

4666 - 27th Ave. No.
St. Petersburg, Florida 33713
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Dear Mrs. Meagher:

Your thoughtful letter came yesterday and, when I noted the date of writing it, I prized it even more. I feel compelled to respond in an attempt to comfort you and yet there is the realization that there is so little that can be said beyond repeating what you already know, that you are not alone in your sorrow and sense of futility.

The faceless 'they', who say our society is not sick, should look within themselves. I am reminded that individuals with mental and emotional disorders do not recognize their own illness, they continue to protest there is nothing wrong with them.

There are so many factors in our environment that have the potential to scramble our thinking beyond hope. Noise has this effect, as do radar and the emissions of TV sets - aside from TV's other contributions. The current popular music is still another culprit when it is played at the customary volume. The brain is too delicate to be subjected to all this for such long periods of time without suffering in some way.

Last Wednesday morning, as usual, I turned on the TV the first thing so I would have news and weather while fixing my husband's breakfast. Bob's breakfast was late, he was late to work. We were both almost paralyzed, unable to much more than stare at the TV and cry a little inside. Later that day I worked myself into a rage that has every indication of lasting for a long time.

The whole thing was so unreal and this illusion still persists. It reminds me of the day Oswald was shot before my eyes. The feeling now, as then, was that this was but another of the thousands who have been killed in a box in my living room and then come back to life to be shot dead in subsequent programs. It was nearly impossible for my mind to distinguish the awful truth that this was a real, warm, living, breathing, vibrant human being who was cut down and would not return again as the others did.

I am an adult with powers to reason and, hopefully, detect the false, the illusion. The problem, I think, will be to persuade others to admit they experienced the same confusion. I am in my 40s and if I was affected in this way, how much more unreal it must have been for the young who have never known anything else.

One night last week Joey Bishop had an informal panel discussion and while they were talking about violence on TV there was a break and what did we get? A bang-bang-shoot-'em-up promo. Right then I decided that as long as I have control over that knob that turns the set off, there will be no more shooting in our living room except as it is incidental to the newscasts.

If there is any plot to take over the government of this country, the time is right. All indications are that this could be the result of the November election. Anything I might say about this, you have already known. One thing is certain and that is the threat this will pose for those of us who have been honest in our public statements.

In 1964, my public defense of the memory of John Kennedy offended those of the sort who delight in heaping muck on any public official to the left of General Walker,

When a lady caller to the Open Mike radio program expressed her pride in being called a Fascist if the term meant a love of country, I was the only one who bothered to read the dictionary definition of the term, asking if she was sure this was what she meant. The following night she was unable to pronounce the word, professed never to have heard of it before and stated her feelings that I had to malign her by calling her such an awful name.

When blatant untruths had been told over the air about either Goldwater or Johnson, if I knew the facts I called in to state them and it made no difference which party had suffered from the lies. It was truth and fairness that was important to me.

The result of all this was most unpleasant and something I am not likely to forget. At the time I was just another anonymous voice on the program. Neither my phone number or my name was known to the listeners. I had been far too busy to become involved in activities that would attract attention outside a small group of friends. I don't recall how it came out, but one night the moderator had said that the FBI did monitor every program and had picked up some subversives as a result of what was said on the air. I presume the FBI had traced the line to make identification of whoever it was that attracted their ire. This is the only way I can explain what happened to me.

I began to receive phone calls from persons whose voices I recognized, the most militant of the professional patriots, those who had made the most vicious attacks upon President Kennedy - and among them was the lady who couldn't decide whether or not Fascist was a dirty word. Some of these calls were toll calls, all had one thing in common. I was informed in various ways that by what I had said on the program they had determined that I should be listed as a 'known Communist', that if and when Goldwater was elected I would be treated as every Communist should be treated, the unmistakable implication was that I had been given a death sentence. The actual words used were, "wiped out".

