was working energetically, looking for American delegates to the Indian Conference, and asking those who said they would go to send her advance copies of their scientific papers. When the papers arrived, she had new copies made and sent these to the other delegates in order to avoid duplication of material. Then she made arrangements for Indian housing and recreation, attending to all the details that she had learned so expertly to do.

But soon she was worrying about an article that had appeared in *Look* Magazine suggesting that Pincus and Rock might discover an effective oral contraceptive. On September 26, she wrote William Vogt, National Director of Planned Parenthood:

Instead of giving me joy to see the preliminary publicity, (I know that) so many things can happen until there is an actual accomplishment and thorough testing of these mythical drugs, that I am worried stiff.

As to the amazing and wonderful news of the "Pill," may I again beg of you to get in direct contact with the American Medical Association before you give out anything to any other group? They can kill the best idea in the world, even more decidedly than the Catholics. With all the wealth of Hutton who bought the Carol Dakin formula and standardized it into Zonite, he made an enemy of the A M A only because he did not submit his facts to Chicago before he went to the general public. To this day the M D's

are against Zonite, knowing it is far better on tissues and membranes than Lysol. So please ask or invite the official A M A to come in on the kill!

This hectic activity gave her brief heart attacks that made her call a doctor at any hour of the day or night. For, as Stuart had found, whether she needed medical help or not, she refused to stand the least bit of pain. Angus, who expected to be out West on business at this time, wanted to drop by and visit her for a day but she refused. "The fun of being together would not be there. My mind will be working on details until I land in Bombay." She also admitted to Angus

I am cross as two sticks. If I have another attack before Oct 6 I'll give up going. That's final. I thought I was getting entirely well until yesterday and last night. If I had to open a conference today I could not do it. I've given up cocktails, wines, coffee, all delicious meats and sauces, so that I'll be "conditioned" to diets en route.

Instead of flying to Tucson to see her, Angus, though he was far from a wealthy man, sent her a check for one hundred dollars toward the travel expenses of the delegates. Margaret, meanwhile, asked the National Planned Parenthood Federation for a substantial travel sum for herself, which they said they had neither the desire nor the funds to give, making her furious. The cause, she explained, had always paid her travel expenses, it was quite a change to have to pay them herself.

She sailed on the S S *Lurline* on October 11 for Honolulu, then went by plane to Yokohama, Singapore, and Bombay, taking along Grace Sternberg, a Tucson friend, as well as Mrs. Clarence Gamble. The three made a great fuss over what clothes Margaret should wear to look her best.

In Japan she was received by a motorcade escort with sound trucks blaring, "Sanger is here! Sanger is here! No more abortions! Sanger is here!" The maids in the hotels bowed so low that Mrs. Sternberg was greatly impressed, and Margaret was sure she would get lumbago from all the bowing she had to do in return. Her talks in Japan were so successful that at a meeting planned for about forty women, eight hundred came and stayed an entire afternoon. "People here are desperate, but they are fearless and wide awake to the need for birth control," she

exulted in a letter home. She told of other long talks given to doctors and midwives, with demonstration material and techniques. In addition, she was delighted when she was invited to address the Japanese Diet and became one of the first Westerners to be presented to the Emperor's son. She was furious, however, when the editor of a Tokyo paper gave her age as ninety-four, she was actually seventy-three and admitting to only sixty-eight. As the Japanese revere age, the paper meant it as a gesture of respect, but she was so angry she got sick and retreated to bed, phoning the editor and calling off a reception he had planned.

Seven hundred and fifty delegates came to the 1952 Indian Conference, and twenty-one papers were read. Margaret and Lady Rama Rau, President of the Family Planning Association of India, shared the honors on the platform. Dr. C. P. Blacker, an English delegate, spoke of it as the most brilliant and successful of the early postwar conferences on birth control. Years later he reminisced:

Mrs. Sanger was wonderfully responsive to her audiences. She could draw from them as much as she gave them. Large assemblages acted on her like a tonic. She visibly drew strength and zest from the packed seats and galleries, and the iller she seemed beforehand the more triumphant was her performance.

