3/12/89

Dear Dave,

After finishing annotating Scheim's Contract On Amerixa I'd intended writing you further about it but immediately I had to get to other things and could not. Then Harry Livingstone sent me a copy of his and Groden's High Treason and the little time I've had for reading has me not quite 10 % of the way through it. By now any specifics I intended discussing with you are out of mind. I'll package it for mailing this afternoon and will mail it in the morning.

If you want to get High Treason you do that through the Grodens. Livingstone invented The Conservatory Press for the book, which he was able to publish because he found a printer who would trust him for $27,000. The grodens are at212 Emily Lane, Boothwyn, Pa. 19061. (Boothwyn is on the Delaware River a little south of Chester. Livingstone gives his address and that of Conservatory in Baltimore as Box ~~7149~~ 7149, 21218. Hardback ~~21.95~~ $21.95, paperback (quality format) $16.95. Including notes and index, 472 pp. They use some of the JFK autopsy pictures some of which at least they claim are fakes. I'm taking the time to annotate it.

Along with John H. Davis' Mafia Kingfish, my annotations are much more detailed than ordinarily would be required but in each I soon got the impresssion that there was gross ignorance of the established basic facts about the assassination and that whether or not deliberately, the authors lack integrity. That all argue theories is obvious as is what I regard as a clear fact, none of the theories is tenable when considered with what is now established fact.

I can't really say that Davis is deliberately dishonest, although a very strong case for this can be made easily. For example, in his slanderous invention about me, that the eminent immigration lawyer whose only connection with Marcello was representing him in the immigration cases, described as Marcello's top lawyer, spent much a summer and fall here rammaging in my files. He was never here, we never met, I think we never spoke and Davis knew this. We had only very slight and inconsequential correspondence and all I asked of him was how Ferrie got into it. (Wasserman approved hiring him as investigator on G. Wray Gill's recommendation.) He also thanks me for a "formal interview" when there was none and he doesn t list any in his lists of interviews. But I can visualize that ego paying no attention to what is not consistent with the theory with which he began and as regarding nonfiction as like a novel. I do not believe the story that they do not include footnotes be ause they made the book too large and cumbersome. The book began as a mafia story, not as an assassination book, and I think that after the contract Davis, having read or heard of Scheim, enlarged it with McGraw-Hill already hooked.(Like Epstein after he met Angleton and compamy.)

Scheim is as opinionated and egomaniacal as Davis but not as arrogant in spirit. I think he sees himself as a liberal. He is almost totally ignorant of any of the establish fact of the assassination to the point where he hasn't the foggiest notion of what Dealey Plaza is and he says that what he knows is the Triple Underpass is a single bridge and that Elm St. Goes under it and then turns into Stemmons. The actualities of the JFK assassination are of no concern to him and he is ignorant of them. This is an accurate reflection of his book in which the assassination is a mere incidental to be ignored while he argues his preconception. Like Davis he'd have no book if qualifications, conjectures and overwriting and tricky language were edited out. (True to a lesser degree far as I've gone in High Treason.) He is as imaginative as Davis in his inventions of what are called links, connections, associations and such other things as affiliations, without which he'd be able to say very little of what he says to pretend he is dealing with reality, which he doesn't outside of strictly mafia stuff.

As I may have told you, some of his misspellings of names lead me to believe that rather than reading original sources he recounts what he heard. He misspells Paul (M.) ~~Fuhrer~~ Rothermel (jr.) and also leaves the actual identification in doubt because there

are three men of that name, father, son and grandson.(He refers to the son, former FBI SA) He omits the second "e" in Liebeler. The consummate ego Nobel laureate Alvarez is Louis. he has Cartha as du Loach amd he cheats Ehrlichmann of an "n." He has no idexing of John and Robert Kennedy other than "passim." The Dallas police are not in his index at all. Those upon whom he depends as sources include Buchanan, Joesten and Penn Jones and I am pretty sure, Sybil Leek. (How did he miss Jean Dixon?) Roffman and I do not exist. Nor do my FOIA suits. Yes, he uses the ripoff/concoction of Model and Groden as a source. I think he cites much more than he could have read. And he pretends this is a new book, that the earlier version did not exist. That may have been Shapolsky's insistence but it is dishonest.He is unaware of the indecency of dedication to John and Robert Kennedy and in his claim to have their mantle around him as he carries on "their legacy."

Sublime in his self confidence and pretense of omniscience, high up there on his personal Olympus, he is unashamed in his writing that has all others ignorant on the subject and, secure in his ignorance and persuaded by his belief that hides from him the fact that he is writing a novel pretended to be nonfiction he is I think, totally unaware of the dishonesty of the whole mess and of his personal intellectual dishonesty. In this sense it is more disgusting to me that Davis is.

