

General files
"Sokol"

December 21, 1989

Ronald P. Sokol, Esq.
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FRANCE

Dear Ron:

I write to send you best wishes for the Christmas and the New Year--not only the new year but the new decade! I note that we are about to enter not only the last decade of the twentieth century but the last decade of the second millennium. That fact coupled with events in Eastern Europe suggests to me that we are living in truly historic times.

Cal Woodard and I have just returned from a nine-day trip through East Germany, with two days in Poland. You probably have read of the Leipzig demonstrations every Monday night. We were there on Monday night, December 4, and joined in the demonstration--a river of humanity moving along, terminating at the Stasi Building, which was surrounded and taken over by the crowd. I feel as though I now understand in a way that I have not understood previously the revolutionary power of mass humanity. It is virtually an irresistible force when it becomes animated with chants rising and falling in rhythmic succession: "We are the people." West German flags were in evidence on all sides. Where all of this will lead is not clear. I have always believed that reunification was inevitable, and my belief in that is reinforced by this trip. What is not clear is how long it will take and on what conditions and terms it may take place. I do believe that it would be a mistake for external powers to attempt to prevent this development, if the majority of the people of the two German states want it. The best we can do is try to guide it and have in place some clear understandings.

By now you may have heard the sad news of the death of Judge Clement Haynsworth. I had heard over the last year or two that he had been in bad health. He had been absent from the last two judicial conferences of the Fourth Circuit. John Frank has written a book about four Supreme Court nominations--Fortas, Haynsworth, Carswell, and Blackmun. Most of the book, however, is about the Haynsworth nomination. It is being published by the University Press of Virginia. John had told me long ago that he hoped that Haynsworth lived to see the book, as it is quite favorable to him. Enclosed is a copy of the obituary from the Washington Post.

I appreciated very much your last letter. I continue to regret that you were not able to get here this past summer, but I can certainly understand why you did not.

Ronald P. Sokol, Esq.
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I am a bit rushed at the moment to get this letter typed and out before Christmas, so I will not attempt to convey additional news. Do keep in touch. I hope that all goes well with you and your family and that you do have a good holiday season.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Meador

DJM:kbb