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19 October 1964

My dear Mr. Salisbury,

First, may I congratulate you for your attempt on "Under Discussion" last night to exercise impartiality and to keep the members of the panel within the limits of orderly and relevant discussion of the Warren Commission report. It was unfortunate that the one dissident, Mark Lane, had to oppose three and later five apologists for the Warren Commission. Under such an unfair format, Mr. Lane at least should have received equal time—which would still have left him at a disadvantage. As it was, he had to attempt to refute at least three opponents and he was repeatedly prevented from making his point. The personal venom which erupted from Mr. Ainsworth of the Dallas Morning News was shocking and further stacked the deck against Mr. Lane.

You will have gathered by now that I am generally sympathetic to Mark Lane's minority views on the assassination and on the Warren Commission report. Your introduction to the Bantam/New York Times edition was admirable and persuasive, and would have impressed me greatly were it not for the hard facts. I read the report with great care and as much objectivity as I could muster. It was no easy task, considering the constant obfuscation and misrepresentation which characterize the report.

It is indeed strange to read the high praise conferred on the report by you and other responsible persons, persons who normally exercise independent and penetrating judgment however unpopular. Have you all been bewitched by the galaxy of dazzling names on the roster of the Warren Commission, combined with so weighty and solemn a text? The fact is that despite all the labors and mighty strivings of the Commission, they have been unable to construct a case against Oswald that is capable of withstanding common sense, much less courtroom trial criteria.



There is not a single credible eyewitness for the assassination or the Tippit shooting and, with respect to the latter, there are at least two witnesses never acknowledged by the Warren Commission but easily discovered by George and Pat Nash (see The New Leader October 12, 1964, article "The Other Witnesses."). It is impossible to accept the Warren Commission's eager speculations about how Oswald might have achieved the necessary marksmanship, in the face of utterly opposite findings by independent riflemen (see for example Robert Ruark article in the New York World Telegram & Sun, December 9, 1964). The testimony of Marina Oswald is legally and morally meaningless, since in her fervor to damn her dead husband she over-reached herself with the phony story that Oswald had planned to assassinate Nixon—a story which even the Warren Commission had to reject. The Commission solemnly reenacted the alleged rush by Oswald from the sixth to the second floor and "proved" that he could have arrived in time to be met by Baker—a travesty, since he would have had to complete his dash before Truly, in the vanguard, had reached the second-floor landing. As for the posthumous psychoanalysis performed on Oswald so pontifically by Dr. Hartogs and his confrere, did any man conduct himself more rationally and more consistently with innocence than Oswald during his brief custody? From the visible symptoms of one of the two experts who verbalized on "Under Discussion" last night, I wager he has greater personality disturbance than Oswald had at 13, 20, or 24.

The eagerness of persons of integrity and achievement to endorse and compliment so hollow and sophistical a work as the report of the Warren Commission is beyond my understanding. No matter how much one strains and strives to accommodate the plethora of coincidence, clerical error, and implausibility—the bombardment of the Commission's own speculations—no matter how much one struggles in attempting to join the Commission in the discovery that white is black (or grey, at least, in the case of the zipper jacket), the whole mishmash collapses from its inherent weakness.

Alas, it is no academic lapse—It means that the guilty are still unknown and free to roam the land, on which they have left the blot of unparalleled shame to spread further and further.

Yours sincerely,