

Clippings:

- ** 13. 16 Dec 79 NYT [1 p.] UPI: "Study Group on Slayings of King and John Kennedy Is Disbanding" Now they notice the AIB! Quotes from Blakey, Katz, Oglesby in final AIB newsletter.
- *** 14. 24 Dec 79 WP [1 p.] Lardner: "Justice Memos Critical of Assassinations Panel's Treatment of Ray's Brother [John]" Attempt to have John indicted for perjury to pressure James to talk said to smack of "abuse of process." FOIA releases to Lesar. Legislative purpose issues raised.
- *** 15. 7 & 21 Jan 80 (but out by 1/3) Inquiry [6 pp., including cover drawing] Jeff Goldberg: "Waiting for Justice." Must reading. Some overlap with the AIB newsletter; new insight into Blakey's role at the moment. And then, as if in response:
- *** 16. 5 Jan 80 WP [1 p., including LAT (short) version] Lardner: "JFK slaying probe to reopen" Based on letter of 12 Dec from Robert L. Keuch (JD) to Stokes, just released by Stokes (which I don't have yet). "Limited investigation;" focus on acoustics, but it is "also envisioned that several other investigative tasks" would be undertaken. On King, just a review of the HSC material at the moment. Delay blamed on "inability to obtain a complete copy of the committee's report." (On the King case, this might refer to the missing footnotes, but on JFK??) The letter did not say what aspects of the case the FBI has been asked to look into--there are some. The NSF will be asked to help with the acoustics. JD "seeking to obtain" the Bronson film, but it probably will not be worked on until the acoustics is done.
- ** 17. 6 Jan 80 AP in NYT [1 p.] "Justice Dept. Planning Limited Investigation Into Kennedy Slaying" No additional information of note.

Now What?

Almost all I know is what I read in the papers. One question, of course, is what role the buffs can now play.

The acoustics will take care of itself. I trust that any rebuttal of the HSC's analysis which is in fact not solid will run into flak from Barger, Weiss, and Aschkenasy. While much of the public criticism of the acoustics has been pretty outrageous - non-technical and unpersuasive - I wouldn't expect the Justice Department to pick up on it. So, not much for us to do in this area. (I also expect that Blakey and Dodd, at least, will be pushing for a more detailed analysis of the 3 shots from the rear. Certainly, that is a proper issue for all of us to raise.)

One HSC source is optimistic that in several months the Department will be ready to take on the organized crime aspects. As most of you know, I've got serious doubts about the case against Carlos and Santos, as published by the HSC, and the prospect of a "Get Marcello" squad leaves me a bit nervous - not so much if Blakey is in charge, since he seems properly sensitive to whatever issues of civil liberties might arise. (Not that I always agree with him, but he doesn't deny the issues.) Certainly the HSC people will be pushing the Mafia angle at least as hard as it should be pushed, so I don't see us (at least, me) making a contribution here.

So, the question is: what determines which other issues the JD will deal with? (It would help if we knew what they are already doing!) Are they going to be restricted to prosecutable offenses? There certainly are a number of candidates for perjury investigations. (But cf. item 14 supra.) Presumably various HSC staff will be pushing their favorite areas: "Maurice Bishop," for example. I would like to know if there is any context, or form, in which we can frame issues to get them considered by the Department. Any ideas?

Army Intelligence Again:

For a specific example, consider one of my pet areas. I suspect a little FBI work here could be quite productive. The HSC found the destruction of the Army Intelligence file on Oswald very disturbing. I can't believe that copies of the file were not made and disseminated right after the assassination. The "routine" destruction uncovered by the HSC took place in the 1970's. There is no indication that the HSC was able to look for copies - in Texas, at HQ, etc. Could it be that

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difficult to find some of the Army people seconded to the SS on 11/22 in Dallas?

Given the DoD's reported hostility to the HSC, private FOIA requests would seem futile. But if I had 25 FBI agents, I think we could get something. I would start with the 1964 WC files of the DoD's General Counsel's Office - which presumably have not been "routinely" destroyed.

Having gotten Oswald's personnel file, on 18 Feb 64 the WC (Rankin, for Stern) asked for the ONI file "and any additional information on Mr. Oswald in the files of any other department ... under the jurisdiction of the Department of Defense." In reply, Frank Bartimo (for John McNaughton) sent over the (allegedly) complete ONI file, with no comment about other files. On March 11, the Commission noted that the ONI file includes documents from other DoD organizations, specifically including "intelligence activities of the Department of the Army," and repeated its earlier comprehensive request. On March 16, Bartimo said that "all known materials" on Oswald have been furnished to the Commission. Which is obviously false.

When I got this correspondence in 1968, of course I knew nothing of the Army's activities on 11/22 in bringing Hidell to the attention of the FBI, or of the subsequent destruction of a pre-assassination Oswald file. I was inclined to write off the behavior of the Office of the General Counsel as a routine bureaucratic desire not to be bothered by the Warren Commission. But that's not really plausible - between March 11 and March 16, someone must have made a decision not to look for additional material - or, even more sinister, having found such material, not to give it to the Commission. The Pentagon files should indicate the basis for the letters to the Commission. (In fact, there is a masked section on my copy of the March 16 letter - perhaps routine administrative information, but who knows?) [If you want these 4 pages of letters, just ask.]

We could, in fact, be dealing with something as heavy as the destruction of the Hosty note - even in the version which alleges FBIHQ knew all about it. The HSC concluded that an Oswald-military intelligence affiliation could not be ruled out, and conspicuously failed to include the military in its acquittal of specific agencies of involvement in the assassination. So, on its face, this is a matter of considerable relevance. What do we have to do to get the JD to investigate this, and similar, matters?