

Harold Weisberg, Privacy Act appeal, JFK assassination records 8/6/79

Attached is 62-109090-593, from the Commission file, of 4/24/67 as of the time Mrs. Diana Moe wrote the President and May 2 as stamped for filing at the FBI. This record exists entirely alone in this Section of records, which is unusual within my experience in reviewing countless letters of various kinds in FBI files.

Normally there would be duplicate filing, at least in the assassination file, that being the subject of my first book, about which Mrs. Moe wrote the President.

Normally there would be an FBI comment relating to what Bufiles reflect and a recommendation not to acknowledge or respond or perhaps a draft of a response. Nothing like this at this point in this file, as provided to me.

What is also unusual is that there is no indexing notation relating to me or the book. With a copy of the letter sent to the Chief Justice in addition, the bald notation "No Ack" appears even more unusual, especially with the added notation directing that a copy be made. It is not provided. This copy was directed to be filed. This is to say that there are at least two copies and I've been provided with one only. I did not get that, to the best of my recollection, among the selection of records provided under my PA request.

In short I believe that with regard to Mrs. Moe's letter there remains non-compliance under the PA and JFK requests, both.

By this time the FBI had decided it had to "stop" me, its word. It had considered and abandoned filing a libel suit with an SA as its front. It had done the legal research, no copies of which have yet been provided, and it has decided that there was libel, no illustrations of which have been provided along with what is necessary, factual proof. Conciliatory comments are included in what was disclosed that, without any backup, amounts to defamation. The Lab and Legal Counsel were involved, but none of their alleged work was provided.

I don't know if the number "226" in the lower left-hand corner provides any kind of lead but I have seen such numbers added to records that appear to have been destined for a place other than Central Files alone.

How the FBI reacted to criticism and what it did about books and authors it did not like are of historical and political importance. I therefore provide what I believe may give you some perspective on this.

I had completed my third book, had begun the fourth, and had been in New Orleans for the first time for a few days. A few months earlier one of the few copies of my second book just managed to get lost in New York. My printer did not have a copy of it by the time the Director issued a press statement making response to it, which I found and find as unusual as my inability to get a copy of that release suitable for facsimile reproduction. (Much later the FBI told Mr. Lesar to file an FOIA request for a copy of that press release and in that way, almost a decade later and after publication of the book for which I intended it, I did get that press release.) The ribbon copy of my second book suffered a series of misfortun^{es} in the mail, from which printed copies of my first and second books requested by those who wrote to me were suffering mysterious disappearances. The Post Office never found a single one of these "lost" copies, not even in the scrap and waste paper it was required to save and sell. After I got the carbon copy intended for my Italian publisher to my agent in New York and long after the Post Office reported that search did not disclose the missing ribbon copy, my agent received it. When the Times of London wanted to read the manuscript my agent sent the ribbon copy to its Washington office, which never received it. Instead, six ~~months~~^{weeks} later, I received it in the mail with a note from the Washington Post Office explaining that it had been received without wrapping and it was being sent to the address found on the inside. Only it was addressed as not on the inside. And with impressive magic, the double wrapping disappeared in the mails without a single page getting dog-eared.

There was a substantial amount of information in this book relating to the FBI, to what it had not investigated and reported, to what it had not told the Warren Commission, to what it had misrepresented to the Commission, and even LHM's which stated the opposite of the underlying records relating to Oswald's career in New Orleans. And all of this coincided with the Garrison beginnings, which did interest the FBI much.

For contrast and comparison I provide another record of the same period and from the same file (although designated for duplicate filing), Serial 593. Here, without any of the underlying material (which remains withheld and I do appeal this because I do desire it), there are seven pages of alleged detail on a book more to the FBI's liking and simultaneously of remarkable dishonesty. It was by Lawrence Schiller, the most successful ghoul/scavenger of recent years. (Among the detail the FBI saw fit not to include is the fact that as Jack Ruby's agent he managed to pocket more than half of the money he is known to have raised ostensibly for Ruby's legal defense.) In this record I am marked for indexing but although I may have forgotten it I do not recall receiving this under my PA request.

