

617 Dauphine Street
New Orleans, Louisiana
70112

February 23, 1968

Mr. Robert M. Ockene, Editor
The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc.
3 West 57th Street
New York, New York - 10019

Dear Mr. Ockene:

I had decided not to become involved in an exchange of letters and charges regarding Sylvia Meagher's book and the use of my "endorsement" of it by Bobbs-Merrill since I believed the matter closed. Yet I notice that Bobbs-Merrill continues, even now, to advertise the book by means of my "endorsement". As you know when you sent the manuscript to me it ended with this sentence: "Now that Jim Garrison has come forward, there is a better prospect that injustice will be rectified, and that justice will be done in our lifetime."

I subsequently sent to you a few words about the book which you have printed on the dust jacket and utilized for advertising purposes. This is so in spite of the fact that the book I endorsed is not the one that you have published in that the portion regarding Mr. Garrison has been re-written. The sentence quoted above was deleted and Mrs. Meagher concluded her work with a series of untrue and unfair attacks. I do not wish to endorse a work containing such irresponsible charges particularly when I am well aware of the validity of Mr. Garrison's charges, the thoroughness of his investigation and the integrity of the man. The fact is that Mrs. Meagher has not met Mr. Garrison, has not examined the evidence in his possession, and is not aware of the statements made to him and to his staff by important witnesses. Evidently Mrs. Meagher relies entirely upon public statements made about Mr. Garrison, made by him or perhaps in some instances attributed to him.

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You have written to Mort Sahl that the references to Mr. Garrison are "peripheral" and "an aside". Certainly you are entitled to your judgment. Mine is different. I consider Mr. Garrison to be one of the most important people in this country and to be engaged in the most important work. I understand the motives of the Attorney-General, the C.I.A., Mr. Hoover and others for attacking him but Mrs. Meagher's motivation is more obscure to me.

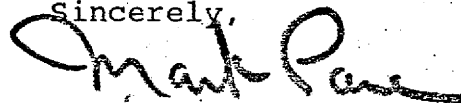
In any event I do not wish to be associated with it. Accordingly you may continue to use my comments, for they are as relevant now as when I made them, so long as you also publish the following comment as well.

"Unfortunately Mrs. Meagher concludes her otherwise fine work with a series of irresponsible charges against New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison. Mrs. Meagher seems willing to comment upon Mr. Garrison's "evidence" and his "witnesses" although she has examined neither. In this sense, perhaps swept along by the general media hysteria, she condemns the one man who is conducting a serious investigation and Mrs. Meagher does so by issuing findings, shades of the Warren Commission, without troubling to present or even refer to any evidence."

I have no objection to your using any portion of the statement that I have previously given to you - but if any reference is made to me in your advertising it must include all of the above material.

In closing let me say that I do not believe that you, in any way, sought to mislead me or trick me into an endorsement but that circumstances have conspired to bring about this unhappy result.

Sincerely,



MARK LANE