

See also Thornley Perry
files

December 16, 1968

Editor, ~~Tampa Times~~
Tampa, Florida 33600

Sir:

This letter is for the record, for to expect honesty or honorable intent from a reporter like Tom Raum is to expect love from a whore.

His purpose, as well as the more open one of lawyer Arnold Levine, was propaganda. This is what you printed.

It is quite obvious that, after a lapse of more than eight months, there was no sudden urgency in his printing his "story" on November 27. He could have done what is normal with reporters of honest intent and, following normal practices, called me. However, he carefully delayed until after deadline, as he specified in his call. But then he'd have had the truth with the falsehood - or no "story", no warrant for his smear.

His second story is no less dishonest. It is a careful selection of what he could twist to servi his original dishonest reporting blended with lies. I tell you I have an accurate record of our conversation and can prove this. For example, "Weisburg (sic) did not explain why he was allowed the services of Garrison's typing pool." This is not only a lie but a deliberate one. Two paragraphs ahead, he selected that part he thought he could use.

Any reasonably bright editor reading this language from the second paragraph of the first story would know his reporter was not dispassionate:

"The possibility" was confirmed to the Times today by Thornley's attorney ... (my emphasis). Apropos of the contrivance of the lead, "Did New Orleans Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison commission a set of deliberately (my emphasis) 'touched-up' photographs ..." This is straightforward crookedness.

There never was any such "possibility", it could not possibly have been "confirmed", and there was no such purpose as that imputed.

This seems to make it clear that, unless you employ incompetent editors, Tom Raum wrote as the paper desired, dishonestly and as a propagandist. I'd prefer to think otherwise and to have your contrary assurance. Without it, I have to assume that his further deliberate omission of what he acknowledged to me by phone, that checking out any possibility may result in exculpation and in this case would seem to have, is no less than what you expect of and accept from him. What Raum told me is that Thornley does look like Oswald, more so without any change in his appearance.

Were it not for the lamentable willingness of the allegedly free press to convert itself into an arm of government, our country would be in better shape than it is. This is more subversive of genuine freedom than in those countries where the press is known to be government controlled, for the people are deceived by the pretense of independence.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg