

January 2, 1965

Sylvia:

I am going to have Vickie go through my tapes to see if the Clemmons tape is still hearable. Then I'll send it to you. You can mail it back when you're through. Actually I can't remember who I sent it to or who got a transcript from me regarding it at the time. I am a lousy file keeper. (I notice Pen Jones is almost as sloppy as I am.) Someone asked me the other day if I made copies of my letters and I laughed. It was easier than crying. I am the world's worst. Nor have I had any formal education. My first remark on reading your letter was: "What beautiful writing." You express yourself so well, your punctuation is terrific (Somerset Maugham said this was the secret to great writing), and your entire presentation even in an ordinary friendly letter puts me to shame.

When I am asked for details of my contacts in the past, who I passed tapes to, etc., I am all at sea. I remember the Kilgallen interview (but I can't remember who told me about it); and I thought it seemed accurate, but I had no idea how she got it except to guess that she was a tenacious reporter to say the least. I am interested in your idea that Dorothy Kilgallen got the story from a Commission source. This would be startling. I remember calling a lady on the Dallas Morning News months ago in regard to the Anyesworth story on Oswald's diary. This lady freely admitted to me that Anyesworth had gotten the story from "a member of the Commission who is in town here now." Next day Anyesworth (and Marina) agreed that Hugh had gotten the story by lifting the diary from her (Marina's) house during the course of an interview. But how do you challenge the Commission on something like this?

Pen sent me a photostat of the Whaley thing. I am confused about it, particularly after hearing about his interview with the cab man. As you know, Pen doesn't think Lee is innocent (sometimes I waver myself), but at least he is convinced there was a conspiracy, that more than one man was shooting from the area on November 22nd. Pen has a tendency to be a little too quick, to make pronouncements without checking his facts, but since I am inclined to be that way myself, I can hardly criticize him. On the other hand, I am always so grateful to find one more doubter that I don't argue with him too much about Lee's possible innocence. Besides, Pen is in the ~~xxxx~~ most dangerous spot of all, right there in the heart of Texas. His wife is a sweet, tiny little thing; she worries and worries (no wonder!). "I don't think they'd kill him," she said. "I'm afraid they'll frame him in some way." God! we have all come along way in the past two years.

Yes, I agree with you on the Fox book. This was surface treatment. Still, it was better than nothing at all. I

have been able to buy it and pass it out to some of my silly friends with the feeling it will impress them and that they will at least read it. The endorsement by Silberling helps. What is your opinion of the extent of Kennedy interest? During the many hours I've spent with Ruth Paine, she never asked me but one leading question. Suddenly in the middle of our talk, she said: "Has William Manchester contacted you yet?" I said, no. Why in the world should he? But it was a funny question. Almost as though it ~~was~~^{were} the only thing the FBI didn't know for sure about me at that moment.

I say this is the only thing of interest Ruth asked; but actually in February 1964 she asked one other: "Do you think the U.S. Government has done something they are ashamed of?" I found out later that she was asked ~~regarding~~ about this remark (made to me) and that she denied remembering having made it. But the question wasn't asked in the Warren Commission testimony that I can find. It must have been asked off the record. Ruth is forever failing to remember she said something. She never says: "No. I did not say that." Instead, she says: "I can't remember saying that." I have a number of "can't remembers" from Ruth. The silly thing is that I like Ruth and Michael Paine. This puts Vince (Salandria) into near hysterics. We (he and I) came away from one meeting with the Paines ~~xxxx~~ with Vince screaming: "They are cold-blooded killers." Well, this is ridiculous. I have no doubt Ruth has worked for (and is probably still working for) the government (some agency), but she is no more a "cold-blooded killer" than I am. We have a saying in Oklahoma when someone is in the soup ~~xxxxx~~ that they are "between a rock and a hard place." I think Ruth and Michael are between a rock and a hard place, and I think they think that what they did was for the best. Until we walk away with them, we can't be sure.

