

13 August 1981

Dear Harold:

Your note of the 7th came in the same day after I had just mailed you the Raznikov piece on Lifton's new book.

It was kind and thoughtful of you to suggest my name to Howard, and he called today. We had a nice cordial talk and agreed to get together for lunch sometime next week with one of the Lucas producers, named I think Levitt or Levitz or something like that. Anyway he's a former LA Times newsman so we should be able to understand each other to some extent. Howard gave little indication of what sort of information or advice they're after, but I may be able to help them in various small ways if they're interested.

We fixed no time for the lunch, as I'm still waiting to consult with the contractor. He was coming today but called and asked to postpone it until day after tomorrow, Saturday, when he won't be under as much pressure. Anyway, I take it as a good sign that he's interested enough to come and look the job over. When he comes I should be able to give Howard a definite time to meet him for lunch. I'll keep you informed of what, if anything, happens.

Howard says the film they are contemplating would be a sequel to Raiders of the Lost Ark, which concerned the efforts of a swashbuckling archeologist to locate the Ark of the Covenant. It used a lot of background footage taken in the Middle East, and they contemplate using similar background footage taken in China for the sequel which I presume will deal with fictional archeological doings in China. Howard didn't elaborate further. He says the Chinese thus far have been cordial and encouraging.

A minor thought about Lifton's book: It occurs to me that in the past various publishers have been used to publish books by purported critics which turned out to be either ineffectual or clearly off the mark, therefore refutable with credibility, and therefore in assence a disinformation operation. Many of these books were lavishly produced far beyond what a normal publisher would invest in them. In several cases I recall we suspected secret subsidies, but as far as I know no one ever pursued this angle in attempt to prove it. Whether McMillan was one of these publishers I cannot say. It matters little, as some highly respected publishers may have been thus used as well as some who normally don't publish quality books in hardcover. I have been left with the impression that few publishers can turn down such prepaid deals in a business which is otherwise a very risky one. Might be worth keeping in mind.

Thanks again, and best to you both.

  
jdw