

SM to David Lighter
(Folder - D. Lighter, 1967-1968)

1 Dec. 1968

Dear David,

I have been dipping into Tom Wicker's book JFK and LBJ and suddenly remembered that you had written to me about it (see your letter of 8/12/68). I like Wicker, who usually takes part in a monthly discussion and analysis of news on our NET station here, and who's despair about the Vietnam situation and the state of the country in general has been unmistakable, these last years. He is extremely intelligent and decent; but I think he shrinks from confronting certain thoughts. For example, my publishers offered Wicker (among many others) the opportunity to read and comment on the galley proofs of Accessories, but he turned it down, saying that he didn't have enough knowledge of the subject. (Apparently he was reluctant to remedy this inadequacy.)

Also, I have been meaning to thank you for your note of 11/16/68 and the enclosed distribution list. You will be interested to know that your distribution of copies of my July letter to Ed Epstein inspired Salandria and one or two others to write to me. The point of Vince's letter was that after reading what I wrote to Epstein, and "notwithstanding our differences on Garrison," he thought that I was honest, consistent, and a whole string of laudatory characterizations, ending with an expression of his love and high regard. I was more saddened than elated, since of course it is simply not possible to ignore "our differences on Garrison." Other letters added to my collection of various preposterous and comical theories being offered to "explain" my position on Garrison (which I have already fully explained, apparently without convincing those who believe that nothing, but NOTHING, ever transpires in this country without the CIA somehow being implicated). The most exotic of the theories and rumors which have found their way back to me is that I am being blackmailed, by threats on Arnoni's life. Talk about demonology!

Which brings me to Harold Weisberg. You will remember that I had two letters from him last August, lecturing me on the folly of my financial contribution to Thornley. As I recall it, I mentioned in my subsequent letters to you that I had heard from HW. I did not, however, send you copies of his two letters to me. (If I am mistaken on this point, please let me know.) Now I have had another letter from HW, in which he mentions, as an aside, that you had told him on his recent visit to California, that I had sent you copies of his two letters to me. As I say, this was only an aside. His latest letter was on a different subject that I won't take the time to go into, as it merely has to do with more feverish suspicions of infiltrators and double-agents. I doubt if the suspect's name is known to you and I will not repeat it, as I believe the man to be an irrelevant kook. But (and please regard this as confidential--and anything I have written or may write in future about HW, so as to minimize his occasions for addressing his inimitable epistolary masterpieces to me) in the same letter, HW proceeded to voice dire suspicion against Bill Turner, as involved in "a major federal penetration" of the critics' jolly little community. I imagine HW is noising this around widely for, lo and behold, a few short days later I received a letter from another Harold (Feldman) asking my opinion of Turner and suggesting that he was up to some sinister and devious work. Poor Turner! He is guilty of over-zealous and uncritical championship of Garrison, but I really do doubt that he is doing undercover work for J. Edgar Hoover or whoever is now running CIA.

I haven't enough to add to warrant starting a second page, so will leave it at that. All the best, let me hear from you.

Sylvia Meagher

Meagher Correspondence
Re: D. Lifton (1968-69)
Page two

SM to Clay Shaw, 6/1/'68

Re: good letter to Shaw. She mentions Tink Thompson,. Sauvage, and Epstein who think as she does that the Garrison case is an unmitigated disgrace and outrage.

SM to DL, 6/30/'68

Re: Ref. to Weisberg and attack on Lifton in paper called "Open City." Copy in the folder.

SM characterizes HW as a former friend or associate--now feels he is irresponsible vis-a-vis role w/ Garrison. Tells DL to dismiss his attacks. Then he levels into Mark Lane and his latest piece of monstrosity re: RFK assassination.

SM to DL, 7/14/'68

Re: takes off on Ed. Epstein and piece he did for New Yorker on the Garrison case.

She was not pleased w/ his defense of the WCR. Tried to get him to drop it in the piece. He did not listen. She explains Epstein to Lifton: "... [his] mind & motives are much more complex and subtle, and he can best be understood in terms of his innate leanings and his personal ambitions to 'make it' in every sense, not the least of which is fame and money."

She ends w/ scathing attack on Popkin and his book on the "second" Oswald or other Oswald. She sees his thesis as spineless and refusal to face the logic of his own research. Popkin argued that LHO knew of the "stand-in" and concurred with this. In short, Popkin contends that LHO was the assassin of the president. [Meagher clearly believes that LHO was innocent of any shooting that day].

SM to DL, 8/26/'68

Re: Her favorable response to Lifton's letter to New Yorker to Epstein pointing out the fallacies and sophistries. (This multi-page draft is in folder). She came under fire from Aronson for helping and defending Epstein as a critic in the JFK case. She will not do it again. [Notes that Aronson has ed. piece on Epstein in TMO].

SM to DL, 12/21/'68

Re: Tally of the fall-out among critics over the Garrison case--Who are the Good, the Bad, and the plain Ugly.

Meagher Correspondence
Page three

Re: David Lifton (1968/69)

SM to DL, 3/22/'69

Re: More SM acid about HW--his writing style(Weisbergia);
He apparently sent her a ms. to preview. Part of WW series. She was not
impressed. Sees a lot of self-advertisement in work. (Not clear which
ms. she is talking about).
Spiteful comments.

SM to DL, 4/9/'69

Re: Ref. to her work on Givens in AAF. She is now
looking at this more closely and is outraged at the testimony provided
by Ball/Belin. Apparently she did not have a complete view of what was
entailed here when writing her book. When does she do the "Curious Testi-
mony of Charles Givens." Was it after AAF?

SM to DL, 6/8/'69

Re: More on the Givens case. Sees it now as outrageoy
miscarriage of proper investigative techniques "prime facia case of
collusion on the p^hart of Dallas PD & WC lawyers involved in the suborn-
ing of perjury to render a false picture of the real facts,etc.

SM to DL, 9/4/'69

Re: Extensive discussion re: Givens case.