

19 May 1970

to Weisberg/Roffman

Dear Harold/Howard:

A time of great urgency in the final preparation of my thesis and some other important matters is upon me, so please forgive if my replies to your generous correspondence is brief and sometimes elliptical:

Mayhew: No reply as yet. I am not bothered by giving hand-outs to millionaires. If things go good, it may give me the opportunity to work for the benefit of others than myself. I can part without trouble with the things that I have that might interest him. He does not appear to have anything that interests me, and I myself-- for myself-- have no great need of his money. But gaining his confidence, and letting him know that I can point the way to things that he values may make it possible for me to steer any money that he wants to spread on assassination projects.

I do not think this is the least unwise. I acknowledge the risk that I will give him something he may value and get nothing valuable in return. But the loss to me is small-- a day of time and slight effort-- and the potential gain is great: the ability to suggest who is trustworthy and who is not, who has material of interest and who does not.

Had I recommended you to Mayhew in earl correspondence, my mail would have ended in his waste paper basket, for he probably knows me less well than he knows you.

I interpreted his letter as trying for a handout, not as offering to buy anything.

If I get for him some of what he may want, then I may be in a position to influence him. Now, however, I think it impossible.

"Further fragmentation of fragment" I interpret this as implying that a whole bullet struck some object and fragmented, sending a fragment into victim, and that the fragment then burst in the victim. I think it extremely unlikely. Velocity id the most important determinant in fragmentation. Velocity of fragment would be considerably reduced after prior fragmentation of whole bullet. Depending on its size, fragment might penetrate, but I doubt whether it would burst on contact with flesh or bone.

Example: Once I was hunting woodchucks with a guy who was using .222 (a .22 cal. center-fire varmint). He took a shot a a chuck sitting in a pile of rocks about 100 yards away. Missed the chuck but hit a nearby rock. Examination afterward indicated that the bullet had burst on contact with the rock, and that fragments were cast in the place where the chuck was sitting. We were almost certain that chuck had been hit by fragment(s), although not seriously (if at all) wounded. He ran off in healthy fashion, and we found no blood among his path.

6.5 mm frag: One more suggestion-- something that I overlooked in writing about cast bullets.

Consider the possibility of a true dum-dum bullet. By that I mean a military round that has been doctored-- ~~xxxxxxx~~ the copper jacket filed off at the nose, or an "X" filed deeply across the nose so as to make the bullet liable to defatation. Some people erroneously refer to any expanding or fragmenting bullet as a dum-dum; strictly that refers only to a doctored military round-- a full jacketed bullet whose jacket has been defaced at the bullet nose.

Once the jacket is seriously disturbed at the nose, dum-dums become very unstable; one of sufficient velocity may burst fairly easily.

Bieberdorf: Bieberdorf's "treatment" of LHO before he was put in the ambulance may be forgivable under excited circumstances and the erroneous impression that LHO was dead. Those mitigating circumstances cannot apply to what happened in the ambulance, however. Heart massage and resuscitator had the alleged intent of reviving the dead. In the ambulance "the dead" was alive and literally kicking to stop the "tratment". There was no need for massage or resuscitation when it was known the patient was alive. Any half-assed quack would know that such abusive handling of the patient could do nothing but aggravate his wounds. I find it difficult to interpret such activity except as a deliberate attempt to finish the work that Ruby started. A girl scout earning a merit badge in first aid would have done LHO more good than Bieberdorf if she had done no more than stand back and scream.

I indicated to Harold that cyanosis takes time to set in. When Perry first saw LHO, he was "very blue". Was he not at all blue in the ambulance? If he was (and I think he must have been) Bieberdorf, who was pumping oxygen into LHO's lungs must have known that he was not getting oxygen though his blood. The speed and quantity of internal bleeding must have been manifest in LHO's color. If oxygen is getting to the lungs, as B knew it was, and the patient still turns blue, then B cannot have avoided knowing about the bad bleeding. Giving the patient external heart massage was tantamount to ~~xxxx~~ ~~sitting on his chest~~ playing musical chairs on his chest. I try, but I cannot find an innocent explanation for any of LHO's treatment before he got to Parkland.

Perry says they were so close to saving him; don't you wonder if they just might have brought him over to this side of the threshold of life if LHO had been treated by my screaming girl scout rather than by Bieberdorf? I think it unwise to speculate over questions that we know are no longer answerable, but it gnaws at my gut.

I think it possible boldly to assert, though, that LHO could hardly have received worse treatment, unless it were by someone who did not care to disguise his intent.

Ray-suit: congratulations! Can't say more now. Will later.

More will follow when I get a chance. I may have to go to Cornell for a few days this week to iron out some thesis matters. Will write as soon as I can.

Still,

Dick