

Rt. 21, Frederick, Md. 21701
9/19/75

Mr. Ben Bradlee, Editor
The Washington Post
1150 15 St., NW
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Mr. Bradlee,

If you will pardon the double entendre, the enclosed says you have no monopoly.

In fairness to Mr. Seib, whose name I mention, I think he should see this.

You did report the January 27 transcript, honestly and fairly.

You also suppressed that of January 22.

I gave Bill Caliborne a xerox in April, in New York. He thereafter discussed it with me. He sent it to Washington because thereafter others of your staff also discussed it with me.

But when the AP put Don Rothberg's also fair and accurate story on the wire you did not carry it. I made no inquiry but another who asked your national desk told me he was told if you've seen one transcript you've seen them all.

This was not your Watergate standard.

If you can't find your copy and you can take the time to read a dozen double-spaced pages I'll send you a copy. If I were the editor of the Washington Post and had nothing to do with killing the AP story or seeing to it that my paper did not have a beat on it I'd want to know if those under me were impartial and followed sound, impartial editorial judgement.

The way things are going you may come to realize how I feel and have felt all these years when the rich and influential papers failed on this major story and then treated me and my work as they have while I kept going deeper and deeper into debt to do what the papers should have ^{done} and failed to do.

There are many stories not yet written that could have been, including by the Post, for a decade. I hope to have a book with such of what the Warren Commission did not have out pretty soon. As fast as a one-man investigator/researcher/publisher (including mail room) and sometime "lawyer" can.

As I think you know, I have nothing that most editors would consider a public relations department.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

Rt. 12, Fadswick, Md. 21701
9/19/75

Editor, Washington Star
Washington, D.C.

Certified- addressee only

Dear Sir,

Your dishonest representations and your rotten professional ethics displayed in your today's story on the Warren Commission executive session transcripts is matched by the suppressions of legitimate news in your paper when it was news and by an editorial bias that is as naked as your low ethical standards.

Those transcripts did not just emerge from locked vaults. The Star suppressed all previous mentions of them or how they were brought to light. So do those who wrote the story, who cannot have done any first-hand work without the dishonesty of their account also being deliberate.

For the first of these two transcripts not to be suppressed today I had to risk serious retaliation by the government. For the second I had to carry vigorous appeals to where the government faced a choice between my filing another suit or give it to me. When it elected the latter course, because of the national importance I attached to it, I gave it away. The Associated Press carried a fair and accurate account of it and you suppressed that story, too. Instead you carried a hysterically distorted and totally misrepresentative column by the partisan Harry Wills (who has yet to respond to my protest written him through you). What Wills wrote and you printed without question defamed AP and me. I wrote you May 31, enclosing a copy of this particular transcript and asked that you read it and then forward it to the Wills syndicate so that those who had received his dishonest account could be offered the realities if those editors so elected. Your own lack of concern about the truth you give your readers is reflected by your continued suppression of the contents of this transcript since then, as it is by your failure to respond to me.

Not those who today seek to commercialize a subject become suddenly popular and commercially acceptable but I have been trying against considerable difficulties to force the release of these improperly classified records. This effort began in 1967. It is not restricted to these evidence only. But while I am the writer who has filed most suits under the Freedom of Information law you have reported not one. When the Congress in amending the law cited one of these as the first of four requiring the amending you also found that unworthy of mention.

The January 27 transcript was given to me as a result of the problems the government faced in my Civil Action 2052-73. Then you also found it unnewsworthy that the government had been defeated in court on a spurious invocation of "national security." (How many instances of this have you ever reported?) To bring this to pass I had to create a direct confrontation under oath with the former solicitor general of the United States, the man who actually ran the Warren Commission, under oath. He was the witness for the lawyer who as prosecutor could have charged me with perjury if I swore falsely. (When has the Star run these risks in its reporting?)

Those other transcripts still withheld and mentioned by your commercializers of the subject and the work of others I also have filed suit for. It is C.A. 1448-75. This also you withheld from your readers.

As you made no mention of this January 22, 1964 transcript when I sent you personally a copy almost four months ago, your paper made no mention of the book that includes the entire text of the January 27, 1964 transcript of which I sent you a copy after phoning your paper.

This story is connected with The New Republic. Consistent with your record, the New Republic also refused to make any reference to the first of these two transcripts I forced out of suppression. My letter to its new owner was written last December 15. Like you, he failed to respond until now, for all practical purpose, like you, he ripe off my work.

You and The New Republic have another common bond in this kind of journalistic ethics.

