

19 August 1968

Mr. George E. Rennar
7316 - 13th Avenue N.W.
Seattle, Washington 98107

Dear Mr. Rennar,

Your letter of the 10th was waiting when I returned last night from a week out of the city. Thank you very much for sending the May 1968 FORUM with your review of ACCESSORIES. I share your regret that space limitations prohibited a longer review but I am certainly pleased by your favorable assessment of the book and your recommendation that it should be read by FORUM's readers.

Yes, I would appreciate a copy of the Washington C.C.I.'s bibliography when it is ready. As to Oswald's attendance at the Gary Powers trial, I am sorry to say that I have not been able to resume my search because of other chores and a short trip away from New York. Now that I am back, I will be returning to work, where I have a very heavy program for the next few months which will leave little time for work on the Warren Report and related questions.

I am most interested to learn that Fred Newcomb has developed evidence showing that the notorious photos of Oswald holding a rifle are composites. I do not know Mr. Newcomb, although Lifton has mentioned his name to me. I certainly look forward to learning more about his findings, when the information becomes available, and I do hope that he finds a publisher quickly. If it is magazine article length, Mr. Newcomb might wish to submit it to THE MINORITY OF ONE, which continues to give generous space to the assassination and related questions (address: 155 Pennington Avenue, Passaic, N.J. 07055). I have suggested to the editor, M. S. Aronson, that the November 1968 issue might be devoted to the assassination, on the fifth anniversary. It is very gratifying that important research and findings are still proceeding: in addition to Mr. Newcomb's find, there is another important monograph in search of a publisher, with important new data on the autopsy findings and the wounds, which proves in effect that even if the back wound is in the higher site claimed (e.g., in the neck rather than below the neck) the bullet could not have exited at the Adam's apple nor hit Connally. Still another finding which has recently come to my attention and which I hope will be written up is an important discrepancy in photographs of the Carcano rifle, which would greatly strengthen the already-known facts suggesting that the rifle was planted and that a second rifle was actually recovered in the Book Depository on 11/22/63.

I agree completely that the Warren Report must be discredited on its own merits and my book, subject index, and articles have all been directed toward that very objective. It is because of the overriding importance which I attach to that goal that I have refused to be diverted into using time to do a major critique of Garrison, whom I regard as a menace to the achievement of a breakthrough on the Report. It is a major responsibility of the critics to expose the Commission's evidence and conclusions, as you say, but this cannot be done by inaccurate accounts of that evidence, by lunatic pronouncements (assassins in sewers and manholes, or assassins whose job was to pick up shells on the grassy knoll, and the like), by outright invention and fabrication of "evidence," or the entrapment of vulnerable but innocent persons.

Garrison, who has been guilty of just such methods and who is increasingly preposterous and irresponsible in his sensations and announcements, is a millstone on the neck of authentic scholarship and criticism of the Warren Report, and he compromises the credibility and integrity of the critics who continue to ally themselves with him, indulging in pathetic rationalization and evasion in their inability to vindicate him with respect to the central charges against his "investigation."

I do appreciate the trouble you took in preparing a synthesis of my letters on Garrison. It is quite good, but there are some important omissions. The following points are indispensable to any summary of my views on Garrison, and I hope that you will find it possible to incorporate them so that I could give my consent to publication of your synthesis.

1. The introductory comment should stipulate that I did not write the subsequent statement but provided you with copies of letters I had written in October 1967 or before that date, authorizing you to use appropriate excerpts in the newsletter; and that the synthesis is necessarily sketchy, incomplete, and not entirely recent.
2. If you wish to retain the reference to my contribution of funds to Kerry Thornley, I would have to insist that it be made clear that I took this voluntary and unsolicited step because I had received persuasive information indicating that Thornley was deliberately and cynically or vindictively entrapped and charged with perjury for the very reason that he lacked financial means or other resources to ensure a proper legal defense. It is my profound conviction that the accused—whether Oswald, Shaw, or Thornley—and not the prosecutor is entitled to the presumption of his innocence; and that any accused person, whether innocent or guilty, is entitled to the fullest legal defense and the fullest possible respect for his legal rights. I contributed funds to Thornley expressly for the explicit and circumscribed purpose of assisting him in meeting the costs of legal counsel, and without in any way necessarily associating myself with his opinions, beliefs, activities, or writings. I consider it equally important, as a matter of conscience, to insist on absolutely scrupulous treatment for those whose political or personal views we find repulsive as for those whose views we applaud—more important, perhaps, in order that our personal prejudices are not permitted to affect judgment or justice.
3. My comments on the so-called code ("P.O. 19106"), set forth in one or more of the letters I sent you, should be included, since I regard the "code" as tantamount to fabricated evidence and calculated fraud on Garrison's part.
4. My comments on the omission from the report of the first interview of Russo (by Mr. Scisabra, on behalf of Garrison) of any reference to the alleged conspiratorial meeting in Ferris's apartment. The omission has been conceded by Garrison himself, but none of the several "explanations" offered for it has merited the smallest credence.

With renewed thanks, and kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Sylvia Meagher
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