

Paul Hoch
1515 Acton St.,
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1/22/94

Dear Paul,

Glad to get the picture of what I am inclined to think is a very youthful looking wife or a rather mature looking nine year old daughter. They are both beautiful in any event, and we thank you for it. If you were the photographer, you knew when the expressions were just right!

Re Posner, thanks. I'll use his reservation of what you take as that.

I've done a lot of work on his book. It is, without any question in my mind, the most conscientiously dishonest one on the assassination by as uninhibited a shyster as I can imagine who is also a talented con man. The impression he and Trisha made on us was so favorable I'd invited them to Thanksgiving dinner nine months later. They accepted, appeared to appreciate the invitation and we heard nothing from them on their intentions not to come. He spent three days here, with unsupervised access to all I have and to our copied and the cheap bastard, with that and my time costing him nothing, did not send me a book as he volunteered he would with the first back from the printer. In retrospect I suppose it as not cheapness. As in some form you'll see. I do not know when but Wrono and McKnight have unedited copies of the rough draft now being edited.

I've written Wicker and Amrose without response. If you have addresses on any of the others who provided prepub puffery I'll appreciate them and will write them also. It is to me simply astounding that those whose reputations were at stake made not effort to learn if he told the truth about anything.

I'll leave a fat file on that book, more than on any other for the 30th. anniv., and if you can think of anything worthwhile for it I'd like to know. What he did is, I believe, really despicable. He knew what he was doing and did it for the expected reward.

Thanks, but I need nothing else on Failure Analysis now. I am not familiar with the defense side but what they did for the prosecution makes a case that such means should not be permitted in some if not most litigation. It, too, was really dishonest. But can a poor defendant cope with such a prosecution presentation? I think not. Whether it is OK for commercial litigation may be another matter.

You say that the condition of the bullet fired at lower velocity was impressive to you. Is that a duplication of how the imagined actual bullet had its velocity reduced? Is it possible that before hitting the wrist, even if it struck nothing in JFK it could have smashed all that ^{R.D.} without even a microscopic mark as the result? I think not. And if you remember Post Mortem, it did strike bone inside JFK.

If Posner told you he handled Hartogs' testimony with care, he meant it other than as you took it. He lied about it, knowing what he was doing. Hartogs swore to the opposite several pages later. I check it and it is so.

I need no more for the book but for the historical record I'll welcome copies of any checking that if I get them I hope will identify who did it. Thanks and best to you all,

Thanks for Elvord page,
too.

Hards

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January 17, 1994

Harold Weisberg
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Dear Harold,

Thanks for your note of the 9th. We are all fine, but getting older - a change that works better for the girls (photo enclosed) than for Sue and me. I remain very busy at work, which has been full time or more for the past couple of months - a special push to make the office look good in light of a possible reorganization. Also, I guess it's nice not to have to keep up with too much nonsense on the case, now that the 30th anniversary has passed.

My father, who is now spending most of the year in Concord (Mass.), has told me about your cold weather. Berkeley does have its advantages.

I'm a little surprised to hear that Posner told Jim Lesar that he had discussed his view of the closedness of the case with me. We did chat a bit, semi-privately, when he spoke at Green Apple books in San Francisco on September 29. He was much more disarming and subtle than he comes across in the book, as I suppose you would have expected, since you've talked with him. There was some evidence for a "second Posner" theory; for example, his account of the care he had taken in using Hartogs testimony was inconsistent with what I remembered from the book itself. Also, he said that Tony Summers wrote "a very good book called 'Conspiracy'" - not the impression his reader would get.

On the "closed" question, I have only my rough notes, not a direct quote. According to those notes, he does not expect - despite his confident title - that the case is closed; he puts 'Oswald alone' back on the table. His point was, as I recall, that in general people are now debating only what kind of conspiracy it was.

Also, I guess I can share what he wrote when he autographed my copy of his book - "I know this case is certainly not closed for you and many other serious and responsible researchers, but it [the book, I guess] should certainly make for a lively and continuing debate on 'Oswald alone.'" But I don't think this is really quotable directly, since he's allowed to soften up his real opinions in such a context.

Thanks also for the copy of your letter of September 29 to Hal Verb. I don't think I have anything on Failure Analysis that would have been of any help if I had been able to reply earlier. I have some clippings and promotional material from the mock trial - which I attended - but nothing I can get my hands on easily. Some of the work they did for each side was not particularly impressive. The one item which struck me as important was the bullet which had been shot at a slower than standard velocity through a wrist, causing the right kind of damage (as I recall) and coming out in CE 399-like condition.

I don't recall where Bob Callahan made the remark I quoted in my last letter (about "Hung Jury" as a book title) - probably not in print - but I doubt that he would mind if you used the general sentiment, attributed to him or not.

Here's 10 pages on John Elrod - you may have seen a reference to him in Jeff Morley's piece of 11/18 on the Conyers hearings.

Best,

Paul