Dear Jim, 1/9/97

Your 1/4 misrepresents what I wrote you. I was not writing about Liz Smith. I was writing about and I'm sure was specific in this, your client, Exner.

I referred to her as a liar, as she was, obviously. I use an illustration of which long ago and for entirely diferent reasons I sent you the documentation, what Larry Houston was forced to send Bobby Kennedy and what Shef Edwards wrote about the CIA's mafia plots.

Not only did no Kennedy have anything to do with that, nor had any knowledge of it until Baletti sounded off, until it was public. That CIA-mafia connection was under the Eisenhower/Nixon administration. It dates to before the election, to August when the election was that November.

There was no need to get any election money to the Illinois mafia and had there been it would have been handled so that nobody could ever know. The crookedness in Cook County was handled not by the mafia but by Mayor Daley. Nixon did nothing not because he was such a decent man but because the GOP crookedness in downstate Illinois was even greater. And then there was the founding father and his connections going back to bootlegging days. Makes no sense, has no credibility.

How many big lies do you need before you can believe she is a liar?

The Castro fiction of hers is enough. And it is hers, not Liz Smith's.

Maybe I remember wrong but as I remember it you were my source on the nature of the book Hersh is writing. And that was some time ago.

The flu shots are not perfect but they are good and you should get them every year. There are other kinds of flu than the kinds anticipated and it takes several weeks for them to work but we've never had the flu when we got the shots.

May I suggest that you get those Houston and Edwards memos sent to Bobby and show them to Exner and tape what she says? I gave them to you long ago.

When I spoke of not knowing the truth, I believe I was talking about the relationship. There was absolutely no question about the above. it is as solid as it can be and she is that big a liar. I think I had in mind the whole truth. But believe me, as your file should show, she lied about that Castro business and she had to know she was lying. Unless she is one of those who believes her lies as soon as she utters them.

I was not seeking any response. I was trying to get you to face what you are into and what you have let suffer because of it.

Hope you all have a good year. Best,

Harold

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January 4, 1997

Mr. Harold Weisberg
7627 Old Receiver Road
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Dear Harold:

After receiving your letter regarding Liz Smith's article on Judith Exner in Vanity Fair yesterday, I sat down and read it. (About the time it came out, I came down with the flu, and I had no sooner recovered from that sufficiently to join the world again when a passel of relatives descended on us from Singapore, London, Illinois and California. So I had only glanced at the photographs before yesterday.)

In the space of half a page--double spaced at that--you manage to make half a dozen baseless assumptions, charges, or allegations. Some seem predicated on the belief that I had some responsibility for the Liz Smith article which placed me under an obligation to "check out" the facts in the article. In case you missed the obvious, the article was written by Liz Smith, was based in large part upon information supplied by Judith Exner, and was published by Vanity Fair. I did none of the above.

You wonder if I am "so wedded to assassination nuttiness and exploitation that nothing else is real to [me], or has or can have any meaning." Frankly, I can't see how Smith's article involves the JFK assassination, other than a passing reference or two to the fact that Kennedy was assassinated, so the relevance of this remark escapes me.

You also charge that I am "apparently . . . helping [Sy] Hersh on the axe job on which he is started." This adds to your lengthening record for making baseless assumptions. I have not assisted Hersh with his book. I have talked with him only twice since Bud died six years ago, for a total of about ten minutes, on a matter having nothing to do with either Exner nor the contents of his forthcoming book. I have heard that his new book will contain some material embarrassing to the Kennedys, but I have not seen his evidence, so I am not in a position to judge its merits. Which raises a question: how can you describe it as an "axe job" without knowing the contents and the strength of the evidence supporting whatever it is he is going to write?

You accuse Exner of being a "very big and apparently very persuasive liar." At another point you also say "I don't know what the truth is." Both statements are vague and without any terms of reference, so it is not possible to determine the degree to which they are inconsistent. You do not provide any specifics as to what

you contend Exner is lying about, much less any evidence or reasoning to support the charge. She has admitted that her book My Story contains lies. I suspect, however, that you are referring to other matters. I would like to hear some specifics on what these other matters are and what evidence you rely upon to reach your conclusion.

I represent Exner in two related libel suits and one Freedom of Information Act case. All are well-founded, and if she lives long enough, I think they will be successful. In connection with these lawsuits, I have spent many hours talking with her. For what it is worth--and I suspect you will dismiss its value out of hand--I do not think she has lied to me about the many things we have discussed, some of which are touched upon in the Vanity Fair piece.

But again, I would like to hear the specifics of what bothers you. Unless I know what you are referring to, I can't respond intelligently.

Best regards for the New Year to you and Lil.

Sincerely yours,

Jim