THAT'S GOOD NEWS ABOUT JIM!

4640 NOBLE AVENUE
SHERMAN OAKS, CALIFORNIA
91403

CONFIDENTIAL

August 14, 1970

Dear Mary and Sylvia,

Nice to hear you two are putting your heads together at long last. I can't think of any two critics who could advance knowledge of this case more, and, only wish I could be there to listen to the dialog.

As you may know, and as your phone call this morning indicated, Mary -- I have not been getting on with David.

Our meeting with Life Magazine really ended things for me - or I should say the letter Dave sent me after this meeting did it. Dave is beyond all doubt one of the most devious, scheming, plotting individuals I've ever come across. I had indications of this long ago, but ignored them and considered him to be brilliant, though a bit weird. He helped me to get rid of the Garrison syndrome ("enemy's are all about us") and start looking at the evidence and the record again.

Then we started distributing films and making slides from the proceeds. That went along well until I noticed that he was going outside of our "partnership" and making separate deals using jointly held material in order to finance his research. This didn't bother me much at the time except when I had a hard time gaining access to these jointly held films.

I also noticed that when he sold material to others (documents) he would first remove the good stuff and distribute the junk. He once told me, in regard to his ABNP order, that "I can't distribute that to the other critics!" It was a receipt for a missle recovered during the autopsy at Bethesda, I believe. I DIDN'T SEE THIS DOCUMENT, AS HE ONLY TOLD ME ABOUT IT ON THE PHONE.
He would always, very graciously, offer a free xerox service to me whenever I got some new info and thus gain a copy for himself. I got a little nervous when I discovered that this service, while free, entailed Dave's going to UCLA between the hours of 1 a.m. and 5 a.m. in the morning - disabeling a xerox machine so that it wouldn't count copies - and stealing the paper. He would do this regularly each weekend, consuming 1,000 to 5,000 copies for his files. He soon wound up printing all weekend and selling this to critics at 5¢ per copy. It's a living I guess.

Between stealing xeroxs, using the phones and perloining equipment and office supplies, I would guess UCLA is out thousands during this three year period. As you may know, he has picked locks and used master keys to get into Wesley Liebler's files and much classified material that Liebler had no business keeping.

So he's not above using any means necessary to gain his end. Now I knew this, yet, I was still surprised when he pulled that deal at Life. I don't know why I should be. I know better, but I still felt sorry for him and wanted to help make his book important. It may be important, but at this point I'm not sure. I like to think it will be, but I'm so god damn mad at him that my judgement may be biased.

Anyway, back to Life. As soon as you mentioned that rumor to me about Life putting the z film on the market, I called my friend Dennis Roy and we discussed checking this out. Dennis called Life and talked to some girl in their library, and then to Dick Pollard. Dennis fibbed and said he represented a group out here that was interested in buying the film. Pollard agreed that it was for sale and wanted to know who Dennis represented - and Dennis said he would write a letter giving Pollard the particulars.

Dennis next called me with the good news and we discussed the possibility of finding a front man who would lend us his letterhead so we could examine the film and make a bid on it. We "knew" the film was not a camera original and that Life would misrepresent it as "the original" so any bid we made would be subject to the authenticity of the material sold.

I called my friend, ~~Mke~~ MIKE Farrell - an actor and good friend who headed the "Who Killed Kennedy Committee" - and presented the problem to him. He offered to help and called back in a couple of days with a name of a man and an appointment for us. This man was Cal Bernstein, of Dove Films - who's partner was William Wexler (producer of the award winning film "Medium Cool").

At this point Dave Lifton and Jack Clemente entered the picture. Dennis and I invited David and Jack because:

1. We wanted to help Dave and his book.
2. Jack could assist in the photographic analysis.

The four of us met with Cal Bernstein and we explained to him our interest in seeing this film, our research to date and why this was important. Bernstein agreed and said he would contact his partner and get his okay. This was done and a letter was drafted on Dove Film's letterhead that went to Life's Richard Pollard.

At first Life wanted Dove (which meant Dennis, Dave, Jack and me) to pay for the courrier transportation out to the coast. This was later changed and Life agreed to send the films out no charge.

Dave then wrote an agenda for our meeting with Life - assigning tasks for the four of us - a rather good agenda.

We had a meeting to hash this over and got equipment and generally briefed ourselves for the meeting. During this period David started talking about turning this "Operation Verify" into something he called "Operation Hiest" - stealing Life's copy by switching with one of our copies. Dennis and I warned Dave we would have none of this and Dave indicated that he was only kidding.

However, you can imagine my surprise and anger when - as we were getting out of my car in the parking lot at Life - Dave nervously spilled about four copies of the z film together with four different colored film spools - all over the front seat of my car in a tangled mess.

He apparently had these films loose in his coat pocket ready for "Operation Hiest". He also admitted later that he had prepared two identical brief cases, one for each operation. Dennis and Jack did not see this - only Greg, my son, and I saw Dave scrambling around trying to wind z films on spools in the car as the rest were carrying equipment inside the building. That started things off badly for me.

I carried a 35mm camera in to the meeting on the chance that I would have an opportunity to copy slides or transparancies. Dave knew about this and approved. Taking a photo of a Brinks truck is not the same as stealing a sack of their money. I was not going to jeopardize this meeting by clicking away with the Life rep in the room and I did not hide the camera and it's case.

Dave and Jack started to work counting frames and working on the Recordac reader. Dennis and I eye-balled the slides and transparancies.

The Life rep left us alone with the door locked so I got out my camera and snapped a shot of one transparancy. Dave hit the roof and started yelling - so did Jack - only Dave more so.

I got mad, got up, put the camera away, walked over and pushed David around, preparatory to belting him one. Jack separated us and I calmed down. We completed our work and left. As we were loading the car to leave Dave asked Dennis and I if we had taken one of Life's films.

That set me off again. I drove Dave to his place and let him off, then went home. Soon things turned up missing:

1. Dave left his z copies in my car.
2. I couldn't find my notes - but later found them.
3. Dave kept my copy of his agenda - HE BORROWED IT AT THE MEETING.
4. Dennis lost his correspondence with Life - Dave has them.
5. Jack kept the drawings I made at Life and has not returned them.

In spite of all of this, I then sat down and wrote a 7 page memo on this meeting and sent a copy to Jack, David and Dennis. WHAT ?

We were going to summarize our findings and ~~write~~ one memo for Mr. Wexler so he could advise Life ~~what~~ his "~~fixxm~~ film technicians" thought of the film. That was our agreed plan. As of this date I have not heard from Jack or Dave in reply to my memo or the results of their research. I've called Jack and he said he would send me his research, but no luck yet.

DAVE ALSO MADE ME ANGRY AWHILE BACK WHEN HE ADMITTED TAKING SOME CORRESPONDANCE OF YOURS (MARY) FROM MY DESK AND WALKING OUT OF MY HOUSE WITH IT. HE COPIED IT AND RETURNED IT AFTER I TOLD HIM HE COULD NOT DO SO.

Dave has indicated to Dennis that he is not going to share anything. He even went right ahead and planned a trip to New York to talk to Life without first discussing it with us. I got more furious. His trip to New York didn't work out so now he's planning to meet with Wexler this month - alone.

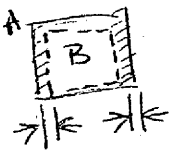
David has been busy driving wedges between Jack and I and Dennis and I. With Jack I think he has succeeded, but ~~not~~ DOT with Dennis.

I deliberately did not send you a memo on this as I hoped things could be worked out and I could give you the benefit of this group project. It makes me sick that things worked out so badly, especially since you were responsible for the original lead.

My memo, in it's present form, is incomplete and almost worthless.

On my own though, and using Volume 18, I have been able to prove that this film was put on an optical printer and a segment enlarged - beginning at frame 318.

I am familiar with ~~optik~~ optical printers and know that this work can be done in one hour's time and that the result will not show mechanical splicing. You can also program the printer to skp every other frame and thus speed up the motion of the film (to get rid of a car stop, for instance.)



This enlarging could have been done to get rid of material on both sides of the picture. Check frame 312 against frame 321 and note the difference in the size of the girl at the top of the picture.

Also, in frame 317 there is a noticable change in perspective of the car to the lense indicating that the car has moved further down the street than it should have in 1/18 of a second.

It is at this point that the car must have radically slowed or stopped and film has been removed. The only thing that can account for this is film removal and optical printing. Some photo retouching was necessary to get away with this, and this too was evident when I looked at Life's transparancies under magnification.

Sometime while you and Sylvia are discussing things, could you two give me an opinion regarding the testimony in Volume 5 - bottom paragraph on page 473 and top third of page 474. Is this a move by RFK — introduced through a sympathetic congressman? This strikes me as being significant and I'm trying to get a copy of this bill and the debate on this bill. The timing on this bill is fascinating.

Bless you two,

FRED

MARY & SILVIA

TO: JACK, DENNIS AND DAVE
FROM: FRED NEWCOMB

PRELIMARY NOTES

confidential

Please excuse errors in spelling, syntax and punctuation, etc.

SUBJECT: Examination of Zapruder film - 8 and 16mm versions, 35mm slides, film strip and transparancies.

WHEN: June 22, 1970. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

WHERE: Offices of Time Life, Inc; Beverly Hills, California

WHO PRESENT: Dennis Roy, David Lifton, Jack Clemente, Fred Newcomb, Greg Newcomb and Miss Ann Drayton of Tine Life, Inc. (title)

BACKGROUND: Dennis Roy, acting as representative for Dove Films, Inc., of Los Angeles telephonically contacted Mr. Richard Pollard of Time/Life on _____ and learned that Time/Life was interested in selling certain photographic materials related to the assassination of President Kennedy.

Arrangements were made by Mr. Roy with Mr. Pollard for an inspection of these materials in Los Angeles by Mr. Roy and his colleagues on June 22nd.

Mr. Pollard of Time/Life, New York, instructed Miss Ann Drayton (title) to courier the photographic materials to Los Angeles for examination.

THE MATERIALS SUPPLIED BY TIME/LIFE
Miss Drayton began the meeting by displaying the material she had brought which included:

ITEM #1 - one reel containing two 8mm color prints of Abraham Zapruder's film - an amateur movie film taken on November 22, 1963, in Dallas, Texas showing the assassination of President Kennedy.

ITEM #2 - one set of 35mm color slides - each slide consisting of an enlargement of a single frame of the Zapruder film. Miss Drayton said the slide set included the complete movie except the begining portion, which contained personel scenes - (approximately 14 frames

filmed by Mr. Zapruder before the motorcade arrived in the plaza where Mr. Zapruder was standing.) (It should be noted that the Zapruder film in the National Archives contains 118 frames of personal scenes.) This slide set was contained in three Kodac Carrousel slide projector trays.

ITEM #3 - one roll (film strip) of continous 35mm color film made from the Zapruder movie. This film strip contained the same material as the 35mm slide set described above.

ITEM #4 - one set of 4x5" color transparancies. Each transparancy consisted of an enlargement of a single frame from the Zapruder 8mm movie. A total of 164 color transparancies were in this set. Frame numbers were assigned to each transparancy - the numbers being #166 through #206 and #211 through #333. Transparancies bearing frame numbers 207, 208, 209, and 210 were not included.

ITEM #5 - one 16mm color film containing two prints of the Zapruder movie. The first portion of this film being a print of the Zapruder movie at regular speed followed by another print of the same movie in slow motion.

PHOTOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT USED IN THE EXAMINATION

1. 8mm Bell and Howell Multi-Motion Autoload Super 8/regular 8mm movie projector - model 467Z. This projector can be set for three speeds - normal, slow motion and step motion.
2. 16mm sound projector capable of normal speed only - in this case, 24 frames per second.
3. Recordak 35mm microfilm reader.

4. Kodac 35mm Carrousel slide projector.

5. Table model light box.

6. 8mm film syncronizer - used for frame counting.

THE EXAMINATION

First, Item #1 - the 8mm Zapruder film was projected approximately six times using normal, slow and step projection speeds.

Miss Drayton explained that this particular copy was made from a Dallas duplicate of this film. The genealogy of the various prints of this film was described as follows:

FIRST GENERATION: Camera original film

SECOND GENERATION: Described as Dallas duplicate - is a copy made while the original film was in Dallas. Testimony before the Warren Commission indicates that three copies were made from the original film.

THIRD GENERATION: Copy of the Dallas duplicate. The print under examination June 22, 1970 at Time/Life, Beverly Hills was represented by Miss Drayton to be third generation copy.

This Third generation copy was projected and the following information was obtained.

1. The film contained _____ frames.

2. This film consisted of two prints spliced together to make one film. It was noted that the film switched in color balance (from warm to cool colors) in two places. Once in the area of frame number (156?) and another time around frame number (207?).

   Observable splicing was noted between frames:

   _____ and _____
   _____ and _____
   _____ and _____
   _____ and _____
   _____ and _____

3. No mechanical splices were noted on the 8mm film examined. All of the splices observed were photographic. That is, they were photographic immages of mechanical splices on some previous generation copy.

4. This third generation print contained frame numbers: 207, 208, 209, 210, 211 and 212.

5. As previously described, a splice was noted between frames #156 and #157 (?). Some frames have been removed from the movie at this point which causes the limousine to lurch forward suddenly and unnaturally when the film is examined in motion.

6. A splotch or imperfection of considerable size ~~was~~ appeared in frame #258. It should be noted that this imperfection has appeared in every 8mm version of this film I have seen - also in the French 16mm version.

7. One method to determine whether this film was, as described, a third generation print was to check to see which side of the film stock contained the photographic emulsion. The film was examined by Jack Clemente and he determined that this print was indeed a third generation copy, having the same emulsion characteristics as a first generation print. (This also means that a second and fourth generation print would appear the same.) The images in this film were inverted and reverted. The emulsion side of the film contained the sprocket holes on the left hand edge.

NOTE: This method of determining the generation of a print is not entirely certain since a duplicate negative could confuse the issue. (Question Jack here.)

It goes without saying that the clearity of a film suffers with each succeeding generation, so telling a first generation from a third is a simple problem when viewed together.

ITEM #2 - set of 35mm slides.

Miss Drayton advised that this slide set was produced from the 16mm film (Item #5). The photographic images were not visable between the sprocket holes in these slides. This could mean that the slide set was produced from a film that had this material masked off - machine duplication looses this material automatically - or the equipment that produced the slides caused this masking.

ITEM #3 - 35mm film strip

This strip was produced, we were advised, from the 16mm version of the film and contained _____ frames.

A splice in some previous generation film was noted at frame #154 and from #155 (see attached sketch). This film did not contain the color changes noted in the 8mm copy (Item #1).

Color balance was consistant throughout.

Frame numbers _____, _____, _____, _____, _____ were not included in this film.

ITEM #4 - 4x5" COLOR TRANSPARANCIES

Color balance seemed consistant throughout. Miss Drayton said this set of transparancies were used to produce the black and white version as printed in Volume 18 of the Warren Commission Hearings and Exhibits.

An area in the front windshield of the limousine appeared to have a large white glare or highlight envelope it at frame #330. Under magnification, this flare did not look like a normal sun reflection, but rather like the shattering produced by some projectile striking the glass.

Previous examination of two still photographs both taken by A.P. photographer Altgens -- one (#6) showing no scar on the windshield and the next, (#7) showing a scar -- indicated that the front windshield of the limousine was struck by a bullet at approximately this point on Elm Street.

Evidence: Photographic retouching was noted between frames #214 and #333 in the area of film occupied by the driver of the limousine. In some cases his movements were distorted or obliterated. This was obvious to me, especially in frame #243 and #216. (I have movie films taken from Mr. Zapruder's position on November 22, 1969 under similiar lighting conditions - 12:30 p.m. - of a car driving down Elm Street and have no trouble "making out" the driver.)

