

March 3, 1969

Mr. Aaron Kohn
Metropolitan Crime Commission
New Orleans, La.

Dear Mr. Kohn,

C
O
P
Y

On my many trips to New Orleans and in my reading of your papers, I have oft noted your proclamations of rampant syndicated crime in New Orleans and equally loud assertions Jim Garrison's investigation was fraudulent. Among those things that characterized your charges was a consistent lack of specification. Therefore, when a mutual friend suggested we meet, I told him if this was your desire, I would be happy, but your open partisanship was such I felt you would find an overture from me unwelcome. Having heard nothing further, I presume either this friend agreed with me and said nothing to you or you told him you had no such desire.

For the past few days our local electronic media have been redolent with your repeated and customarily unsubstantiated charges, this time coupled with the appeal that Garrison resign. If there is one thing you know from your long feud with him it certainly is that the thing he is least likely to do is to resign, especially under fire. Therefore, I presume you are again engaging in propoganda, but another facet of the unended one with which I have been familiar. This is hardly a proper course for one connected with an organization ostensibly dedicated to civic virtue and betterment. Nor would one expect him allegedly staunch in his opposition to crime to demand the resignation of each prosecutor each time a jury rendered a verdict against the prosecution. When your partisanship is such that it extorts from you what is not characteristic of one in your position, I ask myself "why"?

Therefore, I am writing you, because some of the information that came to my attention in New Orleans seems to involve you. If you are parti pris, in any way, no matter how remote, with your own course of conduct so clear and loud, is it not proper for you to consider resigning your post?

It is my information that you were instrumental in bringing the late Guy Banister to New Orleans to assume his official position. It is also my information he was one of the most vicious, most virulent racists in a part of the land in which competition for this distinction was abundant and keen. In addition, although there was official care to keep him from being a witness, even to prevent a personal interview with him, he was part of the investigation of the murder of John Kennedy, albeit a much smaller part than he should have been. In simplistic terms, comprehensible to either side in the controversy surrounding that investigation, it is he who arranged for the use of office space by the CIA organized and funded Cuban Revolutionary Council, the address later used by Lee Harvey Oswald on his literature and by Sergio Arfacha Smith in his funds solicitations. This is by no means all of Banister's involvement. He was much involved with Ferrie, who was blatant in his calling for the murdered President's murder.

Nor does that seem to be the end. But is this not enough for the man represented to me as the one whose going to New Orleans seems to have been your doing.

I anticipate that I may again be writing about what did and did not happen in New Orleans, therefore I ask your comment, your affirmation or denial, as specific as possible and with whatever detail you elect to offer.

Please understand that I am not attributing to you the holding of Banister's Hitlerian beliefs and philosophy. Yet so often lately, deeply as I have been concerned about what I believe involves our national integrity and freedom, our national honor and our future, I have become conscious of the unfortunate capacity of our people to spew up those more dedicated to personal profit or careers than to those things I hold more important. If this is not a characteristic of our people alone, I lament it because so often our people are thus motivated. If it did not begin in Biblical days, it did not end at Auschwitz, either.

Alas, Mr. Kohn, we have not seen the last Judenrat.

May I add a postscript that may enable you to get even more publicity, which seems to be one of your dominating objectives? That suggestion is that you read carefully, with even more than the knowledge one should ~~be~~ presumed you have of the fact of the Kennedy assassination to be so vigorous in your demand for Garrison's resignation, the report of the autopsy at Bethesda Hospital, the subsequent report to the then-Attorney General by these same doctors and the still-later report of the special panel Attorney General Clark convoked. No honest man can read these with any knowledge of the fact and remain silent. No man with a penchant for calling for resignations, with the knowledge easily extracted from this reading, would be able to bridle his instincts.

These demands an honest, concerned man would then make would get you headlines. It might not endear you to your source of income, but it would make a genuine patriot of you, a man sincerely interested in justice, a man really fighting crime.

It has disturbed me, Mr. Kohn, that for a man fighting crime, or at least saying so and getting paid for so saying, if not doing, you have not interested yourself in two of the greatest crimes in history.

The first is the unsolved murder of John Kennedy.

The second is its fraudulent investigation.

Surely you must know enough of the essential facts, for you have been so vocal. No man can make any inquiry without becoming depressed with the most obvious, superficial aspect of this "investigation", that it would not have survived exposure in a haven of tank-town justice.

But as our people produced the Judenrat, so they produced the silent - the selectively - and successful - silent.

Sincerely yours,

Harold Weisberg