

13 July 1968

Mr. Richard Bernabei
Department of Classics
Queen's University
Kingston, Ontario

Dear Mr. Bernabei,

Thank you for your letter of 10 July 1968, and also for your previous letter, which I read with interest. It was very kind of you to send me a copy of the GUNS article by Braverman. I had a copy already, but this extra will be useful.

Actually, it was upon reading the GUNS article that I first contacted Braverman, whose name I had not previously encountered. The reason that I contacted him was that I was startled, if not shocked, by his statement that the stretcher bullet had been "washed with Hydrosol" before it arrived at the FBI laboratory. I had never seen anything in the Hearings & Exhibits or in the critical literature to suggest any such thing (although Harold Weisberg in his first book did, I believe, assume that the bullet had been cleaned deliberately in order to fudge the evidence—but he cited no facts in support of his assumption, which I believe to be unfounded). On the contrary, the weight of the available information about the stretcher bullet suggests that there was no need to wash or clean it because it had no blood or tissue adhering to its surface.

Therefore, I contacted Braverman to ask the source of his allegation that the bullet had been "washed with Hydrosol..."etc. He had not retained any precise record but told me that he felt that he must have gotten that exact information in his reading—at a public library—of the Hearings & Exhibits insofar as the contents related to the rifle and ballistics evidence. I felt equally sure that the H & E do NOT contain such a statement. Braverman said that he had not been familiar with the term "Hydrosol" and had carefully copied it out of the volume—whether the volume was one of the H & E, or one of the books or articles written about the Warren Report, he could not be sure. He is so perturbed by his inability to document the statement (which I feel certain is entirely innocent) that he has gone so far as to order a set of the H & E, vowing to read his way through and locate the exact source. Well, if it is to be found in the H & E, I can only say that it was overlooked by all the critics as well as by me, and even by Raymond Marcus in his monograph devoted exclusively to the stretcher bullet.

Obviously Braverman has occupied himself exclusively with the weapons evidence, as he himself says, and on that basis alone he is severely critical of the Report. I hope that if he proceeds to read the H & E in entirety, or Accessories After The Fact, copy of which I had sent to him, he will come to realize that the entire body of evidence in its various parts is no less dubious and no less deformed than the rifle and ballistics evidence.

With best regards,

Sincerely yours,

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