

12 April 1968

Dear Mr. Sorensen,

Despite your thoughtful suggestion that I need not reply to your letter #2 of 8 April, I did wish to reassure you that it (and the enclosures) arrived safely and intact. I have been notified, once or twice, that letters I directed to distant places arrived in somewhat mutilated condition, indicative of interception. But I have not experienced any irregularities in mail received. So I am inclined to doubt that there is any surveillance of my mail or telephone traffic (where, too, there have been occasional strange noises and interference)—not because I question for one moment the readiness of feebee types to eavesdrop or intercept, but just in terms of the time and manpower it would require to monitor "demonologists" like the WR critics, who are shouting anything they know from the housetops anyhow.

I am grateful for the CDs enclosed with your letter, on Abadie and Siedbrand. The reference to Ruby's shop or warehouse is certainly another indication of mysterious, sinister, and clandestine activities and associations in Ruby's life which have been sanitized out of his WR biography, and scarcely by inadvertence. It is hard to judge whether page 278 was omitted from CE 1750 deliberately; the warehouse is mentioned on page 279, which was published; and quite a collection of the CEs, particularly in Volume XXIII, contain allegations of Ruby's involvement in various illicit and criminal activities. I am convinced that these CEs and all the others which are incompatible or irreconcilable with the WR "facts" were published because the WC and its lawyers or editors had not the faintest idea of their contents—and certainly not, as alleged by the more stupid apologists for the WR, because the WC was being bravely and consciously "honest" about the conflicts between the raw data and the finished fiction.

Mrs. Hartmann's letter on the assassination of Martin Luther King very closely reflects my personal views and emotions. In fact, the main reason for this letter to you (and, if you wish, copy to Mrs. Hartmann) is that on Sunday last—the 7th, I believe—I wrote an article, "Two Assassinations," which called attention to some of the echoes of Dallas 63 in Memphis 68. It is provisionally scheduled for the June issue of The Minority of One (the May issue, where it properly should appear, had just gone to press, and so I may have to update it just before publication, if it is used). I mention this to obviate any possibility of misunderstanding because, unhappily, there have been a number of unpleasant misunderstandings among the WR critics involving charges of plagiarism and the like—sometimes with me in the middle. So I have learned the value of an ounce of prevention and written notes for the record and similar precautions, which in a few instances have caused me to thank what Gods there be for having kept a record. In one case, just such a letter for the record later enabled me to write a masterpiece of nastiness...which brings me to my next point. I am not opposed at all to nasty letters and pride myself on having written some beauties—when the circumstances justified or compelled rejoinder. My favorite was to a "fellow-critic" (who shall be nameless) who had the unmitigated effrontery to excoriate me for having omitted mention of a particular publication (to which he was greatly indebted, but which I had no connection with) in my book. As I reminded him in my reply, he had carefully and meticulously avoided all reference to this publication, to which he was exhibiting such fierce loyalty, in his own book, where it was mentioned not even once—and not overlooked, but calculatedly written out. So: I am an admirer and practitioner of nasties...but only when there is provocation. Gratuitous advice is therefore retracted; anyhow, I am not old enough to be your mother, as it turns out, though I do have two years of seniority. If you ever have the time and inclination, I would love to hear a detailed account of the "marsh gas in mid-Pacific." P.S. NY Times reports that Gov. Maddox suspects that the Communists assassinated Martin Luther King—which leaves us with very little scope for ~~our~~ satire.

All the best,