

From the Editor

EVENING STANDARD
47, SHOE LANE. E.C.4.

FLEET ST. 3000
TELEX 21909

15th January, 1968


Dear Mr. Weisberg,

Thank you for your letter of January 4 regarding Jeremy Campbell's news story on The Mind of Jim Garrison.

Mr. Campbell says that he cannot follow your argument about his use of 'secondary sources'. He was, as far as he knows, the first reporter to interview Manchester personally about his then unpublished book Death of a President, weeks before the main story broke. If Manchester was not a primary source in a story about his own book, he does not know who is.

I may say that Jeremy Campbell retains my complete confidence as one of the most outstanding English correspondents in the United States.

Yours sincerely,


Charles Wintour

Mr. Harold Weisberg,
Coq d'Or Press,
Route 7,
Frederick,
MD. 21701,
U.S.A.



Lillian & Harold Weisberg

Coq d'Or Press HYATTSTOWN, MD. 20734

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Mr. Charles Wintour, Editor
The Evening Standard
47, Shoe Lane
London, England

Dear Mr. Wintour,

That Mr. Campbell "cannot follow" my "argument about his use of 'secondary sources' in his story on Jim Garrison's alleged mental illness because two years earlier he was, as he erroneously claims "the first reporter to interview Manchester personally" is the kind of non-responsive response I might have expected from him but not from you.

What I referred to was his use of the Washington Post's Chicago Tribune story. There can be no doubt of what I wrote. This sentence: "I invite you to make a word-by-word comparison between what Mr. Campbell signed and what the Washington Post used the same day from the Chicago Tribune press service" leaves no possibility of honest misunderstanding.

Your letter in no way addresses itself to the fact of mine, to the entire dishonesty of this kind of "reporting". Were there the slightest possibility of honorable intent on Mr. Campbell's part or your own there would, at the very least, have been a followup as an at least attempted antidote to this poison. It is typical of the worst in U.S. journalism. I regret having had a higher opinion of your standards.

From my own knowledge of U.S. affairs and slight contact with Mr. Campbell I can well understand your sentence, "I may say that Jeremy Campbell retains my complete confidence as one of the most outstanding English correspondents in the United States." It tells me you do not read your competition, that your confidence is easily earned and more readily preserved.

So you can enjoy an even higher opinion of Mr. Campbell, may I suggest that you reread, in the light of what from even his writing you should today know, the story he refers to about his interview with Manchester? If you find this as informative as I think you should, perhaps you would benefit from a rereading of his dispatch published June 21, 1967. The headline announces the "collapse" of the case, slightly prematurely. It is justified by the story, which begins with the libel that Perry Russo "admitted...perjury" then continues with the announcement, also a little premature, that Clay Bertrand "was finally traced by a demon reporter from NEC, who has now passed his name on to the Department of Justice in Washington."

Here is Mr. Campbell at his best—at least in describing Walter Sheridan as a "demon". He is—at attempting to bribe witnesses and extending what here is known as the "Philadelphia" practice of law to avoid appearance before the grand jury he should be so anxious to present his evidence to. His candidate, one Gene Davis, has already filed rather large lawsuits over the misidentification.

This story also recounts Governor McKeithen's fear over his "soundings" of public opinion that show "Garrison's popularity is slipping dangerously". There are interesting reflections- like his having Garrison to his Roosevelt suite the night of the election (I also was there). And he "flatly" refused any more money from the coffers of the State." This is a unique way of saying Garrison got a raise in salary. How clever!

Mr. Campbell, more than eight months ago, presented your readers what he called a "pertinent question": "If this is the end of the Garrison case is it also the end of Jim Garrison?" Just how pertinent can your "outstanding" correspondent be? Or is "pertinent" not quite the right word?

There is choice language referring to the CIA, to David Ferrie's connection with it (and are we forgetting his connection with Oswald?), and that "almost certainly Garrison will never have to prove his case against the CIA." This, too, is a quaint formulation when one recalls that he subpoenaed the head of the CIA, plus two FBI agents, who refused to testify. The next sentence establishes just how quaint: "He talks in the material beritone of summoning members of the Agency to take the stand in the process of the State, but everyone knows this is simple poetry".

Well, we know the Mr. Campbell is not poet laureate, anyway.


Now if you have any doubts about the involvement of the CIA in the assassination, it was come back to the "outstanding" service rendered by your correspondent, for this quite appears in my book, "Oswald in New Orleans", which has been available to him and many in the U.S. press and on the radio and TV stations where he lives. Since writing that book I have developed more evidence of it, like the acknowledgement of the staff in primary responsibility of how he knew about it, why he did not report, tragically, how it all came out in another way in the report. I would be very happy were you to commission an article on it.

Unless, of course, you fear the consequences of a fresh breath through your columns, a little truth instead of official propaganda. My evidence is the voice of the Commission's official tape recorded, together with quite a series of previously-suppressed FBI and Secret Service reports. It is evidence that certainly could be admitted in court.

Taking your confidence in Mr. Campbell's writing as in point, I conclude you would not have confidence in me. This is, perhaps, ~~what~~ ^{because} I have published something like a million words on this subject, there is no one who has alleged to my face that I have made a single basic or serious error.

However, I do not want to give the impression that Mr. Campbell is entirely incapable of accurate reporting on this subject just because he presents the libels of others as his own or always manages to repeat what the U.S. Government desires. When in June he wrote "the Associated Press refuses to print a word about" Garrison he was precisely correct. One of the charges Garrison has made, coming from the introduction of my third book, PHOTOGRAPHIC WHITEWASH: SUPPRESSED KENNEDY ASSASSINATION PICTURES, that the President is both the obvious beneficiary of the assassination and the man ultimately responsible for the suppression of what cannot be legally suppressed, went without mention, even though he made the charge before a major press convention. Like me, Garrison says there is no evidence that Mr. Johnson caused the assassination, but the behavior of the government under him makes more and more people wonder if he had, and therefore he should end the suppressions. "his, of course, is not news, is it?"

Sincerely,


Harold Weisberg