

July 7, 1967

Editor  
Chicago Tribune  
Chicago, Illinois

Sir:

That you could print the series of articles by AP "Newswriters" Gavzer and Moody on the responsibility of the AP I can understand, but that you would, without thorough investigation, by embellishing it with a signed article by your reporter, Wayne Thomas, add your prestige to it without checking I do not understand.

Had you done so, you would find this series largely distortions, lies, misrepresentations and wrong pretended quotations of Warren Commission testimony. As they relate to me, they are fiction. AP has not accepted my challenge to a confrontation on fact.

That your reporter did not read this series is reflected in his statement that Gavzer and Moody "annotated the books of the critics ... Leo Savage ..." The book of this reputable French correspondent should have been included. It was not. His name is not mentioned. To AP fiction, Thomas added his own, a minor example of which is his gleeful and inaccurate line that they "conducted a charge-by-charge comparison of allegations of the critics with the pertinent material ..."

This is utter nonsense. Especially with reference to me, where they consistently use the cheap and quite unoriginal device copyrighted by Charles Roberts, saying, "Lane, Epstein and Weisberg say" and then saying what I do not but pretending to demolish my writing by lumping it with what they say Lane or Epstein says. On the few occasions they address my exact language, they misrepresent. For example, they quote what I report Dr. Shires testified to about the fragment of bullet in Governor Connally's chest.

"Now let us see what Dr. Shires really said," they tell their readers, and they quote, as though he were talking about metal remaining in the chest, what the doctor actually said on another subject. The truth is that this doctor, the one in charge of the Governor's case, detected the metal in the X-rays. Rather than quoting the language to which my footnote refers, "... from postoperative X-rays there is a small fragment remaining, but the initial fragments, I think, Dr. Shaw saw before I arrived" (Gill), they go to the question and answer immediately preceding it, which have nothing to do with bullet fragments:

"Mr. Specter. Do you have any knowledge of the damage which was done to the rib?

"Dr. Shires. Only from hearsay from Dr. Shaw, that's all."

By this characteristic and not accidental dishonesty, by the cheapest journalistic trickery, Gavzer, Moody and the AP pretend that Dr. Shires

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said he had but hearsay knowledge of the fragment of metal in the governor's chest. They knew this to be false. There is no other way they can approach my writing.

I regret to say this is not an exceptional case. I further regret this kind of journalism when an American President has been murdered and consigned to history with the dubious epitaph of a fake inquest, for I believe that if this can happen, if a President can be murdered and the official investigation can fail to answer questions it is within the capacity of men to answer - fail in so many cases even to ask them - then no incumbent is ever safe and the institution, with all those of our society, is in jeopardy.

I regret that your paper, which enjoys a different tradition, allowed itself to be used as an instrument of government propaganda.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg