

24 May 1967

Dear Gordon,

I wish I could share the gratification you express in your letter of the 21st about the progress of the Garrison investigation. Developments during the last month have intensified my lack of confidence. For example, the so-called decoding of "PO 19106" in Oswald's notebook seems to me entirely unfounded —(1) because the "PO" is actually the Cyrillic "DD" and (2) because the entire page of the notebook on which this alleged cryptogram appears seems to have been written in the Soviet Union, long before there would have been contact between Oswald and Ruby involving the latter's unpublished telephone number.

These objections were put to Garrison. His reply was that he had decoded three more numbers in Oswald's notebook; but in detailing them he introduced all sorts of capricious variations into what he had previously described as a rigid and systematic code. He did not comment on the specific questions raised about the first decipher.

I am convinced that a single standard must apply in judging evidence in a criminal investigation; and I cannot justify to myself a strict standard for the Warren Report and a loose one for Garrison. I don't want to influence your thinking, but I thought that I should indicate for the record my loss of confidence, as well as the profound sadness and apprehension and disappointment I feel at having arrived at this position. It is one situation in which I should be overjoyed to be proven wrong.

To summarize my views on Ruby's means of entry is not easy—some 30 or more pages of my ms. are devoted to this problem. The phonecall from Elnora Pitts suggests that a man who may not have been Ruby answered her, and that he was already expecting a request for money from a woman somewhat before Mrs. Carlin's later (and presumably unforeseen) call. As for Tasker, I find his testimony that no one approached from the Western Union office or entered the Main Street ramp generally convincing, although not necessarily conclusive. But added to his testimony is the failure of witnesses inside the basement or at the sides of the ramp to see Ruby enter—a failure transformed into "corroboration" by two or more witnesses in the Warren Report (page 221, paragraph 3). As for the telegram considered to provide Ruby with a no-premeditation alibi, I have not found any chink in the evidence, which appears solid. However, I would merely mention, as an aside, the apparent disappearance from Western Union files of message copies related to allegations that Oswald had received small money orders there and that he had despatched a wire on one occasion to the Dept. of the Navy or a similar government branch at Washington. If there was in that context a deliberate suppression, destruction, or deception, then I would view with some reservation evidence originating in Western Union on the separate question of Ruby's transactions there.

Sorry to be sending negative views on New Orleans, which for a while seemed so great a stroke of luck. Do keep in touch. All good wishes,