

Mr. Charles Kuhn, Librarian
Hood College

3/27/90

Dear Charles,

Some time before the 25th anniversary of the JFK assassination, in the belief a special file on it would be useful, I began one, as Jerry knows. I've kept it in a box for ready access and to be able to add to it. I have the videocassettes separately. You can have either at any time you want them. Or both, of course.

Yesterday I received an audio tape of a program for public radio stations from Public Interest Affiliates. They'd interviewed me by phone. They have commercial interest in the sale of cassettes and they asked for and I gave them a release without listening to the cassette because otherwise would have been to be seeking to censor.

I listened to it this evening and I write about it because it illustrates the great difficulty there is in taking accurate and truthful information to the people on this great "crime of the century." I believe that the producers decided in advance, whether or not with any inkling of what it would mean, to explore conspiracy theories. They had a tendency to go with those who said spectacular, dramatic things, exercising no editorial judgement at all. From the narrative they prepared for Edward Newman it is apparent that they did not know enough to exercise any editorial judgement. The narrative is often quite wrong factually and not infrequently very seriously.

As an example, after they used the voice of supposed critics saying that the records should be made available they have Newman concluding saying that the files should be opened. This despite the fact that I have and you'll get about a third of a million pages of what they actually said is suppressed. Others are getting records I do not have, regularly.

In what they said is two hours and I think is less there is not a single reference to any of the FOIA litigation or to any of the records brought to light by it. I don't know which is worse, presuming to take information to the people when the producers were this ignorant of the subject matter or knowing it and suppressing it for the sake of preconceptions and predeterminations.

From the little they used of what I said I am confident that one predetermination was to avoid the facts of the crime to the degree possible. They didn't use a single word I said on that.

They knew so little about the published material they aired a number of others saying they had brought to light what they had not and I had. To a degree this can be accidental but not in its entirety, unless they were that ignorant of the subject matter.

This also underscores the fact that there are very few critics ~~there~~ are who do stick to the facts and know them.

They gave most attention to Robert Sam Andon, whose book is largely the work of others and was published some two decades ago. He's done nothing since but that makes him an authority on anything and everything, currently, too. They gave what appears to be next greatest time to Jean Davison, who spoke of her "investigation" when she made none and restricted herself, again two decades after the fact, to what the Warren Commission published that was in accord with her unhidden preconception, of Oswald's singular guilt. More than a third of a million pages of previously withheld records were available to her when she began but she didn't consult any and she didn't even mention them. How much greater authority can one be?

Of all the theories they went biggest for the mafia plots garbage. They used David Schein who wrote a book about it with virtually no mention of the assassination and about that much about fact. It is a theory and that makes him an authority and the few references he made to supposed reality are ludicrously wrong. Dan Moldea is another of the mafia-did-it commercializers and he had about the next greatest amount of attention. I'm sure he

worked this into his book on the mafia to seal it. He knows so little about even what he said is the Oswald link to the mafia he mispronounced the name and then established this was no accident by misspelling it.

Sylvia Leagher, who was an authentic expert, did virtually nothing on the subject after her book was published in 1967 or 1968. She was quite good on what they used, but like just about all that has any relationship to fact, it was of the dim past.

I remember at least one thing that was as dishonest as it was wrong. They tried to make out that first, Jimmy Hoffa was the link to the mafia plot when he wasn't and then that he had threatened to kill JFK. To establish this they used excerpts from his Senate testimony from long before JFK was elected. And he'd made no reference to JFK then.

They even confused the CIA and FBI, referring to the CIA when it was FBI. Then they used Prof. Phil Melanson, whose name they mispronounced perhaps a dozen times and they used him almost that often, to say that the government plotted to avoid having the original of the Abraham Zapruder film when that did not happen. (It was perhaps worse- the FBI and Secret Service had no interest in the original film, could have seized it and didn't. On this students may want to read FBI reports Jerry has on the film taken by Charles Bronson. It showed, in the FBI's own words, the President actually being killed but the FBI didn't want it because it could not be used for "identification," meaning of Oswald with a smoking gun. But it was quite useful for other identifications, many of them, in any genuine investigation.)

It is impossible to exaggerate how really awful this show is. And it was not a commercial production but for public radio.

and virtually nobody in the audience was in a position to evaluate what was aired, whether on fact or on what most of it is, theories that without exception are untenable.

Prof. David Wrone's summation is quite good. So also are a few, very few, of the observations made by a few others. But even one of those who is quite good, Dr. Cyril Wecht, perhaps because he has talked himself into believing it, says he brought to light what he had nothing at all to do with bringing to light, he merely cribbed it and took credit for it. It has to do with some of the autopsy materials I got through FOIA. This has to do with some of it no longer existing.

I've taken this time because ~~it~~ this show illustrates so well how most of the people have been misled and because it typifies those who do the misleading. Whatever they may have had in mind or thought they did.

Best,

Harold
Harold Weisberg