Hyattstown, Maryland 20734
October 19, 1966

Editor, The Saturday Review
380 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10017

Sir:

Editing and altering the cover of my book, WHITEWASH: THE REPORT ON THE
WARREN REPORT, is an abuse I have never seen in a supposedly literary
journal (SR 10/22/66). But it is a kindness compared with the malevo-
lence, distortion, misrepresentation, misquotation and outright falsifi-
cation palmed off as a review by a judge who either did not read it or
did not understand it (the other alternative is obvious).

One of the things that distinguishes WHITEWASH from other books is that
it comes exclusively from the official evidence, to which it is exhaust-
ively referenced. Not a single word of this formidable evidence that I
mustered does the learned judge-reviewer quote or address. I do not
suggest the reason - I declare it. He dare not, and he will not. I
challenge him to debate it - in your columns or elsewhere. Instead, he
pretends none of it exists and twists a few comments that he then pre-
sents in other than their intended meaning.

With reference to the forcible removal of the President's body while
federal officials were deceiving those local authorities who had their
own (and the only applicable) laws to uphold, and without indicating any
omission, the man whose sacred function in our society it is to guarantee
that the law is upheld quotes me as saying this was an "abuse of Texas
authorities". He found what follows unworthy of inclusion for it is not
consistent with the impression he wants to convey. It is that ours "is
a government of law, not of men. The law applies equally to the least
and the mightiest." Next, he comments that I went "on to defend the
rights of the State of Texas" (which are the rights of us all, are they
not, judge?), whereas I actually say "rights and laws".

The inference of his carefully selected quotation, "...he also declines
to 'embarrass' the 'public officials' who 'forcibly removed the Presi-
dent's body'", especially with the emphasis added by the selective quo-
tation marks, is diametrically opposite to the clear meaning of my
actual words, "Quoting the testimony and citing the actions of those who
forcibly removed the President's body would serve only to embarrass pub-
lic servants whose dedication is above question and whose intentions
should not be reproached."

It is not less than a lie to say, "Weisberg's hints and speculations are
the launching pad for his criticism of the autopsy reports (only one,
judge) and the doctors who performed the autopsy...". The "hints and
speculations" exist only in the distortions used by a reviewer unable or
unwilling to face the facts. There are about 10,000 words in this chap-
ter, which comes entirely from the official evidence and is footnoted to
it. Had the judge read and understood this chapter, which is unique in
the literature in that it is the only exhaustive compilation and analysis
of the official evidence, he would have made fewer gross errors in the
simplest fact.

For example, saying the official observer of the Secret Service and those other FBI and Secret Service agents assigned to attend the autopsy and actually there were "allegedly" there. Another example is saying that the official autopsy chart that shows the President's rear non-fatal injury was "made by the Commander". If there is but a single man in the entire world proved to have <u>not</u> executed that chart, it is that Commander. But this is not the only point where the judge substitutes his ignorance for fact and berates those who refuse to do so. He says, ignoring the sworn testimony that clarifies the ambiguity of his written statement, that Dr. Humes "destroyed by burning certain preliminary draft notes". Dr. Humes swore he burned, not his notes, but the first draft of the autopsy. What kind of a judge is it who then does not ask, "Why?" The Commission did not, either.

The additional quotation of WHITEWASH, still not addressing its solid mustering of the official evidence, is "Weisberg asserts, without any evidence in support, that the Commission 'exculpated' 'Presidential assassins'". Note that he does not say without evidence he believes, but without any. There are 110,000 words of just that evidence that prove no single man in the world is capable of doing what was attributed to Oswald, that Oswald could not have been at the scene of the crimes at the instant they occurred, and much more I will be delighted to set forth in elaborate detail on your invitation. What I actually say in the bastardized quotation is, "A crime such as the assassination of the President of the United States cannot be left as the Report of the President's Commission left it, without even the probability of a solution, with assassins and murderers free, and free to repeat their crimes and enjoy what benefits they may have expected to derive therefrom. No President is ever safe if Presidential assassins are exculpated." Would the judge deny this?

The abdications of so many judges, lawyers and intellectuals at the time of the tragedies of Dallas, when they maintained a shameful silence, is in no sense redeemed by the continuing refusal to face reality and fact, by the persistent and not accidental befuddlement, and by the other assorted intellectual dishonesties that characterize this fiction presented as a serious review. The judge may carry a vest-pocket cemetery that to him justifies his shrill whistling. It protects him no more than do his own intellectual "Emperor's clothes".

Soon history will write the answer, and it will not be in the dreamstuff solidified in your type. Shame on those who insist that a President can be murdered and consigned to history with such a dubious epitaph, who believe that there may remain unanswered questions that it is within the capacity of man to answer, without jeopardy to our institutions, and who substitute personal abuse and vilification for fact in disgraceful and unreasoned assaults upon those who seek the truth, the recapture of our honor, and the upholding of our principles and beliefs!

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg