

Dec. 13, 1968

Dear Sylvia,

I want to thank you so much for the various items you sent me.

A few comments on each. As far as Bishop's book goes, I just accept the fact that there will always be people like Bishop who will take the publicly available Warren Report and its 26 volumes of underlying documentation, and write about that weekend as he did. I was particularly revulsed at what I thought were his totally unnecessarily ~~XXXXX~~ gory treatment of the medical aspects. I thought that your work was rather conspicuously absent from his sources, at the end, and perhaps the one line in the entire book which, more than any other, is a touchstone of his accuracy, is the one where, describing various materials available, he states that "for the absolute truth", there was always Chuck Roberts book for reference purposes. What a laugh!

Epstein's review should be made "Exhibit A" for fence-straddling. He is still trying to sound like a critic, and not sound like one, at the same time.

Your comments on the Bishop interview were very enjoyable to read. Might I ask you a question? Do you know if there is any indication that the Dallas police ever screened the Zapruder film? In your commentary, you made the point that such had not occurred by a certain time, Friday afternoon.

I liked the Sauvage article, very much. (I had four years of French in high school, 1 in college, and spent one summer there; I have a fair vocabulary, but a lousey accent.)

I do not have your last letter in front of me right now, but you asked me a question about whether you had sent me a copy of a particular item. Your recollection is correct, as stated in your letter, that you did not. I cannot resist the feeling that Weisberg is trying to foment mischief and trouble when he misstates facts of that type. And, of course, I will certainly treat any info you wish to pass on to me in confidence, appropriately.

Enclosed find two items. The first is a xerox copy of a new story that appeared in the Tampa Times, November 27. The clip was sent to me yesterday by Kerry; you may already have it, he didn't specify how many he had sent out. I was somewhat upset that Newcomb's name was not blocked out. As Kerry explained in the letter, he was too. The whole thing was done by his lawyer, and it was a complete surprise to Kerry, who learned of it when his wife saw it in the papers. The second item is my reply to Fensterwald, which I finally typed up last night. (I am answering a rather long letter from Schoener, and one from Madeline Goddard; when these are finished, I will send you copies. I think you will be quite amused and somewhat outraged at the sort of "arguments" I have to contend with.)

About tape and transcribing. I am amazed at the apparent thoroughness and efficiency with which you catalogue and collect materials. I can't tell you of my surprise when I sent you that little 3 or 4 minute tape, to get back a finished transcript which you could simply pull out of a file; or of getting back an index like that, within days of the time you read the Exec.Session transcript.

A girl who does transcripting for me finally completed one tape I had gotten hold of last year. This is a tape that was obtained from the Voice of America, via the US Information Agency. It is the entire Earl Warren press conference when he faced reporters in Lima, Peru, in the Spring of 1967.

I have now a complete transcript of the sections of the tape which deal with the Warren Report.

Do you already have a copy of this tape, or a transcript? If not, let me know, if you would like a copy of the transcript, as I can have one run off on the Xerox machine next time I get materials together for xeroxing. (The tape itself, is very interesting to listen to, and projects --I think--an aura of fatherliness on Warren's part that simply does not come through in the transcript.)

On the same subject, do you keep some type of master list of transcripts that you do have, and of tapes that you have? Hal Verb, for example, has such a list. He has about 155 tapes on it, and he showed it to me last year. Of these on the list, I asked him for Theatre of New Ideas, and, I believe, this Warren Interview.

I have not constructed such a list yet, as I am using a card file, and I have not yet created a card for each tape yet, let alone a transcript. But I am working at it.

Do you have such a list, of transcripts and/or tapes, as Hal Verb made of his collection? If you do, could you make it available to me? As I do not have such a list yet, all I can do is let you know of interesting looking items as they cross my path, or as they are completed. (Example: about a month ago, I transcribed the "Newman" interview from Mark Lane's film. That, certainly, is the earliest recorded recollection of one of the most important knoll witnesses.)

I also want to thank you for the copy of Joesten's newsletter. I enjoyed your article, and hope TMO will publish the longer one you told me you submitted there.

One last item: Harold Weisberg was out here in October, and I spoke to him for about an hour or so. I made lots of notes, but I haven't worked up a memo on it, simply because it seems like such a waste of time. There is practically nothing he says that I don't dispute and, despite his somewhat cute and lovable nature---sometimes---he is an unbelievably dirty fighter. The thing that annoys me the most is the way he ~~mis~~ misrepresents his sources of information regarding information damaging to Kerry as coming from Kerry's friends!

Still another item. About Nov 22, the JFK Truth Committee held a meeting out here, which I attended. A number of people gave little talks concerning some facet of the case. Newcomb, for example, presented his slides on the LHC with rifle pictures; I gave a little talk on LHC and the state department, and I read from Bauline Bates' testimony and from Bates Exhibit 1.

Stephen Jaffe literally hogged 90% of the program, talking about Garrison. I only wish I had a tape of what he said. (No one taped it, as far as I knew.)

He told a story of how someone on Robert Kennedy's staff, or connected with his campaign, told Jaffe that Kennedy's position in private was quite different, on Garrison, than in public. I believe that either the conversation ~~XXXXXX~~ took place in, or the person comes from, Indiana. But what was explicitly stated was that Jaffe had conferred with such a person, and that this person was connected with Robert Kennedy. (The incident was supposed to have taken place last Spring.)

The import of this story clearly made Jaffe the representative of Garrison's staff who was contacted by an "emissary", although he did not state it that way. He told it by way of corroborating the fact that such an attitude on Robert Kennedy's part did, in fact, exist.

Who knows if Jaffe was telling the story for the first time, that night; or whether this isn't the root of still another of Garrison's "emissary" stories, from the past.

Last September, Jaffe came by my apartment to pick up his copy of Document Addendum. We quickly got into a discussion and argument over Garrison, and that, in turn, quickly converged down to the issue of Russo, and the Sciambra investigative report. Jaffe went into quite some detail on this, and told me that all the ANTI-G critics were wrong on this matter. Jaffe claimed to have seen the "entire" investigative report. He stated that Phelan either: a) didn't see the "entire" report or that b) Phelan did not see what was in there, for the entire report does indeed contain material which supports Russo's testimony.

I questioned Jaffe as to what he meant by "the entire" report, for, from the way he was saying it, I got the impression that Phelan had not been shown what Jaffe claims is "the entire" report; which, as far as I am concerned, means that there may exist a portion of Sciambra's report which was in fact added after the Phelan story broke, but put under the same date.

Another possibility is that there is something in the original report which Phelan did see (and presumably does have) which Garrison will insist, at the trial, is a discussion of the plot to which Russo later referred.

I am not too worried about this second possibility, for if the document is not altered or amended, I don't think a jury will be fooled, and I think Shaw's lawyers will act competently and correctly. If the issue simply boils down to a common sense interpretation of a series of sentences and paragraphs, I have no worries, for I don't think Phelan would have written what he did based on a dubious interpretation.

What does concern me, however, is the first possibility. And that is that (Garrison had) Sciambra amend his report, in a style which looks as though it naturally continues, do so at a later date, and yet do so in a manner which conceal the fact that it is a portion that was dictated later.

I left no doubt in Jaffe's mind that I thought Garrison was simple minded and corrupt enough to do such a thing, and convince himself he had done nothing wrong.

The whole line of thinking was inspired when, when I cited Phelan's article and the Sciambra report as a perfect example of the fraudulence of Garrison's case, Jaffe retorted to the effect that the incident described in Russo's testimony was "in the report that I read."

Before this argument ended, I made it perfectly clear to Jaffe that I felt every right to pass on what he had just told me to Phelan and/or Shaw's attorneys.

I also scolded him for being such a blind devotee that he could tell me what he had (which I feel he did only out of his irresistible sense of showing me that he is important enough to be able to read "inside information" like a Garrison investigative report) and not realize what it might imply about Garrison's ethics and standards.

The whole discussion between myself and Jaffe took place at about 2 in the morning, and I was so tired that I went to bed immediately afterwards, and have not written it up, or done anything with it.

Now, however, that the Shaw case is cleared for trial, and if it does come to trial, I think the above possibility should be communicated to Shaw's attorney's and/or Phelan.

Do you have any suggestions as to how this might be done? I have every intention of doing it. I just want it to be done in an orderly and properly way.

On reflection, it would not surprise me in the least that Garrison will have to come up with something to keep his star witness Russo, from being impeached by Phelan's article. In retrospect, it appears clear that there are only two ways this can be done: either amend the report (omitting the date, or deliberately misrepresenting the amendment), or claim that something already in the report supports what he says.

I'm sorry about the length of this letter. I had no intention of letting it grow this big.

With warm regards,
David *David*