

2/17/68

Dear Gary,

Returned, tired, last night, with a tremendous accumulation, the work I did while gone to be gone over, and this a.m. my wife tore the ligaments of her left ankle badly.

So, I've little time for letter writing for a while. However, I must write this one to you to express my pleasure, respect and appreciation for the work you are doing. Your letters of 2/1 and 14 are fascinating and, I suspect, very important. Your suspicions are natural and probable.

I am glad you are working with Sprague. However, where possible, if you can send me a carbon to keep au courant I'd appreciate it because there are other aspects, as you are aware, that may fit elsewhere and there are others with whom I work. Besides, I'm both interested and curious.

Those to whom you send the exhibit on the cars were appreciative and impressed. Some day we should do the same with weapons.

I expect one of Jim Garrison's staff here in a week and I'll show this new data to him. Please bear in mind, also, that every single face in those pictures may be important. I have just found two that may be exceedingly important. A different view of the same ones may be valuable.

Tomorrow I hope to have time to photocopy these letters and send them to westcoast colleagues, who will find them helpful.

Excuse the haste, but this had to be my first letter on returning.

And I wore those nice cig-links on TV out west, on a shirt bought me by OSS in World War II that had been unused for years. Again, many thanks.

Sincerely

new address: Rt. 7, Frederick, Md. 21701

2/27/68

Dr. Robert Bahmer
Archivist of the United States
The National Archives
Washington, D.C.

Dear Dr. Bahmer,

Document 1538 is the October 14, 1964 letter from J. Edgar Hoover to J. Lee Rankin that, among other things, transmits galley proofs of the second instalment of an interview-article with Normal Similas in the now-defunct Canadian magazine Liberty. Mr. Hoover's letter says he forwarded to the Commission two copies of these galley proofs. Missing from the copies furnished me are four pictures taken by Similas and described in the text.

Investigation in Canada indicates that the prints of these pictures were attached to the manuscript. Therefore, they should have been in the material supplied to the FBI. In turn, the FBI should have supplied these to the Commission. I am asking that the files be checked to see if these pictures are there, perhaps with the second set of the proofs, if not elsewhere. If they are not, may I ask that you request them of the FBI? They would seem to be covered by the order of the Attorney General of October 31, 1966. My information that these pictures were included comes from the responsible person on Liberty, who apparently is not mentioned in the FBI reports and letters.

Document 1534 is an FBI report dated September 25, 1964, reporting an FBI interview with one Colin Davies, "Reporter and photographer of the Toronto Telegram". Investigation made for me in Canada seems to indicate that there was been no one by this name in the employ of that paper going back as far as 1875. It also indicates that no person of this name has been employed by any other Toronto paper and that no person of that name can be located.

This is a paraphrase report in the Commission's files. I am asking for the original report from which it was prepared. Normally, the original reports do give the names and addresses of the persons interviewed. The original report also would seem to be covered by the Attorney General's order, for the FBI acted as the Commission's investigative arm and anything considered by it was considered for the Commission. If the FBI has failed to provide this to the Archives, it would seem to me that pursuant to this order it should have been done and now should be. I am, therefore, asking for a copy of it. This is important to me, for if the investigation made for me is in error, I regard it as an error that should be established. Otherwise, it will seem as though in its investigation of the murder of the President the FBI is quoting a non-existent person.

If any additional documents have come to light since I made the request for all information on Similas and his pictures and copies of them, I would appreciate copies. Also, anything on Davies, Kenneth Armstrong and Albert Plock, that is related.

I would also like copies of any files relating to the Minutemen, particularly in San Antonio, Texas and Matamoros, Mexico.

Sincerely yours,
Harold Weisberg

R.R. 1,
Moffat, Ont., Canada,
Feb. 1st, 1968.

Dear Sir,

Please excuse the delay in writing you before you went to Chicago. However I did not receive your letter until Jan 27th, and by that time we were just getting involved in our second ice and freezing rain storm of the month. That meant that there was no postal service out here in the country until Jan 31st. I realized therefore that you would not get my letter until after you had left for Chicago. You must tell me about your trip.

About the only thing that you could possibly have asked about Similas for me; other than the photo's, was for any physical description anyone could have provided of Similas. This I believe could have been helpful to me. I do not know if you have my latest letter to Spragueb but I feel that there were some interesting developments about which you would be interested. I realize that you are no longer handling the photographic end of the assassination in detail, however these new developments have more to do about and with the FBI's handling of this case.

When I realized that I would not be allowed by Similas to see and study any of his photo's I decided to try the next best sources the other people who had seen the Similas photo's, namely COLIN DAVIES, KENNETH G. ARMSTRONG, and ALBERT PLOCK. Armstrong, former editor of LIBERTY magazine, had moved and now has an unlisted phone number which I have not been able to procure.

I was able to contact Albert Plock, former Art Director for LIBERTY magazine. Plock said he remembered well the Similas interviews and article. When I asked him about the photo's he said that the ones Similas said he would send with the two men in the window with the gun never materialized. They sifted through the LIBERTY mail after the closing of the magazine, but the photo's never appeared. He did reaffirm what was mentioned in the Kenneth Armstrong interview, that Similas did give them some photo's, either 3 or 4. He also said that one of the photo's did show the TSBD and other buildings and that although some of the background was blurred, discernable shapes appeared in various windows! He explained that they ran the article because at the time it was topical. He said he did not know a great deal about the subject but was sure that one of the photo's showed the TSBD and he believed in another Connally and Kennedy could be seen.

Plock confirmed LIBERTY going out of business and therefore the second installment in the August issue never came out. The manuscript of the second installment had been prepared and was ready to go to print. When I told him I had a copy of the second installment (printed by you in PHOTOGRAPHIC WHITEWASH) he expressed amazement! When I asked why, he explained. When it was learned that the August issue of LIBERTY would not be printed, he, as Art Director was responsible for the dismantling of the issue so that it would not be set in print unnecessarily or prematurely.

When he and Kenneth Armstrong came to do this they found that the Similas manuscript for the second installment had disappeared along with the photo's Similas had previously given them!! He explained that the photo's had been attached to their appropriate positions to the manuscript for the second installment. He stated also that there had been one and only one copy of the manuscript! Now reminiscent of the "lost" negatives of the Toronto Telegram.

On reviewing the manuscript as published in PHOTOGRAPHIC WHITEWASH one finds that instead of the pictures Similas gave LIBERTY there are four spaces labelled A, B, C, and D. These are undoubtedly the places where the Similas photo's were. The caption with the photo spaces are:

- A--Similas speaks with Jack Ruby, convicted murderer of Lee Harvey Oswald, at Ruby's nightclub
- B--after bullets ring out, Jackie leans on dying husband as FBI agent jumps aboard car
- C--Kennedy talks with Texas Governor John Connally seconds before sniper pressed on trigger
- D--Jack Ruby his arm around stripper in his Dallas club

To me picture "C" could be of the utmost importance. It must be the one in which Plock saw the TSBD, and from the caption it must also show Connally and Kennedy. You will remember that Plock said he saw Kennedy and Connally in one of the pictures. Also if Similas appears in one of Wilma Bond's picture's, a conclusion of which I am almost positively sure (Sprague is looking further into this), then his position is one from which he could have taken a picture of the motorcade with the TSBD in the background. It is from this point that the photo could be important as there are shapes in the TSBD windows. Also the Dal-Tex building may show. The photo's were with the manuscript when it was last seen at the LIBERTY offices. As we now know this manuscript was obtained for the FBI by the R.C.M.P. in Oct. 1964. (PHOTOGRAPHIC WHITEWASH pg.236). Therefore it is my conclusion that the photo's are in Washington. They should have been with the manuscript in the Archives. I have told all this to Sprague also and inferred that a return to the Archives to the spot where you found the manuscript might prove fruitful, as well as perhaps questions put to Bahmer concerning the condition of the manuscript when it arrived.

Also picture "B" could be the one in which Jeffries said he saw the rear end of a car. It sounds from the caption that this picture is quite similar to the Altgens photo. When I asked Plock about this he assured me that they were using Similas's photo's and Similas's photo's only.

