



QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY
KINGSTON, ONTARIO

DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS

20 June 1969

Mr. Eldridge Cleaver
Havana, Cuba

via Mr. Antonio Breton, Ambassador
Cuban Embassy
Ottawa, Ontario

Dear Mr. Cleaver:

This will not be an easy letter for me to write, for even though you do not know me and we do not have mutual friends, I want to ask for your trust, for your help, and for information that you may not wish to share except in extreme confidence. I'll have to persuade you that I am earnest and trustworthy, and yet (in the present letter, at least) offer nothing more than my personal assurance of my good intent.

I am interested in assassinations, political assassinations of prominent Americans, black and white. I have been involved in this issue for the past few years and am in touch by mail with various researchers in the States who have the same interest.

The source of my interest is patriotic, corny but genuine amor patriae that breeds the desire at most to correct the faults of America by revealing the truth about her, or at least to enrich the public record so that Americans and others may know the truth, even if they care to do nothing about it.

I live in Canada, but I am an American, white, and physically untroubled. Knowing that much, you will understand why the shock of revelation about the U.S. has not driven me to rancor and despair, at least not to the degree that you must feel after the way you have been treated. I still have hope that the old whore can mend her wicked ways, that she can actually be as good as she pretends.

My part is relatively small; I lecture on the JFK assassination whenever I can, and I do some investigative chores and research which I pass to others if they care to use them in published form, or merely to augment their knowledge about the matters that I treat.

I am closest to Harold Weisberg, but I have direct contact with some of the top researchers in the States, and can reach any of them indirectly (through primary contacts). You probably know of Weisberg as the author of four books on the JFK assassination that bear the term "Whitewash" in their titles. If things go good and a line of communication opens up between us, then I'll be acting more or less as Weisberg's agent, although I may also share information with a few trusted others.

Weisberg has completed a book called Coup d' Etat which deals chiefly with the three major assassinations (JFK, MLK, and RFK), but also with other killings which probably are linked to the major three, if not by direct and easily discernible links, at least by the kindred spirit that moved the forces who committed them. In that regard, the murder of Malcolm X appears to be especially important.

With this letter I hope to do no more than try to find out whether you are willing to help us and whether it is feasible for you to help us. I have no doubt about the measure of your courage, but I understand that you may not wish to do anything which might embarrass your hosts and cause them to regret their kindness toward you. They should know that I wish to correspond with you about the assassinations, and for that reason I am sending you this letter in an unsealed envelope through Mr. Antonio Bretón, the Cuban Ambassador in Ottawa.

I spoke with Bretón for a few hours last winter in the hope of gaining some information from Cuban authorities regarding certain anti-Castro Cubans whose names figure in the investigation of JFK's assassination. Bretón heard my requests but declined to give help. He did not offer an explanation, so if you wish to know why the Cubans were unwilling to become involved, you should consult them.

I don't have specific questions at this time, but I can give you a general idea of the areas where I suppose that you may be able to help. If you know unpublished information about any of the assassinations, even rumors that might provide investigative leads, I would like eventually to know what you know. You might also be able to put me and my friends in touch with black leaders who could help us. Moreover, your location in Cuba may make it possible for

you to learn some things concerning anti-Castro Cubans who are now operating in the States, but who formerly were close to Batista. And, if you find me trustworthy and capable of treating you material confidentially, I hope that eventually you will use your influence to persuade the Cuban government to render some help.

It sounds like a big order when I place it in one paragraph, but I don't expect you to fill it all at once merely on the basis of what you know about me from this letter. But I hope that in time I can convince you by my actions that I am serious and that I can treat confidential material confidentially. I'll inform you specifically to whom I pass the information that you provide, and I promise that you will get a copy of whatever is written for publication, and that nothing from you will be published without your prior consent.

If there is anything that I can do further to assure you of my good intent, please tell me and I'll try to do it. If you require letters of recommendation from people working on the assassinations certifying that I am not a crack, then I'll get some; if you have specific persons from whom you would like to get such a letter, then tell me and I'll try to get them.

Whatever you do, please don't reject my request without consideration or because you think that you don't know anything important. Unless you are familiar with the assassinations and know about some of the people involved, you cannot evaluate the importance of what you know. Please at least take me seriously.

Yours truly,

Dick Bernabei

Dick Bernabei

P.S. Please reply at least to acknowledge receipt of this letter.

P.SS. I am using Queen's University letterhead merely to indicate a return address. I am not engaged in the assassinations in connection with my association with Queen's. I teach Greek and Latin here.