Last year Livingstone was again in touch with me, after a long lapse following my telling him I did not want to hear from him again over his paranoia and the outrageous accusations it inspire in him. (Usually he is a very nice, soft-spoken guy but he clearly has some kind(s) of emotional problems.) He told me their book had been contracted in Canada, my first knowledge that he and Groden were coauthoring a book I'm sure he alone wrote, and he was very optimistic. He asked me if I'd read a couple of chapters and I said I would. I found things wrong with them marked those places with paperclips because I assumed he would want that computer printout back, and wrote him about them. (All that paper in strips was a real probelm for me in reading and marking places because I have to sit other than at my desk for such things.) He phoned me, he said from Canada, and told me that it was too late to make any corrections, that the book was set in type and as I now recall, was to have been out for the anniversary. (Before too long I heard from him that the deal was off.) I remember one of my concerns, not knowing anything about the book other than what those several chapters about the phonying of medical evidence said. I told him I was used to being plagarized and had no real complaint about that, that he was presenting what was uniquely my work as his and that this would or could redound against them. More with Groden because Lil and I are godparents of his firstborn. He assured me this was not so and sent me notes that meant little in addressing this. Now I find that he has done precisely this fairly frequently, and that the notes never addressed this. I don't really care about the ripoffs but I report this because I do question the honesty of the writing fairly often in the first about 50 pages.(I'm sure Groden had nothing at all to do with the writing and I'd be surprised if he read the ms. with much attention to fact.)

His depeddable and oft-cited sources are as probative as Scheim's and where I've checked him out, quite infrequently, my checking raises questions about honesty. I have this noted on the pages. (Much harder to annotate because he sent me the papernack and I have to annotate while holding the book in my left hand.)

As an example of dishonesty that cannot be accidental or from ignorance. he makes several mentions of th Clark panel report and of the autopsy doctors' testimony before HSCA all without regard and often in contradiction to the meaning of what he suppresses, their own report after examining the pictures and X-rays in 1966. He infrequently mentions in a note what the one time I checked is "Postmortem" but he is aware of the book and its content as he has to be to crib from it. I have that report in facsimile in it. Yet he says they never saw the pictures or X-rays until shwon by HSCA in 1978. This has to be regarded as a deliberate lie to advance his argument. He can hardly be ignorant enough not to know he lied when he claims that before him nobody ever interviewed any of the porsectors about anything related to the evidence. Whether or not he was then in Baltimore and saw the Sun article he cannot know anything about the subject without knowing that first Richard Levine and then AP interviewed Boswell about his body chart and both filed

major stories that got major attention throughout the world. (I think that Boswell or others acting for him or with him got AP in on it when they were so satisfied with how the Levine interview went because AP beat the Sun with the story and Levine, who I'd primed for what he did, accused me of leaking it to AP, which is baseless.) Moreover, I am pretty sure I went into this in Post Mortem and know I discussed it at some length with Groden. (He did his original photographic work for me and under my more or less direction, brought it here weekends and we went over it then.) So this can't be regarded as an accidental and unintended lie. Yet I am confident that Groden is indifferent to such things and I can believe that in some ways Harry is unaware of what he has actually done. I don't know if it has yet dawned on Groden that Model, who wrote the paperback they coauthored, ripped it off from me. (I wish we could do an oral history on the details of that but remind me some time to do a memo on it. The guy he was then associated with/Weisberg/ even tried to stick the costs of it on me but that he didn't get away with.)

Livingstone's presentation is effective and impressive, I'm sure without question to those who know nothing about the subject and I'm sure will be to those who do not realize how little they know about it. But in some respsects it will be to all of us and we will have considerable difficulty identifying what is without question real and substantive and what is based on what isn't. I have, for example, no question about the argument that there was a head shot from the front. I indicate that in Post Mortem. But by now I'm lost in what he arged so intesively and specifically. However, I do not believe there was any alteration of the head injuries as they argue and I never have. They disagree with Lifton on the bodysnatching and say they checked it out and decided it was impossible. My reasoning is simple: if anyone were to fake evidence they would fake it to serve their necessary purposes. What was faked does not destroy the official story any less than what I regard as unfaked photographic evidence and X-Rays. I think that what I did with this in Part II of Post Mortem leaves nothing at all of this evidence as support of the official mythology and destroyed it. I remember Sylvia Meagher's comment when she read the rough draft, which is what I published: tour de force. So why go to the trouble and run the risk of an unnecessary leak or one that does the opposite of what is intended? There is, of course, the possibility, and the Livingstone arguement does not include any allegation of when the photos were faked, that this was much later, after the controversy about the Report. It likewise served no purpose then because it did not and could not hide the fact that the assassination was beyond the capability of any one man. I am not persuaded by the photographic evidence Groden present of alteration of the one picture addressed this way far as I've gone.

Those who theorize and present theories as fact have a distinct advantage given the prevailing media attitude, as long as they do not criticize the FBI too harshly at all. The more their work is like a novel the more exciting it appears to those who know nothing about fact and aren't interested in it and those who may welcome a chance to write other than critically about assassination books.

Best,

Harold