

9 March 1966

Mr Edward Epstein
16 Chauncey Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Dear Ed,

Here are some preliminary corrections and comments, which are self-explanatory. I have checked the footnotes to your first four chapters but will hold the corrections until the checking is completed--by the end of this week, I hope.

Hastily,


Sylvia Meagher

✓ cc Mr Asher, Viking Press
(with copy of enclosures)

Spelling Errors and other minor corrections

Page 8 line 10

Senator Everett Dirksen

Page 9 line 17

"...the public interest in insuring..."

Page 25 line 9

"...to the basic principles of American justice."

Page 27 fourth line from bottom

Stuart R. Pollak

Page 49 penultimate line

Robert Gemberling

Page 50 line 3

"...notebook were fully known..."

Page 75 line 18

Dr. Malcolm

Page 187 penultimate line

blatantly

Page 196 last line

left open by the Commission.

Substantive Errors or Comments

Page 46 lines 1 to 3

I question the statement that Wade knew that Oswald's notebook contained Hosty's numbers. He testified (V 243) that he had never seen the notebook; he had tried to get photocopies, but was still waiting.

Your footnote 14 on page 55 cites V 242 as authority for that statement.

I believe you will have to modify the statement on page 46, or delete it; with consequential change in the footnote.

Page 50 end of first paragraph

As mentioned in telephone conversation, the information that the Commission was never able to explain fully how Hosty's license plate number found its way into Oswald's notebook is too important to be relegated to a footnote. The "Note" should be transferred to page 50 of your text, modifying the last sentence as follows:

...Marina, could not possibly have seen Hosty's car plates on either of his two visits to the Paine house.

Page 60 second sentence

Your statement that the medical experts, including Connally's doctors, established the cut-off point at frame 240 is not borne out by the cited page 106 of the Report. On that page there is reference solely to Robert Frazier's testimony as the source of the cut-off point. However, and this is a very important point, the Report has distorted Frazier's actual testimony. In V 170-171 Frazier says repeatedly that the cut-off point is frame 225, with a single qualification ("There is only one position beyond frame 225 at which the Governor could have been struck...") which was not clarified by counsel's subsequent questions.

Frazier says explicitly that "In frame 235...the Governor...was also facing too far, too much toward the front..." and "In frame 240 the Governor again could not have been shot..." Since Frazier did not explicitly exclude the frames which come between 235 and 240, the authors of the Report have taken advantage of a technicality to pronounce that "at some point between frames 235 and 240...is the last occasion" when the Governor could have been shot --deliberately distorting Frazier's meaning.

In view of the ambiguity which persists about the cut-off frame, I suggest that you maintain your argument as it now stands, but change the attribution "medical experts, including Connally's doctors" to attribution to Frazier.

Page 60 lines 9 and 10

"...2.3 seconds (or forty-two film frames)." See Report page 106 and V 153, which indicate the figure 42.

Page 60 lines 10 and 11

You state that the minimum figure of 2.3 seconds was based on the length of time required to open and close the bolt of the rifle and did not include the aiming time, citing page 88 of the Report. That footnote is erroneous, page 88 deals with the anterior neck wound, not the rifle. I have not been able to find an explicit statement in the Report or the testimony which corresponds with your statement on lines 10 and 11; but I agree with that statement, which is implicit in the records (Report pp. 193-194 and III 407).

I believe that you should certainly maintain the statement on lines 10 and 11 without alteration, either providing a new citation (if you can locate the explicit statement which I could not find) or citing the references I have suggested as providing implicit substantiation (Report 193-194 and III 407).

~~In view of the ambiguity which persists about the cut-off frame, I suggest that you maintain your argument as it now stands, only changing the attribution "medical experts, including Connolly's doctors" to an attribution to Frasier.~~

Page 73 lines 1 and 2

The sentence in parentheses is not entirely clear. You may wish to change it to:

"(The Zapruder film gives no indication of this.)"

Page 87 lines 16 to 18

You refer to "one set of identifiable but unidentified fingerprints," citing page 249 of the Report. However, that page refers only to "one identifiable palmprint (which) was not identified." You will wish to change your text accordingly, *on page 107 too (line 2).*

Page 96 first paragraph

I have mailed you my chapter on the anterior neck wound, and I would urge you most strongly to expand your paragraph somewhat in order to reflect the real and complex dimensions of this problem and the fact that the nature of the anterior neck wound was not resolved in a conclusive manner. The testimony of Dr McClelland and some of the others is very significant in revealing that several witnesses, at all stages of the inquiry, believed that the wound of the anterior neck was an entrance wound; that their agreement to a finding of "exit" was conditional (if not theoretical); and that Perry was by no means the only spokesman to the press and news media.

Page 119, bottom of page

Here are a few more examples of the FBI agents' lack of interest in information volunteered by witnesses:

- (1) the failure to investigate Oswald's allegation that he had seen a rifle in the Depository two days before the assassination, as revealed during Hosty's testimony (IV 472).
- (2) the lack of interest in telephone calls by Ruby to Kenneth Dowe of KLIF on Saturday afternoon, in which Ruby was heard to say, "you know I'll be there," referring to the transfer of Oswald. That is revealed in Dowe's testimony (XV 436) and Hallmark's (XV 491).

(3) the lack of interest in Hodge's story of his encounter with Ruby on the elevator at the police building on Friday night, which indicates Ruby's complete freedom of access to all parts of the building with the knowledge of police officers present on the same elevator and their apparent approval. That is revealed in Hodge's testimony (XV 501).

Pages 139 and 140

As discussed by telephone, the Commission exercised a double standard about new evidence offered during its hearings but not included in a prior statement. When the new evidence was not to the Commission's liking, it seized on that pretext in order to impeach it. But when the new evidence was helpful, the Commission ignored the witness's failure to include the information in prior interviews--even in response to a specific question. That is illustrated by the complacent acceptance of Marina Oswald's improvisations during the hearings on various questions. In some cases, she testified to facts she had actually denied earlier, not merely failed to mention.

Another case in point is the Commission's reliance on the testimony of Lovelady and Shelley to repudiate Victoria Adam's accuracy. She said that she had run down the stairs immediately after the shots, encountering the two men when she reached the first floor. The Commission points out that they had gone from the street to the railroad yards and could not have returned to the first floor until several minutes later. The point is very crucial, because if Victoria Adams was running down (with Sandra Styles, not a Commission witness and not questioned on this point by anyone) and neither of them saw Oswald, or heard him, then he was not descending the stairs within 1.18 minutes of the shooting, as the Commission "found." The affidavits completed by Lovelady and Shelley on 11/22/63 were entirely consistent with Victoria Adams' story; but the affidavits were ignored, since their testimony was so fortuitous for the Commission's thesis.

Page 148 lines 1 and 2

See preceding comments directed to page 60 and the cut-off frame.

Page 184 line 14

The reference to four shims is incorrect. There were three, and Frazier had been told two (III 444). Three seems to be right (CE 576 to 578, photos).