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DEAR TINK,

I HAVE NO INTENTION OF MAKING A POINT BY POINT RESPONSE TO YOUR LETTER OF JANUARY 7. I FEEL THE TEN CHARGES I MADE NEAR THE END OF MY LETTER OF DECEMBER 15 ARE ~~STILL~~ VALID. ANY PERSONS WHO ARE SUFFICIENTLY INTERESTED CAN COMPARE THOSE CHARGES, ALONG WITH THE DOCUMENTATION I PRESENTED, TO YOUR SPECIFIC REPLIES; AND DECIDE FOR THEMSELVES WHETHER OR NOT YOU HAVE EFFECTIVELY ANSWERED THEM.

YOUR LETTER IS FURTHER (THOUGH UNNEEDED) CONFIRMATION OF YOUR GENIUS FOR DECEPTION AND EVASION. THIS ABILITY WAS ALREADY WELL DEMONSTRATED IN YOUR SAT-VE POST ARTICLE, BUT HAS ATTAINED FAR HIGHER LEVELS OF VIRTUOSITY IN YOUR BOOK AND LETTERS.

I CONSIDER "SIX SECONDS IN DALLAS" TO BE THE MOST DISHONEST BOOK ON THE ASSASSINATION SINCE THE WARREN REPORT; ALTHOUGH IN VIEW OF SUCH CRUDE EXAMPLES AS "DEATH OF A PRESIDENT", "THE SCAVENGERS", AND "THE TRUTH ABOUT THE ASSASSINATION", I REALIZE MY STATEMENT REQUIRES SOME QUALIFICATION. I SAY "THE MOST DISHONEST" IN THE SENSE THAT YOUR VASTLY SUPERIOR KNOWLEDGE OF THE PERTINENT DATA, AND THE INCOMPARABLY MORE DETAILED ANALYSIS YOU PRESENT OF IMPORTANT EVIDENCE, REQUIRED A FAR HIGHER DEGREE OF CONSCIOUS FALSIFICATION AND SUBTERFUGE TO FRAME YOUR CASE THAN ANY OF THE OTHER DISHONEST ASSASSINATION BOOKS.

THAT VERY FEW PEOPLE HAVE THE NECESSARY KNOWLEDGE OF THE PHOTO EVIDENCE TO EVEN SUSPECT WHAT YOU HAVE DONE CAN BE ATTRIBUTED NOT ONLY TO THE CONSIDERABLE SUCCESS OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT--AND ITS AGENTS, DE FACTO AND OTHERWISE--TOWARD SUPPRESSING THAT EVIDENCE; BUT ALSO TO YOUR OWN DEMONSTRATED EXPERTISE IN MANIPULATING THAT EVIDENCE, AND TO YOUR STUDIOUSLY DECEITFUL PHRASEOLOGY. YOUR BOOK IS A MASTERPIECE OF DECEPTION, EXECUTED AT GENIUS LEVEL, AND I HAVE NO DOUBT WILL SOMEDAY BE TENDERED BY HISTORIANS THE "TRIBUTE" IT RICHLY DESERVES.

YOUR "MESSAGE" OF COURSE, IS THAT "THREE ASSASSINS" DOES NOT PROVE A CONSPIRACY, BUT MERELY SUGGESTS " ". THAT THERE ARE THREADS IN THIS CASE THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN UNRAVELED LONG AGO INSTEAD OF BEING SWEEPED UNDER THE ARCHIVES RUG. . . AND THAT THE QUESTION OF OSWALD'S GUILT MUST REMAIN . . . STILL UNANSWERED".

IF THREE ASSASSINS DO NOT PROVE CONSPIRACY, YOU SHOULD HAVE HAD THE COURAGE TO STATE WHAT SUCH A PROPOSITION CLEARLY IMPLIES--THAT THREE LONE NUTS, UNAIDED AND UNAWARE OF EACH OTHER'S EXISTENCE, ALL DECIDED TO DO KENNEDY IN AT THE SAME TIME IN DEALEY PLAZA. BUT OBVIOUSLY, DESPITE YOUR IMPLICATION, YOU REALLY CAN'T BELIEVE IN THE REASONABLE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH A FANTASY--AND SO, AGAIN BY IMPLICATION, YOU LEAVE YOUR READERS WITH ANOTHER ALMOST EQUALLY UNSUPPORTABLE ALTERNATIVE: THAT IF THE ASSASSINATION WAS THE RESULT OF A CONSPIRACY, IT WAS ONE PERPETRATED BY A FEW NUTS; NO INVOLVEMENT BY POLITICALLY POWERFUL FORCES, EITHER BEFORE OR AFTER THE FACT.

THIS LATTER ALTERNATIVE IS IMPLIED BY YOUR CONSISTENT TURNING AWAY FROM ANY IMPORTANT EVIDENCE POINTING TO SUCH HIGH LEVEL INVOLVEMENT. IN INSTANCE AFTER INSTANCE, REASONABLY SUSPECT STATEMENTS AND EVIDENCE FURNISHED BY THE FBI ARE ACCEPTED BY YOU WITHOUT CHALLENGE, EXCEPT IN ONE OR TWO RELATIVELY MINOR CASES.

IN YOUR LOS ANGELES RADIO APPEARANCES YOU HAVE INDICATED THAT THERE WAS NO DELIBERATE HIGH LEVEL CONSPIRACY, FRAUD, OR SUPPRESSION.

TO BE SURE, "SIX SECONDS" FURTHER DESTROYS THE WARREN COMMISSION; BUT THE STENCH OF THE PUTREFYING CARCASS OF THAT AUGUST AND HAPLESS BODY HAS LONG SINCE PERMEATED THE LAND, AND HAS BY NOW BECOME OBNOXIOUS TO EVEN ITS MOST SOPHISTICATED FORMER ADVOCATES. YOUR IMPLIED MESSAGE TO OUR COUNTRYMEN, THEN, IS THAT WE CAN SAFELY BURY ITS CORPSE AND LET IT GO AT THAT--A FEW NUTS DID IT, EITHER AS LONERS OR (MORE PROBABLY) ACTING IN CONCERT; AND THE POOR OLD WARREN COMMISSION, RUSHING TO JUDGMENT IN THE "NATIONAL INTEREST", BUNGLED THEIR JOB BY NOT PROPERLY EVALUATING ALL THAT SOLID EVIDENCE OF CONSPIRACY GIVEN THEM BY HONEST J. EDGAR AND HIS BOYS.

THE MESSAGE IS A RELATIVELY COMFORTING ONE TO MANY, PRECISELY THE KIND THEY WANT TO HEAR; BUT, I SUBMIT, A TERRIBLY DANGEROUS ONE BECAUSE ANY OBJECTIVE ANALYSIS LEADS TO A DIFFERENT CONCLUSION: THAT EARL WARREN AND HIS COHORTS WERE NO MORE THAN A CREW OF EXPENDABLE PATSIES, TO BE DISCARDED WHEN AND IF THE SIEVE-LIKE NATURE OF THEIR PRE-ORDAINED CONCLUSIONS NO LONGER SUFFICED TO FOOL THE MAJORITY OF THE PUBLIC. THIS CONDITION OBTAINED BY THE END OF 1966, AND SO WE NOW HAVE "SIX SECONDS IN DALLAS"; AN EXTREMELY SOPHISTICATED AND BRILLIANTLY CONSTRUCTED FRAUD.

IN YOUR LETTER OF NOVEMBER 27 YOU REFERRED TO VINCE AS SUPPORT FOR YOUR INDEPENDENT DISCOVERY OF THE DOUBLE HIT. I NOTED (MY LETTER OF DEC 15, PG 5) THAT VINCE TOLD ME HE THEN INFORMED YOU THAT YOU WERE NOT THE ORIGINATOR OF THIS FIND. IN THE SECOND PARAGRAPH OF YOUR LETTER OF JANUARY 7 YOU AGAIN REFER TO VINCE AS A PERSON YOU ADMIRE AND WHOSE JUDGMENT YOU TRUST. YOU ALSO REFERRED TO VINCE AS A CLOSE FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE A NUMBER OF TIMES ON L.A. RADIO, IMPLYING SUPPORT FOR YOUR THESES. IT THEREFORE SEEMS RELEVANT TO NOTE THAT IN HIS LETTER TO ME OF DECEMBER 3, 1967, WHICH I QUOTE WITH HIS PERMISSION, HE SAYS OF YOUR ARTICLE AND BOOK:

