

10/5/83

Dear Harold:

Even with the computer, I still misplace letters. Sometimes I sit around waiting for someone to respond, then I discover that I never mailed them my last letter!

Well, it looks like next month will be a big one for Kennedy special reports on TV. My own documentary is about half finished. We are trying to decide if it should go before all of the other stuff or after.

We got a memo from NBC saying they produced a half-hour program for all NBC-owned stations. They will send it down the wire to us early in November, and we have the option of showing it locally or just using parts of it for our own production.

Last weekend my wife and I drove over to Clinton, Louisiana, to look around. I shot film in Clinton 20 years ago of the big demonstration at the courthouse. It is possible that Oswald was there that day, but nearly impossible for Clay Shaw to have been there without being seen by all the New Orleans newsmen. Shaw was not the type to go driving into a Civil Rights demonstration with a bunch of fags and murderers in his car. All New Orleans newsmen knew him well, so it is not likely that "six witnesses" could have recognized him without any of the newsmen recognizing him. Oswald, yes, but Shaw, no.

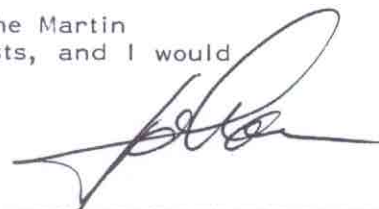
I was amused to note that Paul Hoch wrote in his newsletter a couple of years ago, that over the years, dozens of Civil Rights workers began to remember seeing Oswald in Clinton. Hoch suggested that Oswald was actually one of the Civil Rights workers! Poor Paul. His inability to solve the case must have driven him mad.

I also drove to Jackson and Plaquemine to look over locations I filmed years ago. This film material -- including some very dramatic scenes of James Farmer and local demonstrations -- will be in my Oswald program.

During my research, I discovered an interview with Carlos Bringuier that I shot on August 13, 1963. I remember filming it, but I did not remember that it was on the 13th, a day after their court trial. I discovered a story about Bringuier and two of his friends in a copy of the Times-Picayune dated the morning of the 14, then I remembered that he called a press conference the day after the court stuff was shown on WDSU.

Too bad I didn't give all this stuff to the Warren Commission. At the time, I didn't think it was important.

Well, again, I ask you to loan me a copy of the Martin film. It is not essential to the program, but it exists, and I would like to show it in my documentary.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Edgar Hoover' or similar, written in a cursive style.

9/14/83

Dear Harold:

I hope I didn't offend you with my remark about the air conditioner. I was trying to make the point that some men judge other men by strange values.

By the way, when my wife and I lived in Los Angeles several years ago, we raised chickens in our back yard. Of course these were pets. We started with two black Cochins, then we added a Silkie and a few others of mixed breed. They all started having baby chicks, so we wound up with more than fifty of them one summer.

I was surprised to learn that chicken eggs are soft when they are first laid. They become hard, it seems, when they hit the air.

I learned a little chicken language. Ours, all together, had about a dozen words and phrases that they all knew. This was a true language because the separate words and phrases would be used only for one situation each. I always figured that we might be able to teach a chicken to talk like a parrot if we took a few years to breed them properly.

Regarding your barbecue, I find that very interesting. We southern people seem to think that only other southern people know how to barbecue properly. I like to do it too. When I barbecue, I place emphasis on the smoke rather than the sauce. Out in Los Angeles we used to use walnut wood which gave a wonderful flavor to the meat. We can't get walnut down here, so we use hickory.

There are several different sauces that I use. Some are based on soy sauce, others based on tomato and molasses (cane syrup boiled down). If the smoking is heavy enough, I just use salt and pepper with no sauce. If you want, I'll send you a hickory log so you can try it out.

Thanks for the information about Ron Kessler of the Post. I'll go to my local library and look up his articles. I've got a feeling that Oswald made a threat against Kennedy during one of his Embassy visits, and I'll bet this is something that LBJ wanted to keep secret years ago.

Regarding computerization of your records, it would be a large job, but I think it would be a valuable service to

researchers in years to come. When I get a chance, I'll computerize some of the documents you have sent me, and I'll give you a printout of the list. To computerize, you don't have to re-type each document. All you have to do is assign each document a few code words and a number or two.

When you want to look something up, you type a key word or two into the computer, then the computer searches for any and all documents that contain those key words, and it prints out the file number so that you can go right to the right file drawer or box to find the document.

Another file method is the chronological file list. For example, I've been adding to a chronological file of events in Oswald's life. This includes information on letters he wrote and received, and newspaper stories he read, and other news reports he might have heard about.

The method so far has helped me to identify the source of some of the information he discussed with Bill Stuckey during the first Stuckey interview. Stuckey never knew where Oswald came up with the "media censorship" idea that he talked about. Well, I found a story about President Kennedy forming a media censorship committee, a story that ran in the Times-Picayune several weeks before the Stuckey interview.

If I just made a photocopy of that article and stuffed it in a box, months later I would not remember the article date or its relative time frame. By mentioning the article in my chronological computer file, I can always quickly check the file to check the date.

Of course such files can be done by hand, but the computer is much faster and cannot be misplaced under a pile of old socks.

Look, I'm working on a TV documentary about Oswald, and it will be shown on my station in late November. I really need a copy of the Martin film to use in this program. If you don't hear from Groden soon, I wish you would consider loaning me your copy for a couple of days. Remember that you can insure it for a lot of money so that it will be safe going through the postal system, and I can give you any kind of statement assuring that the film will be safe while it is in my hands. I would need it for only one or two days since I would project it only once and video tape right off the movie screen.

Trying to track another copy down through the network of "critics" is impossible since most of them seem to be con men and liars out to make a buck selling phony books and magazine articles. I'm reasonably certain that I could turn up all sorts of copies of it if I could offer \$10,000, but I can't so I'm stuck with nothing to offer in return. The whole world runs on money and lies, you know, so someone who has no money and tries to tell the truth is at a great disadvantage. This is depressing as hell, especially when I see my own film used in

other productions.

Remember the ABC special report on J. Edgar Hoover a couple of years ago? They showed my film of Oswald in New Orleans. While doing research here, I found an extra copy of my Oswald film in one of my safe deposit boxes. It was labeled "ABC copy". Then I remembered that way back in 1965, Peter Jennings was in New Orleans covering something, and came by WVUE where I worked at the time. For some idiotically naive reason, I gave Jennings a video taped copy of that extra print so ABC would have it in their files. Now and then I see the ABC copy used to promote one stupid theory or another. What a jerk I am.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.

Dear Johann,

10/11/83

No doubt computers are worthwhile. I've a reporter friend who once retrieved some of his notes for me that way, so fast I was astounded. And then gave me a printout. But it would take the rest of my life, if I did nothing else.

I don't recall what you said about air conditioners, but it didn't offend.

FYI on whickens: the shells are hard but moist when laid. But you are correct on their communicating.

Aside from the reasons I've given for not lending you the martin film I've had to adopt an inflexible policy of not letting only copies out of my hands. I've lost too much, and to friends. And I can't possibly make records of all loanings. As you know, I've tried and tried with Groden, without response.

Reur Oswald footage, did I tell you that both Ed Planer and Jessie Core told me that it was not the same when returned from Panamerican films by the FBI? I don't know when you made your print, but they had 11/22/63 in mind, when they looked at it on the movieola, and then days later when they'd loaned it out and got it back.

The file copy in Garrison's day is identical with the print you had copied for him through Bill Turner.

If you ever transcribe the soundtrack of your special or if you have an extra script when you air it I'd be interested in seeing it.

Reur 10/5, I was not aware that NBC did a special but I'd heard that they were doing a segment for First Camera.

What I take to be your 8/13/63 Bringuier interview, or part of it, is included in the single film remaining at WDSU when I saw it. Probably edited down. As I recall, at the courthouse. The two friends of his were the others in the Oswald fracas.

There is to be a new book that will interest you and probably shares your views on Oswald. By Jean Davis, Vermont, publisher Norton, supposedly with a big campaign. Galleys for review are out but I've not seen any.

I also have trouble believing that Shaw had anything to do with Ferrie. But I also have trouble with Shaw's alibi re Clinton: that he could not leave N.O. and didn't because he was in charge of renting space in the new bldg. He wasn't, as you might have known at the time from your then friends. Of course I can also understand that an innocent man, without an alibi, might make one up or go with one his lawyers' invented, but Shaw did not do the renting. I've interviewed those who did - by following leads in FBI records which have nothing to do with Shaw.

But as I may have told you, I had little interest in and spent no time at all on Shaw. I was interested in Oswald.

Bringuier's alibi about Oswald is also untrue. They did not first meet either 8/2 or 8/5/63, and he gave both dates. It was in May, that is, the first time. And I believe it was Oswald who tipped the city off that Bringuier was selling bonds w/o a license.

Good luck with your special.