

14 July 1966

Dear Ed,

On November 22, 1963 I was doing some work in my office when we received news of the shooting in Dallas. I had a transistor radio with me and listened to the news bulletins. When the President was announced to have died, I exclaimed bitterly to a co-worker that we could be sure that a leftist would be arrested for the assassination. By the time I arrived home only two hours later, Oswald had been arrested. Two days later I watched as he was shot to death, flanked by police officers.

I was highly sceptical of the police case against Oswald from the first. The Warren Commission made essentially the same case against the accused in its Report, after conducting an investigation which--from such news as was available in the press--aroused the most serious misgivings.

Therefore, when the Hearings and Exhibits were published I began an exhaustive study of the testimony and documents. First I read through the 26 volumes to obtain an overall picture. Then I made a more or less systematic comparison between the assertions in the Report and the footnoted sources as well as sources not footnoted but which I had encountered in the initial study of the 26 volumes. The relevant testimony or documents which were not cited in the Warren Report were numerous and illuminating. I began to work simultaneously on a comparative analysis of the conflicts between the Report, on the one hand, and the 26 volumes, on the other, in narrative form; and on the Subject Index which has been published by Scarecrow Press. Originally I undertook the Subject Index merely as a personal reference source; but since it was apparent that other researchers might find it useful and time-saving, I decided ultimately to submit it for publication (with much encouragement from Salandria and other students of the case). Meanwhile, I continued to work on my comparative analysis. I began to write it early in 1965; it was effectively completed about 14 months later, although I continue to add material occasionally (two short new chapters in June 1966, for example).

✓ I have generally avoided speculation and theorization about what really happened in Dallas, because I was convinced that before any real search for the truth could be made it was necessary to expose the grave defects in the Warren Report--defects which could not be explained by carelessness, haste, or incompetence alone but which in numerous instances seemed indisputably to result from conscious distortion, suppression, or falsification of the evidence.

Before making any final judgments about particular misrepresentations in the Report, I made an attempt to obtain clarifications from members of

Sources Ed Epstein file, 1966
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The Commission or its lawyers, by writing to them and outlining the particular contradiction between the Report and the official documentation in the 26 volumes, citing exact volume and page references. I wrote such letters to Melvin Eisenberg, Joseph Ball, Alfred Goldberg, Wesley J. Liebeler, Gerald Ford, J. Lee Rankin, Albert Jenner, Jr., and John Sherman Cooper. With only two or three exceptions, my letters were neither answered nor acknowledged. One lawyer was willing to discuss the questions I raised on the telephone, but not for attribution. One person referred me to one of the lawyers, but the latter did not reply in any form. But the net result was that not one of the contradictions was in any way clarified, explained, resolved, or justified. ✓ The unanswered letters will appear as an appendix to my manuscript.

After that exercise, in which not one of the serious discrepancies was cleared up, I felt certain that the Warren Report was neither a reliable nor honest work. So much of the so-called evidence against Oswald turned out to be specious that I feel it is reasonable to believe that he may have had no guilty involvement of any kind in the events of 11/22/63. I have found strong evidence in the Commission's own documents of deliberate impersonation and incrimination of Oswald, in September 1963, by persons unknown (who may or may not correspond with three individuals actually named in the Report).

✓ However, I do not entertain nor (in my manuscript) urge any particular theory of the crime, although I do outline a purely hypothetical series of events and relationships to demonstrate the real possibility of specific political conspiracy. The main objective of both the comparative analysis (now over 500 pages) and the Subject Index is to point to the fundamental speciousness of the Report, in its factual assertions as well as its conclusions. I continue to feel that the paramount task at this time is to expose and discredit the Report before the public, so that there will develop a national demand for the uncovering of the truth and the identification and apprehension of those who planned and executed the murders in Dallas.

I have outlined these facts to facilitate the preparation of any comments which you may wish to include in your article for Esquire.

Hastily yours,

Sylvia Meagher