

Dear Jim,

8/26/75

You probably will not like the manner of my addressing Paul, with copies to his antologu colleagues. I do have reasons and not only my disgust at the nature of his stoneheaded non-response to your letter.

I did want to cut him and his pose of omniscience down a bit, to himself and to the others.

I did want to register contempt, disgust and again the belief that the work, from concept of execution, is not the thing they pretend but ~~xxx~~ represents the attempt to justify preconceptions, political in nature, as well as commercialism.

Probably I had other objectives I'm not taking time to go into. I do want to get back to writing.

In the past I've tried to break with Paul giving him, to himself, the appearance of doing the breaking.

In recent years I've had a little experience with people who have unrecognized emotional problems, not only in this field.

So, I think it is in Paul's interest to give him still another excuse to regard me as a crusty old bastard nobody can please. This way he can tell himself that is not true, that he wants nothing more to do with me and not that I want nothing more to do with him.

He has become quite literally dishonest, and the example you noted is a little less significant than what I spotted in the chapter from Carl Allen.

You will remember the joke I told you Saturday, that some of the reading-room people told I think it is Floyd that I sent students and others to the Archives to work for me. It was Lind, who also said I've spent more time in the Archives than anyone else. And I'm rarely there! Now that is.

Well, what Paul lies about in that chapter is that I sent Gary and Hal Verb there for me. I also paid for everything and put them up here. It was my work, for me, and Paul, to whom I sent copies, knows it. He has to lie this way to live with himself. I have no desire to further share that kind of living. (With a back like mine it was quite painful to stand at the machine and make all those copies, too. And they cost me considerably more than commercial xeroxing.)

= This is his way of justifying to himself an ethical breach that could not be more deliberate and recognized.

Now that his doctorate is utterly worthless (he selected a specialty that no longer exists) he has this ambition.

He has done such work, much of it, unlike the melonry, excellent. But it lacks meaning because he has done nothing with it. The one way he could see was doing what he has known since not later than 11/67 I was doing. I then gave him copies of the appendix to O in NO. The only reason I didn't give him more then is because there was no copying time. I did take these papers with me for him to copy in SLF. Until after that he gave me nothing. And while his research has been done with precision, actual significance attaches only to noticing the existence of the 1/22 secretypists tape. Secretly and I think unrecognizedly this is what really galls him.

If that melonry and other matters, like Alvarez, still nag, I can cut all of this on his emotional problems. Even after his refusal to do what he could and should have on the spectro suit. I think his personal work is the real reason he refused to do that, although I am aware that his feelings about me could have had some influence.

Meanwhile, you and he can have any association you want. I could have ignored this because he did not write me a letter. I elected not to.

-est,

Paul Hoch et al cc Lesar

8/26/75

The copy of your letter to Jim dated 8/22 came this morning with a copy of his of 8/15 to you and a page and a half of copy.

There is no letter to me and no request. Jim gave me to understand by phone yesterday that you want my comment.

I can easily comment on the note you added, "Hi-hope things are okay," They are as okay as people like you and those authorities you quote on my work and those with whom you associate as other than "crazies" as well as those we both consider crazy permit. I am also much too pressured by deadlines

I am not going to read or comment on the copy. The last thing you have ever done is pay any attention to anything I have to say anyway. Your intent in this has been clear from the first. Your non-response to Jim fortifies this. And you certainly know a) that ~~neither~~ neither Nichols nor Wecht is or ever has been dependable. Your preconception and prejudice, if not other perhaps unrecognized intentions, are clear in your explanation for not consulting me when we had heavy correspondence but use the undependable parasites "to give the reader a concise statement about the material which has been released [sic]."

You were stubborn, unthinking and unhelping when you could have been of considerable help and you then gave me bullshit as an explanation for not doing what I asked of you, going to the library, which you described roughly as the equivalent of working for another FBI. (Much of what I asked of you kids have done for me by doing what I asked of you, going to the libraries available to them. Unfortunately, because I was foolish enough to think that you or Lifton would be helpful some of this came in too late for use in the hearings. Not one went to a barren library.)

Were it not for other factors these two would be enough for me to want nothing to do with your prejudiced approach and less than honest or accurate handling. Pull off your face. Perhaps it may be the way of opening your mind. I wish you no harm but I do wish you were less inquisitive and less inflexible, less rocky in the head.

There have been times when I have tried to get you to probe into your own attitudes and thoughts. You haven't and you won't, alas. But it would help you if you could ask if there are events of the past of which you have no ~~more~~ cause for pride that influence you.

I have and have expressed beliefs about your project. I believe you are imposing an artificial political doctrine and are for all practical purposes engaged in a cheap commercialisation/self-promotion that is not much better than the AIB ripoff. Few things will make me happier than being proven wrong.

I agreed to your use of the excerpt only because I felt it would be wrong not to. I believe people have the right, sometimes more, to collect anthologies and that all the flowers should bloom. But some can't distinguish between flowers and weeds. However, agreeing to use is as far as I am willing to go with the subsequent record and what I take to be a dishonest justification of dishonesty and prejudice in your 8/22 to Jim. You can live with that and its results. Let those you regard as authentic experts and the only ones who can give you and your hoped-for readers an honest statement of fact about my suit correct your factual error for you.

However, if it will not cause you to lose sleep, you might tell your readers that an account of this suit with documents will appear in Post Mortem. My plan is for it to appear before a commercial publisher will bring yours out. And the route numbers here have been changed. I'm now route 8, if you include the only thing that can help get my work around. Clearly you prefer less solid work for your anthology so I have no reason to believe you will be anxious to promote any understanding of its nature of your selections for it. (It happens that I have addressed the politics of assassination.

There is another problem about which I would have written you. I mention it now.

Our association was predicated on the assumption you make specific and explicit, that you would not ~~write~~ write anything on this subject. I therefore trusted you and used you as a duplicate depository for some of my work, always with the explicit understanding that it was not for any use and not for any distribution. We do have some rather pointed exchanges on this.

Then all of a sudden, of all the books you could decide to write, you decided on one you knew I had always planned and part of which you had read after I began writing. You did not accept subtle suggests that there was other writing you could do. I regard your unilateral breaking of the promise on which our relationship was based as entirely unethical.

You sent me a copy and asked me to read it. I did not have time then. You wanted Jim to read it so I gave it to him. Then you started making distribution of parts to others, with no restrictions. One was sent to me, I did read it, and I find in it what I regard as a further breach of trust, your following something I had sent you in confidence and nobody but you at a time when I still believed you were not going to write a book in competition with mine. I saw Jim after reading this and told him I'd best read your whole thing. He said you had told him not to let me see it.

When I can't get back to mine @ and some of the Hoch horrors are among the reasons I could not complete it earlier - the one reason that can't apply is the possibility that I would steal some of it. I have a clear record on this in an enormous amount of published words and any such inference is a monstrous slander. The other reasons have to do with the way your head is screwed on.

How many faces do you have?

Your conduct with Whitewash IV would disgrace the Nixon White House. You actually claimed the right to ripoff my work. It caused much harm and bad feeling and there was never any legal, ethical, moral or any other kind of reason why except from the sickness of self-concept you could have dreamed that this was either right or proper.

Aside from the damage this did the book, Jim and me, to wasted time for me. (I presume you will follow the O'Toole/Lane/AIB pattern on these transcripts because they really do belong in a book on the politics of it.)

The time I wasted trying to get through the thickness surrounding an otherwise very good head on the melon insanity would have been enough to finish the book you decided to duplicate on your own, in clear violation of your word. However, your effort was not entirely wasted. Along with Gregory et al and Lane and Wecht and others you did help the Rockefeller Commission's whitewash.

I leave you to your conscience, if any; to your ego, so apparently bruised; to your hates and what they have done to you; and to what I can't really call personal integrity.

To melons.

To Nixon in Dallas - at the wrong time.

To Ruby as a Nixon fink - from a fake.

To Nixon as Cabans' lawyers - when he wasn't.

And to the kind of thinking and dependability all this represents.

I have to do other work so that those you respect can rip it off or try.

I've just had what for me is exceptional good fortune. I've come into a few dollars from some work. I've used it for Howard to come up and help with the work your friends will misuse, they being unable to do their own with any substance or meaning or fact. If he has the kidney, I'll ask him to read and correct this. For me there is no point in taking that added time because you have a set head and nothing influences it.

Meanwhile, correct your own mistakes. Or what ought not trouble you too much, publish them.

You have earned it,

Not that I expect it to make any difference, your colleagues ought to know that once I got the 1/27 transcript I phoned you invited you to come and stay here and be co-author of Whitewash IV. I also offered to joinh you, without cost to you, in FOIA suits. Your response was worse than insulting and the arrogance of it is limned by your current errors in your field of claimed expertise. You ego is so sick and so controlling you can't even ask me to correct these errors. They also ought to know that I am so selfish and self-seeking that I offered to turn the entire 1/22 suit over to you.

2599 Le Conte Ave.
Berkeley, CA 94709
August 22, 1975

Dear Jim,

Thanks for the copy of your letter of 8/15 to Russ Stetler, concerning the supplementary material in our anthology for the extract from Whitewash IV.

The statement that the FBI released 73 pages of raw data to Weisberg in April was based on published reports and remarks made to me. As you suggested, I am sending the supplementary material to Harold so that we can correct any factual errors.

We certainly had no intention of unfairly playing down Harold's role, in this suit or in general. He is, of course, named several times in your analysis of the legal situation, and the general introduction to this part of the anthology refers to him several times. I don't agree that a reference to the date of his original request for the release of this material would add to the introductory comments. Our purpose was to give the reader some idea of what the spectro is all about, and why it is important.

