

Notes and Comments on Interview with

Allen Dulles. Dulles is visiting the UCLA campus this week as part of a program to acquaint students, in a "shirtsleeves environment" with well known people. For several days, he lives, eats in a dormitory on campus. At night he gives lectures, and, two nights this week, was scheduled to have completely informal discussions in the dormitory lounge, with whomever chose to show up. I only heard about the Dulles visit yesterday; a fellow student, knowing of my active interest in the case, suggested I try to see him and interview him. I poo-ppo'd the whole idea, because it is simply impossible to have a serious exchange of information and opinion at the level at which I am interested, in front of a completely uninformed audience to whom any meaningful comments or assent to the sort of work I am doing would be the stuff to make headlines of. Furthermore, I was informed that the previous night, he had curtly parried all questions of a controversial nature, because reporters were present.

The thought occurred to me, however, that a request for a personal interview might be worthwhile. For that reason, I contacted the student who was his host, and told him to tell Mr. Dulles that a graduate student on campus who owns a set of the 26 volumes and who has done much research would like very much to have a 15 minute interview. The student feels that ~~XXXXXX~~ given the nature of the work he has done, and the sort of data that he has assimilated, a personal interview is not only justified, but the student feels quite odd and unmannerly about bringing the questions out in a "coffee klatch" atmosphere, and doesn't want to be rightly accused by Mr. Dulles of being some sort of sensationalist. Would Mr. Dulles see the student if only for 15 minutes?

I called back the student about two hours later, expecting (after my experiences with Liebeler) that I would be told when and where. Instead, the answer was a curt "no." "Mr. Dulles said he certainly will not see you alone, because it would be unfair to the other students. He will "gladly" speak to you in front of them, however. He has absolutely no objection to speaking to you, but in front of them. He thinks this is protection for himself, because otherwise, you could go out afterwards and claim you had a personal interview with him and misquote him." "On the contrary", I replied, "if the interview is conducted in person, and alone, Mr. Dulles can deny that it even existed, let alone any content. I'm surprised that he refuses to see me alone". (Keep in mind, now, that I mentioned to this student to make it a point to tell Mr. Dulles that the student had done much work in enlarging the background of photos which contained the grassy knoll. I also checked to make sure that he had good eyesight. The student said he has excellent eyesight; his hearing is a bit bad, and he does give the impression of being old. Then the host made the following remarks: "Last night, there was some fellow that had this Fox book, and he went on and on, and he really badgered Dulles. Please, don't badger him. They were really laughing at this fellow last night. You can come if you want to, but I'm sure they'll laugh at you too." This remark was made with just enough snideness, that it was not too hard to see that the "host" relished the thought of seeing the intellectual "goon-squad" make mincemeat of another heckler. Then he added the following: "Mr. Dulles also said that if you have information like that, you should take it to the FBI". There was something very ominous about the way he said that. It amounted to this: if you have taken it to the FBI, and nothing has happened, its because you have nothing. But if you have something, and you have not taken it to the FBI, Mr. Dulles will treat you like some sort of reckless fool and make an "unAmerican ass" out of you.

I was rather upset by the time I got off the phone with this fellow, because he had literally dared me to show up, yet had this confidence that if I did, I'd be demolished. I just about decided not to, but a friend of mine urged me very much to go, and said that at least four or five people who had also seen my material one night at his home would also come around. That way, I could speak for at least ~~at~~ a "small group" of students who had shown up, and not be accused of "monopolizing the conversation".

I have never been more frightened in my life, in connection with speaking to anyone, than I was before this. First of all, what could I bring up? What meaningful question could be asked? How would I resist the temptation of being "baited" into statements which would cause the audience to laugh. I made two or three decisions immediately. Absolutely no pictures of the Mary Moorman photograph in front of Dulles, but I would bring them with me. (I have a very well organized steel letter file, in which all sorts of demonstrating pieces on different topics are stored away).

The meeting took place in the Sierra Lounge of Hedrick hall. Word had spread around (because of the host, I think) that some student was going to question Dulles about the Report. About 40 people showed up. The chairs were arranged around in concentric semi-circles. My friends were in the innermost semicircle, and I sat right in the center chair. With me I brought my letter file, Volume 18, Volume 17, the book "Four Days", Paris Match, and under paper wraps some 16" by 20" demonstration pieces. These included the Moorman photo, the "man behind the smoke", and a big blowup of the Newsweek photo, and a platt map.

All my ~~XXXXXX~~ friends were very nicely dressed. I showed up in my best suit, and took great pains to look all dressed up. It was obvious we were not beatniks of any kind.

Meanwhile, Dulles had not yet shown up, and people were wondering just what in hell was going on. My inner semicircle there was buzzing with conversation, and I was thinking out my exact strategy.

I walked Mr. Dulles, with his wife, and the "moderator". He sat down, made himself comfortable, lit up his pipe, and made a few witty remarks. His eyes settled on me several times, and my two hearings volumes, and I exuded the air of a defense counsel who is prepared to make some sort of case.

The floor was thrown open for the first question, and some student asked some silly question about the budget of the CIA, and Dulles gave his usual answer which makes the student feel that he must really be "in" if he can ask a question that Dulles refuses to answer, in his ever-so-witty way.

Now I raised my hand, and I will try to report the conversation and tone as best as possible. (What ensued is not so important in terms of information transferred as in the attitude of Dulles. It is rather negative, he didn't say anything that I didn't already know. What I was surprised at was the rather disgusting ease with which he lied through his teeth when necessary, and the ever present question that kept returning to me: When a man lies as vociferously as he does, ~~even if~~ only for reasons of state--at what control does he end up having ~~XXXXXX~~ fantasy and reality even in his own mind, when the public sessions with naive and annoying students are over?)

"Mr. Dulles", I began "I'm one of these small minority of Americans who have laid out the \$76 cash to buy the complete set of the 26 volumes of the Warren Commission". "Yes," he interrupted, "I too own a set, so you must include me too". (Laughter). "Now Mr. Dulles, I'm perfectly aware that it is almost impossible to have a meaningful discussion of any important chain of evidence because there is such a flood of information in these volumes, and it is very hard to discuss it in this format ~~XXXX~~ with other people all around. For that reason, I'd like to restrict myself to just one question, and just one item, and get your comments on it". (At this point, you could see the audience was getting interested; and I went on: "Now one of the most important conclusions of the Warren Commission goes something like this: "There was no evidence of conspiracy" (Dulles, interrupting....) "Wasn't it (now ~~XXXXXX~~ punctuating the words with his finger) "We have found no evidence of conspiracy?" "Yes," I replied, "these are probably the exact words. But the point is the Commission uses the wording "found no evidence", not "There was no"---and this is an important distinction, and it bears heavily on the way I will word my question to you.

evidence

"Mr. Dulles, one of the most important items of ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ is the Zapruder motion picture film. (Very brief description). Now frame 313 depicts the shot to President Kennedy's head. This was the fatal shot. At that time, a bullet roared in at over 1000 miles per hour, and blew Mr. Kennedy's head apart! It is possible to look at this film, which is available in volume 18, and see which way his head is thrust by the force of that shot. We know exactly where the entrance would be, because of the artist's drawing. We know exactly where Mr. Kennedy is, because of the plat map, and frame 312. We also know the exact view towards the head as seen through the rifle scope. Yet Mr. Kennedy's head is thrust violently back and to the left by this shot. This must imply someone firing from the front. Now this is perfectly deducible from the film, which was admitted in evidence, and constitutes the most important piece of physical evidence conclusively indicating conspiracy---I would like your comment on it". (Meanwhile, I had taken out my JFK "Head Panel"--- showing the sequence of frames from 310 to 321 or so. Dulles asked for one, and now I started handing out about 15 of them to various students, and clusters of students were all sitting around carefully examining this item.

Meanwhile, Dulles said that he had "examined the film a thousand times", or something like that, and that no such thing was true. I interjected that it is simple to see, and actually got up, went over to his chair, and said: "I know these are not the best reproductions, but you can see them. Just look at the head and the car seat, and see if they get closer together or farther apart in successive frames".

"Now what are you saying....just what are you saying?". "I'm saying there must be someone up front firing at Kennedy, and this means a conspiracy". "Look", he said "there isn't a single iota of evidence indicating conspiracy...no one says there was anything like that....". "For your information", I said, "of the 121 witnesses... (Harold Feldman type statistics).

"People even saw and smelled smoke..." I ended. "Look, what are you talking about? WHO SAW SMOKE?".

"Mr. Sam Holland, X, for instance, he was standing on the overpass, he states (I accurately quote Sam Holland). Mr. Austin Miller, also on the overpass. And ANYONE can buy the book "Four Days", ~~XXXX~~ and turn to the picture on the top of page 21, and there is smoke there ~~XXXXXX~~ IN COLOR". "Now what are you saying---that someone was smoking up there?"

