

(Bernabei)

3 April 1971

Dear Dick,

Thank you for your letter and the trouble you took to comment on the correspondence from John Conlon. I have meanwhile received a second letter from him which reinforces my impression that he is uninformed and unwilling to become informed lest he become un-wedded to a hypothesis that clearly gives him spiritual comfort and mental tranquillity—that good old anything-is-possible shit which is in reality nothing but a confession of bankruptcy.

I doubt if anything is to be gained by my entering into further exchanges with Conlon and I think that I will not bother to reply or to send him your analysis of the defective sighting arrangement of CE 399, which I am glad to have for my own information.

Thus far I have managed to read only about 200 pages of Harold's 500-page book, partly because of a very heavy workload at my office and partly because Harold's prose, although much improved over his earlier works, is still taxing. He persists in flogging dead or irrelevant horses so that for every small nugget of hard evidence one must wade through endless pages of anger and sarcasm and monotonous invective. That is all the more regrettable, because Harold has done a truly awesome job of investigation and discovery which is likely to get lost and overlooked in the turgidity and indiscipline of the exposition.

Thanks also for returning my article on Givens. With my erratic recent luck, it appears unlikely to be published. I've heard indications from two different sources that the Texas Observer is in deep trouble and has been missing from newsstands in Dallas where normally it was regularly available. I haven't heard a word from the editor since last December.

Here is an interesting discovery made in the 26 volumes—not by me, but by someone who does not ask that it be kept confidential, although I assume he would not wish it published without attribution to him. The Walker bullet, when recovered from the Walker premises in April 1963, was described in a Dallas police report dated 4/10/63 as steel jacketed (CE 2001 on page 39 of XXIV). By December 1963 when the FBI took custody of the bullet, it became copper jacketed and compatible with CE 399; and when scrutinized recently in the Archives, failed to evidence the marks allegedly made by three of the four custodians (Frazier and Nicol among them) who supposedly did place identifying marks on it. I would think that EVEN a Dallas detective would not confuse copper with steel. If you have any thoughts on this extraordinary metamorphosis, let me know.

Best regards,

Sincerely yours,