

Mr. Bernard Fensterwald, Jr.  
910 16 St., NW, 6th floor  
Washington, D.C. 20006

1/7/76

Dear Bud,

Countrymen have a saying, "college educated ignoramus," used to describe people with good minds and educations and no common sense. It falls short with you because you either know better or are crazy. And while persisting in the most despicable personal conduct you see in and anticipate nothing but evil in others and ill intentions toward you.

No, I am not going to see Jimmy to get you fired. And it was arranged before the Potemac piece came out of I knew you were even mentioned in it. And the only time I have ever talked to him about firing anybody was at your request because you did not want it in the mails. I then did not talk about it but wrote it out so I could show it to him and in advance gave Jim a carbon to be sure it was OK.

Jim called me this evening about the calendar call in 75-1996. I asked him if he has seen you, he said you and he had spoken briefly, I asked if you had anything to say about what I had written you and he said you supposed I'd now get you fired. No more. No regret, not even minimal apology, no sign of a decent, normal human feeling.

You are so used to living without regard to your obligations, so concerned only with gratifying a sick ego with artificialities regardless of cost or means, that you can't understand that others may feel their obligations. Perhaps that I feel and try to live up to my obligations is one of the many things you hold against me. Your lack of concern for your responsibilities, your sick ambition you have neither the ability nor the knowledge to achieve and what it drives you to and your endless indiscretions have been an enormous burden to me because the combination ~~of~~ jeopardizes a number of objectives, including Jimmy's defense. Beginning with your failing to live up to your agreement with me (no provision of which did not serve your interest) and with getting and keeping Livingston you have been a greater obstacle to that defense than the other side. You have done nothing but mess up and you have prepared for nothing, too.

I have not written Jimmy since the story appeared. I have had him sent a copy of it and of a Zodiac story on one of Bob's larger insanities. I do owe him this. I'll take him one of Wayne's rather than mail it in the hope it has escaped official attention and not to have it intercepted in the mail. Jim has an abridged version. I have the original. It is absolutely insane and it, too, is your responsibility, ~~to~~ not ever doing your job to begin with and by abdication when I first told you of Wayne's first visit on the fraudulent representation by Bob that Wayne is Ray's investigator. So this rotten piece is now attached to the defense, too.

I have never lied to Jimmy and I'll not start now to cover for you again. You have consistently underestimated his understanding, as when you stepped off to sell him a bill of goods on the proposed Playbey article (coinciding in time with this shameless and false self-promotion). He wrote me immediately. Whether you lie to him again or not is your affair. I do not intend to raise these articles with him. But what will my position be, what can I honestly tell him if he asks me? Don't you ~~ever~~ think of anything except cheap personal publicity? Or the consequences at some point or another? Especially when you had the whole thing delivered on a platter and then were too incompetent, egomaniacal, lazy or a combination to do what could have given you what you so long for legitimately?

My own opinion, if it is worth anything to you, is that Jimmy is not thinking about and would prefer not to be forced to any changes at least through 6th circuit. You should have realized this on your own when he did not fire Bob at your suggestion.

Because you had asked me to undertake two things for you and I did, I am certain I reported on this and the other to you as soon as you stopped making it impossible. So you should also have had specific knowledge. But the political toy-soldiers you are playing on the Hill alone could have driven any rational thoughts from your mind.

If you can ever escape the false world you have created on this subject you might well give some thought to what you have done to yourself. The time may come when it will confront you. Don't you, for example, think that Jimmy is not aware of legal deficiencies. He has, on his initiative, not mine, written me about them. If you have any concern for yourself you'll start keeping the promises you made long ago, and diligently, as well as casting all the silliness you have talked yourself into out of your mind and critically review your past and your record. You have already done more than enough to ruin yourself. If anything like this were my intention do you not see that long before this, when your abuses and cheap chiselling became so abusive, I'd not have taken advantage of this?

However, do not misread this into thinking I do not mean what I have written you on my own. I was and I am serious and it is a matter in which Jim can't be involved. But it comes for me at a fortunate time because of prior arrangements on other matters.

I have no reasons to believe you'll pay any attention to advice that serves your interest or listen even if you hear words. If you were capable of shame you'd not be able to see Jim or me. Or Jimmy. I certainly have no desire to be with you, unless you are prepared to address what I've addressed with you. I am serious about it, after all these years. But should lightning strike I'll be in Washington for the calendar call, I think Jim said the 21st. Thereafter not until the next medical appointment on the 4th.

I'll be going directly to New York from Nashville and while I don't think you'll want to speak to me on my return Sunday night it won't be possible anyway. Lil is working now and I'll be too far behind on mailings. I have, I think, arranged for commercial distribution of my books through an old friend who is an expert in publishing law. I'm to meet with him and the distributor. He has not been able to represent me in other publisher problems because of prior legal associations. If any time remains I'll speak to him about CBS, which ripped off Frame-Up despite a prior and recorded agreement and advance written notice. If any time then remains you can guess what else I'll talk about. But I know I'll have to go back to New York again and there will at some point be time. Until then don't kid yourself into believing that what I have written about is all there is or all I have.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg