

13th. September, 1957

Air Chief Marshal Lord Dowding,
Oakgate,
Southborough,
Tunbridge Wells,
Kent.

Dear Lord Dowding:

On this coming Sunday, the 15th of September, there will be appearing in "The Sunday Times" a review I have written of Mr. Basil Collier's book about you. I am writing to you in advance about this for two reasons.

The first is that I want you to know that although I found the book of very great interest I could not feel that it does you full justice. And in writing the review which "The Sunday Times" asked me to do I had to develop that point. I must stress the fact, of course, that the views expressed are mine alone, and that "The Sunday Times" people have voiced to me no opinions whatsoever.

On the other hand - and this is the second point - I find that they have described me in an introductory paragraph as "..... Lord Dowding's personal assistant during the Battle of Britain". I stressed to them the fact that I was your P.A. "for a time" during the Battle of Britain, although I find from my diaries that that time on your staff included the period around the memorable 15th of September, 1940. But you did have other personal assistants, and I wanted to be most careful to avoid claiming too much for myself. However, it is too late to be able to change things now, so I do hope that you will forgive that rather sweeping statement made by the editor.

Also, I hope that you will not find the review too disturbing. I do not like the habit of today of searching feverishly for controversies. But I did have a far more difficult time writing this review than I expected simply because of the way in which many important questions are raised in the book. I am a great admirer of Mr. Collier's work, and think highly of his "The Defence of the United Kingdom". But I cannot

avoid forming the opinion that having raised these questions in the book he should have answered them more conclusively, and not left things dangling in mid-air. That is what I mean when I say that I do not feel that the book does you full justice.

I trust that you are well, and I should like to send you at this time of the anniversary of the Battle of Britain my very best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Wright