

Dear Mr. Frewin,

8/27/80

Your letter of the 18th was addressed correctly and reached me promptly. I've not been able to respond sooner.

It is possible that Eddowes quotes correctly but from what I know of his work I'd not even assume that. I probably have the record you refer to but have no way of retrieving it from that file, from which I've not had time to make copies for subject filing. My hunch is that his source was Mrs. Mary Ferrell, 4406 Holland, Dallas, Texas 75219. Mary is a conspiracy-minded, bright person of the right extreme. She also was probably the major source for Tony Summers, of whose work I have nothing good to say. (I do not have Eddowes nonsense so I can't use it for a search.)

I have a pretty clear recollection of the Profumo affair.

The nuts have been wild with theories about Osborne/Bowen but none of them make any sense at all.

Whatever the telegram reports, it makes no sense at all to believe that the news of the JFK assassination would have been available at the USEmb faster than by wire service, which certainly the Cambridge paper had, or faster than it would have been on the air. You do not suggest that there was any suggestion that the embassy would have been able to tell the reporter what was not already available to him.

The probable source of the telegram is CIA disclosure under FOIA, including to me. Of course also others. Getting more from the CIA does not appear to be likely. It has been stalling further disclosures for about four years. However, the possibilities might be better at State. Again, I think Mary is probably the best source on its source and whether or not other pertinent records are available.

While I have no way of evaluating the Mariella Diben/Caces story, I have difficulty crediting the part that allegedly pertained to JFK. It is probable that some of the JFK biographies, certainly the New York Times index, would disclose his whereabouts at Xmas 1960. My recollection is that he then was quite busy in Washington preparing his coming administration, selecting and announcing personnel, etc. It was a severe winter and the TV crews were camped outside his N St., Washington (Georgetown) home, awaiting these daily announcements and observing comings and goings. Regardless of the 1963 reopening of charges in New York and the alleged security aspects, I doubt she had any JFK connection and suspect this is hype.

I think there is no possibility of any connection between these matters and the assassination. I don't know of anyone who has made a study of JFK's affairs. I once sought out one of these women, and she was a fine and honest woman. He cut off from her as soon as he was nominated. Once he was resident his potential for secrecy was severely limited and there was never any possibility of secrecy from the Secret Service outside the White House. I'm not saying that there are no such secrets or that he did not work something out with some Secret Service people, but if he did they have been solidly dependable because none went public.

If you have a good New York source you can get the prosecution and the charges checked out. I now have nobody there I could ask to do this.

This is not the first instance of someone claiming that what he or she was involved in was connected with the JFK assassination, but I don't recall any that was truthful. My hunch is that this one is not factual.

I don't mind the questions. For archival purposes I'd be interested in anything you may turn up. All my records will be a free university archive.

Please forgive the typing. I have circulatory problems in the legs. They require that I keep the legs elevated when typing. It is a bit awkward.

Best wishes,

Jerrold Weisberg

18 August 1980

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Dear Mr Weisberg:

I have been a keen if somewhat desultory student of the JFK assassination since the mid-1960s. I have most of your books here and your work on the subject has always seemed particularly wide-ranging and incisive. Hence this plea for assistance to you.

For the past four years or so I have been working with a colleague - Dick Brewis, Senior Lecturer in English at Redhill College - on a book dealing with the background to what was known as the Profumo Affair. You may recall this British sex-and-spying scandal of 1963 that involved a doctor who committed suicide, a Cabinet Minister who resigned, a Russian Naval Attache who was called back to Moscow, and several hookers. It never occurred to us that there might be any connection between this scandal and JFK's assassination, yet our research has revealed two incidents of potentially related interest.

1. On page 228 of The Oswald File (New York: Clarkson N Potter, 1977) Michael Eddowes reproduces a CIA telegram that was sent from London to Washington on 23 November 1963. The telegram mentions a number of 'phone calls of strangely coincidental nature' that various persons received in this country in connection with Dr Stephen Ward (the Dr of the Profumo Affair, as above) and the scandal. It goes on to report a phone call, anonymous, that was received by the senior reporter of the Cambridge News urging him to phone the American Embassy in London for some 'big news,' only twenty-five minutes before JFK's assassination.

This telegram is not mentioned elsewhere at all in The Oswald File. We have interviewed Eddowes in an attempt to find out more about the telegram and where he got it, without success. It is very difficult to pin Eddowes down on anything and it seems to us that many of his 'conclusions' have no substantive basis in fact. He did tell us that the person who made the call was Albert Osborne aka John Howard Bowen, and said this with some certainty. Our own checking showed the evidence to be rather circumstantial at best, certainly inconclusive.

Do you know where this telegram came from? Was it from a FOIA application? Are there any related documents available? Can you shed any light on it and the subjects it discusses? Do you know anyone who could?

2. On 13 December 1960 a 19-year-old dancer called Mariella Dibben (this was her married name, she was born Capes) left London and went to New York at the behest of an English film/TV producer called Harry Alan Towers who had flown out some weeks earlier. Mariella used as her surname throughout her stay the name Novotny - she claimed before and she has claimed since that she is the niece of the Czech Premier Novotny. On the 23 or 26 December at Hampshire House in New York City she met JFK and commenced an extended affair with him, so she says. She was invited to the party by Peter Lawford whom she had met through Towers. On 4 March 1961 Mariella was arrested for soliciting and Towers for 'controlling' her and receiving money from her that she made while on the game. Some little while later Towers skipped bail and fled to Europe (possibly Prague) and though surveillance was stepped up on Mariella she managed to evade her watchers and stowed away on a ship to return to England.

This is a greatly simplified account of what went on in New York and does leave out some important, if conflicting, matters. Mariella and her husband, Horace Dibben, were great friends of Dr Stephen Ward and they featured in the Profumo Affair as the hosts of several notorious parties/orgies. Dr Ward seems to have been largely instrumental in Mariella going to New York with Towers.

Two years later, in the midst of the Profumo Affair, on 25 June 1963 it was announced that the US Attorney was re-opening the case of Mariella and Towers for possible 'security breaches.' There was also some talk of a possible connection with a call-girl ring at the UN Building in NY and the death of Yvonne Davies.

It has been claimed many times since, principally by Mariella herself, that she was 'used' in an attempt to discredit the President-Elect, a possible explanation of the Novotny business. That the plan backfired and that she and Towers were arrested on trumped-up charges in order to take the heat of the President and get her and Towers out of the country.

Do you know of this series of incidents and could there be, no matter how tenuous, a connection between them and JFK's assassination? Were there any other attempts to discredit JFK before the 'final solution'? Is there any JFK student who has re-evaluated the President's affairs in the light of the assassination and possible attempts to discredit him?

I am sorry to machine-gun you with questions, but you may appreciate at what a tremendous disadvantage we are working over here. If you can give us any help whatsoever we would be very indebted to you. And if there is any help we can give you over here we would be glad to reciprocate.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely

Anthony Frewin

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