

15 June 1968

Mr. Shelley Braverman  
Athens, New York 12015

Dear Mr. Braverman,

Please do not misunderstand my persistence on the question of the washing of the bullet with Hydrosol. I am quite sure that you did read this, and quote it quite exactly. The question is: Where? As you know, I indexed the Warren Report and the 26 volumes of testimony and exhibits, and would have to claim considerable familiarity with the contents. Another researcher, Raymond Marcus of Los Angeles, wrote a monograph devoted solely to the stretcher bullet ("The Bastard Bullet: A Search for Legitimacy for CE 399"). Both of us concluded from extremely painstaking study of all published evidence about the stretcher bullet that it was clean when found, never washed or tested for microscopic traces of blood or tissue, and bore no imprint or other traces of fabric although it had supposedly transited no less than some ten or more clothing surfaces.

Therefore, the reference you discovered to microscopic examination of the bullet after it was washed with Hydrosol assumes great importance, in and of itself, and also because it flatly contradicts the sworn testimony of Robert Frazier and all the assumptions on which the researchers and critics of the Warren Report have proceeded in our attack on the evidence.

I realize that it is not possible for you at this late date to remember the source or to retrace your research at the Albany library, and it isn't, after all, a matter of life or death. We will just have to let it go, and hope that one of us stumbles into the original source information one day. Just a last question: Did you use any sources other than the Warren Report and the 26 volumes, such as articles or books about the Report or conversations with persons who had first-hand knowledge or hearsay accounts of the handling of the evidence?

The reason the stretcher bullet arrived in Washington earlier than the other firearms evidence is that it was handed to a Secret Service agent at Parkland Hospital and taken back to Washington by him on the plane that took the Presidential party from Dallas to Washington, arriving there in the early evening. The bullet was never in the custody of the Dallas Police. The other firearms evidence was taken into possession by the Dallas Police and most of it was surrendered to an FBI agent, just before midnight on 11/22/63, and taken by that agent to the FBI laboratory in Washington, by air.

I do not know why you emphasized so strongly that the stretcher bullet was found "ON THE FLOOR." The man who found it, Darrell C. Tomlinson, testified that he had pushed one of two stretchers out of the way so as to have a clear area in front of the elevator, that he pushed it back up against the wall and "bumped the wall and a spent cartridge or bullet rolled out that apparently had been lodged under the edge of the mat." Nowhere does he say that the bullet was on the floor, or even that it fell to the floor after rolling out from under the edge of the mat. Tomlinson's testimony (6H 130) as quoted here is the sole information we have as to the location of the bullet at the time of its discovery. Since he was questioned by a lawyer (Arlen Specter) who did not elicit precise or complete information, and whose examination of the witness was scandalous for its attempt to influence and distort his recollection as to which of two stretchers was associated with the bullet, and since Secret Service interviews of this witness have been suppressed and remain among the "classified" documents in the National Archives, we cannot be entirely secure about the exact location and fate of the bullet when it was found.

As I hope you realize, I was greatly impressed with your comments on the rifle and ballistics evidence, on the phone as well as in your article in GUNS. I think it is a great pity that your article did not have a wider audience when it was published, failing even to come to the attention of researchers like myself, who would have found it of exceptional interest and value.

Would you consider the possibility of up-dating and slightly revising your article, for republication in a form which would reach a more general audience? Or of permitting someone else to do so? I have two possibilities in mind: First, a special issue in September of the magazine THE MINORITY OF ONE, on the assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, and Robert F. Kennedy, consisting of a series of articles by three or four different writers on various aspects of these crimes—unpaid articles, I hasten to add, since the magazine takes no advertising, and is wholly dependent on contributions from individuals and income from subscriptions—which, since the magazine manages sooner or later to offend almost everyone's political notions, makes for perpetual financial suspense and crisis. I am not connected with the magazine, let me add, except in terms of personal friendship with the editor as a result of his printing my first published article on the case and many later articles.

Second, an associate editor of THE REPORTER (now defunct) has discussed with me the possibility of putting together a book consisting of several monographs devoted primarily to the medical and autopsy evidence and closely related questions such as the bullets and rifle evidence. If this idea proceeds, perhaps you might consider enlarging your article somewhat, for use as one of the monographs or chapters in such a book.

If either or both these possibilities holds any interest for you, we can discuss it further. If not, no harm is done.

Let me thank you for sending the copy of your original manuscript. I hope that my publishers will be equally prompt in mailing my book to you. With cordial regards,

Yours sincerely,

Sylvia Meagher  
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