

1 June 1971

Dear Harold,

Thanks for your letter of 5/21/71, received today. I hope that you received, via Dick Bernabei and/or Howard Roffman, the copy I promised you of Belin's "reply" to my Givens article and my rejoinder to him. If not, which I suspect since you have not mentioned it, I will be most annoyed with Dick or Howard, whoever has been remiss, and will get after them. Please let me know.

I am rather embarrassed by your request for the Waggoner Carr file. Although the article (Wheels within Deals) appeared in the July 1968 TMO, I believe that I actually read the documents and prepared the ms. in 1967, almost four years ago. My first and strong recollection was that the material was made available to me on loan, with request for my comments on anything that seemed strikingly discordant or otherwise significant, but with the understanding that I could make any use of the documents in the way of writing an article; and that ultimately I returned the whole file.

However, I then recalled that I had had an inquiry from Lillian Castellano about one of the papers or letters from which an excerpt was quoted in the TMO article, and that I was able to reply to her to the effect that the words omitted, where I had inserted the usual three dots to indicate elision, were not available due to the fact that the page was folded at the bottom corner when xeroxed so that a couple of words were not reproduced (which words were few and immaterial, so far as I could see). That recollection made me doubt the accuracy of my impression that I had had to return the whole of the borrowed Carr file, so I have just spent about an hour hunting for it in my shamefully cluttered (and where once it was reasonably well organized it is now a shambles and a mish-mosh) shelved closet. Well, I could not find the Carr documents, and neither could I find several other large items such as the mss. of books written by other critics for which I prepared an index from page proofs — but I did find a secret cache of copies of Accessories, about 4 copies that I had stashed away, about which I had absolutely no recall! All in all, this exercise corroborated my suspicion that my recollections about anything earlier than last week are now virtually worthless.

I will try to hunt further, as and when I get time, even though you say that you have no pressing need. Please bear with me. I have been going through fierce days at my office, as have my colleagues and even my boss, for reasons too complex to go into here. Suffice it to say that between January and now, I have attended and reported on the sessions of no less than ten UN bodies or organs, covering a great diversity of subjects, which required much research, preparation, analysis, drafting of statements, and of course reports and assessments of implications. I have today started a "crash" assignment, which will be no. 12, while concurrently covering no. 11 in this non-step series! I get paid well, but believe me I have been earning every penny of it, twice over. So even my boss has been discomfited by the load of work that was placed on me and in a rash moment he suggested that I take the whole summer off. I quickly took steps to make that irreversible, in case he thought better of it, by renting a house at a beach for the summer. I will be leaving June 30th and return September 7th, having arranged things cunningly so that I cannot do any work of any description, even if I change my mind, except in the direst kind of emergency. I will be more or less incommunicado but in case of anything urgent, a letter addressed here to 302 West 12 will be forwarded to me. I know it means being out of touch for a while with the case, but I need the rest and the changes so desperately that I must accept that. I have been depressed and (over)

extremely fatigued, due in part to certain physiological changes which ladies must expect when they get to be fiftyish, and my beloved cat Allegra has not been well—which has troubled me more than all the rest put together. She has aged greatly over the last few months. The vet, who has treated her over the last ten years when she occasionally got a bug, and who has been very reliable, checked her and found nothing wrong except feline advanced aging—though she is only 10½ years old. He assures me, despite my personal acquaintance with cats that lived to be 15, 16 and even 20, that 11 or 12 years is the usual feline lifespan. This has just about broken my heart. I am hoping that a summer at the beach—one huge sandpile, as someone pointed out—will give her a lift, and me as well.

That's my sad story and however trivial it seems to non-cat-people I know that you will understand the kind of impact this is having on me, without my trying to describe it any further.

Best, as always,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sylvia".