

29 September 1970

My dear Paul,

Your draft paper convinced me that you accept the conclusions of the Warren Commission not because of any deficiency in your writing skill but because of your quite explicit statements on page 23, second paragraph ("...the most likely hypothesis...") and page 24, second paragraph ("...our observations tend to support the conclusion...that Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone assassin..."). Indeed, the paper as a whole is implicitly as well as explicitly an unmistakable piece of propaganda for the specious and thoroughly discredited official thesis as set forth in the WR.

Your writing as such is (as I have said already) positively Warrenesque in its skill. An excellent example is your artful and audacious statement that "the Commission failed to properly interpret physical evidence that was available to it; it just happens that they missed evidence favoring their case." Here is a whole volume of misrepresentation compressed into a small, economy-size sentence. The fact is that the Commission suppressed all mention of the recoil backwards and to the left, as did the FBI and the Secret Service, although it is inconceivable that it was overlooked by every one of the WC members, lawyers, investigators and experts who viewed the Zapruder film; that the recoil was inimical to the lone assassin findings and could not be acknowledged without opening up a vast and dangerous additional area of conflict and doubt; and that, your melon-recoil experiments notwithstanding, the thrust backwards and to the left recorded in the Zapruder and Nix films remains inimical to the government's reconstruction of the assassination. Your experiments established nothing except the behavior of a taped melon under a given set of circumstances that in no way simulate the shooting at Dealey Plaza, although it might ^{also} be said that they yielded "inconclusive" data (e.g., in conflict with the desired results) for containers of water, containers of gelatin, toy rubber balls filled with gelatin, and melons in the nude. (Had tape-covered melons failed to produce the awaited result, I suppose that household pets would have encountered a sudden violent end.)

In your opinion, you say, there is no persuasive evidence that the shot came from the front. What is the "persuasive" evidence that it came from behind? Which fumbling, bumbling, and perjured testimony, from which set of medical witnesses or government experts? The autopsy surgeons? the Russell Fisher panel? Shaneyfelt, Frazier?

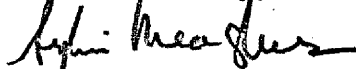
There is another serious contradiction between your letter of the 25th and your draft paper. In the latter, you say explicitly that "this report and its editorial content is the work of P.L.H." but in the subsequent letter you characterize the work as mainly that of Alvarez, and to be published under his name alone. This flat contradiction cannot be ascribed to any deficiency of writing skill. Nor does the technicality of publication under the name Alvarez relieve you of one iota of responsibility for your part in this "study" or the mischievous and damaging use to which you concede it will be put.

You cannot be a handmaiden to the master of the jiggle, blur, and taped melon manipulation, and also be a critic among critics of the Warren Report. The whole apparatus of government, and later the vast resources of CBS and other powerful news media, have been mobilized to mount a fraudulent case against a dead accused lone assassin. For any critic to lend himself to a flagrant effort to shore up an area of evidence that is patently in conflict with the cockamamye conclusions--however much the effort is presented in the guise of pure and objective research (and I think that Tink Thompson has thoroughly demolished your case, in your own terms and on your own grounds)--is plain and simple defection.

You have given the benefit of doubt not to the accused but to the Warren Report, which oozes its sleazy misrepresentations at every salient point. I am not impressed by your espousal in private correspondence of a conspiracy theory with or without Oswald's participation, when you have written a treatise which, for all its scientific hocus-pocus, is only an apologia for the WR and one which goes so far as to assimilate blandly the demolished Alvarez jiggle-and-blur hypothesis.

This is not an issue to be discussed in terms of insult, personal or otherwise; but since you used the phrase, let me just add that nothing I might improvise could match the affront which your paper constitutes to all of us who are committed to reversing an ugly travesty of justice and a sordid abuse of public trust, and who have held you in the greatest respect and trust. Apparently your commitment lies elsewhere. It is a bitter disappointment.

Yours sincerely,



Sylvia Meagher
302 West 12 Street
NYC NY 10014

29 September 1970

My dear Paul,

Your draft paper convinced me that you accept the conclusions of the Warren Commission not because of any deficiency in your writing skill but because of your quite explicit statements on page 23, second paragraph ("...the most likely hypothesis...") and page 24, second paragraph ("...our observations tend to support the conclusion...that Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone assassin..."). Indeed, the paper as a whole is implicitly as well as explicitly an unmistakable piece of propaganda for the specious and thoroughly discredited official thesis as set forth in the WR.

Your writing as such is (as I have said already) positively Warrenesque in its skill. An excellent example is your artful and audacious statement that "the Commission failed to properly interpret physical evidence that was available to it; it just happens that they missed evidence favoring their case." Here is a whole volume of misrepresentation compressed into a small, economy-size sentence. The fact is that the Commission suppressed all mention of the recoil backwards and to the left, as did the FBI and the Secret Service, although it is inconceivable that it was overlooked by every one of the WC members, lawyers, investigators and experts who viewed the Zapruder film; that the recoil was inimical to the lone assassin findings and could not be acknowledged without opening up a vast and dangerous additional area of conflict and doubt; and that, your melon-recoil experiments notwithstanding, the thrust backwards and to the left recorded in the Zapruder and Nix films remains inimical to the government's reconstruction of the assassination. Your experiments established nothing except the behavior of a taped melon under a given set of circumstances that in no way simulate the shooting at Dealey Plaza, although it might ^{also} be said that they yielded "inconclusive" data (e.g., in conflict with the desired results) for containers of water, containers of gelatin, toy rubber balls filled with gelatin, and melons in the nude. (Had tape-covered melons failed to produce the awaited result, I suppose that household pets would have encountered a sudden violent end.)

In your opinion, you say, there is no persuasive evidence that the shot came from the front. What is the "persuasive" evidence that it came from behind? Which fumbling, bumbling, and perjured testimony, from which set of medical witnesses or government experts? The autopsy surgeons? the Russell Fisher panel? Shaneyfelt, Frazier?

There is another serious contradiction between your letter of the 25th and your draft paper. In the latter, you say explicitly that "this report and its editorial content is the work of P.L.H." but in the subsequent letter you characterize the work as mainly that of Alvarez, and to be published under his name alone. This flat contradiction cannot be ascribed to any deficiency of writing skill. Nor does the technicality of publication under the name Alvarez relieve you of one iota of responsibility for your part in this "study" or the mischievous and damaging use to which you concede it will be put.

You cannot be a handmaiden to the master of the jiggle, blur, and taped melon manipulation, and also be a critic among critics of the Warren Report. The whole apparatus of government, and later the vast resources of CBS and other powerful news media, have been mobilized to mount a fraudulent case against a dead accused lone assassin. For any critic to lend himself to a flagrant effort to shore up an area of evidence that is patently in conflict with the cockamamye conclusions--however much the effort is presented in the guise of pure and objective research (and I think that Tink Thompson has thoroughly demolished your case, in your own terms and on your own grounds)--is plain and simple defection.