Yes, the JFK American University speech was really something. I sat here in the living room that day listening to it (to excerpts from it) with the tears coming up behind my eyes. I couldn't believe that after all the Dulles years we were moving even this close or this fast to common sense, fairness, etc. The test ban treaty did not keep his assassination any farther away either. Nor did JFK's gestures towards Castro (through French reporter Daniels) help. The attempt at balance, the attempt to hold the line (the "I am a Berliner" address, etc.), none of these was enough. Are you familiar with the story that was sweeping Texas and Oklahoma at the time of Kennedy's death? Everyone was being told (by the right-wing) that Kennedy's Addison's disease had caused deterioration of his mind and that drugs were required daily to hold the insanity back. "One day he is happy, the next day depressed. He is a real manic-depressive" I was told. I suppose some people could have been easily persuaded that an assassination would save the country and the world. Very few of the people I have encountered in the Southwest would agree with Elith Cavill that "patriotism is not enough." To these pathetic creatures it is the beginning and the end.

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I wonder what the ideas your friends have? I have heard so many lurid stories. This is about the only service we can make: to keep the record as straight as possible for

history's sake. The President would appreciate this. So would Lee Oswald. They had interestingly similar tastes; a liking for reading history, love for animals, children, books in general, travel, and both of them were James Bond fans! Whenever I watch U.N.C.L.E., I think "What a pity JFK and Lee couldn't be watching this tonight." (To tell the truth, the U.N.C.L.E. plots have gotten terrible. They must have changed writers. But do you watch John Drake in Secret Agent? This is a British production, and as usual the British do it so well, taking cracks at their own Establishment as they go; something we would never dare do for fear of losing a dog-food sponsor! Did you see The Impress File? Marvelous. I really ~~enjoyed~~ enjoyed it, and I am not too crazy about movies in general. I want to see Spy Who, etc., Carre's book. Time gave it a terrific review, which is something in itself.)

Enclosing my letter to Monroney. The printer did everything wrong, but I am so grateful to have him anyway. Living in NY you can't imagine how hard it is to find anyone in Tulsa brave enough to print even a dreadful little pamphlet like this. This is why I'm so pleased to read your letters, to see with my own eyes an example of your ability, and to know you are in a place where you can eventually be heard. My husband read your letter and he was so impressed. Please send me anything of yours that you can spare without taking too much time or expense. There is really very little I can do at the moment. I sit here reading the volumes and of course over the years I've built up a good conversational knowledge of the case; but as far as being able to do anything to help in any way, I can't think of anything. I wish I could. I would be glad to be doing something constructive. I am always happy to get letters, as it seems to me sometimes I am almost out of touch with the world.

What is your opinion of Goldberg? I think he has sold his soul for a mess of pottage, having been told that the future held great goodies for him if he did what the Master wanted. Who knows? JFK appointed him to the bench. He should have stayed there. His wife remarked at the time he changed appointments: "We're not cheering." She sounds sensible. I remember the days (in Hawaii) when Goldberg was an out-and-out Communist according to the Honolulu Big Five. Now he is a spokesman for the most conservative American regime in history. How men change.

What in the world is happening "down on the Ranch?" I can't believe a gall-bladder operation is this severe. (Having had four major surgeries myself.) Still, I don't want to be unfair. Johnson is older than I was at the time I had operations; still, the whole sound of things in this country is WRONG. Something terrible is wrong and I can't even begin to put my finger on it.

I finished Sorensen's KENNEDY and Schlesinger's 1000 DAYS. Now I'm on Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's Hymn of the Universe. There are a few priceless gems scattered in it; some of it is dull. I like his Phenomenon of Man and Divine Milieu. (I can't spell. This puts me alongside JFK and Lee Oswald!)

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I have run out of typing paper, which is
a good reason to stop. I'm afraid I
am boring you.

Let me hear from you when you
have time. If there is anything
you want researched, I would
be happy to do it. I have plenty
of time.

Aloha,

Shirley

Yes, I would like the tapes on the panel discussion.
I'll return them when through. My
recorder plays all size tapes.

I got a letter from Thayer Waldo
asking if I would meet with
him in Texas in February.

Have you read his testimony?

He & I & Ben Jones are interested
in the WC cloak of secrecy

thrown over Lt. Geo. Butler, Dallas
police (member of the JBS, Minute Men).
Do you have anything on Butler?