

Peter Skutches
Richard Gallen & Co.,
260 Fifth Ave.,
New York, NY 10001

8/4/93

Dear Peter,

You may not be old enough to remember Kenneth O'Donnell but I think Richard does. He was JFK's appointment secretary who also was one of his speech writers, an able Boston lawyer who had been ^{active} in the JFK campaign. He is one of the JFK people who stayed on with LBJ when he asked ^{to} that.

I've just been given the first 110 pages of an oral history he made for the LBJ Library. This was not as a JFK man although he remained a Kennedyite.

This is to say that O'Donnell, who's book Kennedy was well received and highly regarded, is an excellent source.

I can't understand why ^{it} was not given any attention when it was ^{published} in January, 1982. He ^{was} taped in July, 1968. It has that much in it I regard as new, but then the media did not have that much interest in LBJ after Nixon was President.

I've found 35 lines of typing that are an entirely different account of Johnson and Viet Nam. O'Donnell says that LBJ intended not to get involved in any fighting there and that the military not only saw to it that he was never told the truth but contrived a situation during the campaign that boxed him in. They ^{created} the situation that led to a situation in which he had ^{real} no choice, the situation that ^{led} to our involvement there.

Remember, Never Again! ^{makes} out a case of the military conspiring. *This does fit!*

I do not want to ask Kevin to add anything without your approval. I presume that means Richard's, too. But I think this might get major attention if called to a reporter's or a reviewer's attention and that it also is fairness to LBJ.

To the best of my knowledge, nothing like this was ever said before in any form.

I think that it would fit well at the end of the ^{chapter}, Was There a Military Conspiracy?, as a note to it, or at the end of the ^{book's} epilogue.

If you agree my preference would be to quote most of those 35 lines, with some excisions, with a short explanation. It would make no difference to me where it would be used.

I think that in the sense of last-minute-news it might be best at the end of the epilogue, which consists of what I got after drafting the book, it might be best.

If there is no objection, I'll send you a copy when I send it to Kevin. If not wanted, that is OK, too.

Mc Knight, who teaches Viet Nam, will be back in four days. I'll check the newness with him then.

Please excuse my using an ^{old} ~~evl~~ ^{type} I had to open.

Sincerely,

Hardy