

7/17/69

Dick and Gary,

Dick's 7/14 is fantastic, not only in connection with the pretenses of John's suit, but what the hell kind of examination was made if fragments remained to fall off on handling? Something had to have been going on. I handled 388 the winter of 1966, probably before Xmas, perhaps my notes will show. I mean, out of plastic case, in my hands. Nothing was rattlin' around then.

My pix were taken after Thompson's. I looked at his and considered them inadequate, had my own made. I watched the making of mine. Nothin' felloff.

Get R to send you a copy of his letter so you can counsel etc., and of the reply, if any.

Your hunch was timed perfectly, for as you know, I followed it up with an unanswered request for a picture of 399 on a scale or a certification of its present weight.

They'll be up tight when they hear from R. They'll be certain he is working with me and I put him up to it!

It can be alleged that the tiny fragments must indeed be tiny not to account for all of what might be missing from the end.

On the other hand, they may not figure the way I do. They may go ahead and tell R the truth. On this chance, I suggest you spread it no further, to give him the best chance of succeeding.

We all know there were no fragments when you and Tom and I were there and looked at that case John phoned last night. He is thinking of amending his suit and anticipates if he does the govt will get an additional 60 days for response.

At this point someone besides me, maybe Olson, should see if the sycophant who name escapes me at the moment, the urologist at Columbia's Presbyterian Hospital, has any pix of 399. He just might have had some made for his first paper (1966) or his second, the one on the slicking.

If and when I hear from Archives, I'll let you know. I have to go to DC next week. If weather is not ~~hot~~ I'll appear in person and ask for answer on weight.

Best,

Harold Weisberg

14 July 69

Harold:

Even at this late stage of "the game", I have not lost the capacity to be dumbfounded by what goes on with the items of evidence that figured in the assassination.

I just got a letter from Howard Roffman containing the following statement regarding CE 399: "Marion Johnson at the Archives told me that in photographing it (399) for Six Seconds, it lost some tiny fragments from the base!" !!!

I asked Roffman to get a letter from Johnson stating that information, for I gather that Roffman got it verbally. It's incredible.

I have no idea whether the Archives kept the fragments that were lost. I am beginning to think that that bullet is not composed of lead, after all, but of smoke-- they have that much trouble holding on to it.

This, too, could be very important information for Nichols' suit. If Roffman can't get a document about it from the Archives, maybe Nichols can.

What about the photos of the base of 399 that you got, when were they made? I think the Archives photographed for Six Seconds early in 1967 (I asked Roffman to learn this). I have photos that I think was made after that time; if yours was taken before, we might get something interesting from a comparison.

I think this is good in some respects, bad in others. If the information is true, then we shall probably never be able to tell what the weight of 399 was when it reached the Archives. But it's another matter for which those bastards should be whipped.

Still,

*Dick*

Bernabei

cc. Schoener.

Gary:

If Joseph Nicol has photos showing the base of 399, Olson should try to get them.

Dick