

Dr. Dennis McDonald
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4/8/95

Dear Dennis,

Thanks for your 4/5, which Lil and Bill Neichter, who is here, also read and liked.

My plans have changed since I read the New Yorker condensation of Mailer's awful book. I'm doing a book on his *Case Open*. Got the first chapter done. Don't waste any money on the New Yorker. Nothing new in it of any meaning.

Probably I'll remember the name of the Boston publisher who once published Stormin' Normal. I've gotten bad on names. I may come to it in writing before I mail this Monday morning. One is Little, Brown. It may have been the other other one. But there was a publisher to whom Mailer owed \$300,000. And when he shifted from one publisher to another the more likely possibilities ^{are} that another made a higher offer or the one who did not publish him again wanted no more to do with him. Anyway, a publisher who had reason not to love Mailer may be more likely to be interested in the book. Which I'm doing without seeking one.

What I had in ^{mind} using from Hoax was what was cut from it and addresses his cheap prosecution brief as a defense lawyer would have. That fits this perfectly for several reasons. One is that Mailer merely assumed Oswald's guilt. As he always has. The other is that Random House is his publisher on this one.

If you have any retrieval systems you can use I'd like very much to have what Mailer or RH said in advance of and about this book, including in ads, particularly from Publisher's Weekly.

4/9. Too many interruptions and phone calls when I started this yesterday. The other publisher is Beacon. I am inclined to believe that Little, Brown published him.

In this book, pending the appearance of his, I'm first writing about Mailer and then about his "associate" in it, Schiller, and as I now plan. because he ^{assumes} Oswald's guilt and ^{the same} I have and use some juicy quotes from him about novels and history being alike, only lies, and because he says the actual assassination evidence is "impenetrable," I'll follow that with what I have written in Senator Russell Dissents. Then I'll address what he does say about Oswald which has nothing to do with the crime, then what he had available about Oswald and did not use-suppressed because it is all published - and then with use that "impenetrable" evidence that should have been in *Case Open*.

What Russell said was "impenetrable" when I published the essence in 1968 and Mailer knew me and of my work? When in 1973 I offered him access to it?

It should make a very powerful book. With the editing it will need.

I think Gerry will be sending you a disk of Senator Russell Dissents.

If you are able to talk to any people, in CA 75-226, as the back cover of *Case Open*

2

reflects, the DJ did tell that court that I knew more about the JFK assassination and its investigations than anyone working for the FBI. I can't send that easily. Not the usual endorsement for a writer on controversial matters!

I hope you are visiting Wrono when we speak today, as we do most Sunday's. He has done a remarkable job for the Indians and it should make a fine and important book.

Those clippings are both helpful and timely. Jim Meszar will be here today and he regards my getting after the ARRB as "counterproductive." Those clippings reflect ARRB prejudice, what I told them they were wasting time on (the nutty theories that will lead them to no suppressed records) and I'll show them to him. I have a different opinion of the deputy executive director and I've loaned him the disk of Case Open that he had printed out.

I'm sure I've embarrassed them, especially because under the law all their files are to be public. They have yet to give me any meaningful response, as their records will show along with what I wrote them.

I think that after a week or so more I'll write them about what these clippings reflect and say as I told them, ~~QMB QED~~.

Thanks for the offer of the tape but there are already so many I doubt they'll all ever be used and there is little probability that the others on it had much of dependability to say or that Jim said anything he had not already said.

It is nice to have a visit from Bill, who is a fine person, particularly on my birthday. He will be flying back today to fly to near Chicago tomorrow with his wife to visit her father who just had successful heart surgery. He had supper with the McKnights last evening and we are going to where the crab cakes are the best for lunch today.

If you see anything in your papers about Mailer and his book I'll appreciate copies. I begin with some farout things he said at Penn a few weeks ago. And I've fine stuff in my file on him.

Lil and I are about as well as two people who on the 18th will have between them accumulated 165 years, thanks.

Best,

Harold



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April 5, 1995

Harold Weisberg
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Dear Harold,

Sorry I have taken so long to get back to you regarding *Hoax*. Gerry indicated to me that you would like me to inquire with publishers in the Boston area about the possibility of their considering it for publication.

Gerry did send me a copy on computer disk which I finished reading last week. It is, in my view, an extraordinary book. I had used *Case Open* in my Special Topics course on the JFK assassination last fall. Although it did the job in totally destroying the Posner book, I think the criminal butchering of *Case Open* by the publisher came close to destroying your excellent book.

I certainly would like to see the original *Hoax* published. I am afraid that I do not have friends in publishing circles. But I will certainly make inquiries anyway, and do what I can. We do get frequent visits by publishers' sales reps pushing textbooks. Several seem to be decent people with access to the editorial staff people in their companies. I will begin by talking to a few of them. They may be able to help.

In any case, I will not be able to get to this for a week or so as I am leaving in the morning for the midwest and will be away for a week. I'll be visiting Wrona and spending a few days in Urbana, doing some research in the library there. I'll get right on it when I return.

I have enclosed a couple clippings for your files. Also, I came across an audio tape of a public radio talk show which featured Jim Lesar, among others. I believe that it was for the 25th anniversary. If you do not have it, and would like it for the files, let me know.

Hope you and Lil are well.

I'll be in touch shortly after I return from my trip.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dennis".