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5/21/66

Dear Sylvia,

Your continuing kindnesses and willingness to be helpful despite your own heavy schedule are encouraging and we do appreciate them. We've been in the Job made lately but I think better days are not too far ahead. I have been working on distribution and promotion, although the silence that has confronted your ears would not so indicate. To date, I know of only a nice story in the London Times and a dispatch to France by either AFP or the correspondent who shares their DC office.

Not one of the 18 bookstores I approached turned me down. A 19th wrote for a small order, unsolicited. In all they took 748 books, which is quite encouraging. I have a Washington distributor now but have no idea whether he is doing anything because as soon as I got him I devoted my attention to other matters. I believe there is a chance of a New York distributor and will let you know if I get one. I have discovered that with the conspicuous exception of those who consider themselves liberals, most of the people who see a chance to help are willing. A bookstore manager got me the distributor, etc. Some of the correspondents, especially the British, have been angels. And today I had a very nice and encouraging phone call from an apparently friendly editor, Jerome Agel, of Books, to whom I had sent a copy. He likes the book's contents, appearance, form and feel and is doing a major story on it. He is interested in its history, etc. He seemed quite friendly.

Finally got the envelopes yesterday, now that I've mailed out the press copies in junk. I've had little reaction from them. The New Republic will not advertise it on a P.L. basis. Carey McWilliams says I knew he'd be interested, and I've learned he sent his copy to Fred Cook, I hope for review, for Cook, to whom I sent the Ramparts ad announcing they were using his stuff, tells me his experience was similar, save that his was with an outline. The most violent reaction, bordering on the insane, was from Arnoni, who assaulted me with a violence and vehemence I cannot understand. If he is a friend of yours, please tell him editors should be familiar with those laws that protect people from at the least slanders and damaging fictions. I do not send you the correspondence, for I'd like to protect him from himself. He accused me of plagiarism - in toto - of manufacturing the preface, etc. His letter is entirely fiction, a surprising collection of the most insulting fictions. As you know, and as I told him, the book is entirely mine, was completed February a year ago, and the only things from anyone else are those few you suggested. I am entirely at a loss to understand the man or his motives. He'll do well not to address such letters to others. Lane also has favored me with what you, from what you have already told me of him, would anticipate. Possibly you might add to your stock description "not very bright", for he did a stupid thing. I replied with what my wife found astounding moderation telling him if he'd restrict himself to accuracies in his public comments I'd be content. When you read his squib in the Holt thing that Agel is sending you because from him it will get to you faster you'll understand. Among other things he "discovered" the FBI report!

I still expect to carry my thing off, so the errors you are finding may be quite

important. I found one myself, by accident, and this one was not typographical. It was my own. In the heat of writing I used a frame number, 210, for the page, which I seem to recall as 106, in discussion of the FBI calculation of the angles.

I'm too tired to check it out, but the Hartogs thing was from a TV program I taped. It is not from his testimony or book.

Troubles with the mail continue. I have now sent 14 copies to my agent in England, beginning on the 9th. This costs like hell. As of his letter of the 18th, which got here in the same mail with yours of the same date, he had received none of them. This x hurts because there are English prospect and because the Warren expert of a major magazine which read and was interested in the book happened to be in London and they wanted him to read it.

I hear Fox's book is coming out in England, soon. Viking is now selling Epstein. They were in Washington day before yesterday, but I do not believe the salesman specified release date. I have picked up a little about it down here that I'll tell you when I can confirm it. Holt's advertising (to me) indicates some hysteria over the Viking book. Naturally, I'm looking forward to reading both. I'll be surprised if there are not serious errors in Lanes, despite the commission who did it over in England. Epstein's, though, is the one that really interests me. Do you have any idea when they'll announce their magazine and, if any, newspaper tie-ins? I'm quite curious about the magazine, and I'll guess LIFE.

If and when I have any solid news I'll let you know. And again, many, many thanks for your help. If there are any more, as there well might be, I hope you spot them. You are, of course, right about the importance of the Fritz flap, about the date of the sale of hearings...It now seems to me that the Hartogs things was with a panel of experts, where he didn't dare pull as much. I'd like to see your piece. I've ordered the Dallas papers for the Ruby decision and I'll have them Mon or Tues.

Within the past month, Finck left for Vietnam.

Thanks and regards,