"ON ALL OTHER SCORES, EPSTEIN, THE FRAUD OF THE AUTOPSY SURGEONS, THE CLASPING OF THE THROAT, AND ALL OF IT, HE IS OF COURSE . . . PLAYING THE ESTABLISHMENT'S GAME. THE OVERALL EFFECT OF THE MATTER IS A THREE PART CONSPIRACY BY NUTS. IT IS, IF ANYTHING, WORSE THAN EPSTEIN. . . I HAD TO DISASSOCIATE MYSELF FROM HIM WHEN WE DISAGREED ON THE THROAT WOUND. THE 399 SURRENDER I DID NOT KNOW OF. HE HAS NOT SHARED THIS WORK WITH ME. HE HAS KEPT IT SECRET FROM ME UNTIL NOW. IT IS DISHONEST WORK. I LEARNED IT LAST NIGHT WHEN I TALKED IT OVER WITH HIM. THIS WILL REPRESENT THE ESTABLISHMENT'S SECOND LINE OF DEFENSE NOW THAT THE WARREN COMMISSION REPORT HAS COLLAPSED. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DID NOT DO THIS. RATHER THREE OR FOUR OR FIVE NUTS DID IT."

YOU SAY YOU DON'T KNOW ME PERSONALLY (PAR. 2, PG 1); CURIOUS STATEMENT IN VIEW OF OUR PERSONAL MEETING AT LIFE ON OCTOBER 15, 1968--TO WHICH YOU YOURSELF ALLUDED IN YOUR LETTER OF DECEMBER 15--AND A NUMBER OF LENGTHY SUBSEQUENT PHONE CONVERSATIONS, TO WHICH I REFERRED IN MY LETTER OF DECEMBER 15. CURIOSER STILL, WHEN CONSIDERED WITH YOUR REPEATED CLAIMS AND IMPLICATIONS OF LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF MY WORK, ARE SUCH OF YOUR STATEMENTS AS:

"I HAVE ADMIRER FOR A LONG TIME THE ACUITY AND HONESTY OF YOUR WORK, AND I HOPE WE MIGHT CONTINUE TO WORK TOGETHER IN THE FUTURE"  
(CLOSING PARAGRAPH, YOUR LETTER OF NOVEMBER 27, 1967)

"I . . . I HAVE FOR SO LONG ADMIRER THE INTEGRITY AND CAREFULNESS OF YOUR WORK"; AND, "THE CHIPS ARE DOWN AND LIFE IS TRYING TO RUIN ME; I NEED YOUR HELP . . . I HOPE YOU'LL FEEL YOURSELF ABLE TO GIVE IT"  
(YOUR LETTER OF DECEMBER 15)

"TO RAY MARCUS, WHOSE WORK I'VE LONG ADMIRER WITH MORE ENTHUSIASM THAN HE KNOWS".

(YOUR NOTE ACCOMPANYING COPY OF YOUR BOOK, RECEIVED DECEMBER 3, 1967)

"(WHEN) THE HISTORY OF THE WAY IN WHICH THIS CASE WAS BROKEN (IS WRITTEN), I'M SURE YOU'LL FIND CREDIT ALLOTTED WHERE IT'S DUE, AND THAT YOU WILL HAVE RECEIVED A LION'S SHARE FOR YOUR VERY SIGNIFICANT WORK".

(LAST PARAGRAPH, YOUR LETTER OF JANUARY 7)

STRANGE STATEMENTS INDEED FOR ONE WHO REPEATEDLY CLAIMS UNFAMILIARITY WITH KEY SPECIFICS OF MY WORK.

