

Mr. John H. Davis
20 E 10 St.,
New York, N.Y. 10003

9/2/87

Dear Mr. Davis,

I'll help you in any way I can.

Your reference to the index indicates you do not know what it is. It is a partial index, quite extensive in size but limited entirely to what the FBI decided it might provide to the Warren Commission. For its own use the FBI had the much more inclusive general indices.

Dallas was the office of origin, "OO" in their abbreviations, and in theory all information was routed to FBIHQ through it. Dallas thus had and indexed information originating in all the other offices.

There were some 40 linear feet of 3x5 cards in this index. When we were able to force the FBI to provide copies they were xeroxed, two cards to the page. In this form they stuff three file cabinets. The sheets are bound with Acco clips at the top in volumes of about 2" each, a bit awkward to handle.

The cards are by name only and they list records by file and serial number.

We caught them in some dirty tricks, one of which was the claim that the records they withheld had already been provided when the FBIHQ companion files were disclosed. They also claimed to have disclosed all Dallas copies of records not included in the FBIHQ disclosures, a lie. The way they chose to get off the hook was to take a copy of the set of inventory worksheets and annotate them to include the citations of all FBIHQ records alleged "previously processed."

While this is much better than the usual situation in using raw materials it remains a bit awkward and time-consuming in use. It means that first the Dallas records or inventory worksheets have to be examined and if the record sought is not there, then the annotated worksheets are consulted for the identification of the # and file and serial number of the record indexed.

This, of course, assumes that you would want to examine the indexed records.

All we'd learn if a name is in the index is the record or records in which it appears. However, I do have all the records indexed except those that were withheld under claims to exemption under FOIA. One place or the other.

It depends on the number of names whether or not I can make that search. I phoned a friend who teaches at local Hood College to see if he has a student who might be interested in making a little money by doing this research if you'd want that. Classes are just beginning. He teaches a course in political assassinations, as government/history, and usually has a few pretty bright girls in it. So, I'll probably know by the time you reply whether student help is available.

We do have a copier and can make copies. Slowly but as legible as the originals.

I do not believe there was any mob connection with the assassination but if you do that makes no difference in my willingness to help.

I think I have a few records that may not be included in this index, from New Orleans and not from any assassination file, or at least no such "main" file. I recall a few having to do with Carlos Marcello, who I think is now dead and thus privacy cannot be used to withhold FBI records relating to him if you seek them.

One bit is his conversation with Trafficante about the assassination and another

is a black bag job. It was done by a Lt. Comstock of the New Orleans police, then assigned to Jim Garrison's office. It was on the late Dave Ferrie and what Comstock stole, later given to the FBI which gave it to the prosecution, included correspondence with Marcello's counsel on the case. Ferrie had been hired as investigator for the Guatemala case.

If Jim did not tell you I've kept all FOIA records as I received them but as I read them I made duplicates of some for subject filing. I have a separate subject file, by name. Although I've never had any interest in most of the theories, like the mob did it, because of other interest in these theories I did, from time to time, make copies for subject filing on the chance they'd appeal to others. What I have in the subject file is easily retrieved.

The FBI never investigated the crime itself and never investigated any conspiracy theories or to determine whether there had been a conspiracy. It is beyond question that the FBI knew the crime had to be a conspiracy. But it never conducted any conspiracy investigation. Its extensive work was designed to make as credible as possible the preconception of a lone-nut assassin and to rebut criticisms. So, there will be a minimum of mob records, I believe, in the indexed files.

There is a precise story you may want to use. The fact is known but the details have never been used. It is the amateur bugging job on Dan Martin when Momo Giancana suspected (correctly) that Phyllis McGuire was sleeping with him. He got the CIA to have the bugging done when he and Costello were helping it in their futilities against Castro. If this interests you, Jim can provide copies easier.

There are organized crime records in the Ruby file but I'm not familiar with them. Jim or Bud may be. By this I mean I've never searched for them but I do have them and have read some. (I'm satisfied nobody in organized crime would have trusted Ruby for anything like this job.)

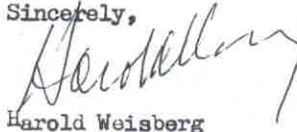
In confidence because it involves others, I knew Tommy "Three Finger" Brown socially. Never met a more perfect or considerate gentleman - socially. Also in confidence for the same reason, I had a relative I never knew who was Bruno's No. 2 man in Philadelphia. I tell you this because he is an exception to the general belief about the origin of organized crime people. He came from a good family and was not Italian. I never saw Tommy Brown when he was not with a priest.

A caution about a source you may use, Walter Sheridan's book on Jimmy Hoffa. What he says about me, which is simple and not tending to induce error, is entirely undependable and often just untrue. He never responded when I wrote him. This makes me wonder about his accuracy in general. (I have a few records on Whitey Martin, if he interests you.) And about his concern for accuracy.

If you or any of your researchers are ever in Washington or Baltimore, we are about an hour away and you'd be welcome and can use what I have without supervision. There is almost nothing that is confidential in my files. One that is is a file about a young relative of Jackie's. He got in trouble in New Orleans.

Sounds like a worthwhile project. Good luck with it!

Sincerely,



Harold Weisberg

cc: Jim Lesar

JOHN H. DAVIS
20 EAST TENTH STREET
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10003
—
(212) 475-0503

August 31, 1987

Mr. Harold Weisberg
7627 Old Receiver Road
Frederick, MD 21701

Dear Mr. Weisberg,


I am an author under contract with the McGraw-Hill Book Co. to write a book on organized crime. See enclosed letter from the publisher.

I have read your books on the John F. Kennedy assassination and am aware of your extraordinary efforts to obtain release of government documents relevant to the assassination from the FBI through FOIA requests. I am also a friend of Jim Lesar.

I understand from Jim that you have a lengthy card index to the voluminous FBI files on the assassination you are said to keep in the basement of your home. If it would not be too much trouble for you, I would like to know if it would be possible for you to ascertain whether certain names are in the file, or whether it will be necessary to send a researcher. Jim has advised me of your ill health.

May I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your most thorough and painstaking research on the Kennedy assassination, and the Warren Commission's investigation of the crime.

Yours sincerely,



John H. Davis

JHD/st
Enclosure

General Books Division

1221 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10020
Telephone 212/512-2000

McGraw-Hill Book Company



July 16, 1986

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

McGraw-Hill Book Company is under contract with the distinguished biographer and historian, John H. Davis, to write a book about organized crime.

Mr. Davis is the author of *THE BOUVIERS: PORTRAIT OF AN AMERICAN FAMILY*, a major selection of the Literary Guild in 1969; *THE GUGGENHEIMS: AN AMERICAN EPIC*, which was selected by the American Library Association as a Notable Book of 1976; and, most recently, *THE KENNEDYS: DYNASTY AND DISASTER*, published by McGraw-Hill and a national bestseller in 1985.

McGraw-Hill would be very appreciative of whatever assistance you may be able to give Mr. Davis and his researchers in his current project.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Lisa Frost', written in dark ink.

Lisa Frost
McGraw-Hill Book Company