

27 November 1968

Mr. Harold Feldman
2037 Upland Way
Philadelphia 19131

Dear Harold,

Probably I did see Turner's article in Ramparts but I have no specific memory of his allegation that Oswald sent the suspect photo to the Militant. I am sure that I just did not take it seriously because, like almost all sensational disclosures in the literature of Garrisonophilia, it was unsupported by factual data. In the early stages, I did try to run down some of the more provocative "revelations" by Garrison or his promoters but each time it dissolved into nothing or remained inconclusive or there was even an outright denial of having made the original allegation at all. So I decided to conserve my time and let the "revelations" dissolve by themselves.

In any case, I would be extremely sceptical of the photo/Militant claim on Turner's part unless and until the objective evidence that casts doubt on its authenticity is overcome. I went over much of that evidence in Accessories and, more recently, heard that new evidence may have been developed by a professional photographer in Los Angeles who works with one of the citizen's committees there. As I heard it, he discovered by chance while working with copies of CE 133-A and CE 133-B that that heads were absolutely identical—if one was placed on top of the other, the outline was exactly the same, which if true would certainly be unnatural.

As to my opinion of Turner: It is very hard to view him in isolation from the Garrison investigation, with which he is so intimately associated. I met him only once, when he came here for breakfast because he had a clogged schedule for a brief stopover in New York. He seemed open, extremely pleasant, courteous, and intelligent, and I liked him quite well. I do not dislike him now, although I am deeply disappointed in his role on the New Orleans "investigation," which seems to have become his exclusive activity. His abandon of normal, investigative standards and judgment is embarrassing. One of his Ramparts articles was made up almost wholly of conditional and qualifying phrases (e.g., I filled 1½ pages with excerpts such as "...one can only surmise...he may have been slated...he evidently acquired...one possible answer...two possibly relevant documents...the likelihood is....it may be significant...the possible implication ...there may be a pattern...a clue may lie...one speculation is...it may be significant...it is also possible..." etc. etc.). One really cannot take that kind of thing seriously, unaccompanied as it was by solid substance.

This being said, let me add that ^{I do not agree} with suggestions in a recent letter from one of our colleagues (and perhaps your request for my opinion of Turner may have been provoked by the same colleague) that Turner is following a methodical program of deceit, untruth, and misinformation as part of a "major federal penetration" of the critics' camp, or one section of it, to be more precise. There have been so many indiscriminate charges that one or another of the critics is really a CIA or FBI infiltrator—indeed, so many lurid and preposterous "explanations" of my position on Garrison, including the hypothesis that I am being blackmailed—that the only valid suspicion that arises is that some of the critics have regressed into little boys playing cops and robbers and having the most rousing good time at this frenetic and irrelevant entertainment. I am afraid that they no longer differentiate between fact and speculation, and that they are increasingly out of touch with sober reality.

11/27/68

As to your second question: I have never considered as necessarily conspiratorial the removal of the body over the legitimate protests of the spunky Dr. Rose (treated unfairly by that ass Manchester). I think the JFK entourage was scared shitless and wanted to get out of Dallas, which they could scarcely do leaving the body behind with strangers and enemies. The main impulse seems to have been on the part of JFK's most loyal lieutenants, not LBJ. Had he been the force behind the removal of the body, I would more easily see it as significant or even sinister. But why would O'Donnell conspire before the shooting in the usurpation of his own chief and therefore in the loss of his own source of power? I doubt that it was essential, in any case, to those who engineered events to have the body in one specific place rather than another—they probably would have been able to manipulate the evidence from any one of a number of sources, even from Dallas had the body remained there.

I did not regard our exchange on the subject of Garrison as a quarrel, but as something less personal and more serious. I remain completely convinced that the only acceptable course for a critic of the WR was to disavow him, and a number of those who disagreed vehemently seem to be moving closer to that position now.

I am very happy that you found merit in Accessories and grateful for your generous remarks. Perhaps you noticed that one page, on which you are mentioned, was unfortunate scrambled by the printers. You may wish to correct your copy, on page 314, by deleting the line "Johnson testified further that there was" and inserting "Kline's affidavit (15H 640) states tersely:"

Please feel free to write again any time, about points of evidence or anything else.

Sincerely,

Sylvia Meagher