

2/12/72

Mr. Peter D. Bunsel
Editor, West Magazine
The Los Angeles Times
Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Mr. Bunsel,

Someone sent me a copy of Robert Kaiser's "Journey Through the Killing Ground" from your January 30 issue. As one of those maligned without naming by him, I write to solicit the same kind of treatment for the kind of response I think you have not had if, as I have no way of knowing, you have printed a view other than his.

I would say, among other things, that Kaiser is one of a series of big-name reporters who do not hide their high opinions of themselves and, having gone for a story they did not get, assumed there can be no story because they did not get it.

I would say what Kaiser did not, that he tried to buy his story, as did Huie and others; and that when a reporter becomes an entrepreneur he ceases being a reporter. Truth ought not be a commodity for sale (Huie says if he doesn't buy it, it won't be had), and the processes of justice ought not be paid for by a reporter who thereby has an investment, his own or that of another, to recover.

In each of the three major political assassinations, this is what hap^{ed} and this is what was certain to taint the institutions of society and seed doubts and suspicions. The husband of one of those who did it with the John Kennedy assassination is doing the same, today, in the Ray case.

Kaiser has an unerring instinct for the nuts and the undependable, therefore everyone is a nut and all information, all leads, are undependable. How can it be otherwise if Kaiser says it is thus?

His words deserve analysis. I hope you will agree your readers should have that right, as should those he defamed.

Of those he did name, I have a lower opinion of some than he expressed. But who but Kaiser sought them out and not others to whom any standard bibliographic source could have led him?

I suppose getting paid to say "I am a great guy but I made a little mistake" is to be preferred over sackcloth and ashes in Times Mirror Square. More dignified, too, with all those opportunities for emphasis on purity of motive (another exclusive) and perfection in competence. If he elected to work in a pig-sty, all your many readers should not be splashed with it. Nor should those who, quietly, do that which was beyond him. And people, in a representative society, should not be conned into believing only Kaiser knows.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg