

3/22/70

Mr. Larry Weintraub
Chicago Sun-Times
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Mr. Weintraub,

Ed DeMar, deeply concerned about the probable counterproductivity of the Skolnick WRSV broadcast on WRSV 3/20, phoned me about 2 a.m. the following morning to tell me about it. Since then I've been sent a copy of your story of the 21st.

I have no doubt your reporting is accurate.

Ordinarily, with all I have to do for which there is no time in a 18-20 hour day, I'd pay no attention to this rotten thing Skolnick has done. However, my long, painful and costly years of working in the field of the political assassinations have convinced me that the ego-trippers, the cheap, self-seeking sensationalists, the literary lightfingers have become a serious impediment to the ultimate acceptance of truth, especially because of the adverse effect they have on an already unfriendly press.

Bright and early the morning after this broadcast, which can have the most serious consequences on ongoing work of which Skolnick could have had no knowledge, I wrote the station. There has been time for response and there has been none. Not from the station, not from Skolnick. Thus I know only what Ed and one other man reported to me. From what they said there was nothing in the broadcast that does not come from one of the books I have written and cannot now get printed. Rather than (your words) "his accusations ~~were~~ were the result of research done by his class at Columbia College", they are 100% unoriginal.

Ed DeMar, who knows of me and my work from a publishing executive who'd like to see this work in print but cannot effectuate it, had told Skolnick about me and had told me Skolnick would be in touch with me because of work his class was doing on the assassinations. Ed also tells me when he learned that Skolnick was about to pull he tried to talk him out of it. E.J. Albright, one of Skolnick's group, also reports trying, without success, to dissuade Skolnick.

Some time before the broadcast I had a phone call from a friend who has a copy of the limited edition of this book (it is copyrighted). He told me Skolnick was to phone me last night. That and succeeding nights I waited up, but there was no call. Now this friend is a former reporter, no longer living in Chicago, who did a little of the local checking for me. In order to help him with that, I had given him copies of the suppressed evidence I had obtained, copies of various FBI "reports", which are hardly that at all. It is from these that Skolnick seems to have quoted, them and the interpretation I put on them. This is contrary to what the reports pretend to say. This, for example, is the source of the New York license number bit. It is hogwash to say that license was issued to Lee Harvey Oswald. Even those contemporaneous newspaper accounts are from my work.

Even if this friend gave Skolnick "permission" to use my work, Skolnick surely knew he could not and any such permission had no meaning. I doubt the friend did this. Skolnick is the expert on the law, the man who seeks to restore integrity to society, is he not?

All of this is damaging to me and what I seek. It presents a clear and present danger to Bolden (and this also is in that book, in some detail). It is because of this hazard to him that I have made no recent effort to contact Bolden, despite encouragement from his friends in the recent past. Whether his story is true or false is unrelated to the possibility of jeopardy. Need I add that such publicity is not calculated to encourage Bolden to disclose what he might not have? It will, without doubt, close a just-opened door, a new area from which new information might have been obtained. And it is hardly designed to increase the possibility of getting my book printed.

When I have been working on this for close to four years and have been careful to avoid any mention of it in any way, can you imagine how I feel when this cheap publicity seeker first sets it and then says it is his own work?

When Albright, who had spoken to me by phone, questioned Skolnick about this, according to the letter I got from Albright yesterday Skolnick said it was not my material and he did not get it from me. Where he got it is entirely immaterial. There is little doubt he got it from my friend, the conditions only being unknown. And there is absolutely no doubt this is my material, attested to by the copyright. Now it is not possible to copyright government documents, but it is possible to copyright the use to which they are put, particularly if, as in this case, that use is opposite what the documents seem to say.

The question is not, essentially, one of violation of copyright, for I have no plans to sue either the silent station or the silent Skolnick. It is, however, one of integrity, especially Skolnick's. And there is the constant problem faced by those elements of the media willing to give time for controversial topics, can they be hurt as a result? I think there is little doubt Skolnick has laid this station wide open to suit.

Because there has been no response to my request for a tape of the show, I'd appreciate it if you could find the time to tell me what else this paradigm of legal and judicial purity aired and any special interpretations he may have placed on any of it. Although this is already an enormous book, my investigation was continuing and I'd like to know what might handicap it, if not indeed, render any further work futile.

By the way, despite what Mr. Clean-the-Courts says, this was not the only contemporaneous threat against JFK in Chicago and at that time. It is my interpretation it is the one that caused cancellation of the trip. And that seems to have been at Secret Service behest, not JFK's idea, as Skolnick conjectures. Nor is this the threat of which Bolden has talked.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg