

6/1/75

Dear Ms. Stone,

Letters like yours, which is more welcome than most and quite welcome in its own, confront me with problems I'll try to explain and I hope you will understand.

The amount of work in which I am involved leave me very little time despite the length of the days I work. I thus hope you will work your way through the typos and in return I'll write you at a greater length.

"Assassination as a form of political change" is a good topic for a PhD candidate. I would suggest that you think it through on your own with my suggestion that it is a bit restrictive.

I have often address an aspect not identical with this. I wrote a long book on it, could not get it published and finally had part appear as Frame-Up. If I found a PhD candidate who wrote well, I then told myself, and would consider doing the thesis in a form that could make a book, I'd share the work in return for a share of the book.

That particular book, like all I do, was necessarily overly hasty. I wrote it over a period of time, with major intrusions into that time. Often I had lost my train of thought. However, I think you will find much of substance in it.

This is not by any means the only assassination subject that could make both a good thesis and a successful, worthwhile book. I've started a couple and have much of the research done. Hint if you know any others, especially after you read this transcript. I have virtually all the transcripts now and am preparing to file still another suit for the little I don't have. They are a large typewriter paper box full and, of course, I have much that is relevant to their content. This particular subject could be illuminated with sensational documentation I have.

I owe you some cautions and I ask your open-mindedness because I'll be telling you a decidedly minority and unpopular series of truths.

Almost all who have achieved attention on any of the political assassinations are at best undependable. One recently published, Howard Roffman (Presumed Guilty, Fairleigh Dickinson Univ. press) is a conspicuous exception. He has not gotten attention because his publisher is almost killing the book. This is not to make a paranoid suggestion. Publishers do crazy things, natural for them. It is a fine work whose chief merit is that it encapsulates what almost without exception was published but incomprehensibly, sensibly and with a fine focus. Understand that I am prejudiced about Howard, who is almost like a son to me, as over the years other students have been. This does not prejudice my evaluation of his excellent work in the book and outside of it. I cannot speak too highly of him or of Sylvia Meagher's out-of-print Accessories After the Fact (Bobbs-Merrill).

In varying ways and degrees, doctrinal and factual, I am critical of just about all the other ~~written~~ books adverse to the official mythology. If you want, there can be time for this in the future. My purpose is to guard the uninited against the pitfalls of a tricky field where official obfuscation and worse combined with what ranges from the crassest commercial motivation to plain insanity.

The Boston conference sponsored by the Cambridge ripoff artists is an example of the worst. These people, regardless of how they may appear to be personally, are utterly unconscionable, unprincipled and ignorant. Their intellectual and moral copout is that they do no more than ~~repeat~~ repeat what others have done and said. Their presentations have been knowingly false. They find accuracy a vice. And over a period of time they have practised and perfected to the point where they make an attractive and professional presentation, which makes them all the more dangerous

because they are more persuasive. You'll be able to evaluate my evaluation when you see the Rockefeller Commission report, now due out the end of this week.

If you are at all influenced by them or their like you are done, your work will be bad and in the end you'll be ashamed.

What the subject needs is honesty and solid work, not exploitation.

The problem this makes for someone like you is that to begin with you have no specific knowledge and no basis except common sense for discrimination.

I realize, of course, that you also have no basis for taking my word on this.

You refer to "the possibilities of a political coverup surrounding" the JFK assassination.

I think you will find this more than amply established and not in my work alone if mostly in it. You'll be repeating and have little possibility of more if this becomes your focus. I think the field offers much more in every way. Covering up is, of course, essential to the purposes that can be served by any political assassination.

Aside from Howard's mine happens to be the only work available outside libraries. If you decide to do this kind of dissertation I think you should consider a mature and sophisticated determination of what books you'll read. My opinion is that you can waste an enormous amount of time this way, time you could better spend, for example, in some of my files. (I will not lend them out, based on long and depressing experience, but I do make them available here to those who display seriousness of purpose and in general a responsible approach, whether I agree with it or not.

No, there is the O'Toole book. It is a commercialization that where it is in contact with reality is repetitious. The little solid material in it is from other sources. And there is little. It and Thompson's are overt commercializations. They are also entirely undependable. The men and their books.

I hope this can be helpful to you.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

bcc: she is Nancy Stephanie Stone,
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