



**PHILADELPHIA LODGE #5
FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE**

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John J. McNesby, President

Robert B. Ballentine, Jr., Recording Secretary

July 22nd, 2014

Michael Pride, Administrator
Pulitzer Prize Board
Columbia University
709 Pulitzer Hall
2950 Broadway
New York, NY 10027

**Re: Philadelphia Daily News /Philadelphia Inquirer– Pulitzer Prizes
Awarded to Wendy Ruderman and Barbara Laker**

Dear Mr. Pride:

In 2010, Pulitzer Prizes were awarded to Wendy Ruderman and Wendy Laker for investigative reporting. More specifically, the Prize was awarded to Ruderman and Laker for their “resourceful reporting that exposed a rogue police narcotics squad, resulting in an FBI probe and the review of hundreds of criminal cases tainted by this scandal.”

Lodge 5 of the Fraternal Order of Police represents the police officers who were involved in that “probe.” Shortly after Ruderman and Laker started their “probe,” the officers were removed from the job that they loved and forced into a meaningless demeaning position within the Philadelphia Police Department. For five years they remained in that position while Ruderman and Laker published the prize-winning series of articles excoriating the officers’ performance and generally condemning them as lawbreaking rogues.

Throughout most of that five year period of time, the United States Attorney’s Office with the assistance of the Federal Bureau of Investigation also conducted a detailed probe of the conduct of the officers. In that probe, the FBI spoke with the same people upon which Ruderman and Laker had relied, examined the same incidents and essentially utilized the awesome power of the United States government to ascertain whether the conduct of the officers was, in fact, criminal and whether they should be prosecuted.

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At the conclusion of the probe that was explicitly cited in the justification of the Prize, the United States Attorney declined to prosecute any of the officers for any alleged violations of the law. The “rogue police narcotics squad” that allegedly were “exposed” by Laker and Ruderman simply did not exist. Had there been the slightest opportunity to pursue those allegations in good faith, there is little doubt that the US Attorney would have seized upon that opportunity with unbridle vigor.

When the US Attorney closed its book on the “rogue police narcotics squad” as alleged by Laker and Ruderman, the matter was then turned over to the District Attorney of Philadelphia for additional review by yet another level of competent neutral law enforcement investigators. Another investigation was launched into the conduct of these investigators and the evidence again thoroughly reviewed in excruciating detail. At the conclusion of this second investigation by qualified law enforcement officials, the District Attorney of Philadelphia also declined to proceed any further and closed its books on the “exposé” for which you awarded the Pulitzer Prize to Ruderman and Laker as well as the Daily News. In short, the “probe” that was the explicit precipitate for the Prize produced nothing.

As seen from the two July 17, 2014 enclosed articles accompanying this letter, we recently held a news conference regarding further developments surrounding the “exposé” for which the Pulitzer Prize was awarded. More specifically, we stated that we have received “credible evidence” that many of the “facts” as allegedly uncovered by Ruderman and Laker appeared to have been more the product of economically rewarding their sources than skillful journalistic investigation. We called upon the Daily News and the Philadelphia Inquirer – the parent of the Daily News – to conduct their own investigation into the conduct of their employees and to determine for themselves and for the public whether any truth exists in these rumors that abound with regard to the conduct of the two Prize winners.

Again as seen from the enclosed article, and to the great surprise of no one, both the Philadelphia Inquirer and the Daily News “stood behind” their reporters without conducting a single minute further investigation. No interest was expressed by either organization to determine whether any truth existed with regard to these rumors that now abound through the Philadelphia area. The “public’s right to know” apparently ended with the award of the Prizes and did not extend any further.

The Pulitzer Prize is a reward for dogged ethical investigative journalism to uncover and publish the truth. It is grounded upon the principle that the public is entitled to the truth – not sensationalism reminiscent of long passed “yellow journalism.”

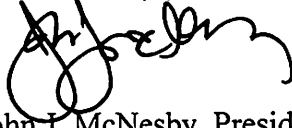
The credibility of the Pulitzer Prize is called into question when recipients of that honor act in less than an ethical manner. Clearly, if true, the purchasing of “facts” would be utterly inconsistent with the essence of the Prize. That fact notwithstanding, neither the Inquirer and the Daily News are willing to exhibit the slightest effort to determine if the rumors surrounding the conduct of Ruderman and Laker are, in fact, unfounded or whether their conduct, if investigated, might be determined to be inconsistent with any standard of responsible journalism.

The lives of the police officers who were the target of the "exposé" by Ruderman and Laker have been ruined. While years of investigation by competent federal and state investigators have failed to undercover any criminal conduct, both individuals, while loudly touting, their Pulitzer Prize status, have written a book that essentially mirrors their newspaper articles that, collectively, fail to impress either the US Attorney or the District Attorney.

If neither the Inquirer nor the Daily News are willing to search for the truth, we are requesting that the Pulitzer Prize committee do so. We are requesting that an investigation be launched to determine whether the 2010 award provided to Ms. Ruderman and Ms. Laker was, in fact, the product of dogged journalism that was simply rejected by competent criminal investigators or whether that rejection was, in fact, a reflection of the quality of the "exposé" for which the Prize was awarded. We would be willing to cooperate with that investigation to the fullest extent possible.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John J. McNesby", written over a circular stamp or seal.

John J. McNesby, President
Philadelphia Lodge 5
Fraternal Order of Police