He looked down at the photographs again and claimed he couldn't see what I say is there. Then he repeated his statements:

"Look there isn't ONE ~~XXXX~~ IOTA of evidence that the shots came from the front. How can you say such a thing".

"Mr. Dulles", I said, "I'm showing you this evidence right here, and I tell you about that earwitness testimony, and that certainly qualifies as evidence because it was taken under oath--- and I am absolutely amazed to hear you assert away the existence of this evidence right before my eyes".

We then argued some more; he dumped all over Paris Match, which I displayed---and which impressed the students, because I commented that the editorial board must have been pretty impressed to run such a story.

I got off Paris Match really quickly, however, and finally the conversation ended something like this.

~~XXXX~~ I said: "I would be willing to dismiss the testimony of very excited witnesses, myself, Mr. Dulles, but when that testimony is corroborated by such an important item of physical evidence as the head snap....." He cut in here waving his hand quite vociferously: "I can't see a blasted thing here. You can't say the head goes back ...I can't see it going back...it does not go back....you can't say that...you haven't shown it....."

I replied with a simple statement:

"The photographs have been passed around the room. Each student can look and see for himself whether Mr. Kennedy's head goes back, or forward, in response to the fatal shot".

Judge THE END.

At some point during the conversation, Dulles looked at me and said: "You know, I've never heard that argument before, and I've read all those books the experts supposedly are writing". He said it in a very funny way. To the students, I'm sure it sounded as though the argument must be NG because it hadn't been published by the critics. But it had the two edged tone of disgruntled complement reluctantly payed.

The next student, unfortunately (or fortunately) started to also rip into him, but this time on the "weaving bullet theory". Dulles really got annoyed, and said if there were no further questions ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ but questions on this, he would prefer to go to bed. He said that he had had enough of this work when he was on the Commission, that the Commission had settled all these questions a thousand times over, and tried to make the uniformed audience think that anyone who dared ask questions on this were rude nitpickers. I think it was so obvious that he was on the run at this point, that he knew it too. NO ONE, (and this is unusual given what I heard happened the night before) NO ONE laughed at the critics. And everytime he tried to make them laugh at the critics, he was met with silence.

After this diatribe at the other student, in which he threatened to go to bed if this continued, the student "apologized", and the moderator said:

"Now are there some other types of questions someone might want to ask Mr. Dulles".

Now hold your breath, and try to picture this moment, for the

next question was so ~~IX~~ assissine and so unintellectual, and so disappointing in the light of the lively sparring that had just taken place, and so indicative of a certain type of mentality, a mentality that could now ask a "permissable question", ~~XXXXXX~~ ---poor Mr. Dulles~~8~~---no one could have asked a ~~worse~~ question at that moment:

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"Mr. Dulles" this thick necked starry eyed student asked: "Mr. Dulles,could you please tell us something about the methods of torture that are used when spies are captured---specally by foreign governments?"

(If Dulles suspected a plot at that moment to embarrass him, I cannot say that I would blame him).

The rest of the evening was spent discussing questions that were rather trivial. But these headreaction~~K~~ pictures were being passed around; each student could judge for himself. I'm not going to say they were all convinced. But many saw the head go back. And even if they didn't agree or understand why this meant the shot had to come from the front,, they could see the head go back---and they had heard Dulles say that it didn't, that he heuldn't see a blasted thing; and I think that in the air ~~XXXXX~~ was the feeling that I had called Dulles a liar, and dared each student to see for himself if this wannit the case.

When Dulles left, a group of 25 or 30 students gathered all around me and the few friends I came with. They were really interested! For two hours, I put on a demonstration of all the best and most convincing material in my portfolio file.

You know, there are sometimes when you really get beaten ~~XXXXXX~~ badly by an audience, but I had them all so thoroughly fascinated---Life Cover, the splice,-head reaction, CE 399--- that I finally decided to show them the Moorman photos. I got a tremendous reaction. (I recently got back ~~XXXX~~ cutout masks which are of extremely high quality and which have excellent sketches, and I'm sure this paved the way). Anyway, I left 25 convinced students wanting to work on this thing, asking for my phone number, asking if I would come around to speak to the dorm---it was really a neat night. I know how badly things can go, because I have been through those sort of evenings, too--- but I really felt tonight as if I'd won, and with a shutout.