

17 April 1966

Dear Curtis,

*Crawford*

A petty point that I've been meaning to take up with you for some time: during our Randi broadcast, I pointed out that Seymour Weitzman had never been shown the Carcano rifle in order to obtain his identification of the rifle as the same one he had co-discovered in the Depository and identified as a Mauser. You reverted to that comment later in the broadcast, suggesting that it was only fair to the Commission to mention that Weitzman had been shown photographs of the rifle, for identification purposes. Recently, I was checking Weitzman's testimony again and took the occasion to look at the photographs in question, referred to as "D", "E" and "F" in the transcript (PH 108), and appearing as Weitzman Deposition Exhibits with corresponding letters. Each of the three photos shows the cartons on the sixth floor behind which the rifle lay when discovered; the rifle itself is visible only in photo "D" and lies partly concealed, with the stock and part of the barrel showing.

The exercise obviously is useless if the purpose is to establish that the Carcano is the same as the rifle found by Weitzman. Incidentally, the co-finder, Deputy Boone, was shown the Carcano when he testified, but did not make a categorical identification (3H 294).

After our last conversation, devoted mainly to the Salandria article and his excerpt from the FBI report of December, I did not telephone Salandria. As I told you, I was really not inclined to call him—on the contrary. So the situation remains just as it was when we spoke. I cannot give any further details about the basis on which the FBI reported that there was no exit for the wound in the back.

I will admit that before leaping to the conclusion that the FBI "no exit" report is final proof of the fraudulence of the autopsy findings—as I did, together with everyone else with whom I discussed the "no exit" (except you)—one should have an explanation from the FBI, and an explanation from the Commission. Perhaps, despite appearances, there is a good and plausible explanation. You are no doubt correct in withholding judgment, pending further details, at least correct legally and legalistically.

However, I am going to live dangerously and stick with the conclusion to which I leaped, without further ado. I don't need a written confession from the Chief Justice that the case against the accused is spurious. At the same time, I recognize that I should be less intolerant of those who want absolute proof of official perfidy before they accept its reality. More in sorrow than anything else, I wish that the same absolute proof would be demanded before they accept Oswald's "sole guilt."

I am really sorry that we have such a fundamental moral and philosophical disagreement, because it was instructive and pleasant to collaborate with you in the early days. I must admit that I have kept expecting you to return to the camp of opposition; but now I realize that I miscalculated. If the FBI "no exit" doesn't do the trick, I suppose it will take a public confession by the Chairman, with the six Commissioners serving as a Greek chorus and Rankin and the legal-eagles selling peanuts and popcorn in the aisles.