

24 August 1967

Mr. Mark Lane
860 Lathrop Drive
Stanford, Calif. 94305

Dear Mark,

Bob Ockene told me on Tuesday, two days ago, that you had mailed me a letter on July 26 or so enclosing a comment for use on the jacket of Accessories After the Fact--a letter which, as you now know, I never received. The fact that your letter was neither delivered nor returned to the sender is mystifying and particularly unfortunate, in that it has resulted in needless friction and misunderstanding.

When I received no reply to my July 5 letter to you, and when Ockene received no reply to his letter to you of August 9 reminding you that the deadline for the jacket was imminent, it seemed to me that your reaction to the book might have been negative and that you did not intend to provide a comment (although I had heard from Maggie Field that your assessment of the book was favorable). On the possibility that this assumption was indeed correct, I argued rather vehemently with Ockene when he told me on Tuesday that he intended to telephone you about the quote--I was opposed to placing you in the embarrassing position of explaining that you did not feel able to recommend the book (if that was the actual case) and unwilling to have pressure exerted on behalf of my book, whatever the circumstances were. This led to the only serious dispute Ockene and I have ever had in almost a year in tandem; and I was very glad, as it turned out, that I had lost the battle. Otherwise, I might never have learned that you had written the letter that went lost.

Now that I have received the copy of the lost letter, I don't want even a day to pass without expressing my very sincere appreciation for your generous, thoughtful, and reassuring comment. That the comment comes from the author of Rush to Judgment makes it all the more generous, thoughtful, and reassuring. Please be sure that I am genuinely grateful and deeply pleased.

When I said earlier that the non-receipt of your July 27 letter was particularly unfortunate, I had in mind not so much my quarrel with Ockene but your rebuke with respect to The National Guardian. Had you called this to my attention at any time after you received the galleys, or in reply to my July 5 letter, or had I received the original July 27 letter, I would have taken steps immediately to rectify this omission. It was nothing more than an oversight that I failed to mention The National Guardian. At no time did I ever consider but reject mention of this periodical, on grounds of its "persuasion" or for any other reason--I simply overlooked The National Guardian, without any conscious element of discrimination or deliberateness. I am surprised and distressed that you seem to have leaped to the conclusion that I purposely excluded mention of this publication for reasons of political disaffection or expediency. We met for the first time last December on a radio broadcast, and subsequently on one occasion when we had the opportunity for fairly prolonged conversation. I am not aware of anything in our personal talks, or in my published work, or in Accessories, which would create any legitimate presumption that I am guilty of political intolerance or hypocrisy.

Perhaps if we had known and collaborated with each other over a longer period of time I would not have leaped to the unwarranted conclusion that your silence after reading the galleys of Accessories was sinister, and you would not


have leaped to the conclusion that my omission of The National Guardian was malicious.

I do not wish to take refuge in a technicality, but each of the contributions by The National Guardian which you specify in your letter preceded the publication of the Warren Report, while the appendix in Accessories is titled "The News Media and the Warren Report" and deals primarily with their role in praising, promoting, and seeking to sanctify an infamous fraud. References to pre-Warren Report writing which appear in the appendix are incidental rather than central. Nevertheless, if I had received your remarks before the book was locked up, I would gladly have added a new paragraph embodying all the points in your letter (some of which were previously unknown to me).

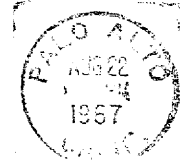
I appreciate that the rather stinging criticism you voiced must have been animated by the force and tenacity of a loyalty which I approve no less than you. But I must point out that I do not find any reference to The National Guardian in Rush to Judgment, in the "Acknowledgments" or in the text. On the flyleaf of the jacket, you refer to "an article" which you wrote not long after reading Wade's "proof" of Oswald's guilt; in the text or footnotes, you refer to "public lectures delivered prior to the publication of the Report" (page 280) and to "an article I had written" (page 376). The sponsor of the lectures and the publisher of the article is not mentioned.

Since I am not obliged to be holier than the Pope, I hope that you will reconsider and retract the reprimand which accompanied your handsome comments on the book and which I am frank to admit has caused me considerable distress and consternation.

Yours very sincerely,


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

(In view of the fate of your July 27 letter, I am taking the precaution of sending this by registered mail.)



Mrs. Sylvia Meagher
302 West 12th St.
New York, N.Y. 10014

VIA AIR MAIL

Copies sent 8/25/67 to

1. Aronson

2. Savage

3. Ockene

4. Field

5. Selandria