

August 29, 1968

Dear Sylvia,

Received your letter of August 26, 1968.

I was given delivery of all the books for which I had orders today, and spent the afternoon stuffing jet packs, cutting up cardboard stiffeners, pasting on shipping labels and postage etc. Everything was mailed tonight at the post office. I sent yours Special Delivery/Parcel Post (4th class) and mailed it, along with one other expedited book, directly at the airport. So perhaps you will receive it this weekend.

Re Maggie's article. I think your letter of August 26 is quite good, and I am going to include it with *your* letter to Epstein which I am sending to about 30 west coast people next week. I will send you a list of those who will receive both items the day they are mailed. (The first time I read Maggie's article, by the way, her remarks about you sailed right by me. Even after several readings, I kept wondering if I was being paranoid by imparting to her remarks the veiled cattiness that I thought was there. They are just below the threshold of explicitness that would be required for most readers of the newsletter. I think your letter very does a very good job of bringing these charges into their proper focus, and then refuting them---all quite calmly done.)

Thanks for your very nice remarks regarding the material I wrote to Epstein. I will send a copy to Bethell next week. I will also sent the same material to Arnoni. Other than that, you and Epstein are the only two that received the material. If you want to show it to anyone, or duplicate it, feel free to do so. If you want me to mail it to anyone, just say so. As you say, I don't think my comments are going to make one bit of difference. But I wanted to be on record, and have that sort of critique available to distribute to anyone that I might want to. For that reason, I didn't take Epstein to task on a host of other (and smaller) points that I kept finding, the more closely I read the article.

I am not writing any article for the Atlantic. Perhaps that information stems from Epstein's suggestion to me, as well as Dick Billings' that, if there is interest in the Thornley case (assuming a trial date is someday set) I ought to send in a complete article. In fact, Billings' said he would help me get it placed. Epstein told me that Michael Curtis, who was quite a controversial figure at Cornell while I was there, is now one of the editor's at the Atlantic. I am still working on various Thornley materials. I am now trying to finish a critique of the Garrison press release. This Sunday, I am supposed to head a meeting of Kerry's friends, and Bill O'Connell and Harry Pollard (also of KPFK) both want to do radio programs about Kerry in about a month.

About Fred Newcomb. There is no secret, as far as I know, about what he has done. Here, in a nutshell, is what that is about.

There are two poses of Oswald with rifle. Fred made a transparency of one of the poses, to start with. This transparency is not a 35mm color slide; rather, it is a large, approximately

except for EIS
letter to me
copy to Bethell
Arnoni.

5 by 7" black and white transparency of one of the two poses. (A black and white transparency is exactly like a negative except that it is reversed; it bears the same relationship to a black and white print, that a color transparency bears to a color print. And, of course, in this case, it is 5 by 7", rather than a small 35mm slide).

Then, Fred made another similar transparency of the second pose. He made the second transparency, on his enlarger, so that the head of Oswald in that pose would be ~~XXXXXX~~ the same size. To his surprise, he found that not only was this possible, they were photographically identical heads. Not a hair is out of place. But this was only the beginning.

More important, Fred found that when the heads were made the same size, the resulting picture was such that the bodies were of different sizes; (they differ by about 5-8%, I think.)

The work he did was so exact, that the two transparencies can be put, one against the other, and held up to the light. The heads overlay one another perfectly; not a hair is out of place. And the bodies are just of different sizes. Its a weird thing to see.

This exhibit suggests that the head is pasted on the body. Here is why it is unlikely, if at all possible, that this could result from a simple box camera. Lets say Marina takes the first pose, winds her film, and then takes her second pose. Even if she moved between poses (toward or away from ~~XXX~~ LHO with his rifle) there is no reason for the ratio between the head size and the body size to change. When transparencies are made, so that the heads register perfectly, the body's should be of the same size also.

There are some minor flaws in the argument. 1) Could the lens of the camera cause the effect? 2) Suppose Oswald was leaning, either forward or backward. Wouldn't that account for it? 3) Doesn't the exhibit only prove that one of the two poses is phoney, and not both? I think "3" is a valid point, though if either of the pictures was shown to be phoney due to an inconsistency of this nature, it would cast doubt on the validity of both of them. I think two is highly improbable. It would take an awful lot of leaning to move your whole torso so close to the camera that it changed the ratio of head-to-body that much. I don't think the lens could cause the effect, mainly because both pictures are centered in the viewfinder (according to the "original" negative found in the garage, and the "original" print for which there is no negative). Therefore, the lens should have the same reproducing effect on both poses, not a different one. A friend of mine may do some work on ironing out the technical details, regarding lenses.

Re Weisberg. I find it difficult to believe that Weisberg really thinks Thornley had anything whatsoever to do with the assassination of JFK. That he writes you the kinds of letters you report leaves one no choice but to accept him at his word. I have more to say on the subject of Weisberg, and will perhaps do so in a future letter. On the Thornley matter, I find it difficult to take him seriously, and regard him as something of a dangerous clown. The utter preposterousness with which he pursues Thornley keeps me from getting as angry as I might.

re Weisberg

One person I know, sympathetic to Garrison and even to Harold, recently admitted to me: "Harold's the type of guy who you wish were on the other side." This struck a chord with me, as did Garrison's "eating with the guards" statement re Epstein, which was really quite well put.

I met George Rennar a few weeks ago. He was down here for a while. We spent one long evening discussing the case at my apartment, and we went out on a double date one night, when I fixed him up on a blind date. George is a law graduate, soon to take the bar. His specialty is criminal law. I spent much of the evening that we spent alone attacking Garrison, and I think it was the first time he had been subjected to anything like that. Almost everyone out here is sympathetic to Garrison, to one degree or another. The only people I find that really irritate me are the blind true-believers, especially the ones whose arrogance is born of blind simplemindedness. I can't stand true believer's of any type. In fact, when I run into people who don't believe the Warren Report, and I suspect that they really have never bothered to base their feelings on informed criticism, I frequently argue the other side just to bring to the surface the sorry state of affairs. There is a look of panic and suspicion that enters their eyes when, with nothing to back them up but faith in Mort Sahl and Elliot Mintz, I argue the case for the lone assassin so well that they start to wonder just where I stand! I usually end up by attempting to relate their ill-founded position towards Jim Garrison with their ill-founded position on the Warren Report. Well, perhaps someday in the middle of such an intellectually sadistic enterprise, I will be hauled away by members of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to True Believers.

In

I will be examining the LHO pictures this weekend, for the points you mentioned in your Aug 19 letter.

Best regards,

David
David

P.S. Rereading this page, I want to assure you that George Rennar is no true believer, though he is not unsympathetic to Garrison. The true believers I actually had in mind were Steve Jaffe, Elliot Mintz, and Steve Burton.

I think, Sylvia, that many of the people who have a sympathetic wait-and-see attitude towards Garrison find it difficult to believe that Garrison is bluffing the pants off the U.S. government with nothing but a pair of two's in his hand. I believe this to be the case, and am going to make this point on the radio programs; that I wish Garrison would come to trial! For with each passing day, the bubble gets bigger. And when it does finally burst, an awful lot of people are going to be awfully disappointed.