302 West 12 Str.
New York, N.Y. 100..

(Not the man who wrote to TMO - he has same name)

27 September 1968

Mr. Charles T. Howard
c/o The Minority of One
Passaic, N.J. 07055
(Please forward)

Deceased 1969

Dear Mr. Howard,

Your letter in the October TMO insinuates that my books on the Warren Report were written with a view to profits and that my position on Garrison similarly is motivated by fear that the market for sale of my work will dry up. Similar attempts to discredit critics of the Warren Report as greedy money-grubbers enriching themselves on the corpse of a martyr have been made in the past by, for example, Lawrence Schiller (agent for the sale of Jack Ruby's papers) and by Truman Capote (whose best-seller In Cold Blood became a top-price motion picture).

What are your credentials, Mr. Howard?

I have no obligation to give you or any other reckless purveyor of defamatory mischief any financial accounting, but I am happy to volunteer the following information: I earned less than $300 on my Subject Index (which is a research tool rather than a "book" in the conventional sense), on which I had worked for six months or more, and worked exceedingly hard. For my book Accessories After the Fact, I have received only an advance on royalties when the manuscript was accepted for publication, and no other earnings to date. About one-third of that advance was nullified by charges for manuscript changes made after galley and page proofs had been set in type. Amost another third of the advance was expended in the purchase of copies of the book which I sent to other critics and interested persons at my own expense. The balance was used to purchase materials from the Archives and other research publications and a new typewriter.

During the same period of time, I made a contribution of more than two times as much as my total receipts on both books to an outstanding periodical which was then in financial extremis, in order that it could continue to publish singular and uncompromising views on the major issues which confront this country and the world.

My articles in TMO and in other magazines, with only one exception, have all been unpaid.

This being said, let me now emphasize with all the vigor at my command that the critics of the Warren Report are fully entitled to remuneration for their work, in exactly the same way as writers, researchers, and lecturers in other fields of inquiry and, indeed, in the same way that you, Mr. Howard, presumably receive salary, fees, or other payments for whatever labors you may perform. We owe no apology whatever for earnings of whatever nature or amount for legitimate labor performed openly and in the public eye, and those who read into the efforts of the critics only a monetary motivation succeed merely in betraying their own sordid impulses.

Now I turn to the question of the superiority of my "invective" and the alleged parity of my words with those of the Warren Report and/or Garrison. I should like to point out that there is on record a large body of literature, including my book and other published work, which documents in painstaking and explicit detail the misrepresentations, falsehoods, and fraudulence of the Warren Report. No one has even suggested, much less proved, any such defects in my work. Consequently, I absolutely reject your attempt to equate my work with the Warren Report. The very notion of equating authentic critical work with the defective and deceitful Report is deranged.

I reject your attempt to equate my words with Garrison's for the same general reasons. One needs only to examine his own utterances and writings, and his failure to refute serious documented charges of fabrication of evidence, entrapment, and the like, to identify him as a preposterous and dangerous demogogue. His derelictions and contempt for simple fact are already manifest in rich variety and abundance and cannot be ignored by any conscientious or objective person.

In Accessories After the Fact, which you appear not to have read, I have made crystal-clear my insistence on the use of the adversary procedure in appealing for a new investigation of the assassination of President Kennedy. The adversary proceeding is a sine qua non to any genuine effort to arrive at the truth and to serve justice in this case.

But the adversary procedure may not be utilized by scoundrels to serve purposes inimical to truth and justice. That is why I applaud a recent decision by the federal district court enjoining the Parish of Placquemines in New Orleans, Louisiana, from prosecuting a civil rights lawyer from Washington, D.C. who represented non-white defendants in a case involving their civil liberties and rights. The federal bench deemed the arrest and prospective trial of this lawyer nothing but an attempt to harass him and to intimidate other civil rights attorneys. I hope that you share my gratification at this blow by the federal court against bigotry, repression, and misuse of power by the local authorities. Or would you appeal to the federal court, "in the name of almighty Truth" to let that trial of the civil rights attorney take place?

I am also opposed to the trials to be held in Chicago of protesters against the Vietnam war and against the anti-democratic Democratic Party convention, for alleged criminal acts and for physical assault against the heroic Chicago police. I need not, I think, belabor this point. Again, I ask you whether in this instance, too, you would invoke "the name of almighty Truth" to plead that the trial of the Yippies should proceed. (This is not a rhetorical question and I would like to have an answer.)

We do not need a trial to enable us to determine "if Warren or Garrison is the liar." It is already conclusively on the public record that both Warren and Garrison have done systematic and deliberate violence to fact and to truth. The simplistic and pseudological argument that we must have a trial before it is possible to reach valid conclusions cannot be sustained on merit or logic, and it is high time that Garrison and his handmaidens dropped this tiresome attitudinizing.

Yours very truly,

Alan Meagher