

Rt. 8, Frederick, Md. 21701

5/4/75

Mr. Ben Bradlee
Washington Post
1150 15 St, NW
Wash. D.C. 20005

Dear King Canute,

The water is up to your balls but there you are, in the Post and on coast-to-coast TV, pretending to be astride Olympus.

Of the many current great national tragedies few have or can have more dire consequences than the major media constituting themselves arms of government. On some subjects this is without significant deviation true. Without this complete abdication of the traditional and proper function and attitude of the press, I do believe it can be argued that most of the trauma of modern times would have been avoided.

At some point you personally and the Post will no longer be able to avoid its and your personal record on both the JFK assassination (and less the others) and, given the power and influence of the Post, the consequences. Horrible consequences.

What touches this off is that disgusting insult to a high-school intelligence obscenely headed "The Oswald Evidence" on today's ed page. What makes it all the more indecent and dishonest is the record of the Post on just this subject during a single week. Plus your comments in promoting your book.

"Evidence" lies in Friscilla McMillan's "understanding" of Lee Harvey/ Oswald's "personality?" You not only said it, you dredged other papers to reprint it. It is a "waste" of time to seek "hard facts" over this "expert's" personal nightmares? Would there had been this "preddiction," but there wasn't. And when it was and remains impossible to place the accused at the scene of the crime or to connect him with it by any "hard" evidence, the Post tells its readers, "it was probably the strongest case ever assembled against a single individual." What is so important that you have to comb other papers for it? ...that time of day a certain photograph was taken or how long a particular bus ride might ~~have~~ take at a given hour of day of/night."

Yesterday, in order to make an effort to frustrate more of the shoving around and commercialization that has tainted both sides in the assassinations controversy I offered the Post, exclusively, the results of a Freedom of Information suit that is unique and is only part of an enormous, unpaid effort of a decade. I mean on this one aspect alone. By any rational standard this is a major story. It is official, it is definitive, it is the result of court action (unreported by the Post as recently as yesterday), and it is a story that after Watergate ought shock decency. The refusal of your national desk (which I do hope is reconsidering) was couched in words that denest you and the Post.

One of the elements that makes this case (C.A. 226-75) unique is that Congress, in effect, passed a law ordering the FBI to deliver this suppressed evidence to me after the Supreme Court supported the official mendacity also suppressed by the Post. You even found this unusual position by the Congress (5/30/74) not worthy of mention.

A week ago I gave the Post a copy of a long-suppressed Warren Commission executive session of 1/22/64, which was well before it began its so-called investigation. That session concludes with the Orwellian statement by Allen Dulles, agreed to by the others including our unelected President, "I think this record ought to be destroyed."

Hot news, especially when the controversy has flared up again?

Hot news when what it follows is full recognition, articulated, that Hoover and the FBI had made any real investigation of the assassination of your friend impossible:

"They would like to have us fold up and quit. ...This closes the case, you see. Don't you see? [Boggs]. Yes, I see that [Dulles]. They found the man. There is nothing more to do. The Commission supports their conclusions, and we can go home, and that is the end of it."

The "this" is not unknown to you. I put a copy of part in your hand, personally, almost a decade ago. It began what with no shame you described on TV as this massive investigation of the Post's. It was Hoover's "solution" to the crime, his so-called definitive "report" of five volumes which he personally leaked before it could reach the Commission. (You people are great with leaks and being uncritical about accepting them but as investigators you couldn't find public hair in an overworked and under-cleaned whorehouse.) Now, to your personal knowledge, did Hoover "solve" this crime? By eliminating one of the President's wounds and a shot known to have been fired, the so-called "missed" shot.

With this background I challenge you, personally, to confront the evidence on that "missed" shot alone that the Post rejected yesterday and to tell me that it is not newsworthy, that it is not the most positive proof of deliberate FBI fakery; or that it was right and proper for the Commission to ignore it.

Quite aside from evidentiary content, I would like you, personally, to tell me that it is not news when I offer the Post over Clarence Kelley's signature the proof that the required scientific tests were not made and that of all these tests there were no compiled results. Remember, this was not a common mugging. This was the FBI's "investigation" of the assassination of a President and a Presidential Commission's acceptance of it.

There now appears to be a reasonable prospect that the official mythology is going to fall apart. How this happens can be crucial to the nation. How it happens and when it happens will be influenced if not controlled by what the press does and does not do, what it suppresses by resort to phony journalistic concepts and standards.

I do, really sincerely, hope that you come to feel the rising water and that you recognize it for what it is, the overflow of the sewers. It may already be too late for you to avoid a time when the record will trouble you sorely. I would lament the day when Bridlee's name would mean to "friend" what Hobson means to "choice," too.

In all interests I encourage you to believe that my work rests on the most solid factual foundation. It is enormous, it is careful, and there has never been a single serious challenge to any of the million printed words of it. Ask any Post reporter who has ever dealt with me on anything if I have ever given him a bum steer or he has ever found factual inaccuracy in anything he has checked.

In your interest I hope you can rise above the man who ordered Geoffrey Wolff not to review my first book, the first on the subject, with a hoked-up dodge and then proceeded to review by syndication every following book with a corrupt doctrine. If you do not there will be this albatross, forever more.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg