

NEW ADDRESS: Rt. 7, Frederick, Md. 21701:::473-8188

February 29, 1968

Mr. Julian Goodman, President  
National Broadcasting Co.  
Rockefeller Center  
New York, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Goodman,

If NBC had set itself to validating what I have been saying in our correspondence, it could succeed no better than on the Today Show this morning. There you presented the import from Britain, the eminence John Sparrow, the most professional of the professional apologists for the Warren Report and for error in government, and the most scholarly slanderer.

Although it is not the central purpose of this letter, I again tell you that what NBC is doing under your leadership and with your responsibility is not something you will be proud of, not the usual function of the press in a democratic society, not the presentation of information but of propaganda, and it puts you in the position of being an arm of the government. I would like to suggest to you that what Walter Sheridan has done in your name, with the assistance of Richard Townley, and what Johnny Carson tried so obviously to do, tend both now and in history to link you with the CIA. You have all the responsibilities of a vast corporation to bear, and were you inclined to know about this subject what you must to evaluate what you are doing and have, you just cannot. It is clear that no one on your staff can take that time or has, and there is no other source except in the "critical community" you can consult, and that you have not. On many aspects, I am the only one, and as you know, you have not only not consulted me, but I am almost the only one you have not in any way ever aired.

This morning you aired a slander of me by Sparrow. You became part of a vast campaign, hidden to begin with so it could be presented as "scholarship". You spread a considerable amount of misinformation and defamation. And you have, most likely unwittingly, become an aspect of what is now a campaign for the political assassination of Robert Kennedy.

Sparrow's book was, to the best of my knowledge, never mentioned until this morning, on the Today Show. Until this moment, it was hidden behind an apparent reprinting of it in the London Times Literary Supplement dated December 14, 1967. There a 20,000 word "article" bears the same title, "After The Assassination". The work in it and presumably the book you have now urged all Americans to buy is so utterly incompetent he quotes directly and within quotation marks witnesses who do not exist! In it he libels me by saying that I believe Kemy O'Donnell was part of a conspiracy to kill his close friend who trusted him, the President! How rotten can writing be and still be acceptable to NBC? Just what will you not lend yourself to in your sycophancy?

By one device after another, the Literary Supplement denied me the opportunity for response, with Sparrow's lusty connivance. However, he and I have since then had an exchange of letters. This man is so impartial that when a major British publisher had given editorial approval to my first book in the Spring of 1965, well before any other book on the subject had been written, and asked him for an opinion, he caused

them to decide against it by telling them it was not favorable to the Commission and thus was not worthy of publication, from what I have been told. Under date of February 1 Sparrow did not deny this. Instead he wrote with the evasiveness typical of the "scholarship" you see fit to present to the American people in the place of fact about how their President was murdered, "I really think there must be some misunderstanding here, and I should like to clear it up. What was the 'house' in question?" I replied giving him the name and date and repeating my challenge to a confrontation on fact. I asked him to give me the name and to cite the pages of testimony of the non-existent witness. He has since been silent on all counts. But, without checking and despite the history of the recent past, this qualifies him for your programming, justifies your presentation of him and his slanders that he and through him you substitute for fact.

It is a shameful NBC history that you perpetuate. Is this your concept of the function and responsibility of your corporation, of news presentation, even of entertainment? Is this what the stockholders of NBC intend as a dedication to the function of news reporting? Is this in accord with your own beliefs about the responsibilities of newsmen in a democratic society? Can you conceive of NBC as no role save that of lickspittle? Is there no end to the abdication of the press on this most vital issue of our day?

Let me cite you one example of the lesser evils of this show. Pretending to address himself to the charge that is in my book alone, that, as he put it, Oswald was a "tool of the CIA", this eminence thought it was sufficient response to laugh. Now what would you think of a Report on the assassination of the President by the government that came into power because of that assassination that fails to mention what its own evidence discloses, that the alleged assassin openly got Communist literature in the mail as a Marine, that when this was reported to higher authority they ignored it, that the government then gave him a fraudulent discharge so he could "defect" to Russia, using the Russian he learned in the Marine Corps and at the same time kept him in an organization where every man had at least a "confidential" security clearance and he had at least secret? I tell you that over and above this sworn testimony from the competent witnesses, including his commanding officer, Oswald really had, from my own work, top secret and "crypto". You will find this set forth in full in my most recent book, "Oswald In New Orleans", beginning on page 85.

Is this something NBC wants laughed about, hidden and misrepresented from its vast audience? If you conceive that it is proper for the government to suppress this from its "Report", do you believe it is also proper for NBC to likewise suppress it and let this scandalous man laugh at it? Do you want the FBI reports showing that Oswald used a CIA address as his in New Orleans? I'll give them to you. Do you want the incontrovertible evidence that the FBI lied (and the Commission repeated this lie, virtually verbatim) in hiding the fact that Oswald had an accomplice in the establishment of his intelligence "cover"? I will give that to you also, copies of the FBI reports included. This suppressed evidence has also been suppressed on NBC. What has not been suppressed is laughter about it!

As NBC knows, mine was the first book analyzing the Report of the Warren Commission from its own evidence alone and showing from this evidence that the Report was wrong. Until recently, it, my first, was the only such book. As you should know, I have done more work in this field than anyone else, officials included, and I have a broader knowledge of it than anyone else, again including officials. I have not only ransacked the Commission's published "evidence", but I have dredged that enormous literary and legal quicksand, its files. I have published four large books on this subject, close to a million words, and I have the fifth book done. It has not appeared only because I cannot risk the additional debt burden it would require. To a degree, I have NBC to thank for this, for not only has it suppressed me, but it has gone to

extreme of using the copyrighted name of my work to publicize a show that included as one of its participants a man who accepts the Commission's basic conclusion as sound and without question, without ever once examining it, and pretends to be its "critic". But it will appear, and you will then have more that will not make you proud of what NBC has done under you and of your own abdication.

