

NEW ADDRESS: Rt. 7, Frederick, Md. 21701:::301/473-8186
12/1/67

Dear Mr. Lerner,

When I am able to risk the additional debt to publish the fifth part of my study of the Warren Commission and the assassination (MUST MORTEM: THE SUPPRESSED KENNEDY AFFAIR), perhaps you will recall these words from your very kind review:

"...I confess that I cannot see a deliberate government plot to cover up the crime and protect the criminals".

May I suggest that trying to analyze the performance of the federal investigative agencies and the Commission staff in terms of a conscious plot, an organized and conscious conspiracy, can prevent understanding of what really happened. This is a diversion commenced early by those who pretend to defend the Commission, particularly the Commissioners. If they succeed any more than they have, the existing and I think reasonable defense will no longer be credited.

What troubles you also perplexed me as I began my by now really enormous research. The conclusion I initially reached is in the introduction of WHITENASH, which dates to mid-February 1968, when the book was completed. In all such bodies, the real work is done by the staff, though the Commissioners, in this case, bear the ultimate responsibility. When I had progressed through the vast typed swamp of the Commission's files to the point represented by WHITENASH II, I was satisfied that, as I say in the Epilogue, the members of the Commission were spoon-fed a predigested pabulum. I was by then also convinced that there was no doubt about the cover-up by the FBI and the Secret Service. Hence the subtitle: "The FBI-Secret Service Coverup". Why this coverup may be a question (I am satisfied I know the answer), but of the fact of it the thousands of pages of once-secret documents I now have leave no doubt of the fact of it. As I suggest in OSWALD IN NEW ORLEANS, it is to hide the involvement (that could have been involuntary) of the CIA. It could also be because the initial story of the Dallas police had achieved such thorough acceptance in the press that no one in the government was about to disturb it.

If you have read my most suppressed book, PHOTOGRAPHIC WHITENASH: SUPPRESSED KENNEDY ASSASSINATION PICTURES, I think you will have no doubt that there was a coverup. I sent you one when I published it.

The sequence in which I wrote these books may help explain your proper comment about the "chaotic disorder". It was completed in early April of this year. It was the third of my series, then subtitled "CIA Whitewash". The publisher with whom I had a contract had agreed to accept a rough draft so I could complete my work. He was to edit it. Instead, he backed out. My agent (I finally got one who would handle this subject), after trying all the houses that could bring the book out fast, made the arrangement with the Canyon subsidiary of Perillax. By then I had written and published PHOTOGRAPHIC WHITENASH. Canyon found the 200,000 manuscript too long. Their editor had to be hospitalized in the middle of the reading and I fear much of the shortening was done with shears. They had little choice. You see, I wrote this book completely independently of Jim Garrison. While I had been helping him from the first of the year (which enabled me to background and brief Bob Scott without telling him what I expected to break into the news), I had received nothing from him. I postponed the request that I testify before the grand jury until 19 days after the ms was in the mail. It was then that I met Jim for the first time. My purpose was to preserve his integrity and mine. No one can now say I printed what I

if ~~is~~ in his files. My work is entirely my own, so I presume the references will show a careful reader. The original concept of the book included an appendix that is in itself book-length, about 400 pages of largely once-secret documents. At the 95¢ price and in pocketbook format, this was financially and mechanically impossible. However, if the book is a success (and the need for improvising distribution impedes that), we do plan to print the completed edition, which then will be carefully edited. Unfortunately, because I have had to be my own publisher and because I perform all the writing and publishing chores while continuing my investigation, all my published books are really my first drafts. Here again, an explanation of what you can rightly call "chaotic sequence."

Perhaps when you understand that my writing in this field now approximates a million words and that I had a third of a million words of notes typed before I wrote the first book, you can see the size of the problem. Its consequences are clear. I am, if I may apologize, but one man and there is but so much I can do with the very long days I work.

There is a purpose in the "endless diversions". Perhaps they are bad style. But you will find each of them an elliptical reference point for the future. I began this with WHITENASH, when I did not know what would follow. That was, in both writing and appearance, the first book on the subject. Throughout it you will find what I planted for those who might later read it, little hints and suggestions of what I could not then prove or could not then be certain. At no point do I know how long I can continue what I am doing or will have to stop. The physical and financial toll have been very great. So, although right now I have the fifth book completed and the sixth and seventh largely done, I must think of each as the last I might do, and I try and cram all I can into each. Since the assassination, I have averaged a better than 18-hour working day. For most of the period I averaged better than 20 hours, seven days a week. I still go through the day once in a while without getting into bed. When the work is going well and my mind is clear, I am captive; I cannot stop. Sometimes, also, I do this while making my infrequent personal appearances, when there is an all-night radio show available.

I didn't intend to wander so, to try and explain as much. I do, very much, appreciate the kind things you said. I have seen very few in print. Not one of my books has ever had a review entirely of it in any publication, even the minor magazines. In all, but a single ad has been placed for any of them, a small one by Dell when it reprinted WHITENASH. Besides thanking you, I also wanted to suggest you think in terms of the coverup not being the consequence of a conscious conspiracy.

And I also want you to know that I have every document cited in each of my books. Should you ever want to see one, please ask for it and I'll send you a photocopy. It is almost a futility to suggest it, but if you look in the appendix of PHOTOGRAPHIC WHITENASH, you can get an idea of the thoroughness of my documentation. It is a futility because there are only two wholesalers in the entire country who have any copies at all. If there is any wholesaler who is also a salesman, I have yet to meet him. The book is almost entirely unavailable. My own opinion is that it is a very important one. We sell them by mail, by a simple flyer (enclosed) that we send with each letter and order. When you read this, I think you will see the beginnings of what you have also seen recently in major magazines. A "buff" friend is continuing my work on the suppressed pictures, I think magnificently, better than I could. Ultimately, we will, as a result, know much more about them and see more of them. The photographic proof of Oswald's innocence already exists. It was in the possession of the FBI (PHOTOGRAPHIC WHITENASH 125-33;278-81).

Whether or not you agree with me is not important (naturally, I do hope you eventually will agree with me). What is important is that we have a dialogue on this, for it is the touchstone issue of the day. Everything flows from it, for there is no change of Presidency without change of policy. So, I thank you also for the time, attention and space that you give the subject.

Please excuse my haste and the normal bad character of my typing.

Sincerely,