Frame #212 was masked so that the material between the sprocket holes was not visible. Also in frame #212 JFK's head - as it appeared over the Stemmons sign, was dyed a dark bluish color for some unknown reason.

The impact on the President's head at frame #313 produced a yellow/orange burst as viewed on the 5x7 transparancies. The after-effects of this hit - which appeared as if made an explosion - left a hole in the right temple and caused a flap to appear above and below the hole (sketch attached) in frame #323.

Gov. Connally, who had been facing Zapruder at frame #307 - facing and leaning backwards towards his wife - was, in frame #323 sitting up, facing the front of the car apparently looking at the occupants of the front seat.

Connally's right hand was in a position to have been hit by the projectile that seems to strike the front windshield at frame #330. But this is speculation.

ITEM #5 - 16mm copy of Zapruder film.

We were told by Miss Drayton that this 16mm print was produced from the Dallas duplicate (second generation) when this print was projected it was noted that this film was far superior to the 8mm copy (Item #1). Miss Drayton said this film was made using a "watergate" method of duplication.

The color balance changes - the switch from warm to cool colors - characteristic to the 8mm copy, were not visable here. Warm colors predominated this print - or the print was on the "warm side."

The splice at frame #156/157 and resulting gap in the 8mm copy was not in this copy. Rather, there was a large visible splice in frame #154 and another in frame #155, in this 16mm version. (See sketch.)

Visual examination of this film indicated that (the picture extended between the sprocket holes? - did not extend between the sprocket holes?)

JACK - were mechanical splices detected in this copy:

There were _____ frames in this film.

There were _____ frames missing from this copy.

It also appeared that one of the occupants of the front seat - probably the passenger - stood up in his seat in the area of frame #462.

In summary - the differences between the 8mm version, Item #1 and the 16mm version, Item #5 were as follows: (Jack and Dave supply answers:)

	#frames	splices	frames missing	other
8mm				
16mm				
35mm				

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE TEAM EFFORT THAT WAS GOING TO PRODUCE A MEMO FOR WECHSLER? I COULD NOT SPOT ANY DATA IN THIS "LETTER" - IS A PAGE MISSING?

CONFIDENTIAL

11818½ Dorothy St.
L.A. Calif. 90049
June 28, 1970

Fred Newcomb
4640 Noble
Sherman Oaks, Calif.

Dear Fred,

In view of the events of the past week, I thought it might be useful to put certain views and opinions in writing.

Re the incident at the offices of Time-Life..... YOU KNEW WHEN WE EXAMINED THE ZAPRUDER FILM IN BEV. HILLS? I am sure you know what a "straw man" argument is. It is when a person misrepresents an issue at hand, and addresses himself to the misrepresentation, rather than the issue itself.

I feel that this is exactly what you have done in this case, thereby permitting you to see yourself as the innocent victim of my unjust charges, rather than myself as the victim of your unwise actions.

You have reacted to the whole incident of last Monday as if the issue was whether or not I was unjustly accusing you of theft, and was thereby impugning your integrity and honesty.

This is a gross misreprentation and oversimplification of what really was at stake.

If I were about to enter a room where some item of evidence existed to which I might not ever again be given access, and which--- as evidence---was so conclusive that it could conceivably "solve" the entire JFK assassination--"break the case", etc.---if only such an item could be retrieved from the room, than I believe I would do everything in my power to get the item retrieved from the room, and use it appropriately, whether that meant going with it to appropriate officials, or journalists, or what not.

I would then gladly serve my sentence in jail for "theft", if it really ever came to that, with no more conscience qualms than a man who refuses induction accepts the consequences for his act.

I do not believe that any situation such as the one I hypothetically described above existed on Monday. Quite to the contrary, there was every indication that future access to these same materials could be had, and I look forward most keenly to a NewYork City trip to examine originals, and question staff people there about various pertinent matters.

