

Mr. Frank Mankiewicz
National Public Radio
2025 M Street
Wash., D.C. 20036

2/2/79

Dear Mr. Mankiewicz,

Your letter of 1/31 concludes "perhaps we can continue this dialogue" after you listen to the tape of a broadcast and speak to your reporters.

If you decide to, fine. Although I'm not well and have more to do than I can do I believe that what reaches the people as news is extremely important. This will not be exceptional and is in no sense any special favor to NPR. I do not want to give this impression. I do it with anyone of serious purposes

It should be apparent that I have asked nothing of you or NPR for myself or for mine or any other point of view.

If you doubt my effort to be impartial George Gardner, whose views do not coincide with mine, should be a good source.

I do not want to argue but I think it is not faithful to put it as you did, "...our failure to meet your standards of reporting..."

There is no complaint I made about what I regard as bad reporting that is based on my personal standards. My reporting began in the 1920s when investigative reporting was something more than cultivating or accepting leaks but in other respects today's standards are the traditional ones.

Please try to avoid being overly defensive. Otherwise the good that might come of this will be impossible.

While investigative reporting is not the real question, if you have doubts about me on that score try Les Whitten.

At the same time, NPR missed a great, almost unprecedented opportunity for investigative reporting on that story. It is not easy to suspect that the inside it had might have contributed to this. I am not making the accusation.

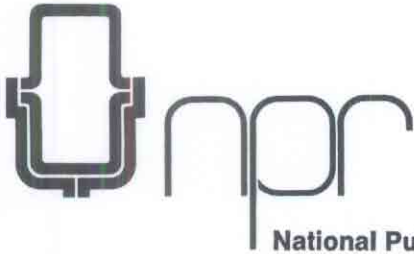
Until and even after the committee formalizes a report these possibilities remain, with both present and past.

As an example, and probably some of what I had in mind, NPR can compare what the committee represented and NPR reported entirely uncritically about an alleged Ray family conspiracy centering around John Ray with the hasty (and of this moment still unread) analysis of the alleged case I did and Jim Lesar as John Ray's lawyer filed with the committee. Gardner and Lesar (223-5587) have copies. You are both lawyer and journalist. Your people had most of that material and could have had what they didn't by merely asking for it.

If you desire and if it is possible for me I'll go to Washington, but not to argue. I am not able to drive that distance, although riding has presented no problem. Perhaps I can get a local college student who is making a specialized study from some of my records can provide the wheels. Up to you.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg



202-785-5400

National Public Radio 2025 M Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

January 31, 1979

Mr. Harold Weisberg
Route 12 - Old Receiver Road
Frederick, Maryland 21701

Dear Mr. Weisberg:

I did not respond to your earlier letter because I was troubled by the implication in it that our failure to meet your standards of reporting somehow made us an ally of those who have willingly or inadvertently concealed the truth for so long. I thought that sentiment unworthy of you, but perhaps understandable in light of what you felt to be the provocation.

In any event, I did not hear the program you referred to in your letter of January 18. I will listen to it and talk to our reporter, and then perhaps we can continue this dialogue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Frank Mankiewicz", is written over the typed name.

Frank Mankiewicz