

11/23/88

Dear Mr. Navasky,

If I were able to search for it I'd enclose a copy of the CIA record I refer to. It states that Robert Kennedy was surprised <sup>maybe shocked,</sup> to learn of the attempts to kill Castro and of its alliance with the mafia in this and ordered that no such things ever be undertaken at least without consultation with him.

The general I refer to is Gavin but because I am not now physically able to search for the tape, of an interview I conducted at the annual ABA meeting at the Shoreham for Authors Roundtable, I do not mention his name.

Sincerely,



Harold Weisberg

I gave my copies of these Pentagon releases to the present general counsel of Lucas Films when he was a student researching the cold war.

His name is Howard Roffman if this interests you. My copies were from the Wash. Post but I think the N.Y. Times index would list them.

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Andrew Kopkind's version of "J.F.K.'s Legacy" fails to recognize the drastic change in his policies beginning with the 1962 missile crisis and is wrong in its sneering reference to the 1963 American University speech, which states his hope for those changed policies.

Such things as the first step toward detente, the limited test-ban agreement; cancelling some military contracts, including for Blue Streak missiles for Britain; stating the new policy of refusing to recognize military dictatorships that overthrew democratically elected governments, as in the Dominican Republic; his lengthy and still secret correspondence with Nikita Khrushchev, which is not likely antagonistic from its length alone; and ordering our withdrawal from Vietnam, are hardly what Kopkind refers to as "from the first, hard cold war" policies.

His little-remembered change in Vietnam policy was announced by the Pentagon shortly before he was assassinated and the reverted and expanded policy was announced by it shortly after his assassination. That he had called his generals in, one by one, and explained to them that Vietnam was a political problem and political problems are not susceptible of military solutions was confirmed to me by one of those generals in 1967

"The brutal and self-defeating devastation of Vietnam" was begun by the Eisenhower-Dwight-D-Eisenhower-Nixon administration, was inherited by Kennedy, and was made really bloody by Johnson and Nixon, not by Kennedy.

It is not reasonable to prate that Kennedy "never grasped the possibilities of Nikita Khrushchev's reforms" when it is a fact that these two leaders had an extensive exchange of still-secret communications, hardly on either part "a hard cold war" exchange.

It is the fiction of those who hated him and those who were <sup>really</sup> responsible for "the plots of assassination" of Castro, <sup>that this was his policy. This is reflected in</sup> ~~not Kennedy,~~ from CIA records disclosed to me.

Does anyone really believe that once the Kennedy brothers were dead the CIA would admit undertaking those adventures on its own?