Therefore, when---to my shock and suprise---I saw you clicking away with a fully loaded 35mm camera, my instantaneous reaction was that by your action, you were jeapordizing the entire operation at that time, as well as any future legitamate relationship with Life Magazine, a relationship which I certainly would not want to hurt in any way, not only because of the key evidence they possess, in which I am interested as a researcher, but also because I will soon have completed a manuscript and, if they are sympathetic and

not alienated, they might conceivably be interested in buying serialization rights. Finally, these are the people with whom a publisher of my work would have to deal if they wanted to obtain permission to publish certain Zapruder frames.

I was fully aware of these considerations and, at the moment that I saw just what it was you were doing, my instant reaction was to tell you to cease such activity immediately, and put the camera away.

You will surely understand that I had no concern at that moment for whether or not you don't care to be "yelled at".

Your reaction, in response to my spontaneous outburst, was to rise from your chair and actually come across to where I was standing, and physcially attack me. I have been under the impression that you threw a punch at me, though Dennis insists I was "only" shoved. I also recollect that one of them helped pull you off me.

From that moment on, I became convinced that whereas I had carefully planned out a legitamate research program to take place in that room, typed up and distributed copies of it, rehearsed with Jack the taking of various measurements as efficiently and quickly as possible, and rented much of the equipment as well as made provision for the microfilm reader-----you had meanwhile come to view this opportunity from an entirely different strategic viewpoint. I realized then that you viewed the situation in the way I described ~~it~~ at the beginning of this letter, as a once in a lifetime opportunity to photograph evidence which would support your theory of the assassination----perhaps a transparency showing a Secret Service man in the front of the presidential limousine turning around, gun in hand, shooting the President of the United States.

It was with great dismay that I realized, at that moment, that you did not view this as a team operation at all! But that rather, you came into that room prepared to jeapordize the interest of others (and certainly my interests, previously described) in the service of proving your own pet assassination theory: that the agent in the front of the car shot the President, and that clear transparencies to which you would be given access to for that one day in your whole life, would show this to be true.

Of course, no transparency or film material showed any such thing.*

But that is not really the point. Let us assume that it had. Even if it had----don't you think there were other ways to handle the situation??

Don't you think that-----if such an image existed on any material wewere shown---that this called for a meeting on the minds among us all as to what to do about it???

After all, there is more than one issue involved here. Another and and far more probable and provable one is the question of whether the Z film Life bought is a copy made on an optical printer.

In the last analysis, a trip to New York City and future contacts with Time-Life will be necessary to develop the evidence necessary to resolve this matter with certainty.

* EVEN ITEM OF PHOTO RETOUCHING?

Fred Newcomb June 28, 1970

(In this regard, I would hope that you realize the importance of keeping the contact with Life in strictest confidence, until after my trip to New York has taken place. Any exception to this rule risks exposure via promulgation on some grapevine. Strictest confidence means that one does not tell anyone, no matter how fond we may personally feel about them, or how much we would like to share the visual experience that was had with others. Deppite all these considerations, I am told that already, you have spoken with Lillean C. about the whole matter. May I please request---in the name of my completing successfully the investigation that must take place before a particular chapter in my own manuscript can be written----that you excercise more discretion in this matter????)

Getting back to where I was at the bottom of page 2 of this letter....This matter of the optical printer is a legitamate research interest, every bit as legitamate as your theory that the SS man in the front seat turned around and shot the President.

Now, what I can't understand is, that you didn't realize (and haven't conceded it even, since) that your action in bringing a camera into that room, and then in using it, and then in physically fighting with me (for getting "yelled at", I suppose) jeapordized all future contacts with Life of any kind, as well as those taking place right there that day.

The fact that I hissed my contempt at your action, and ordered you to put the camera away----and that you don't like to be addressed in that fashion, does not appear to me to be a particularly important consideration under the circumstances as they existed at that moment, and given the risks to which your action was exposing us all.

Joining this incident with what took place at the end of the day, I hope you realize that what is at issue here is not whether or not I had "the nerve" to accuse you of theft; rather, it was a question of a severe policy disagreement between you and I, about what our objectives ought to have been and were while we were in that room.

While I thought we had a team operation, it became apparent that the seedule of events that I designed and typed up was an item to which you paid purely lip service.

The other incident, therefore, to which I wish to address myself occured at the end of the visit.

I sensed what I felt to be a sudden odd desire to terminate the visit, and leave the room---a marked departure that I felt came along quite suddenly. I went over to the box containing the various materials and felt the item wrapped in tissue paper which was supposed to be the 16mm film we had been screening. It felt very malleable to the touch, and I concluded that it must contain a rolled up AC extention cord. (By testing a reel wrapped in tissue paper later that evening, I know now why it felt that way).

THE DAY BEFORE YOU THOUGHT MY CAMERA WAS A SPLENDID IDEA —

I then bluntly asked you and Dennis whether or not you guys had swiped the 16mm film, making it clear that I wanted no part of any such matter, if this was the case.

I am convinced, today, that these suspicions of mine were unfounded.

OK

I extend a most sincere apology to you for having made the matter a subject of my question, and any hurt feelings it may have caused you.

COME ON!

I hope you will understand that---once I saw that you had smuggled in a loaded camera into theroom and were bent on using it----I simply no longer had a reliable standard by which to gudge any of your actions and intentions. WHAT GOOD IS AN UNLOADED CAMERA?

Once having concluded that you entered that room with certain secret and entirely different research objectives and methods than I, I simply did not know where you were drawing the line in such activity. IF ONLY WE ALL HAD YOUR SCRUPLES!

OTHER YOU PREVIOUSLY MADE NOT MENTION STEALING

Therefore, I found the idea, at the time, perfectly credible.

GOOD!

I now realize, in retrospect, that you entered the room prepared "only" to secretly photograph materials, but not to take physical possession of them. WHAT MADE YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND?

BREAK A TRUST?

But don't you see, Fred, once you break trust like that----can you really blame me for not knowing where you intended to draw the line? WHEN I SAW YOU WITH THAT FOULED UP MESS OF 2 FILMS IN THE CAR AFTER WE HAD TOLD YOU NOT TO DO THIS, HOW DO YOU THINK I FELT?

I summarize with these key points:

IGNORES WHOLE HISTORY OF THIS

1) Under circumstances that are highly specializedand unusual, I feel it would be proper, if the gain was that great, and the loss not too great, to technically "steal" evidence that might be absolutely crucial to exposing a conspiracy that took the life of JFK. — WHY NOT JUST CONFRONT HIM RIGHT THERE — WHY SNEAK?

2) I do not believe any such situation or opportunity presented itself on Monday, June 22, at the offices of Time-Life here in LA. AND AFTER? SEE (A) PREVIOUS PAGE

3) At the time we entered the room, I felt we were involved in a team operation to obtain certain resezrch data, in a prearranged and pre-agreed upon and perfectly legitamate format.

A TELL OF THAT

4) When I saw the camera in your hands, and you taking pictures of your favorite Zapruder frame, I immediately realized that you had entered the room with research methods and objectives of your own. MY MY

FAVORITE ONE!

5) My concern and outrage was not with the issue of whether or not you were technically "stealing" property owned by another, but with the gross lack of judgment you displayed, and the complete lack of consideration you showed for my interests and future contacts with that corporation, by engaging in activity which would jeapordize everything, when there was absolutely no need to. As I have since said to you on the phone, there is a line one draws between

? WHAT'S TECHNICAL STEALING? IS THAT

the heroic, and the stupid; its important not to lose sight of that line, and to try to stay on the correct side of it. GREAT ADVICE!

6) The camera incident in turn upset my ability to judge accurately each of your subsequent actions---even to the extentof guaging just what the atmosphere was in that room. I then falsely suspected and alleged that you had swiped the 16mm copy of the Z film.

