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September 11, 1968

Miss Sylvia Meagher
302 West 12th Street
New York, New York 10014

Dear Miss Meagher:

Many thanks for going into detail as you did in your letter of September 3.

So far, I have not received the copies of TMO and would appreciate if you would check on this for me. Your experience with Commission members and staff is both discouraging and revealing. Isn't it likely that these people are simply attempting to blot out an unpleasant experience, psychologically?

In dealing with them we also have the pride of authorship, and the reluctance to admit one is wrong.

However it also seems to me that the best likelihood of having the case reopened, is to have one of them ask that it be reopened.

Miss Scobey and I had a bull session Sunday afternoon. It gave me a chance to have a look at her library which is extensive. However, it was interesting to note that I found only one of the Warren Commission critics' books on the shelf. This was Dr. Thompson's, it was autographed - which leads me to believe that only the occasion of his visit here to Atlanta for the debate had brought her to acquiring a copy. She does keep a complete 26 volume report and exhibits at her home.

On the New York trip, Miss Scobey had raised three questions on points I had made raising serious questions about the Commission's conclusions. We took up two of these. Frankly, I find that she is still fighting mentally any change of position. Even to the point of changing the subject when there is no other

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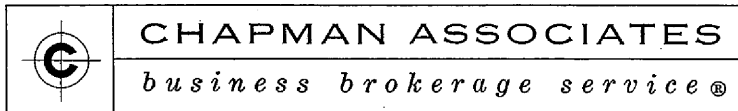
answer to be found. The third point involved, the question of prints on the rifle. As our time had run out I left your book with her as regards this point. You have done a tremendous job of documentation, and it is my hope that she will check these reference points. And that she will proceed from this one point to other parts of your book. She has promised to call me when she finishes that section so the door is still open.

I agree with you completely in your statment that this matter does not hang on the interpretation of the film or any other single piece of evidence. As a matter of fact my study has been almost completely in other areas. The film served as an entree to have a staff member face up to the conflict on at least one point. And frankly I knew that there were answers to the traumatic reaction explanation, but did not present those at this time (and have not yet), feeling that I can possibly move Miss Scobey only one step at a time. And this would probably be the case with most human beings in her position.

On the head shot question, we thought we could detect a slight forward motion, prior to the sharp and very noticeable leftward and somewhat rearward thrust of the President's head. This would be in line with Dr. Thompson's theory of two shots hitting the head almost simultaneously, first one from the rear and then one from the front right side. We did not have the time nor the equipment, however, to measure it in the same manner that Dr. Thompson had done.

Since writing to you and Dr. Thompson, I have thought of a possible explanation for the white spot on Kennedy's head found by Miss Scobey. The movement of air immediately ahead of the bullet is something of a jet stream. In this area of a man's head a jet stream of air does spray open the hair, revealing the white scalp, and accounting for the unusual shape of the spot. This explanation would also account for the fact that it showed on only one frame in view of the speed of the bullet, and the hair being drawn back in by the suction ~~on the~~ after the bullet. I plan to have some 8mm pictures made for comparison using a barber shop air hose to simulate this affect. Will send you a copy.

Your question as to Miss Scobey's reaction on the head shot: she recognizes that it does take place but thinks that an explosion of the bullet inside caused the reaction, rather than the force of impact from the outside. This lead to my questioning her about the bullets themselves. It seemed that this was thoroughly discussed among the staff and agreement was reached that "dum dum" bullets had been used. This is most interesting in the light of the fact that the "pristine"



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bullet is not a dum dum. (This is a point which I failed to make with her at the time, however.) She has a good working knowledge of this type of bullet, and does understand that the effect is a splintering, rather than an exploding one. But here again, I failed to carry the point that splintering could not account for a thrust in the opposite direction.

I admire both your work and your determination. It has been an encouragement to me.

Cordially,



Paul H. Chapman

c.c.

Dr. Josiah D. Thompson, Jr.