

Willie Weisberg

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Dear Mike,

You did not mail your 7/14 until the 20th, which is just as good because it would probably have been added to a stack of put-off work I've begun to attack this a.m.

Some of your letter illustrates what is wrong, dangerous and hurtful about the approach you share with others and the lesson you did not learn from the Braden suit. You make a big thing out of Wrons's book and based on that make many assumptions none of which is true. I did not see it prior to publication and had nothing to do with the preparation of it. While Wrons is more than an "associate" in a sense other than you misuse this - he is a close and cherished friend - the plain and simple truth is that you have again fabricated a nightmare and think of it as a pleasant dream.

If Wrons had consulted me about this I'd have suggested changing the tense of the footnote. With that it would not have been subject to misinterpretation and would also have phrased it differently if he'd asked me. However, he did not use the word "field office," which you do immediately following quotation of what he did say, which is "office" and is ambiguous. Even when you are apparently bent on defending yourself you cannot avoid the falls in thinking that characterize what I've objected to.

There was little point in your ~~misstatement~~ self-serving rhetoric about the 544 address, which I brought to light and you bracket this with the "association," here undefined, between Oswald and Ferris, and need I remind you that I brought that also to light, to the degree it was done with accuracy. Beginning with first mention/publication.

I do NOT "complain about" attempts "to draw some potential significance" from the building but you put it differently, now as "with 'from Marcello's operative Ferris's work out of ~~the~~ the small building during the same period in which Oswald used it for his return address." (The only other "potential" significance you attribute is the CIA's.)

The degree to which you persist in factual insecurity continues to amaze me and I'm not going to waste time pointing it out. I point out only that Ferris was not and so far as I know never was "Marcello's operative" and did not in the sense you contort all into "work out of the small building" at the time Oswald used that return address, 8/63. Ferris shared Benister's strange views, reportedly did a few jobs for him and was there from time to time but at the time you refer to he was really in C. Wray Gill's office, had and used space there I was told, worked for Gill on occasion and apparently with success because Gill recommended that he be hired for the Marcello defense to "ack Wasserman, who then hired Ferris for that job in which Ferris succeeded. How does this make Ferris "Marcello's operative?"

I'm lucky that you and your fellow Keystone Kops, junior grade, did not ask me any questions about this or my work on it for God knows how it would have come out!

I'm glad you do not go for the Mafio Pecora fabrication. The alternative, and I imagine with the totality of my detachment for the young fogie theorists the only alternative, is your "associate" Holden. I think he went into that with me at some length and it is my recollection attributed it and all of that stuff to you only. I am not in touch with Oglesby and he sends me nothing that he writes.

There is much in life that is easily misinterpreted. For example, what has come to mind with our finally getting city-like addresses. Now I have not moved since 1967 but I've had five different addresses since then. Then there is my envelope, the printing on which can be misinterpreted. To save me money the local printer used type set for my book envelopes, without removing what is, I think, inappropriate. If you look carefully you will see that he did not make this mistake with the earlier original printing of that envelope. It can be taken as putting on air. In fact it is accidental and meaningless.

I have no sensitivity about Willie Weisberg, what you call over-sensitivity. That he was a distant relative means no more than that others were judges, heart-specialists, became wealthy in various businesses and professions and earned respectable fame in various ways. My concern is over the intended mischief involved. I doubt that even as a child I ever saw him. I recall the shame, the family sympathy for his father, who I recall from childhood as one of the warmest of humans. I recall his brother became prominent in business circles but I never knew him, either. The only knowledge I have of his career comes from I think an Anderson column, obviously an FBI leak to him of the Bruno phone conversation.

While I see nothing in what you say about him that could not have been general knowledge I would now like to know all I can because of what fairly obviously has been launched. However, there is no established relevance of any of this in the JFK assassination and none in anything you have written. I do not know if anyone will send me the committee's final report and I'm not spending any of my limited resources on its disinformations.

Whether or not it is relevant, and I doubt it, I am interested in proof of your statement that "we do in fact know that at least three (and perhaps more) of the people who worked out of the Camp Street building were being employed by Carlos Marcello." Who are these three and the others possible; what work did they do out of there as distinguished from dropping in there; when and how were they employed or being employed by Marcello and for what.

There is also the inherent suggestion that when Oswald stamped that address on his leaflets he was serving either Ferrie or Marcello through Ferrie. Or others. Do you intend this? If not what significance do you in all this attempt at self-justification attribute to his use?

Ferrie is dead, as maybe Willie also is. I never heard of his wife and don't know if they had children. I doubt Marcello will see. But the kind of stuff you really believe and has already gotten you into a libel suit is libel and is neither proven nor even reasonable.

Take all these threats as intended, all the thousands of them. How does the making of a threat establish that it led to the crime?

Have you ever given any thought to the consequences of all this theorizing if you do not theorize the truth? What interest is served by all these conjectures and giving them so much attention aside from drawing attention away from what is real and can have been involved?

Your effort to belabor me over Wron's footnote represents the kind of false assumption and further building on it from which you apparently will never learn. (I also did not see Howard Roffman's or Sylvia's manuscripts or any others and don't want to.) This is true of your other alleged "associations" and acquaintanceships.

People of all kinds of beliefs come here and use my files or interview me. In general when these are of the right it is not uncommon for the interview to represent what those people believe rather than what I actually said and some of it has been pretty hurtful. There is nothing I can do about it once it is printed. This does not mean I aid it, believe it, have been "associated" with these characters or even have an acquaintanceship in the sense you use these words with others. These are circumstances of life, not the kinds of things on which responsible people undertake to build what they want to believe is responsible work. Take as another example most of the critics. As I their "associate" or "acquaintance" when we disagree on almost everything and some even regard me as a federal agent?

I appreciate your offer of copies of the stuff you are talking about. I think I'd better be aware of the possibilities of misuse. Of course if you can also show me any real relevance I'd welcome that, too.

Excuse the typos. Sincerely,

Michael Ewing
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July 14, 1979

Dear Harold:

Thank you for your brief note.

I just wanted to write today and let you know of some information relating to your distant relative Willie Weisberg. Knowing of your sensitivity to this area (and of the potential for mischievous use of it by your would be detractors) I thought I would let you know of the information in question. It comes from some of our file material on Weisberg and his organized crime colleagues which was not included in any of the Committee's published reports. Since I expect to discuss it with various people who have an interest in learning more about Willie Weisberg and his avowed wish to murder President Kennedy, I thought I would inform you of it directly; so that you won't jump to the conclusion that I am maliciously spreading information about Weisberg behind your back. As you know, I do think you have overreacted in believing as you do that any discussion of Willie Weisberg and his La Cosa Nostra associations is meant as an attack upon you in some way.

In any event, for whatever it's worth, federal organized crime files derived from the Philadelphia area establish that Weisberg was closely associating with David Yaras, the senior executioner of the Chicago Mafia, during the fall of 1963. Yaras, the close associate of Santos Trafficante, Sam Giancana, and James Hoffa, was of course an acquaintance of Jack Ruby, and is infamous in the annals of organized crime as a particularly inhuman torturer-executioner. (I'm enclosing a brief rundown on his career for your information). Federal files reflect that Yaras (who was also closely identified with several other associates of Jack Ruby) made various travel arrangements with his associate Willie Weisberg in late September of 1963; with Yaras and his wife socializing with Weisberg and his wife Annie during that period.

Additionally, federal files indicate that when Weisberg crudely spoke with Philadelphia Mafia leader Angelo Bruno about wanting to assassinate President Kennedy, he was speaking about a subject not entirely unknown to him; the files indicate Weisberg's familiarity or knowledge of various organized crime executions in the Pennsylvania region. (An account and analysis of the Weisberg remarks about the need to kill the President is contained in both the Committee's Final Report and supporting volume on organized crime. Additionally, our volumes contain a more detailed account of Dave Yaras's activities in a lengthy

profile of his longtime partner Lenny Patrick, another brutal Chicago executioner and friend of Ruby. I'll send you the relevant excerpts once these reports are released if you wish).

I also wanted to write and correct you about a mistake you made in both of your recent notes. You stated that I had discussed the parole of Oswald in August of 1963 and the alleged mob association of those involved in this incident. I think you have got my conversation with you mixed up with some other recent conversation you had with another person. I did not discuss this with you, although I know it is a hot topic among various critics at the moment. In point of fact, I myself have been throwing cold water on such discussions and have been correcting various critics on what they have "heard" about it. In particular, I've been pointing out the totally erroneous reports about Nofio Pecora's alleged involvement in the parole; reports first printed by Oglesby in the A.I.B. newsletter and then repeated in the NBC-TV coverage a few weeks ago. Like I say, you're confusing me with someone else you've talked to; I'm in complete agreement with you about what some people are saying - inaccurately - about the Oswald jailing incident.

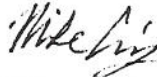
Lastly, I wanted to enclose one brief item I came across a couple weeks ago in regard to your continuing chastisement of those who discuss the possibility of Oswald-Ferrie association through their respective "connections" to the small 544 Camp Street building in mid-1963. I enclose a page from your associate David Wrone's new book on your FOI work on the JFK case; a valuable book that I gather is the exclusive product of your work in this area. Recalling your association with Wrone (who I respect), and his continuing work with your files, I would tend to assume that you probably reviewed and approved his manuscript prior to publication. In any event, in reviewing your obtainment of the January 22, 1964 WC transcript, Wrone writes that Oswald's use of the 544 Camp Street address is noteworthy because he was using "the return address of a right-wing, anti-Castro organization located in a building housing a Central Intelligence Agency office." (Underlining mine). This of course was and is news to me. I'd love to know his or your source for putting a CIA field office in the building. However much you may complain about those of us who attempt to draw some potential significance from Marcello operative Ferrie's work out of the small building during the same period in which Oswald used it for his return address, at least there is documentary evidence supporting their respective connections (however limited) to the premises. However, I don't believe the same can be said for the Wrone claim about a CIA office being housed in the building.

But, as I have said before, we all have our biases, and some prefer chasing the CIA more than Marcello. In any event, I do hope you (and your associate) might at least acknowledge that 544 Camp Street is in fact a significant area to pursue, with at least as much cause for looking for signs of Marcello as signs of the Agency.

Whatever Wrone's or your sources are about the purported CIA office there, we do in fact know that at least three (and perhaps more) of the people who were working out of the Camp Street building were being employed by Carlos Marcello. And we also know that the Cuban exile (and CIA-funded) organization in the building had been expelled by the landlord in February of 1962, a year and a half before Oswald used the place as his return address.

Again, forgive me if I have sounded overly contentious.

Best wishes,



Mike Ewing

Encs.