

February 2, 1977

OUTSIDE SOURCE

John F. Kennedy

My dear Mr. President:

I have refrained from troubling you with the contents of this letter as long as I possibly could. But I have finally decided that a personal letter to you is, in the end, in your interest and in the country's interest.

I am simply transcribing notes which I set down about two weeks ago--and which concern, and must concern, any leader of this country.

I was Lee Oswald's cabinmate on the SS MARION LYKES, which sailed from New Orleans to France in September-October, 1959. I have recently been the subject of surveillance, of harassment, of pressure tactics, and possibly of terror tactics.

First, in September, when I was teaching in Japan, someone broke into my house, rifled my papers, but stole nothing. I returned to the United States shortly thereafter. Back in Texas, I was suddenly and improbably the subject of a blitz of contacts by telephone from persons wanting to know urgently and insistently what I knew or remembered about Oswald. No one had asked me anything about Oswald since the time of the Warren Commission investigation twelve years ago. The blitz of calls came out of the blue. It was highly improbable, and, after the break-in, I was suspicious. I stalled these people, who represented two major national publications. During this period of non-cooperation, I received another surprise, another "first" for me. Two Iranian gentlemen appeared at my front door. My mother's house was up for sale and they were prospective buyers. A small ad had been placed in the paper. The Iranians strode through the rooms in a very cursory, almost arrogant manner, paced off the front yard, and drove away. The sale of the house had been discussed on the telephone among family; a small ad had been placed. Only one other couple showed up to look at the house. Neither I, nor my mother, who is 63, had ever received a visit from Iranian gentlemen before.

One of the parties which has blitzed me with telephone calls trying to persuade me to tell them what I know about Oswald, is engaged in a very costly project which allows them to locate, interview, monitor, and influence every single available person who ever knew Lee Oswald--and this, just in advance of the new governmental investigation by the House Select Committee on Assassinations. I finally consented, not to grant an interview,

2 ENCLOSURE

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EX 10A

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per CIA letter 9/23/88

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FBI

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but to allow the publication's representative to explain their project to me in person. After a lunch with this researcher, I was told that if I had refused even to meet with him, pressure was in the offing through two Midland men: Mr. Jim Allison, publisher of the ultra-conservative Reporter-Telegram, my employer (out of necessity, and for the moment!), and Mr. George Bush, Jr. The researcher said he had asked an acquaintance, a Mr. Beamis (?), chairman of the Republican Party in Virginia and owner of "a string of hotels" in that state, for help in persuading me to tell what I know about Oswald. After this revelation, and when I still refused to be interviewed, the publication's leg-man made an effort to purchase my knowledge about Oswald. I refused, and he left.

Shortly thereafter, my mother discovered that her telephone had been tampered with. The casing around the dialing apparatus had been pulled out about one-half inch. It was so obvious as to be grotesque. But we cannot doubt that someone entered the house at a time when I was at work and my mother was away; she returned to the house, however, at an unaccustomed time.

I have been in anguish for weeks, Mr. President, trying my best to laugh at my apprehensions and to see these events as fortuitous ones. Experience, common sense, and logic persuade me otherwise. So I have been compelled to react to all this in the form of a statement--and it may shed some light on the reasons for the intrusions into my life:

Speaking as the man who spent more than two weeks in the same ship's cabin with Lee Oswald at the time of his 1959 "defection", and speaking as a man who has been the subject of the above-described tactics of cowards, I offer the following considerations to the American people and to people everywhere:

1. It is CIA and FBI relations with Lee Oswald which have been covered up since November 22, 1963.
2. It is the CIA and the FBI which have concealed and destroyed evidence of their relations with Oswald prior to November 22, 1963.
3. It is the CIA which has, from the beginning, fabricated or distorted certain Cuba-Oswald relations, and certain Cuba-JFK relations, as a smokescreen and decoy to conceal the CIA-Oswald relationship.
4. I can testify, and others can testify, that the CIA did not conduct a real investigation of the so-called defector Oswald in 1959. The CIA has long been concerned about witnesses who can testify to this oversight on their part.

5. They did not conduct a real investigation because Mr. Oswald was a bogus defector.
6. The CIA is concerned lest the knowledge that Oswald was a fake defector in 1959, linking him to CIA, also link him with CIA on November 22, 1963. But there is an impressive body of evidence that CIA used--and abused--Oswald as late as November, 1963.
7. It is the CIA-Oswald relation and the FBI-Oswald relation which have necessitated the thirteen-year cover-up.
8. A necessary conclusion is that CIA and FBI elements in 1963 are suspect in the assassination of John Fitzgerald Kennedy.
9. The assassination of John Kennedy has every appearance of having been our first American coup d'état.

Mr. President, as a man, a father, and a concerned citizen, I believe that you would act energetically also, if you were in my shoes. I believe that you should be aware of the fact that one of your fellow-citizens does not feel that he, his wife and three children, and his mother, are safe in Midland, Texas.

I conclude, Mr. President, by assuring you that I have the most enormous respect for you and the most hope-inspiring indications of your good will, as of your rare ability to lead the nation. Without flattery, you are quite simply the political light of this period in history. God be with you.

I apologize for the crude and, doubtless, offensive tone of this letter.

Sincerely,

Bill Lord

~~Bill Lord~~

PILL, JOE, LOED

2403 Holloway
Midland, Texas 79701
(915) 68-44537

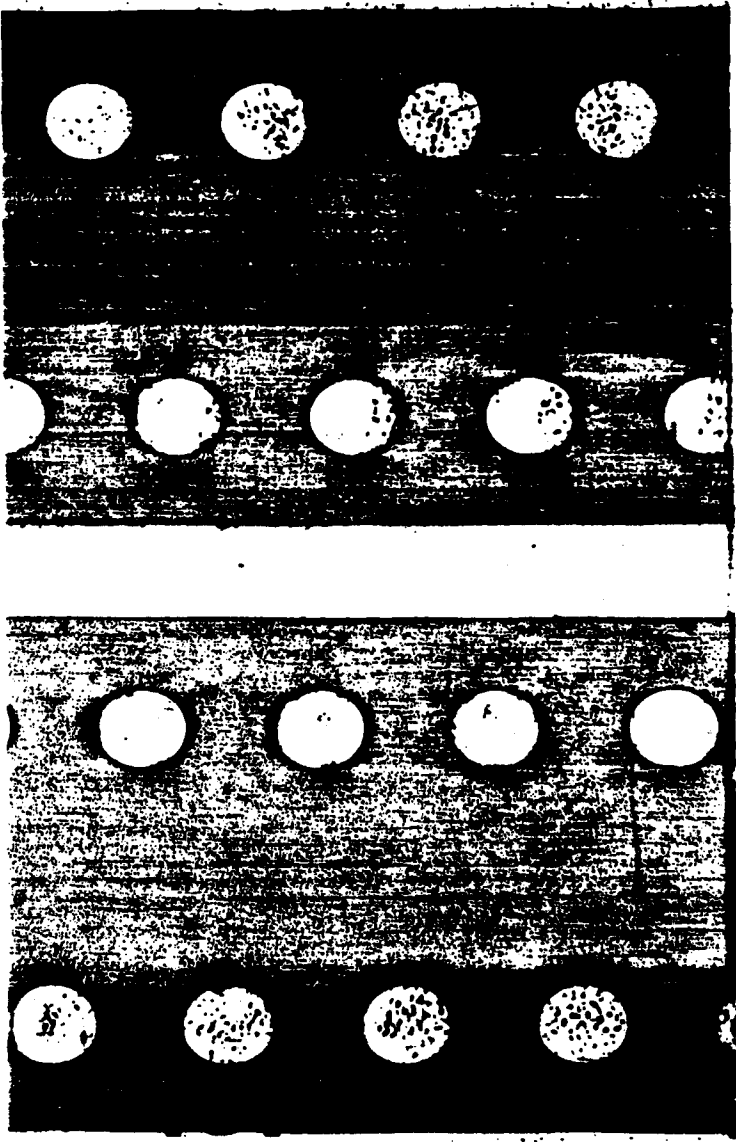
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FRANCIS
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**AIR MAIL
SPECIAL DELIVERY**

WHITE HOUSE
RECEPTION & EXPEDITION
JUN 11 1951
Processed by
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*President of the United States
Executive Office of the President
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., 20500*

**AIR MAIL
SPECIAL DELIVERY**



(1)

Date December 2, 1963

BILLY JOE LORD, United States Air Force #18649720, assigned to the 862nd Combat Defense Squadron, (CDS) Minot Air Force Base, rural Minot, North Dakota, advised as follows:

He entered the United States Air Force on September 28, 1962, at Amarillo, Texas, and has been assigned to the Minot Air Force Base, rural Minot, since December 16, 1962. His home of record is 2403 Halloway, Midland, Texas.

In the Spring of 1959, he graduated from the Midland High School, Midland, Texas, and in the Fall of 1959, traveled to France, where he intended to enter a language school to obtain a major in Language and Literature.

He first met LEE HARVEY OSWALD when he departed from New Orleans, Louisiana, the latter part of September, 1959, aboard the SS Marion Lykes, a freighter. OSWALD occupied the same cabin as LORD enroute to France. He recalled observing OSWALD's passport and visa and noting the name LEE HARVEY OSWALD on this passport. However, he was unable to recall at this time OSWALD's destination as reflected on the visa attached to the passport. He did recall that the freighter stopped at only two ports, Lace Palisse, France, and a port in England, and that OSWALD did not disembark at Lace Palisse, France.

In addition to himself and OSWALD, there were only two other passengers on the freighter, namely; a retired U. S. Army major and his wife, names unrecalled, who he believed were from the State of Florida. He vaguely recalled they were traveling to either Ireland or Scotland.

During the entire trip he actually had very little conversation with OSWALD; as OSWALD was a very cynical, surly, unfriendly type of individual who obviously did not desire to associate or engage in conversations with his fellow passengers.

On the first day of the trip, OSWALD did engage in a very limited amount of conversation. He recalled OSWALD told him that he intended to vacation in Europe, with no specific area in Europe being mentioned. He further recalled OSWALD saying

HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 12/16/89 BY SP/BJW/STP
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FBI

On 11/30/63 at Minot, North Dakota File # Minneapolis 155-2564
by SA DOUGLAS E. SMITH/sbk Date dictated 11/30/63

- 3 -
ENCLOSURE

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(2)

MP 105-2564

that he might possibly attend some unknown school in Switzerland. OSWALD at no time indicated that he had any intention of going to Russia. He never had any reason to believe OSWALD could be an agent of any foreign government or that he was inclined towards Communism.

He advised OSWALD never discussed his background with him other than to state that he was from New Orleans, Louisiana, and was just recently discharged from the U. S. Marines. OSWALD stated that his mother lived in Fort Worth, Texas, and was employed in a drug store in Fort Worth. OSWALD seemed very bitter of the economic conditions of his mother. OSWALD however, did not comment on the economic conditions in the United States or discuss any political views.

He recalled that although OSWALD never specifically stated he was an atheist, he gave this impression, stating on one occasion "that only matter existed and everything came from matter." OSWALD appeared to be somewhat of an intellect, having above average intelligence, but did not appear to do any reading aboard ship. OSWALD did not appear to be a violent or a fanatic individual.

The first time he actually knew that OSWALD had traveled to Russia was when he was in receipt of a newspaper clipping from his mother, Mrs. LELA K. LORD, 2403 Halloway, Midland, Texas, in which it was reported in a Fort Worth, Texas, newspaper LEE HARVEY OSWALD, 20 year old ex-Marine from Fort Worth, Texas, had renounced his American citizenship and had turned in his American passport and requested Russian citizenship. He said he believed the article appeared in the Fort Worth newspaper during November, 1959.

His mother had recalled the name of OSWALD from a letter he, LORD, had written to his mother upon arriving in France, mentioning to her that OSWALD had been his roommate on his voyage over.

AFFIDAVIT OF BILLY JOE LORD

The following affidavit was executed by Billy Joe Lord on June 28, 1964.

**PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION
ON THE ASSASSINATION OF
PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY**

AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF TEXAS,
County of Travis, ss:

I, Billy Joe Lord, being duly sworn say:

1. I am an Airman Third Class in the United States Air Force, and I am in the 340th Bomb Wing, Combat Defense Squadron at Bergstrom Air Force Base, Texas. I am 22 years old and my parents live at Midland, Texas.

2. After graduating from Midland High School in 1959, with the financial assistance of my parents, I made plans to continue my education in France. During August, 1959, I made an application for a passport, and on or about September 13, 1959, I departed Midland, Texas via train for New Orleans, Louisiana, arriving there about September 17, 1959. I spent the next three days touring the city of New Orleans and making several trips to the ticket office of the Lykes Lines. The cost of passage aboard the ship S.S. Marion Lykes amounted to slightly more than \$200. I registered and stayed in the LaSalle Hotel on Canal Street, which was near the city library. I visited the library several times during this stay in the city. During this period I did not know Lee Harvey Oswald.

3. On September 20, 1959, I boarded the freighter S.S. Marion Lykes at New Orleans. Upon boarding the ship, I was shown to my room, and when I got there, Lee Harvey Oswald was already there and moving in. We were to share this room. I had never before seen nor heard of Lee Harvey Oswald. Lee Harvey Oswald and I shared this cabin for the duration of the trip to France which was fourteen days.

4. In our first conversation, Oswald said that he was recently discharged from the Marines and that he had worked in some technical field while in the Marines. He indicated that he was somewhat bitter about the fact that his mother had to work in a drugstore in Fort Worth, Texas, and was having a difficult time. He also said that he would probably return to the United States to work. He gave no indication of his ultimate destination, although he said he was going to travel around in Europe and possibly attend school in Switzerland if he had sufficient funds. Also in this first conversation, we discussed religion. I do not know why we discussed religion except that possibly he noticed that I had a bible. Oswald maintained that he could not see how I could believe in God in view of the fact that science had disproved the existence of God, and that there was only matter.

5. After the first day, I hardly conversed with Oswald at all. Oswald was not outgoing and neither was I. We just were not very friendly.

6. Besides Oswald and myself, there were two other passengers aboard the ship. They were a retired U.S. Army Colonel and his wife, Colonel and Mrs. George B. Church, Jr. All four of the passengers generally ate their meals together in the ship's officer's mess. Oswald ate most of his meals with us. I do not recall Colonel Church and his wife associating very much with Lee Harvey Oswald.

7. I shared a closet with Oswald, but I did not notice anything out of the ordinary among Oswald's possessions. He did show me either his military identification card or his passport.

8. Oswald did not indicate that he might defect to Russia. To the best of my knowledge, Oswald did not receive any correspondence or communications while aboard the ship, nor did he associate with any of the ship's crew. Oswald never mentioned any contacts or friends in Europe.

9. Lee Harvey Oswald appeared to be a normal, healthy individual, mentally alert, but extremely cynical in his general attitude.

On October 5, 1959, our ship arrived in France, and I disembarked from the ship. I never saw or heard from him again. It is my recollection that he departed from the ship subsequent to my departure. I had written my mother about all the passengers. When Oswald defected, she sent me a newspaper clipping about it.

10. Oswald spent a great deal of his time during the trip on the deck. I do not recall him doing any reading. I do recall, however, that there was a radio speaker which received programs from Europe and that Oswald and Colonel Church seemed to understand a little bit of the foreign language that came over on the speaker. I thought it was German, but I am not sure.

11. I attended the Institute of French Studies at the City of Tours, Province of Touraine, France, from October, 1959 to February, 1962 intermittently while auditing courses at the University of Poitiers, Tours, France, and at the Sorbonne, University of Paris, France. I returned to the United States aboard the French ship, Liberty, in June, 1960. I went to France again in February of 1961 for further education, and returned to the United States in February of 1962.

Signed this 28th day of June 1964.

ENCLOSURE
(8) Billy Joe Lord,
BILLY JOE LORD

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DATE 1/26/89 BY SP6 [redacted]
Per CIA letter 9/23/88 b7c

62-109060-764/9

Airtel

2/24/77

To: SAC, El Paso

1 - Mr. Peelman
1 - Mr. Giaquinto

From: Director, FBI (62-109090)

ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT
JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY

11/22/63
DALLAS, TEXAS
OO: DALLAS

Enclosed are two copies of a letter and envelope received from the complainant Bill Lord. Also enclosed are two copies of an FD-302 reflecting an interview with a Billy Joe Lord on 11/30/63, and two copies of an affidavit of a Billy Joe Lord as it appears in the Warren Commission Report.

El Paso Division is requested to contact the complainant, acknowledge his letter and obtain full details regarding any additional information he wishes to provide regarding the allegations set forth in his letter of 2/2/77. Bureau indices reveal that a Billy Joe Lord was in fact a cabin mate of Lee Harvey Oswald during a two-week ocean voyage from New Orleans to Europe which took place in 1959.

During the course of your interview with the complainant, insure that he is advised that any fears he may have for his personal safety should be referred to the local authorities.

If a review of El Paso indices should preclude interviewing the complainant, set forth your recommendations for not interviewing him in an appropriate communication, however, if the complainant is interviewed, submit the results within 21 days.

MAILED 12
FEB 23 1977

- Assoc. Dir. _____
- Dep. AD Adm. _____
- Dep. AD Inv. _____
- Asst. Dir.:
- Adm. Serv. _____
- Ext. Affairs _____
- Fin. & Pers. _____
- Gen. Inv. _____
- Ident. _____
- Inspection _____
- Intell. _____
- Laboratory _____
- Legal Coun. _____
- Plan. & Eval. _____
- Rec. Mgnt. _____
- Spec. Inv. _____
- Training _____
- Telephone Rm. _____

Enclosures - 8

JSP: sas (5)

DDO

EX 104
REC-45

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SEE NOTE PAGE TWO

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Per CIA letter 9/23/88.

b7c

MAIL ROOM TELETYPE UNIT

Airtel to SAC, El Paso
Re: Assassination of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy

NOTE: Complainant, in his letter of 2/2/77, indicates that he was a cabinet mate of Lee Harvey Oswald on an ocean voyage to Europe in 1959. The complainant was interviewed by our Minneapolis Division in November, 1963, regarding said voyage and the complainant additionally filed an affidavit with the Warren Commission. At no time did the complainant mention any of the allegations specifically points one through nine as set forth in his letter of 2/2/77. This instructs El Paso to interview the complainant regarding any additional information he may have and to suLHM the results.