

Sunday 6/11/67 2 pm

Dearest Maggie,

Yesterday I received a letter from Shirley Martin, after a long silence, in which she says, "Thayer met Maggie and wrote me glowingly about her. She really made an impression on him!" She especially wanted you to know this. Unfortunately, she wrote also the following: "I am repelled by the Arab/Israeli mess. How much of this is another IBJ/CIA Sukarno-type coup against Nasser? I cannot take seriously Israel's claim that the USA did not aid in the attacks. At any rate, I see the beginning of the end here for Nasser, and I smell a Texas rat. My God! Are the Jewish intellectuals really going to help Johnson pull this one!"

No comment.

I did not reach Sauvage until yesterday, and did not reach Bob until this morning. Sauvage was really surprised that they had "done it again," after his own experience. He thought that as mere businessmen, they would be more prudent. He thinks there is less excuse for RH in your case than in his, as his contract was signed before the WR was published and before the issues were clearly arrayed. He suggested that you write a registered letter demanding the remainder of the advance stipulated in the contract, pointing out that you had fulfilled your obligations and had incurred substantial expenditures in so doing. (I am sure that you will consult your lawyer(s) before taking any step, but I am just relaying what Sauvage said.) He thinks that it is possible by legal action to force RH to honor the contract in full, i.e., to publish the book; but he advises against it because it will cost a fortune in legal fees and because even if you succeeded, they would publish "pro forma" and not promote or otherwise help the book.

Bob had not heard any rumors and was surprised and befogged (I am afraid I woke him from his late Sunday-sleeping). However, he promised to think about the situation and will try to come up with some suggestions. Both he and Sauvage seemed to feel that it should not be too difficult to find a different publisher, since after the commercial success of the Lane book the prospects for books on the same subject bringing in profits are good.

I have been slaving on the galleys and when I thought I had just about caught every possible misprint (that the proofreader who had already examined the galleys before they came to me had missed) my niece Susan read one section and found three more. That was pretty discouraging; and I don't know now whether to try to summon up the energy to do another complete reading (my eyes don't really "see" any more, the material is too sickly familiar) or whether to send the galleys back, saving ten days on the time originally allotted for the proofing.

Maggie, no one could have deserved less the foul blow you have suffered at the hands of those rotten RH people. Some day, if there is any justice, they will be paid back for this. I feel a sickening sense of misery; what must you be feeling? I only wish, dear, that around the corner beyond which we cannot yet see, in the very near future, there is the balm of publication, under better and more brilliant circumstances, and that we will all be able to look back on this black week and say, how strange, that something that seemed at the time like the ultimate in disaster should have turned out to be the luckiest and best possible turn of fate. Don't please think I am being Pollyanna --because sometimes things do happen that way. When Simon of RH wrote that nasty letter returning my ms., it was a blow (although in no way a comparable one); yet it would have been far worse if he had accepted it, as ultimately I am sure it would have been vetoed on a higher level of RH. They are yellow-belly sycophants, handmaidens to IBJ, and they don't deserve the honor of publishing your work. All my love and my faith that you will be published,

With many kisses,