I have left my encounter with COLIN DAVIES for the last. To be blunt about it and come right to the point, Colin Davies doesn't even exist! That is to say Colin Davies doesn't exist as a reporter photographer for the Telegram or any other Toronto newspaper. Davies was the first person to see Similas on his return to Toronto. He also saw all of the Similas photo's and initiated the "loss" of the vitally important negatives in which two men appeared in a window of the TSBD with a gun. When I phoned the Telegram and asked to be put in touch with Colin Davies, the switchboard operator transferred my call to the Personnel Dept. as she said that they kept the records of all the employees names, addresses, phone numbers. When I explained

to the Personnel Dept. whom I wished to contact they checked their records and found that they had no record at all of a Colin Davies either as a reporter or a photographer. I told them that they must have made a mistake. However they rechecked their records back to 1975 and confirmed their previous statement, no record of Colin Davies. Playing a hunch, I phoned the Payroll Dept. However the results were the same, no record or payroll account for Colin Davies. I then decided to check with the two other Toronto papers, the Toronto Star and the Globe and Mail. If Davies was a reporter or photographer I thought that he may have been a former or present employee of either one of the papers. The results were the same in both instances, no record of a Colin Davies. In fact the man at the Star said he knew most of the reporters and photographers in town but that Colin Davies rang no bell.

I think this explains why no answer to my letters at the Telegram. Davies never existed. The first time the Telegram interviewed Similas was probably on Nov. 24th, Sunday, resulting in the story appearing in the Monday edition concerning his visit to Ruby's bar. Davies was sent by someone, presumably the FBI, to see what Similas had. This would explain why there was no story on Similas in Tely with his photo's. The Tely couldn't run a story like this because they were instructed not to and besides they did not have Similas's negatives then nor at any other time.

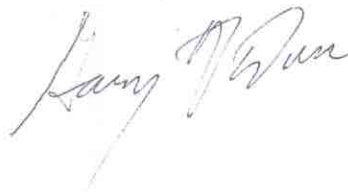
I am presently in the process of completing more on my Exhibit on the vehicles. I will send it, along with the copy of the NY TIMES story you wanted, soon, in fact probably next week.

I heard back from Ray Marcus, but he did not have a spare copy of his map he could send me. Perhaps you could send me a copy of the one you have.

One last item. In the NY Times for Jan 7th, 1968, there was an article entitled "Arrests for Threats to the President Up Sharply Since the Assassination." This is on pg. 59. In this article it is revealed that "even an idle, offhand remark can make a person subject to the statutes maximum penalty of five years in prison and a \$1,000 fine." The article goes on to explain some examples of those who had been arrested over the last year. In almost every case, the person who was arrested made a remark against Johnson. These remarks were, in my opinion, of a less serious nature than those attributed to David Ferrie (his "colloquial expression") against John Kennedy. Also the remarks made by the men of the "False Oswald" story to Sylvia Odio regarding how easy it would be to kill Kennedy. I can also send you a copy of this article if you want.

Well I must close as it is getting late. I will write and send you these things next week.

Respectfully



R.R. 1,
Moffat, Ont., Canada,
Feb. 14th, 1968.

Dear Sir;

I realize that our letters will probably get crossed, but I have gathered quite a bit of stuff for you. You will find enclosed some additions and revisions to my exhibit on vehicle research. I would like to thank you for some of these new leads. I am grateful for them.

Also find enclosed copies of two newspaper articles on Norman Similas. The first is a recently discovered article from the final edition of the Toronto Telegram of Sat. Nov. 23rd, 1963. I have had for quite some time the 2-star or first edition of the Telegram for the 23rd. As stated before it made no mention of Similas. However a friend found the final edition and gave it to me. I think you will find the article interesting. It reveals one important fact not brought to light before. In the second last paragraph Similas states that he saw a gunshot wound in the Presidents left temple! I have been trying to reach Similas to get confirmation of this fact, but his wife says he is out of town. If true it will support the same opinion as expressed by Dr. McClelland (17H12) and Father Huber who administered the last rights to Kennedy. I will continue to contact Similas about this and let you know what he says about it. The part about Kennedy's head being bathed in blood was repeated by Similas in the N.Y. Times for Nov. 23rd.

The second article is a copy of the one from the Telegram for Nov. 25th, 1963. This is the story that appeared after the Telegram had supposedly already had and lost the Similas negatives. You will notice that although they are supposed to already have these negatives there isn't even mention of the fact that Similas took pictures of the motorcade! The story is that which the man questioned Similas about on Sun. Nov. 24th, that is Jack Ruby and his visit to Ruby's club.

One last bit of info on Similas. On page 217 of PHOTOGRAPHIC WHITEWASH, at the bottom of the page, Similas states that "I received a call at the hotel from a Hamilton Radio Station CHML, I believe, and a taped interview was made by a chap named Johnson." I went to Hamilton on Feb. 5th and spent the afternoon at CHML. I also have heard the Similas interview. The man who interviewed Similas was a Don Johnston, News Director for CHML. Mr. Johnston was very nice as he is an extremely busy man. He let me go through their library until I found the interview. He also talked to me for about 30 mins. about Similas and the interview.

I took notes while we talkd. Johnston stated that shortly after the shooting (30-45 mins.) their radio station was contacted by Similas's employer who informed them of what Norman had seen and left a Dallas phone number where they(CHML) could contact Similas. (Johnston is presently searching their records in an attempt to locate this number). Mr. Johnston said that he personally phoned and contacted Similas, and he is sure that it was a Dallas number as he had to go through an operator. Also you can hear the beeping of the phone at times on the taped interview. The interview ran for about 2 mins. plus. Johnston stated that there is no doubt in his mind that Similas was in Dallas and in Dealy Plaza. The call came too close after the shooting and Johnston stated that Similas was giving them detail that had not even come into the station over the wire service. Also Similas's tone of voice (excited, stitterering etc.) adds to the credibility that Similas actually witnessed the shooting.

Johnston said that after the couple of months excitement after the shooting that Similas more or less dropped out of sight, and CHML was unable to contact him. Then one day (date unknown, but another fact which Johnston is trying to find out) Similas suddenly showed up at the studio unannounced. He, Similas, listened to the tape of the interview and obtained a copy of it. CHML also paid him \$25 for the interview.

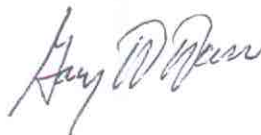
I found the interview on a reel containing CHML's year end review of the major news events. It is only about 1 Min. and 15 seconds long. It is, in essence, almost an exact duplicate of the newly found Telegram article. It begins with Similas describing the motorcade coming towards him, him hearing 3 shots, Kennedy falling towards him, the secret service man coming to the back of the limousine etc. I describe the interview this way because I cannot remember it all, but no need to worry as CHML is making me a copy of it. I will in turn make a copy of it for you if you wish. Also I have asked Mr. Johnston to prepare a written statement for me in which he will attempt to record everything he can remember about this event. Also he edited about 30 seconds of the interview out. He is trying to find it. If he cannot, he will try and put it down as best as he can remember. I hope to have more of this to report next time we exchange letters.

You will also find enclosed copies of 2 other newspaper clippings. They are the New York Times for Jan. 6th, 1968. This is the issue with the column about the Kennedy X-rays. The other is the article about the step up of arrests against those threatening the president.

I am sending you two newspaper clippings from the Toronto Daily Star. The Feb 3rd clipping is about Richard Giesbrecht the Canadian who overheard the Ferrie talk in the Winnipeg airport. Mr. Giesbrecht as you know, is going to testify for Garrison. The second clipping of a week later, is about a newly found Garrison suspect in Toronto. I think you will find it interesting.

I have more to say, but I will leave it for next time. If our letters do cross, I will write you first and set it straight again.

Respectfully,



A U.S. Marine stands ramrod-straight at the American Embassy in Moscow while Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev signs the register

as he arrives to present his condolences on the death of President Kennedy. Accompanying him is Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko.

Prophecy In 1956

WASHINGTON — (Special) — An amateur soothsayer, who predicted in 1956 that a Democrat would win the 1960 presidential election and be assassinated in office, said here today she tried desperately to warn President Kennedy.

Mrs. Jean Dixon said: "I knew it would happen on his trip to Texas."

Her original prophecy was printed in Parade magazine in 1956 and is quoted in a book by Jess Stearn — Door To The Future.

