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Dear Mr. Pechoda,

The manuscript on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy which you have asked me to vet is publishable.

It embodies two major aggregates of evidence. The first is the central evidence which is treated in the Warren Report and in the Report of the House Select Committee on Assassinations. The Second is the largely anecdotal evidence amassed by the author during the inquiry conducted in the late 1960s in New Orleans.

The first body of evidence and argumentation is generally well-researched and analyzed. Much of it is to be found in the earlier literature of Warren Report criticism, but this is not a drawback. On the contrary, the egregious defects of the official findings cannot be exposed too often. There is now a new generation of readers who had not yet been born at the time of the assassination. They need to be educated to recognize the mockery of justice and the utter disrespect for fact and logic committed by the Warren Commission and its successor investigatory bodies.

I am particularly pleased, in this respect, by the author's movement from the view that Lee Harvey Oswald was a party to a conspiracy to assassinate JFK to his new perspective, which sees Oswald as the wholly innocent scapegoat who had no hand whatsoever in killing Kennedy or Tippit. That is a great strength of the manuscript.

At the same time, there are sections which are--inadvertently, I believe--not entirely correct or which have other deficiencies which can easily be corrected. I will deal with these in the enclosed chapter-by-chapter commentary.

The second body of evidence and argumentation presents some difficulties. It deals with such personalities as Clay Shaw, David Ferrie, Guy Banister, Vernon Bundy, and Perry Raymond Russe. It depends upon identifications and allegations elicited years after the fact. Very little value should be attached to material offered by witnesses--and especially identifications--long after the event. The Russe allegations have been largely discredited (see James Phelan's book Scandals, Scamps and Scoundrels, Random House, 1982, pages 138-176). Clay Shaw was exonerated by a New Orleans jury. The chapters of the manuscript dealing with these and similar persons and their activities--which may well have been sinister but not necessarily connected with the assassination--are dizzying, full of scattershot, and probably irrelevant. The literature is, after all, rich with books which destroy the official findings and which exonerate Oswald, without the benefit of the New Orleans galaxy of witnesses.

The author undoubtedly would resist very vehemently any suggestion that these chapters be excised, even though they slow up the flow of the manuscript and introduce considerable confusion and--above all--are not essential to the attack on the official findings or the thesis of Oswald's innocence. It is hoped, nevertheless, that the author would consider condensing that material and making it less exasperating to follow.

It is surprising that so little attention is given in the manuscript to the theory of the involvement of organized crime in the assassination. Among the suspects treated by the HSCA and by G. Robert Blakey in his book The Plot Against the President and also by David E. Schein in Contract on America is Carlos Marcello of New Orleans, who is said to be the head of a Mafia family. The author does take a few swipes, in passing, at the theory of organized crime as the engineer of the assassination, pointing out quite correctly that the Mafia did not possess the power to make

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the government close ranks and to insist, against the evidence, that Oswald was the lone assassin. However, organized crime collaborated with the CIA in plots to assassinate Fidel Castro, and it is not inconceivable that it also collaborated in a plot against the President.

Finally, the crucial question: You ask for an assessment of the credibility of the thesis that the CIA planned and executed the JFK assassination. The general argument for that conclusion appears in Chapter 13, "The Secret Sponsors". This is a superlative chapter, which provides a historical account of and a convincing perspective on the CIA's resort to assassination plots. This chapter is superb writing, well-documented, and very persuasive indeed. It passes the test of credibility with flying colors.

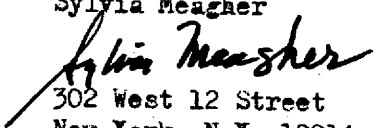
It is clear that prodigious study and effort went into this work. Stylistic considerations are subjective but I suggest that the first twelve chapters would benefit from fewer sarcasms and fewer strained metaphors. The more clinical, the better.

The manuscript, when corrected on specific items as set out in the enclosed chapter-by-chapter commentary, will be an important contribution to the critical literature on the JFK assassination. It is certain to be controversial but I believe that the author can easily defend his thesis by recourse to the central evidence.

I definitely recommend publication.

Yours sincerely,

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Chapter-by-Chapter Commentary

This commentary will not deal with punctuation (parentheses opened but not closed), misspelling (gauge for gauge) or incorrect usage (laying for lying) but will focus on substantive, factual, and structural elements.

Introduction

Page 4 paragraph 2

The acoustical evidence is ambiguous. It was transmitted by the House Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA) to the Justice Department for evaluation. In turn it was submitted to the National Academy of Science, which rejected the acoustical findings of the HSCA. The present status of the acoustical evidence is therefore uncertain. Consequential changes should be made also in Chapter 8, page 17 footnote.

Page 5 paragraph 2

The allegation about the FBI telex was considered by the HSCA and ultimately rejected. See HSCA Report, pages 191-192. Among the reasons given for rejecting the allegation by William S. Walter about the telex message were: (a) he did not say anything about the telex alert until 1968 (b) no corroboration for his story could be found (c) the replica of the telex message produced by Walter varied in format and wording from the standard (d) Walter's former wife could not support his allegation. Even if the author rejects the conclusion of the HSCA, it must at least be set out. Consequential changes should be made also in Chapter 3, page 12 et seq.

While I also reject Walter's allegations about the telex message, I call attention to the "Miami tape" on which Joseph Milteer, an organizer for a radical reactionary segregationist political group, in early November 1963 gave a virtual scenario ~~which~~ for the assassination which took place in Dallas two weeks later.

As detailed in Accessories After the Fact, page 89 footnote, the tape recording of Milteer's scenario was given immediately to the Secret Service, which nevertheless took no precautions directed to the assassination plan described by Milteer. I suggest that the author insert into his text a summary of the "Miami tape", the delinquency of the Secret Service (and the FBI) in the protection of the President, and the failure of the Warren Commission to mention anywhere in its Report or its Hearings and Exhibits the explosive Miami tape, which became known to the public only in early 1967 when it was released by the Miami Police Department.

Page 5 paragraph 3

The statement that it was "learned" that Jack Ruby had unloaded a rifleman at the scene of the assassination is too strong. It depends wholly on the allegations of Julia Mercer to the author -- statements which a reasonable person might question or even reject. There is evidence that Ruby arrived at the offices of the Dallas Morning News at about 11 or 11:30 a.m. on Friday, which corresponds with the time that Julia Mercer supposedly saw Ruby at the assassination scene.

Chapter 1

The comments on this chapter deal principally with the motorcade route, which is also referred to in many subsequent chapters (Chapter 3 page 21; Chapter 5 page 18 and footnote, page 31 and Note 32; Chapter 9 page 18; and Chapter 11 page 3).

The author's account of the motorcade route is incomplete and unintentionally misleading. A fuller account follows.

On Tuesday November 19th the Dallas Times-Herald reported that the motorcade would proceed "west on Main, turning back to Elm at Houston and then out Stemmons Freeway to the Trade Mart".

On the same date, November 19th, the Dallas Morning News reported that the motorcade would travel "Harwood to Main, Main to Houston, Houston to Elm, Elm under the Triple Underpass to Stemmons Freeway, and on to the Trade Mart."

Thus, any reader of the Dallas newspapers could have learned three days before the assassination that the motorcade would turn down Elm Street and pass the Texas School Book Depository Building. But there is no evidence that Oswald or most of the other employees of the TSBD did in fact know this. Several of the workers questioned on the afternoon of the assassination said that they did not learn until Friday morning that the motorcade would pass the building. FBI agent James Hesty did not learn until Thursday evening that there was to be a motorcade nor that it would pass the TSBD.

On Friday morning the Dallas Morning News published a story about the motorcade which did not specify whether it would proceed down Main Street all the way or make the detour to Elm Street. Accompanying this story was a map of the motorcade route which indicated that the parade would proceed down Main Street all the way and without any detour from Main to Houston to Elm. In other words, the map showed that the motorcade would not pass the TSBD.

Just as the author says, the Warren Commission printed a cropped photocopy of the story as it appeared on the front page of the Dallas Morning News from which the accompanying map was deliberately excised. This is one of an innumerable mutilations and distortion of evidence by the Commission in its determination to tailor the evidence to the "lone assassin".

But Oswald did not know that the motorcade would pass the building where he worked. Between 8 and 9 a.m. Friday morning Oswald asked

a fellow-employee, James Jarman, why people were gathering outside the building and it was only then that he learned, from Jarman's reply, that the motorcade was to pass the Depository.

The author of the manuscript presents evidence on page 18 of Chapter 1 that every motorcade before President Kennedy's proceeded down Main Street without detouring through Houston to Elm Street. The Warren Commission claimed that the Elm Street approach was necessary to avoid traffic hazards which would otherwise exist. But Traffic Patrolman Joe Marshall Smith testified that he knew of nothing that would have prevented the motorcade from going directly down Main Street and on to the Stemmons Freeway.

But the MSCA in its Report quotes Governor John Connally as saying that Main-to-Houston-to-Elm Street had been the usual route for ceremonial occasions.

There is, thus, an unrecconciled conflict between the claim by the author, based on a deposition by Forrest Serrels (the head of the Secret Service division in Dallas), that motorcades customarily went down Main Street without a detour to Houston and Elm; and the assertion by Governor Connally that motorcades customarily made the detour to Houston and Elm.

Perhaps the author, with his many investigatory assets, could have a check made of the Dallas newspapers to see which allegation is true. In any case, the manuscript should provide a full account of the complexities and conflicts involved in evaluating the motorcade route, both in this Chapter and in subsequent references.

The subsequent references are found in:

Chapter 3, page 21, paragraph 1
Chapter 5, page 18 and footnote
Chapter 5, page 21, paragraph 1
Chapter 9, page 18, paragraph 1
Chapter 11, page 3, paragraph 1
Chapter 10, page 2, paragraphs 1 and 3

Chapter 1 (continued)

Page 13 paragraph 1

It is not possible to agree that Chief Justice Warren was "at most the titular head of the Commission". Warren and the chief counsel, J. Lee Rankin, ran the show, as is clear from the book Inquest by Edward J. Epstein, and from many other sources. It was Warren and not Allen Dulles who tried to suppress publication of the 26 volumes of the Hearings and Exhibits. (See page 14 of Chapter 1, last paragraph.)

Page 14 paragraph 3

At the end of the quotation from Dulles the author states that emphasis is added, but there is no underlining in the text.

Page 25 line 2

The false Secret Service agents did not "accost" anyone. One was encountered in the grassy knoll area by a policeman with drawn gun; two others were standing at the rear door of the Depository.

Page 26 paragraph 2

Here the author deals with the nitrate (paraffin) test to which Oswald was submitted and asserts that the results exonerated him by proving that he had not fired a rifle on the day of the assassination. The paraffin test was positive for Oswald's hands, which is meaningless since many other substances than gunpowder could have left nitrate residue on his hands. Significantly, however, there were no nitrate deposits on Oswald's cheek. The Warren Commission did not consider that significant or exonerative, and stated in essence that the paraffin test was unreliable and irrelevant. But when one turns to William Turner's book Invisible Witness (page 76) one finds the following significant passage:

"...the absence of residues chargeable to the gunpowder in the rifle would seem to exculpate Oswald as the President's assassin.

"The FBI did not think so. 'A rifle chamber is tightly sealed,' testified FBI ballistics expert Cortland Cunningham, 'and so by

its very nature, I would not expect to find residue on the right cheek of a shooter.' This explanation seemed so implausible that I contacted Dr. Vincent Guinn of General Atomics...He said that he and Raymond Pinker of the Los Angeles police crime laboratory were also curious about the Cunningham testimony, and ordered an Italian Carcano rifle such as Oswald supposedly fired...They fired the obsolete weapon a number of times--some gun experts think it is likely to blow up--and tested their cheeks by neutron activation analysis. Nitrates from the blowback were present in abundance."

This additional information is important because it shows that the nitrate test did exonerate Oswald and that the Warren Commission (and its servant agencies like the FBI) were prepared to go to any length to deprive Oswald of exculpatory findings. The author may wish to incorporate this added information in his manuscript.

Pages 26-27

Here the author asserts that the Zapruder film was concealed from the public for more than five years. In fact, one critic examined the color slides in July 1965 and another critic viewed the film in September 1965. The author does make it clear later in the text of the manuscript that one copy of the Zapruder film was available for viewing at the National Archives, but that information should be given here rather than in a later chapter.

