

March 21, 1969

Dear Sylvia,

Just got your Commonweal review of Flammonde's book. I think you expressed your anger and contempt for the G investigation quite eloquently. I suppose you realize, however, that it won't move the blind devotees one inch. I am suprised to find the extent to which they still support Garrison. Some examples. There is a girl who works at the periodicals desk at the UCLA library. She is from New Orleans, is rebelling against home, but not so much as to have avoided bragging, in the past, that her folks have had Garrison over for dinner. ~~XXXXXX~~ During a trip home last summer, she was present when Garrison was at her home; my stories had just come out in Open City. Apprently, they disturbed him a bit; but he said: "Well, the Free Press is still with me." I ran into her the other day. She had promised to eat crow if Garrison really didn't have anything and fell on his face. I found a very determined stare, and the phrase: "Of course Shaw's guilty!! They couldn't convict him, you know. You just don't understand New Orleans."

After Fred's slide lecture the other night (on the train being removed from the Willis slide), I tuned in on some of the small talk. One person said: "Well, one thing is for sure; Garrison has proved Shaw is a perjurer." And others simply disagreed with the jury's decision, and thought he was guilty.

When I see how easy it is, for people to believe anything they damn please, and on the flimsiest of evidence, merely because it fits with their conception of what a plot looks like, or who killed JFK, you get some appreciation of what would have happened in this country, back in 1963/64, if some pronouncement by some authoritative body hadn't been pronounced; or if an honest investigation had come to the conclusion that they just didn't know who was behind it, based on the information produced by the investigators, except that there was more than one shooter, and hence a conspiracy. I liked the editorial in the States-Item, reprinted from southern paper, comparing the women in the courtroom who screeched "No!" when the jury returned the acquittal verdict to the French fishwives who wouldn't get to witness another execution by the guillotine.

By the way, Art Kunkin is appearing on a series of programs on KPFF, lauding Garrison, and reconstructing events to make it look like there was so much accomplished. I tried to get on the program. The moderator went to Kunkin, and returned with the message that Kunkin definitely didn't want me on the program, "...and he was quite emphatic about that." This week, Kunkin ran the 2nd or third in a series of articles he is doing on the trial. I presume you get the Free Press? If not, let me know. You would probably want these articles for ~~KKK~~ your files.

From Fred (who got it from Lillean) I understand that Ray had written Garrison a "Dear Jim" letter of condolence, expressing the thought that he is a great man for having tried so hard.

I have been trying to switch Shoener's point of view. I feel sure that if he lived nearby, and I could speak with him regularly, and at no cost, I could switch his viewpoint. In a recent letter I wrote him, I compared the argument that Garrison lost the trial because of "trial errors" to an argument with a person on the issue of Vietnam, in which one person is holding the position that the war is immoral, and that we shouldn't even be there, while the opponent

constantly argues about how much we should bomb, that we might win if only another 100,000 troops were sent. One simply must take a moral position on Garrison. Is there a plot structure there? I could sympathize with a local DA who, having actually uncovered something substantial and solid, was then getting hamstrung because of rules of evidence, technicalities regarding evidence, relevancy etc. But at least he should start with some type of competently researched plot structure, something that would at least read well to a man of intelligence! But Garrison had nothing but a witness with a tale to tell. And he warped and twisted everything in sight to make it fit a scenario which has its roots and substance in Russo's weird recollections.

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*get Ray to give*

Switching subject, the main reason I am writing is to tell you that Gary Schoener called Fred (and I) last night to report what had become of his effort to the Zapruder film back to Fred. He went over to Vince's house and they placed a call from there to Ray Marcus. He thought Vince understood perfectly. But within minutes of the time Ray answered the phone, Vince had switched positions, and it was three against one, with Vince really screaming and yelling at Garry. Gary said he could hardly get in a word edgewise; that the most difficult thing to deal with was an apparently very close Marcus/Salandria bond. Salandria does not know the Marcus I know, Fred knows, and Gary is getting to know. Salandria became putty in Ray's hands.

Furthermore, Gary said that everytime he's corner Ray, Leitha would throw in such intelligent questions as "But how do you know Jaffe didn't put the splices in there?" This question is really silly, as I'm sure you'll agree, if you read the memo.

Which brings me to the next thing. Ray claimed that he "hadn't had the time to read the memo", but that he would do so in the next few days. I simply don't believe that. Ray Marcus simply doesn't have that much to do, and I'm sure he didn't receive that many special delivery letters that day (Monday) that he couldn't have digested letter and memo by Thursday night.

Also, Ray kept dragging up the most silly irrelevancies about Fred's past work, or quoting conversations and opinions he held long ago and that he has since dropped. (Once, for example, he thought Harold's road strip argument was valid, before the fallacy was pointed out. My god; how petty and mean can you get to quote that to prove "bad judgement", to validate your case for not returning the Zapruder film.)

I'm going to try to call Salandria next week, (on a new WATS line I have just learned about and to which I may get access). But it is sad to hear Gary tell me that although Vince has never said it, I will have problems of credibility because Ray has made sure to undercut me in three areas. 1) I once went to a psychiatrist, after "flipping out"; 2) I see "men in trees" and, most incredulous of all 3) I think Johnson and Ruska were involved in a plot. This is really dirty pool. I don't suppose I have to even go into the first, but critics like Ray and Vince have gotten so paranoid on this case that every time they see "black", they think its "white in disguise", and everytime they see "white", its "black in disguise". That's why Ray can be shown splices, beautiful direct evidence of an elaborate plot in operation that weekend, and find the "Jaffe-is-an-agent-who-put-the-splices-there" hypothesis, more credible than the sensible idea that Fred may just have discovered

*and that  
was 1/66.  
How much  
more time  
must pass  
RM consider  
that past  
Fense?*

\* who constantly rereads on the  
"post-war foreign policy shift"  
3 who does he think makes foreign policy -  
Will Fritz and obs cure CIA agents??

something of immense importance, that had gone unnoticed before!!

Exactly why Vincent Salandria\* thinks talk about Johnson and Rusk is absurd I don't know. Perhaps he thinks I have Johnson on the grassy knoll, firing a gun? Can he be that silly? And doesn't he realize that any such noises I have made were for private consumption, and that before going public with even that type of unnuendo, let alone specific charges, I'd have to produce evidence to measure up to it?

In the same vein, Gary told me not to say this to Vince, but that Vince has voiced skepticism that I am even writing a book because it has taken so long! Manchester, who is a professional writer and who didn't have to do any sophisticated or ingenious detective work or researching, because he accepted the Warren Report, took 3½ years to put together an error strewn and false reconstruction. And Vince, himself, I am told, took off 6 months to do the work that produced his original Liberation articles. What kind of talk is that. Furthermore, according to Gary, he even made some type of remark that if "Kroman didn't have anything, I don't understand how Lifton could." I don't know who Kroman is, except that he is another in the cast of characters in that farce down there in New Orleans. It would be insulting to be compared that way to him, if it wasn't so funny. (Just this week, Fred (who has really done a turnaround on Garrison) got permission to show me some of the Turner memos, Boxley memos, and other materials which were considered "Top Secret" by that office. I roared with laughter as I read them. They are unbelievable. Bernie's reaction, on seeing samples from the notebook at lunch today was: "And this is what they've been hiding from you?" Sure, Garrison was fed a lot of junk. But he's responsible for eating it!)

All this is to say that I don't expect I'll have much influence over Salandria, who I consider somewhat muddleheaded and fuzziyminded. Well, I might as well be more blunt. I don't see how it is possible to subsist on a diet of the memos that I saw, call that evidence, and be able to come away without it having any effect on you. I think irrationality has almost become an accepted form of behavior, among some of these people.

One more item. About trees. You know, I haven't pushed that, but in my heart, I think that's how it was done. Well, you should know of the following incident. About 12 seconds of the DCA film has a segment of the Martin film, within one minute of the shooting, with Martin panning the knoll. Fred has the DCA film, and we were all viewing it a week or two ago. He stopped the camera when it was directly pointed at the knoll. I went up to the screen, pointed at a given area, and asked them to watch that area, that is where my work with the will and bond slides indicated camouflage. Well, Fred ran through it the first time. His daughter fairly schreeched: "Daddy, did you see that!" Fred hadn't been looking at it. So he ran it again. Sure enough, up in the tree line is what I can only describe as a very weird, unmistakable, macroscopic movement of a very large clump of foliage that ~~KXXXXX~~ couldn't possibly be due to wind, and which looks awfully contrived. Fred sees it. I see it. His daughter sees it. Yet our combined observations don't amount to a hill of beans when it comes to evidence. The concept is so outlandish and ridiculous sounding that, even if it were done,

the only way it will ever be proven is through direct evidence of its installation at a previous hour.

But anyway, I brought this up to show you how Ray can combine "men in trees" with ~~X~~ psychiatry to form a totally fraudulent picture of another person's intellect. I've seen him do that to me. Fred is now having ~~KMK~~ a similar experience in which ~~MAXXXXXXX~~ Fred undercut him with Vince, using whatever twigs he could grab at.

So thats the latest news.

The irony is that, pending some breakthrough with Ray Marcus, our only hope for getting an 8mm copy of the Zarpduer film is by Jaffe writing a nice letter to LaMarre, and literally begging for it.

I don't really trust Jaffe that much, but, <sup>irony of irony</sup> would you believe, he has actually switched his position on Garrison. He appears to feel he was "used", and expresses quite a bit of annoyance that Garrison didn't have more!

I feel like telling Life Magazine that if they really wanted to protect that film, so that it would never see the light of day, all they had to do was give it to Ray Marcus!

I'm interested in hearing your reaction to the letter and memo, which I suppose you got today. My theory is that you might be able to do something, woman-to-woman, with Leitha. But you are really the best judge of that, and I may be entirely wrong. Its my feeling that unless she is swayed, and starts talking back to Ray on this partiulcar subject, that film will never leave his hands.

Best wishes,

David

David