

I had just started to wash and change for the coming of company when Dave phoned, saying it was from New York. The call lasted a long time, to the accompaniment of many sirens, so I presume he was using a downtown phone, probably somebody's WATS line, maybe even Jerry's, is Jerry has an office whose windows open on a warm day.

At first he was trying separately for some kind of access to my JFK records. I explained that there are certain conditions on which we insist in order to preserve these records so that when I transfer them to Wisc. they will be in perfect condition and in exactly the order in which I received them. He wanted to borrow them to make copies and I so impossible, they do not leave here, that copies can be made here but that with our costs there is no saving, the cost is as high as the FBI's charge. I said that others can come here and examine the records but that from his past, particularly from his refusal to provide the help he could have provided in FOIA litigation, he would not be welcome. I added that were I to relent my wife would not. I made no reference to his other dirty tricks. When he had explored all the avenues of which he could think and came to realize that there is no possibility of any saving here he just started to talk. Mostly about the House assassins and the autopsy film and about Wecht.

His account of Wecht is incredible yet I believe it, at least in essence. It is of an utter incompetent. He says he has Wecht's own transcripts of the notes Wecht dictated, some more ridiculous than in a cheap novel. Wecht saying I am now walking down the hall, I'm going past a door that says "Marion Johnson. His phone number is... Dave says he spent months preparing a book for Wecht, of what to do, what to look for, etc., and had it all arranged in a well-organized fashion. Complete prep. Even how to check the batch identification of the film, how to examine the film to see if it is the original, things like that. Says he spent days consulting authentic experts to be able to provide this kind of information. Wecht could not even keep grid lines straight on a graph overlay, could not read an X-ray eve.

Lifton appears to have had more than Polioff as a source on who has had access to the autopsy film. Says the committee has it in its possession. (There are prints of the X-rays dating back to the earliest day of SS possession and duplicate prints of the pix.) He leaves little doubt that Michael Ewing is one of those who has had access. He changed what he was saying about some details but I do not attribute this to fabrication. Rather to a formulation that changed as we talked, like how many of those who saw the film did not have any college degree of any kind.

He says that in 1974 there were two nonMDs who saw the film. In the past six months four who are not doctors. His concern is that because these include those he regards as critics it would be damaging to the critical community for this to come out. I told him that the best approach was to expose every misdeed, especially this and that if he and the others who are concerned will give me the leads I'll get the story out, w/o any other guarantee about the story or its line, that I deal with no reporters I can say I control because I do not. But that with good leads good reporters can get the story. As I think back he began by saying that two without college had had access and shifted to no, four, two in the past six months. If this is unclear what is not unclear is the allegation of access by the unqualified and that it is not uncommon. Of course the access by the pros means little, which is why they have access. That panel has reported, the one dissenter of the nine is Wecht.

He hears that they will not even print the public testimony they take. (My belief is that he has no original sources. On the autopsy film he seems to have been saying this and giving it as one of the reasons he does not want to give me the names he has. I made no effort to pump, saying that decisions was for others to make - and then to live with, as they all have to live with Wecht's past.

He adds a new detail on the insanities - they have taken the Umbrella Man seriously - with even large detail blowups to study. I asked him if they had done this with the second umbrella man and he did not recall that. When I prompted him he came to recall it, or to pretend he did, but he appears to have no knowledge of that so I guess the committee is interested in the Cutler-Sprague silliness only.