

## Comments on "Echoes..."

(Meagher Sept. 1979)

### Introduction

I find it somewhat soft and fuzzy and personally I dislike the Freudian-analogy approach. I think the points should be made more decisively - even, more polemically - and that the introduction should reflect the fact that while the HSCA did some commendable work, its serious deficiencies (the basic lack of coherence in its over-all hypothesis; the deliberate omission of material facts such as the obstruction of the view from the sixth floor window by the oak tree at the crucial Zapruder frames at which shots are now hypothesized; the deliberate exclusion of Wacht from the Forensic Panel's interrogation of Humes & Boswell; and the like) force the critics into an adversary role.

### Discovery of New Evidence (pages 1-4)

Interesting account of the discovery of the dictabelt. Perhaps you might include - in a footnote if not in the text - the work done by Gary Mack and published by Penn Jones in The Continuing Inquiry of August 1977. Mack discovered seven shots on the DP radio tape and I think he deserves some credit in the acoustic evidence area.

### Pages 19-21

Succinctly and well-argued. The clarity and conciseness of this kind of presentation make it very effective.

## Section 2 B. The Acoustics Evidence and Its Critics (PLH)

Very good material is included here. But it is entirely too discursive. I think it would be out of balance in terms of other equally important segments of evidence which presumably will not receive such detailed all-inclusive treatment. I prefer the JT version for inclusion in the MS. but the PLH in slightly revised and tightened form would make an excellent separate article or monograph.

Re: page 13 last 4 lines, I fail to grasp your point about "firing through the tree (neither an assumption nor a problem...)". Of course this is a problem. How can you dismiss it so lightly and so cryptically?

## 7. A New Puzzle (pages 22-57)

Effective, well-written bridge to the later sections of the MS. It gives the single-bullet theory (perhaps too freely and too easily) and then it takes away (somewhat) the single-bullet theory, by implication at least. This may not reflect my own views but it is a good statement of the views held by the author of this segment. Again, I would point out that the NAA, trajectory and ballistics findings are based on probabilities and have margins for error which may or may not invalidate the conclusions. Remember, the Photo Evidence Panel took a vote - 12 to 7, I believe - but where is the minority opinion of the 7? Remember also that all those scientific findings were made during a period when the HSCA Panel committed to a confirmation of the Warren Report findings - SB and lone assassin. One can

3.

Only conjecture what the findings might have been had they followed, not preceding, the proof of a shooter on the grassy knoll.

[Digression: Please, please be sure that the book is indexed before it goes to press.]

## Section III A The Initial Cover-up: The Commission and the Agencies

(Pages 1-14)

At middle of page 5, this chapter deals with

"a CIA recording of the alleged Oswald's voice".

Here, it is important to insert an exact quotation from the FBI memo, quoted in the HSCA Report,

pages 249-250, and then to cite from page 250 para. 4 the HSCA's conclusion that the information in the 11/23/63 FBI letterhead memo "was mistaken".

This is so flagrant, so preposterous, so insulting to the intelligence of the public — and so dishonest — that it

deserves detailed critical treatment. Perhaps that comes later in the ms. but I am jutting down these

comments as I complete each section, and I think the additional information from pp. 249-250 of the HSCA Report is essential here in Section III A.

## Chapter II. From Garrison to Blakey

This is such clearly introductory material that I am puzzled to find it in mid-text. I suggest that it be transferred to the beginning of the ms., between the Introduction and the Acoustics (or perhaps merged with the Introduction?).

## Chapter VI. The Public Hearings

Good chapter. No other comments come to mind.

## Chapter VIII. Oswald and Nosenko

I would urge that, in a footnote if not in the text-proper, you would indicate and document the fact that Epstein's book Legend is stuffed with astonishing, elementary, and gratuitous errors. Not the least was his allegation that the oak tree was bare on 11/22/63. There are many many more such misleading and erroneous allegations (another that comes to mind is the date of Oswald's departure from London to Helsinki). They add up to such flagrant irresponsibility on Epstein's part that they become sinister and pose the question of how far he - like the WC before him - was willing to distort and misrepresent evidence so as to shore up the Oswald-alone-assassin thesis. It is not enough to say that Legend is "intriguing". The public must be warned of its multiple falsehoods and unreliability.

~~In this chapter, the bottom of page 13 and the top of page 14 is not coherent - has some of the text inadvertently been omitted?~~

In this chapter, some pages are misnumbered. Page 15 is actually page 14; page 14 is actually page 15.

### Chapter VIII. Overview

This chapter needs to be rewritten so that it becomes stylistically compatible with other chapters. I suggest that all first-person passages be revised and that personal informal comments ("I wouldn't like that at all - no fair.") be rephrased.

### Chapter IX A. The Hosty Entry

Please consider adding (in a footnote if not in the text-proper) that we still do not know how the Hosty auto license number found its way into Oswald's address book. See AAF for discussion of the manifest impossibility of Marina's version of how she copied the number from the bedroom window (pages 212-214). During Marina's lengthy testimony, the HSCA found no opportunity to raise this scarcely-unimportant question with her. Why?

Chapter IX. Marcello - Ferris - Cony Street

Well-written, well-reasoned, succinct.  
I agree with the judgments here, especially  
the implied scepticism about the Clinton witnesses  
(whom I do not believe).

Chapter X. Successful Conspiracy

Also a good, well-reasoned, well-written  
Chapter.

[Digression: ~~My~~ I assume that footnotes  
citing sources of quoted material and/or  
important assertions requiring documentation  
will be inserted before the ms. goes to the  
publisher.]

Chapter XII. Autonomous Operations

Top of page 20: I think this is a duplication  
of material on AMLAST that appears earlier in the  
ms. and repeats in exactly the same words  
that, in re: Fitzgerald, "his only fig-leaf was an alias."

In general, a strong well-written chapter.  
Missing from the HSCA staff reports on the anti-Castro  
Cuban exiles and thus also missing from this chapter  
is the long history of violence and criminal activity  
on the part of the exiles — as individuals and as  
groups — violence and crimes with and without  
political overtones — which did not stop even at  
attempted murder and massacre (e.g., the attack  
against the W.N. HB's building which, had the  
missiles not fallen short, would have killed and injured  
hundreds of innocent bystanders).

### Chapter XIII Cubans, Mob, Chicago Junta

You asked me to be frank. This is incoherent and stupefying. Perhaps after it is retyped and, hopefully, reviewed, it will achieve some clarity. But, as it is, it leaves me utterly baffled.

### Chapter XIV The Junta and the Kennedy Case

This chapter has valuable substance but would benefit from careful editing.

### Chapter XV Oswald in Dallas

Again, a chapter rich in substance and new information, the presentation of which is better and clearer than the preceding two chapters. I would suggest that because of the diversity and interlocking nature of the material, and the flood of misinformation (to the general public) from individuals and organizations, each of these 3 chapters (XIII XIV and XV) should conclude with a summary of the main points and a statement of the author's conclusions.

## Chapter VIII Ruby, The Mob, and Palatessa

I have no particular comments on this chapter, which also would benefit from a succinct summary at the end of the main points.

## Pat Lambert chapter on the AS

Paul, I would not include this in the MS. It is inconsistent in tone and style with the MS. as a whole and I think it overstates the case against the SS and insinuates — quite unconvincingly, in my opinion — its possible complicity in a plot to kill JFK.