

901 Carry Building
927 - 15th St., N.W.
Washington, D.C.
January 24, 1935

Mr. Edward J. Reilly
c/o Hunterdon County Courthouse
Flemington.....N.J.

My dear Mr. Reilly;

I'm an ex-police reporter (Denver and St. Louis) making a living at present out of detective fiction, so perhaps I am theoretical, but I'd like to present a few slants. The Hearst-Minchell method of trying the case by headlines and "items" gags me. I know about cops souping cases to fit, too; I've seen too many masterminds made by the second guess.

(A) - WHO CHECKED OFF THE BILL NUMBERS ON THE \$20 Grand THAT WASN'T PAID TO "JOHN"? No testimony on this that I saw. Was all \$70,000 on the wanted list as ransom money? If so, it seems significant that approximately \$20,000 showed up. If there is nobody that can swear that the twenty thousand was ~~not~~ included in the \$50,000 parcel, what happens to the State case?

(B) - Wasn't that ransom box designed to hold money that was going to be buried rather than to carry it? If it were to be carried away, why not the simpler brief case instead of a box or a suitcase? (Unless the man who took it into the cemetery intended to bury it there in a place already prepared).

(C) - Doesn't the wording of those notes seem more like JFC than anyone else? They read to me like the work of a sly, cunning individual with his tongue in his cheek; an old gaffer who is over-proud of his "book-learning" and egotistical enough to kid himself that he is writing like an illiterate when he sits down and throws in a lot of vaudeville dialect. Jafsie composing, Reich writing? Possible?

(D) - Was Violet Sharpe a suicide or was she murdered? Wasn't she the type who would leave a note? And if she did, who got it?

(E) - Wasn't there two crimes; the extortion an afterthought? Supposing somebody (Reich?) cut with V. Sharpe, double date arranged with Gow and upset by Lindbergh change of plans. Party drives by Hopewell anyway for Gow who goes out briefly, leaving baby with Mrs. W. Accident happens...baby dropped or something falls etc ...would there be a mad scramble to cover up anything but cover-up at first. Sharpe's escort, only outsider available, writes note. Others will be on ground and afraid of writing check-up. Later, he talks to others, JFC maybe, and idea of

capitalizing accident evolves. Other notes result and would naturally be somewhat different. Fisch comes in as fence for money. (Spiritualist either overhears some talk of two principals or is confidant of Sharpe, explaining prediction). JFC's delay in Hauptmann identification explained by worry over what Fisch may have told Hauptmann. The ladder, of course, had some police work done on it before the wood expert came in. Fantastic? Well, no more so than the State's case as I see it.

(F) Lastly, I am going to check Winchell's old columns myself. It seems to me that he made a number of cracks about gangs and inside info on the case before the Hauptmann arrest. In your shoes, I'd subpoena him as a defense witness, draw out his boasted ability to scoop the regular newsmen and his eternal "rightness", then make him admit that he was a faker or that he had some basis for earlier statements (if I'm correct in my memory that he made them). It mightn't be strong evidence but it would be HEADLINES and the jury would love it and the smart Jew-boy who tried this case and reached a verdict we know wouldn't be so right when you got through with him. It would be an off-stage victory; but most of your defeats have been of the same variety; headlines unbacked by facts and whispers subject to two-way interpretation.

I may be a bore, but you've got my respect for your handling of the case and I'm pulling for you. I do not believe that Bruno Hauptmann has had a square deal from the press, a fair trial from New Jersey nor that he has been considered innocent until proven guilty.

Sincerely,

901 Cherry Building;
927 - 15th St. N.W.
Washington.....D.C
January 31, 1935

Mr. Edward J. Reilly
c/o Bronx Courthouse

My dear Mr. Reilly;

Since the press is making so much out of "change of name" challenges by the prosecution, isn't there some way in which you can bring out the fact that the LINDBERGH PARTY CHANGED ITS NAME TO LINDBERGH'S FAMILY NAME OVER FROM KIDEN. The original name, I believe, was Mansohn.

And, of all the low tricks in the dirtiest prosecution I have ever followed, that trick of today wins -- throwing the blame for that beauty parlor stunt on the Hauptmann defense by inference. The first accounts quoted the woman's daughter as saying that her mother had refused several times to back up her newspaper interview by taking the stand for the prosecution. All the later accounts deleted this and called the woman as "a prosecution witness".

Isn't there any way of making the State put the woman on the stand if they claim her as a witness? The fact that Mrs. Hauptmann considered it necessary to go to a "beauty college" for her work is a defense point, I believe. Such work is always cheap and a person rolling in wealth etc would hardly be a regular customer. (How many people, I wonder, have been trying to take Winchell's broad hint early in the trial -- in his column -- that some people were smart enough to see the thousands of dollars worth of free advertising that mention in the trial would bring them)

This is my second letter and I'm probably in the "crank" class; but I am a professional fictioneer with an average sale of 50,000 words a month over the past five years, so I do very little crank writing. It's the smell of flame in this case that excites me. I didn't serve my time as a police reporter for nothing.

With best wishes and my congratulations on the smooth work under tremendous difficulties.....

Goddally,