

*File Copy*

30 November 1970

Dear Paul,

As you say--although it is not the point I raised--you are not the only critic who has not published. Some have no facility for writing, but you are not among them. Others have submitted material time and again only to have it rejected. No one except you has written a paper that has all the earmarks of being intended for eventual publication, which attempts to discredit a major argument against the WR and does so on the most flimsy and dubious grounds. When an asserted WR critic produces a maiden offering that reads exactly like the work of a WR apologist, he must accept the consequences. The fact that you were irreproachable in your pre-melon period, which I certainly acknowledge, makes your volte-face all the more shocking and incomprehensible.

There have been occasions in the past when a critic discovered that a particular argument used against the WR was not, after all, valid. The stress marks on the Stemmons sign, which turned out to be marks on the film, is an example. Another is the identity of the man-in-the-doorway, now generally acknowledged to be Lovelady. Although these were solid findings, which your melon study assuredly is not, no one published a special article retracting or renouncing the mistaken argument, since it was only one in a virtually endless list of inconsistencies, contradictions, and misrepresentations which testified to the illegitimacy of the WR, in which the disappearance of a particular item left the basic situation unchanged. The critics of course abandoned the stress marks and the man in the doorway, and when either subject was raised freely and frankly explained that the argument had proven to be unfounded.

Unfounded arguments must be repudiated even when they are directed to the obscene WR, but only when there is a conclusive demonstration that the charge is in fact unfounded--which you have not provided in your melon study--and when the retraction is placed in the proper context and perspective so that it will not mislead anyone about the demonstrably spurious and fraudulent nature of the WR taken as a whole. Your paper was flagrantly misleading, as you have since acknowledged in part by your restatements and retractions.

You had sufficient cause when Alvarez suggested the jet recoil hypothesis to disassociate yourself from his theory and tests, in my opinion. In the first place, after the immense resources of the government and the news media had been used to fabricate and propagandize a so-called lone assassin, using a structure of malodorous evidence which crumbled wherever it was probed, the first duty of the individual is to work for the defense that was denied to Oswald by the establishment, and not to use his brains and skill on behalf of the prosecution case which has already enjoyed every conceivable advantage. In the second place, you were familiar with the work done by Alvarez (including the "tenuous, to say the least," sub-hypothesis) and the flagrant misuse by CBS of Alvarez' material in its monumentally deceitful effort to redeem the WR. You were familiar with Alvarez' arrogant, evasive, and insulting replies to those who raised legitimate questions about his data and his conclusions--replies which betrayed his lack of objectivity and a towering vanity invested in exonerating the WR. Under those circumstances, I do not see that you had any moral or intellectual obligation to assist him at all, or to do so without imposing safeguards against later misuse, by him or others, of the results. No doubt you find it comforting to view your role as a "joke" but to me it is a disaster, if only in the sense that a valued relationship has been irreversibly altered.

Yours sincerely,

*Stephen Meagher*

*cc Bernabei*