This record appears to have gone to many in the FBI, including for no apparent reason SA Shaneyfelt. The part of the book that relates to me also relates inaccurately to SA Shaneyfelt's work, albeit more pleasantly for the FBI. At the time I thought it remarkable that Schiller, who was not renowned for doing great amounts of detailed work, had so much partisan detail relating to SA Shaneyfelt and how it was of no consequence that when SA Shaneyfelt filmed a reconstruction of the crime it was 30% off on time.

There is no deficiency of similar records among those disclosed by the FBI. I provide this one because only one number separates it from the Mrs. Moe letter.

Meanwhile, unless the FBI is prone to allege libel and plan "stopping" suits with no factual and legal basis there are underlying records relevant in the JFK cases and my PA request that have not yet been provided. I am again appealing these denials.

Handwritten signature

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

Tolson	
DeLoach	
Mohr	
Wick	
Casper	
Callahan	
Conrad	
Felt	
Gale	
Rosen	
Sullivan	
Tavel	
Trotter	
Tele. Room	
Holmes	
Gandy	

DATE: 4-20-67

TO : Mr. Wick
FROM : M. A. Jones

SUBJECT: "THE SCAVENGERS AND CRITICS OF THE WARREN REPORT" - PUBLISHED BY DELACORTE PRESS BY RICHARD WARREN LEWIS, based on an investigation by...
...LAWRENCE SCHILLER

SYNOPSIS: (for the sake of clarity in this memo Lewis and Schiller will be referred to as "the authors.")

Review of above-titled book requested by Mr. DeLoach. FBI is mentioned throughout book. Most references merely factual. But the last chapter, titled "THE REASONS FOR DOUBT," pp. 169-179, contains criticisms of FBI and Secret Service. Typical of these criticisms is a sentence contained on p. 171 relative to possible conspiracy. The authors state: "And conceivably the FBI and Secret Service probes did not dig deeply enough into this ticklish area."

Bob Considine has an "Introduction" in book and states Lane must be accorded the No. 1 spot among the coterie that Governor Connally has dismissed as scavengers. To date, he appears indestructible. Considine feels that author Lewis and investigator Schiller have made a notable contribution toward a clearer understanding of the assassination. Schiller states in his foreword, he was in Dallas 3 1/2 hours after the assassination took place as a staff representative of the "Saturday Evening Post" and he saw the chaos and horror of that time. Authors feel majority of accusations against Commission unfounded and in some cases intentionally distorted. Authors accuse Lane of using gimmicks of professional huckster-distortion, innuendo, conjecture, allusion and sheer fantasy. Background data on Lane's civil rights participation and arrest included. Testimony of SA Shaneyfelt set forth. (pp. 69-70) Mrs. Sylvia Meagher regarded as the "Housewives' Super sleuth" and the unchallenged authority on the 26 volumes of the Warren Report. Separate chapters devoted to Penn Jones, Jr., and Edward J. Epstein, their theories of conspiracy, etc. Director's name mentioned p. 94 when authors state Commission counsel Liebeler loaned Epstein two FBI reports, one of which bore FBI seal "and J. Edgar Hoover's name on the cover...." Authors discuss observations of Mrs. Carolyn Walther which suggested a possible conspiracy and Epstein

- 1 - Mr. DeLoach
- 1 - Mr. Wick

- 1 - Mr. Sullivan
- 1 - Mr. Rosen

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M. A. Jones to Wick Memo
RE: "THE SCAVENGERS AND CRITICS
OF THE WARREN REPORT"

SYNOPSIS CONTINUED:

stated insufficient attention was paid to her observations. Retired journalist Harold Weisberg who accused Commission of pursuing preconceived case of Oswald is discussed in chapter V. At bottom of p. 125, Weisberg alleges the FBI and the Secret Service framed the whole thing, not the murder, but everything that has happened since. Additional testimony of SA Shaneyfelt contained on pp. 129-131. Chapter VII, p. 163, deals with George C. Thomson, California, who "peddles the most bizarre assassination theory of them all. Five people were killed in Dealey Plaza... The suspect is Lyndon B. Johnson." Last chapter "THE REASONS FOR DOUBT," pp. 169-179, contain authors' allegations against FBI and Secret Service. "Sloppiness in both the FBI and Secret Service photographic re-enactments of the assassination left the door ajar for the critics." (p. 173) This statement is typical of the statements made by the authors against the FBI and the Secret Service in these last few pages of the book.

