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Dear Jerry:

I returned last week from three weeks of speaking in Scotland, on nuclear disarmament. I am just beginning to emerge from the pile of business accumulated here. So with deep apologies, I'm finally returning to your chapter on Oswald in Mexico City that you sent me at the end of March, so as to give you my comments.

Your chapter has a wealth of research information in it. You have clearly done a huge amount of background work in preparation for writing it. As you are well aware, however, much of the "information" that we have been provided by the government is bogus. You summed up that situation very well in one of our phone conversations by saying incisively, of the Warren Commission's work, "There's not a goddamn thing you can believe!"

That leaves us with the prospect of sifting through piles upon piles of disinformation -- or to use the blunt term, lies. The danger in that process is that we can give those lies a degree of respect that they don't deserve. I think you were right on the mark when you said, "There's not a goddamn thing you can believe!" So where does that leave us when it comes to writing about this mountain of lies?

I think we can burn down the mountain of trash by the torch of a few truths that stand out even before we get to Oswald in Mexico City. The first is that Oswald had long been working for U.S. intelligence agencies, which were adroit at manipulating him. You suggest this truth in your chapter's introduction; for example, on page 4: "Either Oswald was a moon walking fantasist with only the flimsiest grip on reality, or he was being handled by sources that had uses for him that he never suspected."

This is a fundamental insight that you build on in the next paragraph by saying: "The crux of the concern here is that if it was proven that Oswald, the man charged with assassinating the president, had a Cuban visa and had spent time in Castro's Cuba just weeks before Kennedy's murder, this revelation might have been all that was needed by certain elements in America's military and intelligence services who were overly eager to solve the Castro problem by military means." With that sentence, I think, you have cut through to the role of the Mexico City scenario in the original plot to kill Kennedy. I suggest one small change in your sentence -- a substitution of the word "would" for "might".

I am afraid that your chapter as a whole spends too much time with the tangles of disinformation, churned out simply to keep us from seeing and stating the obvious truth of the matter -- which you have seen from the beginning. But perhaps you state this foundation too tentatively, and give too much respect to government sources that have already thoroughly

discredited themselves over the years. I mean specifically almost anything coming from the CIA, unless it be from a clearly dissenting individual. The CIA is the obvious suspect in the assassination. Its managers and agents have every reason to lie constantly. David Atlee Phillips, a chief candidate for director of the Mexico City show, and Richard Helms, the Langley overseer of it, are not to be trusted in anything they say. If we were a jury listening to them, as in fact we are, I think our correct attitude toward their testimony is a thoroughgoing skepticism. Being under oath means nothing at all to the CIA. We are right in identifying these characters as professional liars, in or out of the witness box. That is a major part of their business.

As I believe I suggested in a previous letter, the Alvarado Ugarte hoax was likely run by Phillips, who told a series of lies about it. I think Gaeton Fonzi's book stripped Phillips clean. We shouldn't take Phillips or anything he says seriously, except in his role as a key propagandist in the planning of the assassination -- and a cover-up artist afterwards, when the Mexico City scenario had to be jettisoned because it pointed more at the CIA as the assassin than it ever did at Oswald. The imposter was directed by the agency that reported his "Oswald conversations" as genuine to Johnson. Hoover knew better, and so did Johnson.

On the bottom half of page 16, you again go to the heart of the matter, the reason for the Mexico City plot: to justify an invasion of Cuba after JFK's murder. Your footnote 27 references to "Operation Northwoods" in support of that position should, I think, be brought into the text and developed.

The bulk of the chapter, I fear, distracts from that basic insight into the Mexico City rationale by spending too much time in the government's trash barrel, which they have left to us to go through and empty. There is no point in sifting through its deliberately circular papers. I would begin instead (as you do) with the obvious rationale for the Oswald imposter and the phony phone calls, but then work on that hypothesis and fill in the picture from what we can get from the Lopez Report, Fonzi's research carried out in spite of his HSCA masters, and various odds and ends such as Dick Russell's research and interviews that lie outside the government channels. To reiterate your phone observation, "There's not a goddamn thing you can believe" when it comes to the official sources.

Thank you, Jerry, for allowing me to see and comment on your chapter. Once again, I apologize for not being able to get to it until now.

Peace,



Jim Douglass