

13 August 1966

Dear Ray,

Thanks for sending the Mosk clipping; this time, I won't lose it. Thanks also for your three-page letter of the 10th, to which I will try to send as much as I can of a proper reply in the time remaining before I dash to the airport to meet my niece, who has been vacationing in Rome.

Before I forget: an emissary from Studies on the Left got in touch with me the other night, to ask if I would be willing to do an article on the four major books and the renewed controversy about the WR. I told them I was very reluctant to write something when there is so much good stuff already written but not published—ie your bastard-bullet article. The emissary took one look and said it was out of the question because of the length, and probably because it was too specialized and sophisticated for their present purposes. So far as Arnoni is concerned, he has not been ready to look at anything yet, being still in the throes of giving birth to the September issue, and some urgent (non-WR) developments such as the Vietnam/Cambodia situation, the SG-ship of the UN, etc. Please don't delay attempts to interest a publisher pending Arnoni's availability, because the prospects are really so dim so far as TMO is concerned.

Also, I am enclosing the two lists of press clippings received since Maggie's departure (I had been sending them to her, as you know). I am handicapped by lack of access to a photocopying apparatus, even a commercial one, until I return to work at the office. Could you either copy the lists and mail them to Maggie in Paris, or, alternatively, could you save them for her to see on her return? I leave it to your judgment.

Your situation with Dave is probably representative of many of the mutual abrasions among any two cooperating researchers, although perhaps somewhat more serious because of the factor of instability which is not related to the case as such. I think that intense commitment to the investigation has thrown people together who otherwise would never have formed any friendship or association, and who in some cases are really incompatible in every respect except interest in the same wholly-absorbing subject. I don't misunderstand your comments, never fear. I find myself quick to irritation and resentment these days—as I never used to be—and I suspect we are all reacting to a very prolonged strain, labor, and discouragement. And while I used to dispense freely and quixotically everything that I uncovered, I have become much more guarded, partly for the reasons you sketched in your letter and partly because I don't like to be exploited, for questionable motives, even by fellow-researchers.

Epstein is an upper-middle-class product, not a crusader. His intellectual and moral process is affected, whether consciously or otherwise, by his concern for his future career, by his desire to reach the Roveres and Goodwins—without whom (and maybe even with whom) nothing will change—by some inherent confusion, intellectually and morally, and by an empathy with the WC lawyers, or some of them, as well as by fairly strong conviction that LHO was deeply involved in the assassination, whether or not he fired the shots. I might say also that Ed is (to me) rather a one-dimensional, charmless, humorless, and often mannerless person. I am continuing a close association with him because of what he has accomplished, and what he may yet be able to accomplish, in opening the way for others, who are ready and willing to take a bold position, toward the ultimate objective which I think is a common denominator among all of us. When Epstein refers to "demonologists" he is being silly, and perhaps offensive—although again I think it is a ploy tossed to the Roveres, not his view of most of the researchers. Yes—it's unfair and reprehensible; when the case is over, I may be angry about it. But not now.

With all his shortcomings, Epstein has personal ethics and within certain limits he has intellectual integrity, although morally he is no lion. When we come to Mark Lane, I have to recognize that he made an important contribution in two ways--first by forcing the WC to rebut some charges ("rebut" that should be) on items of evidence that otherwise they would have been delighted to remain silent about. Second, by keeping alive at a crucial period in time the concept that Oswald might be innocent, at a moment when the whole atmosphere was extremely demoralizing.

I have since learned--first to my sorrow, then disgust, then rage--that Lane is a totally unprincipled person. He is completely out for himself, and ruthless. I have heard him called amoral. That is too generous. He is a thief, a plagiarizer, a liar, and seems to be attuned to blackmailing as well. I suppose that he did not go so far as to label anyone a demonologist--he just made all the other researchers (who did not serve as his acolytes and claque) non-persons. What tremendous pains he took in his book to avoid crediting or even mentioning Sauvage, Salandria (I know he does mention him once, but not in the text-proper), Epstein, Weisberg, or anyone else. Where Weisberg is concerned, it is a matter of sauce for the gander--he, even more than Lane, has a paranoid obsession which tells him that there is no researcher except he himself; that the other researchers, if they publish anything, have stolen it from his book; that Arnoni, Salandria, Popkin, and others are in a conspiracy or were in one (some have redeemed themselves, and are transferred to the inactive shit-list), against his book and against him. Weisberg has worn my patience very thin--every letter is staggering under the weight of his complaints, persecution to plagiarism, and the dreary recitals of his financial outlay (does he think I get free typewriter ribbons, telephone privileges, or carfare?). He is the kind of man who asks me to buy a copy of my own Subject Index for him at the author's price, to save him 40¢--never mind that my time is worth something, that the 40¢ comes off my royalties, and that I have the additional cost of mailing the book to him (I am now speaking of his reasoning, not my own.) Naturally, I did the only possible thing--I bought a copy of the Subject Index (my own supply being exhausted) through a third party and sent it to him as a gift. If there was a "thank you" or a polite word about the Index, it has gone lost in the mail and never got to me. Nor a word about my piece on Hartogs...or anything else, ever. Everybody who is permitted to "exist" at all in the Weisberg mind exists only as a satellite to him, or as a demon out to do him harm in a spirit of purely gratuitous evil.

No, thanks: Where Weisberg is concerned, and certainly where Lane is, I'll take Ed--who is neither insane nor criminal, whatever else you want to say about him. Now, when we come to Sauvage, here is a complete gentleman and scholar. I have always had high regard for him; I have never had to kick myself in disappointment or disillusion. His personal dignity is such that I never feel my own dignity threatened, or my loyalties taxed, or my suspicion and resentment aroused.

Yes, I have been caught in the middle of the inside dispute about Epstein, and it has forced me to spend a lot of time on something for which I have little appetite.

About my manuscript: unfortunately I have only the master copy and two carbons, one of which is in Arnoni's custody. I would be happy to have you read it--not only read it, but give me the benefit of your comments and criticisms. As things stand, I couldn't spare my own carbon copy; but if and when I get around to having some Xerox copies made (frankly the cost puts me off--it will be about \$55 for a single Xerox copy), you will certainly get the ms. to read.

I didn't mean to ramble on this long and I will have to hasten with the remainder of my reply to the points in your letter. Your ideas on the Tague shot/curb chip should certainly be written up; try to keep it to 7 or 8 typewritten pages and I know that Arnoni would give it the most serious consideration.

I have some difficulty in commenting on the business of the Moorman photograph, because the material I was shown was made available only after solemn promises of secrecy. I can only reiterate that my understanding of what I was shown seems to eliminate all possibility of the 5 images being real physical bodies. There is one possibility of error and misunderstanding on my part, and I will inquire into it as soon as the opportunity arises--that is, that despite my impression that what I saw covers the same time period as the Moorman photo, it may have been a second or two afterward, in which time those images may have had time to drop (literally) out of eyerange.

The material I was shown is still being worked on, technically and otherwise. So far as I know, it will be made public when the avenues of exploration are fully investigated and the evidence as solid as possible. Again, let me emphasize that I know very little about it--some I have only inferred. So please do not hold me to anything, said verbally or written here, as I am stumbling around in the dark myself.

There is the doorbell now! I'd best be off^{to} the airport, I've been horribly negligent toward family as it is, for too long. Forgive my haste and incoherence,

Warmly,