BUFILES:

No record in Bufiles on author Richard Warren Lewis. Several references on Lawrence Schiller, who is a contract photographer for the "Saturday Evening Post." Bureau Agent interviewed him on 3-5-64 relative to Schiller advising Jack Ruby's attorney Tom Howard that the "Post" was interested in a story which would be of mutual benefit to the "Post" and to Howard's client, Ruby. Schiller was very cooperative. Later he sent a transcript of Ruby's conversation with his attorneys and his family. He offered Director a copy of the tape. Mr. Hoover thanked him for transcript and declined tape. Recently, Schiller furnished identity of Mark Lane's confidential informant who allegedly overheard a conversation of a meeting between Jack Ruby, Dallas Police Officer J. D. Tippit and Bernard Weissman. Lane's informant was identified as Paul Bridewell and Dallas is currently conducting investigation to locate Bridewell so that he may be interviewed.

RECOMMENDATION:

That no action be taken as no new facts have been presented in this book. The last chapter represents another very general attack on the Warren Commission, the United States Secret Service and the FBI. But there is not one thing specific. The book and the allegations are nothing more than a rehash of the same old story. It is obviously a commercial venture by another author, Richard Warren Lewis, to capitalize on criticism of the Warren Report.

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Details--next page

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

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Wick	_____
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Sullivan	_____
Tavel	_____
Trotter	_____
Tele. Room	_____
Holmes	_____
Gandy	_____

TO : Mr. Wick *v/l*

DATE: 4-20-67

FROM : M. A. Jones

SUBJECT: "THE SCAVENGERS AND CRITICS
OF THE WARREN REPORT"
BY RICHARD WARREN LEWIS, based on an investigation by...
BOOK REVIEW
DETAILS ... LAWRENCE SCHILLER

The above-titled book bearing the subtitle "The Endless Paradox" was written by Richard Warren Lewis based upon an investigation by Lawrence Schiller with an introduction by Bob Considine. It has been reviewed at the request of Mr. DeLoach. The FBI is mentioned throughout the book more than 50 times. Most of the references are merely factual but the authors are somewhat critical in the last chapter of the book as set forth in this memorandum.

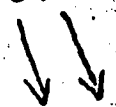
In his introductory remarks Considine states that author Richard Warren Lewis and investigator Lawrence Schiller have made a notable contribution toward a clearer understanding of the assassination of John Fitzgerald Kennedy... he states this book "shapes up as the Rosetta Stone of this Report." Considine states that Mark Lane must be accorded the No. 1 spot among the coterie that Governor Connally has dismissed as scavengers. To date, he appears indestructible. He states that regardless of the fact that Lane has appeared before the Commission and has had a host of open confrontations at his lectures, his book, "Rush to Judgment" is still with us. He further states that "One hopes that the work of Lewis and Schiller gets airborne through the smog spread by the poisoned calculations of the professional cultists."
(pp 7 - 10)

In his "Foreword" Lawrence Schiller states he was in Dallas three and one-half hours after the assassination took place, as a staff representative of the "Saturday Evening Post" and he saw the chaos and the horror of that time and the sights and sounds of Dallas in November, 1963, are impossible to forget. In his introduction, he points out that the investigation which he and Richard Lewis conducted to get the facts for this book was not conducted from an arm chair; that they returned to Dallas again and again; that they went to

- 1 - Mr. DeLoach
- 1 - Mr. Wick
- 1 - Mr. Sullivan
- 1 - Mr. Rosen

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M. A. Jones to Wick Memo
RE: "THE SCAVENGERS AND CRITICS
OF THE WARREN REPORT"

Washington, D. C., to check out facts at the National Archives; they taped interviews with Commission members and members of their staff; they traveled 18,000 miles to seek out witnesses and they met with the critics themselves. Schiller stated that in the end, there was no doubt in their minds that the majority of accusations and allegations against the Commission were unfounded and had been based on material that was not only misinterpreted but, in some cases, intentionally distorted. (pp. 11 - 15)

In speaking of Mark Lane on page 20, he states Lane was succeeding with the gimmicks of the professional huckster--distortion, innuendo, conjecture, allusion and even sheer fantasy. "A high point of the routine occurred when he dramatically unveiled well-coached witnesses he thought should have been quizzed by the Commission. He showed no restraint in hinting that President Johnson was protecting the real assassins " On page 21, he states that Lane embraced the civil rights movement in 1961; that he was arrested and convicted of breaching the peace in Jackson, Mississippi, where he and a Negro leader attempted to use segregated facilities at the municipal airport. The authors take Lane to task for his evasive testimony on two separate occasions before the Warren Commission and they set forth a variety of data concerning Lane to show his methods and his rather irrational behavior.

In chapter II, the testimony of SA Lyndal L. Shaneyfelt is set forth and the authors refer to him as a photographic expert with the FBI who made exhaustive tests to determine the authenticity of certain exhibits concerning the Oswald rifle photograph. (pp. 69-70)

At the beginning of chapter II, titled "The Housewives' Underground," the authors quote Mark Lane as saying that for three years there has been an unorganized group of housewives, editors and students who have the 26 volumes of the Warren Report in their homes and they have played a very important role in developing the body of dissenting information and that he, Mark Lane, is part of that network. A great deal of space is devoted to one of the leaders of this housewives' underground movement, Mrs. Sylvia Meagher, a widow who was regarded as the "Housewives' Supersleuth"--the unchallenged authority (among the skeptics) on the 26 volumes. They interviewed her and questioned her in detail.

M. A. Jones to Wick Memo
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Beginning on page 79, the authors devote a chapter to Penn Jones, Jr., who is convinced there were at least two riflemen firing simultaneously and he stated he knew of 18 people who were in one way or another associated with the assassination and who are now dead. Jones spread his incredible story among television and radio audiences in some of the biggest cities in the country. He published a book called "Forgive My Grief" which served as a Bible for his faithful flock. Certain photographs are contained in this chapter and stories of various deaths are contained therein.


Chapter IV is titled "Edward J. Epstein." He is a 31-year-old Harvard University graduate student; he gave up a fellowship to produce his thesis for a master's degree in government. His subject was the workings of the Warren Commission. And, through his mentor, Professor Andrew Hacker, Commission members and staff met with Epstein and he eventually gained access to privileged files and reports. A swift metamorphosis occurred once his thesis was completed. Without informing his benefactors he transformed his thesis into the book titled "Inquest" which was a broadside against the findings and methods of the Commission.

"The chemicals that catalyzed Epstein's innocent efforts into a best seller were two FBI reports, unmarked as to classification, given to him by assistant Commission counsel Wesley J. Liebeler under representation that they were to be used only in connection with his thesis. One of the blue-bound volumes, imprinted with the FBI seal and J. Edgar Hoover's name on the cover was a summary report dated December 9, 1963, which capsuled what FBI investigations into the assassination had uncovered up until that date: ...". The second FBI document referred to was a supplemental report dated January 16, 1964. Both of these documents directly collided with the final official autopsy conclusions contained in the Warren Report." (pp. 93 - 95)

On pages 105 through 109, the authors discuss the observations of Mrs. Carolyn Walther which suggested a possible conspiracy and Epstein stated that insufficient attention was paid to her observations.

Chapter V deals with Harold Weisberg, a retired journalist who accused the Commission of pursuing a preconceived case against Oswald.

Details
(Continued next page)



M. A. Jones to Wick Memo
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OF THE WARREN REPORT"

At the bottom of page 125, he states that his book is the one that does not draw upon eye-witnesses; that he is the severest critic of the Commission because he restricts himself to the Commission's information; he states the FBI and the Secret Service framed the whole thing, not the murder part, everything that has happened since. Additional testimony of the FBI photographic expert Shaneyfelt is contained on pages 129 through 131 when he was questioned by Commission counsel Arlen Specter and Commissioner Gerald R. Ford.

