

4/12/69

Dear Dick (copy to John),

Your two mailings of the 9th and that of the 10th arrived this a.m. I have scanned them, for I haven't time for careful reading. They are too voluminous. In general, I am in complete accord. I have read John's letter also. Let me make a few suggestions and offer some opinions.

First, I assure you that my writing on this is not immediate, and my intended use is in AGENT OSWALD, of which, you may recall, I told you a third will be on his framing. I have much not related to the subject of your and John's interest on this, very, very much and some of the most significance material I or anyone else has dug up. I that I will not want technical writing, although I may well want the results of testing simply paraphrased.

Second, I have an advantage over you in having seen some of John's work. He is an excellent photographer and he has an excellent working knowledge of the weapon. Further, he is also in a position to do other kinds of testing. I recommend that we do all the initial testing among ourselves, for involving even friendly police involves those who, perforce, work regularly with the FBI. If John can make a deal with LOOK (I agree with your suggestion here and will have further suggestions if John is in accord), they will undoubtedly do their own photography and can do what we cannot dream of (no reflection on John. His stuff is good, as is his equipment). I have already suggested to John that he try and project the error on the short range to the actual distances involved because he has a contraption that locks his rifle in place. The targets should be effective.

You both must recognize that in this you are making a basic assault on the integrity, which also means the intentions, of the FBI, which also means Hoover. Is LOOK willing to do this?

I suggest that there be two formulations, the precise, careful, detailed scientific one, important in history, in present work and understanding, and as backstopping for the second, the popular one, the one that could interest the LOOK audience. I also believe that regardless of content, it is more readable and more comprehensible in terms of the framing of Oswald, where the inherent criticism will be no less severe but phrased differently, as, perhaps, "razier himself put it in New Orleans, I did only what I was told (shades of Auremburg!). Title: Oswald Was Framed". Subtitle, "For the first time, the ballistics proof". We interpret ballistics very broadly, for I believe the most comprehensible part of the whole thing remains the clip in the rifle when it was found. These are the pictures I will take as soon as possible. The rifle does not yet have the sight mounted for they had to get another tap.

If your citation of the Hoover letter to John is identical with what I cite in WHITWASH, okay, but I seem to recall a long, unsigned report on the searching for the source of the ammo that I also cited and might fit well here.

On the Archives pictures John wants taken, I suggest I go there, armed with his letter and supervise this. He and you spell it all out simply, I give the letter to the photog, etc. I can also get coloroids made, and I have the good one, with the Zeiss lens. John know what pictures I have had made for myself this way. He has seen them. I made this suggestion on "stretch": We have them use the camera providing the largest negative and with close-up lenses get as tight

as possible. Then I try and get the undeveloped negatives, have them developed and printed here, and send John the negatives for his own work, his own enlarging. I think that this way it might be possible to get a measurement that may prove your point. I'd also prefer not to leave copies of the pictures there for those so carefully checking on us to read our intentions.

If they go for this and want to go further, I have the best evidence yet that Oswald was framed with the ballistics stuff and they can have that for a second piece. However, I have every reason to believe I am not popular at LOOK, having been sent there by a Congressman in 1965. He sent me to a senior editor he knew. They were very embarrassed. I also clobbered Knebel, remember, and this meant them. Yet there is an extra editorial appeal in the three of us if John tells them his collaborators are a professor of classics and an experienced investigator-analyst without naming names to begin with. If LOOK does not go for this, I have a kind of entry to another publication and when I hear from them, which should be soon, I had planned to offer them the parts of my interest. I will not now and will wait to hear from the two of you. But what an unusual lineup: a pathologist, a classicist and an investigator, on a piece like this! Makes a good switch, and switches often have appeal in themselves.

I am in touch with people unknown to either of you. I expect one of these soon. He was close to the Kennedys. He has expressed an interest, delayed because of the excesses of one of the more unscrupulous "critics". I had planned to show him what interests me, for though he is an intellectual, he can also be impressed by the graphic. Unless I hear otherwise, I will assume it is okay to mention the cases as a generality, in confidence. Also, there is the possibility that despite the vigor of my letters, I may have a kind of federal rapport. This could be the kind of thing that could help there. For the moment I have no intention of in any way indicating it. But I think you can understand the possibilities for the future. I do not have reference to the FBI or its head. Rather, to professionals, like lawyers. I would not allude to the material of either of you without your assent. I wanted you to know this for the time when you might, if it develops, be what you might want.

My own schedule is that I spend every minute I can get working on suggestions for John in his suit. I have something very new on the spectro and other things, just got. It will be long and detailed. But there are major hunks out of every day. I have had to lay aside my own urgent legal needs to do this. I have a lawyer vs. Dell and there are things he wants and needs, and much is at stake. Also, I have urgent work needs on the helicopter suit, where I think I am getting a new lawyer, the old one having gone to the west coast. I have had to lay my own writing aside. Knowing what I have been working on, you know what this means and how little I want to. I have important new developments there I cannot now go into (No word from Lincoln).

I think what John writes about the difficulty of hand-loading that weapon is the second most telling thing photographically for a popular presentation. A run of pix there could be wow! It also is comprehensible to the lay mind, simple and easy to understand. Particularly if in the course of this we get similar damage. ...It has been so long since I read the testimony, but from somewhere I have the impression there was testimony saying that the bolt face in itself was as distinctive as a fingerprint and invariable marked the case. If not Frazier, could it have been Shaneyfelt? I may have omitted some things on which I should have commented, but before getting bogged down I wanted to get some kind of answer out on the chance I can get into town to mail this today.

Sincerely,