

GARY L. AGUILAR, M.D.
909 HYDE STREET SUITE 530
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94109

TELEPHONE 775-3392

12-26-95

HAROLD,

YOU ENJOY

THIS SORT OF
INTERCOURSE, DON'T
YOU?

BEST HOLIDAY

WISHES,

Gary

Dr. Gary Aguilar
909 Hyde St., # 530
San Francisco, CA 94109

12/29/95

Dear Gary,

Thanks for the copies of the Stone/Haldeman/Nixon flap and your good letter to the ~~paper~~ paper.

If you are not aware of it the plots to kill Castro and specifically the one in which the CIA tried to use the mafia were White House-Eisenhower/ Nixon plots.

And there was that popular kick-back theory.

Nixon, according to E.Howard Hunt, was the action officer of the White House on all of that, including the Bay of Pigs.

However, the mafia plot was not secret long before the assassination. It got to be known when the bungler Maheu got to wire the bedroom of Dan Martin to get the sound effects with Phyllis McGuire was discovered by the maid and he was arrested.

He got off by saying if he went down he 'd not go down alone.

That got the sheriff to speak to the FBI. I have a fat FBI file on that if you know anyone who'd like to write about it. With no assassination connection.

Hunt dealt with Nixon as I recall his book.

I've never had a great interest in that but it occurs to me that there was a possible threat to the CIA because it was puffing up that kickback theory.

And it has no paper saying that its attempts to kill Castro were not its own idea. I have this from it.

My only opposition to Stone's JFK was he announced it was nonfiction and would do that with Garrison's book. Impossible. I wrote him two months before he started shooting and he ignored my letter. So, when I was given a copy of the script, I went public and got it firmly on record that his movie was not nonfiction. That was my purpose.

I still offered him access to all I have and I declined a rather thinly hidden offer of a bribe. In this movie, if he did not hate me so and had been in touch, I could I am confident have given him the answer on those missing 18 1/2 minutes of that tape.

There are other CIA Watergate connections still not out and the CIA was aware of them. But I doubt very much that Nixon wanted any of that on his tapes. *

*Aside from what he may have meant speaking of ^{Thames} and have a good year,

the Bay of Pigs thing of which we really know very

little and that from Hunt. and the CIA did not remove that from his book/

But I do not believe Haldeman or Ehrlichman. I do believe DiMona. It is normal for proofs to be submitted for approval and correction. Publishers do not want libel suits. Defending a frivolous one can cost a fortune. and hurt sales. But if The Bay of Pigs thing was a code word for the JFK offing, that would have made Nixon an accessory which as a lawyer he knew. Livingstone has not done you or Mantik a favor in ^{chapter} his atrocity of a Zapruder faking. I've read a xerox of that.

CHRISTOPHER MATTHEWS

EXAMINER
(2-6-95)

'Nixon' was based on a dubious quote

O WASHINGTON LIVER STONE'S "Nixon," a movie due in theaters for the holidays, ties the Watergate coverup to the death of John F. Kennedy.

In an attempt to escape blame for the 1972 break-in, the movie tells us, Richard Nixon sought refuge in the CIA's coverup of the JFK assassination.

Here's how the Stone scenario unfolds:

► Beginning in the last months of the Eisenhower administration, the CIA tried to kill Fidel Castro.

► The CIA covered up the anti-Castro campaign, fearing that it may have triggered JFK's death in November 1963.

► Richard Nixon tried using the CIA coverup to hide his own Watergate-related misdeeds. He ordered Chief of Staff H.R. Haldeman to tell the CIA that a further probe of the Democratic National Committee break-in would "open up the whole Bay of Pigs thing."

And "Bay of Pigs" was Nixon's code for the Kennedy killing.

Stone points to an extraordinary source for his "Nixon" scenario. In an introduction to the Disney-published script, his producers drew the connection between Dallas and Watergate from something Haldeman, was supposed to have written about Nixon's coverup orders to him on June 23, 1972:

"It seems that in all those Nixon

references to the Bay of Pigs, he was actually referring to the Kennedy assassination."

The introduction to the "Nixon" script states, "These are not Oliver Stone's words. They are H.R. Haldeman's."

The problem is that Haldeman denied writing those words. While they appeared in his 1978 book, "The Ends of Power," Haldeman attributed them to his collaborator, Joseph DiMona. ✕

Haldeman was clear on this point — to the end.

I interviewed him at his Santa Barbara home in October 1993, just a month before he died of stomach cancer. Though I had never met him before and came from the opposite political background, my host was incredibly generous, sitting with me for an enormous amount of time discussing Watergate and the

coverup, certainly not his favorite topics.

Like Stone and his producers, I was particularly interested in the theory advanced in "The Ends of Power" that Nixon's coverup was actually an attempt to hide Watergate behind the CIA's bodyguard of lies surrounding the Castro assassination attempts.