I hope that the distinction between the crazies and the serious critics will be clear throughout our book; I think the readers will be able to see that Harold is one of the serious critics.

The comments from Wecht and Nichols on the spectro were included to give the reader a concise statement about the material which has been released. My understanding was that Harold is indeed "persisting in his court case to achieve (and certify) full disclosure."

Best wishes on the Ray case.

Sincerely,

Paul

PLH

cc: Harold ✓
(with Lesar letter and
commentary (2 pp.))
Russ Stetler

*Hi - hope things
are okay*

Paul

8/18/75

JAMES H. LESAR
ATTORNEY AT LAW
1231 FOURTH STREET, S. W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20024
TELEPHONE (202) 484-6023

August 15, 1975

Mr. Russell Stetler
424 North Street
Oakland, Calif. 94609

Dear Mr. Stetler:

Thanks for sending me a copy of the introduction and conclusion to the excerpt which you are reprinting from Whitewash IV.

Because I am writing James Earl Ray's appeal brief, I can't spare the time to give you detailed criticisms. In any event, I am not an expert on spectrographic analysis or the assassination of President Kennedy. For criticisms of accuracy and content, of which I am sure there are some, I would urge that you solicit the opinion of Harold Weisberg.

I am unhappy with the writing, which lacks focus. I am disturbed by the failure to mention certain elemental facts which the reader ought to have. Harold Weisberg was the first critic to call attention to the significance of the spectrographic analyses. On May 23, 1966, he wrote J. Edgar Hoover demanding that the test results be made public. Since then he has filed two lawsuits to force their disclosure. Yet these facts, which help give the reader a better perspective and accurate specific information, are not mentioned. Except for the one instance where it is impossible to avoid, all mention of Weisberg is excized. Instead there are vague general references to "critics", a category which in the minds of many of your readers includes Skolnick, A.J. Weberman, and the latest escapee from the nearest nuthouse. I think credit ought to be given where it is due, to Weisberg, not to the crazies or to his unequal imitators, Wecht and Nichols. To do otherwise is bad scholarship and worse politics:

The statement that in April, 1975, "the FBI released 73 pages of raw data from the spectrographic tests to Harold Weisberg" is factually inaccurate, but I don't know what the correct figure is, since I've left the counting of pages to Harold.

Sincerely yours,

Jim Lesar
Jim Lesar

cc: Paul Hoch
Peter Dale Scott

intro to Jim Lesar on the spectro evidence

The FBI performed ^{Spectrographic} comparisons on certain bullet fragments found in the wounds of President Kennedy and Governor Connally and on larger fragments found in the limousine floor and on a hospital stretcher. Critics of the Warren Commission were struck by the limited claims expressed in the language of the Hearings and of supporting FBI statements. An FBI report to the Dallas police, for example, notes that the tests show the lead in the fragments in question is "similar" -- not that all components of the core are or are not present in identical amounts. In a letter to the Commission's General Counsel, J. Lee Rankin, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover referred to the more sensitive Neutron Activation Analyses which supplemented the spectro tests. He indicated that it was not possible to tell which of the larger fragments any particular minute fragment came from, since there was no significant difference between the larger fragments. But Hoover failed to comment on the more important question of whether any of the minute fragments did not come from the larger ones.

The technique of spectrographic analysis is to induce the chemical elements of a sample to emit a spectrum, which is then photographed. Analysis of the spectrum reveals which elements are present and in what percentages. Two fragments cannot originate from one source unless their spectra are identical in the elements revealed and in the percentages of each element. Identity under such analysis is necessary, but not sufficient, to establish the common origin of two fragments. Thus, one set of findings in the FBI tests would be consistent with the Warren Report's finding of a lone gunman, without establishing the certainty that all the fragments came from one gun. But any other findings would conclusively disprove the Report's conclusion.

In the case of the spectro tests, the Commission did not follow its usual procedure of introducing each report into evidence as a Commission Exhibit. Instead, an FBI ballistics expert was asked to describe the results of the tests and to confirm that the report would remain in the permanent files of the FBI. The absence of the data from the Commission's files and the peculiar wording of all references to the tests heightened critics' curiosity and prompted a number of attempts to obtain the test results. Author Harold Weisberg ultimately filed a suit under the Freedom of Information Act.

His lawyer, James Lesar, describes the resulting legal battle.

[TEXT- WHITENASH IV, P. 172 (1ST FULL P). THRU P. 177 (LAST FULL P)]

concluding note to Lesar on spectro evidence

In April 1975, the FBI released 73 pages of raw data from the spectrographic tests to Harold Weisberg. Another researcher who has been seeking access to the physical evidence, Dr. John Nichols, claims that the evidence which has been released "is incomplete, contains errors, and has essential factors missing." On May 5, Dr. Cyril Wecht declared that "it is too early to draw conclusions as to [the data's] significance." At this writing, Weisberg is persisting in his court case to achieve (and certify) full disclosure.