

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: *Legislation for Ma*

per 2/2/74

Howard Hunt: 'The Post Continues Its Vendetta Against Me'

Daily and Sunday (Potomac, Jan. 27th) The Post continues its calculated vendetta against me, through innuendo, inaccuracies and inchoate rage that the Court of Appeals saw fit to release me from prison via a "complicated appeal ruling" which, I feel confident, The Post would have lauded had it applied to the Berrigans, Angela Davis or the Chicago Seven to name only a few beneficiaries of The Post's editorial sympathies.

Apparently The Post is wretchedly unhappy with the judicial system that permitted my unanticipated release. Sorry about that, fellows, but it can happen—even to non-militants.

I don't plan to spend a lot of time cataloguing The Post's gratuitous slurs on me since June 18, 1972; that may be more appropriate for something heavier than a Letter to the Editor. Nevertheless, it was the government, not Howard Hunt, that told the media I'd been a CIA officer ("spook" in your parlance), thus rendering my children and me vulnerable to reprisals by those nations and groups I'd worked against—on orders of the U.S. Government, which happens to be The Post's government, too. So, my 21-year

cover having been blown by government sources, why should I not point out to the American public, as I did before the Ervin hearings cameras, that in planning certain aspects of the Watergate entry operation I had been doing no more than what our government had trained me (and many others) to do?

The intense, almost necrophiliac interest in the books I've written and their sales suggests an envy-hatred mix that really has no place in serious — and honest — journalism. Although I've been deprecated as a "spy novelist" the fact is that only about eight of my perhaps 50 books have dealt with organized espionage. The asserted 18,000 copy sales of *The Berlin Ending*, if true, may reflect a triumph of public taste over the vicious East Coast literary "reviews" which attacked me as a Watergate villain rather than the style and faults of the book itself. If my publisher (Putnam) supplied your writers with the 18,000 figure they have been favored, for I will have no knowledge of the book's sales until Putnam's statement arrives sometime in April.

The "ludicrous image of (me) in the

'ill-fitting red wig' " was, after all, a product of media glee, venom and again media inaccuracy. If the wig fitted illy blame CIA. And unless all involved are incurably color-blind the issue wig was BROWN, not red. But perhaps red is a more mirth-provoking color . . .

From the beginning I have not sought fame nor, much less, notoriety. The latter was thrust upon me by media adversaries, aimed, I suppose, at my total annihilation.

Within the U.S.S.R. the Soviet government is doing a pretty thorough job of defaming and discrediting Alexandr Solzhenitsyn by among other techniques attributing to him sentiments and characteristics he never possessed. Without presuming to equate my creative skills with those of Solzhenitsyn, I find an interesting and depressing comparison with my own situation. The difference being that in America it's not the Presidium going for the author's jugular but the vindictive representatives of our free and "objective" media.

HOWARD HUNT.

Bethesda.