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James W. Silver to Mr. Emmerich, 12 March 1961

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March 12, 1961

Mr. Oliver Emmerich
The STATE-TIMES
Jackson, Mississippi

Dear Mr. Emmerich:

Every person who was present when Myers Lowman spoke at Ole Miss will know the truth of the following statement. There was no organized ~~opposi~~ demonstration against him and the almost universal indignation of the audience had nothing to do with liberalism and conservatism. Several students who pressed the Circuit Rider hardest were, in fact, among the most conservative on the campus.

It was a conservative graduate student who insisted on Lowman's telling exactly who made up the various lists of supposed Communist sympathisers. To this question the flustered Lowman, ~~finally~~ after considerable parrying, finally answered: "You might as well say that I make up the lists."

The other question which Lowman also parried and never answered concerned Hodding Carter. It was: "You accuse Carter of being the dupe of Communist fronts, while we know that he has been cleared by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Please tell us how we are to choose between Myers Lowman and J. Edgar Hoover?" The nearest that the speaker came to answering this question was his statement that he (Lowman) had no proof that Carter had been cleared.

On page 312 of MASTERS OF DECEIT, J. Edgar Hoover writes:

"Too often I have seen cases where loyal and patriotic but misguided Americans have thought there were "fighting communism" by slapping the label of "Red" or "communist" on anybody who happened to be different from them or to have ideas with which they did not agree.

"Smears, character assassination, and the scattering of irresponsible charges have no place in this nation. They create division, suspicion, and distrust among loyal Americans - just what the communists want - and hinder rather than aid the fight against communism.

"Another thing. Time after time in this book I have mentioned that honest dissent should not be confused with disloyalty. A man has the right to think as he wishes; that's the strength of our form of government. Without free thought our society would decay. Just because a man's opinion is unpopular and represents a minority viewpoint or is different he is not necessarily disloyal. Hence, one should have the facts before accusing anyone of propagating the Party line."

Mr. Hoover requests that anyone having information about suspected disloyal persons get in touch with the FBI.

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I listened, somewhat impatiently I'll admit, to Mr. Lowman for about an hour. I didn't like his innuendo and his cheap platform tricks. What really enraged me was his ~~speaking~~ speaking in what a good many people in the audience interpreted as a slurring manner of our "boy-President" of the United States.

The conservative who had been requested to preside over the meeting later apologized for having done so. A member of the Federal Bureau of Investigation complimented those who ~~took~~ took issue with Mr. Lowman.

When the Circuit Rider shows me credentials (and perhaps the Sovereignty Commission might profitably look into this) showing that J. Edgar Hoover approves of his type of campaign against the Communists, I shall be glad to listen to him again.

And as for you, Mr. Editor, if you don't watch out you will get yourself and the STATE-TIMES on Mr. Lowman's black list.

Sincerely,

James W. Silver