

26 August 1968

David Lifton
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Dear David,

Thank you for sending the copies of your correspondence with Epstein on his New Yorker article. Before going into that, let me mention that Sauvage asked me the other night about the non-receipt of the book for which he had sent a pre-paid order. I explained that there had been a delay but that it should arrive momentarily.

and wrote to CCI on it

I did see the article by Maggie Field in the CCI Newsletter, /copy of which I will xerox in the morning and enclose with this (or send separately later, if I cannot use the machine). The references to me verged on innuendo, and I commented on them. But my letter to CCI was mainly to point out that none of those who wrote critiques of Epstein's piece even tried to refute his central and damning charges against Garrison, such as the code, the initial interview report on Russo, etc.

Now, let me congratulate you on your well-reasoned and excellent analysis of the shocking elements in Epstein's article. I have just read both your letters and the 9-page analysis and I believe that I agreed completely with everything you said (perhaps with one minor exception, which I don't even remember now). Moreover, I admired the tone, which was friendly but entirely firm. I would like to think that Epstein will give due thought to your excellent criticisms and suggestions, but I am not optimistic.

I am not optimistic because, as indicated in my letter to him, I feel that he conned me with avowed intentions to ask a new investigation, for the very same set of considerations you posed, and then quite deliberately reneged. In other words, I do not believe that his position is governed by the merits of objections but by quite different considerations. For example, long before his article was published, I informed him in writing that his attribution to Ray Marcus of "cowboy hats" was absolutely incorrect and false; yet he did not delete or change his reference, which converts it from an innocent or careless error to a malicious misrepresentation. I also argued very strongly (and on much the same grounds as you did) against his treatment of the prints on the rifle and Oswald's alibi (it was Sauvage who first devastated the Commission's travesty of a reenactment, in the French edition of his book--now I think of it, that was the "minor point" of disagreement mentioned above, but since WWI appeared before the English edition of Sauvage's book, I would not press the point). Again, Epstein ignored my arguments, although he did not refute them (and it was only when I saw the published article that I realized with bitterness and indignation that he had not altered the original ms., while putting me to considerable and prolonged work to provide the comments and suggestions he had solicited).

You have done a really fine job in exposing the fallacies and sophistries of his position to Epstein. I would like Arnoni to see this exchange of letters. Look for his editorial on Epstein in the next TMO--he was so disgusted with the New Yorker article that he bawled me out for ever helping Epstein; and, indeed, I will not do that again. Thrice burned is enough. Someone mentioned that you have an article coming out in The Atlantic Monthly. True? If so, congratulations also on that...Why not let me know these things ??? Had another long harangue from Weisberg re my financial contribution to Thornley--this time, complaining that no one ever offered him a cent, although he is broke and being harassed by Bringuier, etc. at great expense to him. I was less tempted than ever to send Harold a check; and will ignore his second letter and future effronteries from him. All the best,

Sylvia

P.S. I would also suggest that you send copies of your exchange of letters with Epstein confidentially to Tom Bethell in New Orleans.

Page 3 You should qualify your statement that Ferrie was Oswald's commander. See Voebel's testimony, 8H 14, in which he thinks it might have been Ferrie but is rather dubious.

Page 11 lines 1-4: Garrison's supporters will point out that while "PO" yields at least six different prefixes, it yields only one that corresponds with an existing telephone exchange in Dallas. Lines 4-5: True, and in Garrison's press release unveiling the "code" in the first instance he repeatedly said that the "PO 19106" code was rigid, invariable, and undeviating.

Page 15 middle of page: Suggest you delete "Much like Oswald." I don't think there is a true analogy but will not burden you with arguments against it unless you want to hear them.

Page 18 para. 1: I didn't know that Martin admitted that he had invented the story. Has that been in print anywhere? (I assumed that he had invented it out of malice of some kind.) Did Garrison know that Martin admitted the story was false?

Page 18 para. 2: I believe that I was told in January 1967 that Garrison also had a wiretap on Ferrie, for what that is worth.

Page 20 penultimate line: Oswald received an honorable discharge from the Marine Corps but subsequently was discharged from the Marine Reserves, not with a "dishonorable discharge" but an "undesirable discharge" (see WR 689).

Page 21 para. 3, line 3: young assistant district attorney

Page 29 line 7: imported from Cuba, when? If from pre-Castro Cuba, it should be indicated.

Page 40 When Andrews testified, he explained why he had told the FBI that Bertrand was only a figment of his imagination, as indicated in 11H 334. He was trying to get the FBI out of his hair. This might be mentioned, in fairness to Andrews.

Page 45 Marcus never claimed the men were in cowboy hats, not, at least, to my knowledge.

Page 74 footnote: The frames are missing from the original film, according to George Hunt, publisher of Life, who states that in the excitement on 11/22/63 the film broke and had to be spliced. However, these frames do appear in the first-generation copies of the Zapruder film. See full account in SIX SECONDS IN DALLAS.

Page 80 para. 1: Although you are dealing with Garrison's evidence primarily and not the Commission's, I think you really must qualify the statement that "a palmprint was discovered...which three different experts positively identified as Oswald's." It is not the identity but the authenticity of the lift that is in question; and you might indicate some reservations without going into chapter and verse.

Page 81 para. 2: I strongly disagree with your presentation. The encounter could not have taken place as long as five minutes after the shots; even the Commission stipulates that Oswald left the TSBD by 12:33 p.m., to get him out before any policeman could stop him at the door (one officer testified that he sealed the front door 2 or no more than 3 minutes after the shots), and to get him on to the bus on time. The reenactments were inexact and unfair; and you must take into account also Sandra Styles and Victoria Adams, even if the Commission did not.