Page 28 second footnote

It is not clear what the author intends to convey when he writes that "The Commission...also went along with the official line that Kennedy was shot in the front and the back..." The Commission ignored or deformed all evidence of a shot from the front. The footnote should be rewritten for greater clarity.

Page 28 first footnote, first paragraph
and relevant parts of Chapter 2

The Warren Commission was determined to do away with strong evidence of an entrance wound in the front of the neck, and claimed that it could not locate the transcript of the press conference held immediately after the President was pronounced dead, in which Dr. Perry had described and characterized this wound.

A few years ago a critic located the Perry transcript, which had been resting quietly in the Lynden B. Johnson Library as the first document of his Administration. In this transcript Dr. Perry describes "a bullet hole ...in the lower portion of the neck, in front" and states unequivocally that this "was an entrance wound..."

This was strong evidence, on the day of the assassination and before official efforts to pollute and distort the facts, that the President was shot from the front.

The author may wish to incorporate this information in his text.

Page 29 text and second footnote

As previously noted, the Julia Mercer allegations are not conclusive. Mercer is cited again several times--in Chapter 3 page 18 C paragraph 1; in Chapter 5, page 6 paragraph 3; in Chapter 6 page 57 footnote (where the reader must ask ^{How} Mercer knew on Saturday--before Ruby shot Oswald--who Ruby was); and in Chapter 10 page 30 paragraph 2 (where it is alleged that the police displayed photographs to Mercer, including one of Jack Ruby, and that she identified him--but why would the police show photographs of Ruby on Saturday, and where is any evidence that they did so?)

All of the references to Mercer in the manuscript, as cited above, should be qualified so as not to imply that her allegations are equivalent to established fact.

Chapter 2

This is a strong chapter (and might be further strengthened by the inclusion of the quotations from the press conference held by Dr. Perry on the preceding page). The autopsy and medical evidence, and the flagrant degree to which it was manipulated, altered, and corrupted, is perhaps the greatest single proof of conspiracy and cover-up. It would be easy to devote a whole book the size of the present manuscript to the autopsy and medical findings alone. The author has elected to concentrate on the entrance wound at the Adam's apple, which in itself establishes shots from the front, crossfire, and conspiracy. I have no objection to that approach, since it accomplishes the objective and a more comprehensive account would require perhaps another hundred or more pages.

The question of interference by military brass with the conduct of the post-mortem process is well laid out, as of the time that the manuscript was prepared. New information emerged during 1986 which throws further light on this matter: (a) The Kennedy Library declassified and made available the transcript of an Oral History Interview with Admiral George Burkley, the presidential physician, in which Burkley says "...during the course of the autopsy I supervised everything that was done...I supervised the autopsy..." (b) testimony by Paul O'Conner, a technician who took part in the autopsy process, who described the atmosphere at the autopsy as "hysterical" and with constant "interference", usually by the President's personal physician, Admiral Burkley.

Not in this chapter but in a later chapter of the manuscript the author describes the deletion from the testimony of Jacqueline Kennedy of "reference to wounds". That is quite correct. However, some years ago, the critics obtained a copy of the deleted material (I received a copy from critic Paul Hoch of Berkeley, California).

Chapter 2 (continued)

I quote from the unedited transcript, underlining the material excised by the Warren Commission:

"...I was just down holding him. I was trying to hold his hair on. But from the front there was nothing. I suppose there must have been. But from the back you could see, you know, you were trying to hold his hair on, and his skull on..."

Turning now to the "receipt of a missile (sic) removed by Commander James J. Humes..." this electrifying document was discovered and published by Harold Weisberg in the early 1970s. It was then called to the attention of the HSCA at the outset of its work. The HSCA did not consider this receipt worthy of mention in its Report, but it is discussed in Volumes VI and VII. The HSCA disposes of the matter by concluding that the receipt was not actually for a "missile" or whole bullet but for two fragments removed by Dr. Humes from the right side of the skull. It also disposed of testimony by Admiral Osborne that "he recalled seeing an intact slug roll out from the clothing of President Kennedy and onto the autopsy table". Osborne was mistaken. (See HSCA VII pages 11-12 and 15-16.)

The dissent by Robert Groden, HSCA consultant, from the Committee's conclusions with respect to the "receipt for a missile" is to be found in HSCA VI page 302. I assume that that volume is available to the author. Groden's dissent contains additional information and arguments for the reality of a whole bullet and might well be quoted in full in the manuscript.

