

Dear Jim,

9/4/91

Sorry to hear AARC is in such a fix. You did a very generous thing. Sorry we are not in a position to help. Hope you succeed against the odds. Very good letter if a letter can help do it.

For a couple of months we've had some extra expenses, medical not covered by Medicare and thus not by our insurance and for the need I'll explain, food.

Gradually Lil was having more and more trouble getting around and + developed a weakness in the less damaged leg and thigh. When the family doctor was indifferent I saw an orthopaedic man. He diagnosed and with X-rays confirmed spinal stenosis and bone spurs in the lower area. He also sent me to a physical therapist. Who did wonders. So I suggested to Lil that she see the orthopaedist. The family doctor had had X-rays made years ago and the radiologist told him, as we may have told you, that Lil had arthritis from her neck to her toes. I suggested to Lil that she see if she could get such a referral. First the ortho. wanted the old X-rays, they do not exist, so we got and took him the report on them. He said that was not what his examination showed. So he had X-rays and she also has spinal stenosis. (And the wrong medication for years!) He referred her and the physical therapy was like magic. Discharged her yesterday and she sees the doctor next week. Had been in a wheel chair for several weeks, then needed a walker and then a cane and now does not need anything like them.

I also sprained a foot, it and the ankle swelled, the therapy removed the stenosis symptoms and those of the sprain rather rapidly and then most of the ankle swelling. Scar tissue about the size of a third of a gold ball remains and I'm still in therapy. Had to use a cane all the time for about a month and now only on early-morning walking. I could always move around and drive so when Lil was worst off I went to the Korean restaurant whose owners have become friends and brought our meals home. Now we go there, last night to celebrate her good news. We are both much weaker, not all from the years. From inactivity.

In recent weeks I've had increasing difficulty using my better eye from which the cataract was removed several years ago, now having more trouble with glare than with the cataract. But in June at Hopkins I was told I did not have to return absent some development, confirmed by local ophthalmologist. I had been told that what I think is called a sac had formed, that that is not unusual, that it could be removed easily with a laser, and that it was not then indicated for me. Two months ago the local doctor said this again. No change in lenses although right now I'm using a prescription at least 15 years old for close work, probably older. When it got to where sometimes I could not even read at home with the better eye (they do not track together and I have no double vision) I saw the local and he

suggested that I consult Hopkins. Heard today the earliest the specialist who removed the cataract, chief of corneal surgery, will see me the 30th. Fortunately Lil's younger sister now lives in Frederick and drives me there. I'll be there the 18th for a urological appointment. They are injecting something monthly in the hope of eliminating the need for another prostate job generally referred to as a rororooter job. So far no benefit apparent after three shots. Urologist there says give it six months. I'm willing and I hope the prostate is, too. Believe it or not, the injected material costs four times as much as the complete examination, almost \$400. Hopkins discontinued it (for most people and officially) a month ago because Medicare and insurers had given them a loss on what was not paid for. We face that, too. Fortunately, after the cataract was removed and I had the right eye covered I learned that although I had to hold what I read closer and it ~~was~~ appeared smaller, I can read with the left eye. When I can't use the right, I do that now.

If you've not heard, a DC outfit is to publish Jimmy's new book. They've arranged an appearance for Jerry on Inside Edition (I turned them down) and for Barbara Walters to interview Jimmy on 20/20. I had a phone call from the NY office last week. I told her about you and how to phone you. You should have heard by now.

The computer disks are I suppose the modern technology that Hood is getting and will use to make what they have, including from me, available to others. I've not inquired into the details because I wouldn't understand them anyway. Jerry knows them. And the new library building, which looks fine, is almost finished. They have other plans for making stuff available I've not inquired into and understood only partly when Jerry told me.

Best to you all,



ASSASSINATION ARCHIVES AND RESEARCH CENTER

918 F. ST. N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004
(202) 393-1917

August 28, 1991

Dear Friend of the AARC:

Last April I had the sad duty to inform friends of the Assassination Archives and Research Center ("the AARC") that its founder and first president, Bud Fensterwald, Jr., had died. Now I urgently write to inform you of the dire financial condition of the AARC. Unless we can raise a substantial amount of money soon, we will have to cease operations. To avert this, I am asking you to send whatever contributions you can afford.

The AARC owed its existence these past seven years to Bud's extraordinary generosity. He spent some \$50,000 a year on the AARC, as well as much time and energy. He obviously wanted the AARC to continue after his death. His will provides that AARC is to receive a share of a trust fund established by his father. Unfortunately, the trust contains a provision preventing the AARC from obtaining the principal during the life of Bud's sister.

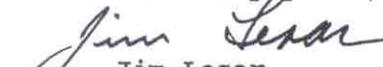
If the AARC is to remain open, all of us are going to have to emulate Bud's generosity to the extent we can. Some already have indicated their support by pledging to give monthly sums ranging from \$50 to \$100 a month. If others care enough to make similar pledges, in greater or lesser amounts, then the AARC will survive.

Donations must begin soon if they are to really help. I have paid most of the July and all of the August rent out of my own pocket. Unlike Bud, I am not wealthy; the two payments I have made, totalling \$2650, represent a very substantial part of my income this year. I cannot continue to support the AARC more than another month. And I must know by September 10th how much financial support I can expect from you, because the landlord is requiring the AARC to enter a new lease by that date.

I enclose a brief memo giving some information about the AARC and some ideas and plans which I believe will enable it to expand its services to members while also improving its financial base.

If the AARC is to survive, I need all the help I can get from every friend of the AARC who cares. Please give as generously as you can.

Sincerely yours,


Jim Lesar
President, AARC

MEMORANDUM REGARDING THE PAST AND FUTURE OF THE AARC

In 1984 Bud Fensterwald and I founded the Assassination Archives and Research Center ("AARC"). We wanted to establish a central repository of documents which would collect, preserve and disseminate information on political assassinations. To this end, the AARC also collects materials on subjects broadly related to the study of political assassinations, such as intelligence organizations, intelligence activities, organized crime figures, narcotics trafficking and extremist political groups.

The initial holdings of the AARC came largely from Bud's personal library and the documents collected by his old Committee to Investigate Assassinations. Today the AARC's holdings comprise more than 2,000 books and over one-half million pages of records. This unique archive attracts visitors almost daily. Members of the news media frequently draw on its resources, either to obtain documents and photographs or to get in contact with researchers.

There is currently a resurgence of interest in conspiracies generally, and in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in particular. With the thirtieth anniversary of Kennedy's murder barely two years away, with new books and television programs being planned, the need for the AARC is obvious.

At present the AARC is most useful to those who can visit us and spend some time rummaging in our files. In order to better disseminate our information, we need to computerize. This would also improve our financial base. The purchase of an optical scanner would enable the AARC to put many expensive or hard-to-get materials on a computer disc. For example, the Warren Commission 26 volumes, the House Select Committee on Assassination volumes, and the hearings which various congressional committees have held on organized crime could all be computerized. The discs could then be sold to libraries and individual researchers.

Given enough funds, this project could in time be extended to other materials, such as the 48,000 index cards to the FBI's Dallas field office files on the JFK assassination and the cross-index to FBI Headquarters files. Moreover, last year the AARC acquired the microfilm of all of the available Warren Commission CDs from the National Archives and had it blown up into hard copy. The Warren Commission CDs could also be put on a computer disc. (The National Archives organized the CDs both numerically and alphabetically according to 600 key names, and the AARC has both sets.)

The AARC is currently exploring the possibility of undertaking some publishing ventures. Many early articles appeared in small, sometimes esoteric magazines. Thought is being given to publishing an anthology of such articles.

Over the years, many new government documents have surfaced as a result of Freedom of Information ("FOIA") suits. Once the

AARC gets on a proper financial footing, it should index these records and publish document sets of the more important ones.

For example, the AARC has approximately 80,000 pages of FBI records which were made available to the House Select Committee on Assassinations. These records, which were obtained under a FOIA lawsuit by a researcher who has donated them to the AARC, focus largely on organized crime figures and Cuban exile organizations. If the AARC can find a way to do so, perhaps through volunteers or interns, these records should be indexed as soon as possible.

Another pressing need is to properly preserve our film collection and to convert films to video format. This would enable us to better serve the media, in particular, and might also provide an additional source of revenue.

In order to make such projects possible, the AARC must first devote attention to the task of raising sufficient funds to stay in existence. To this end, several steps are being taken:

1. A fund-raising appeal to has been launched. This appeal is critically important, both because of the need to guarantee a year's rent (\$17,400) immediately, and because it will serve as the basis for convincing other potential donors, including foundations, that enough people care enough to make their investment worthwhile.

2. Membership drive. The AARC needs to increase its membership. If we can get 2,000 paying members--a goal which ought to be obtainable--we will be able to pay the rent and hire the full-time secretary/office assistant AARC so badly needs in order to keep its doors open and to fulfill its mission. I have been asking those authors and publishers who call on us for assistance to reciprocate by mentioning the AARC and its need for contributions in their publications. I also encourage all who are presently members to recruit their friends and associates to join.

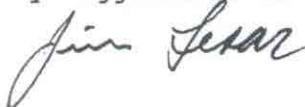
3. Xeroxing services. Henceforth, a charge of ten cents per page plus postage will be rigorously enforced for all copying.

4. Duplication of photographs. The AARC will make special arrangements to duplicate photographs in its collection, but from now on there will be a surcharge of 50% on the actual costs.

5. News media, particularly those who rely on the services and expertise of the AARC for costly TV specials, will be asked to make substantial contributions to the AARC.

I hope that I have given you some idea about the future direction of the AARC and how it hopes to attain its goals. If any of you have any suggestions on these matters, I welcome them.

Jim Lesar



President, AARC

August 28, 1991