

Dear Dick,

Bernabei

July 30, 1969

Sorry to take so long to write, but many things have been happening, and your correspondence called for a bit of thinking on my part so I had to wait until I had time to sit down with my volumes.

First of all, I am sorry about the confusion over the things I sent you which needed returning. Practically all of them were yours to keep, and although you may have already wasted money making copies, I am returning them all to you. The only thing I needed, and which caused my request for a return, was the stuff on Rose. Believe it or not, the original to some of those memos has never been found, and for some reason they have a habit of getting lost, so I panicked when I went to my Rose file and found it empty. These items will be coming to you under separate cover.

As a note to your earlier suggestion on HHH, Humphrey's oldest son, who is 20, is a student at Hamline College in St. Paul, where I have already made two big lectures which attracted much attention. This coming Sept. 11 I will address the incoming freshman class. Eventually I hope to reach him.

Your letter of July 11: My comments on the Train in the Last Train, and the Nix film, are based on the pictures (especially the integrated images) presented by Itek in their analysis of the Nix film. The train is unquestionably there, in my mind, and I think that anyone would agree were they to see the photos. Fred presented his argument, in both the article and the set of 80 slides, very poorly. Itek proved that the train was there and provided good photos of it, and that is the strength of the argument. On the West tape: I heard it the first time it was played. Mutual news used it long before anyone else, and to my knowledge it has not been edited, unless it was before the first usage, which is unlikely. Believe it or not, good old Dave Kroman woke me up with a phone call that night within minutes of the shooting and before there were any news reports of it, and told me that it was all over and I should head for the border. I did not believe him at first, turned on my radio, and got nothing. When the first account came on, I called Vince and talked for about 10 minutes, and then called Harold and talked for about 20-30 minutes. Then I called Penn. It took Harold a while to find it on the radio or TV as I remember. I still don't know how Kroman knew so quickly and wish that I had a timing of it. On LHO to Mexico, I am familiar with the allegation that LHO crossed by car with some other people, but think that it was not verified in the end. I was referring to the fact that the actual border crossing documents seem to indicate travel by car and differ from those of the people on the bus. On Lifton, enclosed is my last letter to Paul Hoch # (please keep everything I send unless I otherwise mark it) which will give you some more ideas as to what has been going on. Harold is not over-reacting at all, especially given the fact that I probably have seen only the tip of the iceberg. I regard Dave's mental condition as a great loss, because he is bright, hard working, and could have made big contributions, and instead he sits on what he says is info which can break the case wide open for years. (According to Fred, since 1965! And the last projected date for completion of his book is late this year or early next, from what Dave told me. And although he claims to have fully investigated LHO as agent and the military, he has just gotten the ONI file on LHO and the GA files! The latter was quite shocking in that it indicates that he has done little archival research at all.) On films and photos, I would appreciate loan of the three frames of Weigman (negatives) since, while I have slides, I would like stills. Bear in mind that I still have a copy of the Muchmore in B&W, plus UPI newsfilm from inside the motorcade cars, plus the killing of LHO, plus Bob Gibbons remake of the Z film from the volumes # which you can have for \$10. It's 16mm which means a disadvantage in getting a projector, but well worth having. Fred is quite excited about it. Fred, by the way, is getting slides made from the Bell and Hughes, which Lifton got on loan from Tink with a promise that the stuff wouldn't get out. Fred is too important to Dave for Dave to withhold it from him, but at present it doesn't look like they will be sending either slides or film out. Dave was angry at Fred for mentioning those movies to you, and # wants the whole thing kept quiet. I will check with Masterman on the rest.

I do not have Nix but am hoping to find a way of getting it. Agreed on Mondale, but I think that one of the most important things I have learned from Harold is that it is important to make a public record of inaction, and that sometimes the very people you should write to are those who are in important places and who are bound not to act. I am popular out here, and just wait till those people have to live with their inaction. No longer, after a reasonable period and a deliberated decision, will I answer that their congressmen are just uninformed. This is not my objective, but this will be the worst that can happen. I will try to follow up Ceil Van Leuven. Thanks for the stuff from Flamonde. The stuff on the weight of 399 is important. Best of luck--they will undoubtedly know what you are after. I am not sure whether or not I asked Marion Johnson about it last summer, but I recall doing so and getting a promise of a reply which never came. It has always intrigued me and I discussed it with Lane in the Fall of 1966, which, of course, led nowhere. I asked Vince about it once, and he said no one had checked it. True to form, however, I did not do what you and Harold are doing--persistent inquiry. One of these days I will either write memos when I think of serious questions, or learn to follow them up. For god's sake don't let them stop you with flak on this one; I think that you have them on it, even though the few grains mean very little when compared with the 1968 Panel review revelation of metal in the neck. The thing you got from Roffman on 399 was incredible.

I agree with your comments on the Olson rifle. The speed of the camera at 18.3 is a crucial question which Harold has often raised. There is another facet of the speed tests which people forget, and that is, what is the standard deviation of the results. The results of the tests of the speed of the camera get very little treatment in the WR or volumes. I will pass this on to Olson, who I'm sure, will appreciate it. By the way, did I ever ask you if you would send him copies of your memos on the rifle and cases? Oh, right, you did send them and he commented on them if I remember correctly. Since you have already spent the money to copy his paper, I will not return it and will instead send it to another critic.

Your letter of July 16: I looked at the CE's and agree that it looks like you are right insofar as I have the power to observe. Since Frazier's testimony gives the exact number of diameters that those things were blown up (III, 424 B=544 at 90 diameters; CE 563-544 at 70 diameters; p.427, CE564 is at 100 diameters, and CE565 at 80 diameters), it should be possible to arrange a photographic test of your hypothesis by printing those things out at the proper magnification onto film, and see if they are superimposable. I will look into getting this done some way. If you are right then Frazier's goose is cooked and Nichols will have some big ammo. They can't weasel out the way Hoover did for them with the switching of frames 314 and 315 in the volumes.

Your letter of July 18: Thanks for the Thunderbolt address. On the possibility of a fragment going through the base of the skull and going all the way down into the neck, I checked on this some years ago. This is one of the big disagreements Tink and I had, although at the time I didn't know how big. Tink was interested in my work, because I was the only critic who had worked a great deal on the head wounds and who knew the neuro-anatomy necessary, and was also interested because I had suggested a double-head hit to Vince prior to knowledge of the head movement, based on the damage to the brain and skull. I checked with a forensic pathologist with 30 years experience, plus many other people familiar with head wounds, and all said that it was just about impossible for a bullet fragment to have gone down there, unless it was fired straight down. Medical people rarely, if ever, say "impossible"; but they clearly meant impossible.

First of all, the thickest parts of the skull are down there, and secondly, just to get there it would have had to penetrate the top of the skull, the membranes around the brain, the brain itself (which is very dense), and then the bottom of the skull. Secondly, there is no opening which goes down, which exception of the Foramen Magnum, through which the spinal cord goes into the spinal column. If it went through that, then it would be inside the column which is a pretty hard piece of bone to break out of. Then there is the very dense neck it has to go through to get down to the lower neck. The fractures in the base of the skull, which I have predicted publicly for years, are suggestive of a massive explosion, probably from an exploding shell, and are just what one would expect if such a shell were used. As for those two tears inside the brain found in that coronal section, these are just where they would occur if they were caused by compression due to an explosion. Remember that one of them partially connected to the third ventricle, and the other (although they don't say so), was in the vicinity of the lateral ventricle on one side, and that these areas could be greatly disrupted by pressure since they are the weak spots. Those tears could have been just that: tears. I don't rule out, of course, the possibility that there is a great deal more damage inside the brain.

I should have done a memo on this long ago. I communicated most of it to Thompson over the phone, and the rest in letters. Originally I was supposed to be doing the medical appendix to his book, but I ran into time problems, and had to get experts who could be quoted. Eventually, Wecht did it. Wecht's appendix, while excellent, did not do what I was going to do, and I was angry when I saw what a poor job Tink did in the text. Had I known that he would just include the stuff in the text, I would have done a much better job of it than he did, but at the time I was trying for an irrefutable scientific proof rather than just various arguments presented in the text itself. The biggest problem with my analysis, from his point of view, was that rather than helping him take a fragment out the throat as he originally expected, in the end I refuted it. Ray and Sylvia were after me to do the memo a long time ago, and perhaps someday I will do it. I really feel that an excellent case can be made for a double head hit, with an exploding shell from the front, in terms of direct injury and contre-coup damage. This ironically, could be the reason for the scarcity of info about the left cerebral hemisphere, since if there were a good pattern of contre-coup damage there, it would be extremely convincing for a hit from the right front, and medically count as quite persuasive evidence.

Well, I'm going to close now. Those other items are coming to you under separate cover. Best wishes.

PS: Under separate cover I am sending you copies of the Weaver photo and a blowup of the windows made from it. These have not been "fixed" which means that they should be kept out of the light except when in use. If left out on a desk in the light for a year, they will be completely faded, but they will last many years if just taken out when in use.