

12/24/66

Dear Mr. Salisbury,

I am late acknowledging receipt of my rough draft on the autopsy pictures and Xrays because I have been away.

Meanwhile, I keep hearing reports of governmental plans for the use of the pictures and Xrays that are not honorable and that I shall try and forestall if I can. I have exhausted my administrative remedies and have been denied access to this evidence. Commission apologists reportedly are saying they can see these films whenever they want to. One report has it that Epstein, who knows less of the subject and the Commission's evidence than almost anyone writing in the field, is to be shown them so he can say they prove the report is right because the wounds are shown to be approximately where the doctors allege them to have been. Another report, coming from Larry Schiller, of Capitol Records, who had just interviewed a member of the Commission, is that two members of the Commission are to be shown these film. I believe neither the members of the Commission nor its apologists, including those who pretend to be its critics, know enough about the subject matter to comment intelligently about them. They cannot, in any event, address themselves to the basic facts of the assassination, even if they can today be credited.

I have it in writing from the proper official that the government does not have an unbroken chain of possession on these film.

Thus far I have made no public use of this knowledge. I'd rather, if possible, prevent another national disgrace. I'll need at least legal help, for the "literary scavenging" has not yet paid the printer and cannot pay a lawyer. It is my intention, if I can find a lawyer interested enough to take the case, to file an action that will allege illegality in the entire giving and receiving of the pictures and Xrays and in the use of the 1950 law, which I believe was inapplicable because this was government and not private property.

Also, there is much data that I believe is covered by the Acting Attorney General's order of October 30 that has not been placed in the archive. Some of it has been denied me. I also have in writing the identification and absence of some of it. I should like to contest this in a nonsensational way, for in addition to everything else, this involves freedom of information and does not and cannot in any normal sense involve the protection of sources of information, the national security, Jack Ruby's legal rights, or the welfare of innocent people. Should you desire, I will specify. Only some of it is in my writing.

It has been called to my attention that if Wesley Liebeler placed Altgens inaccurately any conclusions drawn from this placement may be inaccurate. I agree, hence the Presidential car may not have been at the point represented by frame 255 of the Zapruder film when he was represented by the FBI as being at Frame 210.

Schiller tells me he has something new and very sensational that he will release with his record, on January 9. His number in Hollywood is 462-6252.

If there is anything I can do to help you or your team working on this, please let me know. Paralleling Manchester's claim that but two bullets were fired is a statement made to your paper by Rankin about Christmas 1964. My copy was borrowed and not returned. If you can supply me with a copy of it (and any post-Report statements by Rankin) it would be helpful, as it would be if you could suggest a lawyer who might be interested in pursuing this matter in a responsible way and without fee.

Sincerely yours,

Harold Weisberg

The New York Times  
Times Square


December 16, 1966

Dear Mr. Weisberg:

I am returning to you the material which you sent to me on November 16 and I appreciate very much your having sent them along for our examination.

I think that you have talked to Mr. Kihss in the interim and he has seen the material and asked me to send it back to you.

With every good wish,

  
Harrison E. Salisbury  
Assistant Managing Editor

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Enc.