

Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

7627 Old Receiver Road
Frederick, Md. 21702
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Dear Senator Moynihan,

Your excellent oped piece in this morning's Post prompts this documentation for some of the belief and suspicions you expressed when JFK was assassinated, particularly because from what has happened in the past, you may be criticized for it.

I obtained the documents I enclose by FOIA lawsuits of which I filed about a dozen. The Congress amended the investigatory files exemption in 1974 over FBI corruption in one of my earlier suits.

"Unless we investigated the event with exactly that presumption in mind," you said of the possibility there had been a conspiracy, people would believe there had been one.

No real investigation was ever intended or made. When Katzenbach was deputy AG and then acting AG, as soon as he learned that Oswald had been killed 11/24/63 he wrote a memo for LBJ through his channel, Bill Moyers. It was retyped very early Monday 11/25. I have a copy of his holograph, a DJ file copy and one from the FBI's files. This same memo recommends what became the Warren Commission. I have an abundance of FBI records reflecting its effort to frustrate any investigation other than the one it would make.

You say that LBJ set "a chief justice with no great ~~intellectual~~ intellect to do a job that ~~the~~ a corrupt FBI was well content should not be done." Close. You should have said "saw to it would not be done." Bearing on this, and I have many more relevant documents, I enclose a damage-control ticket. (I added the paperclips to call judicial attention to what they say when I used this in a FOIA lawsuit. This record was disclosed to my friend Mark Allen. He proceeded to litigate requests we had both made when health reverses made litigation impossible for me. Which also explains my typing, for which I apologize.)

You err in what follows saying that Epstein laid it all out in his master's thesis. His was not the first, far from the most complete, and it supported the FBI against the Commission.

"Oh, my God!" you said of Oswald. "I thought the Texans would kill him," I not only had the same belief, I predicted it to my wife before it happened. Here, I think, is the explanation for Oswald's going to a movie, a ~~place~~ place where for at least a while he could expect to avoid being lynched.

Hoover had an instant vision of a lone-nut assassin. I have FBI records on this and all else I say about it. But the FBI's failure to conduct a real investigation is recorded in filed-office records generated before any order from FBIHQ could have directed avoidance of any real investigation. I'll supply this and any other documentation that may interest you if any does.

From the thousands of letters I've gotten from them I believe you are correct in saying that this wretched Oliver Stone commercialization and exploitation of that assassination in which he makes the tragic fraud Garrison the hero will have a very bad effect on our

Young people. Politically especially this is unhealthy.

I doubt you can believe how corrupt and dishonest Garrison's book is. When I learned that Stone was using it as the basis of his movie I wrote him 2/8/91 in great detail that he would be rewriting the history of this tragedy based on a fraud and a travesty. I offered more than enough for him to ask questions if he doubted my word, attached some documentation, offered more and to respond to questions. When some time passed and he did not respond I set out to cause the great controversy that did ensue and that Stone attributes to the CIA, its allegedly paid-off reporters and "The Establishment." I gave George Lardner my letter to Stone, a copy of the script I'd been given and whatever he wanted of my Garrison files. I spent much time in New Orleans. It began with an effort to learn more about Oswald, it ended with damage-control, in part at the request of Garrison's staff. I did ^{as one example} prevent incredibly insane magnifications of the national disgrace Garrison had already caused in his imagined but non-existing case against Clay Shaw. The staff had tried and failed to talk Garrison out of his planned commemoration of the fifth assassination anniversary.

They apparently believed that with my ^{54/}subject-matter knowledge and previous professional experience, as a reporter, investigative reporter, Senate investigator and editor and World War II intelligence analyst (OSS) I might succeed.

One of the new charges Garrison planned to make, alleging additional assassins, was of a man he knew had killed himself in 1962 yet he was to be a 1963 Grassy Knoll killer!

This is unrecognizable in Garrison's book and the original Stone script has faithfully in it Garrison's knowingly false account, which he fired a man over, claiming that what he himself had made up was in fact the invention of that man, allegedly infiltrated onto ^{his} staff by the CIA. In fact Garrison had hired him personally over strong staff objections.

In fairness to Garrison whose great national disgrace cannot be exaggerated, he was also a man of principle on occasion. You refer to the movie having "homosexual orgies" in Shaw's "town House." (I do not recall this from the original script so I presume it was used to replace the serious flaws in the script that were publicized.) Shaw's was actually a modest and quite small house. When Garrison's detectives searched it with a warrant they discovered s/m paraphernalia. An enterprising reporter got the publicly-available return on the warrant. Garrison did not leak any of it, including those whips and chains. One of the detectives who made the search told me that in the bedroom ceiling there were hooks around which there was much smudging, as from sweaty palms. This has never been used. The FBI also knew he was s/m and homosexual and lied about it.

Shaw was also a man of culture, a dramatist one of whose plays was made into a movie. However, there is no reason to believe a word about him in the movie. His connection that both Garrison and ~~Shaw~~ ^{Stone} lied about with the CIA, from what is known, is limited, as is that of millions of Americans, to contact with the CIA's domestic-contact service, proper con-

nection and a normal and essential intelligence interest and function.

The Congress itself is not without some justified criticism over what did ~~not~~ happen, a real investigation of this great tragedy.

Among those I tried to interest, Wayne Morse would not touch the matter. Mac Mathias read the manuscript of my first book (of seven) the first ~~two~~ nights he had it when he was home, then near here, as he recovered from surgery. Among the efforts he made was trying to interest Manny Celler, chairman of the judiciary committee of which Mac was a member. Later he asked me to go to the committee of ^{which} you were a member, intelligence. That led to nothing. I suppose it never will because no political figure can hope to survive politically any real investigation of the FBI, which, inevitably, any look at the JFK assassination must include if not in fact begin with.

The Schweitzer subcommittee and the House Select Committee on Assassinations were to my personal knowledge farcical, the latter beginning with the intent to support the official mythologies.

While I believe there is ~~no~~ prospect of any real investigation, I believe one is vital to national needs and to the functioning of representative society in particular.

At 78 and with ~~serious~~ health impairments there is not much I can not do except try to leave a truthful and accurate record for history. This is one of the reasons I caused exposure of what Stone is up to and have informed the media about since.

I am not and never have been a conspiracy theorist. While I have brought to light most of what is factual and known about the assassination, I debunk all the imagined solutions I can. Like Garrison/Stone.

That there was a conspiracy is without any question at all, as is the fact that this was known officially. This is quite separate from who the assassins were. Of this there is no lead in the official records. (I have about a third of a million pages of which about a quarter of a million are on the JFK assassination investigation.) The official "investigations" draw to this. When the ^{New Orleans} Secret Service was following a promising lead, the FBI had it called off. I later followed it myself and it was productive and could and should have been followed further than a private citizen can.

If you personally, if only for a better record for history, or any committee, wants to know what I have established, I'll take all the time desired and provide documentation. But physically it is not safe for me to go to Washington, *medical reasons*.

Everything I have, including about 60 file cabinets and many boxes of records, will be a permanent public archive at local Hood College. There was no quid pro quo. Dr. Gerald McKnight there and Dr. David Wrone, University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point, both have good subject-matter knowledge. Both are historians and dear friends.

My thanks ~~for~~ ^{for} you taking time for this article and for your political courage and honesty in describing the FBI as "corrupt." (Barry Goldwater, at Mac's request, corrected some of its defamations of me in the intelligence-committee's records.) Best wishes,

Harold Weisberg

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Daniel Patrick Moynihan

The Paranoid Style

It happens I was in the White House at the hour of John F. Kennedy's death. There were a dozen or so of us (I was an assistant labor secretary at the time) seated in a circle in presidential assistant Ralph Dungan's large southwest corner room on the first floor. We were a few doors down from the Oval Office, where the rug, or something, was being changed and the furniture emptied out. The president's famous rocking chair was resting on top of a pile of cabinets and such in the little anteroom just outside. (Come to think of it, this may be the only "proof" of a conspiracy that Oliver Stone's movie "JFK" somehow overlooks.)

There was no formal announcement that the president had died—just a time when everyone knew. Nor did we do anything; there wasn't anything to do. Or not much, anyway. McGeorge Bundy got up and went over to a telephone, asking in a quiet voice that he be put through to the secretary of defense, Robert McNamara. The door opened, and in burst Hubert Humphrey, eyes streaming. He grasped Dungan, who had risen. "What have they done to us?" he gasped.

"They," of course, were those people down in Dallas. No one in particular, just the bunch that never did like Kennedy, one of them—or whatever—crazed enough to do some cowboy shoot-out thing. A little later I was interviewed on television, and from some unfathomed recess there rose the opening words of Prospero's soliloquy in "The Tempest": "Our revels now are ended." That is what had happened.

But there was another matter. What would the American people *think* had happened? Late in the afternoon I learned on the radio of the arrest of a man who had been involved with Fair Play for Cuba, or something like that. Oh, my God! I thought, the Texans will kill him. Keep in mind that this was a nation only just coming out of a period of near hysteria on the part of some about the menace and influence of communism.

At midnight I went out to Andrews Air Force Base to meet the plane bringing back the Cabinet and subcabinet members, who had been halfway across the Pacific, heading for Japan, when the assassination occurred. I pleaded with any who knew me: "We must get hold of Oswald." No one had the foggiest idea what I was talking about. I

went away with the sense that not enough of these people had ever been in a police station.

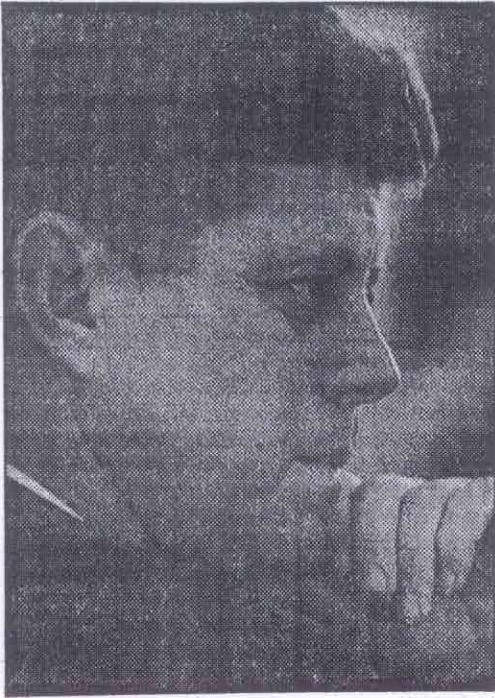
Oswald was killed presently, whereupon a complicated thing happened. I did not think there had been a conspiracy to kill the president, but I was convinced that the American people would sooner or later come to believe that there had been one *unless we investigated the event with exactly that presumption in mind*. John Macy, who was then Civil Service commissioner, is now dead, and so I must be careful in what I say he thought. But I believe he agreed, and I know he began to join me in meeting with people who might make a difference, and making the same argument I did. At one point I was carrying with me the 19th century "memoir" of Pastor Charles Chiniquy, "Fifty Years in the Church of Rome." I used it as evidence of our utter credulity. Chiniquy tells of an "interview" warning Lincoln of a Catholic plot against his life. Lincoln agrees (according to Chiniquy's fantastical account, responding as follows):

"I will be for ever grateful for the warning words you have addressed to me about the dangers ahead to my life, from Rome. I know that they are not imaginary dangers. If I were fighting against a Protestant South, as a nation, there would be no danger of assassination. The nations who read the Bible, fight bravely on the battle-fields, but they do not assassinate their enemies. The Pope and the

Jesuits, with their infernal Inquisition, are the only organized powers in the world which have recourse to the dagger of the assassin to murder those whom they cannot convince with their arguments or conquer with the sword."

The president particularly regretted "the Roman Catholic traitors" that so infested the Union army. Let it be noted that Lincoln's secretary of war, Edwin M. Stanton, believed that the assassination had indeed been a Catholic plot. Note also that the copy of "Fifty Years" that I was carrying around had been specially reprinted for the 1960 presidential election, which is the only reason I knew about it.

We got nowhere, Macy and I. In truth, I probably got into trouble. I was heard as saying not that people were likely to think there had been a conspiracy unless we investigated properly, but that there *had* been a conspiracy. The Warren Commission did not see its work in anything like the perspective I had hoped for. It was Lyndon Johnson at his worst: manipulative, cynical. Setting a chief justice of no great intellect to do a job that a corrupt FBI was well content should not



be done well. Edward Jay Epstein laid it all out in a master's thesis written at Cornell a few years later.

More relevant to the present moment, however, is Richard Hofstadter's incomparable essay "The Paranoid Style in American Politics," which, as it happens, he delivered as the Herbert Spencer Lecture at Oxford within days of the Kennedy assassination. (It was published in Harper's Magazine a year later.) He begins: "Although American political life has rarely been touched by the most acute varieties of class conflict, it has served again and again as an arena for uncommonly angry minds."

Hofstadter begins with the panic in New England in the 1790s over the dangers to religion of the Bavarian Illuminati. On to the anti-Masonic era: them that is what drank wine from human skulls. Next "Catholics and Mormons—later Negroes and Jews lent themselves to a preoccupation with illicit sex." (Probably the most widely read contemporary book in the United States before "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was "Awful Disclosures" [1836], one Maria Monk's "account" of her escape from a convent/brothel in Montreal.) On to the John Birch Society.

Hofstadter (as also Daniel Bell) was at this time primarily concerned with the conspiratorial

fantasies of the right—Ike as a tool of the Reds etc.—and certain of their characteristics, such as the redemptive role of ex-communists in exposing the conspiracies (similar to that of the ex-Catholic priests of yore). But he knew well enough the paranoid style of the left also, as is illustrated in this passage:

"... the clinical paranoid sees the hostile and conspiratorial world in which he feels himself to be living as directed specifically *against him*; whereas the spokesman of the paranoid style finds it directed against a nation, a culture, a way

of life whose fate affects not himself alone but millions of others. Insofar as he does not usually see himself singled out as the individual victim of a person conspiracy, he is somewhat more rational and much more disinterested. His sense that his political passions are unselfish and patriotic, in fact, goes far to intensify his feeling of righteousness and his moral indignation."

It is in that sense a rationalizing mode. Facts are everything—and facts are *never* accidental. "For every error or act of incompetence one can substitute an act of treason." And always, of course, this is proof of "the existence of a vast, insidious, preternaturally effective international conspiratorial network designed to perpetrate acts of the most fiendish character."

And so to "JFK." It *could* be viewed as parody. The homosexual orgies in the New Orleans town house of the villain Clay Shaw are straight out of Maria Monk's nunnery in Montreal. The generals boozing it up as they plan the murder of their commander-in-chief are straight out of Ramparts in a slow week in the '60s. The black waiter who hears nothing is, well, MGM in the '30s. A John Birch look-alike is the fake erudition. Garrison is forever going on about those who practice to deceive, about riddles wrapped in mysteries inside enigmas. Of particular note: "Let justice be done, though the heavens fall." At one point I all but yelled out: "Jim! Use the code! *Fiat Justitia Ruat Coelum.*"

But it is not parody, and it is not funny. It could spoil a generation of American politics just when sanity is returning.

All of us in politics ought to see it: This is what citizens under 30 or 40 are going to be thinking soon. But don't despair. We have got through worse. As a matter of fact, an inadvertent illustration is there in the movie itself.

In one of the longer scenes, Jim Garrison meets with a renegade Pentagon officer who explains the whole plot. They sit on a park bench, with the Washington Monument at some distance in the background. Now if you just look closely at the monument, you will see that about a quarter of the way up, the color of the stone changes, gets lighter. That is because in the 1850s the pope donated a block of marble to the private association that was building the memorial. It was widely believed that there was a secret purpose in this act—that when the block was actually set in place, it would be the signal for the Masonic-Papist seizure of the White House. A band of alert citizens saw to it that the marble ended up on the Potomac instead. Work stopped, only to be resumed by the Corps of Engineers 30 years later, in time for the 1888 centennial, and that is the reason for the difference in color.

Don't despair, but maybe do read a little. The members of the Warren Commission could have done that for us. They could have known our past better.

Hofstadter closes with this pearl from the British historian L. B. Namier: "the crowning attainment of historical study" is to achieve "an intuitive sense of how things do not happen."

The writer is a Democratic senator from New York.