

Rt. 8, Frederick, Md. 21701  
12/4/73

Dear Steve,

I was so surprised to hear from you last night I forgot to ask a very obvious question while I was answering yours: can you ask the man who queried you what the source of the report he had is?

To the best of my knowledge all these fantasies trace back to the Tackwood tapes and those who interviewed him and got involved in commercializing him, beginning with but not limited to Donald Freed. These are strange people, some quite sincere and some quite the opposite. The latter interest me much, otherwise I would not ask who came up with the one that Howard Hunt was on the Grassy Knoll 11/22/63 and even was arrested. As recently as the 20th, when I did Take It From Here with Mark Lane, who is one of them, he had three, McCord, Fiorini and Barker. He also was quite careful to give no names in public, unlike the Tackwood-Freed book, which gives two, McCord and Hunt, but Hunt as "Paymaster" as I recall. That version has clean escapes and no arrests. I don't have the book but I do have that page of the manuscript.

Beginning after Garrison got all that attention, a whole brigade of weirdos made their appearance and in the ways the major media have ~~is~~ of giving attention to the nuts only, got a lot of attention. They were well received in the underground press, too. During all this long period, no attention was given to serious, soild work. This, of course, does concern me. ~~It~~ also destroyed the credibility of the few of us who did do real work, not invent.

Finally, there came a time when I decided that some day I would do a book tentatively titled Lemming: The Mardi Gras Solution to the JFK Assassination. Earlier I did a book only one person has seen, A Citizen Descent, after reading Lane's obscenity, A Citizen's Dissent. Some of this would be rather attractive in Britain, I think. Lane is merely the best-known one. Some are more colorful. A crazy Chicagoan in particular, one Sherman Skolnick. Then there is the guy who has this series of "solutions" based on a series of newspix of tramps in the hands of the police. His improvisations, all deadly serious, had their strangest misuse during the King assassination, when the fuzz got an artist to duplicate one, attributed it to an alleged witness who saw nothing and was out of it, drunk, and used that as the picture of the killer. Here I have the whole story in pictures, including even the creation of the artistic fake.

There are tales without end about the doings in these uncivilized provinces! This is why I asked about your Sunday colleague. Aside from assassination nitty-gritty, there are, I think, some stories.

Broke as I am, I am not prepared to sell the hottest of this nitty-gritty for a one-shot, a piece in which it can have no context. I am, however, anxious to sell some that can stand alone and be understood with ease. The one of these things I mentioned, how the dissenting members of the Warren Commission were screwed by the staff, is, in my not unprejudiced opinion, a hot story that has added topicality from The Watergate. It raises what I hope you will agree is a substantial question, how much is any piece of federal paper really worth? Here I have stacks of records still stamped "Top Secret" and none stolen. I gave some to the late Senator Russell, who thereafter broke a lifelong friendship with Lyndon Johnson and resigned his Military Affairs chairmanship, thus also divesting himself of any CIA oversight responsibility. To his dying day Russell encouraged me to continue the work I was doing, regretted he had no time for it, etc. All his letters are friendly. What happened is that a fake transcript of an executive session of the Commission was fabricated and the record of their dissent by three members, led by Russell, was memory holed. I have documentation so complete a small part of it convinced Russell.

Russell was right, by the way, LBJ did screw him by appointing him to the Commission after leading Russell to believe he would not. Russell told me the whole fascinating story. Russell was wrong in his explanation of the reason, old LBJ was that subtle. Russell began with doubts in several areas and thus refused to sign the report as drafted. What I gave him eliminated his doubts and convinced him there was a conspiracy. ~~Finally~~ Finally, quite some time after our relationship began, he went public on this, but everyone has forgotten it. I have the news accounts. He died believing opposite the basic conclusion of the report. He ~~believed~~ believed there had been a conspiracy.

So, I do hope you speak to Admason and I do hope both of you come up, for I have no reluctance in trusting you with what I am not now prepared to let out except for extraordinary reward that I think is unlikely. When you see what I have that the Commission did not, I think you will be entirely without doubt and what I am willing to sell will have more meaning and added credibility.

Back to your inquiry, there has been a minor industry of black books. Executive Action is almost a plagiarism of the most sophisticated on them, Farewell America. This, clearly, was a SDECE job in which the flack for Executive Action was involved. My documentation of this is so complete I have xeroxes of the cards he got from the French spooks. I blew their official connections over here in December 1968 and with it a movie of the same name they had. Another is current, also French. I have an involvement in its non-publishing history in the U.S. about which I have to be circumspect. However, I can show you an indignant cable from people who had no way of knowing me of which I am aware protesting who the hell is this guy Weisberg that he says such things about our book when he has never seen it. One consistency in all these books and all the excesses of the strange ones like Skolnick is that their criticisms of the CIA are so extreme they build sympathy for the spooks of the world, not just CIA.

Skolnick, by the way, led the false hue and cry over the Dorothy Hunt crash and thus obscured the real questions that are without answer.

When I reminisce, as infrequently I do, I think of the key role you, personally, played in all of this, thinking of having me call Bill Loeb and making it possible when I couldn't pay for the call. That really led to opening the subject and ~~it~~ made it possible for other than deliberately angled work to appear. It is not generally known, but the next two books, Inquest and Rush to Judgement, were ~~ax~~ jobs, both subtle but very personalized misdirections. And the odd thing is that while this led to the underground book, the only ones of these early book now available are mine. The commercially-published are not available to the new generation. I will fill six orders that came yesterday in a short while when I am looking at the a.m. TV news.

Whether you come or not, as I hope you do, it was good to hear from you again. Maybe Dáidre would not be bored?

Sincerely,