

26 August 1968

Citizens' Committee of Inquiry
Box 150, 308 Westwood Plaza
Los Angeles 90024

Dear Sirs,

The article by Marjorie Field in the August 8th Newsletter includes a number of references to me which are ambiguous or misleading. I have been invited to read a number of manuscripts, published and unpublished, among which was the manuscript of Inquest. In each case, certain of my suggestions were rejected by the author, as was his prerogative. I accept no responsibility for any work other than my own book and other writings on the Warren Report.

There is consequently nothing "curious" about my uncompromising advocacy of Oswald's innocence, nor should it be linked to Epstein's position in Inquest. What is curious is the instantaneous conversion to the thesis of Oswald's complicity of some critics who, from November 1963 to March 1967, were impassioned advocates of his complete innocence—so impassioned as to be openly contemptuous and intolerant of a fellow-critic for the lateness of his realization that Oswald might be innocent. It needed only a pronouncement by Garrison (and the allegations of his curious witnesses, Russo and Bundy) to make instant converts of critics who had long and tenaciously insisted on his innocence, and quite rightly so. It seems to have escaped their notice that the allegations of Russo and Bundy had about the same degree of plausibility as those of Markham and Brennan, which had been universally and scathingly discounted by the critical community.

Despite its weaknesses and equivocation, Inquest undeniably had a tremendous impact and put an end to the dark age of silence and taboo which prevailed before its publication. If my prophecy was not fulfilled to the complete satisfaction of some of my colleagues, I must remind them that I am not a professional seer like, for example, Jeans Dixon. I am indebted to your sister-Committee in the State of Washington for publicizing Mrs. Dixon's assurances to a Seattle audience that "Garrison is on the right track"—not at all embarrassed by her earlier clairvoyance on behalf of the Warren Commission. (See "Forum," May 1968.) I am unimpressed by this metaphysical endorsement and I suspect that my amateur prophesies will not suffer by comparison with the professional.

Epstein's article in the New Yorker angered and disappointed me because it backslides even from the timid equivocations of Inquest into an apology for the Warren Report. His softness on the Report is all the more indefensible because Epstein, in his account of the Garrison "investigation," shows that he is quite capable of subjecting "evidence" to rigorous tests and of calling a fraud a fraud. He is quite correct in dismissing Garrison as a crude demagogue and a transparent mountebank who does not shrink from outright fabrication of evidence.

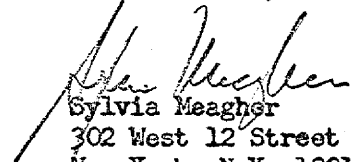
Because the principal charges against Garrison are damning and irrefutable, I have read with particular attention the critiques of the New Yorker article by Harold Weisberg, Shankar Ghosh, and Richard Popkin, as well as by Mrs. Field.

The bankruptcy of Garrison's cause is clear from their individual and collective failure to attempt any refutation of the central charges---the so-called code "19106;" Sciambra's report on his interview with Russo, and collateral evidence which casts grave doubt on Russo's story and on the methods and morals of the District Attorney; Garrison's allegations about the epileptic seizure victim; his allegations, after he knew them to be inaccurate, about the destruction by thermofax of the CIA message; his instruction to his aides not to bother completing the extradition papers for Gordon Novel; and his storm-drain allegations, among other examples of his scholarship and integrity.

Nor do the critiques of the New Yorker article mention the striking fact that Garrison, exactly like Warren, pretends that it is beneath his dignity to confront explicit and detailed charges. Self-evidently, and exactly like Warren, Garrison cannot refute the devastating evidence that his "case" is no less fraudulent than the infamous Warren Report.

I see no essential difference between those who are soft on the Warren Report, as Epstein is, and those who are soft on Garrison even after devastating revelations which they cannot even pretend to refute. In the name of sanity and simple decency, may we not at long last repudiate and denounce all violence to fact, logic, and justice, whatever the source?

Yours sincerely,


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