

Wall Street Journal

June 17, 1971

Dear Kent,

Thank you for your letter of June 14. You are welcome to keep the "Frame-Up" file, and I will send you copies of anything I obtain which might supplement it.

I must admit some disappointment in your decision not to write a separate item on Kaplan's review, as I believe that there are several points which distinguish it from other Times axe-jobs.

For one thing, Weisberg's book is not a novel or a literary essay, but the only documented study of the government frame-up of James Earl Ray. I wish you would read "Frame-Up" because I think you will see that it is exhaustively documented, and its conclusions are difficult to dispute on a factual basis. By suppressing "Frame-Up" the Times is not merely smearing a book and an author, but in effect it is saying that despite its eloquent editorial demanding the truth, the Times really does not want it, and they will do what they can to bury anyone who seeks to reveal it. The Times review has all but killed "Frame-Up." If you read it, I think that you will agree that it is a book which raises some frightening questions, not on a platonic level, but on an evidentiary level, baring the disparity between our Constitution and our Government. Mr. Weisberg's point is that if Ray's rights can be systematically denied him, then the rights of all of us hang on a slender thread. Ray's treatment was in every sense of the word a lynching.

In the case of Brossard's book the Times did publish his letter and several others, in effect acknowledging what it had done. In Weisberg's case only Geoffrey Wolff's libelous and untrue letter (dealing with an admittedly tangential subject) was printed. Thus rather than acknowledge their bias or simply ignoring it, they added to it. Neither Wolff's letter nor Kaplan's review dealt with the contents of "Frame-Up." Rather, each was an attempt to discredit Weisberg as a credible reporter of facts. If Weisberg truly lacks credibility, why did Kaplan choose in both the 1967 American Scholar article and the Times review not to challenge a single Weisberg point? Instead Kaplan chose to make personal attacks upon Weisberg rather than to dispute the evidence Weisberg had presented.

While I agree that Weisberg's style of writing leaves much to be desired, the Times could have edited portions of the May 2 letter or it could have solicited one more suitable for publication (indeed, Leonard told me that he was much disturbed by the May 2 letter, and in addition to soliciting a letter from me, he indicated that at least part of Weisberg's would be published as well). When I spoke to Leonard after the publication of Wolff's letter he told me that it had been in type for some time. Why then, did they not communicate with Weisberg? In addition, if Weisberg's letter was too long and intemperate, I don't believe that the same can be said of my letter of May 10, or Carol Jackson's letter of May 14 (you should have copies of both), yet they printed neither.

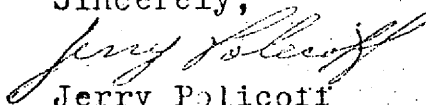
You might be interested in some facts behind Wolff's letter. He is a friend of one of Weisberg's publishers, Harris Deinstrey. He had read "Frame-Up" and was planning to review it for Newsweek. If he objected to that footnote when he read the book he did not mention it to Harris. After Kaplan's review appeared he told Harris that the appearance of that footnote in Kaplan's review had caused him " considerable embarrassment," and that he was writing to the Times denying it. He also told

I have nothing to gain from the success of this book except a feeling of satisfaction for my part in helping it to happen. I met Mr. Weisberg as a result of my interest in his writing and that of Lane, Sauvage, Popkin, Meagher, and others. I have come to regard both Harold and his wife with deep affection, and I have come to respect Harold as a man of sincere conscience who is as dedicated to his task as one can possibly be. I also have come to believe that as a meticulous researcher he is probably without equal.

Please consider what I have written in this letter. The Times has been doing this with total impunity for far too long, and they have yet to be taken to task for it.

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,


Jerry Policoff