

302 West 12 Street
New York NY 10014
30 December 1965

Dear Shirley,

Thank you very warmly for your friendly letter and for your generous comments. I am really sorry that we have not been in touch earlier in this strange two years, which I imagine has changed the lives of some of us completely and irreversibly. I first heard about you in a radio interview of Buchanan on a local station, shortly after the Warren Report came out. I didn't know how to reach you at that time. A few days later, I was visiting Marlene Behrends (she lives only a few short blocks from me but unfortunately we have not stayed in touch) when she received a phonecall from you. Again, I hesitated, not wishing to ask your phone number or address lest it appear that I was horning in. Later I found references to Shirley Martin in the Hearings and Exhibits; and still later I learned that Vince and you were friends, and that you and Penn Jones (a new acquaintance of mine) are in touch. So we have many mutual friends and I certainly feel that our lack of contact until now is merely technical.

Still, it is hard after two years of work for either of us to describe to the other exactly what we have done, how our thinking has evolved, and all the other day-to-day details. That is why I feel so chagrined that I did not take the initiative much earlier. When I first heard about you in the Buchanan broadcast, he said that you would be glad to make available your tape recordings and other material on the case. I have only recently acquired a tape recorder and if it is still possible to borrow any of your tapes, I should be most grateful. I can send you, if you are interested, the tapes of a five-hour radio panel discussion on the WR in which I participated (with Sylvan Fox and others) on November 14th.

I'll try to describe as briefly as possible what I have been doing on the case. I have compiled a subject index with about 400 categories of information, giving citations to the relevant material in the WR and each of the 26 volumes, by number, page, and name of witness or other identifying data in some cases; and a supplementary name index for about 800 names which are found in the Exhibits (some of which coincide with the names indexed in Volume XV), indicating in each case some identification (i.e., Dallas Police, witness Tippit shooting, etc). The two indexes will be published early in 1966 (I hope, early) by Scarecrow Press. I am waiting for the galleys now.

Second, I have written a series of letters to some of the counsel, asking them to clarify or explain certain discrepancies or contradictions or plain fabrications in the WR as compared to the official testimony or documents in the H & E. No replies received (other than inconsequential or evasive acknowledgments, promises to answer in substance which were not fulfilled, and in one case telephone "replies" on a confidential basis which added no real clarification whatever except to strengthen my impression that the whole investigation was incompetent, dishonest, and unbelievably prejudiced). I visited the Archives in July and examined the color slides of the Zapruder film and in my follow-up on questions which arose from the slides was told two serious lies by Shaneyfelt.

Third, I am writing a comparative study showing the flagrant contradictions between the WR and the H & E. I have written 300 pages already (about 80,000 words) which might almost be ready for publication as-is, as a first volume in a series. I would like to make the study comprehensive; but that will be such a long manuscript and take so many years to write that I am tempted to seek publication now for as much as I have written—which I have to say without false modesty probabls much deeper into the official "evidence" than Sylvan Fox's book, but which I must also admit doesn't hold a candle to his style and is difficult and dry reading. (My writing style has been greatly influenced by writing UN-officialese for 19 years, a real punishment to the reader.)

Lastly, I conceived of a project about a year ago (on first reading the H & E) which I thought then, and still think, has the most exciting and important possibilities---a "reading" of the testimony in a theater or on radio or TV. I did not have the time or the contacts to follow up on that idea but later on I mentioned it to someone who did. He was very excited about the possibilities and, with my full consent, approached a friend of his who is an off-Broadway producer with his own theater near my apartment. The prospects seemed very good, for a while, but as it now stands both men are so painfully slow in getting this off the ground that I told them frankly the other night that they will be doing the readings in Upper Volta by the time they manage to put together a working script. Furthermore, they have some ideas and approaches which are shocking and completely unacceptable to me; and they, in turn, do not accept my approach---the whole foundation of the idea---which is to show by means of the reading of certain testimony that the case for Oswald's innocence is far stronger than the case for his guilt. So I don't think anything will come of this, at least not now.

Shirley, can you please give some further clarification on Mrs Clemmons? Did you tape-record or otherwise transcribe your interview with her? If so, did ~~mm~~ you give a transcript of the questions and answers to anyone who might in turn have given the transcript to Dorothy Kilgallen? I am going to try to send you a Xerox of her story, so that you will see exactly what she quoted, and be in a better position to judge whether it is derived from your interview or from some different source. The importance of this is that in the story Miss Kilgallen wrote "Here are extracts from the actual documentation---interviews, affidavits and special reports---that presumably (will) appear in the Warren Commission report" ---suggesting that she obtained this transcript of the "interrogation of a woman (name withheld)" from a source within the Commission (as she had previously obtained the Ruby transcript).

I agree with your comments on Whaley and I especially agree with your analysis of JFK's maturation between 1961 and 1963. I have always felt that his June 1963 speech at American University was his death-warrant (just as I have been tempted to think that Oswald's statement on Saturday when shown the photograph of himself that he knew photography and he would prove it was a fake was his death warrant).

Shirley, to answer your question about showing anything I have written---I would be pleased and honored to have you read my manuscript. The difficulty is that I have a master copy at home and a carbon copy that I keep in my office so that I can use my lunch hour and any slack time to work on it there. So it is hard to send even part of the manuscript. However, if you won't be offended, I will send you two sections which I have since rewritten, but without making any fundamental changes. I will send those plus anything else that might interest you under separate cover.

Please let me hear from you again, and often. If you ever feel like phoning, my number is Area Code 212, Chelsea 2-4293 (I leave alone so station-to-station is just as good as person-to-person). Please send me you number, too. With best wishes for 1966, and renewed thanks,

Sincerely yours,

Sylvia Meagher

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