

10/10/68

Dear Miss Klausner,

Your letter of October 8, which is kind and friendly, and Gordon's high opinion of you, impel my candor.

I want nothing of you. You cannot take me on as a client, which is what I had asked of Gordon, therefore, no request. My purpose in writing was to inform you. You may begin by considering me a prejudiced source. I do not believe this is the case.

One of the major problems those of us doing serious work on the assassinations and their investigation have had to cope with is the irresponsible writing, which misinforms people and provides the target for the powerful other side. No single major error, for example, has been charged to me. Charles Roberts wrote an entire book attacking us, including me, without a single quotation from my writing. His technique, not his alone, was to say "Lane and Weisberg say", and he'd quote Lane, not Weisberg, or "Epstein and Weisberg claim", and he'd quote only Epstein. It is effective. That side gets the media attention. I was never able, not once, to get air time to answer Roberts, Sparrow, etc.

Joesten has brought nothing new to light. He is busy writing the most horrible conjectures he conjures into fact, using the material of others without credit when he thinks he can get away with it. He has used mine. From the internal evidence of "Oswald The Truth" (which is anything but that) he does not even have the 26 volumes of published evidence! He accomplishes those impossible things others would not attempt, like libelling the Dallas police.

So you will not misunderstand, I have always and often credited him with an important function, asking those questions that had to be asked. Some of them were right. Today, his first book is a horror. For its day, it was important. There was little else a writer could do. We are in his debt for his effort. That day, however, is past. Gordon will confirm that as soon as I read this book (which I did not do for Dawney, who had by then published it, but for Horne, which was considering US distribution) I told him that if he could gracefully, to withdraw my OSWALD IN NEW ORLEANS, which Dawney was considering. I didn't want even that association with Joesten. His, I regret to say, is my honest opinion of his writing. I would rather have had my book unpublished in England than bracketed with his. I fear its appearance in the United States will be very harmful to the work we do, to what we hope to achieve. This need not interfere with your efforts as an agent, which have nothing to do with the content of what you seal. But in fairness to you, I wanted you to have this opinion. If his work is published, I might well sue for plagiarism. I think I can prove it. I have come to the point where I just cannot sit back and silently let others steal, endlessly. I know this sounds like paranoia or an inflated ego, but I am confident Gordon knows enough to assure you I am not so motivated. I have arranged counsel against Meredith for their "Weight of the Evidence", an advance copy of which I have, pub date 10/25, and I think it may not be necessary to go to court.

I would have done so sooner had I been able to. My five years of this, without subsidy or income, have put me so deep in debt I doubt I can ever break even. If I am to justify this, the kind of life we lead, the hours I invest, in the quest for truth and what that means, must be consistent. It has come to the point where some of those pretending to be on our side, who may be serious, but who are damaging, uninformed and wrong, may also have to be opposed, openly. If I come to that decision, I will do it. I have an entire book written about a so-called "critic" who may ruin us all. If I reach the conclusion this is likely, I will try and do something with that book. If the day doesn't come, it will be an unpublished book, an historical record.

As I believe I told you, were the Dallas police subpoena me as a witness, I would have to testify in their favor in a suit against whoever published "Oswald The Truth". I also tell you I do not believe they will sue because what they really did is so beyond justification. However, I am confident Joesten did libel them.

Chandler is different. I think you will have little difficulty with his book, especially if it can be handled fast. I will be opposed to it for a different reason. He has become Garrison's enemy. He is, quite publicly, Clay Shaw's friend. Thinking he is right, he will be wrong. Whether or not he likes Garrison, whether or not Garrison has given him cause for this personal feeling, there is no doubt in my mind that on the New Orleans case he has taken to court, Garrison is on solid ground. I doubt if Chandler knows any of the fact. He is true to a friend, opposed to an enemy. I have some unpublished evidence I developed after writing my New Orleans book that convinces me even more. I have also always suspected that with the simple code he used, minor errors, Oswald has Chandler in his address book, as "Crawford". If this is the case, I believe Chandler has been silent about it. One of the editors of LIFE agreed with this hunch. I am on the trail of data which may provide an definitive answer. That, too, need not concern you. It fascinates me, however, if a writer was in Oswald's notebook, may have been sought out by him, and says nothing.

I have no time for such letters. I ask and expect you to do nothing about this one. I write it intending only to inform you, for if I am correct, you may be getting involved in something that could be unpleasant. So, I took time.

If you have any questions, I will answer you as honestly and frankly as I can. I leave on a trip soon. I expect to be in the New York area about 11/22, if I can be of any help to you. Between now and my departure, I will not be able to do the work I must before I leave and I will be even more clogged when I return, with three weeks of notes to type, tapes to transcribe, letters to catch up on, over and above the behind-schedule writing. I seek no extra work. If you regard anything you may ask of me as help, I will be glad to help you.

Many thanks for your kind wishes.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

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October 8, 1968

Mr. Harold Weisberg
Coq d'Or Press
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Frederick, Md. 21701

Dear Mr. Weisberg:

I have your letter of October 2. I have been acquainted with you and your books by way of Television interviews.

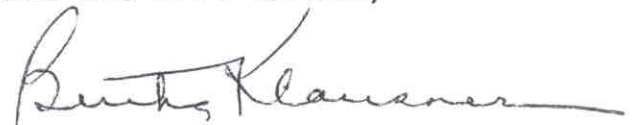
It is interesting to note that you reviewed Joesten's book for Dawnay.

I agree with your sentiments regarding the Kennedy assassination. It is interesting to me to find someone like yourself carrying on a one man crusade and I do hope that your disclosures will be well founded and bring you just reward.

I would like to know more about what you wish me to consider before I can commit myself.

As Gordon Harbord told you, I am now absorbed with finding publishers for my clients' work and do not want to compete in that area.

With all best wishes,


Bertha Klausner

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