

Route 4, Box 33
Santa Fe, N. M.

6 October 1965

Mr. David H. McAlpin
Box 670
Princeton, N. J.

Dear Dave:

In spite of having told you that I wouldn't have time to make another trip to the Adirondacks, and in spite of feeling that it would be very difficult to take pictures which would satisfy Mr. Hochschild's concept of what typified these mountains, I went back for a few days to see what I could do. I had a bare week between returning from Lake Powell and going to a color conference organized by the University of California Extension to be held at Squaw Valley next week end. This is my day of grace and I am using part of it to write you about the outcome of my last visit to the Adirondacks.

I flew east with camera and minimum baggage, spent the first night with the Hochschilds during which I had a very pleasant and I hope profitable talk with them about the proposed Adirondack book, and then went on to Keene for two days of minor climbing and photographing. The weather being bad was in my favor offering me the opportunity to make pictures of the mountains surrounded by storm clouds. If the weather had been perfect I would have had only bald skies to work with. I don't know yet what I got, but I think I could have been lucky in getting some quite interesting photographs. So much for that part of the undertaking.

Now for my conversation with Mr. Hochschild. I asked him point-blank why he now wanted to publish the book without the help of the Sierra Club. He told me that it was because he didn't like the way David Brewer did business with him, which he found very offensive and in a manner that he was entirely unused to. It seems that David Brewer didn't return one or several telephone calls that HKH made to him in San Francisco last spring in spite of the fact, as ascertained by HKH, that Brewer was in San Francisco at the time. So he turned the matter of communication with Brewer over to the representatives of his attorneys in that city. This action in turn offended Brewer who likewise felt that this was not the way to do business. Thus out of a situation which was the result, in the first place, of too heavy a burden of responsibilities on Brewer (he is responsible for running all the Sierra Club, not just the publication program), and in the second place, of misunderstanding and misinterpretation of circumstances by both of them, developed a state of offended feelings on both sides. If their premises were correct there was no way out for either of them but to break off any effort at collaboration. However, I am convinced that their premises were not correct: neither of them intended to be rude or difficult or to offend the other.

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To clarify this situation and to bring it back to saner perspectives it should be realized that David Brower is a very harassed individual with all his duties connected with running of the Sierra Club. He single-handedly runs the publication program, which has brought fame to the Sierra Club throughout the world. This is not an exaggeration. Consider the awards that its display-format books have won. Consider the Carey-Thomas Award last year. In addition he is responsible for the conservation work carried on by the Club throughout the United States, which involves not least testifying before congressional committees, as well as an endless amount of correspondence with government agencies, congressmen, legislators, and executive department heads. Only recently has he been given help with these duties in the person of a presidential assistant who now carries on much of the correspondence he formerly had to do himself or which had to be done by the president of the club. Further relief will be coming from a newly authorized Department of Conservation directly responsible to him. But these reliefs were not yet in force at the time the conflict developed between him and Harold Hochschild.

Likewise, it is easy to understand how frustrating it must have been for Mr. Hochschild not to be able to get into communication with David Brower at a time when he felt discussion was urgently needed.

Neither HKH nor DB wanted this kind of a situation to develop. It was circumstances beyond their powers to anticipate or control that led them both into this impasse bordering on an unpleasant animosity. I feel, however, that the matter can still be rectified if they could be persuaded to meet one another half way. David Brower I am sure will try to reestablish friendly relations with Harold Hochschild if he is asked to do so. I did try to convince Mr. Hochschild that his differences with Brower were due to a misunderstanding and that it would be very desirable to work with the Sierra Club on this book, but he remained adamant in his refusal.

My reason for writing this letter to you is to ask that you, who know Mr. Hochschild, intervene to settle this misunderstanding with David Brower. There would be many advantages if this could be accomplished: the Sierra Club has much more experience in publishing books of this kind than most publishers, certainly more than either Mr. Hochschild or myself. The Sierra Club has already invested several thousand dollars in the book which could be used to advantage to reduce its cost below what it will be if it has to be started all over again. The Sierra Club can help tremendously with the design and production of the book, and with its marketing after it has been manufactured.

Do you think you could use your good offices towards setting straight this unfortunate affair? I will gladly do

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all I can myself; I have already offered to act as a go-between with Mr. Hochschild and the Sierra Club, and regardless of the outcome I am committed to working for the book. But someone who knows Mr. Hochschild better than I do is needed to act as an ambassador of good will.

With best regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Eliot', with a small flourish at the end.

Eliot Porter