

WILLIAM L. NEICHTER
ATTORNEY AT LAW
1313 LYNDON LANE
SUITE 115
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY 40222
(502) 429-0266

December 29, 1993

Dear Harold and Lil:

I just got through writing Alma Handelman and Dennis MacDonald letters, so I thought I would write you! Alma sent me the nicest thank you card, so I wrote her back and enclosed some extra pictures I ended up with. I finally got around to writing Dennis and sent him some of the Sen. Cooper material, and the pictures I had made for him.

I told Alma that Harold came from such a nice family, I can't figure why he is so mean! Just kidding.

It seems strange to write you without sending you some material. I appreciate the copy of the Mary Ferrell letter. I don't know what to think of the Jowers case. Maybe he is just stupid and thinks he can get a TV deal.

We just got back from Chicago and visited Betsy's father. He is fine, and I gave him your thanks for cutting out all the articles in the Chicago paper.

I forget to send Dave the Madoc article. Your friend is right, supposedly years ago, some farmer plowing found some pre-Columbus Hebrew coins. I've seen them in the paper years ago. I wish I had a scrapbook of some of that kind of stuff. My feeling is that some white folks made it to the East coast before Columbus, but I don't think they made it to Kentucky. The Hebrew coins may have been traded to Indians in the 1600-1700's. A lot is luck, I've found hundreds pieces of flint but never any complete arrowheads. I think the Indians were much more sophisticated than we give them credit for.

I found Newman's book in Chicago. Looks good. I'll never believe Kennedy was dumb enough to go into Vietnam like LBJ. Neither did Sen. Cooper. LBJ was a tragedy, a corrupt pol who actually did want to help people, and he did, but Vietnam will forever overshadow his accomplishments. And gave us Nixon, who I still consider the most evil man to sit in the White House.

Bill



Happy New Year to you both!

Since the 25th anniversary of the death of President John F. Kennedy, books and documentaries on the subject have become much more available. Many new books have been published, and of course the movie "JFK" by Oliver Stone has become one of the most controversial pictures of our time. Documentaries on CBS, PBS and the Arts and Entertainment network have been seen by millions, and the 30th anniversary in 1993 was occasion for many new books and articles.

Accuracy, however, has not been a hallmark of much of the work concerning the assassination of Jack Kennedy. Many books are filled with interviews of patients in mental hospitals, or shadowy characters who claim they somehow were involved in the murder. Others make vague allegations about Mafia involvement, or that Lyndon Johnson was behind the shooting. Few have any real proof, and some are clearly the result of fraud or an active imagination.

The average curious American may read one of these works of fiction or watch a disbarred attorney claim his mob client did it, and wonder if there is any accurate, responsible writer working in this dark field. Is there a researcher who actually knows something about the assassination, with proof behind his claims? In other words, is there a Sherlock Holmes involved in the crime of the century?

There is. His name is Harold Weisberg.

Harold Weisberg is a writer who lives in the bedroom community of Washington DC, called Frederick, Maryland. He has been a Senate investigator, an investigative reporter, a member of the OSS, (the agency which became the CIA) and a chicken farmer. Weisberg is 80 years old, and he knows more about the assassination of President Kennedy than

any man or woman alive. Who made him such an expert? Perhaps the fact that he sued the Federal government a dozen times under the Freedom of Information Act, resulting in the release of over 250,000 pages of documents, has something to do with it.

On November 22, 1963, Harold Weisberg was gathering eggs in his chicken coop, listening to classical music, when he heard the first bulletin of the shooting in Dallas. Rushing into the house, he heard the President was dead, and later that a very odd man named Lee Harvey Oswald had been arrested in the shooting death of police officer J.D. Tippit, a Dallas cop who was killed about half an hour after Kennedy was shot. Oswald had been arrested in the Texas Theatre, and in the process the arresting officers roughed him up. First only suspected in the Tippit killing, Oswald was later charged with the murder of the President. Oswald found out that he had been charged in JFK's death by a reporter who shouted the information at him while Oswald was being paraded through the Dallas police station. Security was almost non-existent, as the nation would find out less than 48 hours later, when the Dallas police let a strip joint owner named Jack Ruby walk up to Oswald and shoot him to death on international television on Sunday morning.

Weisberg's life was changed forever by the events of that weekend, and he has gone on to publish six books on the assassination of JFK. His first, *Whitewash*, is considered the classic book on the assassination and many of the books that have been written steal and plagiarize from it. How did Weisberg come to write *Whitewash*?

Hale
Bryant

When the Warren Report came out in 1964, it was hailed by much of the establishment press as the book that would answer all the questions that anyone could ever ask about the assassination of President Kennedy, the wounding of Texas governor Connally, who was seated directly in front of JFK, the murder of police officer Tippit, and the killing of Lee Harvey Oswald in the Dallas police basement. Chief Justice Earl Warren was the head of the Commission, other members included Sen. Richard Russell of Georgia, a Democrat, Sen. John Sherman Cooper, Republican from Kentucky and a close friend of Kennedy, Gerald Ford, John McCloy, a banker from New York, and Allen Dulles, the former head of the CIA who JFK fired after the disaster of the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba. The 888 page report looked impressive on its face, although it is doubtful that most reporters took time to read much of it. The 26 volumes of Exhibits were quietly released almost three months later.

Weisberg ^{read} the Report, and purchased the Exhibits when they became available. The Exhibits are really an encyclopedia, and they tell quite a different story than the Report. Weisberg was shocked by the contradictions between the two, and the odd things in them, such as important pictures that are cropped to eliminate interesting things in the background, and the testimony of Secret Service agents who describe shots from the grassy knoll, or the sound of automatic gunfire. After reading as much as was possible in a few months, difficult because the Exhibits do not have an index, Weisberg knew he must write a book.

Whitewash ^{out} was the first book to point the deficiencies in the Warren Report. Originally a private printing, it was reprinted by Dell in paperback and went through three printings. Weisberg made the round of radio talk shows, and spoke on college campuses. Whitewash would often sell out locally after one of his radio appearances.

Does Weisberg think that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone? No, he does not even believe that Oswald did any shooting that day. He is certain that Oswald was a patsy, and that evidence was planted to make him look guilty. In addition, he believes that the Warren Report ignored evidence of Oswald's innocence in both the Kennedy and Tippit murders. Weisberg is especially critical of members of the staff of

the Commission, who apparently did not want to jeopardize their shiny future careers by finding any evidence that Oswald might have been innocent, or could not have acted alone. In other words, some members of the staff lied to the Commission members. In a courtroom, this is called prosecutorial misconduct.

One of the most highly visible former members of the staff is Senator Arlen Specter. Sen. Specter is now most widely known for his bizarre conduct during the Anita Hill hearings, during the confirmation of Justice Clarence Thomas. His treatment of Ms. Hill, his absolute contempt for her, was obvious during the hearings, and brought the Senate into^a disgrace not seen for many years.

Among students of the Warren Report, Sen. Specter is known as the father of the "single bullet theory", also known as the magic bullet theory. The Warren Report states that three bullets were fired, one missed the car completely, one bullet caused all the non fatal injuries in both Kennedy and Connally, and one caused the fatal head wound. There is only one problem with this theory. It is impossible.

Sen. Russell and Sen. Cooper strongly disagreed with the single bullet theory. Rep. Hale Boggs also did not agree with it. Although they did not realize it at the time, without the single bullet theory, the conclusion of the Warren Report is thrown out.

In the Texas School ^{Book} Depository Building, a cheap Italian rifle was found. It had one bullet in the clip, and three empty shells were found. Oswald's fingerprints were not found on the rifle, and the rifle could never be positively connected with Oswald. On a stretcher at Parkland Hospital, where the President and Gov. Connally were taken, a bullet was found. This bullet was in very good shape, and no metal was missing from its nose area. Yet Governor Connally had metal fragments that had to have come from this bullet if the Warren Report was correct. Weisberg scoffs at the single bullet theory.

Insert quote.

How could the Warren Commission be so wrong? How could these men of such high reputation be so far off base in telling the American people the lone assassin was Lee Harvey Oswald? The answer is a complex one.

The days after November 22 were frantic ones in Washington. The public wanted answers, and in the middle of the Cold War, anything was possible. Was Kennedy killed because of the Cuban Missile Crisis? Could this be a Communist plot? If Oswald had killed the President, what was his motivation? Oswald had been a Marine, had mysteriously learned Russian while in the service. He defected to the Soviet Union, where the authorities did not know quite what to do with him. When he was refused permission to stay, he cut his wrists. The Soviets then gave him permission to stay, and provided him with an apartment and a job. He married Marina, had a child and then returned to the United States, apparently with the help of the US government.

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ The only legal trouble Oswald had ^{at that time} was that his discharge was changed from honorable to dishonorable. (?)

Oswald was a professed Marxist, which is like being a Socialist. It is not the same as communist, although the distinction is lost on the average person. He was involved in strange activities in New Orleans, where he lived after his return. He handed out Fair Play for Cuba pamphlets, although the organization did not have a chapter in New Orleans. Then he moved to Dallas.

He obtained a job at the Texas School Book Depository, a warehouse. He was a good worker, and his boss said he was very polite. At the time of his arrest, he had fake ID on him, in the name of AJHidell. He supposedly had a post office box in that name, and the Manlicher-Carcano rifle found in the TSBD was ordered in that name. There is no proof that Oswald ordered this rifle.

Weisberg believes that Oswald ^{was involved} in intelligence work. In other words, he was a spy, an informant. Would Oswald have been convicted if he had lived to stand trial? Weisberg says no.

Insert quote.

On the surface, Oswald looked suspicious. But digging under the surface, a different picture emerges. His friend, George DEMohrenshildt claimed that Oswald admired President Kennedy. He told the Warren Commission that he just did not believe Oswald would shoot the President. Insert quote.

This is even more amazing because DeMohrenshildt was a friend of the Bouvier family, Jackie's ^K family. If he thought Oswald did it, he would not have any reason to hide the fact. Yet he was quite strong in his belief of Oswald's innocence.

Weisberg is undergoing somewhat of a resurgence in popularity because of television exposure. He is featured prominently in the documentary, "The Men Who Killed Kennedy". He was unhappy with parts of that work, in that some of those interviewed don't know what they are talking about.

Weisberg is featured prominently in another documentary, "Reasonable Doubt". Along with Dr. Cyril Wecht, the renowned forensic pathologist, and David Wrone, a history professor from Stevens Point, Wisconsin, this documentary is considered by Weisberg and others to be the best and most accurate work on the assassination. Chip Selby, who is one of the top researchers in the archive of Sen. Richard Russell at the University of Georgia, made this documentary while working on his master's thesis.

A compilation of Weisberg's four Whitewash books has been released, called "Selections from Whitewash". This is the first time his writings on the JFK assassination have been available commercially for years. In 1993, a reissue of his book on the Martin Luther King murder, called "Martin Luther KING, The Assassination", was published. Along with attorney Jim Lesar, Weisberg was part of the defense team that attempted to get a new trial for James Earl Ray. It is worth noting that neither Jesse Jackson nor the late Ralph Abernathy believed that Ray killed Dr. King. *Weisberg is certain of it - did it*

Weisberg does not believe that the FBI or the Warren Commission did a good job analyzing the photographic evidence in Kennedy's murder. For example, a photo~~XXXXX~~ by James Altgens, an Associated Press photographer, was taken at the moment of the first shot that hit Kennedy. In this picture, it appears that Lee Harvey Oswald is standing on the front steps of the TSBD. In addition, a man is acting strangely on the fire escape of the Dal-Tex building, and it appears that another man may be beneath him. At the very least, this picture show the total lack of security for the President. At most, it may show a gunman. The only versions of this photo published in the Warren Report clearly show the alleged Oswald, but even in the 26 volumes of Exhibits, the man on the fire escape is cropped off. The man was apparently never identified or questioned by the Warren Commission or its staff. Another man was arrested in this building, but his name is also lost to history.

Weisberg and his wife Lil were recently awarded honorary doctorates by Hood College, where his files and documents will eventually be stored and available to researchers. Many authors of books on the assassination of JFK have done research in the files at his home, with mixed results. Gerald Posner spent three days with Weisberg, then wrote "Case Closed ". Posner's book is considered a joke by many serious students of the assassination. He did not even send Weisberg a copy. Weisberg believes Posner's book is a work of fiction.

After researching the topic for almost 30 years, who does Weisberg think committed the murder of the President? The old man always says "Cui bono?" Who benefited? He does not believe that the Mafia was involved, though Jack Ruby was known to associate with known mobsters. He believes Ruby was a very mentally ill man who probably thought he would be a hero. He thinks Kennedy was killed as the result of a conspiracy, but that Ruby was a fluke, an accident of history. He does not believe Ruby knew Oswald, that the Dallas police failed to secure the basement and stupidly allowed Ruby in. The Dallas police have long been criticized for their lack of professionalism, such as

allowing normal traffic to resume in Dealey Plaza less than 10 minutes after the shooting. This destroyed possible evidence of missed shots, and one bystander later gave the authorities a piece of Kennedy's skull he found by the road! Poor police work is a trademark of the Dallas police dept. the whole sad weekend. If you ever see a film of the police carrying the alleged murder weapon with thier bare hands, you'll see an example.

Weisberg does not believe that Lyndon Johnson was involved, nor does he believe that the Soviets or the Cubans killed JFK. He believes that Oswald was set up to take the fall, and with Oswald's apparent intelligence connections, the killers had to have had some knowledge of Oswald and his secret life. The Warren Report discusses a number of reports of False Oswalds, people imitating him at shooting ranges, car dealers, and in bars. The appearances have a common theme of an obnoxious or hard to forget Oswald shooting at other peoples' targets at a rifle range, or test driving cars at 80 mph. However, Oswald was supposed to not have known how to drive, and some of these appearance took place when he was in another town or in Mexico. The Warren Report discounted all these false Oswalds, saying that they were all cases of mistaken identity. A close reading of the incidents can be seen as evidence of a conspiracy to set up Oswald.

Weisberg is very critical of the autopsy of JFK. He feels it was incompetent, and way below standards for autopsies in 1963. For example, the bullet wounds route through the body were not traced, and the autopsy doctors missed the wound in the throat. They failed to do a complete autopsy on the brain, and it is certainly unusual that the doctors had generals and admirals looking over their shoulders. In addition, the two doctors responsible for most of the autopsy did not normally do autopsies, but worked in clinical pathology, in the lab.

Why Dr. Humes and Dr. Boswell were chosen to do the autopsy is not clear. Perhaps the most unusual behavior is that the original autopsy notes, in Dr. Humes (?) own handwriting, were destroyed by burning at home after Oswald was killed by Jack Ruby. Oswald's death should not have had any effect whatsoever on the autopsy of the President. Oswald himself received an excellent autopsy in Texas, where Kennedy legally should have had his autopsy performed.

So if the Mafia didn't do it, and LBJ wasn't involved, and the Cubans and Soviets were not involved, who did it? Weisberg feels that we must consider the possibility that President Kennedy was killed for political reasons, like many of history's greatest men. Julius Caesar was killed for political reasons, so why not JFK?

It is a little known fact that Kennedy had signed an authorization to withdraw 1,000 of our troops from Vietnam. At the time the US had 17,000 troops in Vietnam, as "advisors". Contrary to popular myth, Kennedy did not initiate our involvement in Vietnam. President Eisenhower sent in the first troops. According to John Newman's excellent book, "JFK and Vietnam", Kennedy intended to withdraw most all US troops after the 1964 election. His order was rescinded by LBJ within days after JFK was slain.

The popular press has carried on the myth that Vietnam was Kennedy's fault. If you ever go to the Wall, the Vietnam Memorial in Washington DC, look at the names of the men killed under the command of Ike and JFK. All their names would fit on a good size dining room table. The great majority of those brave men and woman killed in Vietnam were lost during the administrations of Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon. Lyndon Johnson was in over his head from the minute he became President. Although somewhat of a populist in domestic policy, LBJ's lack of sophistication in dealing with foreign policy caused his regime to become a Greek tragedy. His macho mindset made him determined to keep Asia from the Communists. LBJ never explained how illiterate, uneducated agricultural peasants could even become Communist.

