

Dear Jim,

8/14/81

We've assumed you were busy with the part-time job in addition to all else. But in your letter of the 9th you say nothing about fixing the underpinnings of the house. Hope that means there were no special problems.

Your friend Pete Dreyfus is one of a multitude who are trusting people and believe what they read, never dreaming that there are liars of the Lifton variety. The way he does it is ^{clever} clever. Whether or not he influenced his witnesses, whose memoranda can't really be trusted after the long time lapse, he quotes them straightfacedly saying what he knows can't be true and he bases on this theories he also knows can't be true.

If Dreyfus were familiar with the literature he'd have substantial basis for having doubts about Lifton's integrity. Lifton claims credit for all that is known about the JFK assassination for himself and only himself. ~~His~~ Knowledge of the literature would immediately tell Dreyfus that nothing factual in Lifton's book originates with him. And he would ask himself why Lifton makes such false representations.

Don't waste your time on the bad book. If you'd like you can give Dreyfus a couple of cuss he'll grasp readily. Lifton claims there was a chance to tamper with the corpse on AF1 in Dallas because General McHugh was at ~~EMK~~ hot with it all the time. McHugh has refuted this in an angry letter to Time, which ~~was~~ had subsidiary rights. (Lifton theorizes that the body was altered and theorized different times and places. Import: a combination of the Secret Service, the Presidential staff and the military assassinated.) There were many others on the plane and never ~~far~~ away from where the casket was. Most of the JFK staff, all the Secret Service escort, some military, etc.

He also theorizes that the real casket and real corpse were taken off the wrong side of the plane at Andrews Field in DC. Not the casket, corpse only. The whole thing was heavily floodlights and even if that did not preclude even thinking of taking such a risk, the fact is that there were about 3,000 spectators close to that side of AF1. They would have seen this and certainly one would have had something to say.

He talks about a helicopter taking off, suggesting that it flew to Walter Reed for hankypanky with the corpse, to cover up what happened by altering the corpse. Well, what he doesn't say is that two helicopters took off, each for a special and necessary purpose, and neither went to Walter Reed. Not for any purpose. One carried LBJ and the other flew the military honor guard out to Bethesda. That simple.

Lifton says that there was an extra ambulance. ~~W~~orrect, and account for other than as he fabricates, for carrying a dummy casket. The CO of the Navy hospital was LBJ's cardiac expert, so he sent an ambulance and a heart specialist just in case LBJ needed help from the great stress. That simple.

Lifton claims that the ambulance from Walter ~~reed~~ reed slipped in the back gate of the

Navy Medical Center with the doctored corpse. Obvious he has to have them getting in some way and the security at the front gates preclude his dreaming that up. So he fabricates that it was through the rear ~~22~~ gate. By accident I know that also was impossible. I have a neighbor who worked there then. He was an AF vet and he was assigned to the Armed Forces Radiological Institution, which was at Bethesda. In going home at night he always used the back entrance because it was so much closer and because he avoided the always heavy Wisconsin Ave. traffic that way. His recollection of that night is very clear. They were told about the extra security and its purpose and as he left he saw some of the special arrangements. "like lighting up the heliport. But when he got to the rear gate it was locked and there was no attendant to open it. He had to turn around and fight his way out the heavy emergency traffic ^{to} the front gates and then struggle through the heavier than usual street traffic.

Lifton makes up that there was also ~~hank~~ ~~penky~~ at Bethesda and to invent a time condition that might enable this he omits entirely in his time reconstruction the time necessary for taking the X-rays and pictures that were taken before the first knife cut. On this he called me up to ~~EM~~ threaten me with a lawsuit, allegedly after consulting with the publisher's lawyers. He had his usual enlargement on something that had happened. I had told someone that these theories are the theories of the Lifton who had phoned me in 1966 to assure me that the assassination was done from papier mache trees, assisted by Brown & Root ~~tunnels~~ tunnels dug in secret in Dealey Plaza. He pretended that I'd played a tape of these calls, as I hadn't. I told him to stop bothering me, that he and I both know what he is, a crook and a faker, and that he was also a deliberate liar. When he asked for an illustration ~~EM~~ I told him about the time required for the exposing of the film, that he did not allow for it. He claimed he did and I asked him how and he actually said because the autopsy did not begin until 10:30. I asked why he said that and he said that this is what the radiologist told him. No doubt the radiologist, whose other recollections also are faulty, did say something like that. But Lifton knows it isn't true and the film was exposed at 7:30 and the cutting began a little after 8. Because he can't live with that he has built all these false structures and with the publisher's help got away with it, making much money, too.

It doesn't make any difference how many impossible statements he has because if they are impossible the number of them does not reduce the impossibility.

There is a simple law of assassination publishing: the better the book, the less the chance; conversely, the worse the book, the more attractive to the publisher.

I've decided to do a little good, not on the level of your Hospice work. I am driving a woman older than we are to the store and bank because she has no other means. We should all do more of such things.

Sorry you can't lend us a little of your wonderful weather, but by and large we've been making out OK. Today is less humid but only a few recent days, for months, have not gone to 90 or higher. I get my exercise in the mornings when it isn't raining, in the woods just past the pool. I've been sawing up a log wood, to 6" diameter, with a 16" pruning saw. Inefficient as hell but great exercise! I take a cool drink and a radio with me and I've not only sawed up a cord or more but I've split all that I had to split, a little less than a cord, and I've got it all stacked. Finished it this a.m., except for hard, dry stuff over 11" in diameter than won't split. When I get back to the chain saw I'll slice that! I have a sturdy sawbuck and I take an old lawn chair to it. I sit when I must, and if using so small a saw didn't look funny, my sitting certainly did. I've got three large poplar logs to get cut into stove length, after which I can get them into the woods and enjoy splitting them, too. Yes, I also split sitting down. Once there is dormancy and before bitter cold weather I want to get a few dead bull or mountain pines down. They are dead, thus dry, but they'll probably deposit some creosote from the ^{trunks} ~~trunks~~ when I split those I could split of year before last's cutting. Then, on the house side of the pond, I'll have only some locusts to cull and except for any future damage I'll have it the way I want it, with regard to trees. Makes me feel good, no matter how ridiculous it may look or sound or how inefficient it is. Good is not best medicine.

I've been sending a few extra carious (Dave has) pertaining to the new affidavit in the old spectro case. If I did not tell you, the affidavit proper is 112 legal-sized pages and there are 82 exhibits. A local history prof friend, after reading it, says said, "You've cut them a new asshole." Hope so. Losar yesterday asked for an extension of time so he could do the material justice, his words, in his motion, etc. I plan for a press conference after Labor Day. I think maybe with attention this can do something. It is absolutely definitive. We're asking the judge to order the duplication of the tests the results of which are withheld and I want to push on perjury. Perhaps with Fensterwald's help, with the Congress. He seems interested. He used the same words about assholes when he visited me in the hospital and I told him what I expected to do. That was before we deposed the Lab agent who spilled a bit, like they didn't make the necessary tests in the JFK case.

I now have proof that the FBI destroyed much of its "arrison material, all of the special files I'd identified. Now I have to address that for Losar.

Our best,

9 August 1981

Dear Harold:

Sorry to have been so bad about writing, but I've just been exceptionally busy with a number of things.

I do thank you for your recent letters and for the various enclosures. The one I would have missed otherwise was the nice story about Sidney Shapiro. I've known about him for a long time, but my time in Peking was much too short and he was one among many that I missed seeing.

This is mainly to forward the enclosed piece on Lifton's new book. I've not seen it, but a good friend, Pete Dreyfus, has read it and sounds somewhat shaken. I must say it's difficult to form much of a judgment from Raznikov's account of it. He seems to accept it totally without criticism. Wish I had time; I'd like to compare it with your own Post-Mortem.

One of the reasons I've been so busy is that while Hospice of Marin has nearly 10 volunteers to help with patients, I happen to be one of only two men among them. The other is a busy travel agent with his own business, so I'm available much more of the time for certain jobs than he can be. Consequently they've been calling upon me to help with certain types of patients, and of course I regard each as a great opportunity and always try to oblige if possible. With three days of the week out at my part-time job, I seem to be very fully occupied these days in addition to the house and garden work I do here. Things may ease up a bit in the next month, but the prospect is that my time is going to be very full until sometime late this fall.

We had a hot spell in June, but since then it's been standard Bay Area fog in the morning which burns off by noon and rarely does it get hotter than 75° -- one can get a lot done with weather like that. Wish I could share some of it with you.

Take it easy, and best to you both,



jdw