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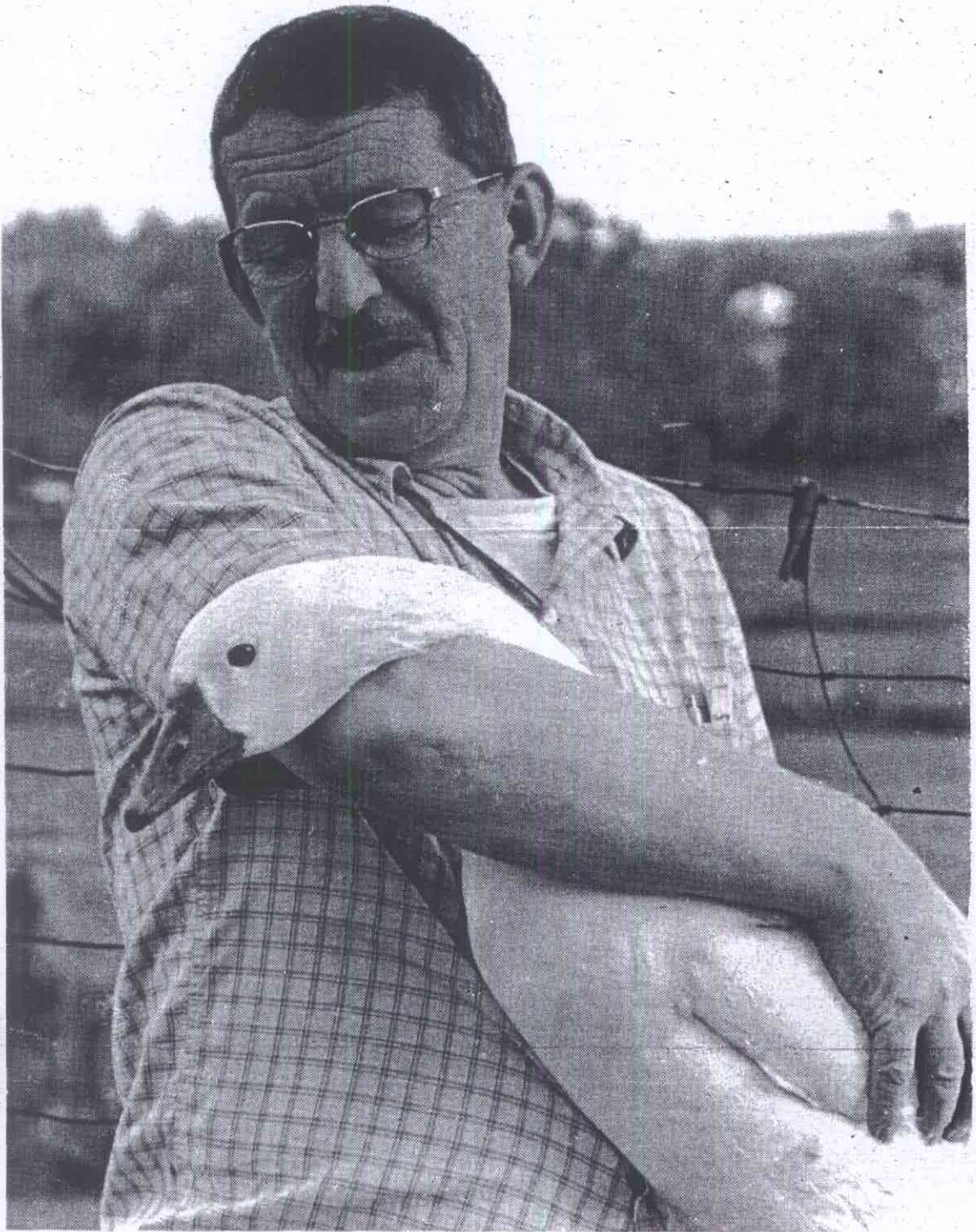
The Courier

CLARKSBURG

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NEWS

Farmer Author of Controversial Report



The author of "Whitewash" discusses matters with a pet goose at his Hyattstown farm.