I WANT TO MAKE A FEW REMARKS ABOUT YOUR NUMBERED RESPONSES TO MY CHARGES. IN EACH OF THE THREE POINTS RELATING TO BULLET 399 (8, 9, AND 10), YOU RELY AS A DEFENSE ON THE CLAIM THAT ALTHOUGH VINCE GAVE YOU A COPY OF "THE BASTARD BULLET" ". . . ABOUT A YEAR AGO", YOU ". . . LOOKED THROUGH IT. . . THOUGHT IT WAS A GOOD JOB, BUT NEVER DID READ IT". ONCE AGAIN, YOU DISCLAIM KNOWLEDGE OF MY WORK. IT DOES SEEM ODD, DESPITE YOUR STATEMENT THAT YOU FIND THE "PRIMARY STUFF MORE REWARDING" THAT YOU DID NOT READ IT, ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF YOUR INCLUSION OF IT ON PG VIII OF "SIX SECONDS" AMONG THE SECOND GENERATION BOOKS (MARCUS SCRUTINIZED THE EVIDENCE SURROUNDING COMMISSION EXHIBIT 399). AFTER ALL, THINK; IT'S ONLY 77 PAGES LONG. VINCE, WITH WHOM YOU WERE COLLABORATING AT THE TIME, READ A PRE-PUBLICATION COPY SENT TO FONZI IN AUGUST '66. HE HAD HIS OWN PRE-PUBLICATION COPY IN MID-OCTOBER '66, AS DID ED KERN -- TO WHOM I GAVE A COPY DURING MY LIFE VISIT ON OCTOBER 15. ON PAGE 7 OF "SIX SECONDS" YOU REFER TO THE FACT THAT YOU MADE SEVERAL TRIPS TO DALLAS, AND TO THE ARCHIVES, WITH ED KERN -- WITH WHOM YOU WORKED VERY CLOSELY WHEN YOU WERE EMPLOYED AS LIFE'S CONSULTANT.

IN A LETTER TO ME DATED OCTOBER 22, 1966, SHORTLY AFTER YOU WERE HIRED BY LIFE, KERN SAID THE FOLLOWING:

"I HAVE JUST FINISHED READING YOUR ARTICLE, THE BASTARD BULLET, AND I'M BOUND TO SAY THAT OF ALL THE ACCOUNTS I HAVE READ OF THAT MYSTERIOUS MIS-SILE, YOURS IS BY FAR THE MOST THOROUGH AND COGENT. YOU TOO, IT SEEMS, ARE FORCED TO THE SAME CONCLUSION AS POPKIN WAS: THAT 399 WAS PLANTED. AS YOU PRESENT THE ALTERNATIVES, THERE DOES INDEED SEEM TO BE LITTLE ROOM FOR ANY OTHER CONCLUSION".

COMMENTING ON THE KENNEDY STRETCHER TIME-CONSTRAINT IN MY MONOGRAPH, HE SAID:

"YOU ARE RIGHT IT SEEMS TO ME IN SAYING THAT TOMLINSON WOULD HAVE TO HAVE MOVED THE STRETCHER OFF THE ELEVATOR AT LEAST 40 MINUTES LATER THAN HE REMEMBERS DOING IT IF THE STRETCHER WAS KENNEDY'S. THIS IS AS YOU SAY UNLIKELY. BUT IS IT IMPOSSIBLE? I THINK THAT ANY READER OF YOUR PIECE WOULD FIND HIMSELF WONDERING, ESPECIALLY AS YOUR ELIMINATION OF JFK'S STRETCHER APPEARS, AT LEAST IN YOUR PRESENTATION, TO DEPEND ON 40 MINUTES IN AN ELDERLY MAN'S MEMORY. . . . BUT I THINK THAT OTHER EVIDENCE WHICH YOU CITE SAVES YOU. THIS IS THE NOTE BY JOHNSON REGARDING HIS RECEIPT OF THE BULLET FROM WRIGHT ABOUT 5 MIN. PRIOR TO MRS. KENNEDY'S DEPARTURE FROM THE HOSPITAL". (ACTUALLY, I RELIED ON OTHER DATA IN ADDITION TO THE TIME CONSTRAINT IN REGARD TO JFK'S STRETCHER. HOWEVER, EVEN AFTER PRECLUDING HIS STRETCHER AS A REASONABLY POSSIBLE LOCUS FOR 399'S DISCOVERY, I ALLOWED IT TO REMAIN A POSSIBILITY IN ORDER TO MAKE AN EXTREME CONCESSION TOWARDS EXAMINING NON-SINISTER HYPOTHESES RE 399'S ROLE -- RM B.B., P 16, 68).

KERN ALSO COMMENTED ON MY FAST FRAGMENT/SLOW BULLET ARGUMENT AS FOLLOWS:

". . . YOU RAISE THE INTERESTING QUESTION ABOUT THE BULLET FRAGMENT THAT PENETRATED THE GOVERNOR'S FEMUR. YOU USE THE FRAGMENT TO SHOW THAT

THE BULLET WHICH STRUCK CONNALLY'S THIGH COULDN'T HAVE BEEN A SPENT BULLET . . . IF THE BULLET WAS TRAVELING SLOWLY, THEN HOW DID IT MANAGE TO THROW OFF A FRAGMENT THAT TRAVELED FASTER THAN ITSELF--FAST ENOUGH TO PLOW INTO THE FEMUR? I'D BE INTERESTED IN HEARING ANY COMMENT YOU MIGHT HAVE TO MAKE ON THIS ONE SINCE IT WAS YOU WHO RAISED THE PROBLEM. (I DID NOT DRAW A CONCLUSION AS TO THE BULLET OF ORIGIN OF THE FEMUR FRAGMENT; I MERELY ARGUED THAT, EVEN WITHOUT OTHER EVIDENCE, THE FAST FRAGMENT COULDN'T HAVE COME FROM A SLOW BULLET--WHICH 399 WOULD HAVE TO BE FOR IT TO STRIKE THE THIGH, FALL BACK OUT, AND/OR RETAIN ITS CONDITION--RM).

KERN CLOSED HIS LETTER AS FOLLOWS:

"WELL, THE LENGTH OF THIS LETTER OUGHT TO PROVE BETTER THAN ANY WORDS OF MINE HOW FASCINATED I AM WITH YOUR PIECE. I SHOULD ADD THAT I WAS DELIGHTED TO MEET YOU, A FELLOW-TOILER IN THE VINYARD. I'M SORRY I HAD TO DUCK OUT ON YOU WHEN I DID; BUT I GATHER DICK BILLINGS TOOK CARE OF YOU. LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH."

I DO NOT CHALLENGE THAT DORIS NELSON TOLD YOU AT PARKLAND ON NOVEMBER 2, 1966, OF THE TIME-CONSTRAINT IN REGARD TO JFK'S STRETCHER. NOR DO I CHALLENGE THAT DR. SHIRES CONFIRMED LAST MAY THAT THE FRAGMENT WAS EMBEDDED IN CONNALLY'S FEMUR--THUS VALIDATING AGAIN THE FAST FRAGMENT/SLOW BULLET ARGUMENT. I DO BELIEVE THAT BEFORE THEN YOU WERE AWARE OF THESE ITEMS IN MY BOOK; AND AT ANY RATE, WERE CERTAINLY AWARE OF THEIR EXISTENCE THEREIN LONG BEFORE YOUR BOOK CAME OUT. I CONSIDER IT EXTREMELY PROBABLE IN VIEW OF THE THEN IMPENDING TRIP TO DALLAS BY YOU AND KERN, AN IMPORTANT MOTIVE FOR WHICH WAS A DESIRE TO LOOK INTO 399'S BACKGROUND, THAT HE DISCUSSED THE ABOVE ITEMS WITH YOU.

TO BELIEVE THEN YOUR STATEMENTS IN YOUR LETTER OF JANUARY 7, RE THE TIME-CONSTRAINT, THAT YOU WERE NOT AWARE THAT I . . . HAD ADVANCED A PARALLEL ARGUMENT IN 'THE BASTARD BULLET'; AND THAT, RE THE FAST FRAGMENT/SLOW BULLET, YOU WEREN'T AWARE I . . . HAD REACHED A SIMILAR CONCLUSION UNTIL YOUR LETTER ARRIVED (OF DEC 15--RM), ONE MUST ALSO BELIEVE ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:

1. THAT ALTHOUGH YOU HAD A COPY AND "LOOKED THROUGH IT . . . ABOUT A YEAR AGO", YOU WERE UNAWARE THE ITEMS WERE INCLUDED THEREIN BECAUSE YOU "NEVER DID READ IT".
2. THAT ALTHOUGH LIFE ASSOC. EDITOR ED KERN WAS EXTREMELY INTERESTED IN THESE SPECIFIC ARGUMENTS--AND COMMENTED EXTENSIVELY ON THEM IN HIS OCT 22 LETTER--HE DIDN'T DISCUSS THEM WITH YOU, DESPITE YOUR INTIMATE COLLABORATION.
3. THAT ALTHOUGH BULLET 399 PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN YOUR CHAPTERS "PHYSICAL EVIDENCE" AND "THE WARREN REPORT", YOU NEVER WENT BACK TO CHECK MY MONOGRAPH. (OH YES, I REMEMBER; YOU SAID YOU MISPLACED IT)

IT SEEMS TO ME THAT IF A WORK OF A APPEARS PUBLICLY AND COMES TO B'S ATTENTION (LET ALONE POSSESSION), AND IF CERTAIN UNTIL--THEN UNIQUE PORTIONS OF A'S WORK APPEAR IN A SUBSEQUENT WORK OF B; AND IF B COULD THEN RIGHTFULLY CLAIM--AS A VALID DEFENSE FOR FAILING TO REFER TO A'S PRIOR WORK--THAT HE WAS UNAWARE OF THE PRESENCE OF THE SPECIFIC ITEMS IN A'S WORK; THEN THERE WOULD BE NO MEANING AT ANY TIME TO A CHARGE OF PLAGIARISM, OR OF FAILURE TO PROPERLY CREDIT SOURCES, OR OF FAILURE TO ACKNOWLEDGE ANOTHER'S PRIOR INDEPENDENT DISCOVERY -- WHICHEVER OF THE THREE APPLIED IN THE SPECIFIC INSTANCE.

AS TO THE 314-315 FRAME SWITCH (ITEM 7 OF YOUR LETTER), HERE AS ELSEWHERE YOU IGNORE OUR PERSONAL CONTACTS--BOTH FACE TO FACE AND BY PHONE--NOTED IN MY LETTER OF DECEMBER 15; AND YOU IMPLY THAT YOU DID NOT KNOW WHO DISCOVERED IT UNTIL YOUR RECEIPT OF THAT LETTER. IF BY SO DOING, YOU MEAN TO IMPLY THAT THE

PHONE CONVERSATIONS DID NOT TAKE PLACE, AND THAT IN ONE OF THEM A MAIN TOPIC OF DISCUSSION WAS NOT THE FACTS OF THE 314-315 SWITCH, THEN YOU ARE---QUITE SIMPLY--- LYING. NOT ONLY DID THAT PHONE CONVERSATION OCCUR, BUT I AM VIRTUALLY CERTAIN THAT I MAILED YOU AT THE SAME TIME A COPY OF MY LETTER TO DICK SPRAGUE OF MAY 22, 1967, GOING INTO CONSIDERABLE DETAIL ABOUT THIS, AND OTHER ASPECTS OF THE ZAPRUDER FILM. AS NOTED IN MY LETTER OF DECEMBER 15 (PG 16), YOU SAID THEN YOU WERE GLAD TO HAVE THIS INFORMATION SO YOU COULD MAKE PROPER ATTRIBUTION (OF MY DISCOVERY, AND OF LIFTON'S LETTER FROM HOOVER).

(I KNOW THAT MANY PEOPLE, GIVEN A CHOICE BETWEEN THE UNSUPPORTED WORD OF A COLLEGE PROFESSOR---PARTICULARLY A PHILOSOPHY PROFESSOR--- AND THE UNSUPPORTED CONFLICTING WORD OF A NON-ACADEMIC, WILL USUALLY OPT FOR THE PROFESSOR'S. I AM AWARE THAT THIS WEAKNESS OF MIND AND CHARACTER MAY EVEN AFFLICT SOME IN THE CRITICS' "COMMUNITY". PHONE RECORDS, CONFIRMING THAT THE CALLS WERE MADE, EXIST.)

IN ITEM 2 IN YOUR LETTER, RE THE INDICES OF THE 238 HIT, YOU SAY: "I BELIEVE THE CHEEK PUFF IS THE MOST IMPORTANT". THE CHEEK PUFF, OF COURSE, WAS YOUR DISCOVERY. BUT ON PAGE 274 OF "SIX SECONDS" YOU SAID OF THE SHOULDER-DIP, MY DISCOVERY: "YET THE clearest INDICATION OF THE IMPACT OF A BULLET IS THE SUDDEN COLLAPSE OF THE GOVERNOR'S SHOULDER." YOU HAVE EVIDENTLY CHANGED YOUR MIND SINCE WRITING YOUR BOOK.

