

Auckland, 05/02/95

Dear Harold

Well, I have been back at school for just on a week and it almost feels as if I have never been away, like I did not have any holidays. I was a bit swamped by the first rush of jobs that I had to get done last week, but I hope the coming weeks will not be as busy. Now, my thoughts turn to you and I am mindful I have a couple of your letters to reply to, and a few things here to bring you up to date on, and then there will be my inevitable questions no doubt to fill this letter out.

First, your letters, and I'll start with the one of 10th January. Thank you for the very interesting history of your contacts with Vincent Salandria, I knew almost nothing about him before your letter but that deficiency has now been well remedied. I read of him in Gaeton Fonzi's book, and he was praised there by Fonzi for his insights and perception. Your accounts of the time you were involved with Salandria when you were helping Jim Garrison were fascinating as well as informative. I thank you again for giving me such a close look at this period through your eyes, it is all very very interesting (a lot of the background to the period itself is still largely unknown to me).

I was also interested to read you are still countering the likes of David Belin. Is he still actively defending the Commission's work? I read something written by him years ago, some book I took out of the library, before I started to write to you. Even with my very limited knowledge of the assassination then it was obvious he was vainly arguing a defence from a hard to credit position. I cannot recall anything at all of the book, not even its title.

I am still waiting to receive the December issue of "Vanity Fair" with the Summers article reporting evidence of a second rifle found in the TSBD. Did you check it out? Thank you also for giving me some more background information on Anthony Summers and his methods of researching. You had warned me before to be careful with his material, and you reinforced that message again in this latest letter. Harold, I appreciate your concern and care in helping me more than I can say. Without your guidance I could still be wandering from author to author never sure of what I was reading. (Incidentally, what is a transcribing machine? Is it like a dictaphone?)

The book I took the photocopies from showing the German WWII Model 98 action carbine was called "Backbone of the Wehrmacht" by Richard Laws. I do not know the publisher but I can find out. It has photos of every known variation of this rifle as it was manufactured from 1934 to 1945, over 15,000,000 of them. And then there were some 20,000,000 made under licence in China, Poland, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Argentina, Portugal, Belgium, Jugoslovakia, and so on. Whenever somebody says a "Mauser rifle" it is the model 98 they mean, not the unknown and unseen museum piece which is the model 1884 illustrated by the Commission as a "Mauser". Literally hundreds

2.

of thousands of the type '98', military issue came back with US soldiers after the war. A large number were "sporterised", custom stocks and new barrels to fire US cal. ammo.

My response to the defender of traditional history at Auckland University? Yes, I am going to do something eventually along the lines of what you suggest, i.e. send him something of the material from my course with an invitation to comment on it. I think my chances of being able to teach a course through the university next year are pretty good if I take the rejection positively and make a well presented application again.

Your offer to let me have copies of FBI records relating to the brown paper bag allegedly used by Oswald to get the rifle into the TSBD- yes, I would be delighted to have copies of these papers. I hope there is somebody there who can retrieve them from your basement and get them copied. This will obviously incur costs to you, photocopying and postage, and I enclose some money (\$US20.00) herewith to offset your expenses.

Yesterday I copied on audio cassette tape the LP record of Oswald's interview with Bill Stuckey on Radio Station WDSU in New Orleans for Don Craig. It was very plain that Oswald initially started to say he had at all times been under the protection of the US Embassy while he was in Russia. As well as Oswald, Butler, Stuckey and Bringuier on the soundtrack, Hale Boggs and Dr Anton Ochsner were chipping in with advice on how one should understand what Oswald was really saying. I bought the LP record from "The Last Hurrah Bookshop" late last year.

Your suggestions as to what parts of the evidence I can focus on for the book are most welcome. I am going to be pressed for space when I finally get my material together for McMillans. My initial contacts with people I know in the Auckland History Teachers' Association have tallied with what Chittenden told me last time we talked, the market will be for a smaller rather than a larger book. This means that what I write and produce from the evidence has to be right to the point and sharpish in its presentation. And, yes, you are right, I agree the 22/01/64 transcript will have to have a place in the body of reproduced material, most likely summarised as you say along with a page or so of the actual transcript.

While I think of it, I have not managed to read your discette with the unedited text of "CASE OPEN" yet. My college has all IBM compatible computer software and it will not accept the discette you sent. Auckland University and the University of Technology (which is almost next door to our campus) both use Apple-Mac software so I should be able to get somebody there to make a copy printed from the discette for me.

I remember writing I would tell you more about this corporate lawyer John Shaw who attended the course Don Craig delivered at the University of Canterbury in 1993. He has kept in touch with me over the last 12 months or so, and tells me he is keen to attend my course. After a while I thought he may be some sort of informant for the US Embassy. You know what I mean. This is a wild kind of thought I know, but for somebody with an avowed strong interest in the assassination he was quite uninformed in many areas, and unread too. I told Don Craig of my suspicions and he did not think there was any basis for my doubts. Now thinking back on our conversations (i.e. John Shaw and me) I see his

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level of interest, being mainly with the legal aspects of the whole process of the investigation and the general interest everybody has in finding out more about 'who may have done it'. I am privately and personally outraged and appalled that such a thing as the assassination happened, by all the issues that were behind the assassination, that it was covered up, that the news media world-wide just accepted the official version of the assassination (and in many instances actively promoted the coverup), by the implications the whole thing has for the type of world my children will be growing up in, and so on. I feel none (or very little) of this moral questioning in John Shaw. And he is sceptical about criticism of some areas of the evidence where I have become highly critical (thanks to you and my reading of your books!).

This letter is wandering all over the place, I must come back now to answering yours of 18th January. Great news that "NEVER AGAIN" will be released in April. I will order my copy from 'The Last Hurrah Bookshop' to get it by airmail as soon as it is released.. I think I may buy a copy from you later, autographed. I could then give my first copy to Donna Chisholm as a small gift.

This 18 January letter was full of your very good answers to my questions posed in the letter I wrote from the beach. Again, thank you many times for taking time to answer all my questions. I hope it is worth it, my understanding slowly grows and grows, thanks to you. There is so much detail, all of it important, just in your books.

I am reassured to read you believe the figure by the doorway of the TSBD may be Oswald. It always struck me as odd that Oswald would not have walked the small distance to the front door to see Kennedy drive past. He was after all not an apolitical person. Assuming this was the case, it then raises the question as to why he did everything he did subsequent to the time of the shooting, from walking back inside the building (and his encounter with Truly and Baker) to his later actions leading up to his arrest in the Texas Theatre.

I will ring the TVNZ newsreel archivist again to check their ruling on charging me commercial broadcast rates for a copy of the Zapruder film, but I feel they will not be easily swayed by my word about US practice regarding its educational use. We'll see. It may not be important after all if Peter Willis in Australia is able to get me a copy of the Zapruder film from the commercial TV channel in Melbourne that provided him with his copy. I had a short letter from Peter Willis last month, I'll enclose a copy of my reply for your information.

Now, where I am at with the course and book? I have talked to a couple of old colleagues over the last week who are members of the Auckland History Teachers Association and I am confident I will have their co-operation and moral support in preparing material for the course and the book. As you know it is my intention to re-work the material I shall use in my course into a 'history skills analysis textbook' for level 6 history students in secondary schools. (Our level 6 here equals US grade 12.) That at least is the idea. I hope that at least one of the history teachers I approached last week will want to actually take part in the course. It is really important that the book as it evolves is going to be in a form that is popular with teachers and students. I feel I only have the one chance to get this right.

When I first discussed this idea of the book with you last year I thought it may have been possible to do a draft of the book first and get that into shape before the course, so the course material could be drawn out of the book and enlarged as needed. I have done a 180 degree turn in my thinking now and I see the course material coming together first, and the whole process of developing the course material into the book/text being worked up in the light of how the Auckland History Teachers Association sees the book developing. In other words I shall be taking their advice on format or outline and combining it with my ideas and my knowledge. My knowledge of course is almost entirely derived from from your books. You have a big part in this equation.

Last week I discussed how my course can best fit into the Community Education programme that operates for night and weekend classes at my college. I am enclosing the letter I sent to the programme co-ordinator which details the arrangements I negotiated with the college. The later start in July suits me as it gives me more time to prepare the material and to discuss the course outline with the Auckland History Teachers' Association, to discuss these developments for the book with McMillans, and, to teach/test a couple of pieces of evidence analysis with a history class at my own college. If I can point to their input in trialling the book's content and format, I am sure it will help immeasurably in getting the book sold and into schools. If I cannot show McMillans there will be a sure market for the book, that teachers and students have been consulted in its preparation, that teachers support the way the book is written, then it will not get very very far.

I started working around Christmas on an outline for the book but I kept getting bogged in petty detail, and I could not decide which parts of your book(s) I should use. As time went on I moved closer and closer to working on the course material instead. I have a much clearer sense of who I am preparing course material for. I still have to find the right level of student understanding to pitch the book at. I know my idea of writing a book that involves students evaluating evidence used by the Warren Commission is a sound one, but I am not too sure yet how it should all come together. Your idea of making it read like a detective story is excellent- that the students try to resolve questions by using the real life evidence and testimony of real people who were witnesses to one of the most significant events in the history of the twentieth century. The exercise in developing history skills is to be as scientific and as accurate as possible in writing an honest and informed analysis of the evidence, from the evidence, which can be put up against the conclusions reached by the Warren Commission.

Harold, I hope the later timetable for getting the book ready I have just sketched out for you does not disappoint you. As soon as I have something in draft form for the course I will start sending it to you, so you can check its factual accuracy and its historical perspective and interpretation.

I had a super letter from David Wrone a couple of weeks ago, written after he had my letter telling him my application to teach the course had been blocked by the Dean of Humanities in the University Senate. I must send you a copy of this letter. It made me laugh and it made me feel good that I had his sympathy and support. He is a good person.

I have been thinking about your advice on which areas of the investigation I could best concentrate on to provide the class with both primary evidence (testimony). One of these areas was the question of how the Commission implied Oswald was supposed to have got the Mannlicher Carcano into the TSBD. I lay awake the other night going over all I could recall of this area, and for the first time I seriously asked myself, 'well, if Oswald did not make the brown paper bag that the Police said had been found near the southeast window on the sixth floor then who did?' I recalled you had picked up on the fact that the dispenser of the sticky paper tape on the packing bench only worked to supply lengths of moistened tape, and that the tape on the bag showed it had been pulled through the dispenser, and hence moistened ready for sticking on. This means, presumably, the bag could only have been made within close range of the paper and tape dispenser which was on the first floor. Right? From the rather new and clean condition of the bag, it was probably made within the previous 24 hours? The possibilities are interesting, 'who could have made it, why, and when?' It may have just been laying around. Or maybe somebody from the Dallas PD made it that afternoon? Or somebody else who was in the building? From the contradictory police evidence it looks pretty clear the bag was not where they later claimed it was found.

Question- what exactly did the NAA records you obtained as a result of your action(s) against the FBI (as reported in POST MORTEM) reveal? I know you covered this in the last section of PM, and I do not have the book beside me (it is above my bed) to look at, give you page numbers, but I recall when I last read it I was confused about exactly which bullets and which fragments were tested and what those tests said overall about the firing in Dealey Plaza. Can you explain?

Another Question. Missile? What was the 'missile' ("missle") signed for by Sibert and O'Neill at Bethesda? A large part of a bullet? Or a small fragment? Why so differentiated from other pieces by calling it a 'missile'? If it was a more or less a whole projectile, does this mean the FBI's report on the autopsy written by Sibert and O'Neill may have been edited to take out any reference to the presence of and significance of such an additional projectile/missile/bullet? Surely not.

I have a busy year ahead of me, not just with preparation for the course(s) and the book but with my professional association. I think I told you I was elected national president at the AGM at our Hui (conference) last August? There are quite a few issues coming up that will require the association to be politically active supporting the access Maori and PI students, and indeed all 'at risk' students in secondary schools, presently have to move on to tertiary education. Any political action that aims to put pressure on the government takes a lot of organising. I know, four years ago I organised the opposition of the Auckland regional association to the government's intention to bulkfund Link money to schools. (Link is a programme that helps Maori, Pacific Island and all 'at risk' secondary school students move into tertiary level study.) We stopped that one, but it involved me in an enormous amount of work, incredible hours, endless letters and meetings and phone calls.

We may be moving house later in the year, and that really would be a strain. Houses beside us and behind us have sold in the last few months and both properties are now being 'developed', i.e. having townhouses built on their back yards. The house on our other side

may sell soon and that could mean our back yard surrounded by high townhouses on three sides, 'infill' housing it is called. In the past 8 years there have been 87,000 Asians, mostly Chinese, settle here, many from Hong Kong. A lot of Koreans and Taiwanese have settled here too. In a city of just on one million, that is a lot of people to absorb. It has made housing very expensive in Auckland. It is happening all over the so-called Pacific Rim, the heavy flows of Asian migrants. I read that over 200,000 have settled in Vancouver in the same period, many more have gone to Sydney in Australia, and of course California has been a great magnet. The Chinese from Hong Kong are mainly those with British passports and lots of money, which makes them attractive migrants. They want to get away with their families to another country before 1997 when Hong Kong reverts to Chinese sovereignty. So, that is why we may be moving house, because of small Chinese capitalists fleeing communism. Our little suburban bungalow with its lawn and trees will be surrounded by high walls and new high concrete and brick homes.

Whew! What a letter. This is what English critics would call a "stream of consciousness".

Well, I must away now. It is late and I am off to bed after a cup of Horlicks.

goodnight! Lots of love and
best wishes to
you and you,
Dan.