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

February 3, 1976

City Editor:
Philabelphia Bulletin, 30th and Market Sts., Philadelphia, Pa.
Philadelphia Daily News, 400 N. Broad St., Philadelphia, Pa.
Philadelphia Inquirer, 400 N. Broad St., Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Editor:

The enclosed copies of my letter to Arlen Specter and his refusal to accept it are in part self-explanatory. I am no stranger to Mr. Specter, although he has managed on several dozen occasions to avoid a meeting.

The combination of his exploitation of the role he served on the Warren Commission and his newest refusal to debate his work with me under auspices and place of his own selection prompts my challenge.

In 1967, while he was District Attorney and after one of his unopposed-only coast-to-coast appearances on TV, I made this challenge explicit. I published a book accusing him of suborning perjury, said that if I erred it was actionable, and I awaited hearing from him. When he remained silent and I made a public appearance in suburban Philadelphia, I let the papers know I would be repeating the charge and daring him to sue me for libel on his own turf.

I understand Mr. Specter describes what he is now doing on college campuses as a "blitz" and that it includes the Warren Report and his work on it. But he still refuses to confront the expert on his work on any campus. Is "blitz" the right description? In my view, it is also a special, cowardly commercialization of a great tragedy.

There can be no commercialization in this for me because I have no books on sale in Philadelphia. I have had to be my own publisher because of the opposition to the first book on the Warren Commission, Whitewash, which later became a best-seller.

I have used the Freedom of Information law more than anyone else. The legislative history of its amending lists one of my suits as first of four requiring the amending. This suit dealt with an area of Mr. Specter's work.

If you file your wire copy, you will find that on Friday, November 14, 1975 (embargoed until Sunday a.m.), I held a press conference at the National Press Club in Washington to announce Post Mortem. This book, the largest and I think far and away the most definitive on the subject, centers on Mr. Specter's area of work. It includes some of his own once-secret papers in facsimile and what I think you will agree are extraordinary if not unprecedented until now suppressed evidence it was his duty to obtain and use - and he did not. The wire copy quotes what I said: this book charges perjury and its subornation and I challenge all named to appear before any duly constituted Congressional committee with us both subject to the penalties of perjury.

Mr. Specter was silent. David Belin debated me at Vanderbilt University the following Wednesday night. He had read only part of Post Mortem by then. As of that night he refused to join in my 1965 request for a full Congressional investigation. Two and a half days later, if self-servingly, he did, a 100 percent switch.

I suggest that if his knowledge of my earlier work does not control Mr. Specter's fear of confrontation, the newest work persuades him he dare not. Should he, it will be in Philadelphia. So, if I libel him, that is where I would be charged or sued - where he is a man of influence and all I can claim is birth four blocks south of old Shibe Park 63 years ago.

I think you will realize that the odds are with him, except for the facts. He is an experienced lawyer. In my youth I was an occasional correspondent for two Philadelphia papers, a reporter, a Washington correspondent for several magazines, an investigative reporter, a Senate investigator and an intelligence analyst. I deal with fact, not lawyer's devices. And if there is any doubt about my expertise, the FBI has certified to a federal court that I know more about the JFK assassination than anyone in the FBI.

Although in addition to phlebitis I have other limitations, if Mr. Specter persists in fear of confrontation, I would be willing to appear before any Philadelphia college audience and say what he is afraid to face while he commercializes untruth unilaterally.

Please notice that I addressed Mr. Specter at his home. He refused two certified notices, as the envelope shows. It seems the only means I have of reaching him is through you.

When he appears to have made the Warren Commission, its Report and his role part of his political campaign, I do believe those he asks to send him to the Senate should know his record from other than him.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg