

6/30/71

Dear Leon,

Thanks for finding the time for your thoughtful letter of 6/27. I will not have time to respond to each thought separately because I'm into too much writing and law work.

Your commentary on the fingerprints is especially helpful, telling me what I did not know. However, if Hoover has not gone farther than your local police, I'd be surprised. Also, they had more than one fingerprint from that wide assortment of objects on which prints were conveniently left for them to be found.

Some of your comments reflect opinions other than those in my book and I am not in accord with them, one example, that window. My citation of 5 p.m. had to do with the official allegation of it only. Since then I have learned this is fiction.

The Dallas photos and the sketch² on this also I have learned more and cannot discuss it. However, I have heard use of "Frenchy", and I have yet to see any proof of validity. I know of no probative reason to believe there was an actual arrest and all the accounts of what happened are at variance with the facts as developed by two separate and I believe dependable sources for me in Dallas. They were picked up two blocks away from the TSED and long after the shooting.

To the best of my knowledge, Somerset is still around. I can't, really connect the two sheet stories....The elliptical early references were to advance knowledge of the assassination and it would have resulted in the deaths of my sources had I disclosed what they said. This does not mean that they were 100% correct. It does mean coverup, 100%. But I withheld nothing in the interest of my own security. You refer to the presence of an FBI agent at the motel. Any proof, or just assumption? Why (rhetorical, for I have no time to discuss) do you postulate a "field coordinator"? What need? What function? I believe this gets things unnecessarily complicated. I can't explain the men on the steps at Dealey Plaza except that different people react differently. They broke up pretty soon, if not in a split second. Interesting point about "inatra". I expect most police depts would have similar complaints. Your point on 1119A is well taken. I do not recall if I went into it in that detail, but I did not see the relationship to Tippit and that address.

Sorry I've no more time. Thanks and best regard to you all,

Leon Davidson
64 Prospect Street
White Plains, New York 10606

June 27, 1971

Mr. Harold Weisberg
Frederick, Md.

Dear Mr. Wesiberg:

I read through your new book "Frame-Up" with great interest. Needless to say, the general message which you give in the book is one which I accepted from the time of the event, namely that James Earl Ray was the "patsy" of a conspiracy. The parallels to the Oswald "patsy" in the Dallas assassination are too obvious.

I found one or two (but no more) places in the text where it was obvious that the publishers had cut your manuscript (as you mention in the introduction) and the flow of discussion abruptly switched illogically. On the whole, the chief fault of the work (in my own view) is that you belabored the greed of Foreman and the other true "scavengers", at too great a length. I imagine that this is an indication of your personal deep feelings.

A few technical points might be of interest to you, of which you seem to be unaware. (No one can be expert in all matters.)

[1] I had occasion a few years ago to study the fingerprint filing systems used by the New York police, etc., as part of a project trying to introduce a computerized system. I had always been intrigued by the fact that fingerprints could be "looked up" so quickly, and wondered how it was done. Without going into detail here, suffice it to say that the "quick look ups" are almost invariably done by using a complete set of ten-finger prints, as you yourself may have impressed on a fingerprint card during an employment check-up as an investigator. By assigning certain codes to the type of print on each separate finger (loop, whorl, arch, etc.) and a numeric count of the number of ridges on each finger, from the center of each pattern, etc., a filing scheme has been built up which lets the 10-finger card be filed in a file of millions of cards, in almost a unique position every time. The purpose of this system is for identification. [We've got this hombre in custody; who is he, really? Take his fingerprints and check the files.]

To match a single print, or prints of a few fingers, which was the situation with prints on the rifle in this case,

a very different system is used, and a different file. Most police departments keep the single-finger prints of all of the fingers of known local criminals of major interest, but the general run-of-the-mill criminal is not included in these single-print files because of the effort involved in the specialized single-finger-print identification system.

