

19 July 1966

Mr. Jacob Cohen  
98 South Fullerton Avenue  
Montclair, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Cohen,

Thank you very much for taking the trouble to write in detail your comments and your views as to next-steps; and thank you also for your generous remarks about my work.

I suppose most of the male researchers have spent considerable time contorting themselves to see the degree of shift in their coats and/or shirts. Every time I am seated behind gentlemen at meetings, I find myself so preoccupied with the drape of their apparel in the neck region that I fail to hear the proceedings (usually no great loss). I have seen a strange variety of bunching and lifting but never any arrangement in which a bullet striking the neck would not pierce at least two layers of the coat; and that has increased my reservations about suggestions, not corroborated by photographic or film evidence, that the President's coat was raised in such a way as to account for the position of the bullet-hole.

In any case, I received four days ago an extremely important document obtained from the Archives, which perhaps has come also to your attention. It is the long, detailed, precise five-page report of FBI agents Sibart and O'Neill on the autopsy performed on the President's body in their presence on the night of 11/22/63. The agents describe the wound as located below the shoulders and state that the missile had travelled a short distance inasmuch as the end of the opening could be felt with the finger; and their report has other arresting details.

(A second document, also hitherto-unseen, reveals the speciousness of insinuations by Fletcher Knobel in his LOOK article that Epstein had misrepresented the Hudkins/Allan Sweatt business. The document is the Secret Service report, control number 767, referred to in Inquest; and it shows that Hudkins was not only interviewed by the Secret Service, notwithstanding his denial as quoted in LOOK, but he actually took the initiative in making the contact and reporting information he had obtained from Sweatt.)

Regarding the stretcher bullet, I do not find that Frazier gave the pristine weight as 161 to 164 grains. He testified that several standard bullets had been weighed and "they were all in the vicinity of 161 grains." He added that there was at least a 2-grain variation allowed. Since the stretcher bullet was within the range of variation, Frazier said, "there did not necessarily have to be any weight loss to the bullet" (3H 430).

I believe that the weight of the stretcher bullet as well as its undeformed state and pristine appearance must be taken into consideration. While the Commission has acknowledged the fragments in the Governor's wrist, I believe that the Report fails to mention that the largest wrist fragment, or the two largest, were lost after removal and could not be weighed (4H 123); and it fails to mention a fragment or fragments in the Governor's chest (6H 111). But I agree that the shape of the bullet is the thornier problem of the two and remains an insuperable obstacle to the single-missile hypothesis.

I will not try to comment now on all the other points raised in your letter, in the expectation that we may have an opportunity to meet and discuss our points of agreement and disagreement. Certainly I am in sympathy with your efforts to elicit the autopsy photographs and x-rays, within a larger attempt to determine what really happened in Dallas. I confess, however, that I find it difficult to reconcile your apparent close study of the testimony and documents with your continued defense of the Commission and its Report. Regardless of your opinion of the theories propounded by the Commission's adversaries—and I do not think it is reasonable to equate solitary researchers with a governmental body which had almost unlimited resources and powers—the Warren Report remains saturated with gross inaccuracies and cunning misrepresentations which, in my judgment, leave the Report and its authors without legitimate claim to confidence or respect.

I expect to be on vacation from about the 29th of July and probably at home for the most part. Do you get to Manhattan at all? Perhaps you could visit here, where the only distraction is the occasional venturesomeness of a sedate cat in middle years.

Sincerely yours,

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