

5/3/75

Mr. Tom Susman, Counsel
Administrative Practices Subcommittee
Senate Office Bldg.,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Tom,

While I don't know when this can reach you and am confident it can't before the events I anticipate on Monday, I think it best to give you an idea of what does lie immediately ahead. By now you have enough background.

Bud Fensterwald, Dr. Cyril Wecht, Robert P. Smith, Herbert McDonnell and an Arizona University forensic pathologist named Joling are having a 9:30 a.m. press conference. Smith had been "research director" of Bud's Committee to Investigate Assassinations. Wecht (put him on his payroll as Alleghany County Coroner) and he collaborates with Wecht in what they shamelessly call their work on the assassinations. (Their record as investigators is that they could not find women in a bordello.)

I found out about this press conference after the end of the working day yesterday, from a friend who had been told by a magazine. This meant that only the weekend, no regular national-desk working days, shy before the conference.

And it is my belief that the result will be another Department of Disinformation operation. Adding to what I've told you about much of which, as you may have noticed, has come to pass. While we may hope that an honest man will yet figure in these new whitewashes and refuse to go along, the record to day is 100% to the opposite. And with many men who did cross the line into perjury, plus those who merely deceived.

I have no way of knowing what is planned for this conference. Those in it have been extremely careful to let nobody who talks to me know anything about it. They know my views. Several days ago, anticipating more from what he said in New York and other reports I'd picked up, I wrote Wecht a rather severe caution. What I expect is a big deal on the brain and a not illegal ripoff of what I've received in CA226-75, the spectro and NAA raw materials. Unless the government decided to hold back copies to all others who have asked, Wecht has to have these. McDonnell has the spectro because I wrote and asked him to be my expert and sent him copies. (I'd mentioned this to him in October.) He has not replied to me but phoned Jim Lesar and said he could not. He also has not returned what I sent him.

An ethical man would respect the rights of the litigant in this case, particularly with its known history and the fact that it has not reached final determination. Wecht also is a lawyer. But I'd not accuse him of being ethical where he can promote himself and his malpractice business. An honorable man would want to know all that can be known, not go public in what amounts to the theft of a decade of the most strenuous and costly effort.

Of course I do not want to be robbed of the fruit of all this labor. More at this juncture, I do not want any credibility imparted to those commercializers and self-seekers. It could be part of an enormous new misdirection of which I've already written you. I understand the last week's Village Voice spells this out. But giving these who to me are miserable ones any credibility will tend to give all their nonsense credibility, too, so I'm also worried about that.

I've been backgrounding people in the press on this. I've said that until I have written assurance (not provided) that I have been given 100% of what the government has it could be interpreted as unfair to release what I have. I guess one should never try to be fair with the kinds of people who have been in opposition and that is the cause of the present problem/situation.

Today I spent close to three hours on the phone giving George Lardner all the details he wanted, reading for him to make direct quotes, citing relevant documents and pictures in the printed evidence, etc. Earlier I had offered him/the Post copies of all I've gotten for them to do with as they please subject only to a hold until I made general release on getting the missing assurances. (Actually, Kelley wrote me what he wanted me to take as this assurance but it is semantical.) There is no doubt in my mind that if George did not see the major story I see he would not have spent all this time and more on his day off, the first nice weekend afternoon of the season.

My one stipulation was that the story appear Monday morning. I told him if he came up he could use my machine and copying paper.

We finished lunch time. He told me his desk editor would not be back before 2. He phoned me a little after 3 with the apology he'd had to do some grocery shopping. He was obviously embarrassed. First he said that the Post would not cover the press conference, which is irrelevant. So I asked him why they turned it down. He said it is because I have no scientific analysis of the figures. This also is irrelevant to the story I offered (the figures can be argued over) and the major story is the missing figures, the comparisons/tests not made, the missing evidence that is an indispensable of the official version. And the deliberateness of Hoover and the FBI in all of this, which extends to deliberate "mistakes."

The plain and simple fact is that no real tests were ever made and no results were ever compiled. I knew this would have to be the case or that I'd never, ever, get the material when I filed the suit the first time. The whole story was known to be false from the first. The problem was that the Commission felt it could never get away with Hoover's way around the fact. If you will look at the conclusions of Whitewash, the one with the blue cover, you will see that in his so-called definitive report of five volumes Hoover made no mention of one of JFK's wounds and none of a shot known to have been fired and to have missed entirely. (The new fakery is about this.)

