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Pacific Palisades, 1950-01-11

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Erika Mann
1550 San Remo Drive
Pacific Palisades, Calif.

January 11, 1950

Mr. Victor Jacobs
Galef & Jacobs Law Offices
22 East 40th Street
New York 16, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Jacobs:

Enclosed please find my check for \$116.58. I am ashamed of this delayed payment, and I am also ashamed that it won't do more than cover your expenses. As soon as - from sources not as yet dreamed up - more money will come pouring in, I'll send some more. (Please note that, as customary, the corresponding check in question is only now being sent to my New York bank, and that therefore your check is once again post-dated).

Re: The Battle of the Citizenship, I regret to state, that my patience - as 11'1 old Hitler used to say - is now exhausted. Def. And all the more def., since the step on which I reported to you some time ago failed to get me any result whatever. As I told you, Dr. Manfred George, editor of the fairly influential "Aufbau" intended to heat some congressman (I think, Jawitz of New York) into decisive action. Before doing so, and being an extremely cautious gentleman, Dr. George got in touch with Robert M.W. Kempner (112 Lansdowne Court, Lansdowne, Penn., telephone Madison 36342), a former prosecution lawyer at the Nuernberg trials who is said to know his Washington ropes and probably does know some of them. Mr. Kempner also knows me, and has therefore been kind enough to "look into it a little, so far as I am in a position to these days". Mr. Kempner continues: "The things seemed to me rather complicated, and I have the impression a lot has to be done. The most important point is to clear yourself from obvious falsifications, but for this purpose it is necessary for you to have some official information about the reluctance to do something for you. I don't know whether you have some legal advisor who has experience in governmental matters in Washington..." (Mr. Kempner's English is strictly his own)

Needless, almost, to say, Dr. George, though he has known me very well for more than 20 years, consequently refrained from bothering with dear old Jawitz. Since "a lot" has to be done, he wouldn't wish to trouble one of his more

influential acquaintances.

Mr. Kempner who knows me only casually then suggests that I get in touch with Telford Taylor (law firm Paul, ~~W~~ Weiss, 61 Broadway, New York), the former general and chief war crimes prosecutor in Nuernberg whom I seem to have met in his Nuernberg office.

I need hardly assure you that I have complete confidence in you and would not dream ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ of approaching Mr. Taylor. However, no matter how serious the "encasement of fear" of which you wrote me may be, we cannot under any circumstances let matters slide any longer. This jolly investigation has been going on for more than three years now. That's quite enough, and it has cost me quite a lot - in money, nerves, and prestige. My "conscience" is clearer than any whistle: there is nothing I have to hide, no question that I would not cheerfully answer - and answer to the satisfaction of even the most idiotic questioner; any number of honest, eager, distinguished witnesses are at my disposal; and, in short, I beg of you to get this thing going with the utmost dispatch and urgency.

Not only may I have to go to Europe in the early spring, my father's plans are also involved. Since he has an aversion to change continents except in my company, he cannot at present take any decision concerning a proposed trip to Switzerland and elsewhere over there. I am sure I don't have to go into further details regarding our house here and the problems at stake if we go. Nor do I have to explain to you how I feel as a virtual prisoner in this country and one whose lot so damagingly affects that of others.

While you have never indicated to me just what the trouble was, I suppose you have a good enough intelling of its nature. Both from what you intimated occasionally and what Kempner's letter seems to imply I gather that I am considered, shall we say, politically unreliable, perhaps even actually or potentially subversive. Well, I am not. This letter - "a privileged communication" (how am I doing?) is completely sincere. As my lawyer, you have a right to know how matters stand, and I assure you that I am innocent of any and all crimes that I may be suspected of. Why don't we go to Washington and fight it out? Why, don't you discuss my affair with those in charge on the occasion of your next routine visit, announcing that I am determined to get a little justice, but fast, and that anyone who thinks it an ideal solution to have the case pending for another two or three years, - or for any length of time - will find himself to be grievously mistaken. As long as I was still able at least to obtain a re-entry permit whenever I needed it, I didn't care as bitterly as I do now. Which does not mean that I haven't been morally outraged for a very long time, and that I am not now completely fed up.

My father, too, is sick and tired of it all, and more than willing to do whatever you may consider useful. He might write either to Mr. Acheson or to President Truman or any other demi-God or -Goddess; he might write an exceedingly polite letter or a faintly threatening one, calling things by their true and disgusting names, and promising to publish the letter in question; or he might do nothing of the kind. Just let me know what you suggest.

As it stands, I could not in the long run remain in a country where I am not welcome; nor would my father wish to remain in any such place, devoted though he is to the United States. My own devotion to the nation with whose armed forces I chose to undergo a considerable bit of discomfort should require no commentary. Even so, I enclose copy of my letter to Dr. George which, for the prospective benefit of Representative Jawitz - stresses this particular point.

And that, I believe, is all. Just to sum it up: LET'S MOVE NOW, - I cannot frankly imagine that even in these hysterical times anyone like myself should be so badly injured without any justice.

kindest regards

as ever yours very cordially

Erika Mann.

P.S. Perhaps, to make this letter a complete statement of all relevant facts, I should mention that I have of late experienced severe professional difficulties. While, even three years ago, I was the most sought for professional woman lecturer, my "market" has been shrinking continually. And although - even now - I chanced to be astonishingly successful wherever I went and thus constituted - still - a bright feather on my agent's cap, the latter saw fit to fire me. I have no doubt that this has been done under pressure. Of course, I do not, and could not possibly, deny that I have often criticized American foreign policies, both in Germany and in general, but whatever I have done or said was done and said in public, which leaves those above us nothing to investigate. I don't know any reds, don't belong to any leftist organization, don't - except for the American War Correspondents Association - belong to any group or body whatever, and just wonder how those investigators of mine are making a living.

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~~When I return to the States~~ I could not in the long run remain in a country where I am not welcome; nor would my father wish to remain in any such place, devoted though he is to the United States. My own devotion to the nation with whose armed forces I chose to undergo a considerable bit of discomfort should require no commentary. Even so, I enclose copy of my letter to Dr. George which, for the prospective benefit of Representative Jawitz - stresses this particular point.

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as ever yours very cordially

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[FEAR on the part of the heads of organisations, program chairmen, college presidents, etc.]*

regarding