

August 16, 1967

Mr. Julian Goodman
President, National Broadcasting Co.,
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York

Dear Mr. Goodman:

The partisanship of NBC on the subject of the Warren Report and the assassination of President Kennedy, its taking of editorial positions in the guise of a balanced presentation of two sides, indeed, its intrusion into official investigations and legal proceedings, is flagrant.

I have already written Hugh Downs about the Charles Roberts book, which is dignified if called thinly-disguised official propaganda. It is open in its intent of damaging me, as are Mr. Roberts in his appearances and the publisher in his advertising. The same is true of the appearance of Louis Nizer, both of whom you gave nationwide opportunities to sell their books. This is in sharp contrast with NBC's attitude toward me and the other side, going back to 1965 when my first book, the first one on this subject, was in a limited edition and was offered to you.

On Monday, June 19, 1967, NBC aired what it misleadingly titled, "The JFK Conspiracy: The Case of Jim Garrison". This show was in no sense "The Case of Jim Garrison". It was a quite dishonest selection to make a "Case Against Jim Garrison", consistent with NBC's own involvement with Gordon Novel. Your Walter Sheridan came to see me when I wrote Fred Freed asking for the text of what you aired on Novel. Sheridan and Richard Townley, who worked under him on this show, both knew I had written a book on the New Orleans aspects of the assassination and its investigation, quite independent of Mr. Garrison. It was almost completed before Mr. Sheridan came here.

He then, and subsequently in New Orleans, asked me to participate and on each occasion I agreed. Despite his partisanship, for what you improperly did with Novel was then public, as was your attitude toward this subject, I did consent. Mr. Sheridan regarded the transcript of the Novel material as some special "goodie" and said he would give it to me when he filmed me. That he did not do either was his decision, for I agreed and was at any time ready. I spent quite a few hours with Townley.

I think at some point you will do well to learn what Townley tried to do to the Garrison investigation with me as his instrument. I have written Mr. A. Louis Reed about this. His answer was non-responsive. I presume that what Townley did was with the knowledge, if not at the direction, of Mr. Sheridan, who was (I think a carefully arranged) witness to my being with Mr. Townley.

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The time NBC gave Mr. Garrison for response was neither fair nor adequate. You were careful to have no transcript available for the press and you scheduled the show to deny him access to the press, for at that time of a Saturday night the Sunday papers have been printed and for the Monday papers it was a third-day story. There are no Sunday afternoon papers.

In addition, as you well knew, Mr. Garrison could not address himself to the fact of the case he was preparing to take to court. He could not reply on the basis of fact or evidence. All he could do was seek to recapture what was possible of his reputation and minimize the prejudicing of potential jurors.

I am, therefore, writing to request time under the fairness doctrine to use for the presentation of fact on the other side of this case. As NBC knows and knew before it aired its partisanship, I am the only one of the so-called "critics" who has done original work in this case. I repeat, NBC asked me in advance and I agreed, and it was a political, not a news, decision to ban me.

I use the word "ban" by design, for in your name others have denied this. Yet it has been the consistent attitude of NBC. If you want documentation, ask it.

For whatever you think of it, I suggest to you that your own honor and integrity also require this, for I doubt if you or anyone else at NBC who did not work on this show have the remotest idea of the kind of evidence, all of it official, that exists on the side Mr. Sheridan and his colleagues suppressed. I have more than 300 pages of it I will show to you or to any reasonably impartial and open-minded person you designate.

In any event, I am asking for the half-hour, on the same facilities on which the original show was offered, that Mr. Garrison did not get for use to make factual response, which NBC knew he could not make, under the fairness doctrine.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg