

Dear Jerry,

10/1/90

Thanks for your letter of the 27th and the enclosures. I've marked the letter "confidential" and if you send me anything else disclosure of which could be embarrassing to you please mark it when you mail it.

Joe West and Gary Shaw were here before Shaw went to Baltimore for an operation but I do not recall the date. It was early this year, probably. I spent some time trying to show them that their (general as given to me) belief that the mafia killed JFK would not withstand critical examination and could not be true. They both thanked me, West rather effusively, and the next thing I knew West mailed me the notice you also sent, of their appearance before the Galveston meeting of the National Association of Legal Investigators. I knew it was nonsense but I wanted to have what they said for archival purposes so I wrote West and requested a copy of their prepared remarks and of any tapes they may have made of them and the questions asked. To this day I've not heard a word from either West or Shaw.

You describe West as a man of limited knowledge of the JFK assassination. What little he said here reflects some knowledge of the nut literature and theories only. He never took the time to learn anything about the assassination, by which I mean what is really established as fact, and thus he can't adapt his concoctions or those of others to what is factual.

Gary Shaw seems to be a nice guy but he has trouble discriminating between fact and theories. I understand he is now ruined, financially and emotionally.

You say West claims to have spent \$100,000 in his "investigation." That is precisely the sum Midland oil men gave Ricky White for what I understand is a quarter interest in what he gets from book and movie and other rights.

You say that West is trying to raise money for his foundation. First of all, I think he'll get now here, except with people who have no common sense at all, and secondly if he does he'll be subject to fraud charges and it may be getting to the point where the state or local governments will file such charges.

There is no question but that the so-called "service book" is a fake. The content leaves it without question that White knew nothing at all about the CIA or any other intelligence agency. Besides, the internal content destroys it. There is a 1/65 entry saying "they want me for Watergate." Aside from the fact that it would not have been called that, it wasn't for another seven years!

I would appreciate a dub of the tape of the press conference, but again, for archival purposes only. I'm glad to have read the stories you enclosed. I understand that the Dallas Morning News also had one but I've not seen it.

West tells you that he severed his connection with the Dallas so-called "information" center but I was told long ago that they fired him but that they could not avoid having him at the news conference. I understand that White's backers, doing business as MATSU, have filed suit against West for stealing some of Ricky's crap. I understand also that the papers were served on West at but after that press conference. In which I do believe he ruined himself and any chance he may have had for a scam involving money.

I know little about the Dallas center because I've had no connection with it but I also believe that the only way they can get any money from the White fabrications is by acting as technical advisers to some project. Which will then, if it ever comes to pass, be in distress because they also can't separate fact from their dreams.

Some people in Dallas agree with your suspicion that this newest concoction, was by Geneva and before it surfaced I'd heard that she had told Ricky that if he didn't get his show on the road promptly she would do her own. Later I heard that he had assaulted her- his own mother! Not surprising, though, when you consider what he has already done to his father's memory.

You heard that Fensterwald helped Morrow write his phony book on the JFK assassination. I doubt it. But at the same time I know there was some connection, the nature of which I don't recall if I knew, and going on the past, I'd say that Morrow looked him up in the hope of getting some authentication. Which, of course, wasn't possible. Fensterwald has been involved in almost everything that has surfaced for some reason like this and he hasn't been able to discriminate. I know of an awful lot of really nutty stuff he believed. That is the way he is.

West claims death threats against him. I don't believe it. There also were death threats reported against White. Some in Dallas believe that someone at the center may have pulled that kind of caper to promote it and this fraudulent project. I don't know Howard so I have no way of knowing whether such threats coming from him would be consistent with the kind of person he is.

With regard to your conjectures, there is no question about it, West is "full of crap." That is no conjecture. It is fact, and he cannot be innocent in any of this. With regard to the center, it can't survive this and it was in bad shape before this. It could not possibly gross enough to pay the rent and I understand there is a tidy sum of back rent for which personal notes were given and I believe will be collected through the courts if not in any other way.

The so-called Dorff Report you enclosed, says substantially what I understand West and Shaw said to the legal investigations convention and it is rubbish. From what I've been told they went farthur and said that Roselli was in charge of the job, on the scene, on the grassy knoll, and that Nicoletti and Sam Giancana did the shooting. When confronted with this at the center's press conference for "hite and asked to reconcile it with his endorsement of what Ricky White had just said he said there was no conflict at all, that both groups of assassins were at the same place and at the same time! He then said there were nine assassins in all!

I will appreciate anything at all you send on this but my only interest is in leaving as full and accurate a file for the future as is possible. Fakes are part of the history, too, alas!

Thanks and best wishes,


Harold Weisberg