I WISH TO CALL YOUR ATTENTION TO A RATHER GROSS ERROR IN AT LEAST ONE OF THE SKETCHES OF THE ZAPRUDER FILM IN YOUR BOOK, ON PAGE 31: JFK'S "LEFT" HAND, THE ONLY ONE VISIBLE IN THIS SKETCH, SHOULD ACTUALLY BE HIS RIGHT. THIS CAN BE DETERMINED BY THE FOLLOWING METHOD, BY REFERRING TO SKETCHES 224 AND 225, AND TO THE CORRESPONDING COLOR FRAMES AS PRESENTED IN LIFE, NOV 25, 1966; AND ESPECIALLY TO THE LARGE BLOWUP OF 225 IN THE SAME ISSUE:

1. VIEWING JFK IN THE COLOR BLOWUP, WE SEE IN FRONT OF HIS CHEST TWO UNMISTAKABLE FLESH TONES, WHICH OBVIOUSLY CAN BE NOTHING BUT HIS HANDS; AND OBVIOUSLY CAN BE NOTHING BUT HIS RIGHT HAND POSITIONED ABOVE HIS LEFT --- THE FLESH TONE OF THE LATTER APPEARING AT LOWER-CHEST LEVEL.
2. TURNING NOW TO THE REGULAR SIZED COLOR FRAMES OF 224 AND 225 IN LIFE, WE CAN DETECT THE SAME TWO FLESH TONES IN EACH, IN ROUGHLY SIMILAR POSITIONS. SINCE IT IS OBVIOUS THAT HIS HANDS COULD NOT HAVE SWITCHED POSITIONS IN THE 1/18 SECOND FROM 224-225, IT FOLLOWS THAT THE UPPER FLESH TONE IN 224 IS JFK'S RIGHT HAND, AND DEFINITELY NOT HIS LEFT AS YOUR SKETCH INDICATES.
3. IT FOLLOWS ALSO THAT YOUR SKETCH OF 225 IS MISLEADING; FOR FOLLOWING YOUR 224, ONE WOULD ERRONEOUSLY BELIEVE THAT JFK'S LEFT HAND IS THE ROUNDISH WHITE BLOB JUST TO THE RIGHT (AS WE VIEW IT) OF HIS RIGHT HAND---NOW DRAWN CORRECTLY.

WHILE IT IS NOT HARD TO SEE, BY COMPARING YOUR 224 SKETCH WITH THE COLOR FRAME, THAT ONE COULD EASILY INTERPRET AS A "LEFT CUFF" WHAT ACTUALLY IS A REFLECTION; THIS MISINTERPRETATION ON YOUR ARTIST'S PART ALSO INVOLVED HIS DRAWING OF LOOSELY CLENCHED FINGERS FOR A "LEFT" HAND WHERE NO FINGERS AT ALL SHOULD HAVE BEEN EXISTED ON THE ZAPRUDER SLIDE HE WORKED FROM. THIS IS A QUITE AMAZING ERROR IN VIEW OF THE FOLLOWING:

- A. THESE TWO ARE AMONG THE FEW BLOWUP SKETCHES YOU PRESENT OF SECTIONS OF ZAPRUDER FRAMES, SHOWING ONLY JFK, JACKIE, AND CONNALLY (MOST OF THE OTHERS ARE MUCH FULLER VERSIONS, AND THEREFORE THE PASSENGERS ARE CORRESPONDINGLY MUCH SMALLER).
- B. THE FACT THAT THE ERROR(S) CAN BE EASILY DETECTED EVEN FROM THE RATHER POOR QUALITY PHOTOS IN LIFE, WHEREAS YOUR ARTIST WAS WORKING FROM EXCELLENT ZAPRUDER SLIDES.

C. THE FACT THAT YOU ARE EXPERT IN THE CONTENTS OF THE ZAPRUDER FILM AND SLIDES, HAVING SPENT A GREAT DEAL OF TIME STUDYING THEM UNDER IDEAL CONDITIONS ("I KNEW EACH MOVEMENT IN DETAIL, ETC"; SIX SECONDS, PG 8)

IT IS, OF COURSE, POSSIBLE THAT DESPITE THE ABOVE POINTS THAT THE ERRORS IN YOUR SKETCHES WERE NO MORE THAN THAT. HOWEVER, IT IS AN ERROR WHICH, IF UNDETECTED, WOULD TEND TO SUPPORT A VITAL UNDERPINNING OF YOUR THESIS, THAT JFK DID NOT MAKE A CLUTCHING MOTION AT HIS THROAT. ANY SUCH MOTION BY HIM WOULD SERIOUSLY UNDERMINE YOUR ENTIRE SHOT RECONSTRUCTION; FOR YOU HAVE THE THROAT WOUND RESULTING FROM A BONE CHIP CAUSED BY THE HEAD SHOT, APPROXIMATELY FIVE SECONDS LATER (OBVIOUSLY, SUCH A THROAT WOUND RESULTING FROM A FATAL HEAD SHOT WOULD PRECLUDE A CLUTCHING MOTION AT THAT POINT).

