

Letters on JFK murder

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determine whether or not a new investigation is needed. With best wishes. Sincerely yours, Eugene J. McCarthy EJM/mgv. Another letter in the file, this one to Perry Owen, came from Senator Abraham Ribicoff on December 12, 1966:

"Thank you for your recent letter. I, too, believe that the American public has a right to know all the relevant facts surrounding the tragic assassination of President Kennedy. Efforts to provide those facts have my support. Sincerely, Abe Ribicoff.

Since Senator Ribicoff is now

one of Bobby Kennedy's staunchest supporters, it is possible that he would not write such an affirmative letter today.

A letter from Senator Russell B. Long of May 8, 1967, is also worth quoting at length.

Dear Mr. Owen:

This will acknowledge your letter regarding New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison's investigation of the Kennedy assassination, and my encouragement of that investigation. I very much appreciate your support in this regard.

I have always questioned the

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Warren Commission's conclusion that only one person was involved in the assassination of the late President. I made known my feelings to the District Attorney during a trip to New York last year, and I was pleased to see that he followed our conversation up with an apparently thorough investigation of the matter.

It is my feeling that if no conspiracy did exist, then certainly no harm could be done by such an inquiry. On the other hand, if the current investigation should reveal that there was a plot involving two or more persons, then all Americans will be grateful and relieved that such an investigation was undertaken. Wish best wishes, I am Sincerely, Russell Long.

A letter to Fred Newcomb from California Congressman Alphonzo Bell on January 25, 1968 men-

tions the House Concurrent Resolution 312 which seeks to establish a joint committee to investigate the Kennedy assassination;

Dear Mr. Newcomb:

... I can assure you that many members of Congress share your concern about the investigation into the death of President Kennedy and would raise similar questions to your own

... I will surely relay to my colleagues on the Committee your queries about the investigation and will keep your views in mind should this resolution reach the floor of the House for a vote. With every good wish, I am sincerely yours, Al (Alphonzo Bell, United States Congressman. AB:arb, Enclosure).

A letter of May 22, 1967 from New York Congressman Theodore Kupferman to Perry Owen also deals with House Res. 312 and

says, "I would hope that you could gain support for it from your friends throughout the country."

A letter from Colorado Senator Peter H. Dominick dated April 17, 1967, says, however, that "I would be happy to see far more study on the assassination ... But it is also doubtful that any further investigation will be approved by the Democratic leadership, as it was the President and the Democratic leadership that established the Warren Commission and precluded any possible Congressional investigation."

Senator Spessard L. Holland of Florida also expressed this pessimism in a letter to Perry Owen of March 20, 1967. He said, "I appreciate both your concern and point of view ... However, I doubt seriously if the truth will ever be known in our time—probably never—in spite of all the investigations which are being currently

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conducted at many levels. The Kennedy family has quite effectively deterred investigative phases by impounding necessary records under seal prohibiting comprehensive analysis upon which any latter day conclusions might be reached."

California Congressman Charles Teague, in a letter dated April 18, 1967, said, "If the current proceedings in Louisiana develop reliable leads or information, the chances are good that the Kennedy investigation will be reopened."

Letters in the possession of the Free Press which did not commit their authors one way or the other were received from Wisconsin Congressman Laird, Texas Senator Ralph Yarborough, Senator Herman Talmadge of Georgia, New York Senator Javits, Vice President Hubert Humphrey, Senator Birch Bayh of Indiana, and Senator George Murphy of California. All of these indicated politely that they would continue their study of the question.

On the other hand, a series of letters were received from United States government officials taking a fairly definite stand against reopening of the investigation until, as Hawaiian Senator

Daniel Inouye expressed it, "... Until I see more evidence that he (Garrison) is on sound grounds, I frankly am not encouraged to go to his assistance."

Similar letters were sent by Oregon Senator Mark Hatfield, Michigan Congressman Ford, ("The Commission did have an opportunity to examine all possible evidence, and based on this evidence draw what seems to me the best possible conclusions."), Robert Kennedy Administrative Assistant Joseph Dolan, California Senator Kuchel, and Fred M. Vinson, Jr., Assistant Attorney General.

United States Senator Tower from Texas, on the other hand, said, "... I will, of course be most interested to see what will be the results of the New Orleans investigation now under way. Certainly, if additional facts are brought out which merit further investigation of the assassination, I will support such investigation."

And Illinois Senator Charles Percy wrote on August 3, 1967, "... I am impressed by the fact that Senators Robert Kennedy and Edward Kennedy have both expressed confidence in the findings of the Warren Commission. Nevertheless, I would not oppose continuing investigative work on this matter."