1/21/75

Well, Joe?

Why did you say the opposite of what you knew?

I could conjecture but I won't bother. Fact is enough.

If you think for a minute that I'm kidding about the challenge in my enclosed letter to Limpert, who not call any supposed bluff?

I haven't listened to the tapes, but I recall our discussing "conspiracy theories" only in terms of my disagreement with almost all the others on this. I do recall quite specifically giving you an entirely non-conspiratorial explanation of how it all got started. If the tapes do not include it, much else does. It is not something I invented for you only.

On perjury and its subornation and official lying, I extend you an invitation to confront the fact, and the record I have made in court and in writing to those who did commit these crimes. You can have access to my files or I'll give you the case numbers. If you have any shred of integrity, whether or not you say anything publicly you will satisfy yourself.

The case I didn't go into while calling it the first is the one in which you wanted to see Danaher's "forever forfend" minority decision. It began as CA 718-70.

Where Archivist Rhoads swore falsely is 2569-70. My subsequent correspondence with him on this I'll be glad to show you. No denial since. To date. And I've reminded him.

The one in which, whether you believe it or not, not having taken the trouble to look while you were here, in which I laid the same charge on an FBI agent named Williams is # 2301-70. This is the one that went to the Supreme Court. And if you think that I was some kind of nut, see Congressional Record for May 30, 1974. This is the first of four cases cited as requiring the amending of the FOI law. Remember what the Congress did to Ford's veto?

No matter what, I will not say for any use what I told you about Bud and me. He has a compulsion to say what he thinks about me. He cannot have been with you without having used almost the exact words you do. But when I was as explicit as I was, how the hell could you, with any self-respect, write what you did?

No difference what you tell yourself, when you write something like this you whore. How could you bring yourself to say anything about Lesar without talking to him? How can you know anything about what he thinks, says, feels, does? I'm almost 62 and your viciousness makes little difference to me. But he is a young man just starting, working without pay when he can ill afford to. How could you bring yourself to defame him without even looking at him? Especially when he has just set a fundamental new principle of law, unless the Supreme Court overturns it. (Arguments were filed by 1/6 and the court has not said whether it will grant the State cert.)

You have brought me some comfort. Living as I do is, to me at least, preferable to living better if it means I'd have to write as you have.

Thanks!

Harold Weisberg

1/27/75

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Harold Weisberg

Rt. 8, Frederick, Md. 21701
1/27/75

Editor, Washingtonian:

Joe Goulden is one of too many reporters who were in Dallas on the "crime of the century"story, came out with little or nothing, and have forever since been berating those who did what was beyond their comprehension of competence.

His hatcheting of me for you is in direct contradiction to fact, includes deliberate lies and lacks the direct quotes possible from an entire day here after which he left with three cassettes of tapes.

That after Watergate and the current CIA scandals a magazine is capable of Agnewing the few who like me seek what the major media have abandoned, what can be believed about the official investigations of the political assassinations, is less distressing to me personally than that Joe would prostitute himself.

He lumps me with those I vigorously oppose in imagining conspiracies under every rock, a fabrication refuted by my million published words on the subject. He had no questions about this when he was here and I told him the opposite of what he attributes to me. (Or did he write what others told him prior to his 12/19/74 trip here?)

On federal lying, perjury and its subornation, can an honest reporter doubt this is common practise? I have, in fact, charged it without even the pretense of refutation in four Freedom of Information suits, beginning in 1970. In that case, had Goulden been interested in fact, the Department of Justice was forced to certify to the court of appeals that the Attorney General was in fact a liar. In the most recent, C.A. 2052-73, not for the first time, I did this under oath, making myself subject to the court's punishment if I had sworn falsely. The court agreed with me, as the decision and various court documents with which Goulden left here attest. (They are printed in facsimile in WHITEWASH IV: TOP SECRET JFK ASSASSINATION TRANSCRIPT, the name of which he managed to omit to make it more difficult for readers to check him and you out.)

His/your faulting me for being right ahead of time is like charging the raped woman with being an attractive nuisance. I was exposing official lying when the press was reporting it as unquestioned truth. Does any reasonable and informed person doubt that beginning long before Tomkin Gulf lying has been the official way of life? I here and now challenge you and Joe to show me one such accusation by me that is not true.

When Joe was here and I showed him the FBI's representations of what he said and its investigation, he confessed dissatisfaction with that and the JFK assassination investigation. But you tell your readers the opposite. The fact is that Joe knows that the most conservative member of the Warren Commission had his own disbeliefs. (WHITEWASH IV, 28 places indexed) And Senator Russell did believe there had been a conspiracy.

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You and Joe ~~xx~~ have every right to believe the earth is flat and that the Warren Report is right, but when you tell this to those readers who trust you, you do have an obligation to have done enough work to have a defensible independent opinion.

If for one minute you think you have, then I extend you the invitation countless others, including a gang-up of former C/ommission senior counsel, the late Merriman Smith and Charles Roberts declined: You be the "impartial" moderator, let Joe have any help he wants and can get, including these former Commission counsel, arrange the Press Club for the debate, and let us see who knows what he is talking about.

I'll let you stack the deck against me. If you have the guts to do it in public, and where I can respond rather than in your rag, in which I cannot.

The needs of the nation are poorly served by those pretending dedication to truth casting themselves in the role of official propagandists. A genuinely free press cannot survive it. And should not. The people are more deceived by it than they are in authoritarian societies, where they know the press speaks for government.

Sincerely,

ccL Joe Goulden

Harold Weisberg

Mr. Limpert: An indignant friend read me the parts of this piece to which I respond immediately so that you can include it in the first possible issue. I will be without my car until the end of this week. I will be in Washington next Monday or Tuesday. If someone has not sent me the article by then I will get it. Thereafter, if it seems necessary, I'll write you and Joe further.

I do not know what your spread is. But I find what Joe has written so inconsistent with everything I have written, everything I believe, I do ask you if this writing preceeded his visit here 12/19 (when did you close?) and if what he attributes to me he got from others, not me. The actuality is that I work closely with one man in this field only (and another currently inactive because he is in law school) because I am that tiny a minority and oppose those who hold the views Joe attributes to me. Had Joe had any doubts there are hundreds of letters I could have shown him. I took them on publicly at the Georgetown gathering of the nuts in November, 1973. And I denounced another faction in refusing to attend their meeting in Boston next month. (John Hanrahan covered the Georgetown meeting and may remember. My lot was to be dalled a CIA agent for it.)

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