

Mr. Farris L. Rookstool, III
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8/14/90

Dear Farris Rookstool,

When I first looked at the picture you were kind enough to send, I wondered when and where it was taken. The fence is the first thing that took my attention, then the rifle, then the book in my hand. But in a few seconds I was confident of my recollection. It was taken in the back yard of a man I'd visited just that one time. Most of his back yard was taken up by a swimming pool. and there was just the one time I held that rifle any place but home and on a local firing range. Moreover, it does not have the scope. I had that put on locally. So, I'd just gotten it, in Pasadena.

So, I'm curious. How did you get a picture taken at Fred Newcomb's in Sherman Oaks? He never even offered it to me. I didn't recall that it had been taken.

I think the date was about February, 1968 even though the book appeared 12/66.

Remembering the range reminds me of what may interest you. I was never an expert but when I was young I'd been a pretty good shot. I'd had a little experience with rifles and pistols. I was always curious about the dent on one of the shells recovered in the Texas School Book Depository. The bullet could not have been loaded that way and there is nothing the ejected shell could have struck that could have caused such a dent. There was no explanation of it by or to the Warren Commission. The FBI did not volunteer it and the Commission did not ask.

The friend who went to the range with me was a rifle buff and he was well informed. He tried but could not duplicate that kind of damage in firing the rifle. I asked the retired colonel in charge of the range if he had any idea how it could have happened. He didn't but he directed me to a man who was a stranger to me and had a sideline of as I now recall selling rifles and other things.

He figured it out. He operated the bolt more vigorously than I'd ever seen one pulled in ejecting the shell and that threw it back so hard it made a dent before the shell hit the earth.

It doesn't seem likely that anyone would have used such force in that crime as officially described. It certainly would not have made aiming the next shot easier.

If you get a better print I'd appreciate it.

and if you want one autographed, I'll be glad to.

Thanks and best wishes,

Harold Weisberg
Harold Weisberg

'JFK' sparks flood of calls to FBI about assassination

By Jack H. Taylor Jr.

Daily News Staff Writer

to Angelo
DALLAS, Texas — The FBI is hearing all about Oliver Stone's controversial new movie "JFK."

"There have been calls which have told us we ought to open the files," said Oliver B. "Buck" Revell, special agent in charge of the Dallas office and a former FBI assistant executive director in charge of investigations.

"There have been some that have called in advancing various theories," he said. "And there have been others who have called in that were essentially very anti the movie, saying it was a communist plot to try to stir up trouble."

"Youngsters going in and seeing this are going to come out 99

percent convinced (there was a conspiracy)," Revell said. "And those who were doubters to start with will have their doubts confirmed."

Nearly three decades after the assassination of President Kennedy, the FBI still keeps the investigation open and occasionally follows up a new lead.

Stone's \$40 million, three-hour epic film, which mixes fact with fiction, has given new impetus to the debate over who killed the president — lone gunman Lee Harvey Oswald or conspiratorial government figures.

With interest in conspiracy theories high again because of "JFK," Dallas police last week opened thousands of pages of

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The FBI has maintained secrecy on its recent attention to Marcello because of apprehension that disclosure would fuel conspiracy theorists who long have believed there was an organized crime connection with the assassination.

Based on an almost endless chain of circumstantial evidence and guilt-by-association links to Oswald and to his assassin, Dallas nightclub owner Jack Ruby, proponents of the theory that organized crime was involved in the assassination long have pointed the finger at Marcello.

Although the Warren Commission, the FBI and the CIA said they were unable to tie Oswald to organized crime, the House Select Committee on Assassinations report in 1979 said elements of organized crime "probably" conspired to have Kennedy murdered.

The House committee drew its conclusions from circumstantial links that Oswald had numerous associations with Marcello; that Oswald's uncle, Charles Murret, was a minor gambling figure in Marcello's New Orleans crime family; that David Ferrie, a Marcello associate, had been a Civil Air Patrol instructor of Oswald's; and that Oswald's mother was acquainted with several men associated with Marcello lieutenants.

The House committee's conspiracy theory turned largely on the analysis of the Dallas police tape recording of sounds picked up by a motorcycle officer's radio. The panel concluded it was highly probable two gunmen fired at Kennedy, but re-examination of the recording by both the FBI and National Academy of Sciences later discounted the finding.

"The fact is that the overwhelming forensic evidence and all of the supporting evidence points to Oswald as the sole assassin and there is no credible evidence that anyone else is involved," Revell said.

"Now what we have also said is there is no credible evidence that anyone else was involved. We have not said no one else was involved. We simply have not seen any credible evidence of anyone besides Oswald being involved in the assassination. So, therefore, we have not found a conspiracy."

they pursued any substantive lead was in the summer of 1989 when an aging organized crime boss was quizzed at length following repeated reports from government informants inside two federal prisons that he had acknowledged complicity in the assassination.

But 81-year-old Carlos Marcello of New Orleans flatly denied any involvement when confronted by FBI agents from Dallas, officials said.

Marcello's own associates say he suffers from Alzheimer's disease and cannot remember enough about the assassination to respond to questions.

Marcello was released from prison in October 1989, after serving six years of a 10-year sentence for attempting to bribe a Los Angeles judge.

Initially, Marcello was imprisoned at the Federal Correctional Institution in Texarkana, Texas. After a series of strokes, he was transferred to the Bureau of Prison's medical facility in Rochester, Minn., where he was questioned by FBI agents from Dallas in July 1989.

The FBI had received an increasing number of reports from informants inside both prisons that Marcello had admitted complicity in the Nov. 22, 1963, assassination in mumblings during sleep and in conversations with other inmates.

Revell and Bobby R. Gilliam, who was special agent in charge of the FBI's Dallas Division at the time of the inquiry, said agents questioned Marcello at the federal

Harvey Oswald's actions.

The FBI's actions so many years after the assassination illustrate that the FBI still will follow leads on the case, however remote, because of the continuing controversy over the Warren Commission's conclusion that the assassination was the work of a lone gunman.

Revell said the FBI keeps the case open "because of the nature of the crime, the trauma to the nation."

"Officially, there was a closure in '88, but it wasn't like a final closing-type memo," said Farris L. Rookstool III, an investigative analyst for the FBI in Dallas who is a Kennedy assassination specialist.

"I would say a lot of people find a lot of fascination with Mafia figures or people that have been linked to organized crime, and I think the fact to actually elicit a conversation or a confession out of someone, despite what their state of health is, might be something that might be worthwhile," Rookstool said.

"I understand that he (Marcello) had been making some ramblings," Rookstool said. "The only reason someone such as himself would merit an interview as opposed to some person, some indigent, off the street is strictly because his past animosities toward the Kennedys are known."

Marcello could not be reached. Dorothy Ott, his longtime personal secretary, said she and Marcello family members were dismayed at the informant reports that spurred the FBI to question