by Mrs. John Beecher

Harold Weisberg, who lives quietly with his wife on a small farm in Hyattstown, Maryland, is a newspaper and magazine writer, a former Senate investigator, and poultry farmer. Mr. Weisberg followed the investigation of the assassination of President Kennedy more closely than most of his fellow Americans and early came to the conclusion that the whole truth was not being told. The Report of the Warren Commission, published in the fall of 1964, confirmed his convictions. Since Mr. Weisberg passionately believes that an informed public is vital to the existence of a free society such as ours, he spent long painstaking months searching the archives of the Commission and analyzing the Report, and in mid-February completed a book, which he called "Whitewash - The Report on the Warren Report." It offered "the first critical study based on a close analysis of the 26-volumes themselves." (This is not only Mr. Weisberg's assertion, but is a direct quotation from one of the books on the assassination and investigation which now proliferate, and which apparently have little difficulty finding publishers.)

Last week Mr. Weisberg talked about his efforts to have the book published and how he eventually brought it to the attention of the American public himself.

Mr. Weisberg offered his manuscript to 63 U.S. book publishers and a number of French, English and German publishers, during a 14-month period. Twenty-one refused to read it. Some considered it as many as four times but all eventually declined to publish. In summing up his efforts at publication Mr. Weisberg says in his preface to "Whitewash," "Without exception, all the publishers pronounced the subject matter important, one insisting even the author did not realize how important. Many also expressed the firm conviction the book should, in addition, be profitable. Yet all shunned the profits as much as the honor. In all the author alone has made 103 offers of this book, not counting repeaters." Despite repeated praise and expressions of interest, no publisher accepted the manuscript. Mr. Weisberg felt compelled, therefore, to publish and distribute the book himself.

Mrs. Weisberg typed the book for printing by offset reproduction. The 7 by 10 size chosen for the book originally as a more readable presentation of single space offset work was abandoned in favor of the 6 by 9 size because of the cost involved in printing the larger size. A limited edition of the book was printed in August, 1965, by Merkle Press, Washington, D. C.

After the first printing was available for general distribution on May 9, 1966, Mr. Weisberg set about the difficult job of distribution himself. He left copies at 17 local stores, one of whom obtained a local distributor for the book. An adverse story in May by the Washington Post on all inquiries into the Warren Report created a terrific interest in the book. In the first week of June, 1966, Mr. Weisberg was invited to attend the Book Sellers Association meeting in Washington. He did so, and publishers who had declined to publish the book actually recommended it to distributors, most of whom ordered the book. A second printing had to be made in July 1966; less than

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a month later a third printing was needed; and in early October a much larger fourth printing was arranged to fill orders on hand. As of this time he has sold more than 15,000 copies.

Mr. Weisberg has appeared on radio and television to discuss his book and has been asked for articles by book magazines and other media. In late July he appeared on the Allen Burke TV Show, in New York. The show lasted for two hours, and Mr. Weisberg feels he triumphed over critics planted in the audience. The show brought over 300 letters in praise of his work.

Interest continues to grow here and abroad. In July the "Arriba" newspaper of Madrid, asked for serialization rights; a German magazine is also negotiating for them with Gordon Harbord, his London agent. Recently Mr. Weisberg participated in another panel discussion produced on tape by Metromedia in New York for distribution to television stations. The discussion was moderated by Jim Bishop, Mark Lane and Leo Sauvage, the French author who has written on this subject, are among the other members. The discussion is scheduled for viewing on November 12, in Washington on Channel 5, and is expected to last three hours.

Mr. Weisberg has written a second book entitled, "Whitewash II: Who Did It!" He feels deeply that the Warren Report cannot be allowed to stand as history's answer to the assassination of President Kennedy. He believes a new investigation must be made completely in the public eye by the Government, preferably by Congress.

Private publication is usually an author's knell, but Harold Weisberg refused to let his work be buried.

Reluctant as many of us will be to review this national tragedy, we are going to have to read Weisberg's and other works on the subject, to decide what must be done.