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WA6-2034;TR4-4246

20734

November 11, 1966

Mr. Werner J. Dannhauser, Assoc. Ed.
Commentary
165 East 56 th. St.,
New York, N.Y. 10022

Dear Mr. Dannhauser,

Either of the alternatives in your letter of November is satisfactory, I'd prefer to address myself more pointedly in a separate letter and will trty and do it over the weekend.

What I would like you to consider, however, is a more honorable and I think you will find a more satisfactory alternative, an article, like Mr. Bickelss, from me. I would like very much to make this the beginning of a belated dialogue. The tragedy of the abdication of the inellectuals is one to which we must address ourselves immediately, for time is running out. I have the advantage over you in knowing the subject matter and probable developments of the very near future in which I figure. I have the advantage over Mr. Bickel in knowing what I talk about.

What I am really proposing is that you pay me to tear the hell out of you, for this is exactly what I would do to both Mr. Bickel and your magazine. I recommend this to you as not alone the course of intellectual integrity but one by which you can in at least a small measure recapture your own honor;

You may, of course, doubt my sincerity or question my purpose. But I am confident that before your issue can appear the sequel to WHITEWASH will be available. There are also pending other things by other writers (one in a major publication with which I am helping ~~in~~ which will use some of my discoveries) which will make your sin even worse if you show no sign of repentance!

I am overwhelmed by the demands upon a one-man, one-woman publishing house with a successful book (despite the disdain of the reviewers, 22,500 copies) and a researcher-writer simultaneously doing a still larger book (and WHITEWASH is the largest, as well as the first of the first wave) so I cannot now go into detail. I will be happy to speak to you should you call. I'll be gone all day Monday. Like everyone else, you considered the last word has been written. No one who read WHITEWASH ~~xxx~~ could make such a judgement if he thought at all.

Your letter of the 7th is a gesture at fairness I appreciate. In return, should you elect not to accept my offer, I give you permissionxto use my letter, editing it as you see fit, because it is possible I may not be able to get to this over the weekend. Should you accept my offer, I would not only expect youxto edit my contributions, I would want it. You have no idea of the speed with which I must work and the amount of work I do. Perforce, too much of the writing is hasty. I made a submission of a 4,500 word piece on the transfer of so-called evidence to the archive that is a first draft. It was retyped. The second piece, a little longer, I had to submit as the unretyped first draft. The côice was not to do it.

I acknowledge that were I in your place, this would sound a little paranoid. Perhaps you can find out for yourself by calling me or, not far from you is one of a number of editors who have come to know me and my work through WHITEWASH. I think Jerry Agel, of BOOKS, PL 5-2220, will assure you that I do not exaggerate or engage in stunts.

In fairness to your decision, I believe that with the appearance of WHITEWASH II: WHO DID IT! there will no longer be any doubt about who did the whitewashing or how (it names all the names shows exactly how and in many cases even when), ~~and that~~ the only question remaining will be whose fingers were on the trigger or triggers.

Aside from clobbering the intellects for their failures when our society most needed them and being specific about Mr. Bickel's piece, in the article I propose I would also want to point out that for those who want to defend any or all of the members of the Commission there is but a single defense: the truth as untainted as mortal man can make it. Had you or Mr. Bickel read WHITEWASH at all carefully you would have understood that it is alone among the current books that seeks to make comprehensible the position of the members of the Commission and is alone, despite the pretenses others make, in not assaulting the integrity of the members.

Had you not ignored my May letter, you would have understood that despite my belief WHITEWASH was a strong attack on the Report, it historically offers the only means by which the reputation of Earl Warren, which I took to be an interest you would have, might be protected - at least as much as what he has done permits. It is in May that I sent you a copy of WHITEWASH.

Airmail saves no time at all coming here, nor does special delivery. We are in the real country, where we share each phone with seven others and pick our mail up at the local grocery. On its way up from Washington, once a day, it wanders the pigpaths and byways.

Sincerely yours,

Harold Weisberg

Commentary
165 EAST 56 STREET, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10022, PLaza 1-4000

November 7, 1966

Mr. Harold Weisberg
Hyattstown, Md. 20734

Dear Mr. Weisberg:

Thank you for your letter of October 29, to which I am replying as Mr. Podhoretz will be out of the office for a few weeks.

We would be pleased to print a letter of up to 1000 words that you might wish to write on what you consider the shortcomings of Mr. Bickel's article. Or, if you wish, we would be willing to run excerpts of the letter we already have.

Incidentally, Mr. Bickel did mention your name and book in a footnote on page 36.

Sincerely yours,

Werner J. Dannhauser

Werner J. Dannhauser
Associate Editor

WJD:mg