

7 August 1967

Dear Tom,

Many thanks for your letter of the 1st. Your remarks about Vince Salandria and Tom Katen's dissertation were, as always, perceptive, balanced, and realistic. I was especially interested in your report that after reviewing all the files Vince considered that there was precious little of a case against Shaw. This was very encouraging to me, because Vince and I have been increasingly alienated because of our differences on the issue of Garrison.

However, when Vince called me last night on his return home, I was dismayed by his evasiveness and generalizations. He gushed praise of Garrison--a devoted father, a man with the purest motives, an outstanding public official, no better man in public office, etc. etc. Russo? Vince believes him, while conceding that it is hard to believe his story. The "code"? Garrison is convinced that it is valid. Does Vince believe the "code" is valid? No, and he told Garrison so. Did he "deconvince" him? No. But if I could only see him with his children, the way they respond to him!

Frankly, I cannot sustain a discussion on the level of Garrison's tenderness toward his offspring. I suspect that Warren was a model father, too, and so was Eichmann. What could be less relevant to the issue of the assassination and the evidence against the accused conspirators? What especially disappointed me was that I knew from your letter that Vince now knew that there is little or no case against Shaw, but would not say so; that it was implicit in everything he told me--including the "exciting news" that Katen will soon embark on constructing a model of what had to have happened on Dealey Plaza--that Vince's confidence that the case had indeed been solved had not proved to be true, yet he refused to acknowledge in so many words that Garrison did not have the goods. All along Vince has relied on inferential logic, as proving that Garrison must have a case or why would the Establishment do everything in its power to frustrate and destroy him? I challenged him to say whether his visit to New Orleans had or had not corroborated his inferences; but again he was evasive and full of generalizations. The matter was complicated; there were many political interests involved; he was creating a problem for the Government; etc. To top it all off, Vince said that no one should attack Garrison, he was only after the truth, had no ulterior motives, but he was only human, naturally he made errors of judgments and mistakes. At this point I said that I was heartsick to hear him talk this way (how reminiscent of all the outrageous editorials and newspaper columns that appeared immediately in the wake of the publication of the Warren Report, warning in advance that there must be no questions and no criticism--as Sauvage described in the foreword to his book), that I now wondered if we were even on the same side or on opposite sides, and we said goodnight.

You will gather from what I have already said how I react to your comment that Garrison is anxious for me to be on his side. There is absolutely no possibility that I will ever be on his side. On the contrary, I am opposed to his methods, I reject his witnesses and his cryptography, and I intend to make this crystal clear whenever the occasion arises. Much as Vince and my other colleagues would like me at least to be silent, I have no such intention--to be silent would be condone exactly what I have been denouncing for almost four years on the part of the Dallas authorities, the federal agencies, and the Warren Commission. I do not consider that the ends justify the means, whether Garrison's ends are at issue or those of the Commission.

I had dinner the other night with Dick Sprague and got to see the famous DCA film, including the sequence which shows Lovelady in his long-sleeved, checked shirt. The photo-buffs are wildly excited about this discovery and insist that this cannot be the shirt in the doorway. Yet I feel that we have lost ground when it is established that Lovelady was in long sleeves, not short, and in plaid, not stripes. Sprague has done heroic work in rounding up the films and photos, and he has been remarkably generous in sharing his material with others. But I do think that he sometimes tends to read more into the picture than is really warranted.

Your account of the Sunday staff meeting (which I will of course treat as absolutely confidential) confirms my feeling that you are performing a pivotal and essential function in countering the surrealist tendencies with which Garrison endows the investigation. You are certainly correct in your view that a poor showing in the Andrews trial will destroy what is left of Garrison's credibility. Weisberg wrote that Garrison has issued a subpoena for Liebler to be a witness in the Andrews trial. Can that subpoena be enforced, or does it depend on Liebler's voluntary compliance?

I have heard also that Mark Lane intends to move to New Orleans and work full-time with Garrison. Can you let me know if there is any substance to this rumor?

The page proofs of my book arrived on schedule last month, and I had almost a week of real labor in compiling the index and adding a few last-minute footnotes, incorporating new information like the death of Bogard. I also read Thompson's ms., which seems to me a very forceful, well-documented work which makes an irresistible argument for a cross-fire involving at least three riflemen in separate locations. It is hard to predict the impact of his book, and/or my own---I have serious foreboding that the Garrison affair has glutted and disgusted many people who might otherwise give serious consideration to the forthcoming books.

Please do write again, Tom, and please consider my letters to you as confidential--which I will also do with your letters. With warm regards,