

Rt. 8, Frederick, Md. 21701
12/9/73

Dear Mr. Shepherd,

At about the time I received your gentle letter of November 14 I also got all but the last section of my work. I do not know whether you received this, "This Is Your FBI..." If you have any reason for wanting to retain it, I have no objection. However, if you did not get it or if you returned it and I have not received it I would like to know. My experiences with the mail impel me to insure what it will cost me money to replace and I did insure each of the sections I sent you.

If it is no comfort to me, I do find the attitude of all segments of the book industry interesting and consistent with my own experience in ~~dealing with~~ dealing with what is unwelcome. Dick's first reaction when I broached a book in May was that Bantam would cream the market with a "special." They contracted one with a fine reporter, Clark Mollenhoff, only to abandon its advance and the book. Clark has, too, apparently. Then S & S put up some nice numbers for the Post reporters and in time, now delayed, will get a rehash of what they and others have written, all without context. A Washington Post editor has completed a book for which he had a contract, one that does have a context and addresses one aspect only, and he is not satisfied with what he has done. In time there will be the Ervin committee's report. I have expected and still expect that some major publisher will do with it what several did with the Warren Report. It would not surprise me if Bantam has made the arrangements already. And then we will have the official truth.

I suppose one of the reasons our society is as sick as it is is because those who have the obligation to inform the people simply will not on these most essential events when they are current, when informing might enable society to function.

Your letter of the 14th and your not responding when I asked about magazines led me to make other efforts, with magazines and elsewhere. My negative experiences are quite consistent with the import of what you wrote me. However, I do have this hot stuff and I will now return as best I can to getting it on paper. During this non-writing period I have done a little investigating, based on earlier work. Had there been any interest, had there not, in fact, been a rotten expediency, it could have had an impact on the Ford nomination-confirmation. For your information only, he does have connections of the past with some of the Watergators. What I have not been able to complete checking out on this is potentially super-sensational.

I knew the ACLU was working on another rehash. It has come out and has had no impact. There was another, similar rehash, by Nader's people, financed by Stewart Nott. The re-telling of the well-told can have no impact because it tells the people nothing they do not already know. In my view, substantial work of social usefulness has to go behind the tube and has to put it all together, with context above all. The book of the Times of London men will not satisfy the market potential, especially among the young. It is, from my hasty skimming, based on using the index, not entirely dependable. These experienced reporters were conned and deceived themselves on the key things.

If my appraisal of the situation is close to accurate, events may overtake us. However, whether or not they do, I feel that someone must try to do what I have undertaken. As I think I told you, I have from the first been aware that it may only be a document for the future. The amount of work and the difficulty of it will discourage the few with the capability of attempting it. So will the commercial aspects. Because I believe it must be done, I will return to it.

On the chance the situation will change, I tell you what will follow what you have read in my Watergate ^{library}. I am working on the chapter, really a part and actually a separate should-be book, on Nixon and authoritarianism. I shall follow that with one on his psychological state, for which I have all the material necessary in hand. (This should also tell you that it did not take the slapping flap for me to see this.) And then what I have called the hot stuff. That will all be new. But I do not see how it can be a separate book if only because no reader or editor will be willing to credit it without what I have done and will be doing first.

Separate from literary merit or lack of it, you have by now had a chance to evaluate my foresight and my judgement. Why, for example, that chapter Republicans are Carnibals: Richard Nixon? Do you not now see him doing exactly this? But none of it showed when I wrote that, which was long after I understood it. And the notes about which you had doubt, on both Hughes and CIA? The committee has been forced to undertake to correct itself, if this mild description of its failing is adequate; and only some of the CIA crimes in this matter are now being reviewed. In secret, let me add. This is still another committee failing, one about which you had doubts when you read what I still have not but wanted to get down on paper. Where I was specific, false swearing, the Ervin committee has been questioning Helms about in secret. They brought him back from Iran for this. And the Military Affairs Committee, while pretending to be investigating, is trying hard to cover the CIA up. Among the ways I know is from having had a long chat with one of the secret witnesses and from his lawyer, who is well known to me. I know what went on behind those closed doors and it was not an effort to produce the truth. I have no reason to believe that if I do not do this it will be done. Not for years, anyway.

To date, with all that has happened and all that has come out, I feel that I have been completely right in what I have written, which is saying more than that I have no rewriting to do to correct error in fact. This is the one thing from which I do take some comfort. I have been right in what I anticipated also. One example is today's news, what I have not yet seen because the morning paper is not yet here. Nixon and money and property. (You should recall my handling of him and money when nobody was talking about it.) Responsibility led me to lay aside my effort to use the law to learn more than I already knew about him and his property dealings. But I have my correspondence on this long before the story broke. John Dean answered for the White House. None of the major media would touch this before it broke by an error in a small paper, and I did try to give it away, one of the factors that impelled me to undertake this book of poor prospect. I did anticipate the essence of what he would do with his tapes and tried, in writing, without success, in interesting the Washington Post in doing what to me obviously should have been done by the major media.

So, I guess all I can say is that I have confidence in the doctrine and content of my work, believe that in some form it must be done, and will do it, whether or not it can ever get into type in any form.

And, of course, thank you.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

HAROLD OBER ASSOCIATES
INCORPORATED

Telephone
759-8600



Cable Address
LITOB, NEW YORK

40 EAST 49TH STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10017

November 14, 1973

Mr. Harold Weisberg
Route 8
Frederick, Md. 21701


Dear Mr. Weisberg:

I just can't see how I can expect to make any arrangement for the publication of your manuscript that would be in any way satisfactory.

You must have seen the Ballantine book called WATERGATE that was put together by a team of journalists employed by the London Sunday Times, which tends, I fear, to preempt for the time being what may be regarded as the merely factual aspects of the case. I understand also that the ACLU is rushing out an actual bill of impeachment.

I do appreciate your letting me see your material. It interested me very much, but we both have to cope with the practicalities, unpalatable as they are.

Sincerely yours,



Peter Shepherd

PS/kv
enc.

DOROTHY OLDING