

Auckland, Sunday 20/11/94

Dear Harold

Good morning from Auckland, a fine Sunday morning in Spring, and here I am suffering my annual bouts of hay fever- running nose, sneezing and itchy eyes! I should be enjoying a lovely balmy morning like this, but I am not.

Your parcel of books arrived on Friday; the reprint edition of the Warren Commission Report, Lifton's book, and Schlesinger's Robert Kennedy and his Times. I THANK YOU AND YOU for all three, the first and last titles most of all. The parcel made very good time I feel given in the past I know of surface mail that has taken up to three months from the States.

Your last letter arrived a couple of days before the books, and as always it was good to read what you have to say. I am glad Gerald McKnight can retrieve the text of his address at Hood College to mark the conferment of your degrees. I will be looking forward to getting a copy of AFTERWORD from Gerald, seems a sensible way to send it too, on disc. I could get it printed at my college. If Gerald were able to copy his slides for me that would just be the icing on the cake, it would make the preparation that much easier for, me and I could devote my time to producing other material.

Last weekend I took my family away on the Friday night to a beach 160km south of here for a break. We came back on the Sunday evening. I took my copy of your **OSWALD IN NEW ORLEANS** with me to read, and I am glad I did. There was a strong wind blowing off shore and I had to spend most of my time indoors because of all the pollen in the air. (Of course when the wind blows in from the sea I have no trouble at all with my allergies.) So, I was able to give the book some close attention while Chris and children were out or on the beach.

I have not studied the Summer of 1963 in New Orleans period of Oswald's life very closely and consequently I did not feel too confident or informed on the subject and it posed several problems for me. After reading your book though (and it was the first time I had read it cover to cover) I now feel more in touch with what happened.

Last week I also received the two records I had ordered from 'The Last Hurrah Bookshop', one of which had the radio debate between Oswald and Bringuier. Listening to the record gave me the first opportunity to hear Oswald speaking, apart from the few remarks recorded by the TV news cameras in the Dallas Police Department. In the debate with Bringuier Oswald seemed very much in control of himself, articulate and confident.

Reading your **OSWALD IN NEW ORLEANS** made me think about the actual time at which he may have started moving and doing things in response to the plans of the plotters. The business of promoting the FPCC in New Orleans and the visit to Mexico City with his contacts with the Cuban and Soviet embassies seems to me just too well suited to the framing of Oswald to be unconnected with the assassination. The proximity in time (of Oswald's FPCC activities and the Mexico trip) to the 22nd November make it more likely. Surely the planning for the assassination must have been well under way by the Summer of 1963 when Oswald left Dallas and returned to New Orleans.

In the past I have tended to think it was not so all important to know exactly which intelligence agency Oswald was connected to. I thought it was likely some other agency involved in the assassination, knowing of Oswald, and probably keeping tabs on him, was able to use him to create a 'patsy'. But now looking more closely at events in New Orleans, I wonder if this was the case. Of course Oswald may have been involved in some operation, run by the FBI for example, targeted at the FPCC that had no connection with the assassination, but.....?

My 'feeling' that the FPCC cover Oswald created for himself in New Orleans (and the subsequent trip to Mexico City) fits so perfectly the profile that fulfilled the role of 'patsy' that I wonder if whoever directed Oswald were themselves involved in the assassination. How else could Oswald be made to do these things that were so suited to the needs of the plotters in creating the figure of a 'patsy'.

A few weeks ago I dipped into Peter Dale Scott's **Deep Politics and the Death of JFK** and I read there where he surmises Oswald may have been working for the ATF Office of the Treasury Dept in 1963, specifically as part of an operation against illegal use of the mails for traffic in firearms. Such a role would explain his purchase by mail order of the Mannlicher Carcano and pistol under the Hidell pseudonym. This is not to say the ATF was implicated in the assassination- Dale further surmises that Oswald may not have been working solely for any one Federal agency but rather for a private firm that was itself contracted to do jobs for various government agencies in the intelligence field, in the same way Guy Bannister presumably worked in New Orleans. This is all interesting but means nothing in the end because Peter Dale Scott offers no real hard evidence to substantiate his ideas.

Do you have any views you would like to share with me on these matters- i.e. the possibility that events surrounding Oswald in New Orleans and Mexico City may have been orchestrated by the plotters? Mexico City is still an area were I need to find my feet, touch ground with reality and hard evidence I mean. What do you think is the real significance of photos the CIA had on file that purported to show 'Oswald' in Mexico City?

Other things- I had nice letter from David Wrone two weeks back, saying he has sent me Roffman's book, and that it was a gift. I think I told you I had received it. That was a very generous act, and I am indebted to him. I hope by now he has received the copy I sent him of **The Treaty of Waitangi** and that he finds it of interest.

