23 January 1967

Mr. Clay Felker
Associate Editor
World Journal Tribune
125 Barclay Street
New York, N.Y. 10015

My dear Mr. Felker,

I was intrigued to learn from the article by Richard Warren Lewis published in the magazine section yesterday that Edward Jay Epstein on his first visit to my home seized the opportunity surreptitiously to check the contents of my bookcase. If his "heart dropped" then, it must have lifted by the time he asked me, during a subsequent visit, to review the manuscript of Inquest for accuracy prior to publication of the book. Although a variety of services to Epstein and his publisher have been followed on Epstein's part by public references to me invariably denigrating in character, I still regard his book as having unique historical importance. Even his recantation (heralded gleefully at regular intervals by a spokesman for the Warren Report), his entry into a symbiotic relationship with practitioners of "political truth," and his despicable attacks on critics who have shown him many kindnesses, do not nullify the value of Inquest nor can they rehabilitate the discredited Warren Report.

So much for Edward Jay Epstein.

As for Richard Warren Lewis, the enclosed copy of my letter to him and his fellow-entrepreneur best refutes his insinuations of avarice and publicity-seeking. I do not regard myself as a heroine, sung or unsung, except insofar as I succeeded in maintaining civility toward Lewis and his cohort when I received them in my home, despite an immediate sensation of contamination entering in their wake--in an intrusion gained under the same false pretenses which gave these two charlatans access to the time, courtesy, and hospitality of the other critics whom they have tried to defame.

Lewis does not classify as "scavengers" all those writers who deal with the assassination but only those who question or challenge the Warren Report. He charges them with a "rush for money" knowing full well that the victims of his malice, with perhaps a single exception, are out of pocket by considerable sums in pursuit of their research on the case. Apparently his personal ethics and experience are such that he cannot even conceive the possibility that others may be motivated by a disinterested commitment to justice or truth. Lewis does not mention, much less denounce, the profits earned by books which attempt to legitimize the untenable Warren Report, published or to be published by Gerald Ford, William Manchester, and Wesley J. Liebeler, among others. May one assume from Lewis's righteousness, incidentally, that his article in your magazine was unpaid?

Source SM Corresp.
Schiller/Lewis Folder

Evidently defense of the discredited Warren Report is one qualification for immunity from defamation in the article you published. But it does not escape notice that critics of the Report who enjoy friendship with an eminent editor of your paper, or who fraternize with former counsel for the Warren Commission, or both, have been spared the ridicule, smear, and malice to which less-well-connected critics have been treated.

I turn now to the insinuation that there is something devious in the monitoring of public broadcasts. Mr. Louis Nizer's error with respect to the Mauser was not singular but one of many travesties of fact in his radio statement of September 30, 1966. I circulated an analysis of his wild inaccuracies among many of my colleagues and not merely to the critic singled out for mention in the article. That analysis is enclosed for your information, together with a commentary on equally inaccurate and irresponsible pronouncements broadcast by Albert E. Jenner, Jr., former senior counsel to the Warren Commission. Mr. Lewis's attempt to dismiss the President's body-recoil on impact of the fatal bullet by alleging the acceleration of the car at the same moment betrays his kindred capacity for blatant misrepresentation of established fact.

I cannot close without protesting vehemently the false and malicious description in the article of the lovable German shepherd dog with whom I became acquainted recently. This noble animal received me, and others who were strangers to him, with utmost affection and courtesy. That he displayed animus toward Mr. Lewis or his companion is a tribute to the dog's fine sense of discrimination between the subhuman and the human being.

Yours very truly,

Sylvia Meagher
302 West 12 Street
New York, N.Y. 10014

Enclosures
Copy of letter to Schiller and Lewis dated 12/4/66
Commentary on remarks by Nizer
Commentary on remarks by Jenner

cc: Edward Jay Epstein, etc.