

6/22/70

Dear Dick,

Howard read and enjoyed your letters of the 15 and 16 today. He is here and has indexed my Archives and Justice files and is beginning SS. He is finding it interesting and worthwhile and I am going to find it very helpful and we will all have access this way. Ultimately it will be typed, but not at this moment, for none of us has the time.

He is a very disappointed young man, for he was looking forward to going into federal court with me tomorrow, hair and jeans and all. I think he is almost sorry I won again! In a way, Bud and I both are.

Mary is also getting the Nix and Wuchmore.

In your next dissertation on goats, be so kind as to specify sex. It is only the billygoat who is so pungeant, and the reason is fascinating.

We have carried the shirt slits and the shirt far forward. More when it is definitive. You should now have my memo on the picture I got and the letters carrying this request forward.

I do not mean to suggest I believe there had to be or was a shot later than 313. I merely mean we cannot ignore the possibility.

Neck fragments: at the moment I am persuaded they were neither that small or in that precise area.

Your points about the water-jar and the apple are interesting.

If Sprague has someone named "Hazel" with him, he passed along to Sk the phone slip. I have Skolnick's file, pre-suit copy, before he removed this part.

Bradley: I have no reason to believe he was there, none to believe he would have involved himself in this kind of thing, but this has nothing to do with Braden, about whom I know little. The man who wrote the letter I sent you is a former FBI agent with good current contacts in the key office.

Negative arrived today also.

Howard will write you on his return home. I just asked him if he has anything to say. He is too deep in various files to even think of anything. He's a great boy and is being very helpful.

Best regards and good orals luck,

16 June 1970

Harold:

re Sprague:

In correspondence Sprague indicated that he favors Sk's activities, but I got no notion that Sprague had passed anything to Sk, or even that he was in touch with him. Sprague had a copy of the suit, so I guess that he at least wrote for that. I have no knowledge of other contact.

I feel sure that Sprague did not give Sk the Bradley/Braden association, since Sprague thinks that one of the "tramps" is Bradley.

What is your opinion re Bradley/Braden? You sent me the letter from Hunt's assistant indicating Braden is Bradley, but you did not comment. I regarded the letter as authoritative and worth serious consideration as indicating the truth. Is that attitude warranted?

Dick

16 June 1970

Dear Howard (co. Weisberg):

Although I have foresworn correspondence until after I have taken my oral and done some additional thesis writing, I must congratulate you for the revelations in your most recent letters.

A.L. Baker/Couch: This is splendid. I have no criticism, but one comment. You did not take into consideration Billard's photo of CSBD taken within a few seconds after the last shot. Would this not be important in your determination of the location of Camera Car 3 after the shooting?

Even without that, however, I think your piece conclusive.

Slippings from Skolnick: The Richmond editorial serves more to convince me that if all else fails in keeping the lid on the truth, the authorities are going to pull a communist conspiracy out of the hat. Having finally disclosed that they were indeed covering up a conspiracy, they will then not only justify their actions, but will even heap themselves with praise for having maintained national security by avoiding a war with Russia, or Cuba, or what have you.

~~XXXXXXXX~~ I cannot imagine what else they can do but encourage conspiracy notions and then show it was communist inspired.

The other article merely shows Sk's lust for publicity. That devil can cause us ruin.

Neck fragments: The minute quantity of metal still makes no sense to me. I suppose that you might consider that a soft-nose bullet entered the back, and was removed before the X-rays were taken. That leaves, however, the important question what happened to the bullet that wounded the front of the neck. I firmly believe that a bullet did enter from the front, and tend to consider other factors in light of what I read as that fact.

I still think they are hiding something about neck fragments. Maybe not the panel docs, who did not see all the evidence, and do not know all that went on. But surely somebody is holding back.

Lifton six: I am most anxious to see what L sends you. If you let me have them long enough to make slides, I'll share the cost with you. In time I shall get the Six and Luchmore from Gary, but I would like to have copies of the other things, too.

Lung bruises, etc. You have already fully convinced me that Humes lied re the chest tubes. It's good, though, to gather as much corroborative material as possible.

I do not have full confidence in the conjecture that I sent you, that Humes lied merely to help cover up charade with Perry over front-neck wound. It's the sort of explanation that will do for want of anything better, and I do think it reasonable. But it's best not to cleave solidly to it. Consider it the best available explanation, but try to think of others, too. Humes stuck his neck way out by committing perjury on this matter, and I wonder ~~what~~ why it was that important to him.

Bothering Wecht: Harold's advice was good when he gave it, and should be considered in the future, but presently I think you can rightly disregard it somewhat. Wecht's response seems more than polite

compliment. Moreover, he seems sincerely to invite you to stay in touch. Use good judgment in determining when to write him; stick to important things. But don't be too reluctant to consult him merely on the basis of Harold's cautions.

The form of your letter is excellent in that it asks questions that can be answered briefly. Letter reading is not much of a problem, but having to write long explanations might turn him off. Above all, don't argue with him or try to convince him of anything. You seem to know this, anyway, but I set it forth as a reminder.

Skull matter: Your comments in 2 June letter to me are good. Can we agree, however, that 2313 shows a piece of skull matter flying upward and forward of J&P head? I do not know whether a shot from the front could produce that effect; I think not, but perhaps it is possible. I know that if you shoot a closed jar-full of water, pieces of glass may fly back toward the shooter. I do not know whether situation with head is analogous. Similarly, I once shot an apple with .38 magnum at about 10 yards and had pieces of the apple splatter to.

Congratulations for winning the scholarship. And good luck.

Still,

Dick

15 June 1970

Dear Harold/~~Harold~~ Howard

I write quickly what may be my last letter to you for the next few weeks. My oral exam is scheduled for 24 June, and I need every minute for preparation. Please continue counting me in, though; I'll answer urgent stuff.

Nichols 399 picture: I can't comment on this until I see it. I am interested, so please let me have a look at it when you can.

*to HR* Other 399 pix: It may be that one of the pix taken for Thompson shows the base, but I doubt that it is close-up and imagine that it ~~contains~~ is non-informative. Archives showed me Thompson color photos, but all were at long distance compared to what we have in other photos. They show a hand holding the bullet. If one shows the base, it will have to be greatly enlarged, and may not show the detail that is necessary. Worth trying, though.

Harold's was the first close-up of 399 base. Taken after pix were made for Thompson.

Latest base photo not helpful in determining what the "powder" is. We need a close approximation of photo-4; so far, none has approached it in clarity.

*to HR* 00- buckshot: I did misunderstand what you proposed by the analogy. I now think it appropriate, but not properly phrased.

Consider the position of the Markland docs. Before learning the results of the autopsy most (if not all) considered the front-neck wound a wound of entrance. Secret Service "interviewed" them (Perry, for the most part), and disclosed that autopsy docs concluded it was an exit wound. The autopsy determination is normally the last word in such matters, and Markland docs were influenced by their faith in the integrity of autopsies. They were driven forcibly from their determination that the wound was entrance. Placed in their situation, I or any responsible person would have to go along with the autopsy. Boiled down to essentials, what the autopsy docs say is this: "Very well, it was a wound of exit that has all the visible characteristics of a wound of entrance."

Your writing invites the conclusion that the Markland docs first got the wrong impression of the wound. I am convinced that their impression corresponds with the truth.

I can't make a full estimate, both because I don't now have time, and because this bit of writing has to be seen in relation to ~~what~~ other things you are writing on this.

*to HR* Missing fragment: from cracks in 399 base? I know that you are not kidding. Neither am I: NO, NO, NO!

*to HR* Lifton: If you get these pix, please let me see them. \$14 for Nix copy? I am not sure, but I think Lifton bought this from Gary for \$10 (I'm pretty sure. If so, somebody is being had.)

*to HR* Hair: I have not the least doubt that Harold meant nothing objectionable or suggestive by sending you cartoon (which I have not seen). If Harold's banter hit a sensitive nerve, then I think perhaps the length of your hair is more important to you than it should be. I take great delight in long hair grown for reasons of vanity ( simply because the wearer thinks it looks or feels good that way), but am most impatient with those who put it forth as symbol of something or

other. It's difficult enough struggling with problems that stem from reality; it's absurd to invite problems inspired by symbolism. By now you may have come to the conclusion that I object to long hair. I don't; I love it. But I do object to nonsensical conformity, which I think is the inspiration for much of the long hair that I see.

I recently started letting my own hair grow long, but last week had it cut short again because my old fishing hat would no longer fit comfortably on my head-- and I need that hat, though from 5 years of unwashed perspiration it smells like a goat's ass. I shouldn't say "unwashed", but "unwashable". My wife "accidentally" threw it in with a load of wash recently. My hat was unaffected, but she had to re-wash the clothes. *She even had to wash the washing machine!*

More on hair. There are certain times when, for purely tactical reasons, short hair is better. McCarthy's "children's crusade" know this-- they have used it and will use it to very great advantage for the detriment of those whom they disfavor. It's better to lose hair temporarily than to lose an opportunity permanently. Hair grows back, but some opportunities come only once.

to HR

Shirt slits: This is excellent information. I suggest that you pursue further and further. First step is to get a better copy of the exhibits. If what you have shows a slit not mentioned by Frazier, that is ample grounds for demanding to see the shirt and getting your own pictures.

Consider the possibility of the tears occurring by more than one means; i.e., started by one means and finished by another. Example: a small hole (or holes) made with a knife is elongated by tearing with the fingers.

to HW

Mayhew: Good luck with him, Harold. He wants copies of the published pictures that I offered him, but has not yet sent money. When I get it, I'll make them for him.

to

Shot after Z313: Lacking any evidence of this, but having strong indications that 313 was the last shot, I am strongly inclined to discount the possibility that a shot was fired after Z313. My recollection is that witnesses are unanimous that JFK's head blew up at the last shot. Although I don't like to cite witnesses in some other matters, they usually are very accurate in determining "before" and "after" events. I am not unwilling to consider the possibility of a shot after Z313, but I think some substantial indication is required before it can be taken seriously.

to HW

Rankin/Redlich: In time, I'll look at the N.Y. Times index and find out if the Times reported what you want to see. If clippings are important to you, and I should forget, please remind me. It's not much trouble for me to get copies.

Have to stop now. Thanks for your good wishes on my orals.

*Dick*