

March 30, 1974

Dear Harold,

Again a letter from you bearing tidings of self inflicted injury. This time you seem to have cut yourself with a razor and to have bled enough to sign your letter in red. You must be more careful. Occam is not a safe diversion from Burkley.

So you confused me with Occam whose philosophy, you say, is relevant to our exchanges because it enables us to avoid circular motion, and whose preference for simpler solutions than I conceive is superior to that of ancient Chinese sages and my own Byzantine thought. Marvelous! But in closing you identify yourself with "William of Occam."

I should have thought you would have preferred Occam's contemporary, said to be his rival, the Scottish theologian and philosopher, Duns Scotus, sometimes called the Subtle Doctor, and champion of the Immaculate Conception. Or, if your spirit needed a mortal shell more immediate to our age, you might have elected the philosophical idealist, author of Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge, who held reality to be a projection of the human mind which is supplied by ideas in communion with god - His seventeenth-century Grace, Bishop George Berkeley. But were I in your well, I should have chosen the nineteenth-century German tanner, epistolographic logician, epistemological materialist, collaborator of Marx, ~~Joseph Dietzgen~~ ~~of The Positive Outcome of Philosophy~~ Joseph Dietzgen, author of The Positive Outcome of Philosophy.

Berkeley or Burkley. I have no stomach for bishops and you, apparently suffer from an inhibition about naval medics. You do say, however, I "assign Burkley a role it was not necessary for anyone to fill" and I have "no probative evidence that with or without need he filled that role."

Well, let us see. We begin with some non-Berkeleyian, non-metaphysical, material fact: Kennedy was killed in Dallas; evidence was manufactured in Dallas in advance of the assassination and, after it, especially the autopsy, in Washington, all with the aim of sheltering the killers and their sponsors behind the misidentification of Oswald as the sole assassin. So far, I believe, we are in agreement.

To hold, truly, Dallas and Washington also were linked in other ways is not to deny the role and importance of the autopsy in the post-assassination cover up. All the eyewitness, earwitness, ballistic, medical, and collateral evidence the government amassed and contrived was subsumed and validated by the autopsy. And this is so whether the autopsy in Bethesda was preplanned or improvised immediately following the assassination. The autopsy linked the assassination with the government.

You think it was not necessary for Burkley to act as the human connector. Maybe so. But if not Burkley, who? And if no one, how was the connection made? By Haig's sinister force? Like Old Man River you "must know somethin' but don't say nothin'." Discussion, therefore, proceeds under a handicap.

What if Burkley was not "needed" to link Dallas and Washington? Why does that preclude consideration of him as an actor in the events following the assassination? "Probative" evidence of his role is lacking, you say. What of his "Report" to the Commission? Is it not evidence? Why not probative? Because the Commission ignored it? And if not probative, is it not biographic evidence, and will it not become with the passage of time a wisp of historical evidence? What prevents us from construing it as evidence?

What of the activities and documents central to the autopsy and therefore the assassination Burkley did not report to the Commission and the world? By what criterion of reason, truth, or law is that not evidence?

All together there was, first, Burkley's presence in Dallas. En suite his request to Dr. Clark in Parkland Hospital to make out a death certificate which Burkley took with him to Washington. His initiative in kidnaping Kennedy's corpse. His arrogant behavior to override legal opposition. His search of the trauma room after it was vacated. His persuasion of Mrs Kennedy to consent to an illegal autopsy under military direction which amounted to the preemption of civil authority by military authority. His explanation to Mrs. Kennedy it was necessary to find autopsy evidence to link with other evidence then yet to be found. His failure to inform the autopsy surgeons who were looking for an exit locus of Kennedy's back wound, a tracheotomy had been performed in Dallas, thereby obliterating the original wound in Kennedy's anterior neck. His issuance the day after the assassination of a second death certificate, signed by him, containing unique language in locating Kennedy's back wound, which was then suppressed for a reason or reasons yet to be established. His collection of the entire assassination medical protocol. His issuance of the official autopsy report, containing errors of omission and a false location of the head wound which in itself, apart from other evidence, when corrected, destroyed the Commission's account of the trajectory of its fatal bullet and, therefore, of that bullet's point of origin. His unsworn "Report" of his doings on November 22, 1963, in which he portrayed himself as a fatuous, inconsequential ninny. His non-appearance as a witness or deponent before the Warren Commission. His more than ten-years' silence since the assassination.

If all that is of no significance, why your alarm at, and derogation of, my attempt to examine Burkley's role with you? Why your attempts to divert me from pursuing the matter? Why your reiterated but, fortunately, not entirely realized, intention not to respond to my "persistent" requests for information and opinion from you? What are you concealing from your friends and collaborators whom you would swear, like the mafia and the CIA, to deep and loyal secrecy? What do you know and what do you really think about our George Burkley?

See, too, what distortion in our intercourse your inhibitions work. I advance for discussion political analysis of the Kennedy assassination. You reply at first you have no disagreement with my "concepts." You suggest next I express "socialist belief." And in your last letter you ask a single question twice which begs restatement of what gave rise to it, and follow with a parenthesis to disassociate yourself from your own inquiry because you think it irrelevant. Bishop Berkeley might have found that dialectically amusing. But it is not worthy of Occam, Scotus, Burkley, or even Weisberg. Denuding the assassination of political significance remains the government's game. Investigators should challenge it. The truthseekers' task is political analysis. I am waiting for yours.

Philosophically,

*Thomas*

My "eyes only" report on the mysterious and ambiguous assignment you gave me is made separately to facilitate the sanitizing of your files by easier shredding. 10-4