

Wave and Howard - and Jim

12/23/76

My enclosed today's letter to the counsel of Harper & Row relates to their scheduled Jan. 26 publication of a rehash of the McKinley Playboy series. Their book has the same title, Assassination in America.

From the brief time between the mailing of the proofs and pub date the indications are that they are rushing to commercialize the subject. Ordinarily bound copies are sent for review purposes and with more time than they are allowing.

While I have no reason to believe Harpers will call you I felt I had to refer them to others whose word they could take. I do not know whether either of you has read this miserable stuff as it appeared in Playboy. (I have read the manuscript of the series only. That was disgusting enough. I have not read these proofs and do not plan to.)

I have made no demands of Harpers, verbally or in writing. I have suggested none. I have not yet discussed this with Jim, who does not have time for it anyway. I do not believe, unless Jim counsel's otherwise, that I should seek to influence any possible Harper decision not to proceed with the McKinley crap. But I do not propose to let them use my work gratis if they go ahead with this really bad business.

That also I will leave up to Jim.

This comes at a bad time for me. Not only do I have the FBI records to go over but I am getting some of my personal files. No, Not FBI, NOT CIA.

I have not been able to think about what I would want or what would be fair, etc. Nor to discuss this with Lil.

I do know that unless Lil says otherwise if I get anything from Harpers, and not only as a consultant, it will go to Jim for the FOIA work.

From the ~~xxx~~ proofs the book will be 256 pages. They are numbered to 216 now. This includes the bibliography but not a promised 16 pages of pictures. That leaves 14. I suspect that will be more than the index will take if they are indexing.

With pub date only a month away they do have problems so I felt I had to offer them this kind of independent source of information. I believe their lawyer is away until three weeks before pub date.

Ordinarily the situation I represent would mean the book is in manufacture now at the latest.

Best,