

9/15/71

Mr. Tom Wicker
The New York Times
1920 L. St., NW
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Wicker,

Those of us who saw your face while we heard your edited words on TV tonight need no descriptions to understand your feelings. For your courage and integrity we are all in your debt.

I write also for another purpose, for I have lived through experiences I fear you are only now about to really understand by also living them. The vilification of you by Joe McCaffrey on WMAL-TV tonight is, I fear, only the beginning. I hope that in the interest of truth and society, as well as your own, a few rudimentary precautions can and will be taken.

Most of all, to see that all network radio out-takes are also preserved. Without them there will be no way to undo the possible harm.

It may not seem possible to you, but there is immediate interest in the disappearance of this kind of thing. Aside from those with immediate interest in accomplishing this, you and your paper now have powerful enemies in Washington who have done this in the past. I have, unfortunately, proof beyond question. And during the Chicago Democratic Convention, from a source I then had there, I knew that the police were reaching every lab possible to effect the destruction of all film possible. They paid for it.

My poverty limits what I can do to alert people to this and in the hope of saving what can be saved. I have phoned Pete Kihss. As I figured, although on deadline he spoke to me briefly and I think, despite the confusion, he understood and will make the request of someone at the Times. There is an ABC vice president who is my friend. Although he had left for the day, I asked his secretary to ask him to ask that their tape be saved (videotape can cost much to preserve). And I have a call in to a CBS friend who, while without personal influence, may be able to reach someone there and perhaps have their tapes preserved.

It often happens that the outtakes are discarded immediately. With this story, perhaps it will not be the case. I do hope, in your own interest but not it alone, when you receive this you will find time and means to see if there is anything that can still be done to save this record that can be so important to truth and to those who, inevitably, will be misquoted, quoted out of context and abused in every way possible. Please take the word of an old-time and long-time victim. It does happen. Hule even called me a Kluxer, with no more reason than that Stoner had been one of Ray's lawyers! I spare you what the Times has done...also, as I have expected something like this and forecast it in my writing. I also expect this is neither the last nor the worst. We are in very deep trouble.

Again, thanks and congratulations!

Harold Weisberg