

12/28/94

Dear Mr. Weisberg:

It must be about 25 years since last we corresponded-- but I have kept up with your work all through those years. I am especially pleased with your quick response to Posner's Case Closed. I wrote several letters to editors rebutting favorable reviews of that book.

When the enclosed column by Michael Sneed appeared in the Sun-Times, I thought there would be some follow-up by someone, but not a peep anywhere that I saw. I wonder if Bob Vernon of Houston TV has something. The prisoner certainly has a great attorney--one of the very best.

My admiration for your work in the assassination case is unlimited. May the ~~the~~ truth prevail!

Pax, amor et felicitas...

Hank Dettinger



The JFK Affair . . .

The story of the century? Here we go again? Sneed hears James E. Files, 52, who is being held in protective custody at Stateville Correctional Center in Joliet, claims he was one of two people who shot and killed President John F. Kennedy.

(Illinois)

■ Files reportedly claims Lee Harvey Oswald was a patsy.

■ "It's the story of the century," said Bob Vernon, an independent TV producer from Houston, who told Sneed he videotaped a "confession" interview with Files on March 22 at Stateville. Vernon claims Files confessed he was one of two men who fired the last two shots at Kennedy. The other shooter was mobster Charles Nicoletti, who was murdered years ago, he says.

■ Nic Howell, a spokesman for the Department of Corrections, verified that Vernon was granted permission to interview Files . . . and that Files has been in voluntary protective custody since May, 5, 1992. "But I have no opinion one way or the other on what he says about the Kennedy assassination," Howell said. "That doesn't fall within our purview."

■ Vernon claims Files just wanted to tell the truth. "He's asked for nothing. Is getting nothing. He just wants to clear his conscience. So he let me tape him," said Vernon. "He wanted to leave his story behind for history. It's a one hour and 16 minute interview."

■ So what gives? Files, who has been serving a 50-year sentence for the 1991 attempted murders of two police officers from Round Lake Beach, has retained legendary attorney Julius Lucius Echeles, who is awaiting word from the Illinois Appellate Court on a post-conviction petition.

■ Sneed's query: So howcum Files wants to confess to a crime of murder, a charge that has no statute of limitations, that was committed in the state of Texas, which has the death penalty?

■ Vernon's reply: "It's really not admissible in court."

CHICAGO
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Dear Hank Gettinger,

1/1/95

Yes, I do have a faint recollection of our earlier correspondence.

I thought that sanctimonious stuffed shirt Elmer Gertz had died.

He hasn't changed, has not tried to learn anything.

The official files on the assassinations and those who regard themselves as Sherlock Holmes reborn abound in such confessions as your clipping refers to. I have not known a single one to be in any way real.

In the King case it was most common among those in jail or about to go there seeking some benefit from what they made up. The reasons others did that include escaping a bit from the four-walls hundra.

Thanks and best wishes,

Harold Dean