

July 1, 1967

Mr. J.R. Wiggins, editor  
The Washington Post  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Wiggins,

Your letter of June 29 is responsive to nothing.

If you have no recollection of any arrangements between the Washington Post and me, I am not responsible for your lack of knowledge of what the paper you edit does and does not do.

You did say you were interested in seeing no injustice was done me when I showed you the proof of it. I wrote you the column-length explanation you phoned me and told me you'd print and expressed my confidence in your integrity by telling you to edit it if it was too long. I went out of my way to make no reference to what the Post had done not to embarrass you. You changed your mind and restricted your prefer to 500 words and asked me to shorten it. I did, with a scissors, just cutting off the bottom. Newspapers customarily exercise the right to abbreviate letters. I extended it to you unasked. You then let an additional inordinate amount of time pass without publishing my letter. I did not want to be in the position of compelling you to do what you so clearly did not want to, hence I did what my own concept of honor dictated, released you from your reluctant promise. How you can express this in the words "spent some time trying to get into print the precise complaints you had to make" I leave to you. I do not care.

If you were still "at work on it" after that length of time, I can only wonder that your paper appears at all!

There is no vilification to which you -meaning your paper, the one for which you personally are responsible - have not stooped. You did order Geoffrey Wolff not to review my book on the ground that it took expert knowledge he didn't have. You did thereafter print reviews of its competitors. You have printed without comment, without seeking the truth or to learn if I'd have any comment, every slander that reached you. You have, consistently, refused to print every letter I have thereafter written. In each case you leave a record that demeans you, the paper, its owners, and the press in general. If this is the way you want to be remembered in history, if this the way you want to participate in its making, that is your affair. I have done more than can be expected of any injured man to protect you from your own blindness and prejudice. I can live with it better than you. If you want to print lies, slanders, libels, distortions, misrepresentations and other dishonesties, that, too, is your affair. If this is the way you think you can "protect" anybody or anything, I shall no longer try and persuade you otherwise. What I can promise you is this: I will leave a record of every one.

No! You and not any single one of the motley of literary whores you present as madonnas has shown a single error in my work. You do not intend the compliment this is. I do not claim infallibility. I do seek accuracy. This you cannot say.

What you have made yourself part of it perhaps a greater national tragedy than the one nobody could stop and the one that ensued, for the second of which your abdications is in part responsible.

Sincerely,  
Harold Weisberg

The Washington Post

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WASHINGTON, D. C. 20005

JAMES RUSSELL WIGGINS

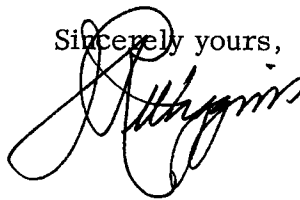
EDITOR

June 29, 1967

Dear Mr. Weisberg:

I have no recollection of any "deal" that I made which I "promptly dishonored". I was interested in seeing to it that The Washington Post did you no injustice and spent some time trying to get into print the precise complaints that you had to make. I was still at work on it when you advised me to drop the matter.

Sincerely yours,



Mr. Harold Weisberg  
Coq d'Or Press  
Hyattstown, Maryland 20734

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