

8/3/92

Mr. David Phinney
2847 Shirley Dr.,
Newbury Park, CA 92320

Dear David,

I have read your letter of 7/30.

In it you give me assurances of your intentions, as you see them. On cable tonight there will be a show I made it clear I wanted nothing to do with and no matter how I am used on it I wanted and I want no association on TV with either Mark Lane or Jim Garrison. But there it will be, despite assurances. When I learned about what was being done, not that it had been done, I wrote that provider of assurances reminding him of our understanding. I did not hear from him for months. Then, after it was in the can, he phoned to tell me that he had moved to a different state and had been abroad but not to worry, I was treated well and he'd send me a cassette so I could see for myself. Which was not the basis of my objection.

You know what you intend. I know what I do not want.

You have not said anything that changes what I think.

And I am even more firm in my refusal to even be on a show that goes into the nuttiness if only with the intention of refuting it.

Your letter has led me to seeing this as I had not before.

Precious as TV time is and rare as the decent, factual shows have been, I want nothing at all to do with anything that uses any TV time for this purpose. It can, as I am sure I indicated to you, be put to better use.

Chip Selby won a CINE Golden Eagle without mentioning them in any detail if at all.

I gave you other reasons you do not address. I am content to leave it that way but they are in my mind and you'll not be able to eliminate them.

And haven't.

So, I wish you well but count me out.

Sincerely,


Harold Weisberg

Mr. Harold Weisberg
7627 Old Receiver Rd.
Frederick, MD 21702

July 30, 1992

Dear Harold,

Please grant me the courtesy of reading this letter - your letter arrived this evening, and although it would normally be exciting to have spent the day reading an author's work and then receive a letter from him that same night, I found the experience to be just the opposite - it was most upsetting and it prompted me, as I did you, to write immediately.

First, please let me extend to you my most sincere apology for getting you keyed up and unable to sleep. I would never want to do that to anyone I care about. Putting aside any mention of the project for a minute, let me say that the most upsetting thing you said to me was that you felt that I was so wrapped up in myself that I was incapable of even thinking that I may have been abusing someone of your age and with your health problems. Harold, there aren't enough words in my vocabulary to express to you the depth of my sincerity in saying to you that that is the last thing I would ever want to do to you. I have the utmost respect for you as well as your age and health problems. If I have failed to convey that in word and deed in my time with you, I sincerely apologize.

As for the project itself, I had never planned to, nor would I have, put you in any situation which would have cast doubt on your credibility or tarnished your reputation. To have someone, such as yourself, express some of the fruits of their investigative labors in a factual and concise manner, and presented in an area of discussion where their views were showcased almost exclusively, was not in my opinion an untenable position for you. The very fact that you might express your views in a tape where perhaps a couple of hours later someone else might mention, with equal conviction, their views of a conspiracy theory is in my mind not an insult to you given the fact that you yourself cite the irrefutable proof available to the Warren Commission of a conspiracy. (Whitewash-top, pg 138) I tend to think that it's more often gaudy and overblown "packaging and promotion" of some of these theories that bothers you rather than the mere mention of a second gunman. I did find it ironic that in my reviewing of the video works out on the market that I find your interviews intercut with those I know you differ with, and in vehicles paying lip service to not only a proliferation of conspiracy theories but going so far as to give the names of the assassins. I realize that the producers lied to you and it's unfortunate. I had no intention of ever being anything but truthful with you and to present your views in a manner that you would have agreed with and been proud of for years to come.

I am sorry that you interpret my intentions as that of doing a "rehash" for it is not just a rehash. It is to the extent that it would be a combining of facts to present a balanced and relatively thorough overview, as a start, but then go on from there to separate fact from fiction and do some real educating. I am trying to appeal to a broad audience and definitely those who until now have refused to be subjected to a tasteless and incomprehensible assemblage of "facts". To me, one of the best ways to repudiate falsehoods is to attack them head on. To allow an erroneous view that is widely held to be expressed by a proponent of that view, then attack it with facts so as to expose it for what it is, is the most dynamic way to educate. And if, in so doing, I can expose to those with only a cursory knowledge of

the facts surrounding the Kennedy case, the views and work of Harold Weisberg, a person whose investigations they are probably not aware of but should be, then I feel it is of public value.

I mention all this not to attempt to change your mind, but merely to express my approach. You have made your views very clear to me and I merely wished to do the same, thinking that perhaps I have until now failed to adequately do so. It would be a shame if our differences were based on misconceptions rather than diametrically opposed philosophies. I clearly understand your desire to determine your priorities. I had every intention of honoring your wishes as to how your views would be presented, and in minimizing the time you would have to spend in front of a camera so as to assure you that your time was being well utilized. Nor did I have any desire to compete with your writing efforts. If anything I hoped that this would promote them.

In any case, whether or not I ever get to do my project will depend on many things having nothing to do with the project's intrinsic nature, such as money, marketing, politics and timing. Unfortunately that's the nature of the business I choose to be a part of and even if I don't like it, I had better understand it or risk failure.

But no project is worth the loss of one's self esteem or a friendship. I would no more ask you to do something you would not agree with or be proud of than I would ask myself. I feel saddened more by what you think of me than by my loss of your help. I hope that you will consider that you may have been mistaken in your thinking of how I view you. I know you don't believe I have much knowledge of the subject, but in all honesty I feel that I do indeed have a good grasp of the facts. Frankly Harold, you have no real idea as to the extent of my knowledge or lack of it. We have really only engaged in small talk about hard facts, and I have not felt compelled to dazzle you with facts and figures, nor did I think the time had come to plumb your obvious well of information. You just know that I read opinions you don't share and think that's a waste of time. When I turned to those pages you quoted me, I had indeed read them and was familiar with their content although at the time I was not aware of what you were referring to, not having the book and page numbers memorized as you do. Nor Harold do I feel it is necessary for me to have the depth of knowledge that you do in order to successfully present an informative and comprehensive package to the American public. My role is not that of an investigative reporter, I have others for that, but my role is also necessary for the success of this endeavor. As far as my spending time reading viewpoints that you do not agree with, I have always felt, and always will that any time a person's view on a subject he is interested in is broadened, even if only by exposure to new and differing views, that that is only to the good. It works not only for me in my research habits, but as an aspect of what I envision as a purpose of my final product.

I thank you Harold for having read this and allowing me to express my feelings. I have nothing but the utmost respect and admiration for both your work and you as a person. My desire to enlist your help was nothing more than an outgrowth of that. I understand your views based on what you perceive mine to be, but honestly feel you have misjudged me. In any event, I will not be phoning you to argue in respect to your wishes. However, if you

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ever feel like contacting me again if for no other reason than to see if I'm still an inconsiderate lout, please feel free ! -I'd be thrilled to talk with you. I enjoyed the time we spent together and am very appreciative of your hospitality.

I hope Harold that if I feel the need to contact you with regard to verifying a fact or two, you will not feel offended. Please give my regards to your bride. My warmest wishes for your continued good health.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "David".

David Phinney
(805) 498-9668 (anytime)
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Newbury Park, CA 91320