

Mr. Victor Navasky
The Nation
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Dear Victor Navasky,

The Republican to-do over Speaker Wright's book is kid stuff compared with the scandalous nature of Gerald Ford's literary adventures.

When he was appointed to the Warren Commission he put John Stiles, who had been, as I recall, his campaign manager, on the public teat on the phony pretense that he would do Warren Commission work, which he did not do. Ford used him to ghost both a book and a magazine article.

The article, for LIFE of that day, was a semi-private Warren Report, which, as I recall, it scooped.

The only thing of unusual interest in the book, Portrait of the Assassin, is the (mis)use of an executive session transcript, that of 1/27/64. It has some pretty raunchy stuff in it but none of that was stolen and sold by Ford/Stiles. *See my Whitewash IV* It also was then ~~the~~ ^{remained} and for a number of additional years classified Top Secret. I know because that is the basis on which it was denied me, even after I filed suit for it. It was about ten years after Ford's theft and commercialization that, when the government appeals brief was due, it was disclosed to me. I then wrote a book around it, reproducing the transcript itself in its entirety, by facsimile.

Then Nixon nominated Ford to succeed the departed Spiro Agnew and there were, of course, hearings at which Ford testified. He was asked about this literary enterprise and he testified, among other things, that he had not used any classified material at all. *Without what material, he had no book at all.*

So, in addition to having his book written at public expense a la Wright he also lied to become vice president and then president, whether or not the lying was, as I think can be argued, material and thus perjury.

Ford/Stiles also radically altered the transcript that by the very they alone had and sold and in my ~~third~~ ^{book} I have a word-by-word comparison of the actual transcript and the Ford/Stiles improvements on actuality. This was largely, as I now recall, eliminating what was embarrassing, particularly to the FBI. Where, by the way, they had the same practise at least under Hoover, whose books were written by special agents on government time. So were his many articles.

There are other Ford cuties, like, when there was commotion about leaking, his having the FBI investigate and give him a clean bill of health. Nobody could do this better than the FBI, to which he leaked when he was its informer inside the Warren Commission.

Ultimately I got all these executive session transcripts save one. That is the one in which Ford was the running dog for extremists and racists who wanted to get Norman Redlich fired from the Commission staff. All the nasty letters and articles about him, more or less, were disclosed to me, but on grounds of protecting his privacy, really, I'm sure, Ford's because ^{Redlich} he had none left to protect, that transcript remains withheld. We do know that it was the time Ford tried without success to get Redlich fired. Some of the racists were then Congressmen.

At some of the other executive sessions Ford intimidated the others, particularly into not hearing Yuri Nosenko in executive session.

Your people or others are welcome to copies of any of this but I'm not able to do much searching. We have a copier they can use.

Sincerely, Harold Weisberg

Harold Weisberg