Her charm and warmth have been abundantly stressed. What I would particularly like to mention is her power of strategical thinking. She saw how Asia, Europe, and America could play different but complementary roles. This grand design, by no means obvious at the start, is now so taken for granted that it can easily be forgotten that Mrs. Sanger was its originator and architect.

Margaret was pretty much exhausted by the conference, however, and decided to make her speech of resignation from the International Planned Parenthood Federation then and there. She slipped a note saying this to Lady Rama Rau who was sitting on Nehru's right while she sat at his left. Lady Rama Rau was a big woman with a booming voice, and as there was much rivalry between the two women, they had been stealing baleful glances at each other across the impassive Nehru.

Now Lady Rama Rau had to introduce Margaret, who had grown more and more nervous as the moment approached. Soon Lady Rama Rau rose and went to the speaker's desk. "I give you the lady who" her voice boomed through the cavernous room. And again, "I give you the lady through whom" Margaret sat trembling while Lady Rama Rau went on endlessly. Finally Margaret stood up, walked slowly to the speaker's desk and stopped her rival by starting to speak herself.

She spoke for only four minutes in a quiet voice, using simple, lucid words, and when she was finished, the entire audience stood up and rang the hall with their cheers.

She described the occasion in a letter to her granddaughter the next day.

Darling Margaret Yesterday was a great and joyous day for me. The conference was opened by Prime Minister Nehru who bent over me (in the ante-room) and said, "It's wonderful that you came to us from so far away." He then offered me his arm, and together we walked out into the Great Auditorium facing hundreds of camera shots & news men. I had to speak from the platform and said, "Mr. Nehru is the greatest living statesman in all this world." It was a great victory for our Cause, and I am happy that I came.

A few days later, the delegates voted her President Emeritus for life after which, excited, she flew to Tokyo for a week as a guest of the *Manuichi Press*, then to Honolulu for a week of festivity, and finally home.

But at home there came the inevitable letdown. Her legs as well as her heart started to bother her, and she turned even more to Demerol. When her supply ran out, she frightened Stuart by suddenly disappearing. She had flown with a nurse back to Honolulu, where she had many "connections," and flew back with a suitcase full of drugs.

Still, she could manage short comebacks. At a three-day emergency conference called by the Population Council in New York to discuss the population explosion, the highlight dinner was given at the Waldorf Astoria in Margaret's honor. Sir Julian Huxley came over from England to be International Chairman. Distinguished guests included

Marriner Eccles, former Secretary of the Treasury under Roosevelt, and H E M C Chagla, Indian Ambassador to the United States

When she received her invitation, Margaret wired in jubilation, "I will get there if I have to crawl," after which she flew to New York dressed in her finest. But the introductory remarks by Mr Chagla were so long and repetitious that she fell asleep, having passed out with what drug users call "the nods." Dr Alan Guttmacher, President of the Planned Parenthood Association, was seated next to her, he tried to wake her but it was impossible. The only thing he could do was to lift her in his arms, carry her upstairs to her hotel room, and put her to bed. The dinner went on as best it could, but Guttmacher had seldom been so embarrassed or the guests so puzzled.

By that time Margaret realized she could not shake off her drug dependence and was thoroughly depressed. She kept repeating that she had accomplished nothing in her life, her friends tried to help by reminding her that few people start and finish a crusade in one lifetime. Nothing did much good, even the adoring letters from Angus. She would simply glance at his letters and say wearily to her secretary, "File them away." Occasionally she would perk up, as when he wrote her that she was "the greatest woman who was ever born," and in a rare burst of modesty she answered "Thanks for the compliment, but please don't get the woman mixed up with the cause. I consider the cause the greatest ever conceived by the human mind, even though the woman who conceived it may not be the greatest of all." But mostly she sat and looked blankly at TV, or rambled on about the objections to her sex talks at Mabel Dodge's Greenwich Village salon long ago.