

Dear Mr. Bradlee,

11/25/83

Because I still have ~~many~~ promises to keep, although with many fewer miles to go before I sleep (because of serious illness and my 70 years), I write you with a complaint not against you but against the Post. When my wife retypes it I will enclose a copy of what I am sending to your <sup>op</sup> ed page editor, about Dan Schorr's piece that I hope, <sup>u</sup>pon examination and reflection, will not make you proud.

While what I have written will ~~have~~ have to speak for itself, to illustrate the gross unfairness of both the piece and its publication, I personalize. I also do this because checking me out is easy and simple for you.

Schorr begins by lumping (if not also condemning) all critics of the official solution of the assassination of President Kennedy as idle theorists and all work as "a spate of conspiracy theories." It is not possible that anyone qualified to be any kind of editor on the Post does not know other and better than this.

I am one who not only does not theorize whodunits (as you will not Schorr does), I oppose those who do.

My work is of a magnitude and ~~I believe~~ an accuracy you will, I believe, have difficulty finding duplicated in any field and on any subject. My FOIA efforts, including ~~precent-making~~ <sup>re</sup> FOIA litigation not reported in the Post, results in my having - and making freely available to all, including those with whom I do not agree - about a half-million pages of once-withheld records. In the course of this, I was responsible for the 1974 amending of the FOIA's investigatory-files exemption, also not reported in the Post, with all the public benefit of which you cannot be entirely unaware.

If I would not have elected it, I have been forced into a public role and to the best of my ability I serve it fully and impartially. I have never had a single complaint about accuracy, in either my writing, which means seven books, or the information I provide, including to any and all reporters, even those I know will describe me as a "chicken farmer" instead of a former investigative reporter, Senate

investigator and editor and intelligence analyst.

In meeting this public responsibility and serving this public role without regard to personal interest, you can easily find, for example, that long before I published the 1/21/64 Commission executive session transcript, <sup>referred to</sup> I gave Bill Claiborne a xerox of it in New York, when he chided me for understating its significance. I have not yet published the Marine Corps proof that Oswald had ~~crypto~~ crypto clearance, which required top secret clearance, but when I received it I offered it to your national desk. Thereafter, when it appeared to be pertinent, I phoned and offered it to the national desk at least one more time, both times 4 to 5 years ago.

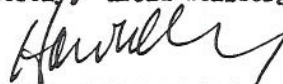
Whatever you may think of my writing, and I doubt you have had time or interest to really familiarize yourself with it, it has stood the test of time and minute scrutiny. It is anything but conspiracy theorizing. And whatever you may think of my perseverance in so many FOIA suits, the one thing you will not find in them is much theorizing. It ought be apparent that an undertaking of this magnitude and cost cannot be and was not for any kind of personal profit and did involve not inconsiderable sacrifices.

While nobody else has come close to an inquiry of this cost, depth and magnitude, you must certainly know that there are others ~~who~~ also are not either self-seekers <sup>or</sup> of conspiracy theorizers.

Particularly because the Post is read and credited by the judges who sit on my cases and the government lawyers who stonewall them, can you see how entirely, and I think inexcuseably, unfair the Schorr piece is, quite aside from the nature of the rest of its content? Even hurtful to what the press ought not want to hurt?

After 20 years, is it not, really, long past time for the Post to confront its shibboleths and prejudices and treat this subject as it treats any other? And to at least be conscious of the possibility of unfairness and injury to many decent people who have assumed the responsibility of good citizenship in a representative society? I ask nothing of you but thought, but I do hope you will want to find some way of undoing this harm.

Sincerely, Harold Weisberg



7627 Old Receiver Road  
Frederick, MD 21701

November 26, 1983

Op-Ed Page Editor  
The Washington Post  
1150 15th St. NW  
Washington, DC 20005

Daniel Schorr's op ed page Oswald as Avenger is not reporting, not a balanced and reasoned expression of opinion. It also is not accurate on the few occasions supposed fact intrudes on his unoriginal amateur shrinkery. It is a work of propaganda timed to support an egregious new book, Oswald's Games, that adopts his earlier expression of this line and it makes a propagandist of the Post, which manages to find space for only such propaganda.

If Oswald did act as avenger, your unequivocal statement, a more probative case can be made for his serving other interests. For example, the Post has long failed to print the official proof that as a Marine Oswald had very high security clearances, was trusted with and, from all the evidence, did keep real and significant secrets. (Details on request.) After advanced schooling, he had no Marine assignment that did not have some relationship with the CIA. He was one of a small cadre of five so trusted in each of three outfits, and he is not known ever to have mentioned a word to anyone. He did not include any of this in his extensive writing. His only officially recorded overseas assignment was Atsugi, Japan, a very important CIA base, but the unquestioned testimony of his Marine mates is that he and they also were assigned for six months to Cubi Point, another CIA base in the Philippines. Before and after Cubi, he was assigned to two CIA operations to overthrow the leftist Sukarno government in Indonesia. This appears on his service record as maneuvers, despite six months at Cubi alone.

To his basic unfactuality Schorr adds unsupportable conjectures, non sequiturs, assumptions that are without support in his piece (if, indeed, anywhere) and the slander of all serious investigators. He assumes Oswald's lone guilt, without even passing acquaintance with the Commission's own fact, which is far from all the relevant fact available today. So does Oswald's Games, which Schorr promotes. He represents that "the basic conclusions of the Warren Commission have stood up" because they have survived "against a spate of conspiracy theories." He makes no reference to factual, nontheoretical, nonconspiratorial criticism, although proof does not lie in theories, even Schorr's, but in fact. He knows better because I warned him years ago and invited him to acquaint himself with the basic fact. (Such as the simple and unquestionable: nobody has ever been able to duplicate the shooting attributed to Oswald, not even the best shots in the country, and he was a lousy shot.)

For all his condemnation of conspiracy theorists, of whom I am not one

and with whom I disagree, he in fact plagiarizes their kick-back theory. It was also palmed off - against the CIA - by the FBI, which convinced LBJ that this assassination was a conspiracy in which the CIA was involved.

Schorr pretends that the Commission had no knowledge of any CIA plots against Castro merely because it was unaware of one CIA/mafia plot. There was never any secret about CIA plots against Castro and they were widely reported. In fact, even the story Schorr uses was known to the Commission, is in its files and it thus did know.

Schorr carries this further with the incorrect statement that the CIA talked the Commission out of going to Mexico. The CIA did not, the Commission did send representatives there and they did "look into the Cuban connection."

Schorr conjectures that Oswald read that particular story and gave it his (unoriginal) interpretation, but there is no indication of this and more, there is no reason to believe it. Like the rest of us at that time, Oswald was well aware that JFK had guaranteed Cuba against any invasion, something even Khrushchev could not and did not do. The last thing in the world Oswald, if pro-Castro, would have wanted is the death of Castro's only meaningful insurance and protection.

For a man of Schorr's record and experience, it is less than fair or honest to refer to the free-lancing scandalmonger, the late Comer Clark, as "a British correspondent" and to withhold the fact that his fabrication was for the National Enquirer.

If Schorr had attempted any research at all, he would have known that the FBI looked into, reported on and debunked the alleged Castro "tirade" at the Brazilian Embassy. If Schorr had any knowledge of the nonconspiratorial literature, he would have known that I published that in 1967.

Moreover, Schorr also requires Castro to have been privy to this alleged revenge. While Schorr may claim, in the face of all dependable fact, that Oswald was crazy and had no idea of where Castro's interest lay, he can hardly believe that Castro wanted his only real protection wiped out, particularly in the midst of bi-level negotiations for rapprochement. He quotes Castro as saying, "If Oswald would have done something like that (saying he'd try to kill JFK), it would have been our duty to inform the United States."

Can you really believe that Castro would not serve his own interest?

Schorr also fails to report that the FBI was charged with an ongoing, unending investigative responsibility and he certainly can't say that the FBI was not aware. It was, if not sooner, no later than the time the CIA's bugger was caught with his mike showing behind Dan Rowan's bed when the CIA had his love-life monitored for Sam Giancana as a condition of Giancana's continuing with his assassination efforts for the CIA. How can Schorr responsibly address "his" theory at all without reporting the FBI's knowledge - and suppression - of it?

Had there been any scholarship at all behind this supposed think-piece, Schorr would have been aware (as the Post reported in 1975) that as of not later than January 21, 1964, the Commission was well aware that the FBI was pressing a nonconspiracy solution upon it without running out conspiracy leads, particularly in Mexico, and wanted the Commission to fold its tent and report that the FBI had found its man and solved the crime.

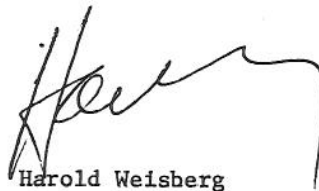
(The Commission decided to destroy the transcript of these astounding deliberations and confessions, but when the stenotypist's tape escaped the memory hole I forced its disclosure to me under FOIA, then gave copies to the Post and others.)

The fact is (as my first attachment reflects) that the very afternoon of the assassination, before Oswald was charged and before investigation, the FBI refused to consider any other suspect or even the possibility of a conspiracy. It also is a fact that the first working day after the assassination the respected Nicholas Katzenbach, then running the Department of Justice, urged the formation of the Commission with these responsibilities - before and without investigation: "1. The public must be convinced that Oswald was the assassin; that he did not have confederates who are still at large; and that the evidence was such that he would have been convicted at trial. 2. Speculation about Oswald's motivation ought to be cut off..."

That these things then were undertaken by the Commission, as the available official record leaves without doubt, is a suitable subject for Schorr's not inconsiderable talents. Instead, he and not he alone ignores it - when a President is killed, the government investigates it, and our system of society is nullified.

Schorr abandons personal responsibility and our traditional journalistic standards.

His piece and your publication of it are a disservice to the country, an imposition on the trust of and a further attempt to confuse the people and still another whitewash and cover-up.



Harold Weisberg

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

C.A. 78-0322/0420  
Consolidated  
Exhibit 13

TO : SAC, DALLAS

FROM : IC ROBERT G. RENFRO

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY

DATE: 11/22/63

Sgt. H. C. SHERRIL, Richardson, Texas, PD, telephone AD 5-5213, advised JIMMY GEORGE ROBINSON and members of the National States Rights Party should be considered possible suspects in the assassination of President KENNEDY, due to their strong feeling against him. He reminded that ROBINSON is the individual who burned a cross on the lawn of a Richardson residence approximately a year ago. He advised ROBINSON, white male, age 25, runs a service station located at Belt Line Road and Mayfield Road, Garland, Texas.

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44-1552  
Jan.

*Not necessary to  
cover as true subject  
located - JMH*

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NOV 22 1963	
FBI - DALLAS	

*Advised JMH*

November 25, 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. MOYERS

It is important that all of the facts surrounding President Kennedy's Assassination be made public in a way which will satisfy people in the United States and abroad that all the facts have been told and that a statement to this effect be made now.

1. The public must be satisfied that Oswald was the assassin; that he did not have confederates who are still at large; and that the evidence was such that he would have been convicted at trial.

2. Speculation about Oswald's motivation ought to be cut off, and we should have some basis for rebutting thought that this was a Communist conspiracy or (as the Iron Curtain press is saying) a right-wing conspiracy to blame it on the Communists. Unfortunately the facts on Oswald seem about too pat--too obvious (Marxist, Cuba, Russian wife, etc.). The Dallas police have put out statements on the Communist conspiracy theory, and it was they who were in charge when he was shot and thus silenced.

3. The matter has been handled thus far with neither dignity nor conviction. Facts have been mixed with rumour and speculation. We can scarcely let the world see us totally in the image of the Dallas police when our President is murdered.

I think this objective may be satisfied by making public as soon as possible a complete and thorough FBI report on Oswald and the assassination. This may run into the difficulty of pointing to inconsistencies between this report and statements by Dallas police officials. But the reputation of the Bureau is such that it may do the whole job.

129-11	
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	
21	MAY 1965
RECORDS BRANCH	

File  
HPW

*Daniel Schorr*

## Oswald as Avenger

The basic conclusions of the Warren Commission have stood up against a spate of conspiracy theories that seemed to respond to an American need to make the assassination of President Kennedy seem less random, less senseless. But the commission might have been less mystified about the probable motive had it not been for the CIA, which feared that a link might be established between the assassination and the agency's plots to kill Castro.

Since the commission filed its report, evidence has emerged—some of it still officially secret—suggesting a chain of circumstance that led Lee Harvey Oswald to become the self-appointed avenger of persistent efforts by the CIA to assassinate Fidel Castro.

Castro's agents penetrated many of the assassination plots. His informants circulated in the Cuban community in Miami, the main staging point. In 1978 Castro told a visiting House investigating committee, "We were constantly arresting people trained by the CIA . . . with explosives . . . with telescopic rifles."

On Sept. 7, 1963, Castro showed up unexpectedly at a Brazilian Embassy reception in Havana and launched into a tirade against President Kennedy and the CIA, accusing them of plotting his death. "Let Kennedy and his brother, Robert, watch out," he said. "They, too, could become targets of assassination."

After his impromptu speech at the Brazilian Embassy, Castro expanded his warning of retaliation in a long interview with an Associated Press correspondent, Daniel Harker.

In New Orleans, where Oswald was living, Harker's story appeared at the top of Page 7 of the Times-Picayune of Sept. 9. It started this way:

*HAVANA (AP)—Prime Minister Fidel Castro said Saturday night "United States leaders" would be in danger if they helped in any attempt to do away with leaders of Cuba.*

*Bitterly denouncing what he called recent U.S.-prompted raids on Cuban territory, Castro said, "We are prepared to fight them and answer in kind. United States leaders should think that if they are aiding terrorist plans to eliminate Cuban leaders . . . they themselves will not be safe."*

It is not established that Oswald read the story, but his wife, Marina, later said that he was an avid reader of newspapers, including the

Times-Picayune.

The story came at a time when Oswald, an admirer of Castro, was in a state of agitation and frustration. He had lost his job. He had been arrested in a scuffle while distributing pro-Castro leaflets. He had engaged in an angry debate on the radio, saying, "Cuba is the only revolutionary country in the world today."

In the days after the publication of the Castro interview, events in Oswald's life appeared to take a decisive turn. On Sept. 23 he sent his wife and child to stay with their friend, Ruth Payne, in Irving, Texas. On Sept. 26 he traveled by bus to Mexico City, telling a passenger he wanted to go to Cuba and see Castro.

On Sept. 27 arriving in Mexico City, he went directly to the Cuban consulate to apply for a visa. Told that he could only get a transit visa—he first needed a Soviet visa—he went to the Soviet Embassy, where he was turned down.

After shuttling between embassies—his telephone calls from the Soviet mission monitored by the CIA—he returned to the Cuban consulate on Oct. 1 with an insistent demand for permission to go to Cuba. The consul, Eusebio Azque, finally threw him out, saying, "Instead of helping the Cuban revolution, you are really harming it."

What Oswald had said to produce this reac-

tion was not known for some time. The CIA succeeded in getting Chief Justice Earl Warren to reject staff proposals to go to Mexico City and look into the Cuban connection. The Senate Intelligence Committee in 1976 thoroughly documented the agency's desperate fear that the assassination might turn out to have been an act of Castro retaliation for its attempts to kill him.

Then, on June 17, 1964, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, who was conducting his own cover-up of bureau contacts with Oswald, sent a top-secret letter to J. Lee Rankin, chief counsel of the Warren Commission. As far as is known, the letter was never brought to the commission's attention, though it ended up in its voluminous files. The letter cited statements made by Castro relating to the Kennedy assassination that the bureau had learned of "through a confidential source which has furnished reliable information in the past."

The substance of the letter remains classified to this day. But it has been learned that the informant was an American communist, working with the FBI, who had returned from a visit to Havana. As summarized in Hoover's letter, Castro said that





"Oswald had vowed, in the presence of Cuban consulate officials, to assassinate the president."

Subsequently, a British correspondent, Comer Clark, quoted Castro as saying that Oswald had stated, "Someone ought to shoot that President Kennedy. Maybe I'll try to do it."

The Cuban consul clearly considered the threat a provocation. There is no reason to believe that he encouraged Oswald to act on it. But why didn't Castro warn the United States Government about the homicidal young man?

In 1964 Castro gave various explanations—that he didn't take the reports from his embassy seriously, that he had no diplomatic relations with the United States, and that he suspected Oswald was part of some conspiracy to embroil him in an assassination attempt that might be used as a pretext for an invasion of Cuba.

But in 1978, interviewed in Havana by the House investigating committee headed by Rep. Louis Stokes, Castro denied prior knowledge of Oswald's plan. He said, "If Oswald would have done something like that, it would have been our duty to inform the United States."

One can understand why Castro would now disclaim knowledge of Oswald's intentions. It would be embarrassing to acknowledge that his warning to the Kennedys might, however unintentionally, have triggered Oswald's violent fantasies and that he had then sat on the information that might conceivably have saved Kennedy's life.

Thus, after two decades, it appears that the Kennedy assassination may have involved a tragic and historic irony, a conspiracy of circumstances in which an arrow launched to kill a troublesome foreign leader fell back to slay our own.

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*The writer is senior correspondent of the Cable News Network.*