



RANDOM HOUSE, INC.

201 EAST 50TH STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022
TELEPHONE 212 751-2600

JASON EPSTEIN
VICE PRESIDENT

28 January 1976

Mssrs. Peter Scott, Paul Hoch, Russell Stetler
2823 Ashby Avenue
Berkeley, California

Dear Peter, Paul and Russ:

So that there will be no misunderstanding, let me repeat what I said to you by phone last week when you and we agreed to the deletion of the sentence from Sylvia Meagher's article.


While I share your disappointment, I'm glad that you agree that there is no alternative to the deletion in view of the advice of counsel. As you know, Random House has never hesitated to defend its rights and those of its authors under the First Amendment. On the other hand, we have never knowingly published a libel.

I understand your reluctance to appear as Sylvia Meagher's censors, but I regret that you have insisted on the black line. This solution is really mute on the question of responsibility (which in this case is really David Belin's). It only serves to call special attention to the deletion, and thus does Sylvia's cause and the cause of the critics generally no good.

As I told you on the phone, publishers routinely edit thousands of manuscripts each year and suggest changes of all kinds to their authors, including changes for legal reasons. Sometimes these editorial discussions can be fairly complex, as they were in the case of THE ASSASSINATIONS, where there were extensive legal questions. Typically, authors and their publishers work out their problems with the best interest of the book in mind, as you and Susan Bolotin did when you and she prepared the manuscript. But I don't think that the black line serves the book's best interests, or Sylvia's, or those of her fellow critics.

I also regret the delay in production that all this has caused. I hope, however, that the book is the success that it deserves to be.

Sincerely,



Jason Epstein



The Now Society
By WILLIAM HAMILTON

W. HAMILTON
© Chronicle Publishing Co. 1976

I'm in publishing, Jeff, because I love language and money talks!

2-2