

2 November 1970

Dear Sylvia:

Thanks for your 29 October note. Although it appears that your illness is serious, I hope at least that it is not long-lasting.

By all means, please do comment on my 11 Oct 70 letter to Hoch, for I am most anxious to know what you and others think. I believe my own feelings are clearly stated in the letter, so I need not elaborate on my absolute confidence in its veracity.

Since you are in close touch with Josiah Thompson, I supposed that you might want him to have a copy of the letter, so I sent it to him-- only the 11 Oct letter. Besides, he seems to be the main target of Hoch's assault on all the critics, so I think it appropriate that he should know what he has going for him.

I anticipate that those who do not know much about ballistics, ~~xxxxxx~~ or those who are by nature equivocal in their final judgments, may rightly wish to exercise a due measure of skepticism about what I say. That's fair, as long as they don't let the matter languish in their constitutional skepticism, for it is capable of positive determination to the degree where it is possible to say not merely that I am right, but that I cannot be wrong, that no alternative explanation is possible.

What I set forth in my 11 Oct letter will stand up against any test, be it physical shooting or intellectual assault, and any honest authority will verify it. (I do not dispute, though, that the government or its hacks can find an authority to suggest a refutation. They cannot, however, prove it wrong). It is possible to refute the contents of the letter only by misrepresenting them.

I am not saying this to you as a bellicose challenge, although I would not shrink from any fair fight over the matter-- indeed, my dukers are already up, so to speak. Rather, I want you to know the measure of my confidence in it.

I have thought about this business of the dust-like fragments for years; all that kept me from disclosing it widely was the true belief that medical evidence is subject to great uncertainties, and the false belief that this was a medical matter. My sudden conversion from uncertainty to certainty stems from the sudden realization that this has nothing to do with medicine, except peripherally, and not in a way that affects my conclusion-- it is purely a matter of ballistics.

I understand that it can be made to seem uncertain in light of medical experience, but it cannot justifiably be cast in that light; the principle applies not merely to flesh and bones, but to all substances that cause bullets to burst on impact.

*Still,*

*Dick*

*P.S. No reply from Hoch yet.*