

Rt. 8, Frederick, Md. 21701  
1/23/75

Dear Mrs. Pomerance,

Because I am the entire publishing operations except for the bookkeeping, I make every package, mail it and am aware of who has ordered what. So, I knew when you ordered NW IV. I was then sorry I could not write you. The number of books to be shipped then prohibited it. And I was then trying to get closer to a normal night of sleep.

However, by the beginning of this week it was apparent that I'd have to go back to only 4-5 hours of sleep just to keep up with what I must do daily - without returning to the writing I want to do more than anything else. So, I take this time in your interest and in the hope that you will understand this.

I remember your call very well. It confronted me with a futility rather than hope. I was willing to make the effort even though I was without doubt that Maxerner - the only name you mentioned - would not permit himself an open mind on this subject. By then I had knocked on so many doors another one slammed would have made no difference. The only reason I didn't is because I simply did not have the money for a special trip to New York. It was not at all because I was unwilling. Nor was it because I did not realize the importance of trying to reach people who might in various ways be of help. I did exactly what I then told you I would, wrote you when I could get there. When that time came it did not suit you.

One of the consequences is that by now you must have wasted what for me at least would be a considerable amount of money. I regret this and I am aware of some of it. I take more for granted.

To begin to have an understanding of this field requires an enormous amount of work. It requires also more than a good intelligence. The deceit and complexity built in by all the official dishonesty alone is close to insuperable for even the most sophisticated. And then there is the normal longing of people of good conscience, which leads to the grasping of straws. From there the jump to what glitters is natural.

There are a not inconsiderable number of good intention who are personable and persuasive and active. But without exception those of the past and those of the present do not know what they are talking about. To those who lack the foundation, they can be very appealing. I could tick off enough names from what has come to me without my seeking to know. These kinds of things get around. But the naming of names of the past would do me good and would distract from one of my purposes in writing you now, very early in the morning, when there is so much else I have to do.

No matter how well intended some of these people have been, their irrationalities have been very hurtful over the years. Their words are collected and store with care and retrieved for the most effective use behind the scenes with those who have influence where influence has meaning. All the crazy stuff that passes over an editor's desk merely persuades him that all of us are crazy. The net result is that where there is political power and where there is control over what can reach the people we are all poisoned. You'd be surprised at how openly some have discussed this with me. These are the minority in both politics and the press who have genuine concern.

This is one of the reasons my Freedom of Information suits have received so little attention. And by receiving so little attention, have accomplished so much less than was possible. (This does not deter me. There will be more and some are in the works now. Jim Lesar and I will be doing them alone and without support. But we will also be doing them as they should be done. The immediate question is time, for we both have much else to do, not just talk big.)

Last night, while I was doing a broadcast by phone, I heard that Congressman Gonzalez has asked for an investigation of the CIA's connection with the JFK assassination.

No matter how well intended - and I assume his good intentions without ever having heard from him or anyone on his staff or speaking for him - no formulation could be more counterproductive. Nor could any do more to tell the CIA today when, for the first time, there is a chance of doing something about its anti-democratic excesses. You may not believe this but you will find it is true. I worked on Capitol Hill in the 30s and was in intelligence in World War II.

What people may believe is one thing. What they can prove to the satisfaction of others is another matter. It is the controlling matter. Every unprovable charge, every well-intended but unfactual one, is very hurtful to the ultimate establishing of truth. It is the major impediment today to enlisting any real power and support. Yet after Watergate the climate is more congenial. However, these same excesses during the active official interest in Watergate was a major impediment to a full investigation. There are not that many good investigators and there was great pressure for non-disclosure. The result is that a tremendous amount of significant and easily-available information remains unexposed. (I had to lay my Watergate book aside in September for the work I hear and I then began with greater intensity on the Ray case. I was in the conclusions and have not been able to return to it. It does have what I describe above in it. But when all the nuts are going around with the most sensational nonsense about the central characters, what can compete? It isn't even possible to approach a publisher or an agent.)

All our nuts not all of whom are well intended are today more hurtful than ever. All their wild charges are used with effectiveness by the legislative operators and those who have access to the control of the press. Today it is no longer merely that they deceive and misinform. They have become the ally of the enemy, which is separate from their hope or intent but is fact. So much of it comes back to me and from these people who do have influence.

One of the greatest of these new liabilities is the gang of cunning commercializers calling themselves the Assassination Information Bureau. They have done an effective job of ripping off the campuses, but the money they obtain by false pretense is minor compared with their ripping off of the minds. How they present themselves to others and how sincere they may appear to be is irrelevant. What they say and do is relevant. Official files must be bulging with the sheer insanity. Many reporters have spoken to me of this and I have been sent clippings of their appearances. To describe what they say as garbage is to praise it. Bad as it is to misinform the young it is worse to arm the enemy, and this they do and have done. Their coming convention, for which I hope they have not tapped you, will be covered well and all the irrationalities will be available for the use of people like the CIA's lobbyists on the Hill. Believe me or not, this happens. I have carbon copies of this surveillance on me and others. A cover agency was set up for it and I have fairly full documentation on it.

One of the AIB, Harvey Yastjian, once phoned me from Baltimore before he was to speak at the University of Maryland. I spent several hours pointing out his grossest errors. They are that gross if you know the realities and the fact. He thanked me profusely and then went to the collage and spewed out all the error that is so attractive. And when they persist in the same error simply because it is commercial and attractive, their pretenses become irrelevant.

Times have changed. Before the misuse of means merely deterred accomplishment. Now it can be seriously hurtful. Now there is a chance of doing something about the evils, some if not all. The World War II caution, Loose Talk Helps the Enemy, is very true today and in the present situation.

I can't begin to keep up with all these nuts. I make no effort and I know only what is volunteered to me. I make no effort to keep up with what others are doing, aside from the very few with whom I keep contact. But one thing characterizes all these people: they look for easy marks with money. They then misuse this money and those whose money is misused finance the opposite of what they hope for. Believe me or not, I am telling it to you as it is in the hope that you and others like you not be exploited and misused.

Sincerely, Harold Weisberg