Harold Weisberg
Rt. 12, Frederick, Md. 21701
12/28/75

Mr. W. David Slawson, Professor of Law
Law Center, U.S.C.
University Park
Los Angeles, Ca. 90007

Dear Mr. Slawson,

Among those who disagree with the work of the Warren Commission for various reasons and in different ways, I am senior in age, in work and in the extent of work and published work.

In my writing I have sought to avoid making a goat of any one of you with whom I disagree. I do not believe that truth is or can be established by propaganda. My quest has been for fact. I thus have, I believe, filed more FOIA requests and more FOIA suits than anyone else. I presume you have some familiarity with the one that went to the Supreme Court and figured in the amending of the law.

In all these years I have never sought confrontations with any of the Commission's staff, although I have responded to attacks. I also have shunned none.

I first thought of writing you as I do now at the time Ben Franklin's New York Times article quoted you in what I regard as less than full faithfulness about the alleged suppression by the late Justice Warren of files suggesting an Oswald imposter. That part of the Commission's work you shared with Mr. Coleman. Those documents were never withheld from you or anyone else on the Commission and there was more than the one a partisan bitterly devoted to Nixon after Watergate planted on the Times, which did not bother to check with the Archives.

When your Los Angeles Times article appeared, writing you was not possible because I was completing my most recent book, which contains much I believe was not known to you.

There is now much to be gained, I believe, from dialogues between the responsibles among the former Commission staff and those who hold opposing views. I go so far as to suggest that there is much former staff lawyers can learn and that it serves their interest to learn before it is too late. Years ago, after an attack on me, I wrote one of your former colleagues that his reputation in the future might be better if he were to be part of bringing to light what the Commission did not. I consider that I have done this and I hold the same belief with regard to all of you.

So, I now write to propose a debate between us in almost any format of your preference, at U.S.C. and perhaps at your Law Center. If as I hope you will agree, I tend to favor short introductory comments by each of us, as short as five minutes, to be followed by questions from the audience and if there come pauses, each of us, in turn, be permitted short comments or questions until there are questions again.

I have never been on the college circuit and until recently have never had a lecture bureau. If you agree I must abide by the conditions of my contract with this bureau. The only other stipulation is also a minor one. While I can travel I also have phlebitis. This means I'd have to sit with a leg raised, sometimes both. All other conditions could be those you want.

When I concluded my first book (list enclosed) in mid-February, 1965 I believed the expected job had not been done and must be, preferably by the Congress and entirely in public. Aside from what you may recall the staff knew that did not become public, there was much withheld from the Commission's staff. It is I who sued for the withheld executive sessions and still do. (C.A.75-1448, federal district court in Washington.) I publish those of January 22 and 27 in full and in facsimile and excerpts from others in my last two books. With each I also include some of the relevant and unpublished documents I obtained. I also obtained and published what the Commission did not have and should have had. What I have been able to obtain from the FBI about the spectrographic and neutron activation analyses is in the last book. This matter is now before the court of appeals. We have granted the government an added 30 days for response in return for its promise not to oppose our motion to expedite oral arguments. In this case there was regular FBI perjury, charged under oath without even pro forma denial.

Recently I obtained from the CIA records showing it was keeping tabs on my work. What it has given me, which is much less than it has, refers to my repeated requests long ago for a Congressional investigation. Although you had your own experiences with CIA stonewalling, I think there is much you would learn about this, too. While I would not be willing to bring CIA files I have it did not give me under FOIA/PA, I would be willing to bring and let you copy those it has provided. This does not reflect lack of trust in you. Rather it is because there is now no doubt the CIA is not going to come clean. I have filed an appeal, and the case is going to court.

Frankly, it is my hope that you would, after learning what I think you do not know, join me in the demand for a proper Congressional investigation. In all sincerity I believe that if you are persuaded and if you do this other than in David Belin's self-serving way your reputation will in the end be better for it and the doubts I believe you hold will be relieved. You also do not have Belin's problem: he suborned perjury.

I hope you will agree to this proposal.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg