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My dear Professor Slusser,

Allow me to congratulate you on your fine review of the books by Epstein, Savage, Weisberg, and Lane in the Baltimore Morning Sun of the 14th of August. Your dispassionate, well-summarized, and perceptive assessments of the books, and of the case in general, stands out in quality among the more excited commentaries which are now appearing in the press and magazines—with a frequency which must be gratifying to those who deplored what seemed for a while to be a taboo.

I am moved to write this letter by your comments on certain questions of evidence. You state in your review that George De Mohrenschildt had accidentally stumbled onto evidence of Oswald's guilt in the attack on General Walker a few days after the event. I find nothing in De Mohrenschildt's testimony that could possibly be equated with "evidence of guilt." He said only that he had made a purely facetious remark, teasing Oswald for having missed the General, and that Oswald had blanched and had seemed embarrassed or uncomfortable. Mrs. De Mohrenschildt, on the other hand, failed to notice any reaction by Oswald to her husband's joking comment.

Marina Oswald, like Mr. De Mohrenschildt, testified that Oswald had been visibly upset by the facetious remark. However, her account of the incident differed seriously from that of the De Mohrenschildts in several important respects. Indeed, the conflict in the stories is fairly serious when one considers that according to Marina Oswald's statements to federal agents Oswald had buried or hidden the rifle in some deserted place near a railroad line after the abortive attack on Walker on Wednesday night, April 10, 1963 (the Warren Commission did not question the alleged burial of the weapon in the absence of tools such as a spade or shovel, nor its later unobserved and tool-less recovery); Marina Oswald said that Oswald had retrieved the rifle on the following Sunday, April 14th—which happened to be Easter Day. Yet the De Mohrenschildts claimed that they had visited the Oswalds late on Saturday night, April 13th, rousing them from bed on their arrival; and that the facetious remark followed on Mrs. De Mohrenschildt's glimpse of a rifle in the Oswald closet. But the rifle supposedly was then buried or hidden at some remote location.

The discrepancy did not go unnoticed; and when Marina Oswald returned to give additional testimony in July 1964 (the De Mohrenschildts having testified in April, three months earlier) she now said felicitously that Oswald had recovered the rifle "Saturday or Sunday," although in December 1963 she had specified Sunday. That information was volunteered not in response to cross-examination or reference to the anachronism either in her story or that of the De Mohrenschildts—it was given, as was the case in several other similar instances, as if purely gratuitously and quite casually.

You mention quite rightly that questions have arisen about Marina Oswald's general credibility; indeed, the pattern of her self-contradictions and the underlying motif of her altered accounts of the same circumstances at succeeding interrogations provide raw material for what could be a most illuminating study.

Because Marina Oswald's credibility is subject to some doubt, and since De Mohrenschildt's account of Oswald's consternation (if that is not too strong) is necessarily subjective and after-the-fact, it appears to me that one should proceed with extreme caution in evaluating the evidence which appears to implicate Oswald in the Walker attack.

You cite in your review the undated unsigned note which came to light on December 2, 1964. The note is linked to the Walker attack solely by Marina Oswald's story. Yet the internal evidence in the undated note throws into grave doubt at least one aspect of her explanation—that is, although she insisted that she had absolutely no foreknowledge of the shooting at Walker, the note assumes that she would be able to inform "the Embassy" of what had occurred even if there was nothing in the newspapers.

Had Oswald really fired at Walker and then escaped or disappeared, how would his wife have known what to tell the Embassy?

The possibility remains, indisputably, that the note was written in the context of other circumstances and other plans, to which Marina Oswald was privy—granted, at about the same period of time as the Walker shooting—for nothing in the contents of the note links it with any specific event.

In that respect, it should be borne in mind that (1) General Walker conversed by overseas telephone, within a day or two of the assassination, with a representative of a Munich newspaper; (2) that newspaper went to press on November 25 or 26 with a story (that Oswald and Ruby were under suspicion in the Walker affair but that their arrest was obstructed by Robert Kennedy, the then-Attorney General—substantially the same story that appeared in May 1964 in the American publication, National Enquirer) linking Oswald with the Walker shooting, in the issue dated November 29, 1963; and (3) on December 2 the undated note was discovered between the pages of a book and Marina Oswald said, for the first time, that it was Oswald who had carried out that attempt to kill.

There was no suspicion prior to December 2, 1963 that Oswald was implicated in the Walker shooting. Of the Munich newspaper story, the Commission says that it was "fabricated by an editor;" of Marina Oswald's story some days later, the Commission in effect says that it is gospel truth. Quite a stunning coincidence, if a Munich editor invented out of whole cloth what so soon turned out to be at least partially true—perhaps he is a clairvoyant. But if we are to believe that the editor fabricated while Marina spoke the simple truth, uncharacteristically, then we must overcome a number of evidentiary objections, including, for example, the following:

(1) That the Walker bullet was identified by Detective Ira Van Cleave and other spokesmen for the Dallas Police, on April 11, 1963, as a 30.06 bullet (which could not have come out of a 6.5 Carcano rifle). (2) That two suspicious-appearing men were seen casing the Walker premises, and reported to the police by Walker's aide, Robert Surrey, two nights before the shooting. (3) That a teen-aged boy next-door saw two men run away after the shot at Walker and that they entered a car and drove from the scene. (4) That the barking dog in a near-by home failed to bark, as he usually did, when the man or men who shot at Walker—presumably strangers—were scented; and that the dog apparently had been poisoned and barely survived his experience.

I have not taken the trouble to document each of my statements with citations from the Warren Report or the Hearings and Exhibits; but I promise you that I can and will, if you desire, document every single point.

Yours sincerely,

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