

Jeff Morley, Outlook  
The Washington Post  
1150 15 St., NW  
Washington, DC 20071

8/30/94

Dear Jeff,

Your letter did not come until today. I'd like to have time to make a full response but with the newest deterioration in my health I do not want to take that much time from what I am trying to do.

I did not know you had anything to do with the La Fontaine piece so I could not as you say have been treating you as an idiot. I treated them as mythologizers, not ~~idiot~~ idiots, and I do not see how that at best peripheral stuff represents "trying to ~~do~~ uncover the truth about the assassination."

Assuming that the ammunition said to have been used in the assassination came from Eisen, and it is only an assumption that the ammo said to have been used, actually was, they sell to anyone. *Could they not have sold him that rifle for less?*

Of all that you could have used on what certainly was and will be the "difficult task of convincing (your) paper's timid leadership that the assassination must be properly investigated," what you used could hardly have been more poorly chosen and there is and always has been solid work available. You may have done more harm than good. That piece at best has a tidbit about Oswald and no more and it is not about the assassination at all.

You talk about those who read the piece in advance. May I suggest that you could have asked me and gotten a reaction to which you could have responded? ~~And I think from a single hasty reading of your letter with a highlighter to tell me what to return to you did not?~~ Yet you say of me, "Your wealth of knowledge and constructive criticism could help them." Is that why they did not seek it?

You ~~are~~ <sup>are</sup> two-dimensional in this. I try to tell young ones first to ask themselves ~~or ask themselves~~ if something is reasonable and if it passes that test, is it possible. Unless they know what I do not (which is to say nothing about what they do not know and have not tried to learn) their piece flunks both tests.

More, that kind of stuff does enormous harm precisely because it is so vulnerable and of so little meaning, if any, even if true.

I do not know the La Fontaines. They have never been in touch with me. But over the years I have been plagued by that kind of at best scrimshaw and I've a belly full of FBI records circulated inside the government blowing such stuff up and using it to convince others of the official mythology. I've wasted countless weeks responding to mail about such rot and much time in the ~~past~~ past answering reporter questions about it. This is not the first hurtful thing to get attention and get deceive and mislead people, including editors.

Any responsible in-depth reporting about the assassination and its investigations requires more than being titillated by what is taken to be a provocative record. It does require knowledge of a great amount of information that nobody doing any writing in the field takes the time to learn about. Most never even ask about it. The La Fontaines are no exception.

From my perspective selling the editors of the Post something like that gives them an excuse, well they did publish something, and an excuse to stop there. And ignore what does relate to the assassination and its investigations. *as they always have.*

Unless you can show me something of real significance that I do not see in what I regard as a hurtful and misleading article you have no chance of interesting me in their work. Particularly not when the time I have left is so little and there is so much I want to get on paper. Especially about the great mass of what was so publishable and so hurtful. Otherwise it would not have been published.

I am trying to perfect the record for our history to the degree possible for me. If I get anything contradicting what I wrote I will put it, as I will you/letter, in the file on their article for the record.

Perhaps their earlier reporting on gun-runners was worthwhile. I've not seen it.

Nor do I see any connection with the JFK assassination except in the <sup>mid</sup>s of those who alchemize theories into fact, those who begin with preconceptions and have made no effort to check them out, and those who have not taken or been able to take the time to get a good grasp of the fact that has been established to be able to determine whether or not there is any relevance.

I had no reason to even suspect that you had anything to do with the publication of that piece. If I had I'd have written you privately. All I knew about it in advance is that when Jim Lesar phoned Hil and I answered the phone he told me it was coming, in the sense that he regarded it as important.

At best, two-dimensional and not an assassination story.

Have you any idea how all this guff confuses people even more than the official mythology does? Or how that helps the immune to now official miscreants?

I saw no story in today's paper about Revell's firing. If you have anything on that I'll appreciate it. For file. I've had nothing to do with him.

I've just gotten the Posner paperback. If when he is back Frank wants to have some fun, I can help him. I've made just a few small checks. I probably will not do any more. But he not only makes no refutation of anything in Case Open, although he did make a major change over it, what little he says about me in his note for that edition is to his knowledge false. Case Open is my fifth book to begin with commercial publication, once in Italy, and my commercial reprints are also five. Rather than "dismal" sales the first Dell print of Whitewash was 250,000, reprinted three times and for six months it was their only best-selling work of non-fiction. Best wishes,

*Harold*



# The Washington Post

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25 August

Dear Harold,

Thanks for your letter of 8/19. I think your point that the official investigation offers no leads is well-taken.

I have also received your letter to Jodie Allen and your critique of the "Fourth Tramp." I leave to the LaFontaines to respond in detail; I need to reread it because you characteristically have marshalled a large amount of evidence and passion.

I must protest your tone though. You persist in treating the LaFontaines (and me) as idiots. Naturally, I think you are wrong but, more importantly, I think it does no service to serious researchers trying to uncover the truth about the assassination. It is simply stupid to attack us for not reading the FBI memo on Elrod. We had in detail, repeatedly. We didn't omit or conceal Elrod's alcoholism; we noted it and said his testimony had to be treated with caution. You dismiss the possibility that Elrod's story could be true without really dealing with how it matched Ellsworth's description of

the case; you don't deal with the fact that Masen, ~~was~~ <sup>would be</sup> the recipient of the guns transported on Nov. 18, 1963, just so happened to have provided the ammunition used in the shooting; you foolishly impute to the Lafontaine's the view that the Nov. 18, 1963 gun deal was supplying weapons for the 2nd invasion of Cuba, something that they never said and don't believe.

At the risk of being impertinent Mr. Weisberg, grow up! We're all in this together. You have no monopoly on insight into the assassination. You have done heroic work on the assassination and every one of us is in your debt. We acknowledge that and hope to accomplish what you hope to accomplish: finding the truth. You can help us in this effort by providing constructive criticism, not a torrent of abuse which hurts me in the already terribly difficult task of convincing this paper's timid leadership that the assassination must be properly investigated. Your superior tone and sweeping dismissal are personally hurtful.



to me, a great admirer of yours, and professionally damaging to a rare Washington journalist who, with his own limited resources and fallible judgement, hopes to continue your work. It also calls into question your own judgement because people whose work on this subject you respect (Jeff Frank, George Lardner, Paul Hoch and John Newman) all read the 4th Tramp before publication and did not object to its appearance in the Washington Post. Are they all fools and idiots who have acquiesced in the publication of nonsense? I don't think so and I don't think you do either.

That doesn't mean the story is perfect or that all its speculations are warranted; the LaFontaines are more than capable of defending their work. Your wealth of knowledge and constructive criticism could help them and me advance this story, though, and that is what I earnestly wish for. There is a difference between a prevaricator like Posner and good reporters like the LaFontaines. The LaFontaines and I certainly do not deserve

the same kind of invective that you properly give Posner. Please.

I will re-read your critique carefully and try to learn from it not take it personally. I will also try to provide you more information that did not appear in the story that indicates just how fruitful the ~~the~~ LaFontaine's work is. I hope to gain your support for their work. ~~I~~ I believe that their reporting of previously unknown events in Dallas (the nexus of CIA-paid anti-castro Cubans and the Masen-Nante gun-runners) is converging with John Newmans reporting on the recently declassified CIA files to open up an entirely new perspective on the Kennedy assassination.

Help us. Do not insult us.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ray and Mary LaFontaine". The signature is highly stylized and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

cc: Ray and Mary LaFontaine  
Paul Hoch