Chapter 2 (continued)

Page 11 footnote

The last sentence ("Photographs of President Kennedy's necktie and shirt are mute testimony to this fact") should be clarified or deleted.

Page 15 paragraph 3

Dr. Humes told the HSCA that he had burned certain autopsy papers because they were stained by the President's blood. This does not hold water because surviving papers are also blood-stained and because it is clear from Humes' Warren Commission testimony that he burned a first draft of the autopsy report.

Page 20 footnote

The author, in this footnote and in subsequent chapters, gives the time span of the shots as 5.8 seconds. That is the minimum time span accepted by the Warren Commission, which considered that it might extend to about seven seconds. Of even greater significance is the fact that the HSCA acoustical experts found that the first two shots --which came from the Depository window--were separated by only 1.66 seconds. Chief counsel Blakey then proceeded to try to prove that the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle could be fired twice in 1.66 seconds and not the 2.3 seconds that has always previously been accepted (by the FBI and the Warren Commission) as the minimum time for two shots to be fired. This was one of Blakey's most despicable efforts to hold on to the lone assassin at any cost. Congressman Christopher Dodd, a member of the HSCA, entered a vigorous dissent from the proposition that Oswald could have fired two shots in 1.66 seconds. That dissent is published in the HSCA Report, pages 483-490. In his concluding remarks Dodd says the following, which might well be quoted in the manuscript:

Chapter 2 (continued)

My service on the committee was a painful one. But hearing of the conduct that was engaged in by various agencies of our Government in the name of security, in the name of law enforcement, not only added to that pain, but caused me to feel shame and anger in a way in which I can only hope that I will never feel again.

Page 22 footnote

On line 1, delete "Dr. Humes" and insert "Dr. Finck".

Page 24 paragraph 1

In the absence of footnotes for Chapter 2, I cannot check on the assertion that a top-secret memo had been destroyed accidentally by the CIA. However, I do have a vague recollection of such a transaction and if my memory is correct another copy of the same memo was available from another official source and was supplied to the Warren Commission.

Page 24 paragraph 3

Dr. Wecht is a forensic pathologist of renown. He did not obtain a court order allowing him to examine the autopsy photographs and X-rays but, after a long and arduous struggle, obtained permission from Burke Marshall, the representative of the Kennedy family, to inspect these materials.

A correction should be made here, and also in Chapter 10, page 29, second footnote.

Chapter 3

Page 8 paragraph 2

On line 4, delete "association" and insert "assassination".

Page 12 ff.

Please see comments on the FBI telex, and on Milteer, on the first page of these comments.

Page 17 paragraph 2

Regarding the "last minute change in the parade route", see comments on Chapter 1 on motorcade route. Regarding the removal of the plastic bubble top from the limousine, Secret Service agent Roy Kellerman testified (2M 67) that he was instructed by Kenneth O'Donnell, Assistant to President Kennedy, that if the weather was clear and it was not raining, to "have that bubbletop off". The bubbletop was not bullet-proof but might have deflected shots aimed at the President.

Page 17 paragraph 3

In the absence of chapter "notes", I cannot verify that there were iron-clad rules "not allowing windows to be open" and calling for the checking of "roof tops along the motorcade route". I have consulted The Politics of Protection by Philip Melanson, which has a very detailed chapter on the protection of JFK by the Secret Service on the Dallas trip, without finding confirmation or contradiction of this assertion.

Page 18 paragraph 2

Jack Ruby was also a Dallas Police informer, and he had life-long close associations with figures from organized crime.

Page 20 paragraphs 1 and 2

If Oswald was indeed on the FBI payroll (which was never conclusively established), why would the FBI move him out of the Depository? It is obvious from all the relevant testimony that the FBI never considered Oswald to be dangerous to anyone's life or safety.

Chapter 4

This chapter is hard on Kerry Thornley, who was not the only person to report that Oswald held Marxist views. Oswald himself, in his radio debate and in many other settings, claimed to be a Marxist. He was nicknamed "Oswaldevitch" in the Marine Corps. It is also quite possible that Oswald deliberately stressed his Marxist beliefs to Thornley to create a cover for his defection to the Soviet Union while his real role was that of a government agent.

