

26 August 1968

David Lifton
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Dear David,

Thank you for sending the copies of your correspondence with Epstein on his New Yorker article. Before going into that, let me mention that Sauvage asked me the other night about the non-receipt of the book for which he had sent a pre-paid order. I explained that there had been a delay but that it should arrive momentarily.

and wrote to CCI on it

I did see the article by Maggie Field in the CCI Newsletter, /copy of which I will xerox in the morning and enclose with this (or send separately later, if I cannot use the machine). The references to me verged on innuendo, and I commented on them. But my letter to CCI was mainly to point out that none of those who wrote critiques of Epstein's piece even tried to refute his central and damning charges against Garrison, such as the code, the initial interview report on Russo, etc.

Now, let me congratulate you on your well-reasoned and excellent analysis of the shocking elements in Epstein's article. I have just read both your letters and the 9-page analysis and I believe that I agreed completely with everything you said (perhaps with one minor exception, which I don't even remember now). Moreover, I admired the tone, which was friendly but entirely firm. I would like to think that Epstein will give due thought to your excellent criticisms and suggestions, but I am not optimistic.

I am not optimistic because, as indicated in my letter to him, I feel that he conned me with avowed intentions to ask a new investigation, for the very same set of considerations you posed, and then quite deliberately reneged. In other words, I do not believe that his position is governed by the merits of objections but by quite different considerations. For example, long before his article was published, I informed him in writing that his attribution to Ray Marcus of "cowboy hats" was absolutely incorrect and false; yet he did not delete or change his reference, which converts it from an innocent or careless error to a malicious misrepresentation. I also argued very strongly (and on much the same grounds as you did) against his treatment of the prints on the rifle and Oswald's alibi (it was Sauvage who first devastated the Commission's travesty of a reenactment, in the French edition of his book--now I think of it, that was the "minor point" of disagreement mentioned above, but since WWI appeared before the English edition of Sauvage's book, I would not press the point). Again, Epstein ignored my arguments, although he did not refute them (and it was only when I saw the published article that I realized with bitterness and indignation that he had not altered the original ms., while putting me to considerable and prolonged work to provide the comments and suggestions he had solicited).

You have done a really fine job in exposing the fallacies and sophistries of his position to Epstein. I would like Arnoni to see this exchange of letters. Look for his editorial on Epstein in the next TMO--he was so disgusted with the New Yorker article that he bawled me out for ever helping Epstein; and, indeed, I will not do that again. Thrice burned is enough. Someone mentioned that you have an article coming out in The Atlantic Monthly. True? If so, congratulations also on that...Why not let me know these things ??? Had another long harangue from Weisberg re my financial contribution to Thornley--this time, complaining that no one ever offered him a cent, although he is broke and being harassed by Bringuier, etc. at great expense to him. I was less tempted than ever to send Harold a check; and will ignore his second letter and future effronteries from him. All the best,

Selvia

P.S. I would also suggest that you send copies of your exchange of letters with Epstein confidentially to Tom Bethell in New Orleans.