

Attached hereto is the information left with me by Mr. Harold Weisberg, who you will remember is the critic of the Warren Commission who met you briefly in the past.

APPENDIX E

Harold Weisberg Correspondence⁵

5. Selected memo and letters, Kennedy Assassination Series, Assassination Commission (correspondence) 1969-1970, Richard B. Russell Collection, Richard B. Russell Memorial Library, University of Georgia Libraries, Athens.

June 14, 1968

Senator:

Attached hereto is the information left with me by Mr. Harold Weisberg, who you will remember is the critic of the Warren Commission who met you briefly in the hall a week or so ago.

If the copy of the transcript or minutes attached is the only record in the Archives on what transpired at the September 18 meeting, it would appear to be a very serious matter. Clearly, there are verbatim transcripts available for the other sessions of the Commission. The treatment of your exceptions to the first proposed draft of the report are obviously inadequate since no real mention is made of them in the attached copy. You will note that Weisberg has included a copy of the letter to him from the Archivist of the United States under date of May 20th of this year and in the third paragraph of that letter the statement is made "No verbatim transcript of the Executive Session of September 18, 1964 is known to be among the records of the Commission. The only explanation of this which I can think of is perhaps the verbatim transcript is still classified and not available at all. Weisberg requested that if you have sufficient interest in this matter to make an effort to see the records in the Archives, that you let him know first because he says he has some other information which he knows you would want to see before going to the trouble of making a contact at the Archives."

With reference to his general criticisms of the Commission he left with me four books which he has written and which have been published critical of the Commission and I have scanned them all and completely read the first one which was the only one that received very wide dissemination. His work is scholarly and evidences a tremendous amount of research. His basic approach is not to try to prove that Oswald was innocent although acceptance of his inferences, etc., lead to that conclusion.

His method is to restrict his criticism to the actual information which the Commission had and he is critical of the Commission only to the degree that it delegated too heavily to the staff. One of his strongest points of departure with the Commission is on the number of shots fired and on which shots hit Connally and/or the President. He completely agrees with your thesis that no one shot hit both President and the Governor. He apparently believes that there were at least four shots fired and probably more, thus destroying the possibility that Oswald acted alone and independently.

CEC:lrr

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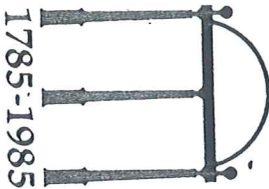
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Page 2
June 14, 1968

Two statements in his book which perhaps are of interest to you are on page 188 in his conclusions:

"The Senators who questioned Marina Oswald at that mysterious Sunday night hearing in September, 1964 have serious doubts about the report that were confirmed by her performance."

Also:

"To anyone with any experience in investigation or analysis, the most incredible part of the Commission's inquiry is its complete lack of question or criticism of the police. It just is not possible that the police are as incompetent as the record shows."

Weisberg was at one time Senate investigator and, through research, he has apparently become very knowledgeable on all aspects of the Kennedy Assassination.

I have any of his books which you may wish to see.

CEC

CEC:lrr

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Lillian & Harold Weisberg

Coq d'Or Press ROUTE 8, FREDERICK, MD. 21701

Phone 301/473-8186

June 6, 1968

Honorable Richard B. Russell
Attn: Mr. Charles Campbell
United States Senate
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator Russell:

It was an unexpected pleasure to meet you yesterday.

I am particularly gratified at this accident for I did not, until then, know that you had misgivings about who Oswald really was, I may put it that way.

There is a considerable amount of new material on this, beginning I believe, with my work, and carried considerably forward by District Attorney Harrison. For example, I believe I have established that Oswald, the so-called "Communist", got Communist literature openly in the Marine Corps while he enjoyed a top secret security clearance. He was actually strongly anti-Communist and anti-Soviet. I know from other official sources that he had associations in New Orleans that were withheld from you members of the Warren Commission. It is my information, as it is my belief, that this was known to the staff.

I now have tape recorded interviews with a number of people who saw Oswald in New Orleans in places, on occasions and with people not testified to before either the Commission or the staff, although this information was readily available from both the witnesses examined and not asked this and others known but not questioned at all.

Further, Oswald was known to have had an association with one of the witnesses before the Commission who had connections with the extremist Cuban factions. This was not adduced in the testimony, nor does it exist in the FBI or Secret Service reports, although it was known. Relating to this is the careful reading of a related witness by the staff lawyer to circumvent what would have disclosed this. The result is an open deception in that testimony, making it appear as though these two witnesses had but a casual relationship with each other that, remarkably, began the day that Oswald, just as remarkably, blundered into the store of one. The truth is that these two witnesses had known each other for some time and had, indeed, entered into a small contract, a copy of which was obtained by the Secret Service and was never thereafter mentioned. It is not in your printed evidence, but is in the files.

I have this evidence and will supply it to you, if you want it.

In this connection, I think you also should know that your staff lawyer made a "deal" designed to deny the public the knowledge that one of these witnesses did, in fact, give testimony.

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Senator Russell - 2

Enclosed is a copy of my correspondence with Archivist Rhoads of the executive session transcripts, particularly the altered one of September 18, 1964, a copy of which I gave you yesterday. Most pertinent is the second paragraph of my letter of May 4 and the third of his letter of May 20. Because of your personal interest, I underline his sentence:

"No verbatim transcript of the executive session of September 18, 1964, is known to be among the records of the Commission."

This means that, in the official depository, those questions you and other members of the Commission raised about the draft of the Report no longer exist.

Please notice also that where I declared that I have knowledge of what was discussed at the executive session of January 27, 1964, that is not included in what I was allowed and is not within the description of what was withheld and asked for a list of the subjects discussed, this was denied me in Mr. Rhoads' letter of May 20, where he repeats what amounts to a right to suppress by law power.

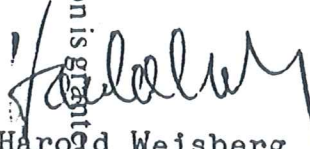
There are other references in my letter of May 9 I hope Mr. Campbell will understand and analyze for you.

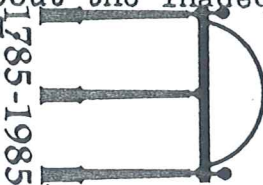
The last paragraph requests further amplification of what is of most direct interest to you. Should I get an answer I will send you a copy.

If there is any manner in which I can serve you please ask. As you know, you may have copies of anything I have.

I write this as we are all immersed in this new national trauma, the shooting of Senator Robert Kennedy. It weighs upon me especially because only last night, on TV in Washington, I discussed just this, which had been predicted to me two months ago. If his accursed assailant turns out to be a Cuban, I think you will have grounds for additional apprehension about the inadequacy of the information you were supplied about Oswald.

Sincerely,


Harold Weisberg



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