Page 17 paragraph 2

Thornley did not appear before the members of the Warren Commission but was deposed by two of the Commission's counsel, Jenner and Ely. The same correction should be made in paragraph 1 on page 18.

Page 20 paragraph 3

Oswald's income tax return was withheld but some years ago it was released to Marina Oswald Porter, since it was a joint return. This is reported in the recent book Reasonable Doubt by Henry Hurt. Hurt states, on page 406 of his book, that "The most startling aspect of the return is that, on its surface, it appears to give complete support to the proposition that Oswald had no unexplained sources of income."

Page 30 paragraphs 3 and 4 and footnote

The question of Oswald's height is perplexing but it seems to me that the authoritative measurement was the one obtained by Dr. Earl Rose, the Dallas coroner, who conducted the post-mortem examination of Oswald. The autopsy report (CE 1981) states that Oswald was 5 feet 9 inches tall. It is true that he is variously reported to be both taller and shorter. In one photograph he is standing next to his wife and appears to be the same height as she--about 5 feet 3 inches. This question of height is an unresolved puzzle.

The manuscript refers to Oswald's height again in Chapter 9, page 8 line 1; and in Chapter 12, page 51 footnote.

Chapter 4 (continued)

Pages 33-34

The "backyard photographs" were discovered not on the day of the assassination but the following afternoon, Saturday November 23rd. At that time, several Dallas policemen searched the Paine garage and recovered a long list of items which belonged to Oswald. Strangely enough, the backyard photos were not listed in the inventory covering this search and seizure of property.

Asked by Warren Commission counsel why the backyard photos did not appear on the list, the police officer replied that they were signified under "miscellaneous photographs". This is very hard if not impossible to believe, given the incriminating nature of the photographs. The testimony on this point by policeman Richard Stevall appears in 7H 194.

Adding doubt to the already-fishy story of the discovery and seizure of the backyard photos is the book JFK Assassination File by retired Dallas police chief Jesse Curry, self-published in 1969. On page 111 of this work, there is a full-page photograph captioned "Oswald's possessions recovered from the Paine's home in Irving, Texas." All kinds of books, leaflets, and snapshots appear in this photo --but no backyard photos, which should have been prominently displayed.

Chapter 5

Page 2 last paragraph

The three rifles are mentioned here and subsequently, in Chapter 9 pages 25-26, and in Chapter 12 page 22. The argument for the three different weapons is partly documentary and partly deductive. The evidence for the author's assertions would be enormously strengthened by the inclusion of a photograph showing the Dallas police carrying a rifle down the fire escape as shown in the film by Dallas Cinema Associates. Perhaps Richard E. Sprague, the films-and-photographs expert among the critics, could supply such a photo.

Chapter 5 (continued)

Page 4 first footnote

There was also one palmprint on one of the cartons which could not be identified, a rather important fact to which the Warren Report devotes one sentence (page 566). This is a matter of some consequence, because when all legitimate handlers were ruled out--as they were--the unidentifiable palmprint meant that an unknown person had handled the box.

Page 6 paragraph 2

It is not true that "some Book Depository employees had been questioned minutes after the shooting in the second floor lunchroom." Oswald was the only one encountered there and the only one questioned.

Page 12 paragraph 2

The author should indicate that FBI agent Mesty (4H 463) unequivocally denies Lt. Revill's version of their conversation.

Pages 23-24

I fail to see any connection between Oswald's move to Dallas and the Cuban missile crisis.

Page 25 paragraph 2

The author alleges that the International Cooperation Administration is a well-known CIA front based in Washington. This may well be true but I cannot corroborate (or refute) it.

"Notes"

The first page of the Chapter 5 "Notes" is missing and there is some scrambling of the footnote numbers in the text. On page 31 the footnote numbers jump from 32 to 36.

Page 38 paragraph 2

The recollections of Banister's long-time secretary (Delphine Roberts) came to light for the first time in the 1970s (elicited by Anthony Summers and reported in his book Conspiracy). As previously indicated, her allegations came long after the event and are not necessarily credible.

Page 44 line 1

Note 40 in the Chapter notes is unrelated to the text. The same is true for Note 41 (last line of page 44). The entire chapter needs to be correlated with the notes and appropriate corrections made.