Chapter VI is devoted to the "Superbuffs" and the authors state the numbing wreckage wrought by the fourth Presidential assassination within a century has washed up a curious assortment of flotsam and jetsam. It is hard for people who have turned into the category of amateur detectives to believe that one deranged individual could possibly have murdered someone of the stature of the late President.

Chapter VII, beginning on page 163, deals with George C. Thomson of Glendale, California, a consulting civil engineer who peddles the most bizarre assassination theory of them all. "Five people were killed in Dealey Plaza. There were at least twenty-two bullets fired. The suspect is Lyndon B. Johnson. An automatic weapon equipped with a silencer was used. Kennedy was not killed. He was impersonated in the Presidential limousine by Officer J. D. Tippit."

Chapter VIII is titled "The Reasons For Doubt." This is the last chapter of the book and contains the authors' own doubts as to certain phases of the whole investigation they conducted. The authors state on page 170 that the gravest errors committed by this resourceful computer-age investigation were directly attributable to the same human frailties which have existed for centuries. They say "A conspiracy is difficult to prove with the scientific certainty of, say, the tracing of a bullet to a weapon... Instead of employing every conceivable means to establish the possible existence of such an explosive likelihood, as the Commission staff did in the area of ballistics and trajectory, the conspiracy investigations of the FBI and the Secret Service alone were believed implicitly... The Commission did check out the possibility of the FBI and/or the Secret Service being involved in a possible plot. This was done by using the Internal Revenue Service and other Government agencies for investigative reports and conceivably the FBI and Secret Service probes did not dig deep enough into this ticklish area." (p. 171)

M. A. Jones to Wick Memo
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The authors mention Garrison's accusation of a conspiracy between Clay Shaw and David Ferrie and others on pages 171 and 172.

On page 173 the authors state "Sloppiness in both the FBI and Secret Service photographic re-enactments of the assassination left the door ajar for the critics." They did not deal with the fact that in the re-enactment at the scene of the crime a Cadillac limousine was substituted for a Lincoln Continental and one would think that the FBI would rephotograph Billy Lovelady to establish irrefutably his resemblance to Oswald and there is no indication that this was done. The authors go on to criticize the FBI and the Secret Service for what they consider discrepancies in the re-enactment on Dealey Plaza and Neely Street which appear in the Warren Report. (pages 174 and 175)

The authors relate that much of the abuse leveled at the Commission protests the manner in which its hearings were conducted; that the Commission has been denounced for the hasty manner in which it arrived at its final conclusions. (p. 178)

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P. O. Box 137
Prescott, Washington 99348
April 24, 1967

REC-8

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Warren Commission

Dear Mr. President

I have just completed reading the book WHITEWASH, by Harold
Weisberg.

It is a book, slated as a report on the Warren Report.

This book has raised many doubts and questions in my mind, some
of which were there before reading it. I feel that if the investigation
was as faulty as this book brings to light, that we should indeed
have a new Committee go through this book and either prove or
disprove beyond a doubt--the questions left unanswered.

I feel as the author does, that we still do not know the full and true
story behind President Kennedy's assassination, and that I, as a citizen
of the United States of America, along with the rest of the citizens,
have the right to demand the truth and to see that justice is done for
all concerned. I feel that this is the business of every responsible
citizen, because anything that affects our Nation is!

Are there any satisfactory explanations or answers, you can give
to me, to the discrepancies and such raised by this book.

Please read this book. I would truly appreciate anything you could
help me with. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Diana Mos

cc: Mr. J. Edgar Hoover, Federal Bureau of Investigation
The Chief Justice, The Supreme Court

REC-8

62-109090-593

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EX-108

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File
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John

P. O. Box 137
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April 24, 1967

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cc: Mr. J. Edgar Hoover, Federal Bureau of Investigation
The Chief Justice, The Supreme Court

File
Copy to Wash. Post
John

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MAY 8 22.6 1967

EX-108

MAY 9 1967

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Mrs. Diana Moe

cc: Mr. J. Edgar Hoover, Federal Bureau of Investigation
The Chief Justice, The Supreme Court

REC-8 62-109090-593

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EX-108

14 MAY 2 1967

Handwritten notes:
FBI
Copy to
Mr. Hoover
5/2/67