

18 April 1969

Dear Max,

It is easier to be tolerant of "a little financial leeway" in the abstract but you might not be quite so philosophical about it had you found yourself minus several thousand dollars extracted on the claim of dire need by someone who not only had considerably greater resources but who wrapped himself in self-righteousness and moral sanctity sufficient to smother a lesser mortal. No, dear Max, I am not about to soften.

I received quite a few exhortations during the last few years to be more tolerant of Garrison, too--to make allowance for his shortcomings (which happened to include fabrication of evidence and framing of innocent victims). I was never even given pause by the rather muddled arguments and events have certainly vindicated my position. As a matter of fact, one of the Warren Commission lawyers, unable to account for certain falsehoods and contradictions in the WR during a phone conversation, took refuge in accusing me of being "intolerant." Well, I guess I am.

Unhappily, it is my investment of trust and admiration in people that sometimes turns out to be an error of judgment. My negative view of an individual has not yet been invalidated. In any case, Arnoni neither asks for or admits resorting to "a little financial leeway," nor (I suspect) would he fail to heap scorn on the very idea that it was compatible with intellectual integrity. Of course, I have no idea what kind of Arnonian version you heard of the whole affair, and perhaps you are not aware of the magnitude of the implications.

But I am nonplused by your sentiments toward Hinckle. He turned a rather fine magazine into a slick sensationalist (not to say pornographic) vehicle, bankrupted the whole venture, and then walked out to start a rival magazine and presumably wallow in his accustomed luxury on the funds extracted from well-meaning saps. A new regime has started to restore Ramparts to its former (pre-Hinckle) serious approach and responsible character. For that you are resigning? even while acknowledging that Hinckle's behavior was scandalous? No, good friend, don't ask me to join you in such perverse sentimentality: when all the villains are heroes, I will have to submit to a very poor opinion of myself and those still dear to me, and this would offend my vanity.

I do appreciate your good intentions and your conciliatory hopes and there is nothing to "forgive." Keep well, and don't be anxious for me--it is not the first disenchantment or the first loss, and I fully intend to surmount it undismayed. By the way, you asked on the back of an envelope earlier about Lane's new book. Two sections in it are superior in every way to the usual caliber of Lane's work---both having been blandly plagiarized from my work (one published in TMO, on Jenner, and the other an unpublished piece on Nizer that I gave Lane as ammunition for his debate with Nizer--for which he thanked me warmly, in writing, and promised to put to good use, as he now has done by cribbing it). The remainder of his book is partly the product of a salaried ghost-writer, which doesn't save it from being a rather crushing bore as well as loaded with misrepresentations (one of which provoked a rather angry editorial in The Progressive). The book is, deservedly, ignored. All warm regards,