

Sam DePino
2400 Sycamore
Hanover Park, IL 60105

Harold Weisberg
7627 Old Receiver Rd.
Frederick, MD 21702
12/24/96

Dear Sam,

Terrible news about your wife! So sorry! I went through something like ~~that~~ about 30 years or a bit more ago. Turned out OK but I thought my wife was dead for the 30 miles to the hospital.

Yockey moved to Channel 4 in Washington when he left H.O. I then lost track of him.

Dean Andrews told me that it was ~~hitewash~~ that got Garrison going. He said Garrison gave him a copy.

Wish I had time to tell you how all that ended.

Incredible story

With the ethics and the morals of your experience always there.

He was, in every way, a tragedy. Personally and professionally.

Yet he was erudite, articulate, an authentic intellectual and I think by ~~and~~ large a good DA.

Thanks and with the best possible wishes under the circ^mstance,

Harold

12/17/96
From
Sam DePino

Mr. Harold Weisberg
7627 Old Receiver Rd.
Frederick Md 21702

Dear Harold,

well, it has been more than 30 years since we covered the Garrison Story in New Orleans.

I had actually forgotten the high praise you gave me in the last pages of your book, Oswald in New Orleans. I discovered last week that my original copy is missing, so I ordered another from, I think, your wife. You were asleep and neither of us wanted to disturb you. Besides, I had talked with you a couple of weeks before.

I haven't done much with that story over the years, never really intended to. I was told by a good source that I had come very close to the truth. This, as I informed some people that ABC had offered me that job as a full time network correspondent and radio anchorman. A lot of the stuff I dug up has come to light over the years and the only satisfaction I get now is the confirmations on my findings. Some of those were in your books, but there was a lot in your books that I didn't know or didn't know for sure. One thing that wasn't in your book is that Jim Garrison called me in May or June of the year before the story broke the following year. So, I had the story long before any other reporter because he wanted to compare notes, saying he was told I was on the same trail as he and we should get together. This was what I was hoping for, because I was told soon after he officially began his secret investigation. The only problem was he wanted me to keep the story secret...and I didn't. He talked my bosses into spiking and heading off every time I tried to report it. I called ABC and UPI. ABC said they'd run it when it broke the national wires. UPI told me to prove it, called Garrison and he denied it. So, the other fellows got the awards and the long tenure and I am where I am today, struggling for the next penny, ousted from my career field for no telling what reasons, including the reputation for laying things on the line.

The first day of the Clay Shaw trial, I was removed from the story. The anchor people wanted me to speculate about the case when nothing had really happened yet in court. They all set up for remote coverage outside on the courthouse steps and I was being interviewed. I refused to speculate and the next day, Ross Yockey took my place on the story. I was relegated to the announce booth and out of the newsloop. I continued that bit of dribble called Action Reporter for a while and then called ABC and told them I was ready to take them up on their offer, that I don't want to do commercials, I want to do news.

So, I had the scoop. I thought I told you that when we met and talked. If I didn't, it was because I thought Garrison would at least have the courtesy to tell you about his call to me and how I had the story. But, then, Garrison didn't share a lot of stuff with me after that phone call. He knew I wanted to report and already had given the death blow to my big story. Meantime, Ross reported stories mostly favorable to Jim and he got a lot of material from them. In the final analysis, Ross was the better person to assign the story at the time. I got everything I uncovered completely on my own. Garrison only called to milk me of information and we had the basic same names, but he had the advantage of putting records of Ferrie's arrest and other documentation out of my reach. So, he did have a lot more than I did and certainly didn't share it with me as he did with others, including you. You had already established a world class reputation at investigating this and he knew you and Mark Lane and others could be used, whether you wanted to be or not. Just your world renown was enough for him to want to associate his name. But Jim and his office gave me nothing. His and one of my sources, Jack Martin, spent hours on the phone with me, trying to divert me.

I talked more with David Ferrie (on the phone) than any other reporter. He called for me the day of his death, saying he was ready for an exclusive interview with me, that he knew Jack Martin was the source of all his problems and he was going to tell all. Someone in my office told him I wasn't there. I was just outside the door and they knew it.

I'm going to cut this short now, Harold. Otherwise, it'll sound like an axe-grind. I never intended to write a book about this. I felt fellows like you were doing just fine and I was willing to help any established author such as you in the interest of the truth, whether I agreed with their findings or not. I know you've invested a fortune in time and money continuing your lifetime investigation and you still have my highest respect and support. My interest has continued very sporadically. I've even gotten somewhat of a life outside of the daily grind of journalism..paid off my mortgages on two houses and acquired a 160 acre grain farm. It's a long story involving producing a book and writing a last chapter that mushroomed into good fortune in equity, but little in yearly income.

The worst thing that has happened to us lately is my wife's braintumor. Her biopsy operation on Dec 6, 1995 indicated a malignant cancerous and inoperable tumor. It has been touch and go since, with blood clotting and as painful shingles. We got her through that and are living day to day. So, you see, even if I had made a comeback become a "heavy" at one of the networks, or gotten rich, it would have all come to this anyway, with my wife, Carol's, life shortened and an anticipated end to our more than 20 years of silky smooth relationship. So, something else matters more now than fame or money. The days and hours that remain for my wife and me to live a full life. If I were in news, Carol and I would barely be together. So, it has worked out kinda 50-50. Offers are few and very far between any more and I've adjusted to an almost certain future. I do keep a healthy interest in current events and history. I still write, but I'm saving all my submissions until reject slips don't matter and I need the money for my hospital bills (ha ha). Once in a while, like last Friday, a newspaper publishes a commentary by me, but only as a guest and not as a paid "newspuke". I took on the now former Senator Simon in editorials against his proposed ban on cameras in courtrooms. I tell people to watch how their taxes are spent and things like that, but otherwise I'm reduced to letters to the editor, guest editorialist or commentator and posting stuff on the internet. None of this pays money and my desires to do it much more are dwindling even further. I will write, because I am a writer, but I really don't expect ever to make any money at it again.

I still want to see the bastards hang, though! But, I suspect that most, if not all of them are dead now, but the truth still matters. It would be great, though, if an effort to find them was as successful as the Jewish search for Nazi war criminals.

So, I close with gratitude to you for your life's work and for all you've done to get the government to stop hiding everything. Although a lot has been uncovered, we know they still are hiding key information and I know you're right in there with us in the middle of the fray, battling with them to your last breath for freedom of information. For this, I'm proud to be able to say I know Harold Weisberg, the man who really came closest to the truth, in spite of all the secrecy and subterfuge.

Many happy new years, Harold...for you and all the people you hold dear.

Sam DePino
630 830-7004....

