

2 April 1967

Mr. Tom Bothell
2323 Ashmead Place NW
Washington, D.C.

Dear Tom,

Thanks for your list of the classified documents, which I will keep to myself as requested. It seems to me that some of the documents correspond with published GEs--for example, GD 1356, CIA report on Soviet Hunting Societies, may be identical with CE 2670. Unfortunately, the latter is not dated, so we cannot be certain. The same is true for GD 1358, Time required for Soviet visa in Helsinki, and CE 2773. The CIA seemingly does not like to date its letters--the date is TS?

FBI agent Pinkston probably got over to the Depository soon after it was mentioned as the source of the shots; the FBI office is not too far from Dealey Plaza. "Immediately" probably means sometime during the afternoon. There is no indication of his presence on the 6th floor prior to Mooney's inspection at 1 p.m. (when no one at all was on the floor) or Mooney's return at 1:12 p.m., when he discovered the shells under the window, and the shield of cartons, etc.

No, no one tested the Carcano on the day of the assassination to see if it had been fired. It is a most astonishing omission, if they did not test it; maybe they did, and forebore to say that it was clean. What is more astonishing is the failure of the Commission and its lawyers to ask the Dallas police and/or FBI Lab witnesses whether the rifle, when it came into their possession, showed evidence of having been fired, or was clean. As is generally true, the omission in itself is significant, as betraying the inadequacy or incompetence of the WC investigation, at the least, or as a clue to the suppression of evidence inimical to the lone assassin theory. This is what proved to be the case with respect to the lack of any explanation in the WR of how Oswald had acquired the Mannlicher-Carcano 6.5 ammunition. The WR says only that it is readily obtainable from mail order houses and a few gun shops. You are left to infer that Oswald got hold of some cartridges somehow or other. But when I traced this out in the GEs, I found that there were only 2 gun shops in the whole Dallas/Fort Worth area that ever carried the Western Cartridge Co. 6.5 Carcano ammo; and both said categorically that Oswald had never been a customer. So the WR is silent on the question, preferring not to call attention to the fact that it had not been possible to establish Oswald's purchase (or acquisition by other means) of the ammunition!

I would be surprised if their silence on examination of the rifle when it was found to see if it had been fired that day was a mere oversight. If Lt. Day found signs that the rifle had been fired, when he examined the weapon for prints etc., why would he not volunteer that information? If he was so incompetent as to be unable to evaluate the condition of the rifle, surely the FBI Lab was not incompetent--yet the FBI rifle experts, when they testified, also said nothing about whether or not the rifle they examined early on 11/23/63 was "clean." See 3H 395, where Robert Frazier is asked if there was metal fouling in the barrel, and he replies that he did not examine it for that. Would that be what you remember?

Sincerely,