

638 Royal Street,
New Orleans,
La. 70130
Sept. 5 1967

Holmes
Exhibit
3A.

Dear Sylvia,

The investigation proceeds slowly, with little new material being developed. No sign of Mark Lane coming here, and we have even had a welcome respite from Jones Harris. My main objection to Jones is that the whole subject exists for him at the gossip level, something to sit around and chat about; he is incapable of thinking about something seriously enough to work out the logical consequences and put pen to paper.

Alcock and I cleared up one point today which I believe was under suspicion by the critics - I refer to one of the Holmes exhibits showing a mail forwarding form filled out on Oct 11th 1963, not in Oswald's handwriting. The question was raised by Liebler in the second deposition of Postal Inspector Holmes, and the form was obviously regarded by Liebler as possible evidence that Oswald had an accomplice in N.O. who filled it out. Holmes was unable to help him. We spoke to a Postal Inspector today and he pointed out that this is an internal form, to which customers do not have access; it was apparently filled out by one Robert Tankersly in response to the fact that mail still arriving for Oswald at PO box 2915 was being forwarded to N.O. after Oswald had also closed his N.O. box on Sept. 26. It is remarkable that Holmes should not have spotted this when he was shown the form, as it clearly could not have been filled out by anyone except a P.O. employee. One other question remains in my mind: the form Oswald filled out closing his box on Sep 26 does not seem to be in the exhibits. The WR footnote refers you to CE §17 (as I recall) which in fact is a different form.

I thought Popkin's piece was as sympathetic as could possibly be under the circumstances. I am inclined to disagree with his interpretation that Bertrand hired Andrews to defend Oswald. There is in fact a very important distinction here which never seems to have been clearly brought out: did "Bertrand" merely suggest that Andrews go and defend Oswald, or did he actually hire him. The former does not suggest conspiracy, (merely a friend who knows Andrews is a lawyer) the latter does. I will at any rate make this prediction about the N.O. investigation: the Bertrand question will be resolved at the end of it all, in fact I believe I know already what the truth on that score is.

I would be very interested in any views you may have on the question of Oswald's finances. Does the \$100 (or less) a month assigned by the Commission for food clothing etc strike you as being a possibility? The Commission obviously found it difficult to equate Oswald's expenditure with his overt income, and it is impossible to read the testimony without realising that Oswald was an extremely frugal person. I am trying to puzzle out why O's tax returns are classified.

I discovered on a recent trip to Dallas & Ft. Worth to interview Mrs Oswald Sr. (complete waste of time) that you have two potential rivals in Dallas, Sue Fitch and Mary Ferrell. Both have read widely in the WR and Mrs Ferrell is compiling an index which includes reference to all editions of all Dallas papers for about two weeks following the assassination. She is now working on a name index to the exhibits. She has done some very good work for us on city directories, old phone books etc. Both ladies tend to be weak on the "hard" evidence, shots, etc., but have encyclopaedic knowledge of all the vaguely suspicious characters such as DeMohrenschildt, and are continually, and inevitably, discovering that X lived in the same block as Y. Propinquity, however, I regard as a completely untenable cause for suspicion. (A Penn Jones example: George Bouhe used to live opposite Ruby.) It only becomes interesting if two people live right at the same address.

Keep it under your hat, but I recently read "Flying Saucers - Serious Business", and found its disclosures about the attitude of the Air force remarkable. I imagine the truth is they don't have the slightest idea what the UFO's are and consider it would be damaging to national morale to admit it. I was interested in his speculation about the "overt landing" phase, but can't help wondering if this is wishful thinking.

I read Vince the paragraph from your letter excoriating Jones, but other than that have not shown your letters to anyone. It appalls me to say however, that I

actually caught Jones in the act of sneaking a look inside my briefcase, and found he was actually looking at that very letter; however I don't think he saw more than a few words. He didn't seem at all put out, typically.

I gather Sprague has located the Alyea film. Have you heard if there is anything interesting in it?

Best wishes

Tom