

8 December 1965

Dear Maggie,

This will probably be the last letter before you leave for Paris next week, so let me wish you a wonderful trip and urge you to try to make it a real vacation from an unrelenting siege of work. Not only do you owe it to yourself, but you need to cushion your energies for the work still to come. Let me also wish you a very Happy 1966, happy in all possible ways including the success of all our efforts and the reversal of this grotesque injustice.

I have now read and re-read the translation of Buchanan in Paris Match. I found nothing disastrous in it, but underlined several passages as being incorrect or questionable: (1) the statement that B "has delved into the 26 volumes" — we know better; (2) that it was possible by means of the Zapruder film "to determine the precise moment when each of the occupants was struck" — not true with reference to Gov Connally; (3) the lapsed time 4.8-5.6 seconds overlooks the WC's speculation of almost 8 seconds if the first shot missed, or some such offering; (4) the opinion of the "neuro-surgeon, a member of the faculty of one of the best known schools of medicine" — who might that be? and why was the name not stipulated? (5) that it is precisely "at this moment" (frames 207-212) that the WC claims the first shot was fired — actually between frames 210 and 225, as I recall, as to admit that it could have been as early as 207 would rule out a shot from the TSB window; and (6) I don't recall that Mrs Cabell mentioned seeing smoke or policemen running to the wall near the RR yards.

Still, as I said before, none of these errors are catastrophic, and perhaps they are surprisingly few, considering the trans-oceanic lines of communication between the "author" and the source. I think that my main disappointment with the article is that it is somehow diffused and lacking in real impact or focus. I had questioned my own reaction, on the grounds that the material was already so familiar that it could not possibly have dramatic impact; but both Isabel and my molasses in the office made the same comment, without being spurred by anything I said.

When all is said and done, I think the ultimate effect of the article is probably positive—in that it has caused Paris Match to reexamine its position and to bring before its readers enough solid material to make them reexamine too. It is too soon yet to assess whether the article is going to filter back here or make any meaningful difference to the complacent brain-washed insular public, but surely it presents a possibility, whereas without the Paris Match story there would not be even that ground for hope. Do please let me hear from you before you leave, or drop me a line from Paris, and let me know if I will have the pleasure of seeing you in New York on your way back. With warmest affection,