

22 March 1967

Mr. Larry Atkins
63 East 7 Street
New York, N.Y. 10003

Dear Mr. Atkins,

I appreciate very much the trouble you took in writing to me and enclosing excerpts from the transcript of testimony of J.C. White. Occasionally I receive such letters from strangers. It is always very heartening to know that there is serious interest in the case and, needless to say, the critics can use all the help that is offered. So I do thank you for the outline of this very strange question of evidence.

The question has come up from time to time in conversations with some of the other critics but as you say it has not been included in the critical literature, so far as I remember. It is difficult to understand White's description of the passing train, when no corroboration is to be found in the testimony of any other witnesses or in photographs or other records. As I recall, one of the advance security arrangements made by the Secret Service and/or the Dallas police was to halt the movement of RR trains at points where the motorcade was about to pass. As you say, why should White lie about the train? It is possible, I suppose, that his memory was faulty—that would seem to be the least of the deficiencies of Dallas policemen. I would have little difficulty in conjecturing that other witnesses deliberately concealed the movement of a train in violation of security plans; but if some witnesses were willing to do so, they ran the risk that the train would be reported by spectators on the street or in nearby buildings. I doubt if it would have been possible to "reach" everyone who presented a risk in that respect; and on balance I am inclined to think that White's account is not factual.

Here is a perfect example of the Commission's failure to elicit necessary information, and to notice or try to resolve glaring inconsistencies. Lawyer Ball questioned another officer who was posted on the overpass, E.V. Brown; but Ball was so inattentive that in asking the witness about other officers stationed there he actually asked, Was there an E.V. Brown? to which the witness replied, That's me. What can one expect from such an "investigation"? Ball questioned White as well as Brown; he also questioned Murphy, a third officer on the overpass. But White was the last of the three to be questioned, and the others were not called back or interviewed after White reported the passing train, to see if they agreed or disagreed. A fourth officer, James Lomax, was not questioned at all!

On the basis of the incomplete information available, it is difficult to form any confident impression or conclusion about White's testimony. If the opportunity presents itself, I will mention the matter to any researcher who is working in the Archives, to see if there is additional evidence on this point among the unpublished Commission documents available there. Again, my warm thanks for your letter; please don't hesitate to write or telephone at any time with any suggestions.

Yours very sincerely,

Sylvia Meagher