

Dear Jim, Good letter to Colonial. I've heard nothing and I expect not to hear. So, give me a date by which we do more and I'll wait until then. I think they just let these kinds of things slide, as does their insurer, it costing them nothing and holding the prospect of profit thanks to the meaninglessness of the governmental bodies that are supposed to but never supervise these kinds of things. Judging by Maryland, anyway...Mailer's letter is polite and complementary, but I think he is merely copping out. As I told you, I would accept his offer to involve his agent, but not for anything like Ramparts nor for anything like what they pay. A good agent can place that with a larger and better-paying magazine. However, you should also bear in mind that it is public domain, and once a magazine sees it they can use it without paying us a cent. Do what you will with this...If Mailer, to whom I also spoke briefly, were sincere, he'd have made a suggestion, someone else instead of him. And if he has had a novel in mind for 15 years and will take two more to write it, it must be War and Peace....It is also possible that the weekend of 23-24 was a bit too much for him. It should have been! Best, HW 12/19/73

December 11, 1973

Jim Lesar
1231 4th Street, S. W.
Washington, D.C. 20024

Dear Jim,

Your letter with the enclosed briefs was forwarded to Stockbridge only after I'd arrived in Washington, so when we talked in the corridor that day I'd no idea you'd already sent it to me. Since then I've had a chance to look at it, and the Memorandum of Facts is fascinating, and incidentally quite well written. I wouldn't be at all surprised if you could find a magazine to publish it. Ramparts perhaps, or even one of the Playboy-type magazines. And if you'd like help on this I'd be happy to send it on to my agent who might have some thoughts on the subject.

On the other hand, as far as getting together with Harold goes, I have to confess to you that it's impossible to think of beginning any other book than the one I'm on. I have this novel I've been promising to write for fifteen years, a huge work, and haven't gotten near doing more than the foundations of it up to now, and have made a vow to myself that I will do nothing else for the next few years. So please tell Harold that while his idea was not without its practical sense, I just can't begin to consider it.

Give my best to Bud and I'll be in touch with you soon. Would you like these briefs back or may I keep them?

Best to you



Norman Mailer