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473-8186

Route 7  
Frederick, Md. 21701

March 30, 1968

Honorable Robert F. Kennedy  
United States Senate  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator Kennedy:

You may recall that I am the author of the first book analyzing the official accounting of your brother's murder and have published four such books. The fifth is completed. In them, I believe it is fair to say, I brought to light for the first time most of what has been established.

From time to time in the past I have written you, hoping to inform you and, in some cases, to help you avoid what I regarded as probable errors. You may recall that I was careful to include in most of these letters the statement that they required no response. If my motive was not obvious, I make it explicit: I was making no demand upon you, seeking nothing personal of you.

For almost two years now I have made countless radio and TV broadcasts and spent hundreds of hours answering questions from concerned Americans all across the country. I cannot recall a single occasion on which perplexity, if not incomprehensibility, about your silence and your statements was not expressed. As time goes on, the frequency of these questions increases; it does not diminish.

To a degree, I have been able to answer these questions in a way that makes your position at least partly comprehensible. Daily that becomes more difficult. Your statements of March 25 at Los Angeles makes this almost impossible, if the Associated Press quoted you correctly.

Meanwhile, your own position has changed. You are no longer the bereaved brother. Whether or not your advisers have so suggested to you, you now are in the position of a man who can be said to be a beneficiary of that murder, for you now seek the Presidency, as you could not without it.

Each man important in public life is dependent upon his advisers. To a large degree, each becomes their creature. When those upon whom he depends have erred, they have a vested interest in protecting themselves from the consequences of error. This may take the form of perpetuating it.

Regardless of what you are quoted as having said in Los Angeles, and despite the fact that I am not privy to your private actions, from my own work, and it is by now of such magnitude that I think I cannot convey its scope to you in meaningful terms, I have not the slightest doubt about two things: That you did not and could not have exercised any kind of meaningful control over the investigation and that it is a total impossibility for you to have "seen everything that's in there", referring to the Warren material.

What is "in there" is an acknowledged 300 cubic feet of data. When a single cubic foot can encompass more than a million words, is this conceivable? I have not your many other responsibilities, yet this has been beyond my capacity. And have you any concept of what a single sheet in these countless thousands can mean?

While I freely acknowledge, as I have above, that I have not seen everything in these files, I have examined thousands of pages. Not a single one that I have seen was forwarded by you. Not a single one bore internal evidence of having been sent with your knowledge of its contents. Entirely aside from the considerable amount of my unpublished work, in my published work (and I have taken care to provide your office with copies of all of it), there are dozens of documents you cannot possibly have had knowledge of or association with. If you want a quick check on this, have a trusted member of your staff skim through just the documentary appendix of PHOTOGRAPHIC WHITEWASH: SUPPRESSED KENNEDY ASSASSINATION PICTURES. Here alone, in the context of your quoted Los Angeles statement, is sufficient, in the hands of a skilled and determined adversary, to effectuate your political death.

Meanwhile, for more than a year, the White House and its spokesmen have been carefully and successfully - without contradiction, save for such unimportant people as I - publicizing the idea that if there is any defect in the official investigation it is your fault because you, they say, were in charge of the investigation. In January, the new "intellectual in residence" went so far as to declare that if it turns out that there was a conspiracy, because you were in charge of the investigation, you must be part of it. Possibly you have not seen or are unaware of these things. I can supply you with copies. In short, you have been unaware of or silent in the face of the attempt at your political assassination.

I repeat, you cannot "have seen everything". What motivated you to say such a thing, if you are quoted correctly, I cannot imagine. But if you have seen just a small portion of what I have seen and what I have in my possession and then can use such words, you vilify yourself as no enemy could. You put yourself in a position that will ultimately make it impossible for you to live with yourself.

At some point you should be asking yourself questions about those who counsel you and whom you trust. I have tape recordings of voluntary first-person statements of efforts at corruption, and I can provide dependable witnesses who are aware of this.

Let me cite a case reported to me by phone from New Orleans last night. I understand you are quoted in banner headlines as having asked Governor McKeithen for protection against Jim Garrison, who you are quoted as saying plans to subpoena you if you set foot in the state. Now, unless he has undergone the most radical change in the past ten days, I can bear personal testimony to the fact that this is a deliberate lie and in no sense reflects his attitude or concern. He and I have discussed you and your position on a number of occasions, particularly in the past three or four months. His desire has been to spare you and to keep you mobile and free. Have you not noticed, or have you not been informed, that in recent months he has not mentioned your name in public?

I did not begin this letter with the intent of offering public-relations counsel. Perhaps I am not competent to do so. But I do assure you from a rather large sampling that a majority of Americans are not satisfied with the official accounting of your brother's murder. How do you present yourself to them - how do you appeal for their political support - when in a single week you first say that you know everything that is to be known about that murder and then ask protection from the possibility of being asked to inform a properly impaneled grand jury about what you know?

What you do with your own life, private or political, is entirely your own affair. What you do that affects the honor, integrity and, in the genuine sense, the security of the nation is a proper concern of all Americans. Therefore, this a letter to which I do request an answer.

I enclose a photocopy of the Associated Press story from which I have quoted, published in the Dallas Morning News of Tuesday, March 26. I ask that you confirm or deny the accuracy of what is there attributed to you.

If I do not hear from you, I will consider this affirmation.

In writing many other people of their performances when their country experienced such trying days, I have told them that if I can do nothing else, I can leave a record. If I am wrong, there will be no doubt it; I will have guaranteed its proof. If they are wrong, the same will be true. I consider it a minimum obligation to leave what record I can of the needless and exacerbating tragedies that followed the great one of the assassination. I do it at great personal cost.

It is precisely because I feel an obligation to society that I do as I have. This, also, is why I have written you. Naturally, I have no way of knowing whether a single one of the letters has reached you personally. I do know that each reached your office, for not a single one has been returned. I also know that my first two books reached your office, for I delivered them personally.

By this time, it must be clear to you or your staff that I have never asked anything of you and do not now. I have gone without income for four years, gone deep in debt, mortgaged my future and that of my wife, and in all likelihood considerably reduced the span of my life by the hours of my work. Perhaps the gas chambers meant more to me than they did to you.

And he was not my brother.

But he was - and is - the symbol and embodiment of the honor and integrity of all of us.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg