

8/3/72

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

Dear Mr. Bradlee,

The letter requires no answer. You are too busy and my purpose, again, is merely to inform you because those legitimate editorial judgements to which I have already referred never end.

I'll be leaving the letter for you because I'm going to Washington tomorrow and when I am there will be giving a reporter a number of pages of FBI reports relevant to one of the stories on which he is working.

Some time ago, after one of the endless and unfortunately detached stories that to me are pseudo-science, not news and a public disservice, I wrote to suggest that the repetition of such things, I think uncritically, in the papers, amounts to advertising for authentic lone nuts to conceive themselves as assassins and to try it.

I then enclosed a carbon of an inadequate story I had suggested to a popular but not highly regarded publication (the one-sided record of the responsible press being something I have lived with for years). In it I raised the question, what happens when a bright nut heeds what amounts to supplications.

If Bremer is not all that bright, not comparable to the author or authors of the challenge addressed to me via Senator Gravel's administrative assistant that was attached to the draft, he is not certified bright. And your today's story, especially in the jump, I think amounts to confirmation of the fear I expressed to you.

To illustrate what I think is not responsible journalism, there was never any psychiatric examination of Oswald. To this I add that none of the shrinks who have held forth at great length merely assume he was the assassin, never made any decent study of any of the evidence. Yet because they know they will get attention and perhaps for other reasons, including the benefits of sycophancy, they compose these fictions they call science, they are duly accredited by the press, and all the Bremers have a fresh appeal if not, indeed, what for the sick may be suggestions. I have a fairly extensive file of such junk and from time to time it is increased by what is sent me from other papers.

The press, of course, can't set itself up as censor. I am not suggesting that. Whether what comes in on the wire is credible and is founded as alleged is an editorial decision, of the kind exercised throughout each working editorial day.

May I also suggest that there is further disservice, that when an intelligent person needs such medical attention and sees what can't reasonably be accepted, he is discouraged from seeking it and the science and the concerned practitioners as well as the sick suffer?

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg