

NEW ADDRESS: Rt. 7, Frederick, Md. 21701:::301/473-8186

November 26, 1967

Senator Robert Kennedy
Senate Office Bldg.,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator Kennedy,

On the assumption you meant it when you said a few minutes ago that the man who acknowledges error is a bit wiser than the man who makes it, I am writing you for two purposes. If your staff has shown you the earlier letters I wrote, you may recall that I expect no answer. My purpose is to inform you. Like most public figures but perhaps in greater degree because of your greater activity, you know what your advisers want you to know. They have a vested interest in what you know -and do not know. Most of us do not practise the belief that acknowledgement of error is wisdom. Less likely than others, those who have made the error in advising and informing important public figures may fear the consequences of misinforming those by whom they are employed, particularly when the consequences to the personality may be very great.

From my own considerable experience in the field and from extensive contacts with many people, particularly electronic media people, I think I have a better understanding about public attitudes toward you and your position on your brother's murder than almost anyone else. My knowledge of the fact of the event and its official investigation is, I think, wider than any other's.

I have just returned from a trip across the country. I met many people, particularly students and the press. I spent three weeks in four major cities. Two things in the past year have, I believe, more than any others, served to hurt you politically. These are the fact that you had the pictures and X-rays of the autopsy in your possession and the manner and conditions of their return, and your attitude toward the Garrison investigation, particularly your seeing of Garvich and your blanket endorsement of Walter Sheridan. These may be related; I can only surmise. I have no doubt you did not have the knowledge required for these acts, for I think if you knew what I do, you'd have done otherwise.

In every appearance I make the question of your attitude toward an unsatisfactory inquiry that is to most people unacceptable comes up at least once and in at least one form. Often those conducting the program, particularly if it is on TV or radio, anticipate it because it is inevitable. Increasingly I find my effort to make your position as Attorney General comprehensible and say what I have written, that in disassociating yourself from active control over the investigation you served a national interest and that because of it there is now no question of a vindictive spirit, unsatisfactory to the questioners. When I say that it is understandable that you might find it too painful to have read the Warren report and those books on it, people say "I wouldn't if it had been my brother". I cannot and do not defend your handling of the pictures and X-rays, although I am in possession of evidence that I will publish when I can that I think may, to a degree, alter public understanding of the real situation and put you in a somewhat better light. I do have evidence that is supposed not to exist.

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Should my letters have reached you, which I doubt, or the same assistant, which may be more possible, I think it should be clear that in this correspondence, in which I have relieved you of the responsibility of reply, I have had no ulterior motive but seek only what I regard as the national good and, where they coincide, yours. You must be aware that I have made no public use of it, certainly not in any way to hurt you. And I have sought to direct you from further error.

At the moment, I believe a situation has been created that may be conducive to such error. There is, right now, an effort to popularize a theory that seems to be critical of the official investigation but, I believe, is in reality a ploy to seek acceptability for a variant of it that is neither defensible nor right. If I am as right as I think I am, there may be pressures to get behind it. For those who do, I believe the political cost will be great. For those who have personal involvements, they may be incalculable.

This is a rather limited approach that, even if it were right, could not serve the national interest. For those who might or might be tempted to associate themselves with it, there are other elements of which they may have no knowledge that will soon be in the public mind.

I have sent my books to you as they appear. I am satisfied no one on your staff has read them with an open mind. Had someone, I'd have heard before now. That is not my affair. Four of the projected seven-part study are now out. The fifth is written and will be published when I can risk the added debt. The others are researched and partly written. There is a very considerable body of evidence of which there is presently no public understanding - indeed, very few people know of its existence. My previous offers stand. I think your personal position is not as secure as it may seem to be and that developments in the immediate future may be less pleasant.

I would also like to suggest that there are those who have the reputation of being expert in the field and are accepted as expert and of mature and wise judgment without warrant. Today's papers carry a review of a book by a man who has had a reputation manufactured for him but who lacks the most elemental knowledge of the fact of both the tragedy and its official investigation. He postulates acceleration of the Presidential car at a time when even those who have just read the available literature should know the car did not accelerate. The taking of advice from those who have not explored the enormous data that is available and almost entirely unplumbed and the accepting of judgments from such sources is risky if not foolhardy.

My purpose in this letter is to alert you. I believe your close personal interest and the national interest now coincide. I also believe the time has past when disassociation will be accepted by most people. And I remain willing to help in any honorable way possible.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg