

27 February 1968

Mr. Mark Lane
617 Dauphine Street
New Orleans, La. 70112

Dear Mark,

I feel obliged to make some comments on your letter of 23 February to Robert Ockene, copy of which you sent me. First, I wish to emphasize that I was not consulted about the ad for my book that appeared in a number of newspapers earlier this month and saw the copy for the first time when I bought the New York Times. You may feel sure that if I had known in advance that your quote was included, I would have made the most strenuous efforts to have it deleted.

Second, I am pleased to note that you exonerate Mr. Ockene of any attempt to mislead or trick you into an "endorsement" of my book. Unfortunately, the NBC radio audience will not be aware of this exoneration but only of the defamatory hit-and-run attack made on my publishers and myself by your spokesman, Mort Sahl, on November 14-15, 1967. Sahl said explicitly, "I want you to know that I talked to Mark Lane before I made that statement." It seems inescapable that you bear some responsibility for the broadcast of unfounded and damaging allegations which you now acknowledge to be unwarranted, at least so far as my publishers are concerned.

It is not clear whether or not you also concede that I personally made no attempt to mislead or trick you into providing a jacket quote for my book. So that the record may be quite definite on this point, I enclose herewith a copy of a letter I directed to Robert Ockene on May 30, 1967. You will perhaps understand, after reading this letter, that if it had entered my mind that the revision of my comments on Garrison would cause you to withhold your "endorsement," I would have moved mountains to make sure that you saw the revised text.

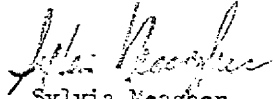
There is no mystery about my "motivation" for repudiating Garrison and his "investigation." You will find chapter and verse in the enclosed copies of my letters on this subject to editors of various periodicals. It is true, as you say, that I have never met Mr. Garrison. Nor have I met Earl Warren. As for the "evidence in his possession," it can hardly nullify or legitimize Garrison's continuous stream of public pronouncements about codes, conspiratorial meetings, and all the other nonsense piled on nonsense. It cannot invest Messrs. Russo and Bundy with one iota of credibility nor can it justify Garrison's persistent attempts to incriminate Lee Harvey Oswald in the assassination conspiracy on the basis of the most contrived and suspect "evidence."

(I formally protest any Bobbs-Merrill's insistence on a jacket quote from Lane and stating that I wanted no association between him and my books)

Let me make it quite clear that I make no apology whatsoever for having changed my opinion of Garrison as soon as the nature of his "evidence" became apparent. Rather, it is for those critics of the Warren Report who continue to condone and defend the lunatic vaudeville in New Orleans to justify their failure to denounce the violence done by Garrison to fact and logic.

Now that your long-awaited letter withdrawing your "endorsement" of my book has finally arrived, you may be sure that I will renew my effort to ensure that your name is not associated with Accessories After the Fact in any manner, shape or form. As to your reasons for qualifying or retracting your comments, I think they have about the same merit as your earlier complaint with respect to The National Guardian.

Yours sincerely,



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

Enclosures (4)

cc: R. Ockene, et al

617 Dauphine Street
New Orleans, Louisiana
70112

February 23, 1968

Mr. Robert M. Ockene, Editor
The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc.
3 West 57th Street
New York, New York - 10019

Dear Mr. Ockene:

I had decided not to become involved in an exchange of letters and charges regarding Sylvia Meagher's book and the use of my "endorsement" of it by Bobbs-Merrill since I believed the matter closed. Yet I notice that Bobbs-Merrill continues, even now, to advertise the book by means of my "endorsement". As you know when you sent the manuscript to me it ended with this sentence: "Now that Jim Garrison has come forward, there is a better prospect that injustice will be rectified, and that justice will be done in our lifetime."

I subsequently sent to you a few words about the book which you have printed on the dust jacket and utilized for advertising purposes. This is so in spite of the fact that the book I endorsed is not the one that you have published in that the portion regarding Mr. Garrison has been re-written. The sentence quoted above was deleted and Mrs. Meagher concluded her work with a series of untrue and unfair attacks. I do not wish to endorse a work containing such irresponsible charges particularly when I am well aware of the validity of Mr. Garrison's charges, the thoroughness of his investigation and the integrity of the man. The fact is that Mrs. Meagher has not met Mr. Garrison, has not examined the evidence in his possession, and is not aware of the statements made to him and to his staff by important witnesses. Evidently Mrs. Meagher relies entirely upon public statements made about Mr. Garrison, made by him or perhaps in some instances attributed to him.

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You have written to Mort Sahl that the references to Mr. Garrison are "peripheral" and "an aside". Certainly you are entitled to your judgment. Mine is different. I consider Mr. Garrison to be one of the most important people in this country and to be engaged in the most important work. I understand the motives of the Attorney-General, the C.I.A., Mr. Hoover and others for attacking him but Mrs. Meagher's motivation is more obscure to me.

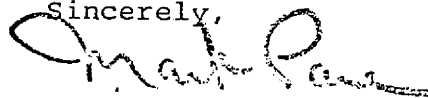
In any event I do not wish to be associated with it. Accordingly you may continue to use my comments, for they are as relevant now as when I made them, so long as you also publish the following comment as well.

"Unfortunately Mrs. Meagher concludes her otherwise fine work with a series of irresponsible charges against New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison. Mrs. Meagher seems willing to comment upon Mr. Garrison's "evidence" and his "witnesses" although she has examined neither. In this sense, perhaps swept along by the general media hysteria, she condemns the one man who is conducting a serious investigation and Mrs. Meagher does so by issuing findings, shades of the Warren Commission, without troubling to present or even refer to any evidence."

I have no objection to your using any portion of the statement that I have previously given to you - but if any reference is made to me in your advertising it must include all of the above material.

In closing let me say that I do not believe that you, in any way, sought to mislead me or trick me into an endorsement but that circumstances have conspired to bring about this unhappy result.

Sincerely,



MARK LANE