I apologize for that. OK

I felt so strongly about it , at the time, that I spent most of my dinner hour agonizing with a close friend as to whether or not it was my duty---given these suspicions---to return to Time Life the next morning, before the package was put on the plane, and ask that it be reopened in my presence , and the contents completely and meticulously inventoried. This is when I started wrapping reels in tissue paper and testing to see how they felt.

I finally decided that I was the victim of completely upset judgement caused by the aforementioned camera incident, and that there was nothing to be afraid of, in that regard.

7) You do me and our past relationship a great misservice if the above complex situation is oversimplified and misrepresented , and the vigorous arguments I have presented as an attack on your judgement and decision making in this situation , is seen as some sort of hypocritical accusation of "theft" on my part.

I do not make such a charge; that was not the issue last Monday, nor is it at issue now.

WEIRD!

8) By misdefining the issue, you become the victim of my unnust charges, rather than myself (indeed---all of us) becoming the victim of your unwise and uncalled for actions.

This straw man version of events also permits you to indulge yourself in much self pity at being "unjustly accused".

The above concludes my summary of this matter, and I hope that these comments will cause you to reconsider the incident more fairly, when you think back to it at anytime in the future.

I would like at this time to comment on ~~certain other~~ THIS SAME MATTER ~~peripheral matters~~.

You implied and practically accused me of stealing your notes. I did not. I understand you have even found them, in your car. I would wish you would search your car more carefully next time, before making accusations like that.

REMEMBER LONG BEACH STATE?

For about 5 days, you arrogantly and defiantly held onto property that I left in the glove compartment of your car, as if to hold material "hostage" to items you had legitamately loaned me in May.

Why did you attempt to turn a loan between associates (materials you loaned me) into a trade between thieves (my Z films for the return of that material)?

YOU MUST UNDERSTAND THAT I WAS ANGRY

WHO FIRST INTRODUCED THE TERM STEAL INTO THIS? OPERATION [illegible]

Fred Newcomb -6- June 28, 1970

As you may have learned via Dennis, I had an extremely cordial meeting set up with Ray Marcus at my apartment for Wednesday evening. This had to be called off because of your inconsiderate, arrogant; and whimsical refusal to return property I accidentally left in your car.

Who gains and who loses by such activity, Fred?

Finally, and this is really outraging---why did you keep me on tenterhooks up to the last minute as to whether I would even get these materials back for my New York City trip, rather than putting them immediately in the mail----promptly, and with a special delivery stamp, if necessary----when you were notified of what were then firm plans, airline reservations and all, for a trip to New York City. You were notified of this on Thursday morning, assured Dennis you would promptly mail the material to me, and then simply did not do so.

Pardon my use of the word, but don't you think that is just a bit cruel?

How would you like to wait for crucial material to be returned, while the hours tick away towards flight time, and where phone calls are met with snotty little remarks and broken connections.

Furthermore, what am I supposed to think when you reel off to me on the phone a list of activities I've been involved in with the implied veiled threat that you might just have to "use" them, if the need arose? ------as if, somewhere in the back of your mind, you keep a list of what you "have on Lifton".

I can assure you that all the above types of behavior do not engender trust, or that you are really sympathetic and without hostility to my own interests in completing my work successfully.

As for me---even when I am angry---my emotions do not have to be vented in a sadistic or cruel manner, whether against another person, an innocent duck, or any other living thing.

Sincerely,

David Lifton

* REMEMBER YOU TOLD ME THAT IF I DIDNT RETURN THESE FILMS BY 6 O'CLOCK - THEN I WOULD NOT GET MY STUFF BACK? THAT'S OUTRAGEOUS! (CRUEL?)

I LOST AN 8MM PICK-UP REEL TO THE BELL & HOWELL PROJECTOR. IF IT CANNOT BE FOUND I MUST REPLACE IT. HAVE YOU SEEN IT? I'M NOT SAYING YOU STOLE IT, NOW... ONLY THAT IT MAY BE WITH THAT 16MM STUFF YOU HAVE.

DENNIS SAID YOU RETURNED THIS - PERHAPS