

4 August 1965

Dear Maggie,

Your letter of Saturday morning has just arrived, and I want to thank you again for your extremely generous and head-swelling remarks about my manuscript. If it is half as effective as you believe, I will be pleased. In a way I live in fear that I have overlooked, misinterpreted, etc. Again, I should like to emphasize that you should feel free to photocopy any parts that will be useful to you in your own labors; I know that you will not make any use of the material that I could possibly object to and I haven't the smallest worry about that--otherwise, I would not have sent any of it.

Maggie, I have had the identical experience as that you describe at the beginning of your letter. At times I am mortified by what seems to me to be a "discovery"--only to find that I had already "discovered" and recorded and/or discussed it with another person back in the dim days of November/December 1964, when doing the first reading of the H & E. The scope and mass of the material is such that no brain can contain it all continuously and in an organized way. One of the greatest difficulties I have experienced is that in the search for one document or one fact, the eye discovers and is trapped by a totally unrelated and fascinating document, which in turn requires a search for related material, in the course of which one encounters another new facet....ad infinitum. I have many times been the victim of this kind of chain reaction (at least in the early days), to the point that at the end of the series of ignitions I could not even recall what it was that started me on the long convoluted journey, or the first second or third distractions. Another phenomenon, as you point out, is that the material one read in the early days takes on new and different meaning once the whole reading is finished--setting up another cycle of rereading, in which one picks up significant points that one could not judge as being significant in the first instance. You must not berate yourself for the "utter and total shambles" because, I assure you, we all have exactly the same experience. Again, the difficulty lies in absorbing and digesting a mass that is simply too great--and the same would be true if we were suddenly freed of all the auxiliary work, the keeping in touch with others, the mechanics of living, the news of the day...etc.

Your letter crossed with an envelope I mailed yesterday, enclosing a few more notes on various phonecalls, including Sawage and Salandria. By the way, Salandria and Harold Feldman are brothers-in-law. Now, let me turn to the specific points with which you dealt.

(1) CE 2424 and Willis Slide 8 In the days when I was in touch with Mark Lane's people, in particular a young married woman Marlene Berends (who lives just around my corner!), I was told that Willis had taken a picture which appeared to show Ruby at the TSBQ shortly after the shots. One of Lane's agents had been to Dallas and contacted Willis; she had obtained a photo which Willis had withheld deliberately, because it appeared to show Ruby and he realized its enormous value. In that withheld photo, apparently (even more than in Willis Slide 8), there is a marked resemblance to Ruby.

The man has his face or part of it toward the camera, I am told, but the difficulty is that he is wearing sunglasses, and it is not possible to make a conclusive identification of him as Ruby or not-Ruby. The testimony that places Ruby on the scene is quite interesting—Jean Hill, a thorn in the WC's flesh in several respects; Victoria Adams, ditto; and Wes Wise, who changed his story from seeing Ruby there Friday to seeing him Saturday. (There may be more, but these are the ones I recall offhand.) To me, this must be juxtaposed to the treatment of Seth Kantor/Wilma Tice's reports that Ruby was at Parkland. In few places has the WC betrayed itself as blatantly as here: its "conclusion" that the Kantor/Ruby encounter actually took place at the police station is ludicrous. The conversation between them would have been anachronistic on Friday evening but sensible in the afternoon. Furthermore, the WC says that Ruby denies having been at Parkland; but you will notice how they avoided asking Ruby if he had the encounter with Kantor at all, and if so, where. Compare also the WC's treatment of the driving time Parkland to Garouset, vs Oswald's taxi Greyhound to Beckley, which was trimmed from 11 to 9 to six minutes, in a reenactment done without even metering the ride to see if the fare came out the same. So far as I am concerned, Ruby was definitely at Parkland, and possibly or even probably at the TSED scene. But the point is that if the WC can disregard the conclusive evidence on the one, we cannot trust its disposition of the other—or any part of its huge pretentious work.

(2) Oswald's encounter with an SS agent I find no difficulty whatever in believing this incident, as Oswald's statements during the interrogation (with one or two exceptions which may and probably are deliberate misrepresentations by those present—i.e. his replies on the trip to Mexico City) seem astonishingly truthful, considering the jam he was in. However, I did not include it in my section on the grassy knoll because it was not a question of someone accounting for himself by posing as an SS agent, but someone who gratuitously drew attention to himself, when his presence otherwise would have been unnoticed. It has a slightly different shading so I decided to leave it out, or perhaps use it elsewhere. As I say, personally I believe the incident happened; Oswald at no time showed a capacity for invention—his seemingly bizarre story of a rifle in the TSED two days before turned out to be true (hard as it was for Rankin to believe it). This one is almost certainly true, too, but I am not sure how it should be interpreted.

(3) Time of report of Tippit shooting From what I have been able to study of the three versions of the police radio log and the relevant testimony, I am convinced that there was considerable doctoring of the entries. I have done a section on the alleged instruction to Tippit to move into central Oak Cliff in which I have tried to demonstrate that there was such a wild internal illogic in that sequence that it can only be regarded as a clumsy ~~myth~~ fiction. I was aware of Bewley's affidavit but I had not noticed the two listings of "1:10" in CE 705 p.408. What I had found

highly suspect was the corresponding part of the third version of the radio log--ie, CE 1974 p 51 (volume XXIII p 857). You will see on that page that 1:11 and 1:15 are separated by only three messages ("end of belt six" followed by 212 to dispatcher, dispatcher reply to 212, and 261 to dispatcher). Without any question whatever, there was more traffic than that in a 4-minute period. One of the officers (I can't be specific without searching my notes) testified (?) or said in a report (more likely) that he was trying for about 10 minutes to get through to the dispatcher or the switchboard, but it was so jammed that he could not (around that hour). But of course the "end of belt six" would give an escape hatch--they could always say that they "lost" the end of belt ~~message~~^{six} or the start of belt seven.

Something is very fishy about the whole Tippit shooting--the conflicts about the time, and the conflicts about many other facets. See for example the testimony of reserve officer Croy in 12H--he reports a woman who seems at first to be Markham, but later it becomes obvious that she could not have been Markham. See also Gerald Hill in 7H, in which he says that an unknown male witness told him the man who shot Tippit had bushy hair. Reverting to Bewley for a moment, he had picked up his child and was en route to pick up his wife, and I am inclined to think that he was more aware of the time than the other witnesses, who had no similar need (except perhaps Markham, who was on her way to work, and who also reported the shooting as earlier--1.07 I think).

I had the same reaction to Thomson's "Quest for Truth"; but he was not quite so far out (far enough, Heaven knows!). As for Joesten, I don't know what has become of him. He was mentioned in a "roundup" article (in the National Guardian, I believe) after the WR came out and possibly just after the NY Lane/Belli debate; the article said that he was working on a book in which he would demonstrate that the man at the 6th floor window was Tippit. And that was the last I heard of J. You have probably seen the interviews with him and his wife CE 2708 2709 in which she said that he was becoming deranged. (Of course, he did publish the "Gaps" article, which in many ways is superior to his earlier book.) I had not heard anything about McDonald's wife visiting Mrs. JFK! Oddly enough, only a half-hour before I read your letter, someone dropped off an article from a Boston newspaper, in which it said that McDonald was visiting there and being feted, and also considered as the subject of a documentary film on the life of a policeman! His photo (CE 744 I think) makes him an unlikely candidate for anything but another Keystone Cops art film. Did you ever see his by-lined article in the Dallas Morning News on 11/24 or 11/25???? In it (but nowhere else) he says that he had drawn his gun when approaching Oswald in the theater--food for thought indeed. I don't want to start another page, so I will tell you in single space that I have a plane reservation for Miami on Wednesday 8/11/65, returning to NY the next night. Do you know yet when your cohort will visit NY? Stamm's wife broke her ankle jeopardizing his trip to Mexico/Dallas! Also, can you tell me the development re back of sign, streaks, about which Salandria could not tell me because he had been asked to keep it confidential? I love and look forward to your letters, Maggie. Affectionately,