

28 June 1966,

Dear Vince,

I have been thinking some more about the proposed conference with Fred Cook over the July 2nd weekend (as I understood it). First, I have to renege on my agreement to join you at Philadelphia or wherever it is that Cook lives. Vince --I am just too tired, and too loaded down with office work. I am in the middle of one of my main assignments of the year, and I have been under a lot of pressure from that source and certain other non-Warren Report situations. I simply will not be up to the effort of a trip.

But even if we get together at my place, I would still like some clarification beforehand. I understand your reasoning about the danger that will arise if and when the Establishment is compelled to give up the ghost of the Lone Assassin; I think there is considerable logic behind your inferences and certainly there is cause for apprehension and, if possible, the elaboration of counter-measures which can be put into motion without delay, at the right time and in the right forum. But I have a number of questions.

One question is, why Fred Cook? I don't have his article in the recent issues of The Nation in front of me, but as I recall Cook made a vehement and uncompromising statement that Oswald had to be guilty--I think he called anyone who did not admit that much utterly idiotic or some such pungent phrase. In fact, it seems to me that Cook went considerably further than Epstein in accepting Oswald's culpability and that his tone was rather an offensive one towards the "demonologists" whom he did not call by that name but surely had in mind. So, why Fred Cook? Is he in a position to contribute something important in the way of information that he has or had but left out of his article? Or do I merely make my key chapters available to him? Incidentally, the editors of the Nation were very careful to make their obeisance to the Commission and its good faith; and I did not notice that Cook impugned their motives. You will have to explain how his position differs from Epstein's in those basic respects since, frankly, I see no inherent difference but only the credentials, so to speak, of Cook's non-assassination-writings which establish him as generally an anti-Establishment man. (So L / F Stone!)

Another thing that troubled me a little was your change of view about reviewing Weisberg's book. The reasons you gave in your letter to Dellinger seem no less valid today, yet you are suggesting that Ira should review Whitewash. Perhaps you have decided that you were too hasty in the first instance; if so, well and good. As you know, I have considerable sympathy for Weisberg (in spite of himself). But it did puzzle me that in addition to your apparent change of mind you sent Weisberg a copy of your rather merciless review of Inquest, which had not been an issue (so far as I know) and which I believe Weisberg not only regards highly (if with certain reservations, which we all feel to one degree or another) but which he never wearies of telling me he is doing his utmost to "help" even in competition with his own book. I know that you are not trying to organize the critics against Ed, but I hope the others concerned realize that too.

Although Ed seems to take your opinion of his book stoically, I am not yet reconciled to your negative and strongly-stated views and certainly not reconciled to the suspicions you expressed privately when I was at your home a few weeks ago. I don't believe for a moment that Ed is acting as an agent for anyone and I really question whether you have sufficient evidence to warrant suggestions of that kind. You will be surprised, I imagine, to know that I have listened to some wild and outrageous reactions to the fact that you dedicated your article on CE 399 to FBI expert Frazier; or your earlier articles to Governor Connally. I need not tell you that I repudiated those unfounded inferences with some vehemence.

So, because I do love you a whole lot, I am mentioning these matters which need some clarification and which do trouble me a little.

I hope that your visit to the Archives yesterday was rewarding. By the way, isn't next weekend an anniversary for you and Livvie? and shouldn't you do right by the girl? I send you both my sincere congratulations and all good wishes for continued happiness and a special kiss all around.

Friends?

With much love,