Chapter 5 (continued)

Page 47 footnote 41

The number 41 is here used a second time. Footnote 42, in paragraph 2, is unrelated to the corresponding Chapter note, which deals with the interrogation of Oswald in the Dallas police department after the assassination.

Page 56 ff.

Footnotes 47-50 have no corresponding citations in the Chapter notes.

Chapter 6.

Page 14 paragraph 1

The text refers to Le Devoir but the corresponding footnote cites Faesa Sera.

Page 20 footnote

This footnote is not clear.

Page 24 paragraph 2

This allegation is unsupported. The same is true of paragraph 2 on the next page. Did this information about the trip to Montreal derive from an interview, from sworn testimony, or from documentation?

Page 35 paragraph 1

Footnote 39 seems unrelated to the corresponding citation in the Chapter notes. Also, there is a second footnote 39 at the top of page 36.

Chapter Notes page 4

In note 42 line 8 delete "Leslie" and insert "Wesley".

Page 59 paragraph 2

The reference to the postman, James Hardiman, would best be deleted. Hardiman was discredited at the Clay Shaw trial, as set forth in The Garrison Case by Milton E. Brener, pages 254-255. After Hardiman testified that he recalled delivering letters addressed to "Clem Bertrand" to Shaw's address, the defense attorney asked him whether he had delivered letters to a Fred Tate, or to a Cliff Boudreux, at Shaw's address. Yes, said Hardiman, to both names, whereupon the defense lawyer informed the witness that he had just invented the names. To retain this paragraph will make the author vulnerable to ridicule.

Chapter 6 (continued)

Page 65 line 1

Nomenclature needs to be corrected here and on subsequent pages. It is the House Select Committee, not the House Sub-Committee. The same correction needs to be made in Chapter 9, page 36, last paragraph; and page 42 paragraph 2; in Chapter 11, page 27 footnote and page 28; and in Chapter 12 page 4 of Chapter notes, Note 19; and on page 33, penultimate line.

Page 65 paragraph 2

Serious allegations are made here without supporting citations, in particular the allegation that the Justice Department has acknowledged that Clay Shaw and Clay Bertrand were one and the same man. Exact corroboration is needed if this assertion is to be maintained.

Chapter 7

I am not commenting on this and similar chapters dealing with the New Orleans cast of characters because I have no way of verifying the assertions and because I am concerned primarily with the bodies of evidence considered--and all too often misrepresented--by the Warren Commission and the House Select Committee.

I would only point out, with respect to page 35 paragraph 2 an electrifying coincidence: That Melvin Coffee was an associate of David Ferrie, who was an associate of Lee Harvey Oswald, who worked for the Reilly Coffee Company, many of whose employees departed for new jobs at the Kennedy Space Center, where they were perhaps put on the shuttle and dumped into outer space, so that they could never testify to how poorly Oswald aimed his oil can.

Chapter 8

Page 11 paragraph 2 and second footnote

These assertions about the testimony of Richard Helms (that Clay Shaw had been with the CIA in the early 1960s, and that he had deliberately concealed this when the New Orleans District Attorney had so charged) are very serious. They must be supported by precise citations. How does the author know the contents of testimony by Helms, the transcript of which is sealed from public access?

Pages 13-26

These pages deal in great detail with the Clinton witnesses and provide an account of events which was accepted by the House Select Committee on Assassinations. At the risk of being tedious, I must point out again that these witnesses did not come forward with their stories until several years after the occurrences and that their stories, and particularly their identifications of three men (only one of whom had a bizarre and memorable appearance) may be mistaken.

At the top of page 24 the author states that one of the townsfolk--whose name is not given--did call the FBI after the assassination to report Oswald's presence in Clinton. There is no documentary corroboration for this in the official records of the Warren Commission or the HSCA. The HSCA in its Report (page 142) states in relation to the Clinton witnesses that "While there were points that could be raised to call into question their credibility, it was the judgment of the committee that they were telling the truth as they knew it."

I nevertheless find it difficult to believe that the real Oswald was involved in the events at Clinton or that he was really involved with Clay Shaw or David Ferrie. Perhaps it was one of the many false Oswalds who surfaced in this case.