A wealthy psychic, Mrs. Dixon said today: "In 1960 I told a friend, Mrs. Mildred Dayton, President Kennedy would die violently in 1963."

Since Sunday I have

Claimed

seen a black cloud coming down around the White House.

"I knew something terrible was going to happen."

"Earlier this week I told several people: 'Dear God, the President is going to be shot.'"

Assassination

Strike Truce

TOLEDO, OHIO—(AP)—Toledo Newspaper Guild Local 43 agreed Friday

might to call a truce in its week-old strike against the Toledo Blade Co. so this metropolitan area of 500,000 would not be without newspapers in the wake of President Kennedy's assassination.

Metro Man Eyewitness To History

Willowdale man Norman Similas, 34, in Dallas for a convention yesterday took time out to take a picture



War hero Lt. John F. Kennedy, decorated for gallantry in the Pacific.

of President Kennedy and became an eyewitness to history.

Here is his story:

"The crowds had thinned out where I stood so I had a good position near the Trade Mart when the President's motorcade rolled up.

"I suddenly heard a sharp crack and I thought someone was letting off firecrackers.

"PRESIDENT SHOT

"I turned and looked in the direction of the noise then somebody shouted 'The President's been shot.

"I looked back at the car and a Secret Service man ran up with his gun drawn.

"Then another shot rang out and almost immediately a third.

"I was still staring at the car.

"The Secret Service man opened the car door and I saw the President slumped to the floor and falling towards the pavement.

"Jackie Kennedy was sitting on the left side of the car. Governor Connally on the President's right.

"I could see the hole in the President's left temple and his head and hair were bathed in blood.

"The Secret Service man looked in and gasped 'Oh, my God, he's dead.'"

Crushed To Death

LEAMINGTON, ONT.—(CP)—Benny David Young, 19, of Leamington, was killed Thursday when crushed by 1,000-pound hogsheds of tobacco in a warehouse here.

ilities on him and depending more on him.

IMPORANT TASKS

Johnson assumed some of the most important diplomatic assignments. He toured the Orient as a goodwill ambassador. He carried the Kennedy message to Europe. He was involved more than any vice-president in recent years, in every cabinet meeting that Kennedy held, few though these were, and he presided at major committee and council meetings.

Thus when fate suddenly threw upon him the task of taking over the control of his country, Lyndon Johnson was ready.

Few vice-presidents in U.S. history could have been more honorably briefed on his role by his predecessor. He had been much closer to his leader than was Harry Truman when Franklin Roosevelt died suddenly.

But apart from this past three years of close and harmonious relationship with the late President, Lyndon Johnson has a record as one of Congress's ablest members.

As chairman of a Senate special preparativeness subcommittee, he established

TORONTO TELEGRAM, SAT. NOV 23RD, 1963.

(4 STAR OR FINAL EDITION)

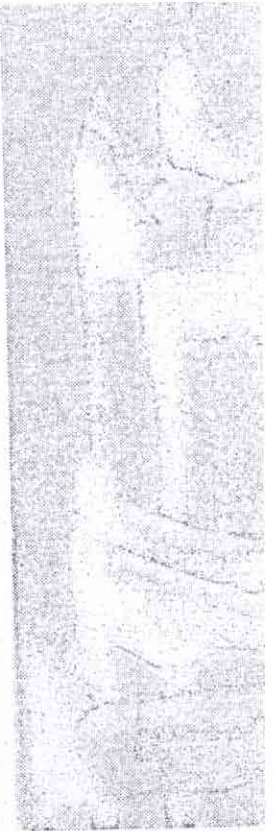
...service would be...
 ...brother would be...
 ...Edward, now a sen-...
 ...went immediately to...
 ...transport to be with his...
 ...her and mother.
 ...As the cancer's cold eye...
 ...lethel. Then, America...
 ...lethel their quiet cour-...
 ...Rose Fitzgerald the...
 ...daughter of an Irish-immi-...
 ...ant family whose son be-...
 ...me President's mayor, mar-...
 ...ed the son of another...
 ...ashington and pro-...
 ...duced Patrick Kennedy with...
 ...ne children.

HER DECISION

She backed him as he be-...
 ...me rich but rigorously...
 ...sed his children to not...
 ...I wealth ruin them, her...
 ...mself, it is said, was at-...
 ...eye the rallying point for...
 ...I wife remain, no matter...
 ...ho as the fiduciary heard.

One son died in combat...
 ...ing the war. A daughter...
 ...as killed in a plane crash...
 ...I France. Now the oldest...
 ...and Ruby has stepped into...
 ...re role of head of the...
 ...lan. His face on the tele-...
 ...sion screen was calm...
 ...and, almost imperceptive.

Because none showed...
 ...cep emotion. They hid...
 ...their feelings, as the Ken-...
 ...edly kids always did when...
 ...they got into fights at...
 ...school. But none could as-...
 ...sure that their feelings...
 ...were not deep and pre-...
 ...pared. Not that they lack-...
 ...ed courage. To a waiting...
 ...table, it could not help...
 ...and deepen pride to see...
 ...such people.



Arriving At The Capitol

Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy brushes a tear from her eye as she arrives at the Capitol with Attorney General Robert Kennedy and her children, Caroline and John, Jr., after being driven in a procession from the White House with the President's body.

Oswald's Killer Like Sgt. Bilbo Says Willowdale Man Who Met Him

A Willowdale man who witnessed the shooting of President Kennedy also met the Dallas night club owner charged with the killing of his assassin.

"I went to Jack Ruby's club the evening before the President was shot," Norman Similas, Sheppard ave. e., recalled last night.

FAST-TALKING

"Ruby is a fast-talking, emotional guy, like Sgt. Bilbo," Similas said.

Ruby is accused of the slaying of assassin Lee Oswald.

"He came to our table several times during the burlesque and comedy act," Similas, 34, advertising

manager for a trade maga- zine, returned to Toronto during the week end after five days attending a con- vention in Dallas.

Keynote speaker was U.S. Vice-President Lyndon Johnson.

15 FEET AWAY

"Two days after the speech, Similas was stand- ing 15 feet from President Kennedy's limousine when he was cut down by rifle shots fired from ambush.

Similas was in the sniper's line of fire but he was more terrified by the heavily-armed police and secret servicemen in the Presidential procession.

"The sniper knew what he was shooting at but the

police seemed likely to open fire in any direction," he said. "They wanted to shoot somebody, anybody."

"The momentary panic among police spread quick- ly to other Dallas residents.

HOSPITABLE

"Before the President was killed, Dallas was the most hospitable city I've ever seen," said Similas.

"This is the end of Dallas," a hotel manager told Similas.

"At first," Similas said, Dallasites refused to be- lieve that a resident of the city had killed the Presi- dent."

"Many I talked to were

man."

He said Kennedy's ad- ministration and that of Dwight Eisenhower, "were characterized by hostile and implacable policies to- ward us. Cuba was victim of... attacks of all kinds that cost blood. Hundreds of our compatriots lost their lives defending against Yankee imperial- ism."

The broadcast was Cuba's first official reaction to the Kennedy death.

ready to take the law into their own hands," he said.

NORMAN SIMILAS
 Ruby "on the shady side"



went the town even in South Vietnam, died in Saigon when the military took over three weeks ago. Mme. Nhu is in seclusion at a convent here.

This is reported to be the text of the telegram:

"I wish to tell you of my profound sympathy for you and your little ones in your time of shock and grief.

"I understand fully how you feel in that ordeal which God had bestowed on you.

"I sympathize the more, for I understand that the ordeal might seem to you even more unbearable be- cause of your habitually well-sheltered life.

"It must be particularly incomprehensible, if as re- ported, President Ken- nedy's assassination comes from Communist hands.

"Indeed, such a murder where even the wounds in- flicted on President Ken- nedy were identical to those of President Ngo Dinh Diem and of my hus- band, and coming only 20 days after the Vietnamese tragedy, would only prove to the world that even power or extreme gracious- ness with Communism still does not protect from its traitorous blows."

Kin- Fabbio, Wash- ington

REMI

OF

MCS agency I of accu- staged a

The- alter we- the new- almost a

"The- identify- he wor- known

The- was us- posture- —pres- "the r- g

"The- traces- —pres- —pres- and the-

A s- film cut- terrupt-

Toronto TELEGRAM, Mon. Nov 25th, 1963.