There is nothing any reasonable man can want by way of evidence to prove that at best the Report of the Commission is not acceptable that I cannot give you. Even if you want the voice of the most industrious counsel acknowledging that he made their decisions for them, that he, without even a typist to check his writing, wrote the basic conclusion on conspiracy into the Report while it was on the press and the night the presses rolled, and it was wrong, I can give you that.

But there are none so blind as those who will not see. You will not. You will not take the time to learn what someone in NBC-and aren't you the boss-<sup>should</sup> keep the time to learn. My own efforts to give NBC the opportunity go back to 1965. Are you afraid to learn the truth? Is it so much more comfortable to avoid it and your right to sacred responsibilities as a major news reporter? You select the role of unofficial apologist, as though that is the glory of the American reporter rather than his grave and that of press freedom.

Throughout my work I had such trust in NBC News that I kept two of your staff members informed of what I had learned, in both Washington and New York. The very first few copies off the press when the first book went into general distribution May 9, 1966, included a half-dozen for NBC News. You were also offered a copy of the limited edition the year before and didn't take it. That night Paul Burke, to whom I personally handed it, glanced at it and said without doubt I'd soon be hearing from NBC News. Several days later I checked back and he said "Monitor would be in touch. The next week he said they had changed their minds. Need I remind you of the trash, trivia and junk that NBC News and Monitor found worthy of mention, while they found no interest in a book that proves the official investigation of the murder of the President was unacceptable, and says that when this happens, the basic institutions of our society are in jeopardy, that <sup>the</sup> president and that institution thenceforth are also in jeopardy?

Or is it that you think factual criticism of the government is somehow "subversive"? Cannot you understand that it is this criticism and the rectification of error that makes government strong and earns it respect?

To date no one has to my face alleged a single error in any of my published work. Even your craven Sparrow, who steadfastly declines to confront me on fact, has yet to even pretend to do this. It is not that I am perfect, or that my work is. It is that there is no major error in it, none not the design of the authors of the Report, and that it is entirely unanswerable. If you dispute this, I challenge you to arrange any kind of confrontation you select on it. I have sent copies to all the proper officials and asked them to show its error, to a response of monolithic silence. I have documented the illegal and improper suppressions, to the proper officials. Not a single denial is on record.

This is the record NBC so valiantly supports, a record of falsehood, misrepresentation, distortion, outright lies, suppression and even the destruction of evidence. It is, indeed, the record of which NBC is now part, for with your own Sheridan "report" and his most dubious activities (of which I have offered you proof that you have steadfastly declined) you have become a participant in them, as you are by such dishonors as this morning's show. It is your election, and by now it cannot be justified on the basis you did not know. If no one else has sought to inform you, I have. I have made you offer after offer to show you proof and evidence, and no

one at NBC has accepted that offer. Is it that you dare not?

I make no effort to cajole you, to cotton to you, for I seek no crumbs. It is clear that this letter is not designed to please you. That is not my responsibility as a writer nor as an American. I seek to charge you with the confrontation with your obligations you persistently avoid. The longer you postpone it, the less pleasant it will be. Perhaps, eventually, NBC's stockholders will ~~share~~ share that displeasure.

If I can do nothing else, I will leave a record, as I will and do try to be the conscience of those who seem to have lost their own. It is not that I find this agreeable - or profitable, as those slanders you have freely aired have it - but that I do assume my obligations. What a tragedy it is that only the unknown in our great country do so! How awful that the rich and powerful refuse. And how sickening that NBC finds prime time for those who have commercialized and do, suppressing those who have not and do not!

With Sparrow today, and on the same show, you did as you earlier did with that other noble embodiment of the writer in the free world, Charles Roberts, who just, by coincidence, as a White House correspondent, is in a position to derive personal profit from his slanderous apologia. In each case you seek to become and do become part of a campaign to promote a book the revenue from which cannot pay for the promotional expenses, and you have, as you had, no question about this. In each case you slander me to your vast audience. To now you have refused me a fair opportunity to respond.

I herewith renew that request.

As in each earlier case, I also renew an offer from which I cannot conceivably derive a profit, an offer to sit down and inform you, and to do that on the basis of official evidence. You, of course, are an important and very busy man. I am not important, but I warrant I am and I have been busier than you. The additional difference is that no one pays me for my time. Yet I offer you this time, in an open-handed way. I will be in New York to make a speech the night of Monday March 4. I will stay overnight. If you are too busy to try and learn any of the things I can prove to you during the day, I will stay Tuesday night. Prepare a list of the questions to which you want answers. If I cannot give you copies of the official evidence at that moment, I will mail it to you. I assure you there is no essential conclusion of the Commission that, from its own evidence, is tenable, save for the assurance that the President was murdered. That required no Presidential Commission for its authentication. Within reason, I will assume the total cost of reproduction of all the documents you may want that I have, and I will photocopy the pages of the printed evidence to save you the time of consulting large books. So, this will cost you nothing but a little time. It is past time for you to find it.

In closing, I ask confirmation or denial of reports that have reached me that Walter Sheridan is independent of the control of NBC. I think it is important to have a straight record on this both because of his present activity and because of his past connections and associations, which, as I understand, include intelligence. If it is not to you, it is obvious to others that official intelligence is very much involved in this entire affair, from before the beginning to the present. I suggest it is also important to you and NBC because your performance so closely parallels the intelligence interest and, whether or not with your knowledge, shows signs of recent connection with it.

Sincerely yours,

Harold Weisberg