

George Lardner, newsroom
Washington Post
1150 15 St., NW
Washington, D.C. 20071

2/29/92

Dear George,

While I do not presume that you or Style or the Post will have any further interest in "Mortal Error," and I sure hope that Book World does not assign it to another incompetent if they review it at all, the Sun ^{this} ~~this~~ past Sunday indicated the possibility that Hickey might file suit. And as I thought with Stone, + believe that exposure of these commercialisms and exploitations is worthwhile.

When first you spoke to me and then Streitfeld did I was not interested enough to check my Donahue file. Streitfeld spoke to me again after speaking to an unidentified person at the publisher's. He said that I would be critical of the book because it "trashes" me. When I not only did not know of it ^{but} ~~by~~ the publisher had kept it secret?

I wondered what impelled Donahue to do anything like that when I'd taken time to try to help him, offered him access to my files, etc. So I made a hasty skim of the indexed references to me in the nearby Walden's. Just enough of a skim to see that the book does intend to trash me and that it lies and misrepresents in several ways. Then I checked my file and learned what confirms what + say above and more.

Donahue had Nicholas Beltrante working on this. Beltrante says he had a working relationship with Bob Woodward. Perhaps Woodward can learn more from him than what what he told, of all papers, The Jerusalem Post of 9/14/87, that Hickey retired because of "an emotional breakdown" that Beltrante attributes to the assassination.

When I get the book I'll read and annotate it, as I have some of the other works of undeniable theoretic^{al} solutions. I do not know whether Hickey will sue or if anyone else will but if there is any litigation I am confident that I can help it and because this is such an outrageous abuse of Hickey and our history I'll take the time. If you have occasion to speak to Bob Snow^{or Carl Meyer} at the SS, please tell him this and that if I help it will be with no quid pro quo and if desired in confidence, although the use of my correspondence to and from the Donahues would make the latter difficult.

What I did give, rather loaned Donahue is enough to prove his theory is false, I did tell him what else disproved it and despite the crack he makes about what I got from the FBI, which you may remember is false, that it was worthless, he did not accept my invitation to go over it, as he ^{clearly} ~~clearly~~ never has.

If I remember correctly, there came a time when I got some worthwhile information from the FBI on a Saturday, phoned you at home, and you worked on your time off to do a story that the Post used. I think this was JFK, not King, and it was on what I got in that suit.

Whether or not you (pl) have any further interest, I'll appreciate copies of anything you may get, including of the press kit that Book World or Style may have.

Best,

Handwritten signature