

1735 Highland Place, Apt. 25
Berkeley, Calif. 94709
November 21, 1970

Thomas Stamm
2705 Bainbridge Avenue
Bronx, N.Y. 10458

Dear Mr. Stamm,

Thanks for your letter of October 30. You bet I have seen the Zapruder film - many times, although not under the best conditions and with the best possible print. I don't think I have misrepresented the strength of the President's backward motion, but I emphatically disagree with your suggestion that one can conclude what direction the shot came from without the most careful examination and logical analysis.

I have asked Harold Weisberg to mail you an extra copy of a Supplement I prepared, which touches on many of the questions you raised concerning the degree of relevance of the melon tests to the assassination. I cannot tell if you have all of the first draft report I prepared; I make much the same case as you do against the Commission for ignoring this evidence. If you do not have that report, I can make a copy for you.

Let me comment in detail on the partial quotation of your comments, as published in Sylvia's book. My purpose was to reproduce your description of the motion, since it was one of the first such descriptions to be circulated. For that purpose, I should not have included the sentence where you admit to the "speculative possibility" that the cause was a sudden acceleration. However, I did leave that sentence in, to show that you had in fact made an attempt to consider alternate explanations; I think that does improve your credentials as an observer. As I pointed out later in the draft (page 13) that there was no such acceleration. The best evidence for that statement is not what you cite, but direct measurements of the speed of the car, which I made for myself quite easily. I tend to assume that everyone who is at all familiar with this problem knows that the explanation of the backward motion as due to the acceleration of the car has been thoroughly discredited. However, I should have added at least a parenthetical remark after the sentence in question: "[As Stamm correctly pointed out, the car did not accelerate at the time of the fatal shot.]" I will certainly make that addition in any future versions of my paper that include your description of the Zapruder film. I hope that you no longer feel that I intended to "mutilate" your thoughts.

As indicated in the enclosed memo of 10/17, if you want to pay for the copying, I will send your comments out to all the people who got the original draft report. Also, if you think it is necessary, I will send out a correction concerning the quotation of your work. Since there were many more serious problems in that draft, and it will be substantially revised before any further distribution (and in any case anything that is submitted for publication will be Alvarez' writing, not mine), I do not feel that such a correction is necessary, but I will send it out if you insist.

Sincerely yours,

Paul L. Hoch

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cc: Sylvia Meagher