

7/26/68

Mr. Barry W. Ernest
551 - 26th Ave,
Altoona, Pa.

Dear Barry,

I know no more about Gary than you report. I've heard from him and from Vince and I expect to see both soon.

On your trip to Dallas, I think most important of all is discussion with Penn Jones, editor of the Midlothian Mirror, which is near Dallas. There is only one Penn. He knows what he has not been able to communicate to the rest of us, may have things he could not do anything about, etc. I fear your time may result in little more than a duplication otherwise. You may enjoy it, but you may add little or nothing to what is known, and when you can spend the necessary money and time, try and make it produce original material.

Of the things you project, I think what you can do about the Tippitt killing may be least productive. Unless Penn recommends otherwise, I suggest you concentrate otherwise.

Because you are a student, I wonder if there is not the possibility doors may open to you that close to Penn and the rest of us? I think it would be fine if you could ask the sheriff for access to his files, and if you made careful notes. Try and see his picture files, and if you do make a note of the description, time and taker of every picture he has.

On the cartridges, I know of no reason to believe other than that they were planted, as my writing, if read carefully, suggests. I know of no reason to assume that the 7.65 was found on the 6th floor. Perhaps it was. I think Penn agrees it came from the roof. Its description was repeated to others. There is more than the Weitzmann stuff. The police told reporters. How come only three shells? It was impossible for one man to have fired that many in the available time, so more would have made totally impossible what the conspirators sought. The shells had to be found as part of the frame, and there was no time permitted for an alleged assassin to have picked them up.

Excuse the haste. Good luck!

There is one thing I'd like you to do for me: get the current address of the Rev Walter Machann, whose parents live in Dallas, possibly at 723 N. Oak Cliff, WH 6-1914, although this may have been his address and number. He was a Catholic priest who was spiritual adviser to the Cuban Catholic community and from what I can gather, a very decent, dedicated young man. I think the existing records have been arranged in a way to reflect unfairly on him and to disguise what he knew and what may have befallen him where he was innocent. I would like to be in touch with him. If you can make any progress in the Cuban community there, that might be a worthwhile field. I'd like to know who the men were at Sylvia Odio's, who were of that description in Dallas at the right times, and anything that can be learned of Youngblood (Nancy Rich story). We have other leads on that.

Please excuse haste and pick your way through typos. Good luck! Let me hear from you on your return.

Sincerely,

July 23, 1968

Dear Harold,

I write to inform you that I will be going, at least as my plans are now, to Dallas on the 4th. of August, and staying for about 1 week. I am in the process of collecting various names that I want to interview in Dallas. Do you happen to know where either Aquilla Clemmons or Domingo Benavides lives, if they are still residing in or around the Dallas area? I am interested in these two people and would very much like to talk to them when I arrive there. Also, is there any people who you think it would pay for me to talk to that you might suggest? As always, if there is anything you want, or anything which you want me to check on, just let me know. I would really enjoy doing it for you. There are three areas of witnesses which I want to get into; those who were witnesses to the assassination and were not called by the Commission; those having information on a Ruby Oswald relationship; and those who were at the Tippit slaying. Any list of people in these general areas who might turn out to be interesting would be greatly appreciated.

Have you heard about Gary? He wrote me a letter just recently and said that he got into a fight and was kicked in the head about 15 or 20 times, lost the eyesight in his left eye and will have to wear corrective lens. That is a terrible shame. I was really shocked to hear about it as I'm sure you are. I may be seeing both him and Vince Salandria in Philly soon, most likely during the middle of August.

I must admit that the radio show I was on went over quite well, at least that what I hear from some of the listeners. We talked a lot about the grassy knoll and where the shots were fired from and the motive and various other items. I really enjoyed it, although there has been no response yet. This town doesn't react to highly to anything.

There is one question that puzzles me. The evidence shows that a 7.65 German mauser was the gun that was found on the sixth floor on Nov. 22. Right? Well, if that is the case, why did they find 6.5 cartridge shells? You are probably aware of Penn Jones statements that he thinks the man on the knoll was the one to be "sacrificed," so the others could get away. In this case then, how did the men on the sixth floor appear to know that shells would have to be found there? How come 3 shells and no more? The Commission states that the most convincing evidence of only 3 shots was the fact of the 3 shells on the 6th. floor. Were they put there specifically to link Oswalds gun with the assassination and if so, why did they feel the shells were necessary if the guy on the knoll was the one to get caught? I can't figure this out although I think it is very puzzleing. Can you help straighten out my thinking???

Well, guess I'll close for here. Let me know as fast as you can what you need as I may decide to go to Dallas a few days earlier. Take care and thanks for everything.

Warm regards,

Barry

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