

5/25/97

Dear Ed,

What you've been <sup>E</sup>nding is interesting.

I'm surprised that Taylor Branch would say what he did in Newsweek for 4/7 because he has no basis for it. If I had an ~~Ad~~ address I'd tell him that, too.

What Roger Morris says about Gary Hart and the JFK assassination is not in accord with Hart's record on the Church committee Schweiker subcommittee. He did nothing and if I recall did not even read that report.

If the major media were not as corrupt as it is and has been the FBI and its Lab would have been exposed not later than the JFK assassination, as you say in a different way.

Just before the IG report was disclosed I called that stuff to the Post's attention again, without response.

If the FBI's Lab was not much better in the King case.

Thanks and best,

*Partners in*  
**POWER**

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The Clintons  
and Their America

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Roger Morris

A John Macrae Book

HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY • NEW YORK

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unanimously adopted a nomination.

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was "frantic," as one ch in New Hampshire alled "a convincing im- were constant meetings money, which quickly t from the wealthy indi- vated outside the state, s the Arkansas interests. ion interview later that ch had been committed ier" to his running. As e race far from the obvi- ocratic nomination was ier McGovern campaign ed veteran of the 1984 publicity, had run well inee, in the polls, and o be the next president. s for an exclusive dinner ther figures from the en- process of currying and ig coincidence, however, ig was Don Henley, a for- e same night, across the friends, a young woman ed the *Monkey Business* for merican politics. ould witness the swift de- tial presidency. Only days or the White House, the about his alleged woman- nonymous tip, the *Miami* staked out a townhouse

where she was visiting Hart, and on May 4, in a story that swept through the media nationwide, accused the front-runner of an illicit "relationship" with twenty-nine-year-old party girl Donna Rice of Miami. The next day it was confirmed that Hart had spent the weekend of March 27-29 aboard the *Monkey Business*, which his aide Billy Broadhurst had chartered for the candidate's relaxation after Hart attended a scheduled fund-raiser in South Miami. On Saturday the two men had taken an overnight trip to Bimini with Rice and her girlfriend.

In the wake of the later *Herald* story, compromising photos of the Bimini trip, including one showing Rice on the senator's lap, were sold to the tabloid press for six figures. And though Hart adamantly denied charges of adultery and seemed to be riding out the *Herald* story, which some reporters had begun to question, there was more. The *Washington Post* put the Hart campaign on notice that it had been given a private detective's report purporting to show the candidate's involvement with yet another woman in Washington. It was what many later saw as the paper's power play to force the candidate out of the race. Meanwhile, amid the blaring headlines and rumors, crucial sources of Hart campaign money and support were deserting him. On May 8, less than a month after he had declared as the clear favorite and only three days after the *Monkey Business* exposé, Hart withdrew.

As elements of the Hart drama began to emerge afterward, it was clear that his personality and habits had driven his fate to some extent. Yet there had been more to the politician's destruction than vulnerable psychology. Whatever his other strengths or weaknesses, Hart was no ordinary candidate to those in the inner recesses of power.

As a freshman senator he had been a key member of the celebrated Church committee investigating CIA abuses and specifically the agency's incessant links to organized crime. He had gone on to serve on the new Senate Intelligence Oversight Committee, where he continued to be known for advocating further investigation and exposure of the alliance between the mob and the US intelligence community. Hart would be a vocal critic of CIA covert operations in general. A leading opponent of the Nicaraguan Contra war, the senator had barely escaped what he and others believed to be an assassination plot in 1983 when he flew into Managua at the time of an extraordinary CIA-sponsored Contra air strike against the capital.

From 1984 to 1987 Hart was repeatedly on record voicing his skepticism about the official version of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy and promising that if elected president in 1988 he would

order the opening of all CIA and other government files in question looking in particular at the possible role of organized crime figures Santo Trafficante, John Roselli, and Sam Giancana in the Kennedy murder—the last two of whom had been killed during the Church committee inquiry. By the mid-1980s Hart was increasingly bold in exposing the “sleaze factor” in the Reagan administration, including the wider influence of the mob in Washington. According to someone familiar with a written record of the remark, Trafficante had said of Gary Hart, “We need to get rid of the son of a bitch.”

Though it came too late to affect his fate, there would be still more evidence that Hart's fall was not what it seemed at the time. According to US Customs sources, one part of the setting of the episode had long been suspected of a role in drug running. Some of those involved in Hart's Miami-Bimini weekend turned out to have links to organized crime and cocaine trafficking and, in spiraling circles beyond, to crime bosses of the Jewish and Italian syndicates, who in turn possessed ties to the US intelligence community dating back to the Bay of Pigs and earlier.

Discrepancies were plain in the *Miami Herald's* role in the affair as well. In the supposedly spontaneous call of the paper's public-spirited tipster there had been highly implausible detail about Hart's movements and phone records over the preceding period, intimate knowledge that should have prompted journalistic suspicion but that the paper apparently never questioned. In fact, as a subsequent independent investigation would show, Hart had been under surveillance by unknown parties for days and perhaps weeks before the weekend of March 27–29.

There were also reports of sensational videotapes of the *Monkey Business*, part of a professional surveillance of the vessel. Despite unexplained money, incriminating phone calls, and even evidence of a contract murder, most of the media had simply repeated the first trumpeted charges and reprinted the supplied photos, joined the clamor that forced the candidate from the race, and then moved on to the next story. There was no doubt that Hart inhabited the edge, but there was compelling evidence, too, that he had been pushed over it. And both self-inflicted and arranged, the ruin of Gary Hart would have historic impact on the Clintons.

Though Clinton continued to travel to a few dates in Washington and elsewhere after the headlines of May 4–8, for most of the next month the Hart scandal and withdrawal threw him and his campaign

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