Haldeman disappointed me. When I asked about the theory advanced in the 1978 book that "the whole Bay of Pigs thing" was Nixon code for something else, Haldeman cut me off cold.

"That's what I have to disclaim," he said. "That's Joe DiMona's theory of what went on."

It was, as I said, a disappointing answer. Like Stone's producers, I had been intrigued by the theory

advanced in "The Ends of Power."

Intriguing or not, it was not Haldeman's theory.

I asked what he thought Nixon did mean by "the whole Bay of Pigs" in that June 23 conversation.

"I don't have any idea," he said. "That was a mystery to me."

It must have remained so.

When I visited him, Haldeman was using the little time he had left to ready his rich, painstaking diary of the Nixon presidency. That diary, which historians will value for generations, is the man's true memoir and his great contribution to our understanding of the period.



CHRISTOPHER MATTHEWS

Christopher Matthews is *The Examiner's* Washington bureau chief.

Gary L. Aguilar, MD
909 Hyde Street, #530
San Francisco, California 94109
(415)775-3392 FAX - (415) 563-4453

December 21, 1995

Dear Editor,

Please allow me a moment to explain the enclosed letter to the editor.

When I read Mr. Christopher Matthews' piece, '*Nixon*' was based on a dubious quote, the thought occurred to me that an association between "the whole Bay of Pigs thing" and the "Kennedy assassination" was so remote, I could not understand how Haldeman's ghost writer, Joseph DiMona, would ever have imagined it. Matthews had nicked DiMona's reputation by assuming it was his fabrication, and my curiosity led me to look for him. I quickly found Joseph DiMona, Jr., Haldeman's co-author's attorney-son, in New York City and I told him the story. He claimed it was not the first time Haldeman had blamed his father for passages offensive to others, including Nixon. He was not, however, specifically knowledgeable about the 'Bay of Pigs-JFK' matter. He welcomed me to contact his father in west Los Angeles, which I did.

The senior DiMona was a delightful man who was tickled by the controversy. I wrote a letter to the *Examiner* disclosing DiMona's side of the story. Out of courtesy, I sent DiMona a copy of it before mailing it off. He suggested that he rewrite my entire letter, putting his own words in quotations so there could be no error about his views. I happily agreed and the next day he faxed me the two page letter, a copy of which I enclose herein. He insisted, however, that I send it to the *Examiner* precisely as he'd written it - and I did - but of course it was far longer than the letters normally published.

When Mr. Matthews again repeated his claim on 12/21/95, I was thankful that he had not mentioned DiMona by name. However, I remain puzzled at his not having contacted DiMona for his side of the story. Without endorsing Oliver Stone's historical scrupulousness, there is clearly another side to this story which has not been told. In the interest of truth, I hope the *Examiner* will consider telling it.

Sincerely yours,

Gary L. Aguilar, MD
Chairman, Department of Surgery, Saint Francis Memorial Hospital, San Francisco
Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology, Stanford University Medical Center
Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology, University of California, San Francisco
Member, Board of Directors, San Francisco County Medical Society
Member, American Medical Association

PS Joseph DiMona may be reached at 310-478-2809. His son at 212-586-2000.

Gary L. Aguilar, MD
909 Hyde Street, #530
San Francisco, California 94109
(415)775-3392 FAX - (415) 563-4453

December 21, 1995

Letters to the editor
San Francisco Examiner
110 5th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Editor,

In two *Examiner* essays Mr. Chris Matthews has taken Oliver Stone's film, Nixon, to task for misstating Bob Haldeman's views on a controversial passage in his book,^{1,2} The Ends of Power.³ In it, Haldeman wrote that he was advised by Nixon to threaten the CIA to force it to intercede with the FBI in the Watergate cover-up by suggesting Nixon would otherwise disgorge the "whole Bay of Pigs" thing, by which Haldeman took Nixon to mean some hidden truth about the Kennedy assassination. Matthews claims there is no truth to the story, for in 1993 the now-deceased Haldeman had told Matthews the story was a fabrication of his book's co-author, Mr. Joseph DiMona.

I called Mr. DiMona who said he was fond of Haldeman.⁴ Nevertheless, he insisted that the controversial JFK assertion, which was elaborated upon in three pages of text,⁵ was truly Haldeman's, and that it had survived five word by word revisions meticulously supervised by both Haldeman and several editors. Had the story been false, not only would it not have survived such scrutiny, it would have been corrected in later editions of the book. DiMona said that without Haldeman, an association between the Bay of Pigs and the JFK assassination would never have occurred to him. Mr. DiMona also mentioned that this was not the first time Haldeman had passed the buck. In order to ingratiate himself with Nixon after his release from prison, Haldeman had blamed DiMona for other passages in the book Nixon found offensive.

Stone's fictionalized movie, Nixon, may fail a scrupulous historical scrutiny, but Matthews allowed Stone a victory when he failed to get DiMona's side of the story.

Sincerely yours,

Gary L. Aguilar, MD
Chairman, Department of Surgery, Saint Francis Memorial Hospital, San Francisco
Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology, Stanford University Medical Center
Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology, University of California, San Francisco
Member, Board of Directors, San Francisco County Medical Society
Member, American Medical Association
Member, California Medical Association

¹ Matthews, Christopher, *'Nixon': The Stoning of history*. San Francisco Examiner, 12/21/95.

² Matthews, Christopher, *'Nixon' was based on a dubious quote*. San Francisco Examiner, 12/6/95.

³ Haldeman, H.R. The Ends of Power. New York: Times Books, 1978, p. 39.

⁴ Personal conversations with Joseph DiMona on 12/8/95, 12/9/95, 12/10/95 12/22/95, and from faxed letter from DiMona advising me what to say in my letter to The Examiner - enclosed.

⁵ Haldeman, H.R. The Ends of Power. New York: Times Books, 1978, p. 37 - 40.

kinko's

Your branch office

fax cover sheet

Kinko's of Brentwood • Telephone: (310) 477-7756 • Fax: (310) 477-5836 • Modem: (310) 478-9557

Date DECEMBER 13, 1995

Number of pages _____ including cover page

to: Name DR GARY AGUILAR

from: Name JOSEPH P. HOWA

Company _____

Company _____

Telephone _____

Telephone 310 774 2809

Fax 415 563 4453

Comments _____

More than 800 locations worldwide. For the location nearest you, call 1-800-2-KINKOS.

To Gary Aguilar, M.D.

FAX 415 563 4453

Following two pages are the corrected letter to the editor, with my new additions.

Dear Editor,

Christopher Matthews' claim that Oliver Stone's new film "Nixon" was based on an inaccurate quote seems itself uncertain. Matthews accurately recounts that in his book, "The Ends of Power", Nixon aide, H.R. Haldeman, wrote, "It seems that in all those Nixon references to the Bay of Pigs he (Nixon) was referring to the Kennedy assassination. The historical background is that at Nixon's request Haldeman approached the then head of the CIA, Richard Helms, on 6/23/72 for help with Nixon's Watergate cover-up.

Haldeman told Helms that if the CIA did not help him, he, Nixon would disgorge the whole "Bay of Pigs" thing. This must indeed have been a potent threat. Helms was so furious that Haldeman later wrote he was startled by the CIA Director's angry reaction. He wondered why Helms became so upset over a mention of "The Bay of Pigs". Was that a code word for something else, perhaps more information that Nixon knew that he was hanging over the heads of the CIA. But years later, in 1993, Haldeman told Matthews that he disclaimed the notion that the words "The whole Bay of Pigs thing" was Nixon's code for something else. Haldeman said "That's Joe DiMona's theory of what's going on."

On 12/8/95 I spoke with Joseph DiMona and he faxed me this reply:

"First of all, I was very fond of Bob Haldeman and his intelligent and super-loyal wife, Jo. I must also say I'm tempted to be amused at this contretemps about who said what 17 years after a book was published. All because Oliver Stone is making a fictional movie.

However for the sake of future historians, I will try to set the record straight.

" IT is preposterous to think that Bob Haldeman, of all people, would allow any writer to "invent" information or erroneous theories, to be published in a book under his name. In fact, all of the information in the book came from Bob. I wasn't in the Oval Office on June 23, 1972 discussing with Nixon a CIA cover-up. I wasn't in a White House office later confronting Richard Helms, the CIA director, and watching him turn livid with anger. Haldeman was.

" So the information about the Bay of Pigs contretemps, as well as the theory of a possible linkage to the Kennedy assassination came, directly or indirectly, from Haldeman. Not only that but the "theory" survived no less than five drafts of the most meticulous word by word editing known to man, during which Haldeman made extensive changes of every kind, as well as minutia. If untrue, why wasn't the "theory" deleted?

In addition he had four other knowledgeable persons, including Larry Higby, his former White House aide, editing the various drafts. I still have a memo from Bob at the time directing me to tell the publisher to send copies of the second draft to these four people. Whether they got the third, fourth, or fifth drafts I don't recall.

I believe it's well known that Bob, after the publication of "The Ends of Power" spent the rest of his life "disavowing" all of it that was negative toward Nixon. He had written the book when he was angry at Nixon for implying to David Frost on television that his biggest mistake in Watergate was not firing Haldeman and Ehrlichman sooner. But once the anger passed, he wanted to become friends again with his old leader.

" Apparently, by disavowing responsibility for "the whole Bay of Pigs thing", the beat goes on.

" And what Nixon meant by mentioning the Bay of Pigs on June 23, 1972, will remain a fascinating mystery forever."

(End of FAX from Joseph DiMona)