

1/27/66

Dear Dave,

As I told you on the telephone last night, I think your "Dialogue" is powerful and persuasive. You can feel very proud of the way you have organized and presented your arguments. If you have the time, you might wish to inject more bite and scepticism into the "citizen" although I don't attach too much importance to that.

I am enclosing my comments and suggestions, as promised. You should definitely insert the Kellerman testimony on the presence of a small wound in the hairline; otherwise, you invite an attack for failing to include it, and you should keep your text as invulnerable as possible to that kind of objection.

Please let me know what develops. And, at the risk of repeating myself, forget about personal irritations and backbiting. Your work stands on its own merit; when it satisfies you, that is the only test that counts. If anyone is critical on the basis of personal malice (and I very much doubt that that is the case) he will merely succeed in making himself look shabby. Save your physical and emotional energies for more work like the "Dialogue," which is a remarkable and forceful challenge to the heart of the official case.

With best wishes and sincere congratulations on your achievement,

Sylvia Meagher

Argument One

Page 4, the phrase "and 2 Secret Service agents saw no such small wound of entry" you may wish to add a footnote referring to Kellerman's testimony, 2H 81, that he saw a wound in the hairline, the size of the little finger, to the left of the ear. It is stupid Specter who refers to the wound as being to the right of the right ear. Clint Hill qualified his testimony by saying that there was so much blood that he could not tell whether or not there was another wound, as you quote him on page 4B; However, the case becomes much stronger when Hill testifies later that he was called in during the autopsy specifically to witness the wounds, and then he refers only to the wound six inches below the neck. He does not mention being shown or seeing a small entrance wound in the head; nor is he asked about that. You will find that passage in 2H 143-144.

Page 10 In the last sentence, you may wish to indicate that the relevant testimony was taken on March 16, 1964, so that it becomes clear that the medical drawings were not made until a short time before the testimony, or almost four months after the autopsy.

Page 25 Item 7 should be "...report of Dr. McClelland..." (not Dr Clark).

In the preceding part of the page, where the citizen asks how the gunpowder smell could carry 200 feet, etc., I realize that you are conceding LHO's guilt for the sake of the argument; just the same, it would be a natural for the citizen to ask about gunpowder smell inside the TSBD and the critic might reply, at least parenthetically, that there was none (Mooney 3H 289). This gives the reader a chance to do some deducing on his own, if he is perceptive, and can be inserted without becoming part of your argumentation.

Argument Two

Page 3, lines 11-13. The sentence is not entirely clear. It should be rephrased, perhaps along the following lines.

"The lower limit was designated as frame 210 because that is the first frame at which the line-of-sight between the gunman in the sixth-floor window and Kennedy was restored after temporary obstruction by an oak tree."

Page 6 When you refer to photograph 18 of CE 875, give the volume and page numbers because those photos are not captioned.

You are interpreting Hudson's testimony as proof that the Stemmons sign was moved or removed before the May 1964 reenactments by the FBI; but doesn't the location of the sign in CEs 888-897 correspond with its location in the Zapruder frames? Under your hypothesis of the "wounded sign" (would you consider a different term, perhaps "fractured sign" or "damaged sign"?) it has to be removed from sight because it has been hit by a bullet. But that evidence could have been concealed by substituting a replica of the sign in the exact same location. Nevertheless, the sign was apparently moved and then removed entirely, suggesting an attempt to create confusion about the exact location of the Presidential limousine when the first shot struck JFK (i.e., increasing the distance between the car and the Depository to account for the surprisingly shallow trajectory of the shot that penetrated the neck, under the Commission's findings).

On the same page, the two sentences in parentheses, "...will show you that they...", might be clarified, perhaps along the following lines.

"(A brief look at the aerial photograph opposite page 14 shows that it would be impossible for a bullet fired from the sixth-floor window to strike both the President and the Stemmons Freeway sign.)"

A personal comment: I had always assumed that if a bullet struck the sign, it struck the back of the sign. If a bullet had hit the front of the sign, would it still cause the stress lines seen in frame 212 and thereafter? Would it leave visible marks on the front of the sign as photographed by Willis?

Page 10 Sentence followed by footnote 8 and text of footnote: I don't find in Shaneyfelt Exhibit 33 the "area behind the concrete wall...top portion of the knoll near the picket fence." Maybe I have not visualized the terrain correctly.

Argument Three

Page 1 Line 9, "shooter" (and wherever the term is used in the manuscript):
I would suggest that you replace the word with "gunman" or "rifleman."

Page 1 and Diagram 1 As I told you on the phone, it is impossible to say that Frazier designated frames 236-239 as a second permissible span, even by inference. He said explicitly, "Now, this obviously indicates that the Governor in between frame 235 and frame 240 has turned from facing completely forward in the car around to the right to the point that a bullet entering his back on the right shoulder area would have exited in my opinion somewhere from his left chest area rather than from his right chest area." Frazier categorically rules out 236-239 in this statement (5H 170). He testified repeatedly (5H 170-171) that the permissible span was 207-225 and although he did refer to "one position beyond frame 225" he did not specify what it was.

How, then, can the Commission possibly justify its assertion that, "At some point between frames 235 and 240, therefore, is the last occasion when Governor Connally could have received his injuries..." on the basis of Frazier's testimony? And if they pervert his testimony into its exactly opposite meaning (yes into no, black into white, although there was no ambiguity whatever in what he said), how can a reader of the Report have confidence in the Commission's version of the testimony of any other witnesses? It is only when every assertion in the text is traced back to the source that it becomes possible to decide whether or not it is accurate and faithful--an exercise undertaken only by perhaps eight people in the whole country.

Diagram 2 bottom lines, "Compare with LIFE photo opposite page 2 and see..."

Page 2 The text of footnote 7 is missing. On the 5th line from the bottom, "vicious" (spelling); but I would prefer the word "sharp" or "abrupt".

And, of course, the treatment of frames 236-239 has to be brought into line with Frazier's actual testimony. (Sorry to harp on that, but it is a matter of cardinal importance.)

Page 4 (position of Governor's hand) Here are my notes on viewing frame 231 of the Zapruder color slides at the National Archives 7/22/65:

(Excerpts)

The Governor's hand appears larger and more distinct, slightly more to the right of his tie knot than in 230. A small section of white cuff still shows above the door handle. The palm is against the chest and the fingers go upwards, with the top of the hand slightly below the top of the glass in the side panel. However, when viewed under magnifying glass, the perspective changes and it can be seen that the Governor's hand interrupts and covers the bottom of the metal on his side of the side panel; he has moved his hand away from his body and toward the side of the car, with palm facing body.

The projectionist agreed with me that the hand obliterates the bottom of the metal frame of the side panel.

232 The Governor has now moved his hand slightly away from the side panel, and the metal is now visible as an unbroken vertical line. The hand is still quite high, although near the right nipple at the wrist.

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Argument Four

Page 8 middle of page: Is it the discrepancy which is ludicrous, or the attempt? I would think "...a ludicrous attempt to reconcile this discrepancy."

Page 13 Last sentence on the page: Why not quote directly from Jones (Dr Ronald) Exhibit 1 instead of referring to Specter's paraphrase of Jones' report?