

295 Harvard Street  
Cambridge, Mass  
November 16, 1967

Dear Sylvia

It was really nice hearing from you. After the Schiller-Lewis debacle, I thought that irredeemable damage might have been done. I really never said anything like what they quoted me as saying. In fact, I spoke to them for a few minutes about the Commission for their "record" and then they told me the recorder was off. At one point, Schiller crawled like a cockroach into my bookshelves and commented on a Hemmingway book there, and then casually mentioned that he had seen Flying Saucer books in your bookshelves. I might have commented something to the effect that I was sorry to hear that but I am sure I would not say anything like what they "quoted". In any case, it was an offhanded remark made in an unguarded moment to people who I thought were making a record. Later, when it appeared in Felker's magazines, I just put the whole matter out of my mind--as too many feelings had been hurt and too many people involved. Of course, I'm sorry about it.

Your information is correct. At least, in respect to the fact that I thought your book is the best book to be written on the subject and an extraordinary book in its own right. And one that has great historic value and will be (for no one else will ever be in a position to do the work you did) the book posterity refers to. I refused to review it with Thomson's book, because I thought it was in a different category. Now I am not sure when or how BookWorld will run it: I ran a little long 2,600 words and it is not by any means a sensational review or one of great interest in itself (that is, apart from the book). In a sense, some fatigue shows in it (How many times can one rehash the single-bullet argument or fraudulent autopsy report without ~~xxx~~ some fatigue showing).

Nor did I try to summarize the book or state its contents item by item. For, to me, the value lies not in the fact that it makes specific disclosures or illuminates certain facts, but that it is a synoptic and places everything in perspective. And I think the book is greatly enhanced with your willingness to take into account counter arguments and material that didn't fit in with your thesis. In a word, the value of your book lies in its objectivity--the way in which you presented the case--rather than in the factual content itself. As the only factual criticism were so trivial (for eg, I disagreed with the death count in terms of probability), ~~xxxx~~ and so few, that I thought it best to consider the book for all practical purposes flawless. Thus I was left only with epistemological problems. To wit, given the fact your book is correct and objective, is there still any possibility that Oswald was the lone assassin. And my conclusion was that, since vital facts like the X-rays were missing, one couldn't reach the same definitive conclusion on the events of Nov. 22nd from your book as they could reach on the Report itself.

In a way it is a shame that your book wasn't published a year ago, when we all had more enthusiasm and more willingness to shout about the subject. But in another way, it is perhaps best that your book--which, I repeat, is by far the best that will ever be written on the subject, came after the controversy and could place that too in perspective. Mark Lane achieved book sales, but I think you will be the one that will achieve historical appreciation for objectively and definitely analysing the Warren Report.

I might add, but please don't disillusion Jones, that I fully agree with you on Garrison and of course will say so in my New Yorker article.

Regards,