

September 23, 1996

Dear Tom,

Thanks for the CD. I've listened to it all the way through twice already. I still enjoy it. Jackson Browne got a lot of emotion into these songs. He's a good poet. I don't always know what he's talking about, but it seems profound.

I am in an uncomfortable period on my new job. We are trying to decide how we are going to get our data processing done independent of the State. We can take the safe route - which will keep our current lousy system going by moving it from the State's mainframe computer to another one like it at a company in Grand Haven - or we can buy our own computer (client/server) and build a new, modern system. The problem with the latter alternative is that the State has promised to continue their support only until September 30, 1997, and that is barely enough time to build a whole new system. I'll be doing a lot of the work either way we go, but much more so with building a new system. On the other hand, it would be more interesting, and if we succeed, it would be quite an achievement.

Now would be a good time for you to start getting into shape. Being fat gets you nothing but an excuse to spend more time in front of the TV. It makes the rest of your life a lot more difficult. It makes it harder to attract women, harder to get jobs, harder to have fun doing anything that requires moving around. And you will die young. Staying in shape takes me about an hour a day, 4 or 5 days a week. And it is cheap - \$50 for running shoes and \$50 for some weights. Running cured me of depression many years ago. Take care of yourself - I can retire in 6 years, and I'm going to need somebody to go hiking in the mountains with.