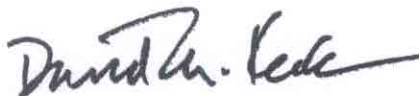


M E M O R A N D U M

October 14, 1993

TO: Harold Weisberg

FROM: David M. Keck



RE: Quotes from interviews and correspondence on Kennedy assassination

The following are on the dates and with the person indicated. The information included is for your use, and mine, as you deem appropriate. In every case, except that of C. Vann Woodward, specific permission was given to David Keck to use the quotes for my article on Case Closed by Gerald Posner. The material from Woodward, however, was written in a personal letter to me, and you have my permission to use any of it if it may be otherwise legal. I have prefaced with commentary where I felt it was necessary for context.

In response to a request from me to comment on the Kennedy assassination, historian C. Vann Woodward wrote to me on October 8, 1993 the following as part of a letter from New Haven, Connecticut:

"I have little but impatience for the wild sensationalism of the movie's ["JFK"?) search for assassination conspirators. And I suffered painful embarrassment when the American Historical Review put a colored picture of the movie's producer and printed three articles taking his theories more or less seriously." (parentheses mine)

From a conversation by telephone with Dr. Cyril Wecht to David Keck on Saturday, September 18, 1993 at 2:00 P. M. (Dr. Wecht was, unless otherwise indicated, commenting on Gerald Posner's book Case Closed):

"He took my testimony of 1975 at the Rockefeller Commission incompletely and casually . . ." " . . . A lot of work has been done since then."

He indicated he was going to view the Kennedy autopsy pictures in the National Archives in late September with Dr. Randy Robertson and R. David Mantik of the National Association of Medical Examiners Convention in Ft. Worth.

Wecht was " . . . convinced more than ever that a second hit to the head is a reality." There is "clear evidence of a second shot to the head."

"Some things are areas of great subjectivity and could never be proved except in a court of law subject to perjury."

"The group that bothers me is the one that walks down the line - one foot on each side." (talking about conspiracy theorists/buffs)

Regarding the neck wounds and Connally's wounds: The exit from John Kennedy's neck "would not cause tumbling." "Two-three-four inches doesn't mean a damn thing."

Wecht (continued)

The bullet would have to go "downward, leftward and forward into Connally." (previous quote relates to this statement)

The neck exit, if that was what it was, "was 1.5 cm, not 1½ inches."

The bullet "had to come out of Kennedy's neck nose first - in 24-25 inches this bullet - comes out nose first 90° - no way in the world - what can deflect it 24 inches?" (see comments by McCarthy on this issue)

The bullet "breaks (Connally's) rib and radius and doesn't separate (the jacket from the lead) but hits twigs and separates." (parentheses mine)

The bullet went "through Connally downward at 27°."

Connally "cannot continue holding his hat" if hit in the wrist.

"frame 230 - still can count the (Connally's) fingers." (parentheses mine)

"Where is (Connally's) wrist in connection to the chest?" (parentheses mine)

"There is no advocate's brief from Posner - a judge would rip him apart."

^(Wecht's)
Regarding his conversation with Dr. Roger McCarthy on Monday, September 13: McCarthy "confirmed that Posner never consulted them or met with them. They sent (to Posner) a courtesy summary of the mock trial information." (parentheses mine) He (Posner) "never commissioned them nor paid one penny." According to Wecht, McCarthy was "very angry with Posner that clear inference (was made) on interviews that he commissioned them to do it." (parentheses mine) "This was done as a project. Non unanimity of opinion amongst them." "Posner is a writer and lawyer - what he's done can't be attributed to sloppiness."

Interview by telephone with Dr. Roger McCarthy, President of Failure Analysis, and David Keck, October 11, 1993:

Regarding the allegation that Posner implied that he commissioned Failure Analysis: Posner has "consciously attempted to create that image." "We are terribly amused at this concept of 'case closed.'"

"This was "a project we took on - supplied experts for both sides."

"The jury voted 7-5, a 'hung jury'".

"There are bigger problems than the wounds."

Regarding the Mannlicher-Carcano: It is a "high energy rifle" with a "pretty fair kick." It (the scope) "has to be mounted to the left." "I couldn't duplicate it (the shots Oswald made)." (parentheses mine)

McCarthy (continued)

"A professional assassin would use a glycerine or mercury bullet."

Regarding the clip in the rifle: "It was a U-shaped spring that holds the clip and it was not lost, it was in the weapon. The bullets would have just flown out the top if it was not there. It was not a stripper clip. There were two side fingers that hold (the bullet) it in place." (parentheses mine)

The case "won't be resolved until they find his (Kennedy's) brain."

Regarding the case: "We would have loved to have solved it. We gave it our best shot and couldn't close the case. We couldn't convince twelve impartial jurors."

Some observations from my notes on Case Closed:

page 460: "Another man present, Carl Roppolo, denied . . ."
Comment: if Roppolo was present, what was he present at?
If there was no meeting with Becker, how could Roppolo be present at it?

page 25: says Oswald "defected". But Oswald didn't really formally defect - his "defection" was never accepted or acted on by either side.

Also on page 25, explains about the Queen Bee visits being very expensive; indicates later that he saved nearly all his Marine money for later trip to Europe. How did he pay for all those expensive trips to the Queen Bee? He never says.

Chapter 3: did not deal with discrepancies about airplane departure times to Finalnd from London.

page 47 - again infers that Oswald actually defected. Why shouldn't it be in quotes? He didn't defect.
If he had only rudimentary study of Russian, how did he get by so well with what Russian he knew when he was in Russia?

In the picture section, with the Oswald "press conference" - how could Ruby be "posing" as a journalist if the police knew him? Why would he even try to "pose" as a newsman under those circumstances?

page 477: about the bullet fragment travelling to the curb (near Tague): how did the jacket (shorn from the lead by a twig) travel so far down the street?

page 478: the size of the entry wound in the back is listed, but not the "exit" in the neck.

page 479: How could Connally still be holding that hat? Wecht told me that the bullet did indeed hit the radial nerve; Posner says not.

Comments (continued)

page 104: it talks about a "low kickback." This directly contradicts earlier McCarthy statement, and also, what difference does it make if it has a "low kickback compared to other military rifles"? What matters is if there is a significant kickback to make firing those shots in that time accurately impossible. My friend who owns the Mannlicher purchased in January of 1963 (Dan Fawcett, a teacher in Westerville, Ohio) has fired his Mannlicher and says it has "a kick like a mule." These two descriptions are very different than Posner's.

page 213: no mention at all of the posturing Oswald (or his imposter) did as claimed by some theorists: the bragging, the cross-shooting at targets. etc.

page 224: about Oswald holding the package under his arm and it "did not quite touch the ground." I have done it with a Mannlicher. I am 6'1", Oswald was 5'9" or 5'11". I can almost cup the stock in my hand with it under my armpit, broken down (which the rifle would have had to have been). Unless Oswald's arms extended down to his knees, the package would hardly have "not quite touched the ground."

page 226: Never explains how there could have been time for him to arrange all those heavy boxes and then calmly make the shots of a lifetime.

page 252: mentions Jean Hill's husband ridiculing her story. According to Jean Hill, they were separated at the time.

page 273: Refers to Charles Voyd Harrelson as "Buddy" Harrelson. This is laughable if it was not so stupid. Buddy Harrelson was an infielder for the New York Mets. Charles Harrelson was never called "Buddy." His son is, of course, "Woody." Maybe he mixed them up!

page 278: If Oswald wore the gray jacket to Paine's house the night before the assassination, as Posner says Marina said, then how did it get from Irving Texas to his rooming house the next day for him to pick up after the assassination when Oswald had not been at the rooming house between times?

page 298: says the "President was above state laws." Not so. At that time, there was no law (federal) about killing the president. That law was passed later by Congress as a result of JFK's murder.

page 304: contradiction. Footnote says Humes said no one influenced him, yet at top of page says Kennedys didn't want the ound shaved. Contradiction.

Comments (continued)

Concerning Jack Ruby: Posner never talks about Ruby having been a runner for Al Capone in his younger days.

At some time, if you have the time, and you have any comments on my comments, I would be interested in hearing them. I hope that some of this may be helpful to you in some way, or have shed some light on areas you may not have noticed. If there is even one, it is worth it.
Happy writing!