

Dec. 14, 1951

Dear Alain:

We are really very sorry to have to report this to you, but we could not locate a copy of the Collier's issue that you asked for. What makes it worse is that Roger Stanier had left one with us, and we read it. We did not remember throwing it out, but it must have been included with trash just before we received your letter.

From what we can gather from comment in various places, this issue and its importance have been greatly exaggerated, especially in France. The whole scheme was a publicity stunt that reflects noone's opinions, not even the editors of the magazine. The worst thing about it, of course, was the implication that although there might be a few minor incidents such as the atomic destruction of New York, Washington and some other cities, that the West would be bound to win without a great deal of trouble. The lurid art-work was probably much worse than the stories themselves, although some of them sound like a Hollywood scenario with a happy ending. Colliers justifies itself by insisting that, like the American people, they do not want war-- but they are just silly to suggest that such nonsense like this is going to scare Russia out of starting anything. I am sorry to learn that it has succeeded in frightening Europe, but there just isn't that much to it.

I hope that you can convey to your friends that a lot of nonsense is going to be coming out of this country in anticipation of the 1952 presidential elections. It would be a mistake to take much of it too seriously, although there probably will, of course, be some alterations in the direction of our foreign policy if the Republicans take over. Very likely they are exerting as much of an influence now, in a negative way, as they would be able to do if they were actually in the position of facing the world of facts as an Administration, rather than an Opposition. Since you are working so close to SHAPB, I suppose you are going to be asked too whether you think Eisenhower will run. Everyone here is convinced that he will, unless Taft looks to be unbeatable. It is an open question whether he could take the nomination away from Taft, but the convention might be deadlocked between them. As time goes on, the glamor of Eisenhower ~~will~~ seems to diminish.

The books you asked for will be sent as soon as ~~you~~ I can get them. Do you think you could find a copy of a new book by Catcheside-- a textbook of microbial genetics? It has been published by Cambridge University Press, but no copies have been seen here. Esther and I would also be interested in some current French literature in paper-back editions, if you can think of anything that would be interesting. Unfortunately, there is very little comparable in American publication, but if anything would meet your fancy let us know. Can you get American 25-cent "pocket-books" in Paris?

Why don't you write in French: your English is good enough that you need no more practise, and if you're not careful, we may adopt your tongue.

I am especially glad to hear you have made better working arrangements Ackerknecht-- whom I finally got to meet for the first time recently-- told me much the same thing.

Sincerely