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Dear Harold Weisberg,

Thank you very much for the interesting letter of the 29th April which arrived last week, and for the news that you had received my money and were posting the books to me. I look forward to receiving them, and to reading them.

I realise how busy you must be, and I appreciate all the more that you have taken the time to write to me. However, there are a few further things I would like you to help me with if you can find the time to write back again.

I read a tiny news item in this morning's Sunday paper that suggested the CIA was going to release its files ('documents') on Oswald. Which documents? Do you know anything more of this? Some months ago I read a very similar 'brief' news item in our paper that said the US Congress was going to release what documents it was still holding from its hearings into the assassination some time back in the 1970's. I waited and waited for something further on this subject to appear in the papers, but there has been nothing since. It is not just in the USA that the news media show little interest in printing anything on the subject of the Kennedy assassination. I imagine that what goes out from news agencies for publication in countries over the world cannot all be as terse and as uninformative as this item printed here in the "Dominion Sunday Times" (copy enclosed).

Can you please point me in the direction of any sources of further information on either of these two developments- the release of documents dating from the time of the House Assassinations Committee by the US Congress, or the decision by Robert Gates to release the CIA's documents on Oswald?

I know you dismissed the 'Corsican connection' (as referred to in Nigel Turner's programme) in your first letter to me, but I would be very grateful to learn anything you know about it. This claim was both a major part and the concluding part of Nigel's Turner's production, namely, that there were three professional assassins, that they were recruited by the US Mafia from the Corsican Mafia. The evidence in the TV show advanced to back up this claim seemed to be strong enough to make a closer look worthwhile. It was substantiated (sic) by two witnesses who themselves both had connections with this side of the Corsican Mafia's activities (contract murder) in the early 1960's. Given that the CIA had an established history of relationships with the Corsican Mafia stretching back to 1943, which in 1963 still involved some of the very same individuals who had co-operated in the war years, there is to my mind a persuasive case for further investigation of at least the origins of this Corsican connection.

file

unknown

file

both phony

can't add

However, the conspiracy as expounded in Nigel Turner's show, that the assassination was solely, or largely, the work of the Mafia seems very improbable to me. It takes no account of the carefully planned 'frame up' on Oswald that was obviously done with the connivance of individuals in various US intelligence agencies, and went back many months before November 1963. Nor does it take account of the many actions by federal government agencies who were concerned with planning the Dallas visit that compromised Kennedy's safety. I feel at most the Mafia could only have had a 'sideshow' role, most likely by placing Jack Ruby in a position where he could be used to silence Oswald if he was taken alive, or any of the real assassins if they had been picked up by the Dallas Police at or near the scene with some incriminating evidence (like a rifle).

The thing that really sticks in my mind now after all the reading I have done since first writing to you (I have read Belin's books too) is the scale of the whole thing. We all know of the forces behind government and the unseen power within the state- the lobby groups, the advisers who talk with politicians and bureaucrats in back rooms, the people who wield power inside the party political machines, the influence of people in big business who can direct large sums of money in various directions, the very pervasive influence of those who control and read the secret reports that come from intelligence gathering networks, the power of all those in authority who have the ability to apply that power at a personal level, such as the police and the judiciary, and the entrenched power of something like the military establishment with its roots in our historical or inherited culture, with its stories of heroism and sacrifice, just wars and patriotic wars, and as defender of our society's freedom. All of these things are part and parcel of the modern democratic state, and its system of government. But as well as these known forces at work behind the facade of government, there must also be other deeper and stronger forces who influence events.

To my knowledge, in recent times, these deeper and stronger hidden forces have not before stood up in such a way that their power could be seen and be measured. And yet, in the assassination of President John Kennedy that is exactly what happened. This ruthless act of assassination is the extent and nature of the power held by these unseen people. As I come more to know and to understand the implications of the assassination, and what followed on from it, I can sense the enormous influence these people wield. Yes, one can almost gauge its dimensions, its substance and reality, and trace just where and how it manipulated both the institutions and systems of justice in the USA. And, interestingly, one can follow some of the still visible leads that are connected back like puppet strings to those who pulled the strings. But I see the leads cannot be followed very far before guesswork and intuition take over if you wish to go further. Without proof there is no evidence at all.

Thank you for your comments about David Ferrie, I did not mean you to think I thought he was connected with the shooting. I did not. But it is people like Ferrie, so much a part of the New Orleans background that spawned Oswald's affiliations in 1963, who are themselves somehow standing in the shadows of this thing.

Another part of Nigel Turner's programme featured an interview with the Dallas mortician who owned the funeral parlour where Oswald's body was held before burial. This man recounted how late at night a party of 'agents' arrived and asked to be left alone with Oswald's body. After the 'agents' had left the mortician found ink on Oswald's hands, fingers and palms, so he assumed they had wanted additional finger and palm prints for their records. The TV programme made a connection between this visit and the discovery later of a palm print by the Dallas Police on the barrel of the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle Oswald was supposed to have fired. Do you know of this?

Nigel Turner's TV programme also claimed that there were bystanders in Dealey Plaza at the time of the assassination who had their cameras (or films) taken by 'agents' and that these films or cameras have not turned up anywhere since. Where can they be? Are they still in existence?

false

One of the most powerful parts of the Nigel Turner production was his interview with Gordon Arnold, the former young US Army serviceman who had stood with his back to the picket fence high up on the grassy knoll with a movie camera. He recalled being ordered away from the area behind the fence before the motorcade was due to arrive by somebody in a business suit who identified himself as a 'CIA Agent'. Arnold stated that a bullet was fired from just behind and to the left of where he was standing ("it felt as if my ear drum was coming out of the other side of my head") and that just after the shooting a police officer holding a gun took the film out of his movie camera and went off with it. The editing done here of the programme at this point was not good, I could not follow what Arnold meant, was it the 'policeman' he supposed had fired the shot who held the gun at him and took the film, or was it some other policeman. Can you enlighten me? Please?

I suppose you must have seen the movie 'JFK' as you referred to it in your first letter. I think it was a pity Stone used the character of Jim Garrison as a dramatic figure to hold the narrative together, but I felt there were some good parts of the movie too. Which brings me to another question, were there a number of tramps and other people picked up by the Dallas police in the vicinity of the railway yard and taken into custody soon after the shooting? Stone makes something out of this, and even claims there are films in existence that show these men. If this is so, I have yet to read about it in the books I have obtained. How significant is this?

Thanks for your advice to see a physiothrapist for my leg. I have been having physiotherapy treatment since my plaster was removed in late February. If it had not been for the physiotherapy I would not be walking around today. I tore loose from the bone most of the ligaments around my ankle joint when I fell and the torn ligaments have been replaced now by scar tissue. This is what gives me such bad circulation and other problems with my ankle, the large amount of scar tissue, but it is getting better all the time. I still have quite a bit of pain and swelling in my leg and I find the quickest and best relief when I come home from work is to lie down and put my leg up. I am now wearing a special knee to toe surgical compression stocking that gives me support and helps to control the swelling. The brand name of this stocking is 'Sigvaris', made in Switzerland, so they must be available in the USA too.

20/05/92

Since writing the above on Monday I have picked up and read another book from the library, "Plausible Denial, Was the CIA Involved in the Assassination of JFK?" by Mark Lane. I found this book very disappointing. There ^{was} little that I considered worthwhile in it, though I did find [^]the Introduction written by Fletcher Prouty interesting, as was reprint of a story by Joseph McBride, "Where was George?", first published in the 13/20 August 1988 issue of "The Nation". I assume you will know of this story which indicated President Bush had a history of involvement with the CIA going back long before he was appointed Director of the CIA in 1976. The story also points to the significance of the FBI had thinking it was necessary just after the assassination to brief 'George Bush of the CIA in Miami on the reaction of Cuban exiles in Miami'.

not relevant - Bush

I noticed that Mark Lane pointedly avoided all mention of your books and of your work. By omitting any mention of you, he takes credit for nearly all the early criticism of the Warren Report and of the cover up. That seems more than unfair to me.

I am supposing you will have read this new book by Mark Lane (published by Thunder's Mouth Press, New York 1991). The book says a lot about Lane himself, and not nearly as much on the assassination. Lane links E. Howard Hunt and Frank Sturgis, two members of the CIA, directly with the assassination on the testimony of another CIA member, Marita Lorenz, which is not substantiated by any other evidence. I find the implication that Hunt and Sturgis, along with Marita Lorenz and a few others, arrived in Dallas on the 21st November with a car boot full of weapons, specifically machine guns, semi-auto rifles, shotguns and hand guns or pistols, on a mission to kill Kennedy as something quite incredible. The assassination if nothing else was well planned, and this tale of CIA members and two automobiles loaded with assorted weapons is not.

Here I go on a fanciful flight of imagination again, but I would think the three gunmen were specialist marksmen. I think they would have had to be in Dallas several days before the 22nd November. If any of them fired from buildings then they would have had to look at the entrance and exit points from those buildings. They would look closely at all ways in and out of Dealey Plaza regardless if they were Dallas inhabitants or not. This would be true for marksmen and for any support crews they had with them too. Any rifles these marksmen used would have been special weapons, bolt action rifles, and would not have been taken to Dallas in the boot of a car along a load of machine guns, shotguns and pistols. I do not think a marksman would pick any semi-auto rifle such as the M-16 and M-1's Marita Lorenz described. I think it would have been the plan for each marksman to fire just the one shot each. There would be no need for faster firing semi-automatic rifles which are generally not as accurate as bolt action rifles. Firing at such close range, and at a moving target, a good marksman would not need to use a telescopic sight. Firing over open sights at a close range moving target would be better in several respects to using a telescopic sight.

If I were planning the assassination, I would not have any of the assassination team staying in a Dallas motel (as Marita Lorenz said her party did). I would have the team staying in a house on a farm or on a ranch some distance out of Dallas, but close enough to get to Dallas within an hour or so. Such a place to stay would be completely out of sight of neighbours and would give the marksmen opportunity to sight their rifles and do a bit of practice firing to keep their eye in. And if it was necessary to hide the sound of shooting, something as simple as firing inside a barn with the doors closed would do this. But if the place was made a CIA 'safe house', it may well have had an indoor soundproof firing range. If the house was prepared months before, such a thing could easily have been done in time. I read that Lee Bowers noticed the cars he observed in the carpark before the shooting had mud splashed up along their sides almost to the level of the tops of the doors. This could well indicate the cars had that morning travelled over dirt roads, the sort we see on and around farms, country side roads too are often unsealed. And it rained that morning, where had it rained? Did it rain in every direction of the compass rose from Dallas, or did it only rain in some areas and in some directions? This information would narrow down the area to look in for such a 1963 CIA operated house or farm.

Mark Lane says that Jack Ruby was an 'FBI informant', and had been so since 1959. Do you know anything of this? Mark Lane does not tell his readers how he knows this. Marita Lorenz also says in Lane's book that Ruby came to the Dallas motel on the night of 21st November and received money from Hunt. If this story by Lorenz is true, this may have been the full extent of their involvement, and the only reason for their

trip to Dallas, to hand CIA money to Ruby. This would surely mean though that Ruby was a CIA person, not an FBI one.

Maybe all of these things are true. Maybe Sturgis and Hunt and Lorenz and the others of their party did go to Dallas on the 21st of November. Maybe they did have the boot of their cars full of weapons- machine guns, shotguns, semi-auto rifles and pistols. Maybe it was customary in 1963 for parties of CIA employees to drive around with an arsenal carried in the boot of their cars. Very likely. But is still does not tie Hunt or Sturgis or anybody else to the assassination, does it? It is just one more bit of circumstantial evidence, if it can be relied on that is.

I recall reading in one of the notes in Anthony Summers' book that it had been confirmed (by whom?) the CIA's number one assassin, a Former French army officer, had been in Dallas on the day of the assassination and was further known to have left in a hurry after the assassination. I cannot recall this man's name, but his appearance in Dallas seems a remarkable coincidence, and I am surprised that Summers did not make more of it and follow it up. Do you know anything more of this most remarkable information? This intrigues me considerably.

*no def
connection*

Mark

Have you ever considered that maybe none of the shots missed? Suppose- first shot from gunman 1 hits Kennedy in the back, second shot from gunman 2 hits Connally, third shot from gunman 3 hits Kennedy in the head. By this time, gunman 1 has had time to reload and sight on Kennedy again (he may even have realised Kennedy had taken a non-fatal wound from his first shot) and is just about to squeeze off his next shot when Kennedy takes the third shot, to the head, and rolls over towards his wife, out of sight of the third gunman (who may have been in on one of the lower floors in the DALTEX building and could not see down into the car). What does he do now that he was himself on the point of firing off a second round, with the first pressure on his trigger taken up already? He may have done what I saw many times on a firing range as a young man, somebody so psyched up to firing a round, and so close to squeezing the last few ounces of pressure on the trigger he lets go with that round even if the target is no longer there. I have seen it happen many times. And if the marksman is experienced, it is still an aimed shot. I think that the fourth shot could have been aimed at where Kennedy's head had been one second before, and hit the kerbstone when the marksman fired at an empty space. (At the instant of firing, only that spot on the kerbstone would have been in his sights.) (I have not fired a rifle for twenty-five years, but when I was eighteen years old I was a Queensland ATC Champion Rifle Shot. And I was a member of the local rifle club for those teenage years, so I had a lot of practice.)

I look forward to hearing from you again. I wish you, and your wife, good health and happiness. Take good care.

*Yours,
Dad.*