

6/14/72

Dear Walter,

The 6/6 Variety story, Hush-Filming on Kennedy Killing is flackery, as is refusal to let anything be known of the "plot". It is published, or was to have been by now. It is Trumbo's reworking of a novel by Mary Lane and Don Freed, the man who is to bring you a fink's fiction, Avon's non-fiction originally The Glass House Tapes, now The Gemstone File (rehash of papers presented as research). The flick has the same name as the novel.

Because of my considerable respect for Trumbo's early work, when I first got wind of his doing a movie (and I then heard nothing more except that it was to have been based on solid research) I wrote him to caution him that there are few who can evaluate what a wide assortment of self-seekers allege is fact and to suggest that in his later years he might not want to wreck so fine a rep with trash on this subject. There was no answer. There would have been none if he had spoken to Lane, either.

From those who may well know and from what I know of the people involved (not Trumbo) I expect this will be a melding of every wild and irresponsible rumor ever floated. CIA and Mafia together. With a new generation of young who know nothing of the subject, there can be a very good market for this kind of nauseating stuff.

The story says one Steve Jaffe is "press agent" for the film. This is the same nut Lane foisted off on Garrison who sent him to Europe on what emerged as Farewell America. Jaffe was conned by the spooks, but completely. The copies I sent you of various calling cards, including one with "M. Flon" written on it, are those given to Jaffe then. He is an utter incompetent, a sycophant, a guy who wants to be important and can't be on merit. He used to carry Garrison credentials. The only use he had for them was flashing them in Playboy Clubs, for which he got a rather good working over by one of the cops assigned to Garrison. His memos to Garrison would make you puke. I have a fair collection of them.

A year after I exposed Farewell America as a fraud and probably from The Dept. of Disinformation Jaffe was still running around with Herve Lamarre, the French spook-in-chief on that project. I last saw both when I was "kind" ~~them~~ to them in New Orleans in December 1968, when finally Lamarre was blown completely, when he and Jaffe fled. Take me literally on this. I was driving them around and their stuff was locked in the car I had. There is no reasonable doubt that Lamarre is SDECE. I've traced part of his career.

I'm by no means certain that if there was a purpose in wanting Bantam to do the Gilles book (aside from what Bantam could do with it), that purpose is not being served in a different way through this (National General) movie.

If you ask yourself could all the horrors of the day have happened without the assassination of John Kennedy and if you answer the question as I have to myself, you can understand why I detest all this cheap commercialism of one of the subjects I feel ~~you~~ ought not be prostituted.

If I knew anything about the ways such people and things work, you should soon be seeing real hushhush "leaks" of the breathtaking content of this most supercolossal spectacularfabulous of all movies. And the real flack will not be Jaffe, who couldn't even hold onto the mistress he took to New Orleans with him when he couldn't have been much over 20. Jaffe is really both a dumdum and a dimwit. When I knew him he was getting along on the wealth of his father, a surgeon in the L.A. area.

I'll be interested in naything you may see on this project.

Best,

Hal, This is the book you had

ORIGINALS

LAST TANGO IN PARIS.

Robert Alley. Dell, \$1.75

This is a novelization of the film script which will sell briskly on the coattails of that overpublicized Marlon Brando movie, which is being touted as the first hardcore pornographic feature to star a big name. The story concerns a man whose wife has committed suicide, and his attempts to find meaning in life through anonymous sexual encounters with a young girl who has her own problems. The writing is as thin as this kind of excuse for a book usually is, and the 8-page insert of photographs from the movie won't show you anything worth standing in line for. [Spring special]

ROCK OPERA.

Ellis Nassour and Richard Broderick. Hawthorn, \$2.95; cloth, \$7.95

Decca Records was looking for a hit album, but when they first heard the song "Jesus Christ Superstar," reactions ranged from panic to fear of starting a revolution, at the very least being excommunicated from show business. The complicated and dramatic story of how one of the most controversial musicals of today grew from a radical concept to a full-blown superhit is told in this book with wit and clear narrative style. It's a fascinating inside look at how the establishment theater and music business is motivated. Illustrated. [May]

FAREWELL THE TRANQUIL MIND.

