

3/21/70

Mr. Ed. Lucht
WBBY
3611 Oakton
Skokie, Ill. 60076

Dear Mr. Lucht,

I have been informed that Mr. Sherman Skolnick last night made a broadcast on your station on which he used my copyrighted material.

Mr. Skolnick never asked my permission and he did not have it.

This material is both a vital part of a book I am hopeful of having printed and is part of material for which I have currently been negotiating the possibility of a magazine article.

From this I think it will be clear to you that I may have been damaged. There is no doubt in my mind that my rights have been transgressed upon. There is absolutely no doubt this broadcast also brings to an end any hope I could have had for carrying these aspects of my work forward and, in ways neither you nor Mr. Skolnick nor whoever let him have access to this and any way of knowing, probably ended my capabilities in an effort that had just become successful after almost five years of difficult work.

I would like to hear from you about this and I would appreciate a tape at your earliest convenience so that I can learn for myself exactly what was used, how it was used and its potential for damage other than is obvious. I understand the press was present. If it is possible, I'd much appreciate copies of any attention this attracts in the printed press.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

3/21/70

Dear Russ,

I was awakened about 2 o'clock this morning by a friend who told me of the Skolnick broadcast. He has never seen COUP but immediately understood (he is a writer, an investigative reporter currently engaged in a tough, dangerous task) this had to be my material for one of Skolnick's men, Jim Albright, had been in touch with him. There was no hint of any public use from you or through him. Rather it was entirely carrying forward the incomplete investigations. This friend phoned me about Monday. I sent him questions to be asked of Bolden without indicating the answers, as a test of all involved. My friend got this yesterday, spoke to Albright yesterday, and, anticipating what was about to happen, did not even give them the questions. Because of earlier and unpleasant experiences with what he regards as Skolnick's potential for irresponsibility and love of ego trips, he had had nothing to do with him for some years. His own work has, in the past, been seriously impaired but just such things Skolnick has done.

Spilled milk is for cats, a futility for others. But it is good to learn from the spilling.

As I wrote you, I have been in touch with those who have the capability of arranging magazine articles and the funds with which to finance the work. The man who awakened me put me in touch with them. He was told about me by an executive of a major publishing house, which will not touch my work in this area and it was his intention to help.

It remains to be seen whether any good can come from what Skolnick has done. If Bolden, with whom he was in touch, speaks again, he has to be crazy. That damage was done I have little doubt. The question is the extent. When you are here you will better understand the allusions in my attached letter to WRSV.

I don't have to tell you that you expected Skolnick to call me and I had already told you he hadn't. This looks like a pretty obvious play of the kind we all fall for.

All causes, as you will learn, attract the seemingly dedicated who equate themselves with the cause and wind up thoroughly convinced that their personal desires and welfare as they conceive it are identical with serving the cause. I have described a few from my own experience to you. Most often (and without exception in my field) they wind up doing not only more harm than good but with leaving some damages that are beyond repair.

If WRSV does not give me a tape, I suppose I'll have to buy it. I understand they sometimes make transcripts of their more popular broadcasts. Because I am currently in negotiations/relations with those who could get real hung up about this, I hope I get it soon. If you have any way of expediting it, please try. And if you have friends who might be watching the papers, I would like clippings, too. A fellow named Weintraub, with the Sun-Times, was there. There was also a man named Katz who did some questioning and seemed rather well informed, so well informed my friend wondered. He asked questions.

It happens. You have to get used to it. But it is never pleasant. And in my experience there is no exception to the rule that on balance, the effect is harm, not help. This whole affair has capabilities you have no way of visualizing, as I told Lucht. By the way, did Skolnick tell you he was going to broadcast my stuff? And the call ended 3 a.m.!

Best to both.