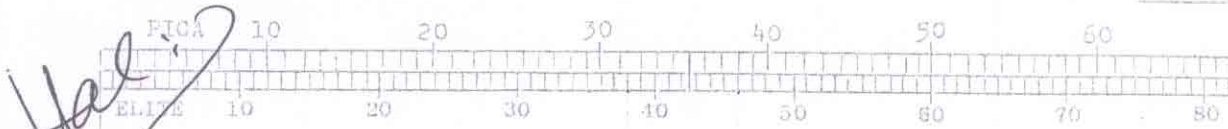


Walter, In addition to the clipping from PW on Mailer's Fifth estate, there seems to have been a wire-service story copy of which I now have from the San Francisco Chronicle, of 2/7/73. I would like to be in touch with him for reasons other than seeing if there could be interest in my work and helping with it. So, if it is not too much trouble, I do hope you can find time to get an address at which I can write him.

What always happens ~~with~~<sup>when</sup> something like this gets known is that all the nuts with nutty notions they believe are reality latch onto the money, which is worse than just the waste of the money. I seriously doubt if any of the people Mailer can get to serve on his board will be in a position to evaluate. There has been so much irresponsible propaganda spread around as though it were the vibrant truth! Garrison and his hangers-on are but one example of many. The unfortunate consequence is that instead of people being informed they are misinformed, and the credibility of all exposes is undermined. Here you will see a relevance in some of the possibilities I have suggested with regard to Romero. All the crazy stuff about the CIA makes it look pure and wholesome. For all his good intentions, Garrison has been the worst single impediment to going past the first wave of books on the JFK assassination. He said what people wanted to hear, but he never could prove anything he said, no matter which of countless conflicting versions is considered. And what he said that seemed likely was not even his idea, as is not generally known. The last switch of which I know is that the Joint Chiefs of Staff rather than the CIA itself was responsible for the JFK job. People of all kinds are dreaming up all kinds of theories and are persuaded of their truth by the affection for their own reasoning. Ultimately, this redounds to the benefit of the spooks. Frankly, I know of no ongoing investigation of the JFK assassination other than mine that is worth looking at. I think this may be the thing Mailer is least likely to believe because he has been subjected to an endless din from people he knows and in many cases may trust. You have seen a small part of my work and know its nature. Those who are well know, like Garrison and Lane, having nothing like these things. As you don't know, I have an initial archive of FBI reports that make media look like the point of a tiny pin, more than 2000 pages of them I've not even had time to read. So, I have several things in mind in case you know anyone who knows him or one of his well enough to talk: keeping him from another futility and attracting some interest to what I've done and am doing. Thanks and best,

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▶ **AUTHORS LEAGUE ASKS WASHINGTON TO ACT ON PUBLISHING TAKEOVERS**

The Authors League of America has written to the Senate Subcommittee on Antitrust and Monopoly Legislation protesting what it calls "a massive wave of acquisition" in the publishing industry and calling upon the legislators to restore some of the houses recently taken over by giant corporations to independent ownership. Citing recently announced plans by ITT to acquire Putnam, the ALA said that the centralization of control represented by this and other takeovers of previously independent houses "is bound to affect adversely the ability of the remaining independent publishers to compete and to survive." It deplored the decreasing number of outlets available to authors, particularly in the case of "controversial" works, and suggested that big corporations were more responsive to outside pressures, political and economic, on their publishing policies than were independents. "It is argued that these dangers are avoided because the large corporate owners allow their publishing subsidiaries to operate independently," the ALA letter declared, but added: "This is a temporary and often illusory safeguard. The reins of control gradually will be tightened." The letter was signed by Jerome Weidman, as ALA president. A spokesman for the subcommittee said in Washington that the body did not intend to look into publishing takeovers "as such," but that at hearings in March into economic concentration in various fields, it would look into the communications area, in which ITT figures.

