

October 31, 1971

The Honorable Edward M. Kennedy  
United States Senate  
Washington, D. C.

Attention: Mr. Martin

Dear Sir:

Letters, which make a permanent record, thereby sometimes can be adverse to the interest of the writer or the addressee. It is now more than two weeks since I sought to get a message to you verbally. Having had no word since, and because I am deeply concerned about what is possible, if not probable, I have no choice but to write you. However, I have no intention of making any use of this letter or your response or your silence.

I believe that your office and your Senator are today in such a bind, that a policy determination has been made on the basis of what I intend no offense in categorizing as ignorance, and that one of the possible end products may be his serious hurt, serious personal and political hurt.

I do not believe you are prepared to believe me.

In seven years of the most intensive work, I have come to realize that busy men prominent in public life come to be the captives of their advisers. If one may presume these advisers enjoy their confidence, my own work abundantly demonstrates that it is not always either earned or justified, that very often the advisers have other, often personal, interests to serve or simply are not prepared to do the work necessary to develop the specific knowledge required for rendering considered and mature advice. Only too often they proffer advice based upon trust of others who, in turn, have compromised lives, or on the basis of political considerations as they understand them, or on the narrow basis of what they regard as legal considerations.

Today is the first day that, under a letter agreement between the representative of the executors of the estate of the late President Kennedy and the General Services Administration qualified pathologists may, with the assent of this representative and thereafter of the designee of the Administrator of GSA, view the film of the late President's autopsy. Unlike what you might expect from one known as a "critic" of the Warren Report, one of my purposes in writing this letter is to encourage you to see to it that no such pathologist is now permitted to see this film. I think that, were this done now, the hurt to the Kennedy name and to the Senator would be beyond repair because of the context and probable misuse of the truth. It would,

inevitably, I believe, fix on both responsibility for all the many suppressions of evidence. The converse is that those who are really responsible for the suppressions and in all cases of which I know not friends of the assassinated Kennedys, if not the Senator, would be exonerated.

I have and can show you some of this suppressed evidence and you can make up your own mind about the validity of my apprehensions. I am talking about evidence withheld from the Warren Commission. I do not and will not force it upon you. It is official evidence I obtained from official sources. I have a chain of possession on it in writing and properly signed by the proper officials.

Please do not misunderstand me. I am the first to have demanded access to this film and to have been refused. I firmly believe that at some point it must be made available, not only to pathologists, who perforce must have limited knowledge of the overall fact and would be studying it in a vacuum, but to one who has made the painful, lengthy and required study of all the relevant evidence. This is beyond the capability of even the most competent and reputable pathologists, all of whom have been busy in the pursuit of their careers.

But now is not that time. Now it would be ruinous for your Senator and his family, a boon to J. Edgar Hoover and the present administration.

You should also know and clearly understand the potential of two facts that are not known but are beyond question:

This film is not complete and all of it was not given to the Secret Service;

After the Secret Service surrendered it, at least one X-ray was damaged.

To this, I add something else you should know, and please understand I am not trying to trouble you but to diminish hurt and trouble: All the other essential tangible evidence has been destroyed, tainted by alteration, has been "misaid" or has disappeared. I have the proof in my possession.

A month or more ago, Ned Crosby saw you on my suggestion. He had visited with me and had made an arrangement with me to make possible the publication of a book I have completed dealing with this medical evidence. Since then, he has added new stipulations with which I am not and will not be in accord. As of two days ago, he had not heard from you. And as of that same day, one of his new stipulations is that I permit him to interview various people to the end that responsibility for suppressions be made a Kennedy responsibility. He has particular objection to a chapter titled "Hades - Not Camelot". He regards it as a "Kennedy" defense. I do not impose upon you and allege that it is so intended or designed.

It is the considered result of years of the most intensive study, My work and my beliefs are not for sale. In this case, the cost is the printing of this book.

That chapter establishes with hitherto unpublished official evidence and other evidence the fact and means of framing Robert Kennedy with responsibilities not his and the efforts of President Johnson and others to frame him and the family members with suppressions. (You should understand that, under the terms of this GSA-family contract, the Senator now has ultimate responsibility. If you do not have a copy, I will provide it.)

I think it might help you understand my sincerity to know that, were anyone to see this autopsy film and emerge to say what is true, that it disproves, is inconsistent with or casts doubt upon the Warren Report, it would be a boon to my completed book, would make it a "hot" literary property. My work and knowledge have advanced to the point where I do not believe that untainted film can or will add materially to what I now have in this book.

This may not seem comprehensible to you, but you can determine the fact for yourself, directly or indirectly, by seeing me, by coming here and seeing what I have, or by sending someone I need not know comes here in your interest as long as he is someone I am prepared to trust. There are a number of reporters who have seen some of this evidence in confidence. I can, of course, understand that you may be reluctant to involve anyone of the press.

In any event, I make you this offer, and I do, strongly, encourage you to listen to the cautions I would press upon you. On my part, I ask no more than the preservation of my confidence. I have years of the most painful and bankrupting work involved in the locating and acquiring of the evidence of which this is part. I also do not want it misused by the prejudiced or the under-informed. In return, I give you my word that I will not exploit you or the Senator in any way.

My sole purpose is the establishing of truth in what I regard as a turning-point in our history as well as that of today's world.

If you fear me, prepare any kind of written restraint or limitation of any nature you elect binding me to silence on our meeting. I will sign it as a precondition. I also agree, should you consider it a protection, for you to tape-record our conversation and for it to remain the Senator's exclusive property, with the sole reservation the nondisclosure of any of the fact I report to you. In short, take any kind of precautions you may desire or consider in your interest or that of the Senator if you believe this letter inadequate for such purposes.

So you can also understand me better and understand that I seek nothing of you or the Senator or your involvement in anything, I strongly encourage that the Senator, should there be any development of any kind, maintain the public posture that he has been and thinks he should be divorced from all such matters and details and

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that he has never had any reason not to trust the members of the Warren Commission or their integrity.

I think if you do not learn what you should, whether or not you believe me, if you are not prepared to trust me as, for example, the late Senator Russell did - and it should be obvious that I have not exploited that trust - you may come to suffer deeper regrets than you may now be willing to believe possible. And the Senator's future may not survive it.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg