

New Address: Rt. 7, Frederick, Md. 21701 : 301, 473-8186
October 14, 1967

Mr. Norman Podhoretz,
Editor, Commentary
165 East 56 St.,
New York, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Podhoretz,

When I wrote you after the appearance of the article pretending defense of the Warren Commission by the very eminent and learned Chancellor Kent Professor of Law at Yale and, more briefly, on the occasion of his piece on the CBS videowhiteashes in the New Republic, you probably thought me intemperate. How much I really underrated his and your literary, intellectual and historical sin you have yet to learn.

Almost singular devotion to the continuation of my own work as precluded this letter until now. The fourth part of my ^{own} "report on the Warren Report", the fourth of the six-part WHITEWASH series, is now appearing. You ignored the first two, WHITEWASH, THE REPORT ON THE WARREN REPORT and WHITEWASH II: THE FBI-SECRET SERVICE COVERUP. Had you not, your publication of his original display of learned ignorance would have been impossible. Since then I have written and published PHOTOGRAPHIC WHITEWASH: SUPPRESSED KENNEDY ASSASSINATION PICTURES. You no doubt found this book easier to avoid because the New York Times found it and its revelations worth 40 column inches as news. Save for the breaking of a contract, the book Parallax is now bring out would have been the third. It is entitled OSWALD IN NEW ORLEANS: CASE FOR CONSPIRACY WITH THE CIA. If he has until now escaped intellectual bellyaches, your scholarly commentator, when he reads that and recalls his studied New Republic pronouncement, "District Attorney Garrison of New Orleans, who cuts a preposterous figure ...", he should then need Maalox for his conscience. I have completed the text of the fifth book, tentatively entitled POST MORTEM: SUPPRESSED KENNEDY AUTOPTSY.

It is in your columns that Professor Bickel schemized his special belnding of sycophancy and ignorance into what you presented as thorough scholarship. His material comes from a hasty, incomplete and entirely incompetent scanning of some of the Commission's appended data in the 26 volumes of "evidence". (How a law professor could even rub his fingers over them without public nausea escapes me.) To this he adds the pretense that this is all, for he was not about ~~to~~ do the work required to plumb the enormous suppressions he might have disclosed had his dedication to genuine scholarship led him to the National Archives. But, sublime in his ignorance, Professor Bickel unabashedly displayed it in the New Republic, content as the Emperor in his New Clothes.

The CBS "firsthour was a brilliant achievement which demonstrated how much new light a second, more effective official inquiry could shed." I should like to challenge this great scholar to cite a single piece of "new" information in that or any of the other three CBS shows.

Compounding the CBS plagiarism and indifferent to his own ignorance first displayed with such virtuosity in your October 1966 issue, Professor Bickel then said that "CBS discovered" Zapruder's "film indicates that the camera jumped slightly." Had he not been so intent on suppressing all credit to the first book on this subject, WHITEWASH, Bickel would have known that CBS took this, without credit, from page 47. CBS read this book in its limited edition in early 1966 and thereafter, when they were preparing their own whitewash and were intouch with me about it and my other work, in

WHITEWASH II, after I had access to the Archives, I studied the Zapruder film in various forms and added to this what CBS also took credit for.

Like CBS, Bickel finds it possible to pursue his own special effort to make wrong appear right by ignoring a missed bullet, acknowledged by the Report and attested to by the blood of James Tague, wounded by its fragments or a spray of curbstone concrete it caused. Here we have the apotheosis of scholarship, lick-spittle style, and thus Bickel can conclude that each of the three shots he, like the Commission he really seeks to defend, feels he can pretend a single man could have fired with that rifle, hit either the President or the Governor and all the shooting is accounted for. There is, of course, evidence of other firing, but here, from Bickel's and CBS's accounting, with the bullet that made them want Tague to have bled in vain, we have four shots and the end of the Report and its apologists.

Only the omniscient can say what "occurred to the Commission and its FBI experts". Bickel is omniscient, for he tells us that the probability of a shot earlier than the Report did not "occur" to them. I tell him it did and they could not write this Report without pretending it didn't. He can describe himself - as a liar, a fool, a sycophant or a deficient scholar. The Commission staff knew that the President had been struck before Frame 210 of the Zapruder film. I shall be publishing this proof in POST MORTEM. Their problem was Tague. Thus they had to have a single bullet inflict all the nonfatal injuries the number of which Bickel halves - they were seven - and through this career like nothing in mythology or science fiction not only not lose more metal than is missing from the bullet said to have done this, but simultaneously, as Bickel, CBS, and the Commission ignore, to have remained also undeformed.

His "alternative", the every-bullet-hits-a-man theory, is neither his nor CBS's but was the case turned over to the Commission by the Secret Service. If he did not know this when he wrote for you, were his pretensions warranted, he should have before he wrote for the New Republic for I published this in WHITEWASH II, complete with the suppressed Secret Service pictures of it! If he ever reads before he writes, I encourage the eminence to silence until he reads POST MORTEM, where I enlarge upon this greatly.

He may pray for this nonsense to "hang together" with "a fresh look", but he will do as well to pray that the tides do not rise.

I spare you further commentary on your Canute of scholars, this noted apostle of the law and justice, for it should be unnecessary. I repeat what I told you a year ago, that such "defenses" as his, sired by ignorance, conceived by stupidity and delived by sycophancy (yours), would make the members of the Commission defenseless. A year ago it might have been able to persuade the people that the members of the Commission might have been only misguided, honestly wrong. Bickel and those others, all of whom abdicated their responsibilities at the time of the assassination and of its official accounting, may, by such writing, have made this belief impossible.

Again I ask you, when is the abdication of the intellectual to end? When is our society to get from them the leadership and direction it should be, entitled to expect? When will they desert the fairies and the needles and seek and report the truth? When will they remember that it is by criticism and the rectification of error that a democratic society is viable?

And when will they ask themselves what changes in national policy followed the assassination and if there is a connection?

Sincerely yours,

Harold Weisberg