

8/24/73

Dear Dick,

Fletcher's letter of the 20th does not indicate a carbon to you so I enclose a copy. I'll not burden him with a response that does not seem to be called for.

I take his expression of sympathy at face value. I also take it that he is persuaded that the project is without prospects. What he accurately describes as disorganized material is hunks of chapters written in haste when it was fresh in mind and when the available time did not permit completion of longer work. I think I also sent you carbons. My purpose was to give indications of content, no more. I hadn't then and still haven't read that stuff. I won't until the time for integrating it, which will not come until I write myself to the appropriate places in the ms.

My wife has retyped about 150 pages of the draft. I have two more chapters to read in haste so she can start retyping them this weekend. Then back to writing.

Instead of an appendix for foreign audiences on the structure of government and the way of the law that Gross wanted, I have incorporated this in the text, in such a way that all or hunks can come out with ease, believing that all or some may be better for U.S. audiences, too.

The clue to me on Fletcher's feeling is not what he has written but what he has not. He has not indicated feeling any publisher out, which would require no more than a phone call. However, there must be quite a publishing grapevine or espionage system because I had a long phone call from a European publisher of whom I'd never heard. It would appear that his fears are not shared abroad. His publisher had decided against exercising his option on one of the better-publicized books and having heard of me and mine - he did not say how and declined to when I asked - phoned to ask about world rights. I build no castle on this, but he has already made a not inconsiderable investment, 45 Transatlantic daytime minutes. I asked him if he wanted to hear the liabilities, he did, and I went into all of which I am aware and all Fletcher indicated. This did not discourage him. He asked for copies of my underground books. It is not because I doubt Fletcher's judgement but because I want to face all the difficulties at the outset that I began with discouragement, that is, of this publisher. He seems prepared to provide a United States editor and I made clear I thought this would be needed. I have lived long enough with the problems of out-of-the-ordinary subjects and trade unimaginativeness to have some grasp on what the combination can mean. So, having no real alternative, I'll plod away.

for you

It has been two months since I left xeroxes of POST MORTEM with Roy (who has not responded to my letter) and I have heard nothing from you. This is the last complete set I have. Others (not publishers!) want to read it. I'd appreciate it if you would return it if there is not some reason to hold onto it. Did you notice that Wednesday our Glorious leader twice referred to the JFK assassination as a conspiracy - his word? And that one who interviewed LBJ before his death quotes him as not believing his own Commission? On the 10th, Dan Rather had a commentary on CBS broadly hinting that there is now new and sort of official interest in a re-opening. One of these inquirers is a member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. He is coming to see me.

In about three weeks a young man is coming here from New York. If you feel you cannot do anything further yourself or through others you mentioned with the legal things, I'll ask him to bring them. I'd rather not trust them to the mails. Neither you nor Manny responded to my letter to him. I really do not want to take this up with the bar association, but if he remains silent he leaves me little choice. There is nothing I can do that will help me about his screwing me. I would prefer to avoid what can hurt him, for that also would do me no good. However, I do need what I gave him.

Best to all,

HAROLD OBER ASSOCIATES  
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August 20, 1973

Mr. Harold Weisberg  
Route 8  
Frederick, Md. 21701

Dear Mr. Weisberg:

Thanks for the additional material concerning the Nixon-Hughes relationship and Archibald Cox that you sent with your note of August 11th, and for your letter of the 15th.

I am most sympathetic with what you are trying to do and I admire you very much for attempting it.

It is clear to me though, that the material is much too disorganized to present to a publisher. I do appreciate your letting me see it all the same.

Sincerely yours,

*Peter Shepherd /kv*  
Peter Shepherd

PS/kv