

1/15/75

Dear Jim,

Almost three weeks ago Jimmy wrote me a long letter I've not had time to answer. In it he again referred 'not unfavorably, what I take to be favorably, as does Jim) to the projected interview. He had written Bud about this, said he enclosed a copy, but neither Jim nor I received this copy and, naturally enough, Bud has not referred to it. But he again made it clear that he left the decision to us collectively.

As soon as I can find time for the kind of response the letter requires, I'll be doing that and making further reference to this.

The immediate inspiration for this letter is catching Hefner on the AM TV news. I am without doubt about his seriousness and I do not think any but the most accomplished actor could put that kind of emotion on. I haven't yet gone out for the paper, so I am restricted to what TV reported and showed.

Had it not been for an unpleasant past with Playboy I'd have written Hefner as soon as I saw the story about Hobbie Arnstein's suicide because there is in this brief news account a name that means much to me, a man about whom I know much, none good. His involvement vibrated antennae. On this alone I'd have questions about what is up.

This past involves those no longer in Chicago, I think with the one exception, the man I mentioned to you, no longer with Playboy. It ranges from several unkept promises to what to me was both offensive and arrogant when I was there. It includes what was also costly to me, a request that I help with a good story. I was not paid for this and I did come up with some unusual material - still never published and perhaps enough for a book. I can't afford this and my experiences tell me that when I am abused this way those who do it justify it by thinking and speaking badly of me. So, I've stayed away.

I do not presume that you go right to the top there, but I also know nobody else who can approach anyone there. I think I can be of help and I'm willing to be.

Without knowing more than I've seen in the Washington Post (very little) and seen/heard on TV I can be underinformed. But based on this little knowledge and what I can project from it, I think that what I know of this person who figures in the investigation of the suicide can be of significance and what I know of the past - of a political nature - may have relevance and perhaps considerable importance.

So, this hasty note to let you know in the event you know anyone there who would like to talk to me. Probably best not by phone. I use mine freely, but not without the realization it is not in privacy.

The reason for the ellipsis is simple. I don't want to get into a situation where I'll be left as I was when I went to some effort and spent some time and money on request only to be left bearing costs I haven't yet been able to repay.

However, I think I can add another ellipsis: I can prove and have in my possession documentary proof of federal interest in what Playboy was doing, an interest in how it could be hurt, and more than a suggestion of help to one trying to hurt it.

Best regards,

## Drug Probe Called Political

# Hefner Says He's Victim of 'Witch-Hunt'

1/15/75  
By Joel D. Weisman

Special to The Washington Post

CHICAGO, Jan. 14—Playboy magazine publisher Hugh M. Hefner charged today that he and his empire are targets of "a politically motivated witch-hunt," which he said ultimately claimed the life of his executive secretary, Bobbie Arnstein.

Miss Arnstein, 34, who was appealing a conviction for conspiracy to sell cocaine, was found dead in a North Side hotel room Monday after apparently committing suicide.

In a five-page note to her attorney, R. Keith Stroup, of Washington, D.C., she said she was acting alone in taking her life, reasserted her innocence in the drug case, and lauded Hefner for standing by her during her trial.

"He has courage, perhaps to his own detriment," she said in a note scrawled on hotel stationery. "Hefner is a staunchly upright and vigorously moral man," she added.

In an emotional press conference at his posh, five-story Chicago mansion on the city's Gold Coast, Hefner compared Miss Arnstein's death with that of "a victim of a medieval witch-hunt and torture."

The millionaire publisher and hotel magnate charged he was a target for the witch-hunt because of his outspoken support for liberal causes, and his willingness to speak out



HUGH M. HEFNER

... lauded by secretary

against repression." He also speculated that his strong financial support of the National Organization to Reform Marijuana Laws has made him a target of federal and local drug investigations.

Since Miss Arnstein's arrest early last year, a federal strike force has been probing alleged drug use and traffic in Playboy mansions here and in Los Angeles.

"It's not an investigation at all," said Hefner. "It's a witch-hunt... an example of using our drug laws for deadly purposes... with people with an enemies-list mentality." In addition to the federal investigation, a Cook County grand

jury subpoenaed Hefner in the drug overdose death of former Playboy "bunny" Adrienne Pollack, 23, but later withdrew the subpoena. Like Miss Arnstein, Miss Pollack lived in the Chicago mansion.

Hefner said today he would be willing to cooperate in the local investigation, but insisted, "I never even knew" Miss Pollack. He also said he has never personally used or distributed hard drugs at the mansions, which he characterized as corporate guest houses. He concluded however, that he ordered a thorough search of both houses after Miss Arnstein's death and declined to say what the searches produced.

Hefner almost lost his composure when he eulogized Miss Arnstein as "one of the best, brightest and worthwhile women I have ever known. Whatever her personal shortcomings... she deserved better than this."

After pausing for a soft drink, Hefner cited the following developments which, he said, indicate there is a federal conspiracy against him:

- Repeated hints from federal authorities that they would free Miss Arnstein if she would give them evidence of Hefner's personal involvement with drugs.

- A warning from U.S. At-

torney James R. Thompson after her conviction last year that "a murder contract" on her life had been issued "and that neither friends nor foes could be trusted."

- The unusual 15-year prison sentence meted out to Miss Arnstein—with the provision that it might be reduced after submission of additional evidence and the results of a psychiatric examination.

- Failure of federal officials to include Miss Arnstein in their original indictment in the cocaine case, but adding her name in a subsequent indictment.

- The disappearance of a key government witness following her trial.

- "There was a conspiracy all right," Hefner asserted. "But it was all the governments."