

Dear Rite,

5/20/87

*Handwritten: New Grove Rt 1 Box 221C Ennis, TX 75119*

I don't know how much time I'll have today and in the near future for the disgusting thing Newcomb started 13 years ago and the infantile Tatro renewed only recently. I responded to Tatro once and told him I'd have no more to say to him. Emory Brown wrote and anticipating that I'd hear from you I made a carbon for you that I enclose. I've just returned from the regular examination by the cardiovascular surgeon in Washington and that generally tires me by the afternoon and I have some community responsibilities this afternoon, so I won't have much time now and it is likely I'll not take more time later. On its face, to anyone with any maturity at all Newcomb's tale can't be true in his interpretation.

That was long ago and entirely innocent and regular, so I'd forgotten it until you phoned, when some of it came back to mind. I think I recalled more in writing Tatro and I am quite clear on it now in seeing what Newcomb wrote. I may not have told Tatro all I could have, and I now am not certain, merely to avoid further misinformation. And I'm fairly confident that Lifton was behind what Newcomb says. He then was manipulating Newcomb and we had some harsh exchanges in a kooky underground paper as of about the time of that letter or a little earlier. And I'm paying no attention to the rest of that letter.

First of all, I did not write the letter to Newcomb, as any examination of it makes clear. When I was in N.O. I worked around the clock. My handwriting is close to illegible, so when I decided to ask what I asked of Newcomb, and I'd come back to that, and have it mailed that day, when I would be working outside of Garrison's office, as I did most of the time I was there, I asked Louis Ivon if I could dictate a brief memo to Newcomb to one of the secretaries. He took me into the pool room and I dictated to Lorraine LeBoeuf. The she used DA stationery I am sure was not known to me until later when Fred made some childish stink of it. I do not remember that I even signed it. Ask for a copy and see.

My purpose was the exact opposite of "showing a doctored photograph around town to implicate a suspect." It was to confirm or refute what I'd already been told by two people in the official story of the crime. As I recall it was not the one photo Newcomb refers to but four photos. I am certain that one involved the part of the hair on the opposite side and I am certain that one involved a beard. This is because of what these two witnesses had told me, one twice, the interviews separated by a considerable period of time. I have the second two interviews on tape. After what I'd been told the first time, with a series of about 100 miscellaneous photos used to be sure there was a real choice, I did this a second time, the second time in addition to taping with a second person with me. Both of these people had identified Thornley pictures and had not identified Oswald pictures yet in the official story they are said to have identified Oswald as the person they saw.

Fred is correct in saying that he did a lousy job. It was useless. But is it not apparent that if I'd been up to anything at all questionable I'd have had the work done in secret? I could have had it done through Garrison or Ivon, for example. Why would anyone in his right mind involve someone in the critical community if he were up to something wrong?

The rest of what Fred says at this point has nothing to do with me and he is just a scoundrel to pretend that I had or wanted "blurry photo comparisons, wierd associations (although in retrospect I'll have to admit that my earlier association with Newcomb qualifies for this description), forged guest books, trumped up arrest cards, pjony codes..." He is a rotten, contemptible liar.

As far as my intention of hurting Thornley, for whom I have no use at all, is concerned, when he was about to get into trouble with Garrison, as he proceeded to do, I sought out his so-called agent, Cling Bolton, told him I thought I could forestall

that if he'd talk to me, and Bolton even wrote about this in a column he wrote for a French Quarter weekly. He recommended to Thirley that he take me up on it. He did not and he had a lot of trouble that he might have avoided.

That anyone with any knowledge of the field and the people in it could give a second thought except in condemnation of what Fred wrote sickens me and tells me that they lack ordinary common sense. Why would anyone up to anything wrong go out of his way to leave a trail? Obviously, anyone with any common sense would stop with this question.

Fred wrote this to Tatro in 1974, which was a year before my first thrombosis and at a time I was quite active. If Tatro had any innocent purpose in raising any question, he could, obviously, have written or phoned me. He did write me about other matters from time to time. And is it no obvious that if I could take the time for your phone call I could and would have taken that time for a phone call from him?

So, to me it is a best a childish business and evil at the same time. And ought I not believe that if Tatro is capable of crediting any aspect of that fabrication, I want nothing to do with him?

Emory Brown was also in touch and he was here, with others, perhaps even including Tatro. But he could have had Emory ask me about that, could he not?

Come to think of it, there is no way at all that Thirley's lawyer could have learned of this except through Newcomb. Certainly not from me or Garrison's office, which except for the one secretary, knew nothing about it. I am certain that Lafton got in touch with Thirley's lawyer.

I'll listen to the tape until the people I'm to be occupied with the rest of the day come for me.

Sorry, of course, about your hand trouble. Don't lose any sleep over this. It won't hurt me. I'm just disgusted by it from grownups....You are not the culprit. You had a right to ask. Why didn't he instead of spreading it around more?.... Because these people may come at any minute, I want to assure you first of all that there is nothing wrong in your asking me about what you'd been told and as you know I was not angry about that. What dismays me is that Tatro would wait more than a decade and then spread libels around. ...You refer to Fred's book. I've not seen it. Because I've had no interest in it after what I learned about him....I'd not know that Fred mentioned me in his book. ...You have no need to feel badly or guilty. If Tatro were ever to make any mention of any such thing he should have asked first. But do you now have a better idea of why I'm detached from just about all the others who occupy themselves in such ways?...Remember, I was quite active when Tatro got that letter and illness is no excuse for his not seeking the truth then. I was not as angry with him as I was dismayed and disgusted. I wrote Emory Brown because I've kept no file on Tatro and don't have his address on my rotodex. But there is no need to forgive you because you did nothing wrong. You did what he should have done if he were ever to make any mention of it....I won't have time to correct the typos, so please excuse. Have to stop. Feel easy not guilty. You did nothing wrong. Best wishes,

Harold

July 8, 1974

Dear Ed,

Thanks for your most recent. I agree that a fair exchange of information between the critics is valuable as I have learned much from the literature on the assassination. Weisberg excepted.

I am in correspondence with perhaps half a dozen people who besides having regular type work also study the case. We exchange information and help one another as much as we can. They don't have "big critic" names and haven't published anything, but look at the case quite level headedly

That "Frenchy" King ~~xxxxx~~ suspect photo comparison was something I came up with in one of my weak-headed moments. I regret that very much simply because it proves nothing. I was greatly surprised when William Turner printed it in Ramparts and claimed he had discovered the comparison, (I sent the photos to him), which only goes to show you that even ex-FBI men are capable of plagiarizing worthless leads and giving them currency.

Dallas police shook down those railroad cars parked back in the yards behind the TSBD and came up with 3 tramps some hours after the shooting. What would you expect them to find in a railroad yard -- stockbrokers? Is this significant? Did the tramps have anything to do with the assassination? What?

If you had to infer my opinion of Garrison, then let me be clear. I think he is a big (6'6") bag of wind who would do anything, make that anything, to build his case -- whatever it was. Here again we are talking about a lawyer and my opinion of lawyers was well stated in my last letter. Garrison was, as one critic put it, a "Warren Report critic on company time." He rode the crest of the public clamor for a new review of the Commission's findings like a carnival barker. "Step right up folks and see who really killed your president." The damage he has done to worthwhile critics of the case has been incalculable. I have a tape of Mark Lane phoning Mort Saul (on the air) from new Orleans that tells the whole story. Lane says he has just seen Garrison's "evidence" and he knows the earth will shake and the government will fall when Jim walks into that courtroom. Garrison is a much bigger con man than Bernie Cornfield, P.T. Barnum or Richard Nixon rolled into one. I love to hear him talk, but I ~~do~~ would hate to live in New Orleans and cross him.

PAGE TWO  
ET:FTN:&7/8/74

As for Weisberg, well, let me relate one thing. Harold addressed a letter to me on D.A. stationery asking if I would retouch a photo of Kerry Thornley too look like Oswald. (no kidding) I was impressed with Harold then and did the job -- thank god I did a sloppy job -- and sent it back to him in N.O.

Harold was, apparently, going to show the retouched photo around to get the reaction of various witnesses. Thornley got wind of this and had his attorney contact me, so I cooperated and sent him a copy of Harold's letter and the retouch, whereupon Harold ran for cover. Have you ever heard of an investigator showing a doctored photo around town to implicate a suspect? That's Happy Harold. Anything goes just so you can make a case -- blurry photo comparisons, wierd associations, forged guest books, trumped up arrest cards, phoney oodes -- all the things they accuse the CIA of doing.

I wish New Orleans would stick with Mardi Gras in the street and keep them out of the courts.

A photo of Shaw and Ferrie taken in 1947? Now all they have to do is prove that this has some connection with events in Dallas. I would suspect Garrison was just having a little fun in a photo darkroom -- a little fun that would enhance his case and ruin Clay Shaw. What does Garrison care about the rights of citizens?

That claim that J. A. Milteer was that old tramp is probably just another "slip of the Penn."

How could Ford, Warren and Belin really believe that "single bullet bullshit?" Because they are lawyers and lawyers believe some really far-out things.

What witness thought he (she) saw Brading with a rifle?

Thompson's book does now show a figure behind the fence in the Moorman photo. I can't see anything there. Marcus sees a figure (first spotted by David L. Lifton) in the west shelter of the knoll pergola and so what? What was he doing? Did anyone see him fire a gun? I have sat for hours with Ray Marcus looking at hugh blow ups of sections of poor quality photographs to no avail. Ray even goes so far in his ink blot test to disern an object (maybe a gun) in the blurry figure's hand. You can play the same game by laying on your back and picking shapes out of cloud formations - the possibilities are endless. It's insane.

PAGE THREE  
ET:FTN:7/8/74

The sewer theory belongs right down there with the rest of the stuff that goes down sewers. Officer Haygood was no where near the limousine during the shooting and parked his bike some 4 or 5 feet away from that sewer vent and did not get off his bike and look in that sewer, as I can follow him during this time. He did miss- park his bike and had it almost topple over in the excitement. Then he ran up to the top of the knoll probably to get a view of the Stemmons free-way to get a glimpse of the Presidential motorcade.

Why do you believe Oswald's rifle was used in the assassination? Because matching slugs were found in the limousine? Was his gun fired that day? Why no finger prints on it? Did he have time to clean the gun afterwards? How much time would ~~xxx~~ that take? Did he have time to do this and then get down to the 2nd floor? Could those slugs have been fired from "his gun" at some other time to implicate him? Was CE399 also planted? Who would have had control over the crime scene (the car, Parkland)?

Why is it that witnesses on the street in front of the TSBD do not look up at the source of the shots? Photos show them looking at the motorcade.

That chart by lawyer Copeland is a beaut. What has he been smoking? I take that back, I forgot he's and lawyer and they don't have to smoke anything to see things like this.

I see you are pressing me for evidence (fair enough) to back my allegation that Oswald was "placed" on the route. That's part of some research I am doing and when I'm ready to present it I'll send it along for your reading. What evidence do I have that LBJ maneuvered JFK to Dallas? Plenty, but I'm going to beg off sending it until I can complete the work.

I don't see LBJ and Youngblood on the floor in the Altgen's photo - I see them starting to react (duck) and I consider it quite significant.

As for the list of suspects you sent (p. 11) I don't have anything sinister here. I know of no significance in Howard's No Name Key photos.

I don't consider it important if Ruby were to wander down to Dealey Plaza after the shooting. That Willis #8 - taken much later in the day, does contain a subject that resembles Ruby. I don't think photo was cropped for a purpose. What if Ruby was there? I would expect him to be where the "action was". I tend to dismiss Victoria Adams, Hill and Wise on this point. Seth Kanter's seeing Ruby at Parkland seems pretty good, but again, so what? Was Ruby asked about Kanter in his testimony? I forget.

PAGE FOUR  
ET:FTN:7/8/74

I have the Hughes movie which I cannot copy and distribute. 40 bucks for the DCA is a rip-off, you should pay approx. \$10.00.

The other night I saw the movie The Parallax View, a movie that raises text-book paranoia to a high art. In view of the authors of this script, nothing ever happens by chance; there is no such thing as a coincidence, every thing seems to fit into a master plan, hugh conspiracies build and build until everything can be explained in terms of a shadow of evid forces that surround us everywhere. ~~Witness~~ Witnesses never die a natural death and even friends of relatives of witnesses run into foul play even though they know nothing. I sometimes think the country is loosing it's collective mind -- a mind numbed trying to make sense out of the chain of murders and misfortunes that have assulted us these last ten years. It's nice to feel that all these "seemingly unrelated" events are "somehow" connected in a giant plan -- a neat scenario, that exists, if only we could make the connection. If we try hard enough and long enough we can even begin to see the sinister shape of this hugh conspiracy, because we want to see it and we let our minds fit things into classifications that make the cabal come alive. Then JFK's, Kings', ~~XXXXX~~ RFK's, Malcolm X's, Rockwell's death make sense. Otherwise the whole thing is nutty and the mind rejects it. I do think JFK's life was taken by a small conspiracy. I do think some of the others were killed by genuine kooks who were alone. See enclosed column by Mike Royko for discussion of the insanity abroad in this land.

Peace, your ~~xxxxxx~~ friend,

Fred

