

FROM: Duke Lane, 76004,2356  
TO: Dave AAPerry, 71051,2073  
DATE: 8/28/94 4:19 AM

Re: WASHINGTON POST, FREE FOR ALL

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The following letter appeared in today's Washington Post and I thought it would be of some interest.  
STEVE

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MORE UNFOUNDED THEORIES ABOUT LEE HARVEY OSWALD  
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After reading your Aug. 7 article "The Fourth Tramp: Oswald's Lost Cellmate and the Gunrunners of Dallas" [Outlook], in which my name is mentioned, I found it to be a case of *deja vu*. I have been involved in the Kennedy assassination investigation since its inception. First, as a Marine officer, I was assigned to assist the FBI while it was conducting a detailed inquiry into Lee Harvey Oswald's military background at the Marine Corps Air Facility, New River, N.C.

Many years later, as FBI assistant director in charge of criminal investigations, it was my responsibility to follow up and take appropriate action on the findings and recommendations of the House Select Committee on Assassinations. I recommended to then-Director William Webster and the Department of Justice that we seek a third opinion from the National Academy of Sciences regarding the disputed acoustical evidence of an alleged fourth shot. The National Academy of Sciences' study concurred with the findings of the FBI's technical staff that there was no fourth shot recorded in the questioned Dallas Police Department radio tape.

Since May 1991, I have been the special agent in charge of the FBI's Dallas division, and it has been my responsibility to conduct any additional investigation warranted in the Kennedy case, as alleged evidence and new documents have been brought to light. For instance, when the Dallas Police Department records were moved from police headquarters to the Dallas City Archives, arrest records on "the three tramps" were discovered. I ordered a search for these three individuals. We found not and interviewed two of the men and verified the death of the third. Our investigation showed no link between "the three tramps" and the Kennedy assassination. We also interviewed Dr. Charles Crenshaw, co-author of the book 'JFK---Conspiracy of Silence,' published in 1992, and found that he had a minuscule role in the treatment of President Kennedy at Parkland Hospital and had no pertinent facts to add to the case.

Much of what Ray and Mary La Fontaine report never occurred. A review of public documents easily refutes many key aspects of their story.

The LaFontaines quote John Elrod in their article as saying he had a brief conversation with Lee Harvey Oswald in the Dallas City Jail late on the afternoon of Nov. 22, 1963. According to the La Fontaines, Elrod told the same story to the FBI 30 years ago, in August 1964.

But it was a different story he told the FBI eight months after the Kennedy assassination. At the time Elrod was incarcerated in a Tennessee jail; a sergeant in the Memphis sheriff's office wrote the FBI that Elrod had come to his office claiming that he had information about the assassination, but when the FBI interviewed Elrod, his story was vague and contradictory.

Elrod, a self-professed alcoholic, told the FBI that he had been troubled by the events that occurred after the Kennedy assassination. Elrod recounted being arrested by the Dallas Police Department shortly after the assassination and placed in cell 10 in the Dallas City Jail with a cellmate whose name he could not recall. Elrod told the agents that his cellmate saw and recognized another inmate in the jail hallway. The inmate whom Elrod's cellmate recognized was someone the cellmate had met at a meeting at a motel. According to Elrod's 1964 account, his cellmate had witnessed at the motel meeting, several men receiving money, and one of the men was driving a Thunderbird filled with guns. The inmate in the jail hallway was that man. Elrod also vaguely recalled the cellmate mentioning, sometime during their time together, that one of the men at the motel meeting was Jack Ruby. But he couldn't identify his cellmate, and he told FBI agents he couldn't remember much because of his excessive use of alcohol. Miraculously, 30 years later, he now can identify his mystery cellmate as Lee Harvey Oswald.

The new Elrod story, as told by the La Fontaines, is inaccurate. Had the La Fontaines examined public documents, they would have found that Oswald was placed in cell number F-2, one of three maximum security cells, at approximately 12:20 a.m. on Nov. 23, 1963. More important, one of Oswald's ever-present police escorts while in the Dallas City Jail has recently confirmed that he was under strict orders to see that Oswald was never placed in a cell with any other prisoners. Prisoner telephone records during Oswald's stay in the Dallas City Jail also confirm F-2 as Oswald's cell. Therefore, it is clear that Elrod, in cell 10, was not in a cell with Oswald and certainly not on the afternoon of Nov. 22, 1963.

Most misleading is the La Fontaine's question, "Is it possible that Lee Oswald was the informant who tipped off the FBI about the gun deal on Nov. 18, 1963?" There is no evidence that Lee Harvey Oswald was an informant for the FBI, nor is there any evidence that Oswald knew anything about a gunrunning operation in Dallas during that time.

---Oliver "Buck" Revell

The writer is special agent in charge of the Dallas Division of the FBI.

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