I also had a letter from 'Publishers Group West' a few weeks back that was not a reply at all to my letter. They did not give me the name of whatever NZ publisher distributes Carroll & Graf titles in NZ, instead it read as if they thought I was a publisher wishing to buy direct from them. I will have to write to them again.

I have not had my course of lectures for next year approved yet, but I am told a decision will be made next week. The hold up has been my application to use a Mannlicher Carcano in my teaching. I phoned the director of the programme to reassure her if there was any problem with regulations to do with bringing firearms onto campus I would be happy to have the rifle permanently disabled by a gunsmith. It then could be classified as a relic or an artefact. I may do this in any case, have the barrel blocked off and the bolt welded up so that the firing pin is removed and cannot be replaced. To demonstrate the capabilities of the rifle I only need to have the bolt able to move in and out and the trigger pull still there. I bought the Mannlicher Carcano in late September at a big annual auction of firearms held by the NZ Antique Arms Association. I found there were three of the model of 6.5mm rifle I wanted and I bought a 1940 manufactured example for \$NZ185.00. I paid \$NZ90.00 for the cheapest four power scope I could find. Now I have to find somebody who can make a scope mount like the one on CE2766.

The only books I am really anxious to buy now in order have my own copies of are **SIX SECONDS IN DALLAS** and **WHO WAS JACK RUBY**. The 'Last Hurrah Bookshop' tell me I will have a long wait to get copies of these two titles, more so Josiah Thompson's book. They said these two titles are on nearly everybody's 'wants list' and all they could do is add my name to what is already quite a long list of names. I wonder if David Wrone may have any spare copies of these titles, but I am loathe to ask him for more help because he already been so generous to me. What do you think?

I spoke to Don Craig yesterday on the phone and he said he would be writing to you this week. He also asked me about buying a copy of **CASE OPEN** and I suggested he ask you to send him one, and to see if you could take the money for it from the credit I have with you. I hope this is okay.

I had no luck getting access to whatever archival copy of the Zapruder film our TV news libraries may hold here, it is not available unless I pay commercial rates, about \$300 p/minute!

On Friday night I took my daughter Emma to the local Library and I saw a copy of book entitled **THE MAN WHO KNEW TOO MUCH** by Dick Russell. I took it out and brought it home to read. I am sure you will know the book. I looked through it yesterday but did not get very far. For one thing Russell reports Nagell as saying Oswald probably fired a couple of shots off in Dealey Plaza. This is so much against the evidence I did not want to look at it any further, It is a large book too. I would not be surprised if it was not another instance of disinformation, initiated by the CIA or by some other organ of the federal government. What do know of this story?

I saw a short story in our daily paper about a week back that said the CIA had released evidence that revealed at the time JFK was killed he was initiating a murder plot against Castro. The same story said Anthony Summers had uncovered evidence of a second rifle 'at the scene of the crime'. I wonder it means. The news item apparently came from an article being published in the next issue of 'Vanity Fair'. I have ordered a copy of this issue of Vanity Fair. I photocopied the news item from the paper for you but cannot find it, I must have left it at school.

Next Tuesday will be the thirty-first anniversary of the assassination. I will mark it at my school with another lunch-time meeting in the seminar room attached to my office. I will not get too many students, they are in the middle of their end of year exams right now. I'll let you know how it turns out, you will recall I did it last year. I know much more now, and I feel far more confident about my ability to field questions. Last year I had a staff member who came along and tried to get me to tie the JFK assassination into an overall world view of history built on the conspiracy theory, from John the Baptist to the protocols of Zion. I could only reiterate my interest was solely in the JFK assassination, and that because it and the issues surrounding it very much affected the world I live in and the one my children are growing up in.

The photo I sent you was not taken at our home in Auckland, it was taken in Australia at my brother's house (just before I started writing to you). He lives in Townsville in North Queensland. Nearly all houses there are built up high above the ground to get any breeze (cooler air) circulating in the summer, hence all the space underneath, like you see around me in the photo.

I am meeting Chris Chittenden (from McMillans) in a couple of weeks. I hope we can take a few concrete steps towards getting the book planned out. I have not seen him now for a couple of months, so I need to touch base with him again. I especially want to talk about how I can write my lecture notes in such a way that they will not need too much reworking to include in the book. I have to go to a meeting of the Auckland History Teachers' Association at some time too. I need more time!

Now I must away. Since starting to write this letter I have made four handkerchiefs wet with the discharge from my nose. I hope you are both well and keeping warm in what must be soon the beginning of your winter. I think of you often. Thank you again for supporting me like this, and helping me understand so much of the things you have come to know and understand. You have given me, or shared with me, something so priceless I sometimes wonder at my good fortune. Such knowledge and understanding together is so..... and I grope for the right word to finish that sentence. I hope you will know what I meant to say.

All the best, with love,

Sam.
