

4/8/73

Dear friend Lillian,

Ours is a strange correspondence with years between letters.

Your latest, dated March 30, 1973, opens with an expression of your pleasure in speaking with me over the telephone in October, 1972! And if your "stay had been longer, we surely would have met."

Then, you write, "In the meantime," you "want to set the record straight on a matter" related to the conversation we had.

And you set forth what you said and thought about the Kennedy assassination photos and X-rays. And complained

about a reference thereto by Sylvia Meashin which you

Ray misrepresented ^{what} you said. And you add, graciously,

that it was no fault of mine, whereby you suggest at the same time, I was the cause of the misrepresentation — the unwitting cause, to be sure. Shouldn't that have cast a pall over the retrospective pleasure you have in recalling our telephone conversation?

As far as that conversation is concerned, my memory hinges on the emphasis I laid on the damage ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~Wacht~~ ^{Wacht} did in the press conference he held following his inspection of the assassination photos and X-rays, to the effort to penetrate the assassination and have the truth. I recall that you had not seen the X-rays and photos but had been present at the press conference. As I remember it, you were impressed unfavorably by the antagonistic persistence of the reporters in

questioning Wecht and were sympathetic to him. My impression at the time was that you had failed to recognize the alteration in Wecht's course and I warned against the possibility of his capitulation.

And I warned Sylvia Meagher who was in communication with Wecht and who respected him. Although I do not remember the details of the conversation or letter in which I conveyed that warning, I most probably included my impression of your witness and views. So you are correct in that point - I must have been the source of the alleged misrepresentation.

About the misrepresentation. I do not see any. Moreover, the point allegedly misrepresented is of minuscule importance, not worth the paper and postage devoted to it. Finally, it

is difficult to debit Sylvia Meagher with deliberate misrepresentation. She is an ethical person, motivated in her entire course in the Kennedy-assassination research, by outrage at and contempt and disgust for lies, duplicity, hypocrisy, and injustice. She does not hesitate to condemn, on moral grounds, the mightiest government in the history of the world. Do you think she would stoop to distort the "record" in the manner in which the Warren Commission did? And over an eyelash?

According to your letter the so-called misrepresentation occurred in a letter she wrote "critical of Dr. Wecht." Your letter contains nothing either critical or supportive of Wecht. Isn't that relevant? Is the source inadvertent or studied? Ask

because I have not seen Sylvia's letter.

If we are to have a correspondence let it be about substantive things, not subjective trivia. Let us begin by evaluating Wecht's course, since I have no knowledge of it following our telephone conversation. What has he done or published? Where does he stand?

Soon it will be ten years that Kennedy was killed and the course of American history altered? You have been indefatigably at work on the mystery surrounding the assassination. Have you developed a theory about it? How does it fit into the kaleidoscope of the history of the United States? Have you achieved political insight into the affair?

Patently
Thomas Mann