When my first book appeared you assigned it to your (or one of your) CIA agents in residence, Jeremiah O'Leary for an ax job. That book suggests that Lee Harvey Oswald has intelligence connections. Prior to my having to print it privately because the publishing industry feared opening the subject I took it to the then publisher of The New Republic, who also was a book publisher. Later we learned, as we have with your Mr. O'Leary, that he, too, was CIA.

Perhaps we have not seen and heard the end of the CIA's involvement in this. I think we have not. I mean to include with writers, too.

(How is this the only government-agent writing by your Mr. O'Leary. He did the same dirty work for the FBI in the Martin Luther King, Jr. assassination. But then the FBI was for years a favored Star source, wasn't it - as long as Hoover lived?)

This is far from the Star's complete record. However, it is, I think, sufficient, to justify my asking you to answer a few questions.

Why was the untouched text of these transcripts not news for the Star when I brought both out? And gave you both?

Why was the suit which made it possible not news, or all the other suits not one of which you reported?

Why do you not report that others than your new commercializers has gone to all the trouble and cost of filing for the still withheld transcripts, which they will get free as a consequence of this suit if I win?

Why do you even now lack the common decency to undo the harm you did and refused to undo in printing that defamatory and dishonest Wills column and to apologize to your readers for the lies you told them in printing that column and in maintaining silence in all the time since when you knew it was a work of calculated dishonesty?

Wills, too, is a partisan, as you failed to tell your readers. He is co-author of one of the many works of sycophancy, with Ovid Demaris in their book on Jack Ruby.

What makes the Star's record in this all the more reprehensible and a disgrace to the once-respected traditions of American journalism is that I didn't even want to write the first of my long series of books on this subject and offered to turn all my work over ~~in~~ to the Star. Charles Seib is not the only one who might remember this. He was then your managing editor. Since then you have resolutely suppressed every one of the countless and entirely uncontested revelations in all my work. Because you were then yellow I have had to devote more than a decade, entirely unpaid and unaided, so that those new commercializers you now print can reap the harvest.

What a record you have! All these years of suppression of legitimate news while you were acting as a government and particularly as Hoover's mouthpiece (Beginning with his exclusive leak to you when the Warren Report was first released and it offended him) and now this disreputable misuse of the work of another. Overt plagiarism would be more honorable.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

Dear Jim, Tad Szulc/Star/ & series 9/19/75 FT HW 9/19/75

I did not have much time to think after you phoned today to tell me of this first of a three-part series this featuring the transcripts. I did, off the top, as usual, write the editor of the Star (cc with note to Ben Bradlee). Long ago I had agreed to a visit from an ex UPI reporter now with a trade publication when he was in the area, which turned out to be today and for supper. Tomorrow there will be at least one and perhaps two guests, also agreed to earlier. So, I'm not getting the work I wanted to done and I'm not having time to think about your call.

However, it occurred to me after our guest left with what I hope is enough time to make the last NYC shuttle, it came back to me that you mentioned Nosenko in your call. This may be a giveaway. I think but ~~through~~ ^{through} my anger can't be sure that I mentioned the possibilities to you when we spoke.

Now I don't know of anyone else who has been pushing both the CIA and the Archives on Nosenko. It began verbally before I was taken ill in April. The day we had the first custome pi~~k~~ taken Johnson gave me a partial file that since I have kept separate. In and of itself it is a deliberate withholding of what then was no longer withheld. Then there was correspondence. Then I got some of what had not been given to me.

I raised questions close to immediately and in writing. The Archives told me it had been referred to the CIA. It violated the law in not saying it would need more time within the time permitted. The Archives, in fact, made the same violation, as I think I wrote earlier, in not even referring that request in time.

In all this time I have had nothing from the CIA.

Now, suddenly, out of the nothingness of his non-interest in the Warren Report, Szulc develops this interest in Nosenko?

ONLY after I appeal the denials some of which were plain stonewalling (the others fancier stonewalling) Szulc develops an interest and from what I gather in nothing in all this vastness of material except that on which I've been working? Nosenko and "my" transcripts?"

Do we want to ask Lloyds of London what the odds really are?

What would seem to be obvious is that someone is feeding Szulc.

How many people can know this story and that I'm after the withheld and its meaning?

(I had a short chapter on this in PM and Howard took all or almost all of it out!)

This whole thing is of the Angleton wing of the CIA. That is, with the Commission.

Szulc seems to speak for the non-Angleton wing and now both are in trouble.

Until I read the series all I can say is that the coincidences, if this they are, are truly remarkable.

I think that if we had support and experienced, perhaps partly retired counsel, we could develop one hell of a thing from these indications and the past record.

I can, of course, file any time with the CIA having violated the law when these two requests were referred to them. But we haven't the time now.

And now, of course, if they give anything to me they have to give it to this ohmy-come-lately Szulc.

What remarkable coincidences we live through!

Best,