These are the very same people who insist upon a return to Constitutional government. When polls have been conducted on the radio as to presidential preference, these are the ones who proudly announce that they will vote for George Wallace, Ronald Reagan being a second choice and our own governor, Claude Kirk, being the third choice. It chills me through and through to know one of these men does stand a very good chance of becoming our next president.

The way I handled the situation was to state over the air that I had received these calls and that the voices had been recognized as regular callers and that any more of the same would be considered grounds for legal action. I received no more and the individuals were silent for a few nights but they are now back in force. There were a lot of others who received the same attention and they reacted as I did.

Always I have considered myself to be moderate in my political beliefs and one who supports the form of government described in the books we used in school. This is supposed to provide every citizen who wishes to do so to have a voice in election of public officials, including the president. This year I am treated to the spectacle of a vice-president who is so certain of the system that he brushes aside evidence in the primaries that we don't want him. It is the arrogance, the contempt, the absolute disregard for the voter that makes me ill.

To the limits of human endurance we are exhorted to use the channels provided in the Constitution, to express our wishes with our vote. But it is obvious our communication is not reaching those at whom our petition is directed. Seems the channels are blocked.

They are being closed still more by the bodies of those who were able to hear us.

Now I am curious about the newest of the Commissions. The Warren Commission Report occupies a spot next to the Bible, the Cerner Commission Report has been damned by the same people who revere the WCR. On the Violence Commission we find our old friends, Boggs and Jenner, which makes me wonder at the sincerity of the effort. The only ray of hope I find here is a statement attributed to Jenner in which he opined that we are in grave danger of changing to a totalitarian form of government. I have a feeling this commission is another bit of window dressing to placate 'the public'.

If we do find ourselves under a dictator, the press must take most of the blame for having decided what and how it would report, for having usurped the right of the people to decide what is best for them and their country. From the beginning the press decided Eugene McCarthy would never have a chance and treated him as a more or less comic figure, a nut. When Robert Kennedy began to campaign in earnest, they still took the responsibility to themselves and proclaimed over and over that he had no chance, that Humphrey had it sewed up. Maybe they were right, but just maybe they were wrong and by their repetition swayed voters who believed it wouldn't do any good to express an opinion and either did not vote or voted party line.

I have yet to hear of any newsman who claimed to have read the entire 27 volumes of the Warren Commission. Some admit to having read the Report very carefully and feel this entitles them to speak authoritatively. Others are so very proud of the fact that someone else has read the Report and pronounced it as true. What ever happened to the old fashioned reporter who had a built-in talent for sniffing out nefarious deeds and would have written a prize-winning series proving Oswald was innocent?

Some colleagues wrote that their compilation of what has been published on the 1963 assassination is becoming a history of the death of the American press. They are aware that events may negate any future use of their work but say they "had to try to do something" and they will know they at least tried, whether it does any good or not.

Speaking for one person, I can assure you that what you have done, your book and the article I have read on King and Kennedy, as well as your letters - all of these have done more than anything else to help me retain my objectivity (which is not always so easy). Like you, of late I have felt more subjective but that is natural and I hope it will not affect what I am trying to accomplish.

Mrs. Meagher, please do not become discouraged. Your ability is needed now more than ever. Take heart from the knowledge that at least two individuals I know have begun to question the Warren Report in view of the last two murders. These had been firm in their acceptance of the Report until last week. There must be ever so many more.

People who can write as you do are more necessary than ever before. With your help, maybe one day soon we will be able to look back on this as a nightmare that brought us to an awareness of our peril.

Before I close, here is a puzzle for you. CE 2966A. Please look at it very closely. Does it appear to you that the rubber stamp may have been applied after the paper was creased? If this is true, there could be other implications to the obscuring evident on CE 1412, implications other than those we have considered before. If the stamp was used after the creasing of the paper, just how much more of the evidence may have been manufactured? Rather, is any part of it real?

Now I have taken a lot of your time again and I apologize. I hope we hear you very soon on our radios.

Your friend,

