

3 October 1968

Dear Mr. Sorensen,

My letter of yesterday was---need I say it?---facetious from beginning to end. In a more serious vein, I am enclosing a copy of my letter of 14 July 1968 to Edward Jay Epstein, from which you will see that the assumptions in your letter of 25 September 1968 (page 4 paragraph 1) are not entirely correct.

I am also enclosing the second page of a letter I sent to Mr. G.M. on 29 August, dealing with the curious phenomenon of Garrison-watchers who never seem to solicit explanations from the New Orleans prosecutor of his inaccurate, unsupported, and insupportable pronouncements, or of his lapses from any semblance of coherence, or his other ravings. Instead, they constantly ask Garrison's detractors to justify themselves. This enclosure also clarifies my assessment of Garrison vis a vis Henry Wade.

Finally, I enclose most of a letter dated 27 September 1968 to one Charles T. Howard, who shared your distaste for "Three Assassinations" but suspected that I was merely protecting my financial prospects as an author, not venturing to go so far as to insinuate that I was a dupe or an Establishment agent in the guise of a WR critic. This enclosure explains my position on the pernicious doctrine that Garrison must have his day in court and on the sophistry of the implicit claim that nothing he says or writes outside the courtroom may be judged or challenged (though he may say and write whatever he pleases) because his "case" is, so to speak, sub judice. (Another curious aspect of those who agonize for Garrison to be allowed to bring Clay Shaw to trial is their failure to notice that Garrison has arrested numerous other individuals, for alleged perjury or bribery or the like, but has failed to take them to trial even when they have not resisted and when no extradition is involved---e.g., Kerry Thornley.)

My articles may well be deficient, as I acknowledged in my letter of 21 September, but on the other hand it is possible that the deficiency is in the reader. You are so preoccupied with the equation of Garrison with Henry Wade that you do not comment at all on the somewhat more substantial item in "Three Assassinations" of the alleged emissaries from RFK. The allegation was a pure fabrication by Mark Lane, who shortly before RFK's death by assassination---and while he was supposedly hugging the secret of the emissaries---published a violent attack on RFK for his failure to oppose the WR, in the L.A. Free Press. Garrison backed Lane's story, with some reservations and embarrassment, but he did corroborate what he knew to be a complete invention.

Your letter also ignores the footnote in "Three Assassinations" (page 14, bottom of column 1) which deals with the so-called code "19106." A comprehensive account of "19106" is given in Epstein's New Yorker article, which I specifically endorse, insofar as it deals with Garrison, on the same page of the article. As a student of the 26 volumes, you should know that "19106" occurs only once, and then, preceded by a Cyrillic "D D" and not by "P O." But if it did appear "again and again" (which I have never heard Garrison say, with respect to "19106" although he claims that the system of cryptogramming appears repeatedly---another wholly false Garrisonism with which the New Yorker article deals conclusively), that would in no way validate the

the nonsensical claim by Garrison in May 1967 that the entry in Oswald's notebook was identical with the entry in Shaw's notebook, nor his claim that it was a cryptogram for Ruby's unlisted phonenummer in Dallas 1963. Obviously, if you ignore the overwhelming and explicit evidence against the "code" which is on the public record, and complain that an ambiguous and irrelevant assertion by Garrison ("...it occurs again and again...") has not been disposed of, you can remain proudly confused and profusely epistolary well beyond the year 2001. Or the year 19106.

In "Three Assassinations" I have given one example of Garrison's default on the obligation to confront explicit charges when offered the opportunity to do so. Another example is the occasion when he obtained a half-hour of prime time on NBC in July 1967 for the express purpose of replying to NBC's attack on him. Once on the air, Garrison announced that he was "not even going to bother to dignify the foolishness" that NBC had broadcast about him. In addition to these abdications, which are on public record, I had two personal first-hand experiences in which Garrison refused to deal with specific, documented instances of his misrepresentation of the contents of the 26 volumes---one had to do with the infamous "code" and the Cyrillic "D D" and the other had to do with his claim that a page of Oswald's notebook which in fact appears in Volume XVI had been "suppressed." I especially resented that because there are many legitimate and grave instances of suppression of documentary evidence (e.g., the spectroscopic test results, the autopsy photos, etc.) and it vitiates the credibility of the critics' charges when a self-styled critic like Garrison makes unfounded and easily exposed accusations of suppression.

