

10/2/75

Dear Mr. Whitehead,

We have not moved. The routes have been renumbered.

Your have a worthwhile project I'll not have time to help as much as I'd like.

You also have a very serious problem distinguishing fact from fiction, honesty from commercialism and self-promotion and self-justification on both sides.

I have kept every communication to me for just the purposes you have in mind. Back in 1966 I realized their potential value to social scientists of the future. If not the major one, it is one of the reasons I've always hope that at some point some foundation might become interested in helping preserve this enormity in files for an unofficial archive.

I know of and do not recommend that you trust The Kennedy Assassination and the American Public (Greenberg and Parker-Stanford.) I read it years ago.

Nor can you trust such representations as Mark Lane's. My own experience - and the first Whitewash was the first book on it - indicates that most people never did trust the Report. What I and those who followed did with our books is remove some of the fear of social criticism from the honest expression of opinion. We did change some minds. But not nearly those Lane claims.

You are in Wallace country. I deduce the obstacles to which you refer are those interposed by "liberals." They finked out ~~asx~~ soon as LBJ appointed Warren and because they all copped out when Oswald's rights were so openly violated. They haven't changed within my experience. But don't let this worry you. Yours is a worthwhile study. Don't be afraid to seek conservative support for it, either.

I disagree with your "the intellectual, of course, generally plays an integral role in such an evolution." The intellectuals, especially the eastern intellectual community, have been perhaps the greatest single obstacle to the natural evolution of "response to and ideas about the Warren Commission." Conspicuous examples off the top are Alex Bickel, the Commentary crowd, John F. Roche, all the major magazines and newspapers and those who give commentary through syndication or on TV. The latest example is Joe Kraft's irrational and illogical column of this past Sunday. The intellectuals have sat on and by whatever way possible deterred this evolution.

While I can't take time for fuller answer, I do assure you that I do not recall a time or a place where the majority of those who called in or wrote after any of my appearances were not skeptical of the Report. Getting support for it now, however, is so rare I can't recall a recent instance. However, almost all the criticism that has achieved attention recently ranges from garbage to exaggeration. With one exception there has been no responsible work other than my own since Sylvia Meagher's published 9/67. The TV spectacles by the self-promoters and the paranoids are not factual, not dependable and have added disinformation only. The showing of the Zapruder film loaned drama only.

My own basic belief about the Report never changed. What did is my attitude toward individuals and increased understand and proof of the Commission's situation and intentions. It was worse that I believed to begin with. No federal agency was honest. An not one of the thousands involved in the investigation and paper-shuffling has had the guts to speak out.

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Good luck!

Harold Weisberg



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27 September 1975

Dear Mr. Weisberg,

I am presently engaged in a M.A. program in history; as a topic choice for a writing seminar I am going to deal with the reactions and evaluations of the "American public" and individuals to the Warren Commission's conclusions concerning the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Although my funds for such a project are presently rather limited, I am interested in the possibility of obtaining your series, Whitewash, or if that is not fiscally possible, in obtaining critiques of your work. Mr. Weisberg, I am working under a few obstacles in dealing with this subject (e.g., the drawback-as some people see it-of the contemporary in regard to the study of history, the mystery and mystique around the assassination and Kennedy, and perhaps the geographical area in which I find myself) and any aid or advice or information which you could give me would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Jim R. Whitehead
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ADDENDUM

Mr. Weisberg,

This inquiry is an attempt to begin a study to discern the evolution of American response to and ideas about the Warren Commission Report. The intellectual, of course, generally plays an integral role in such an evolution; I take your written work to be a part of that evolution. ANY comment pertinent to my attempts-particularly in regard to the evolution or pattern of your own thoughts over the years concerning the Warren Report-will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you,


J.R.W.