3 Jan 71

Paul Hoch
Berkeley

Dear Paul:

Thanks for your Christmas card and the reminder that I had not replied to your most recent correspondence. The reasons for my failure to acknowledge are several, none--perhaps-- acceptable, but all-- I hope-- understandable. The letter arrived at a time when I was especially busy with things that demanded my whole attention, mostly things having to do with end-of-term business-- getting and grading tests, reading numerous term papers, some faculty board duties, and the like. I read your letter once and put it aside, intending to get to it when my [illegible]. Regrettably, I remained rushed and occupied with other things from then until now-- including trips out of town and out of the country. To top it all, I cannot now locate your letter, although I think it is somewhere in my office, surely misfiled-- I'll check when I get there. In the meantime, I am writing to refer to all the [illegible].

Among the things keeping me busy was the writing of a manuscript dealing with the fragments. I'll send you a copy of this the next few days. To save money, I started to circulate an earlier draft moving from person to person until finally it reached you. What you will get from me is the second draft. I consider the first draft, since I have revised certain parts substantially-- largely changes of representation and of emphasis, rather than of substance.

There are still a few things lacking in the footnotes, but I believe that they will be evident in the draft, so I shall not specify them here.

Except for footnotes and references, which will take some time to complete, this draft will probably be very close to the finished form. Rather than discuss our previous correspondence, which has been disturbeful to me, as undoubtedly it has been to you, I would like to start anew and base discussions on the manuscript. Currently it is the best and most that I am able to set forth, although some improvement and additions are forthcoming. (One small illustration, for example, undoubtedly will be received. I am in touch with a man who is getting information that may enable me to set fairly accurate depictions of the areas occupied by the fragments.)

If, when I find and re-read your letter, I find that the manuscript does not treat matters that you discuss, I'll write and discuss them in a letter.

I remember one thing in your memorandum that I intended to mention-- it does not have to do with the fragments, though. I recall that you referred to the possibility that the newly-revised rocket projectile, fired from a rifle-like instrument, might have been used. I believe you are referring to the so-called Gyro-Jet. (Somewhere I have articles on this, and will find and send them if you request them.) I specially for two reasons I think it is not possible that the Gyro-Jet was used. For one thing, the Gyro-Jet projectile is not frangible. As I recall, it contains no lead, but rather is made of a metal

which, if it could break apart on impact, would not break into very small particles. More important than that, I am pretty sure that the Gyro-Jet was not commercially available until about 1965, and may not even have been developed by late 1962. Although I am not relying on my memory, I am almost certain the Gyro-Jet did not exist in 1962, except perhaps in experimental models. I don't whether the latter is of such importance to you, so perhaps my guesswork will satisfy you in this case. If not, tell me, and I'll go through back issues of the magazines until I find a good article on it.

I recently read something that bears a little on something I mentioned in passing about jet-recoil. I don't remember where, and I shall have to refer to it from memory. It does not deal with jet-recoil itself, but merely with the bit of backward spray of debris that emanates from the entrance hole on impact. Moreover, it concerns impact only at soft fleshy substances, so perhaps it will mean very little to you. Nevertheless, I'll pass it for what it's worth to you.

Years ago, even before I became interested in the assassination, I read a book called _guns ballistics_, issued by the U.S. armed services. I had almost forgotten about the book until recently. Then I accidentally spotted it in the library of the military college here in Augusta. One of the early chapters contains text and pictures dealing with the backward spray from the entrance hole. I refer to it in one of the footnotes of my MS., so you'll find it by the reference there.

The book has a great deal of material on missile penetration; but all that I would like, for my present use, I may revise my section on missile penetration so that it leverages more from _Range Ballistics_ than from the sources that I used. Presently I am satisfied with the other references because they are succinct and clear.

I have to stop now. I'll write again when I find your letter and look at the time. When I have finished going over the footnotes once more, I'll send it to you-- probably in a few days.

Still,

Vic