You therefore were whipping a guiltless horse when you complained several times in "Frame-Up" that it took two weeks for Bonebrake to identify the single prints as Ray's. (Of course, if the FBI had really wanted to identify and apprehend Ray promptly, they might have published the print for all police departments to try to identify, and they might also have published the description and sketch more promptly. I do not say they were not guilty of delay, in general.)

[2] On p. 481 you publish the name of Bill Somerset of Miami, who was with Milteer and McCloud. On page 469 you quote the "Milteer tape" showing that the "informant" was with Milteer and McCloud. Since the informant was from Miami, this puts the finger (unjustly or not) on Somerset as the informant. Is he still around?

[3] On the "scoreboard": Jack Brown had his "heart attack" in 1965. Jim Garrison is now wasting away from a bone disease, incurred when he entered a hospital for minor surgery a year or so ago. It just was called to my attention that Robert Ruark (who published articles stating the the Dallas "evidence" regarding rifle-firing made no sense to an experienced rifleman such as he) died of cancer suddenly, while on a safari in Africa in 1964. (Before Ruby's death, or it would have attracted more comment.) And this year, Whitney Young (mentioned in "Frame-Up" as one who was not the target of the conspirators because he was more moderate than Rev. King, died in Africa of a: #1, heart attack; #2, brain hemorrhage; #3, drowning. *(Would you believe sodium azide poisoning?)*)

I won't bore you here with the relationships between Ramsey Clark (mentioned in one or two places in "Frame-Up", as you recall), the Ford Foundation (which paid for Clark's and Young's trip to Africa this year, during which Clark rescued the dying or dead Young from the surf), and the movement for a new Constitution for the US, which the Ford Foundation's funds and Ramsey Clark are both involved with, and which Common Cause, I assume, will in due time promote. (Today's N.Y. Times front page story about the nationwide survey paid for by "Potomac Associates, Inc.", indicates involvement of National Security Council staff member, and ties in with reported plans to delay or disrupt 1972 elections, within the Administration.)

Leon Davidson
64 Prospect Street
White Plains, New York 10606

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[4] You mentioned in the book (I think quoting a story attributed to Ray himself) that Ray drove a getaway car and that a man covering himself with a sheet was lying in the back seat. (This may have come from one of Huie's articles which you quote.) At another place, later, (I think in the section quoting Rev. Kyles statements to Herron) you mention witnesses seeing a man with a sheet over his head running from the area between Motel and So. Main St., (toward the getaway car?). You made no reference to the relationship between these two incidents, nor any analysis of these reports. I would think that ~~if~~ these two reports, if they confirm each other and can be confirmed in any way, cast a real light on what actually happened. [I.e., a shot was fired from the bushes near the Motel by "sheet-man", while "decoy" was in the flop-house bathroom ready to make his well-documented escape and drop his bundle, and Ray (or some driver) was in one car to drive "sheet-man" away.]

hinted
You ~~remarked~~, early in the book, that it is not wise to pursue the actual conspirators (you were quoting someone else who knows facts but doesn't want to disclose them, and it seemed that you also knew those facts.) Your book has the limited purpose of showing that Ray was a patsy; if this is established, you apparently would then leave it to others (aroused public?) to insist on finding the real murderers. I cannot find any fault with you on this; you are taking enough risks as it is. (Sad commentary on this day and age that the "bad guys" are as powerful as they seem to be.)

[5] Another point you failed to make connections about, was the 5 P.M. entry into the bathroom of "decoy", who monopolized the bathroom until 6PM, when the shot was heard and he came running out. (You mention at several places that the man was in the bathroom for one hour, from 5PM.) On page 486 you quote Kyles as saying that the time which had been "announced" for King to leave the Motel was 5PM (Kyles had told King this was the time because King and Abernathy were "slow" and Kyles wanted to be sure they left by 6 PM.) You could have connected these events in several ways. The local FBI agent at the Motel could have heard the 5PM time stated by Kyles to King, and reported it to FBI (for arranging "security" measures, not with malice in mind, at his level). A "conspirator" in the FBI could then have

passed the 5P.M. time to the "field coordinator" at the Flophouse, which resulted in "decoy" going into the bathroom at 5PM, and waiting and waiting for the shot, so he could go into action.

Kyles said (p. 486) that when he called the house (his house) and told Gwen (his wife?) that King was coming at 6PM for the "soul food" dinner, he knew that King would be leaving the Motel at 6, and so told his wife on the phone, but that he told King himself 5 PM (to hurry him along.) (This was earlier in the day.) Clearly, if the decoy went to the bathroom at 5PM, the conspirators were not merely using phone taps or other sources, but had someone right in the motel to hear what Kyles said to King.

[6] The sketch of the suspect which you print, next to the photo of the "tramp" arrested in Dallas on Nov. 22, shows the resemblance, certainly. But more can be said. I have large copies of the photos from the Dallas Times Herald and Fort Worth Star Telegram, showing these three tramps who were arrested in the railroad yards. [These are in the article in "Computers and Automation", May 1970, by Dick Sprague, which you probably have.] The particular tramp in the photo (resembling the sketch) resembles someone I know. This gives me a clue to his nationality and ethnic antecedents. Note how this ties in with the locales involved.

The "tramp" seems to be a French-Canadian. If he is, this ties in with both Ray's visits to the French part of Canada, and it also ties in with the New Orleans and other Louisiana aspects of the various conspiracies. (Need it be emphasized that New Orleans is our "Frenchest" city?)

Incidentally, from your photo-studies of the Dallas assassination, have you a clear idea of the three men (workmen types) who were sitting on the steps leading down from the "gazebo" on the grassy knoll, and were just about at the location where the fatal head shot occurred. I was impressed, in the photos taken in that area, that these three men continued to sit on the steps for many seconds after the shooting, while other bystanders swarmed up the knoll, etc. Were these the men who then (without undue haste) proceeded to the railroad yards, where they were picked up and given police escort to the sheriff's office?

[7] You mention that the Memphis and Atlanta police complained that the FBI "took over" and muddled the waters; the FBI hindered the local police investigations. Are you aware of an earlier, related incident, in which police were hindered by the FBI, and complained to reporters? Look

Leon Davidson
64 Prospect Street
White Plains, New York 10606

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up your newspaper files for December 1963, for stories of ~~the~~ Frank Sinatra's son being kidnapped from a motel (near Lake Tahoe?). The local police, at that time, stated that the FBI rushed right in, even before there was any proof that a state line had been crossed. They said that the whole investigation was messed up by the FBI.

What has this got to do with the Assassination Era? Only this. Frank Sinatra was purported to be a very close friend of the Kennedy family (cf. "rat pack".) Frank S. also had close connections with the underworld, it is said. Assume that he personally, as a citizen and friend, tried to use his contacts to expose the conspirators. It would take very little imagination to picture "them" arranging for his son to be kidnapped, to teach him to keep from meddling in this "affair of state." As you may recall, the kidnapers were later caught, and got only about 2 year sentences (or less) because their defense was that they had been hired by Sinatra as a publicity stunt. The involvement of the FBI in hindering the original investigation implies that, at that time, FBI was involved in the "big picture."

(The FBI prepared the Exhibit 1119-A, p. 158, Warren Report. See my enclosed letter reprint, showing how this exhibit was "hoked up" to hide the evidence. (Marked copy.))

Events are moving so fast, these days, toward a change in our governmental and social structure, (which I take to be the overall real aim of the series of assassinations) that it is hard to present a rational-sounding narration of events. Everything from trying to make N.Y. a separate "state", to the current legal actions against the leading liberal newspapers of the country (which have been induced to print classified documents, which is not the thing to do.)

I wish you continued luck and success in your writing and publishing ventures. Brave and dedicated men are needed. I am the last one in the world to have justification for complaining of prolixity in others, but I would think that the reading public was interested in factual accounts, analyses, etc., and not in polemics regarding the ethics of writers, lawyers, and judges.

Keep me on your mailing list for future works, and do not hesitate to ask me, if I could be of any help to you.
Best regards to you and your wife.

Leon Davidson