(On the figures, where there are figures, there do seem to be significant differences but I can't afford to hire and rehire experts. They really are not necessary to the story and handling it that way would dilute the absolute horror of the whole thing.)

I needed George, impersonally for a while, embarrassing him more, until when I asked how the word "Watergate" ever got into the Post he said he'd write a story anyway and hand it in but to expect nothing.

The Chicago Daily News was not interested (in Chicago). The Star was to phone me back but has not. The Boston Globe (I got a dependable tip this week that they have developed an interest in the assassinations) has a recorded announcement and there has been no callback. Rugaber at the Times said nobody could call back before 4 p.m. tomorrow. The man I backgrounded at UPI appears to be away. We are trying a side door in New York and I expect a callback from a west coast radio reporter friend who may be able to do enough to make the wire from out there.

There isn't much more I can do along this line in the time remaining. I'm still pretty weak and would be in bed except for the expected call. So, I'll be at that Monday press conference.

What I'm pretty certain of is more obscenity about the brain and alleged suppression. I can handle that because Wecht's new evidence is also mine. When he was turned down long, many years, after I started working on that, he didn't even press an appeal. He may or may not be explicit in new anti-Kennedy propaganda but if he is counselled wisely and can control himself it will remain inherent. You should know that some of these people are, in private, bitterly anti-Kennedy. To them to hurt any Kennedy is a legitimate end.

We expect friends from Bethesda tomorrow. If there is an outgoing mail by the time they reach home there is a possibility this can reach you Monday morning. So, I again offer some unsolicited advice.

The Senator had no involvement in any of these arrangements. The transfer in the document was on April 26, 1965. It was not to any Kennedy. Bobby never refused the Warren Commission anything. Ever. (I have records to the contrary.) This material never passed out of government control. (I don't think it would be wise to be too defensive or to appear to be.) And despite the reports to the contrary, the Warren Commission did have the autopsy film. (Pictures only mentioned in the executive session of 1/21/64, Whitewash IV, p. 133 but they also had the X-rays. I have official records on this and have interviewed the official who showed them to the Commission staff, which has lied and/or been silent through all of this.) During the life of the Warren Commission the FBI and the Secret Service had possession of 100% of the existing evidence, including 100% of the autopsy material.

Especially because they all combined to pin responsibility for suppressions on the Kennedy family I'd go farther and ask why any Senator should be without confidence in the FBI, the Secret Service and the ~~many~~ eminent members of the Warren Commission, which included no Kennedy man, or its prestigious staff, headed by a former Solicitor General of the United States.

Remember, LBJ appointed a five-to-two Republican majority and the two Democrats, Russell and Boggs, were both Southern Democrats. Rankin also is a Republican. The Republican House Minority Leader was a member. Should a Senator not have faith in the integrity of such men?

If Lardner can break through the line of that special branch of the executive branch that I've found at the Post, the edge will be taken off what these self-seekers are up to. And if I can't do what I'll try to do at this press conference, I'll try to hold one of my own as soon as possible.

If you didn't know it, Ken O'Donnell invited Ben Bradlee to attend the autopsy at Bethesda, where both were. Bradlee declined. How all of history could have been different if he had not is set forth in Post Mortem. About April, 1966 I personally gave Bradlee what I've referred to above, the Hoover omission of one wound and one shot, in xeroxes of the Hoover report. So despite all his current comment in plugging his book he knows better. I have difficulty explaining his position and the policy of the paper.

I hope this turns out to be less nasty than I can see it being. For me at the very best it means the theft or the giving away of years of uncompensated work if not also a completed book. But I see no choice if we are not to relive a very unpleasant history.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

P.S. Judge Pratt's intimate understanding of the new amendments and his consistency with them yesterday might interest you. We had interrogatories ready, the government wanted to offer their own affidavits instead, ~~and~~ after Jim cited the record of previous lying and deception, getting it into the record in documents, and they are now to answer the interrogatories in half the time they wanted. They can't not answer and they can't answer honestly. I am hopeful that the frightful mess can now start coming apart honestly but because of this potential I am even more troubled by the intrusions of these commercializers. I have about 5,000 words more of explanations and draft questions for Jim. It is close to inevitable that their responses will require further interrogatories, too.