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Mr. Steven Roberts
Los Angeles Bureau Chief
The New York Times
900 Wilshire Boulevard
Los Angeles, California 90017

October 24, 1971

Dear Mr. Roberts:

I am making a study of the political assassinations of the last decade. Recently I had a discussion with Gene Roberts about an assignment he participated in in late 1966. I then asked him why The Times had reported almost nothing on the current controversy concerning tampering of evidence, charges by ballistics experts on impropriety of ballistics testimony, and charges by a well known criminologist about the possibility of a second gunman in the Sirhan case. Mr. Roberts was unaware of these developments and suggested that I contact Wallace Turner who he felt might normally get the assignment. I decided, however, that since failure to report developments of this magnitude must involve a policy decision, that I should write to the Bureau Chief instead.

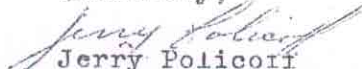
To my knowledge, the entire scope of Times coverage on this story was composed of two small AP dispatches and one Special to The New York Times piece of similar length. On the other hand, The Los Angeles Times has given the story major, usually page one, play.

Outside of the Los Angeles area, few people are aware that any controversy has arisen over the Sirhan case. Scandal sheets like the National Enquirer have done a far more complete job of reporting these developments than The Times, or for that matter, most other major representatives of the print and broadcast media.

Please tell me why a story of this dimension has received so little attention from The Times. Is this not news fit to print?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,


Jerry Policoff

P.S. You probably don't remember, but we met once before in the studios of WRVR-FM when you were covering the campaign of Paul O'Dwyer for Senator. You gave me a going-over because I was being "impractical" by supporting an independent candidacy for Eugene McCarthy. I'm glad to see that you've done so well in the interim.