

22 January 1971

Dear Fred,

Thanks for your interesting letters of the 15th and 18th. I have examined my file on the autopsy photos and X-rays carefully without finding the Memorandum of Transfer of 4/26/65, which I did not recall ever having seen. The only such material in my file, and I feel sure that you have it already, is the document of October 1966 "transferring" the photos and X-rays as well as clothing items to the Archives, Burke Marshall acting for the Kennedy family, as reported in the New York Times. The only one I can think of who might have the 4/26/65 Memorandum is our dear friend Harold Weisberg, but I doubt that he would make it available. Sorry.

My "discovery" of the return of books on 10/3/63 may be only illusory. I had a letter from Mary on the question in which she explains her own interpretation of CE's 1117 and 2650, and she may well be right--that is, that the designation "Card Shows Return Date" refers to the date that the book or books were due to be returned, and not (as I took it to mean) the date on which they were actually returned.

About the attitude of RFK toward Garrison, the information available to me from various sources convinced me at an early stage that he was distinctly hostile, and even more hostile than he had been all along towards the original group of critics, some of whom made approaches to RFK only to be rebuffed for their pains. Because I was certain that RFK felt only bitter loathing for Garrison, I was infuriated that the moment he died Mark Lane exploited the event by making immediate false allegations about emissaries from RFK to Garrison--so patently false that even Garrison hesitated for a while before giving Lane's fairy tales a qualified "corroboration."

The other night I had a visit from a stranger, who had long been interested in the Dallas assassination although he has not done any real work on the case or even read the best-known of the books by critics. We were brought together by a mutual friend. I am mentioning the visit only because what this chap had to say (I'll call him "P") seems to throw an incriminating light on the Secret Service. P was in Army intelligence (G2) for some years and was therefore immediately sceptical on 11/22-23/63 about Oswald and especially about the Carcano rifle. He was certain that that rifle could not have delivered the rapid series of shots reported by eyewitnesses. A few days later at a dinner party he met an ex-SS agent who had been in the SS for about 20 years before retiring, and they discussed the assassination. The former agent said that it was unprecedented, absolutely unprecedented, for James Rowley not to accompany a president on any trip. According to him, Rowley always and without exception went on every presidential out-of-town visit and took personal charge of security. (I am repeating but not endorsing this information, which may or may not be accurate.) Second, according to this ex-SS agent, it was established and standard procedure from which to the best of his knowledge the SS never had deviated to send an advance party to the city to be visited to prepare security measures which always included visits to the superintendents or owners of very single building along a motorcade route, to ensure that the occupants would not open windows and to post men on the roofs.

I find the description quite plausible because in 1960, during the "summit" session of the UN General Assembly, when the creme de la creme came to the UN (Khrushchev, Nasser, Castro, Tito, etc.), I recall distinctly that men were posted on the roofs of many buildings and that when several of us tried to open a window in the ladies room to get a better look at arriving dignitaries we were ordered by a security man on a nearby roof to close the window. Of course, these security people may or may not have included Secret Service agents as well as UN guards and NYC police and detectives, but the point is that roof-and-window security was part of familiar standard methodology and was being used long before Dallas.

This is about it, for now, Fred. I don't really know what to make of the press reports about Brook Army Hospital on Garrison and on LBJ. CBS-TV news yesterday, in its segment on the death of Senator Russell, replayed a portion of the Kronkite/LBJ interview in which LBJ described how he had forced Russell on to the Warren Commission, against his categorical objections. Seven little Indians...and now there are only five. So much for my hopes that the whole Commission and all the lawyers and others involved would live to experience disgrace and public scorn for their false report and their disservice to the country.

Peace,