▶ **MAILER LAUNCHES HIS "FIFTH ESTATE"**

Norman Mailer, fresh from his \$50-a-head 50th birthday party Monday night ("only about a quarter the size of Truman Capote's, but at least everyone paid to come to mine") took time out the following day to try to enlighten a puzzled press about his proposal for a citizen body to check on America's "secret police"--the FBI and the CIA. What he has in mind, he said, is a body something like Nader's Raiders or the American Civil Liberties Union, which could keep an eye on Governmental surveillance activities. He has some people in mind for a steering committee to study the idea, and the "take" from his party will get the funding started. Subjects he feels worthy of study by such a group would include the Kennedy assassination, "still a major unsolved mystery in American life," and such recent political events as the Watergate affair and perhaps even the Eagleton case. Stressing that he wanted only to see if anyone was seriously interested in the proposal, and would then back out, Mailer said "I want only to be a literary man the rest of my life. I don't trust myself to be anything else." Good news for Robert Markel, editor at Grosset & Dunlap for Mailer's forthcoming book on Marilyn Monroe; he says Mailer's copy is still coming in on time, and the book is to be a full-length one, not just a brief essay to accompany pictures of the actress.

▶ **LIPPINCOTT GETS THE "PLANE CRASH CANNIBALS" STORY**

The 16 survivors of last October's Andes plane crash, who survived 70 days only by cannibalism of their companions' bodies, have given the J. B. Lippincott company exclusive world-wide rights to their story. Edward L. Burlingame, the firm's editor-in-chief, went to Montevideo, Uruguay, along with several other U.S. publishers, to bid for the story. The bidding involved guarantees of up to \$500,000, and Lippincott won the unanimous approval of the survivors, who have guaranteed full cooperation. Author Piers Paul Read will write the book after talking to everyone involved in the incident. He is already in Montevideo, and expects to deliver a manuscript by September.

# Mailer Forms 'the Fifth Estate'

New York

**NORMAN** Mailer, the self-styled "embattled aging enfant terrible of the literary world," has just turned 50, and to celebrate the occasion Monday night he threw himself an elegant \$50-a-couple birthday party at the Four Seasons Restaurant.

The party was intended not only to celebrate Mailer, but to let him announce the formation of what the author called "the fifth estate"—a "democratic secret police."

Facing 500 invited guests, the author said: "I want a people's FBI and a people's CIA — to investigate those two" — referring to the real Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Central Intelligence Agency.

"If we have a democratic secret police to keep tabs on Washington's secret police, which is not democratic, but bureaucratic, we will see how far paranoia is justified," he continued.

Mailer's notion was to "let the idea sink in tonight," and to form a steering committee to investigate the possibility of forming such a civilian secret police.

The meaning of the Fifth Estate, a nonprofit foundation that would receive its initial financing from the receipts of the party, was Mailer's secret until last night.

The birthday party was originally the idea of Lady Jean Simpson, Mailer's third wife, and Frank Crowther, an old friend. According to Crowther, when he suggested the party, Mailer at first declined, saying, "another ego trip? Who needs it?" Later he decided to use his birthday as "a launching pad" for the foundation.

About 5000 invitations were mailed for what



AP Wirephoto

Five hundred guests attended a 50th birthday party for writer Norman Mailer (center) Monday at New York's Four Seasons Restaurant

Crowther characterized as "a family and literary event — a night for the written word."

Jacob Javits, Paul O' Dwyer, Melvin Van Peebles, Bernardo Bertolucci, Mrs. Henry Heinz, Bobby Short, Shirley MacLaine, Andy Warhol, Jules Feiffer, Jose Torres, Murray Kempton and many other of Mailer's writing cohorts were there. In addition there were at least two Mailer ex-wives, plus his mother and his ten-year-old daughter.

At a news conference yesterday, Mailer clarified "the Fifth Estate."

He said that he is regretting calling the body, as he did in his original announcement, "a people's police," and explained that it was "open-ended," with a structure and specific goals to be determined after the formation of a steering committee.

Mailer compared the Fifth Estate to Nader's Raiders, the American Civil Liberties Union and Common Cause.

As several possible areas for investigation, he named the assassination of John F. Kennedy, the Warren Commission report, possible Republican involvement in the exposure of Senator Thomas

Eagleton's mental history, and the Watergate affair.

He was creating the Fifth Estate, he explained, because "we have to face up to the possibility that the country may be sliding toward totalitarianism . . . I have an absolute huge distrust of the American government."

N.Y. Times Service