

HSCA
Dear Mr. Swanson,

1/12/78

Please excuse the delay in responding to your 1/3 and the probable brevity of this response. If we were not snow and iced in I'd be in federal district court in Washington on one FOIA case and with an affidavit for my lawyer in another. This would be the third affidavit in two days, which gives you an idea of why I've not been able to respond sooner.

As soon as I rest from shoveling my way to where a brand new and I'm afraid very stiff and recalcitrant snow blower is I must try to clear a lane as long as a football field before it can turn to slush, which the blower can't handle. Or I.

I'm particularly sorry about the delay because you have done what I'd have regarded as impossible, come up with some new missing evidence basic to the crime. I was aware of the continued holding of the hat and of the history of the rest of the clothing but I slipped up, along, I believe, with everyone else, on the hat. I am not aware of any testing of it of anything of its subsequent history.

Worse, I should have been because we are still in court on the granddaddy of all FOIA and JFK cases, for the scientific testing. Now this should be within that request. When he reads a carbon I'll get the opinion of my lawyer, in Meser, in D.C. I'm certain the original request includes the testing of the clothing. I'm inclined to guess that the FBI will say that visual examination reflected no need to test it because there was no visual damage to it. Off the top of the head I suspect that blood testing (typing) was indicated but then I know the FBI was staying away from as much of the corpus delicti as it dared - more than I'd have dared were I Director.

It would be good to see the hat to be sure it had no holes of any size or kind.

I suggest that your formulation relating to a possible delayed Connally reaction should be in terms of greater delay rather than delay. The expert opinion was that delay could have been up to two seconds, with dispute about striking of bone shortening this.

While I've not had time to examine them yet I have about 25,000 pages of the Dallas "bulky" files, which should include all Lab work of any kind and compared by container size about 5/8 of that of FBIHQ bulky files. If there is anyone through whom you would like access, you are welcome to examine them. But I have not seen any reference to the JBC hat and thus am not optimistic about finding anything there.

If you get any constructive response from the committee it will surprise me. They also never investigated the crime and are not about to confess it. If you do hear, please surprise me.

Good luck and best wishes,

Harold Weinberg

Watson & Swanson, P.C.
Attorneys at Law

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January 3, 1979

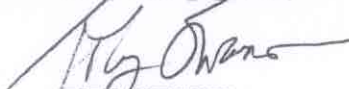
Mr. Harold Weisberg, Publisher
Rural Route #12, Old Receiver Road
Frederick, Maryland 21701

Dear Mr. Weisberg:

I am enclosing a copy of a letter I wrote to Mr. Cornwell which I feel is self-explanatory. Since you probably have as much knowledge as anyone concerning the assassination, I would appreciate knowing if you are aware of any information on the hat which could help me resolve this problem. I still have a great deal of trouble with the concept of the magic bullet, especially if the new evidence will indicate it was fired at Frame 190, especially in light of Mr. Connally's reactions much later.

I understand you may have been the source of origin for the weight questions propounded by Mr. Lardner to Mr. Stokes on television recently, and it occurred to me that possible hat perforations could add to the other "grainy" problems. I am looking forward to receiving your White Wash series shortly.

Very truly yours,


TOBY SWANSON

TS:cjv
Enclosure

PHIL WATSON
TOBY SWANSON
S. JOSEPH RUBENSTEIN
CLARENCE A. STUBBS
January 3, 1979

Watson & Swanson, P. C.

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Mr. Gary Cornwell
Assistant Counsel
Select Committee on Assassinations
U.S. House of Representatives
3369 House Office Building
Annex to Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Cornwell:

I appreciate the fact that you must be very busy trying to put together the final report for the public. However, I have a question which to the best of my knowledge has never been answered and it may or may not be of any importance.

I did write to former Governor Connally regarding any possible examination that may have been made of his Stetson hat after the shooting. As you know, he continued to hold the hat in his right hand long after the evidence indicates he had been hit. Perhaps an examination of the hat would indicate possible fragment holes and residue which could be traced to one of the bullets or fragments. If nothing is found, perhaps there would be markings from a closed fist or gripping to explain why the hat was not dropped at the time the wrist was shattered. In either event, it does not appear that the hat was among the personal items of Mr. Connally which went with Representative Gonzalez and apparently, Governor Connally does not know what happened to his hat since he requested that I contact you regarding this information.

Any light you could shed upon this question would be greatly appreciated. Also, any information that would be available as to when and how your final report and supporting evidence could be purchased, it would be greatly appreciated. A business reply envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Very truly yours,

TOBY SWANSON

TS:cjv
Enclosure

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