

Mr. Michael Lerner
TIKKUN
5100 Leona St.,
Oakland, CA 94619

6/1/92

Dear Mr. Lerner,

I read your undated letter that came today and laid it aside in disbelief. Later I read it again, and then a third time, and I remain astounded that one who presumes to be an editor who presumes not only to inform the public but like a Rush Limbaugh, to tell ~~it~~^{them} how to think, could fail to realize that you indicted yourself and your magazine.

As I told you before, I am trying to leave as complete a record as possible for history and ~~this~~ includes the media treatment of the JFK assassination and what relates to it. So first ~~+~~⁺ must thank you for this priceless contribution.

First you tell me, with all the maturity, wisdom, judgement and insight of those wretchedly bad articles supposedly about Oliver Stone and his movie JFK, that I am paranoid. I suppose that explains why, ~~at~~^{at} 79 and prohibited from lifting more than 15 pounds, I have no weapon, live in a patch of woods on the side of a mountain invisible to any neighbors and despite all the lawsuits I have filed ~~gainst~~ against the FBI just arranged for the publication of a book by a former FBI agent without having seen it. My home has simple and ancient locks, my car is never locked except when I am downtown, the key is always in my costly riding mower I am no longer able to drive so that if a boy comes to mow my grass when I am not home he can do so, and none of the ~~fully~~^{fully} costly other outdoor tools needed to care for more than five acres is under lock and key, I invited ~~strangers~~ here when they ask to be invited. But they could get in anyway because the door is not locked from the time I arise, quite early from sleep apnea, until I retire. I mean, how paranoid can you get?

Then you say, "You write~~t~~ to me as though I have been thinking about your(sic) or your letter, neither of which (sic) I know anything about."

It may seem immodest of me, maven, but if you could write about the JFK assassination and not know anything about me, you confirm my initial criticism: you all wrote from ignorance and prejudice and to indulge yourselves and espouse your own agendas. As distinguished from the nutty theories which you (pl) espoused, I brought to light most of what is factual that is known about the JFK assassination (and that of Martin Luther King, Jr.) in six books and by a series of ~~FDA~~^{FDA} lawsuits in which I compelled the disgorging of about a quarter of a million pages of once-withheld official records. (My seventh book is on the King assassination, and including those records I rescued from official oblivion I have about a ~~third~~^{third} of a million pages.)

So what you really tell me is that as an editor and ~~a~~^a writer you ~~ned~~^{ned} know nothing at all about the fact of the JFK assassination to write and publish others on that subject and tell your readers what to think and believe. And you call your magazine "Tikkun," too!

Your next excuse is incompetence. You blame your nonresponsiveness on your office

and you tell me of it that I should see "how incompetently it deals with too many letters and manuscripts...." To which you add "that how you are being responded to has little to do with the content of what you wrote" because you all have too much to do.

I'm not a young fogie like you. I'm an old-fashioned man raised to believe that when a man assumes responsibilities he meets them, whatever that may require. In the 1930s when I was a Senate ~~editor~~ editor I worked around the clock regularly and several times five days and nights without leaving the office except to drive to the Government Printing Office, hoping not to fall asleep at the wheel. But the reports came out on schedule and they were accurate and withstood the most critical examination from that committee's powerful enemies, political, industrial and financial. (*Senate Civil Liberties Committee*)

When after about a hundred international^{all} rejections for the first book on the Warren Commission, without a single adverse editorial comment, I published that book myself, I then undertook additional responsibilities. These included responding to letters. I've gotten more than 20,000 letters from strangers and they have all been responded to except for perhaps a dozen from the mentally ill. Somehow, one man helped by his wife, I managed also to continue investigating and researching and published more books and filed and fought all those many lawsuits against the government determined to frustrate them. (In the course of which Congress amended the investigatory files exemption over one of those suits to open the files of the FBI, CIA and similar agencies to FOIA compliance) and still find time, after a half-dozen serious surgeries several of which I was not expected to survive, to help others and make my records available to them even though I know I disagree with what they will write. (More of my paranoia: all my FOIA records are in the basement and I am able to use stairs only a few times a day, so I do not supervise what others do with these records and they are permitted to use our copier to copy whatever they want, me not knowing what they copy.)

You complain that "nobody ^{Care} ~~care~~ enough." Not those who write me. They care deeply and I respond to their caring and their concern. To so many letters most of which I do not want to answer! To so many letters inspired by intellectual miscreants like you who mislead and misinform the caring people.

I'm sorry that you found it necessary to confess that you did not read the long and detailed letter I wrote you personally with the substantive and serious criticisms in it. I'm 79, unwell, severely limited in what I am able to do, and I do not get letters like I wrote you, there being no basis for any such to me. But ~~Nobody~~ would write me as I wrote you and get a response^{only} to later letters that confess that the time and trouble represented was ignored. For one thing, I have too much personal and professional responsibility for that. For another it would be arrogant, self-important and contemptuous of a material reflection of concern.

You do refer to my "last two letters." But neither addressed the substance of my first letter, which was commentary on the tinif you published and with it corrupted the

minds of your trusting readers. The two letters you read referred first to your nonresponse and then to the silliness of your form postcard in this situation. So, naturally, from them you have "had idea" what ~~my~~ "Perspective is or what" my "critique is."

But you are generous, maybe. If I will "state it succinctly in two paragraphs...not to exceed 300" words, and get it to you in two days, you "will try (only TRY) yo use it."

Do you think I give a damn about attention in what you have already characterized as your schmatta? I turn TV down when it means I have to go to Washington.

I took the time, at 79, with all else I have to do and want to and cannot do, to write you in detail and with specifics, about 4000 words.

The subject matter is serious, whether you regard it as ~~the~~ ⁺ assassination of a President and its official investigation or the vulgar and indecent exploitation and commercialization of it by Oliver Stone or your endorsing of his rewriting of our history and, like you, misleading and misinforming those who in his case number in the millions.

If you as the editor of Tikkun care so little about how it ~~misleads~~ ^m and misinforms ~~those~~ ^{those} ~~that~~ who trust it or so little about what you do and do not do as its editor that you could get the kind of letter I wrote you and not read it, you have characterized yourself more effectively than I would even want to in the perhaps 300 words or less.

From your personal Olympus, ignorant as you are, knowing not a damn thing about what I wrote you, but perhaps stung a bit by my latter letters, you tell me to "stop being foolish." This followed you asking me to tell you "what's at stake in your disagreement with us - - i.e., why anybody should continue to care about your (my) position (sic)"

Perhaps it was foolish of me to believe that the editor of what calls itself Tikkun might give a damn for anything other than the political agendas he gives his readers. Perhaps it was foolish of me to believe that the man I wondered might be Max Herner's son might care about misleading and misinforming trusting readers, might have personal and professional concerns about what he published that could lead an aging and unwell man to take all that time to ^write him about it.

But I did not write you about any "position" of mine. And if you have to be told "why anybody should continue to care" about the JFK assassination, its official investigations and the exploitations and commercializations of it, I am sorrier for you than I'll try to say.

You conclude with a remarkable confession. "I'm not worried about not being able to refute your criticism, I'm only worried about understanding what they said and why anyone should care." To tell you which I took the time, when each thing I do is at the cost of something I will not be able to do, in about 4,000 words, So, whether in another 4,000 or less than 300, why in the world should I? Live with the kind of editor you make clear you are, a propagandaist and a self-important, omniscient one ~~at~~ ^e that.

For shame! Schanda! Harold Weisberg

Harold Weisberg

TIKKUN

A BI-MONTHLY JEWISH CRITIQUE OF POLITICS, CULTURE, & SOCIETY

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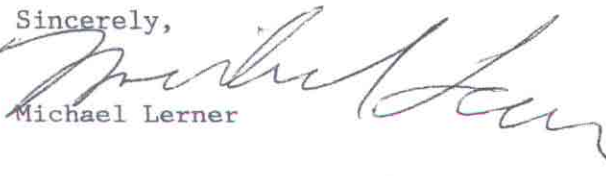
Dear Mr. Weisberg:

You live in a paranoid universe in which everything that happens has a reason or intention. You write to me as though I had been thinking about your or your letter, neither of which I know anything about. Perhaps I wrote you along with hundreds of others; perhaps a second letter got a computer response. If you came to see our office, and how incompetently it deals with too many letters and manuscripts given our tiny and overworked staff, you'd know that how you are being responded to has little to do with the content of what you wrote, most to do with our overworked staff.

I have no idea from your last two letters what your perspective is or what your critique is. If you can state it succinctly in two paragraphs, total words not to exceed 300, and fax it to us by June 3rd (fax no:510-482-3379), then if it's strong, smart and critical, we will try (only TRY) to use it. But if we don't use it, I guarantee you it won't be because it's too critical of our views, but because you don't do it in a smart way that conveys to the uninformed reader exactly what your point is and why our writers have missed it or gotten something wrong. Be specific but tell us what's at stake in your disagreement with us--i.e. why anybody should continue to care about your position.

And stop being so foolish. The tragedy of this world is not that people are paying attention and plotting, but that nobody cares enough. I'm not worried about not being able to refute your criticisms, I'm only worried about understanding what they say and why anyone should care.

Sincerely,



Michael Lerner