R. F. Delderfield. Pocket Books, \$1.50

A brief preface by the late author indicates that this novel was written in 1950, but it is the first time published here and will be greatly welcomed by the millions who made best sellers of "God Is An Englishman" and "Theirs Was the Kingdom." This is the enthralling adventure-love story of a young Englishman who becomes embroiled in the French Revolution and the American Revolution as well. It's a rich, full romance set in one of the most exciting historical periods, and takes full advantage of the people and times through the device of a splendid personal story. *Major promotion and advertising.* [May]

SWEET MARPESSA.

George Revelli. Bantam, \$1.25

Money and sex are what this novel is about, and lots of both. Marpessa is the titled daughter of the wealthiest Greek shipping tycoon. She is elegant, well-educated, exquisitely beautiful, and the only things she doesn't indulge in are smoking and swearing. Her debaucheries are an integral part of the skillfully told story. First of all, there's Daddy, and then practically everybody else—including a soccer player, a Russian

mentioned earlier
 open a 17-year-old boy—everybody except her husband, who's bit on his own kicks. There's a surprisingly rich character study here which you might not expect from such a genre novel. [May]

EXECUTIVE ACTION.

Donald Freed and Mark Lane. Dell, \$1.25

In a taut and brilliantly conceived suspense story, the authors have advanced the modern innovation of the "nonfiction novel" to a new level—mingling real and fictional characters and events in a recreation of what available evidence and enlightened speculation suggests might truly have happened. This is the story of President Kennedy's assassination which takes into account some of the discrepancies and omissions in the Warren Commission report, and dramatically details a shocking logical theory of the tragedy. In a sound, thought-provoking introduction to the novel, Richard H. Popkin presents a cogent political and factual background for the fiction. [May]

FROM THE BELLY OF THE SHARK.

Edited by Walter Lowenfels. Vintage, \$1.95

This is a very interesting collection of poems subtitled "A New Anthology of Native Americans." The poets are Indians, Chicanos, Eskimos, Hawaiians, Puerto Ricans in the U.S., and a final section of miscellany called "Related Poems by Others." The ability of the poets varies greatly, of course, and what is of the most interest is the subject matter, which clearly indicates the preoccupations of the most sensitive and articulate members of groups not usually heard from. Most of the Indian poetry is angry; the Chicanos are politically oriented; the Eskimos speak of nature and the myths of their tradition; Hawaiians

generally bring up ancient historical and religious references; Puerto Ricans in the U.S. speak of their disappointment in living conditions and opportunities. [May]

NONFICTION REPRINTS

Bert
ARCOLOGY: The City in the Image of Man. *Paolo Soleri.* MIT Press, \$7.95

Book
 In its original hardbound format, this magnificent book sold for \$25 and the slightly reduced-size paperback edition is a rare bargain for anyone interested in humanity's urban dilemma, creative problem solving, and the physical fact of a well-made book. The title is a word coined by the author to blend ecology and architecture, and he makes it clear that they are one and the same thing and must be approached that way. His ideas are new and positive, and the illustrations show his radical approach to be workable, unifying the natural and man-made world. To quote Ada Louise Huxtable of the *New York Times*: "... his philosophical and environmental perceptions offer a sudden, stunning pertinence for today." A beautiful, important book. [May]

GOLDA: The Life of Israel's Prime Minister. *Peggy Mann.* Pocket Books, \$1.25

Golda Meir is certainly one of the most interesting and charismatic people of our time, and this biography dramatizes the events of her life in a rather simplistic style which should appeal to young readers. Born in Kiev, where her father had a special dispensation to live beyond the Pale but received no pay for his carpentry work, she remembers the pogroms which Cossack troops carried out against the Jews. Her father managed to escape to America, and Golda was educated in Milwaukee. Her ardent belief in the need for a Jewish homeland brought her to Palestine when she was only 19 (in 1917) and the narrative follows her through personal and political struggles to her present position as head of state in war-besieged Israel. [May]

APARTMENT TO SHARE.

Gwen Gibson Schwartz. Warner Paperback Library, \$1.25

This is a scant and superficial book which should have been a magazine article. The original Wyden hardcover carried the subtitle, "Everything You Need to Know to Win Today's Roommate Game," and what does that mean? It means that times have changed, which should come as no revelation to anybody. It means that roommates come in various combinations of sexes and numbers, and the combination is repeated in all its variations in chapter after repetitious chapter. There is nothing titillating or socially significant here, and nobody's experiences will be of any help to anybody else. [May]



"Jesus Christ Superstar"

