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Dec. 11, 1968

Bernard Fensterwald Jr.
4036 North 27th Street
Arlington, Virginia 22207

Dear Bud,

In reply to your letter of October 11, 1968, I have no objection to working with other individuals, as individuals, regarding specific aspects of research into the assassination of JFK. In fact, I have cooperated and exchanged items of information with different people who are on the list appended to your letter.

However, it is absolutely impossible for me to join any group which is organized along the lines that are proposed in your letter, at this time.

Many of the people on the list of "prospective directors" as well as the list of persons to be invited to become members, are avid and unabashed supporters of District Attorney Jim Garrison, and his New Orleans assassination investigation. And, of course, Mr. Garrison is one of the prospective directors of the group, itself.

As part of his investigation, Mr. Garrison has charged a friend of mine, Kerry Thornley, with perjury before the New Orleans Grand Jury. Concomittant with the release of this charge, Mr. Garrison, in extraordinary unlawyerlike fashion, released a seven page news release on Kerry Thornley which outlines a hypothesis of his involvement in the assassination of JFK.

The experiences I have personally had with Mr. Jim Garrison here in Los Angeles, his actions in prosecuting Kerry Thornley, and his treatment of other evidence in this whole case, has brought home to me with considerable force the recklessness, intellectual bankruptcy, and childlike truculence of this man, which no amount of well-meant intention, on his part, can eradicate. For these reasons, I can not participate in any activity which could imply support for his activities, and which might increase the moral sanction which accrues to his cause.

The makeup of the prospective board of directors, and the membership in general, make it probable that this is exactly what will result from such an organization, if organized along the normal procedures which are designed to make a group responsive to the wishes and desires of its members.

I say this because I want to make it clear that it is not just Mr. Garrison's presence at any level in the organization which is the only cause of my position, but the political state of the critical community in general, at this time.

Perhaps, if there were several federal and/or state district attorney's prosecuting mutually inconsistent "assassination conspiracies", each in their own jurisdiction, it might seem highly appropriate for a group such as this to be, in principle, "a-investigational", just as religious groups may be "non-demoninational".

This, unfortunately, is not the case; there is only a vacuum in this area, and it is being filled by a man I consider to be a

rather dim-witted demagogue.

Under these circumstances, I do not want to put myself in the position where I can be outvoted on my convictions concerning him, and so I will not be able to join.

I should add something else. My opinions concerning Mr. Garrison's methods, and character would be enough to cause me to feel as I do, as far as joining any group at this point. But, completely aside from moral considerations, the question could still be asked as to whether Mr. Garrison---however reckless, unscrupulous, and dishonest he might be-- was really onto anything whatsoever.

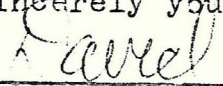
With great emphasis, I must tell you that I do not think this is at all the case. A full discussion of this is beyond the scope of this letter, and I refer you to the articles I wrote in Open City, and other materials which I have sent under separate cover. I base my opinions re the utter invalidity of Mr. Garrison's basic assassination theories on the following:

- 1) the evidence and analysis which Mr. Garrison has presented to substantiate the charges and assertions he has made public; (PO 19106; PE 8 1951; Russo; Bundy; Thornley press release etc.)
- 2) Conversations I have had with Mr. Garrison here in L.A. in September 1967 when he went through a considerable portion of his "plot theory" with me;
- 3) My own knowledge of the 26 volumes, documents in the National Archives, and my own personal researches,

Besides raising the possibility of the conviction of totally innocent individuals, Mr. Garrison's prosecutions, if successfully culminated, in court; , may be responsible for perpetrating the most monstrous injustice of all: laying the legal groundwork for yet another false solution to the assassination. To some of the more short sighted, and thick-skinned, this might be narrowly viewed as a propoganda victory for all those who oppose the Warren Report, but it will be at the expense of innocent individuals, whose sole crime was that some circumstance in their life made them vulnerable to Garrison's wild-eyed approach and flimsy methodology.

I hope I have made my position clear. Please excuse the delay in answering; I've been quite busy.. Also, in closing, I'd like to reiterate what I said at the beginning: that I remain open to cooperation in research matters on a person-to-person basis if there is any project in which you think I might be interested.

Sincerely yours,



David Lifton