

St. Anne  
Paul. Miller

August 29, 1968

Mr. Arthur Miller  
Tophet Road  
Roxbury, Connecticut 06783

Dear Mr. Miller:

"They hate the young people," you said. The world's largest version of the Munich beerhall was emptying and you were on camera. The end of the democratic process had just been formalized, recognizing with formality what was for so long the fact.

You were stunned. You should have been. But only because you and every other major, recognized writer in the country, every leading intellect, are and have been silent over its cause.

"They" do hate young people.

John Kennedy was young. Martin Luther King was young. So was Robert Kennedy, Malcolm X, Medgar Evers, Viola Liuzzo, the four children in the Birmingham Baptist church, and the three fine young men at Philadelphia (Ugh!), Mississippi, and the hundreds of thousand faceless in Viet Nam, where the young die old. They had to be killed to destroy the leaders who might have prevented this and what it is part of.

It will be some time before I can sleep this morning, Mr. Miller, but unless I write you to charge you with your personal share of the responsibility, I will not at all.

You and all the successful ones abdicated when it all began. Your successes required more successes, your minor messages required reiteration, your wealth replenishing. You and all the others were too busy or had other excuses when John Kennedy was killed in a coup d'état.

You were polite in your November 13, 1965, refusal to become involved. Most were not. You were too busy.

Tonight you got some of your profit.

Freedom, so long so sick in this great, rich land where it should enjoy its most vibrant good health, started to die when all the Arthur Millers and Robert Lowells were silent and stayed silent and were too busy or too afraid (did not your own superior intelligence give you even a single little hint?); when not one of you would lift a hand to help those of us, previously unknown, who assumed the obligation freedom awards you as the honorable writer's price of his success.

Salesmen do die, but old soldiers do not, and brave, wonderful kids get slugged by fascist brutes in uniform for the crime of being wonderful kids.

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Without the murder of John Kennedy and those made necessary for the preservation of what it achieved, those of the brother and the great black man, both of whom were silent about it and both of whose murders thereby were so obviously inevitable I predicted them well in advance, there would not have been smashed heads in Chicago. Without your silence and that of your peers, that vital young blood would not be on the Chicago streets.

Ignorance is no excuse for the man who writes, the man who informs others of the truth as he sees it. In assuming this role, he also assumed the duty he cannot delegate, that of informing himself. ("Physician, heal thyself!")

There would be no issue of peace without John Kennedy's murder.

So you and the comfortable, affluent writers talk of peace, which is safe and respectable, contributing to society like the doctor who prescribes aspirin for cancer.

Is there yet time or is it already too late?

If you and your fellow abdicators of the eastern intellectual community do not find voice and do what you failed to do beginning almost five years ago, you will be more uncomfortable than I when we share those quarters so providentially provided for by the man who would be President, an appropriate opponent for that foresighted one who so early started compiling the lists.

What does it say of successful, established writers of principle, that they would neither inform themselves, would not bring to light what some established writer should have, the real story of the murder of the President who sought to restore culture to the White House, to remove the curse from it, to foster the arts, and to find peace? Not one would - not one has - helped those who sought to be their surrogates.

This is a bitter letter, Mr. Miller, addressed to you more, but not entirely, as a symbol. While you (plural) were enjoying the wealth the absence of overt fascism permitted you to enjoy, I, for one, had to work close to 20 hours a day for all these years, go without income and borrow to do this work which has earned me a \$35,000 indebtedness. I am now the author and publisher of four books others should have written and published, with three unpublished, for I am past my capacity for debt, and I enjoy the hatred of those 150 publishers whose fear of federal power made them cowards, whose soul-mirror I was and am.

I will write more of them, for someone must, and, at the risk of seeming immodesty, I tell you no one else is. If the day comes when they can be published, they will be. If it does not soon come, there will be waiting manuscripts, waiting proofs, for the future there must be.

It is three years since I sought your help. No other book on the Warren Commission had been written or published then. Suppose we could have opened this subject a year earlier, would it have helped? More witnesses were then alive. There were fewer troops and planes, less napalm in Viet Nam. The coup was not as firmly established. You were not alone in declining, but you are a special unhappiness to me because I fought and,



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in my own way, beat Martin Dies in 1940 - and have been paying for it ever since - so you would have a better survival prospect against his successor.

Fascism did not end in 1944. And I charge you with your own share of responsibility for that resurgence of it that beat the wonderful young blood into the Chicago streets, corrupted the convention and the meaning of a vote with that as its symbol.

Fascism won a great victory at that moment, the inevitable success of those powerful forces responsible for and beneficiary of the assassinations. To them, it now is immaterial who wins the election, for they have already won it.

If it is not already too late, when it is, you will not be able to live with yourself unless, belatedly, you do what you can to bring out the truth, the fact that others have developed for you. There are many things you can do, if you are not afraid, or too comfortable, corrupted and captured by the complacency of success and plenty. If you and the too many others like you fail now again, you will be knowingly responsible for the many more heads to be bloodied before the viciousness worsens to where the bloodiest head will be a blessing.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg