

Wayne Smith
Center for International Policy
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Washington, DC 20036

3/24/98

Dear Wayne,

Good common-sense article on Cuba. Thanks for doing it and for the copy.

And thanks also for Escalante's book. I'll begin reading it after about 30 pages in the book I'm in.

But do not let depression get the slightest start! We do what we can, what is possible and we hope that change will come. As so often it has. One way or another! I know the feeling re JFK but I also keep doing what is possible for me. At some point in the future it will be of some use.

You will be welcome at any time to use whatever files you'd like.

I've kept just about all I got under EOIA as I got them but with some, esp. some of the FBI's, I've made some duplicate copies and filed them by name. In what I refer to as my "subject" file."

The Dallas FBI made a partial duplicate index that after some fighting I finally got. It is a separate index of what was sent to Washington, as much as not, so it could at any time know what it might have given the Commission. It is for about a year and a half.

If you have not met Jerry Midnight, who is head of the history dept. at Hood until he can get out of it, I think you should. Not only because in time the files and all my work will be under him but because in some of the work in which I've interested him he may have acquired knowledge that could be of interest to you or your school or both. For example he is now working on the study I began of the Commission's executive session and to a lesser degree what I was writing about "Honorable Man," the staff and what it did and how it did it. Besides which he is a fine fellow. And his current The Last Crusade, on the Poor Peoples Campaign, is now in the stories. I'm so happy he listened when I urged that on him!

I've also put him in touch with all the others in colleges and universities with whom I've worked, so he is a good contact, too.

Live about 5 minutes from here.

I had a friend in Canada write Lechuga for me, and I've finally heard from him. He did not mention getting a copy of ~~it~~ NEVER AGAIN! The ambassador at ~~the~~ NY said he'd forward about two years ago and I did send the ambassador. I think it might help him, Escalante and others to get to understand the way that work begins at the very least. And to forget they ever knew Furiato, who was a subject-matter ignoramus and a would-be Perry Mason who has no chance of being that. While we have no way of knowing who was behind that awful deed and who did it for them, I

CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL POLICY

March 21, 1998

Harold Weisberg
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Dear Harold,

I keep hoping to get back up to see you and continue going through your files. I've been so tied up with Cuba, however, that I simply haven't had the chance. Maybe in the summer.

I was indeed involved in the Nassau conference back in 1995. In fact, I organized it. It was not really by invitation. COPA members were informed that it was to take place and anyone who wanted to come -- and pay their own way -- could do so. I hadn't met you then so it didn't occur to me to invite you. I guess it didn't matter if you couldn't have come anyway. It was quite successful. Escalante and Carlos Lechuga were there and gave careful presentations that were helpful, but that didn't by any means point us in any new directions. We'd hoped to do a follow-up conference in Havana at which Escalante would open some files to us. Unfortunately, he got caught in the battle there between hardliners and softliners and was removed from command. He now runs a medical research center.

I don't know whether you've seen his book, *The Secret War*. I enclose a copy. It doesn't deal with the assassination, except for the last few words. Escalante believes Cuban-Americans may have been the actual hit men. He has some circumstantial evidence of that but doesn't pretend to have anything solid.

Furiati, of course, is something else again. She has taken some stuff from Escalante and turned it into a full-blown case. It was rather funny. She did a conference in Rio in mid-1995, invited me, Wecht, and a series of others from COPA, as well as Escalante. She billed the conference "Who Killed Kennedy Will be Revealed at Rio," and apparently was rather expecting

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Escalante to get on stage and tell us all who did it, la la her book. Rather than that, he said that while of course the official version was phony and while the Cubans had some evidence in their files related to likely conspirators and scenarios, they had nothing they could take to court (or words to that effect).

Yes, the Hersh book is trash, but then, what else is new? I don't have an agent either. Had one but she let me down and I've not found another.

I'm depressed on all fronts. I think interest in the JFK assassination is waning again. The bad guys are succeeding with their cover up. And we are further away than ever from a sensible policy toward Cuba. My old West Text granddaddy used to say that the merit in anything in life is in the effort. You do your best and take satisfaction from that; whether you win or not is beside the point. Good advice but hard to accept.

Look forward to seeing you soon.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Wayne". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Look forward to seeing you soon.".