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JOHN HOWARD LAWSON
848 Elyria Drive
Los Angeles 65, California

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VIA AIR MAIL



Exhibit

"VII"

SOI, 66th CIC Group, Region VII
File : D-581207; VIII-15816
Dated : 31 August 1956
Subject: Correspondence from Res-
idents of US to GDR Offices and
Personalities

Alex. C. Schlichting
Berlin - Pankow
Parkstr. 51
Berlin Germany

CONFIDENTIAL PAGE 1 OF 3 PAGES

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JOHN HOWARD LAWSON
948 ELYRIA DRIVE
LOS ANGELES 65, CALIFORNIA

Dear Mr. Schlichting:

I am most gratified to receive your letter of July 21st, regarding definite plans for publication of THEORY AND TECHNIQUE, and FILM IN THE BATTLE OF IDEAS.

The terms are entirely satisfactory. I shall write to Mr. Felshin at M&M telling him that I feel we should accept the proposal on the film book. I assume that whatever contract or letter is required can be sent to me on THEORY AND TECHNIQUE, along with the advance payment. The arrangements and payment on the other book should be sent to Mr. Felshin.

I am troubled by your enquiry concerning the disregard of contemporary German playwrights in THEORY AND TECHNIQUE. It is a real weakness, which goes back to certain limitations on my knowledge and understanding when the book was first written twenty years ago. It is also true that many other contemporary trends are not adequately dealt with. For example, the only approach to the Russian theatre of the twentieth century is in terms of Chekhov and Stanislavski (on pp. 116-117), and this is quite different from the sort of treatment I would give Chekhov today. (Perhaps you have seen my study of Chekhov in MASSES AND MAINSTREAM, October, 1954?) It is hardly right that my material in the book contains no mention of Gorki.

I do not feel that I can enter into a fuller discussion of German or other contemporary European theatre trends: to do so would mean a very extensive rewriting, a change in the form of the book, and would require a detailed knowledge of recent dramatic development which I do not possess. However, I feel that the matter might be covered in a footnote. Let me know what you think about this.

I am also troubled by the citation from Stalin on p. 16 of FILM IN THE BATTLE OF IDEAS-- not on purely political grounds, but because I feel it is a rather arbitrary and doctrinaire statement. I think I should rewrite this page, using about the same space for a somewhat less sweeping statement of the class hold upon the superstructure.

(OVER)

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I shall do some work on these details, and other possible suggestions as soon as possible. Meanwhile, I should welcome further suggestions from you. I wonder if an author's preface would be of any value?

With most cordial greetings,

Richard L. Simon

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