9

Let Weisberg put it in his own words. "I think the most obvious suspicion is that JFK was assassinated to change some of his policies. That is the inevitable effect under our system and his automatic successor was a known quantity. But if you stop to think of all the many different interests that wanted to change pollicy, there is no way of pinpointing who may have been behind the assassination!"

Without a proper investigation, the world may never know why or by whom President Kennedy was killed. With Oswald's death, the FBI and the Secret Service quit looking for other suspects. It is known that both the FBI and the CIA withheld information from the Warren Commission. It was more important to J. EDGAR Hoover to cover his ass and the FBI's ass than to get at the truth. The FBI knew about Oswald and his weird background, and that he was living in Dallas. They thought he was OK. Why? If Oswald did kill the President, it makes the FBI look like incompetents. If Oswald did not kill the President, then who in the hell did? The FBI and especially Hoover had long cultivated the image that "we always get our man." A dead guilty Oswald looked much better than the alternative.

Even with all the asscovering, there is much to consider. For example, the FBI position is that three bullets came into the Presidential limo. The Warren Report says only two bullets came into the car, one missed. If the official agencies cannot even agree on this simple matter, why should the public believe the Report? Even the bullet fragments, after analysis, did not match each other, though they should be nearly identical. The metal tested appears to have come from at least ~~two~~ different batches of metal.

It has been thirty years since the death of Jack Kennedy. Hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions have died in Southeast Asia as a result of our misguided policy there. Over 58,000 Americans will never see their children grow up, will never have Christmas with their families, will never sit around, drink a beer and cheer for the home team. (?) The hardliners are still in control of our foreign policy, because we still don't have full diplomatic relations with Vietnam, the only country to ever beat the USA in a war. Thirty years after World War II, we had rebuilt Japan and Germany. People were buying thousands of cars built by our former sworn enemies, built by countries that had attacked Pearl Harbor and killed millions in concentration camps. But little Vietnam, which had the guts to repel

the American foreign invasion, must still suffer. Such is the depth of the hatred our government harbors towards that beautiful jungle nation.

Harold Weisberg believes that we shall never know the identity of the true killers of Jack Kennedy. But he feels the study of the issue is not in vain. If the American people learn that we must guard against those who would lie to the people, that democracy sometimes means more than voting once a year, his work will have been worthwhile. Watergate, the Warren Report, the Iran-Iraq scandal, all are examples where those in high government felt that they must guard the American public from the truth. The whole truth of the JFK murder may never be known, but Weisberg feels that we at least know that Lee Harvey Oswald was innocent. Some polls have shown that up to 90% of the people don't believe that Oswald acted alone. If faith in government is ever to be restored, all the records and files of the Commission and the FBI should be released. What could they be hiding after these years? Could it be Oswald's intelligence background?

All of the Warren Commission members except Gerald Ford are now dead. Yet some of the staff are still relatively young and vital. They all share a marked reluctance to discuss the Report in public. You might occasionally hear one on a radio show, or giving a short statement on the news. But have you ever seen one in a free and public debate with a knowledgeable ^{critic} such as Weisberg? Don't hold your breath waiting.

Jack Kennedy is dead and buried, but his memory lives on. Many people still have a bust of him on their mantle. You don't see many of Lyndon Johnson or Richard Nixon. The nation knows they were liars, but still hunger for the truth. Harold Weisberg has done more than the FBI or the Warren Commission in trying to get the truth out. Despite the attempt by many in the press to blame JFK for Vietnam or to darken his memory by playing up flaws in his personal life, people still admire him. Jack Kennedy was a man of peace, and he gave his life in its cause. He was a hero as captain of PT109 in World War II, and to Harold Weisberg and millions of Americans, he is still a hero that will be remembered for as long as history is written down by honest men and women.