

Sokol

June 21, 1989

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Dear Ron:

Your welcome letter arrived in the midst of my extensive absence from the Law School. First, I went through the Soviet Union, with stays in Moscow, Leningrad, and Tallinn. The latter was most interesting to me for two reasons. First, I had been to Moscow and Leningrad previously (14 years ago) and, second, Estonia and the other Baltic Republics are extremely interesting places these days. The trip wound up in Helsinki, which is a nice city but one which I have no particular desire to visit again. After returning from that trip, I went away on an interesting family gathering in Tennessee. Having now just returned from the expedition, I am trying to catch up on my correspondence.

It is good news to know that you will be in North Carolina this summer. I will be here in Charlottesville as usual with the judges until early August. From August 4 until August 12, I will be in Hawaii attending the annual meeting of the American Bar Association. Other than that absence, I will be in Charlottesville from now on and would indeed welcome a visit from you. With my children now gone, we have ample beds in our house and would be delighted to have you stay with us, along with any member of your family who might be accompanying you on your visit here. I have not had a chance to see Al Turnbull since receiving your letter, so I do not know what his summer plans may be.

I note with interest that you seem to be providing your children with an English education. When that is completed it seems to me that they will have a quadri-national background--American, Japanese, French, English--quite an interesting combination. I did enjoy your report on each of them.

As for my manuscript, it is experiencing the usual travails of first novels done by amateurs. Although I have lost an exact count, I believe it has been looked at by about seven publishers, all of whom have politely and for various reasons declined to accept it for publication. It is still in the hands of two publishers from whom I have no response. It has been read by four people here in Charlottesville, all of whom have made useful comments, with much in common. I think that I know its problems, but at present I have neither the time nor



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the inclination to undertake the revisions that seem to be necessary. My next step may be to attempt to place it in the hands of an agent. There is much advice abroad to the effect that one must have an agent in order to crack through to publication.

You say that you did not know that there is a relationship between Germany and the American South. I believe that your position is widely shared. Indeed, it is possible that I am the only person who has perceived such a relationship. Nevertheless, that is a theme that runs through this manuscript, and it may be that it is an original contribution. I believe that there is a relationship here, but it may seem a bit far fetched to some readers.

For the past two years I have been chairing the ABA Standing Committee on Federal Judicial Improvements. Over this time we have taken as a major project an examination of the U.S. Courts of Appeals, with an effort to identify their problems and to suggest solutions. That work culminated this spring in the publication of a report, a copy of which is enclosed for your information. In view of your long-standing interest in appellate matters, it occurs to me that you might find this of some interest. This report will be the basis for a program to be presented during the ABA annual meeting in Honolulu. That is the principle reason I am going to that meeting, in as much as I will be a panelist on that program.

You ask whether any members of the faculty continue to do appellate work of the sort that we once did. In recent years Steve Saltzburg has argued some appeals in the Fourth Circuit in connection with a Law School project designed to provide legal aid to prisoners. This past Term George Rutherglen was appointed by the Supreme Court to argue a case there concerning the distinction between a frivolous complaint and a complaint that fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted, for purposes of determining the appropriateness of court-imposed sanctions on in forma pauperis litigants. He won the case unanimously. Richard Bonnie has participated in a few death cases. Apart from these faculty members, however, I am not aware of anyone else who has done any appellate work in recent years.

For your information, I am also enclosing a copy of an address I delivered at the University's fall convocation last September. This was a tough assignment, in view of the audience. It consisted of a couple of hundred undergraduate students receiving intermediate honors, their parents and friends, University faculty members, the Board of Visitors, and assorted others. I stewed around all of the previous summer struggling for some topic that might be of common interest to that crowd and also of interest to me. I do not know how well I pulled it off, but you can see what I finally developed.

I will save the remaining tidbits of news until we get together here later this summer. Incidentally, I have heard glowing reports about Lake Lure. When we lived in Tuscaloosa, we had some neighbors who went there every summer and they thought it was the finest place on this earth. I hope it turns out that way for you and your family. Please let me know when you can get to Charlottesville, as I look forward very much to a good visit. It would be a good idea

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to call me ahead of time to be sure that I will not be out of town on some one- or two-day meeting.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Meador

DJM/ebg

Enclosure