I do regard it as offensive when you postulate the theory that Arnoni and/or I may be "dupes"---not because it implies that I am a nitwit, but because you have no basis whatever for such a speculation except that it offers you the emotional satisfaction of continuing to resist the massive evidence of Garrison's crude chicanery. It is really no excuse to say that you have not had access to the totality of published material on Garrison: it was already apparent in March 1967 that Garrison's methods were suspect, from the very fact that he used Perry Russo as a witness without acknowledging or justifying the fact that Russo had told a far different story to the press and TV in Baton Rouge, a few short weeks before his testimony at the pre-trial hearing, when Russo himself went to the TV news reporters with his "story" (utterly different from his later testimony). Garrison should have been doubly suspect when he then used Vernon Bundy as a witness, to identify two men allegedly glimpsed on a single occasion, from some distance, four years earlier. If you are willing to treat that kind of identification as in any sense meaningful, I hope to heaven that you never serve on a jury.

I think I will not bother to pursue in greater detail the inferences to be drawn from resort to such "testimony" as to the professional competence and the moral integrity of the district attorney. If the significance is not self-evident to you, nothing I say is likely to impress you. As for Mark Lane: Trevor-Roper did not call him a liar, but I do. If you wish to take issue with me, please take issue with what I actually said; and please do it specifically, not with rhetorical and evasive queries, "Does that make him a liar?" I gave you a specific instance. Lane claimed that RFK had sent a message to Trevor-Roper, the latter denied it. Do you dispute the fact of the allegation by Lane or

do you dispute the fact of the denial by Trevor-Roper? If not, do you argue that there was an innocent misunderstanding? Or that Trevor-Roper was untruthful? When you add to the alleged "message" in 1966 the alleged "emissaries" in 1968, the import as to Lane's veracity is very damaging. Now, the evidence is not absolutely conclusive and final, and I am ready to hear any legitimate arguments in exoneration of Lane. But I am not ready to accept a "so what" as relevant or material, nor the fact that Lane did a broadcast that impressed you. (You may be surprised to know that in 1964, I attended Lane's lectures on the assassination at least six times, and was enormously impressed by his knowledge, his intelligence, and his courage. I sent contributions to finance his work to his Citizens' Committee; I sent or gave Lane's chief assistants everything which I had found in the 26 volumes which might be useful to him; and generally regarded him with wholehearted admiration. It was somewhat later that I learned that Lane deliberately said things on the platform that he knew and acknowledged to be untrue, on the grounds, he said, that the audience would not know the difference. By that time, I had had some first-hand experience with Lane: namely, that he opened a letter I had sent to one of his assistants, marked "personal," appropriated an enclosed document of some importance, discarded my letter to his assistant (without showing it to him), and then made use of the appropriated document despite my written request that he not use it since it was my property and he had obtained it by opening a letter not directed or intended for him. I will not give an account of subsequent first-hand experiences with Lane, including his plagiarism of two pieces of my work, one published article and one unpublished critique, altered just enough to escape technical and legal action for plagiarism.)

The fact that you characterize your letter of September 25th as a "love letter" is almost endearing and charming, but it does not make the preceding pages less chaotic, incomplete or inaccurate in factual terms, or less confused, as you put it yourself. I do not feel deserving of your Love and you had best give it all to Garrison. Or Lane. Or both. I have tried to be objective and impersonal but I admit that I falter when I confront your astonishing statement that there is practically no difference between Rush to Judgment and Accessories. Many reviewers and Conor Cruise O'Brien in particular found enormous differences between the two; but obviously you do not. I had not realized that you and I were on such different wavelengths; but I will try to be philosophical about it, and thankful that I do not feel in the least confused, chastised, or culpable, on the issue of Garrison or the WR or Lane. I have replied to your letter despite some pessimism about our ability to conduct a dialogue, because I do not wish silence to be misconstrued at some future time as agreement in any degree with your exposition of facts or your assessment of them.

Yours sincerely,

Sylvia Meagher