

7 December 1968

Mr. Bernard Fensterwald
4036 N. 27th Street
Arlington, Va. 22207

Dear Mr. Fensterwald,

Thank you for your friendly letter of the 2nd. I will be happy to see you, if you should come to New York. It will give me an opportunity to thank you personally for your kindness in sending me the list of Commission Documents with corresponding CE numbers, showing pages available or still classified. It is a most useful catalogue.

You refer to "the failure of critics to find a formula of cooperation," and perhaps we will have an opportunity to discuss that point. Meanwhile, let me make a few comments on my own experience. You will find under the "Acknowledgments" in my book Accessories After the Fact the names of about fifteen critics of the WR, ten of them major, first-generation critics. As indicated, I had always had the complete and generous cooperation and encouragement from those listed, and subsequently from others. I believe that I returned every cooperation, to those listed and to others, as acknowledged in some of their published works and in private correspondence. I think that, with very few exceptions, the active, unstinting, and unselfish mutual help and support that characterized the critics' community for a number of years is not only firmly on record but was in itself a remarkable phenomenon and an inspiration that made it possible to persist in prodigious labor at times of low energy and low morale.

The fact that the cooperation and the devoted friendship came to a halt for some of us was not the result of petty rivalry, unwillingness to share information, or any trivial or self-serving considerations. It was the result of a profound conflict and disagreement on fundamental questions of principle, morals, and ethics---brought to the surface by a specific issue on which, where I am concerned, no compromise is possible or conceivable. When such fundamental differences arise, no "formula of cooperation" is possible. What is really at issue, then, it seems to me, is not unwillingness to cooperate in pursuit of a common objective but a basic schism on the moral and intellectual level.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Sylvia Meagher
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New York, N.Y. 10014