

August
23 ~~November~~ 1968

Mr. Richard J. Whalen
3846 Macomb Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20016

Dear Mr. Whalen,

Thank you for your letter of the 20th. I am completely at your disposal for any information or assistance which may be useful to you. Please let me know when we can meet. My apartment would be best, since all the records and literature would be at hand. I would be glad to spend any Saturday and/or Sunday with you and Mrs. Whalen (an evening might be inadequate, and I work full-time during the day). My telephone numbers: at home, Chelsea 2-4293; at my office, Plaza 4-1234, ext. 2024.

I am not very optimistic about the possibility of a real breakthrough, in terms of identifying those who engineered the events of Dallas. Certainly we can take it as proven that there was a conspiracy, since shots were fired from at least two separate locations; and Oswald, whether he was (as I believe) an innocent dupe or an accessory to the assassination, is the one certain link to the conspirators and to their principals behind the scenes. A private inquiry, without subpoena power or laboratory resources, would be gravely handicapped in any attempt to explore methodically all avenues of investigation which are still open.

You may be interested in an article I did in the summer of 1966, "Notes for a New Investigation," which appeared in ESQUIRE in December of that year and which I enclose herewith. Some items have been overtaken by time (marked with an "x") but most are still valid.

The alternative to a methodical reexamination of the evidence in its totality is to apply pressure at sensitive points and hope for a miracle. Incidentally, I should strongly advise that you exclude entirely the so-called "investigation" by New Orleans District Attorney Garrison. So far as I know, he has not come up with a single valid finding which is relevant to Dallas, and his "case" is a sorry compound of hot air and fabrications.

It is my impression that the Academy of Forensic Sciences might be willing to cooperate with any responsible investigator or investigative group by providing the needed expertise (ballistics, handwriting, fingerprints, etc.). I have recently developed a contact with an independent ballistics expert who might also be of help; and with an anthropologist who has done some original work, with arresting conclusions as to the source of the shot or shots allegedly fired from the sixth-floor window.

I have heard quite reliably that a reexamination of the assassination evidence has been in progress, in secret, in a Senate sub-committee. It may be worth your while to seek an interview with Senator Edward Long of Missouri, or with Bernard Fensterwald, chief counsel of the sub-committee in question.

I have also learned recently that Alfreda Scobey, who seems to have deputized for Senator Richard Russell on the Warren Commission, has become sufficiently disquieted by the critical assault on the Report as to take steps to view a screening of the Zapruder film. If the viewing convinced her that the fatal shot came from the front and right of the car, she was prepared to urge Senator Russell to take the initiative on a reopening of the whole case. You might therefore wish to approach Miss Scobey, or Senator Russell himself.

The Commission members and lawyers seem to me to be foremost pressure points. They have, of course, a vested interest in defending and sustaining their infamous Report. At the same time, many of them must have signed that Report in ignorance and good faith, and may be deeply troubled by the grave defects raised in the last two years by the critics. If they could be persuaded themselves to reopen the case, whether out of genuine concern for the truth or to preserve their place in history, in the face of the certainty that sooner or later the Report will be officially discredited and withdrawn, that would be one important breakthrough.

A most important approach, for obvious reasons, would be Senator Edward Kennedy. I have some reason to think that a copy of Accessories After the Fact was placed in his hands within recent weeks (please consider this confidential). It is also possible that an approach to Burke Marshall might be worthwhile, and of course to Richard Goodwin.

These are some preliminary, random thoughts in response to your letter. I look forward to meeting you and exploring the possibilities much more fully than is possible in correspondence.

Sincerely yours,

Lyndon B. Johnson

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