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Mrs. Sylvia Meagher
302 W. 12th St.
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Dear Sylvia:

Your letter of the 16th enclosing Dick Bernabei's comments was most welcome. I have sent him a copy of the memo on the Walker evidence. A copy of my note to him is enclosed, and it will indicate what other copies of that memo I have distributed.

Please forgive my delay in responding to your letter of April 2. So many things keep cropping up here that I keep falling behind in my correspondence. By all means we shall keep you "in the picture". You are, after all, the principal stimulus for so much of what a number of us have been doing, and a continuing source of ideas and encouragement, that to do otherwise would be unthinkable.

There seems to be a need for some more effective means of communicating ideas and the status of work in progress among the various people who are conducting research. The Newsletter format is not adequate -- too infrequent and too widely distributed. Right now, I'm thinking of a sort of "radial" information exchange, restricted to 10 or 12 people. Each person would send in a one-page letter or memo to our HQ, which we would then duplicate and mail out the copies to all the others. More lengthy productions would have to be distributed by the participants themselves, but the radial system could serve as an abstracting service, and would at least let others know about new developments and areas of mutual interest.

Re your comments on the Walker residence photos, et al, I have a feeling that there is much to be investigated further and much to be deduced yet. The presence of a black border on one of the prints means that the negative was not masked when it was placed in the enlarger (or the mask was too large for the negative), an oversight which played a fortuitous role in enabling Lyndal Shaneyfelt to determine that CE 2, item P2 (see also Shaneyfelt Exh. 23) was taken by the Imperial Reflex camera (as also CE 133-B, for which he had the negative -- another apparent stroke of good luck in view of the absence of all other negatives). Shaneyfelt explains all this at 4H284-289 (re CE 133-B) and then again, some four months later, at 15H692-693 (re CE 2, P2). Coupled with the circumstances surrounding the recovery of the camera itself, and the oddities about Oswald's use of the camera (as you have recounted in your book), the whole series of events leading to identification of Oswald as the photographer reads like a confluence of miracles. Your "army of doctorers of evidence" is not less believable.

I should like to have a photo processing expert go over that evidence at the Archives some day. There are a lot of technicalities in that business which could provide additional clues -- the type of paper used in printing, for example, which varies in weight, surface texture, contrast quality, and some other properties. The types available at J-C-S ought to have been compared by the FBI, but I have never read anything suggesting that they did make such a comparison. Then there is the matter of the kind of enlarging equipment available (e.g., lens quality) and maybe even the kind of edge trimming equipment (paper cutter or scissors?), which might be deducible through careful examination.

I must confess I was not aware that Marina had referred to a yellow lined pad --

although I did recall reading something about Oswald's having destroyed a notebook or album of such photos (if you have the citation at hand, please let me know). In any case, there was only one such photo with yellow paper residuals on it, so we have another stroke of uniqueness to mull over, and even on that one the spots were along one edge only. Recall too that this photo is $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide (I'm not certain, but I think the two side edges are not parallel exactly, either), which seems odd for mounting on a standard pad (now I'll have to look at CE 5 again to see which way the lines run relative to the dimensions of the photo!). All of this shows the need for a careful review of all the pertinent testimony and exhibits, followed by a careful re-examination of the photos to check these matters.

I had been aware of Newcomb's work, and had in no way intended to slight it, having in fact been persuaded by it to doubt the authenticity of the Oswald-rifle photos, but I was more interested in two other aspects: (1) the possible relationship, or lack of relationship, to other alleged Oswald photos (e.g., P5 of CE 4); and (2) the identifiability of the rifle and scope in the original photos. Shaneyfelt (at H282) explained the "quite apparent" visibility of the scope to the Commission after a lot of tinkering and re-photographing of CE 193-A, but I have considerable doubts about how quite apparent it was on Nov. 23, 1963. This again relates to the Dial Ryder episode and Marina's initial denial of recollection of the scope. When I found that the originals were no longer available at the Archives, much of my interest evaporated. The originals, for example, might have had markings or printing on the back to indicate whether and where they had been printed (here I think I recall a clue you mentioned in your book regarding Seth Kantor's notes and "511 Elm St.", apparently never pursued by the FBI or the Commission).

At some future date I hope to go back to the Archives with some good photographic equipment of my own, to get some photos of the Walker bullet, and possibly CE 399 for comparison, showing exactly what markings are on it. Mike Simmons said this could be arranged, but they have to trip the shutter (all else would be up to me). In the meantime, I want to pull together all the various references to the Walker bullet I can find. I intend to check the Texas AG files next (there is a Walker file therein, but I'm not sure it differs from what is printed in the volumes).

Sincerely,

Bob Smith