

8 September 1967

Dear Tom,

You surprise me with your comment that there is no sign of Lane: I heard last Saturday that he had been in Los Angeles the night before, en route to New Orleans for an indefinite stay...I had a bit of a run-in with him, via correspondence...He had read the galleys of my book and sent a very generous comment for use on the jacket (which I genuinely appreciated) ...but at the same time, he blasted me for not having paid tribute to The National Guardian (which had published his "brief" for LHO and sponsored his public lectures)...Since the omission was entirely inadvertent on my part, I rather resented his accusation that I had deliberately failed to mention this publication because of political cowardice (something of which I have never been accused, nor of which I have ever been consciously guilty)... What really burned me up, though, was the fact (which Lane seemed to have forgotten in writing his rather nasty rebuke) that The National Guardian is very carefully omitted from Rush to Judgment—from the jacket, the acknowledgments, the texts, and the footnotes! In the case of his book, this cannot be inadvertent...so, as I replied to him, why should I be holier than the Pope? I guess he did not like that very much; I'm told he is quite upset and angry. Too bad, but that's the way his cookie crumbled...

Holmes Exhibit 3A struck me, when I first read the Holmes testimony, as a possibly very important clue...but after trying to puzzle it out, I decided that the New Orleans post office had merely taken the sensible step of ensuring that mail to LHO would be rerouted direct from his old post office box to the Irving address, without first going to New Orleans. What you tell me in your last letter seems to corroborate that inference. (See XX p. 532, LHO's notification to V.T. Lee; and see what the WR erroneously footnoted as "CE 817" in XXV, p. 670, actually CE 2476, which is the form LHO filled in on Sept. 24 with the change of address entered on Sept. 26.)

You will have received by now my Letter to NY Review of Books commenting on Popkin's "case for Garrison." My last sentence (reference to "a gang war") was intended to be figurative, when it was written; after reading the current LIFE, with its revelations about Las Vegas hotel tabs, etc., I am hoping that it is not inadvertently literal. You need not feel obliged to disagree, or agree, with my views; I understand your position very well (indeed, I encouraged you to try to act as a brake on G.), and I respect your loyalty. The letter was for your information, even though my feelings were already familiar to you, nothing more. (I am really astonished, though, by the LIFE piece.)

I don't know if "Bertrand" actually hired Andrews; it is interesting that he called Monk Zelden, since he was sick himself, apparently to ask Zelden to take the case, or take it until he was well enough to go to Dallas. That would imply hire—but with Andrews, it is hard to tell. I am intrigued by our remark that you think you know already what the real facts are in re: Bertrand. I gather that you do not think Shaw is Bertrand?

No, I am not satisfied with the reconstruction of LHO's finances. The WR is cunningly misleading on the state of his finances in 1959 when he embarked for the Soviet Union (see the chapter on the State Department when my book comes out; it has information on LHO's funds which was not included in the magazine article version of that chapter). Also, when he went to Mexico City, he could not have had enough money (by the WR's calculations) to proceed on his journey, had his visas been approved. So why did he go there at all? As for the flat \$100 a month, one needs only think of one's personal budget's monthly fluctuations, for various non-recurrent items, to suspect that estimate. He was very frugal, but not quite so fanatic as one sometimes thinks (he did eat in restaurants, some of the time, at least; he was contemplating the purchase of a used car; he did leave some money in Irving which I just cannot believe he saved out of his exalted wages).

I am delighted to learn of the two lady indexers in Dallas; will their indices be available for purchase? And I agree with you on the innocence of propinquity...which some students of the case find inordinately fascinating and sinister...a British reporter visited me a couple of months ago who was really hung up on exactly the kind of wild goose chasing you mention...Frank Edwards is (was, rather; he died a few months ago) not the most reliable writer on UFOs, but there is enough corroboration in the more serious literature to validate his charges. Liebelier likes to disparage me for my alleged pre-11/22/63 interest in UFOs; I repay him with the enclosed doggerel (for your eyes alone, please)...NOW I understand why

Jones is so mysteriously silent...He invariably called me on his returns from New Orleans but not this time...I feel sure that he must have read more than a few words of that letter ...well, serves him right for being a sneak and prying where he had no right to look.

Still no phone? Give me a call collect one of these nights, if you feel like chatting. In any case, please stay in touch. By the way, I had better tell you the following, for the record. (When I became leery of Garrison back in April, one of the critics accused me of joining the gang that was out to "get" him--which I greatly resented, and which prompts me to prevent possible misunderstanding, in advance.) Early in July I had a phone call from a man who introduced himself as James Phelan. He said he had heard of me many times but had just encountered an article of mine, for the first time, the one on LHO and the State Department, which he said he found very impressive and thought-provoking. He was calling to ask me to send him any other published articles I had written. I made it clear almost at once that while I was no admirer of Garrison's, neither was I any admirer of NBC or its one-hour anti-Garrison documentary. I was very emphatic about my contempt for NBC (for its touting of the WR from the first, rather than for its more recent forays) so that Phelan would have no basis for thinking that I was "friendly" to his employers or associates...one being Walter Sheridan. He did not press that, but merely asked again for the articles, which I sent him to his California address. Now I've just received a friendly letter from him, saying that he will be in New York next month and is anxious to talk to me some more--presumably about the WR and the evidence. I see no reason not to see him, as I always see any person who is interested in or working on the case who asks to see me; but if I do see Phelan, I don't want it thought that I am plotting with him or anyone else to dynamite Garrison's case or any other such nonsense...I think the "case" needs only enough rope, and the outside attacks help rather than hinder it. Should you hear any insinuations of a "sell-out" or the like, you may feel free to recite this account of the phone call and the letter from Phelan which constitute my only contacts with him to date.

All the best, Tom,

Sincerely yours,