

January 10, 1974

Dear Sylvia,

Thanks for your letter of 12/21. I got a copy of the Policoff letter to "More" from Peter Scott; I hope they will publish it.

Let me toss out some speculation about ~~the~~ the motivation of Salisbury and others like him. Could it be that many liberals, especially people like Salisbury and Priscilla Johnson who had special expertise about the USSR, endorsed the lone-nut hypothesis because they were afraid that Oswald would otherwise be depicted as a Soviet agent? In fact, for a rather right-wing Commission, they did a poor job of following all the left-pointing leads (as Newman's book brings out). If I recall correctly, I.F. Stone was openly relieved that the Warren Report didn't try to pin the assassination ~~on~~ on the left. I wouldn't put it past Salisbury - given his vacillation - to have had something like that in mind (quite consciously). As Peter Scott put it, endorsing a big lie to avoid a bigger one.

I have expanded my comments on Belin's book into a review, a copy of which is enclosed. I would be interested in your comments, corrections, or suggestions. I started just writing up my notes in a form that would be useful to other critics, but then I decided to try to write a review for a general audience. I did this in part as a writing exercise, and I haven't decided yet whether to try to get it published. It is a fairly early draft, and would have to be fixed and shortened. I'm not sure if anyone would be interested in publishing something like this. My first reaction was that if we ignore Belin he will go away, but on the other hand his book might give us a good ~~an~~ opportunity to make some points with the public. In any case, I am sending around several copies of this; there are some facts which might be useful for anyone who is pursuing Belin. I was told that he appeared on several TV programs in the east; I saw him only on the ABC program on 11/21.

Perhaps you could help me with an unrelated factual point. Do you have any record of references to "Harvey Lee Oswald"? I am asking you on the chance that you made a compilation in connection with your index. I am interested in the ~~the~~ possibility that someone in Dallas had a pre-assassination file on Oswald under that ~~the~~ name. The Archives just released an interesting post-assassination Army Intelligence message with information on Harvey Lee Oswald, including some from Stringfellow of the DPD (apparently after the assassination). The list of TSBD employees, apparently compiled by Lt. Kaminski, has the name this way too. (24H259) Your book commented on the possible significance of the use of the 605 Elsbeth address; the police did come up with an "explanation" of that (CD 948) based on getting it from Oswald's library card.

Best,

Paul
PLH