Senator Richard Schweiker,
Room 347, Senate Office Bldg.,
Washington, D.C.

1/6/76

Dear Dick,

Enclosed with this will be a caron of my letter to Specter. I will be sending it by certified mail tomorrow. We have no outgoing mail until then.

Some of the questions were asked, the tape was made and played to me over the phone so I could tape it, by a Philadelphia reporter who as an undergraduate was in an audience before which I appeared in early 1967.

Specter waited until the tapes were off to make the crack about you. In context it was a crack. It is not in Specter's voice but is reported to me by the reporter.

Specter is in trouble on this and he would like to use the clear advantage he has over you on knowledge of his part of your work and other matters . One of these is that you are both now blaming only the FBI, CIA, etc. This relieves him of an enormous part of the burden and to a degree has you arguing his side. In addition to that, the Commission is not innocent in those areas that have attracted most of the recent public attention. (I once told you that most of those who have become recognized as "experts" are by virtue of public relations only.)

I don't know how far you have gotten in Post Mortem. It does not contain all I know and I don't retain all it holds. But I don't think there is anyone who has the knowledge I do and most of those who claim expertise in the medical area don't really know it. The most widely quoted can be quoted in almost any way about it. As I believe Post Mortem reports, I had to try to give him his basic understanding of fairly clear English. It is his knowledge of my knowledge that has impelled Specter to defer or reject any confrontation with me all these years.

So, while I don't expect him to accept now, I'm making a new effort now. And if I get an invitation to address a Pennsylvania audience I'll read this letter and some of the past ones and then deal with Specter's record as well as the FBI's, which is not primary in the medical evidence. Moreover, I'll ask the lecture bureau I now have to circularize Pennsylvania colleges with this letter and a statement that Specter is afraid to face his own record.

The crack about you after the taping stopped was that he'd debate you. In time I presume this will get back to you and that you will resist the temptation.

CBA has elected to give me the missing pages of CD1347 rather than go to court.

I have expanded the complaint in CA 75-1996, for the King materials. The government is building a better record for me by lying. The FBI unloaded a bum steer on your committee with all its "revelations" about Hoover and King. Only two were new. One didn't happen. I'm following it as best I can, more than one way. I may have help by the end of the week. But when it knew only one of the disclosures was new and had a chance of coming out in any event why it created a furore over what it did not do and knew had not happened I think indicates a desire to direct attention away from what may well have happened. My analysis of what this was is what I'm trying to pursue.

Thanks for your recent note.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

HAROLD WEISBERG
ROUTE 12 - OLD RECEIVER ROAD
FREDERICK, MD. 21701
January 16 1976

Mr. Arlen Specter
3417 Warden Drive
Philadelphia, Pa. 19129

Dear Mr. Specter:

In your today's press conference you were asked if you would debate me on your work on the Warren Commission. Your reply was that you would "have to think it over." Whereupon you launched into an attack on all the executive agencies for the failures of that Commission, one of whose most active and most important counsel you were. Then, as an afterthought, you said you would debate Senator Schweiker.

You have been "thinking over" whether to debate me for ten years. Most recently you have been "thinking it over" from the time University of Maryland students asked this of you in November. Back in 1966 you must have ducked at least two dozen such invitations. The last in that year a New York TV station and I thought you and three of your colleagues had accepted in a gang-up on me to have been titled "The Majority Report." You flew off to England for an easier mark and a free vacation and the others just flew. Period. The domestic show never came off despite their/your asking for it.

I have these questions about your record of running away from the one person who knows most about your record on the crucial medical evidence of the Warren Commission:

Are you fit to be a candidate for the United States Senate if in ten years you have not been able to make up your mind? Do the people of Pennsylvania want as a Senator a man who can't make up his mind in ten years? Especially when his integrity is in question, and that about the investigation of the assassination of a President which you parlayed into a political career?

Is it that you fear public confrontation with one who has studied your work more than any other would be ruinous to you and to your present political ambitions?

With all the public interest in political assassinations, if yours is as solid, decent and honorable a record as you pretend, why do you not grab this opportunity to advance your political ambitions while establishing beyond question that your work was all you claim for it in that tragic era that made you what you have become?

My credentials as an opponent you cannot equal. I am the one man the FBI has certified in court knows more about this subject than anyone in the FBI. I have written by far more on the subject than anyone else and more on your part of the work than you did in your official capacity and thereafter combined.

Your afterthought offer to debate Senator Schweiker is dirty politics and plain dirty. He has all the many responsibilities of a Senator and on his subcommittee, the life of which is short and staff small, he has had the obligation of looking into much more than your part if, in fact, that has fallen within his duties. Although you are of

the same party, yuu are adversaries. I understand you made a personal contribution to his last opppnent. So you pick a man who has not had the capability of learning what I have learned, knowing what I know, a man who is your political enemy, to try to take political advantage of him while still, after ten years, having to make up your mind whether to debate an expert on your work.

So, formally, I challenge you to a debate under the simplest conditions and on your turf. For example, any law school in Philadelphia. I will agree to almost any format and any moderator, such as a law-school dean, an experienced criminal lawyer - anyone of your selectinn and not partisan. I will agree to limitations on opening statements or to none at all; to limitations on answers to avoid filibusters; and in fairness to you, to exclude what was outside your area of work unless you elect to go into any such area, in which event I will have no objection.

In short, you can, for all practical purposes, write your own ticket.

I have two stipulations only: That each of us be given a tape recording with no restrictions on its use; and that my part be handled through Mr. Alan Walker of the Program Corporation of America, 914/428-5840, to meet my contractual obligations.

Two more weeks ought to be enough time, after Ten years, for you to "think it over." For this period I will have nothing further to say. If thereafter you have not accepted, I will consider myself free to comment anywhere and in any way I see fit. I will be away for a short period beginning the 15th.

I do suggest that if all the things you have been saying for all these years, including today, are factual and you have confidence in them, you will jump at this offer because in all ways I am the senior of you and the Warren Commission's and the executive agencies' critics.

Yours truly,

Harold Weisberg