

On Assassination Conspiracy Theories

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 or competence.

His hatching of me 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 like me who seek what the major media have abandoned (the official investigations of political assassinations) is less distressing to me than that Joe would prostitute himself. He lumps me with people 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 December 1974 trip here?)

On federal lying, perjury, and its subordination: Can an honest reporter doubt this is common practice? I have, in fact, charged it without even the pretense of refutation in four Freedom of Information suits, beginning in 1970. In that case 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. The court agreed with me, as the decision and various court documents, which I gave to Goulden, attest. (They are printed in facsimile in *Whitewash TV: Top Secret JFK Assassination Transcript*, the name of which he managed to omit.)

His 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 Tonkin Gulf, lying had 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 dis-

satisfaction with that and with 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.

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

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.

HAROLD WEISBERG
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The author replies: Unfortunately for Harold Weisberg, his writings on the assassinations speak for themselves. Hence the most unkind rejoinder I can offer is that anyone with questions about our respective credibilities read his books. Good luck, and look under your bed be-

fore retiring.

I do make one apology: I was overly charitable toward an industrious and seemingly well intentioned fellow. Someone warned me when I began work. "If you don't agree with Weisberg, watch out—you'll wind up a member of The Conspiracy." So now I am a "prostitute" and an "official propagandist." Nonsense, Harold, I'm much more than that. I'm actually Director of Central Intelligence, and have been since July 7, 1957. Dulles, McCone, Raborn, Helms, Schlesinger, and Colby were front men whose chief mission was diverting attention from my own activities.

JOSEPH C. GOULDEN