

To the Editor of Commentary:

The eminent...Chancellor Kent
Professor of Law and Legal History at
Yale University, Alexander M. Bickel,
has paid me the honor of not letting
the name of my book, Whitewash: The
Report of the Warren Report, pass
his lips. For this boon I am equally
indebted to you, for it was to you that
I sent a copy of the book ^{early} ~~only~~ last May.

Of course, it may just have been
because my book reached you so much
earlier than the others that Mr. Bickel
managed to avoid consideration of it
in what we must accept--because of his
exalted...^Iposition and the reputation
...of your learned journal--as an ex-
haustive study of the literature on
the Report of the President's Com-
mission on the Assassination of Pres-
ident Kennedy....

Please, do not assume that I
resent being forgotten.... It is
a circumstance I have learned to live
with in equanimity and increasing
sales, for I find that those commonly

thought of as intellectuals...prefer
 yo ignore a humble writer who suffers
 the indignity of living on a farm
 and...has managed to survive the lack
 of mention and false heaping-up of
 laurels....

When first I began to read "The
 Failure of the Warren Commission," I
 foolishly thought it was a takeoff on
 Sholem Aleichem. I was led into this
 trap by the clear separation of his
 work from both the law, of which its
 author is such a resplendent authority,
 and reality, with which he has little
 association. Soon it became clear to
 even such a clouded understanding as
 mine....that if it were Sholem Aleichem
 it would be tenth rate. No, said I,
 the ...Chancellor Kent Professor of
 Law and Legal History at Yale University...
 can do nothing tenth rate.

Then it occurred to me that the
 piece--~~like~~ one I read some time back
 in Ramparts--might be a spoof. No, I
 told myself, this would be but fifth-
 rate spoofing and certainly...Mr. Bickel
 would associate himself with nothing
 fifth rate.

Aha! I said as the realization of what must be the truth slowly worked its way through...my..head, this is nonsense--first rate nonsense,..!2 At last I understood, and what a relief! This is nonsense, presented otherwise in order to tax those of limited understanding and delight those who are wise, a fitting presentation for such a journal....

So I must congratulate you...for such a tour of intellectual force, for yours/and the professor's attainment of the absolute perfection in nonsense so cleverly disguised as a review....

Harold Weisberg

^{town}
Hyattsville, Maryland