SINCE YOU POSIT ONLY A SINGLE JFK BODY SHOT, A SHALLOW ONE IN THE BACK WHICH YOU SAY STRUCK HIM BETWEEN FRAMES 210 AND 224 (SIX SECONDS, PG 38), IT WOULD INDEED BE DIFFICULT TO RECONCILE A KENNEDY MOTION TOWARDS HIS THROAT WITH A SUPERFICIAL BACK WOUND. BUT MANY EYEWITNESSES HAD EARLY SPOKEN OF SUCH A CLUTCHING MOTION. MRS. CONNALLY, WHO INDICATED SHE LOOKED DIRECTLY AT JFK AFTER THE FIRST SHOT, SAID: (4H147)

MRS. CONNALLY: I TURNED OVER MY RIGHT SHOULDER AND LOOKED BACK, AND SAW THE PRESIDENT AS HE HAD BOTH HANDS AT HIS NECK.

MR. SPECTER: AND YOU ARE INDICATING WITH YOUR OWN HANDS, TWO HANDS CROSSING OVER GRIPPING YOUR OWN NECK?

MRS. CONNALLY: YES; AND IT SEEMED TO ME THERE WAS--HE MADE NO UTTERANCE, NO CRY. I SAW NO BLOOD, NO ANYTHING. IT WAS JUST SORT OF NOTHING, THE EXPRESSION ON HIS FACE, AND HE JUST SORT OF SLUMPED DOWN.

(AS YOU WELL KNOW, AND AS IS DETAILED ON PG 15 OF MY DECEMBER 15 LETTER, I BELIEVE HE WAS FIRST STRUCK, PROBABLY IN THE THROAT, AT 189-190. THEREFORE, I BELIEVE THAT MUCH OF WHAT MRS. CONNALLY REFERRED TO OCCURRED WHILE BEHIND THE SIGN).

IN LIFE'S PRESENTATION OF BLACK-AND-WHITE ZAPRUDER PICTURES IN ITS ISSUE OF NOVEMBER 29, 1963 SAID: "THE PRESIDENT'S WAVE TURNS INTO A CLUTCHING MOTION TOWARDS HIS THROAT". IT IS HARD TO IMAGINE THAT THE LIFE EDITORS MADE SUCH A STATEMENT WITHOUT HAVING REPEATEDLY VIEWED THE ORIGINAL ZAPRUDER FILM ALREADY IN THEIR POSSESSION. SIMILARLY, REFERRING TO ZAPRUDER COLOR PANEL #2 (WHICH WAS FRAME 226) IN THEIR MEMORIAL ISSUE OF EARLY DECEMBER, '63, LIFE SAID, "HE CLUTCHED HIS THROAT". THEY MADE A SIMILAR REFERENCE TO THE SAME FRAME IN THEIR "WARREN REPORT" ISSUE OF OCTOBER 2, 1964; BUT THIS TIME, CONFORMING TO THE WARREN COMMISSION'S CONCLUSION, SAID IT WAS THE RESULT OF A THROAT EXIT WOUND.

IN A NOTE ON PG 58 OF "SIX SECONDS", YOU YOURSELF REFER TO THE FACT THAT LIFE SAYS, "KENNEDY CLUTCHES HIS THROAT" IN THEIR ISSUE OF NOVEMBER 25, 1966. BUT THIS WAS THE TIME DURING WHICH YOU WERE LIFE'S CONSULTANT, AND WERE WORKING VERY CLOSELY WITH ED KERN WHO WROTE THE ARTICLE. ON LOS ANGELES RADIO YOU HAVE SPECIFICALLY STATED THAT YOU ASSISTED IN PREPARING THIS ARTICLE. IF, AS YOU SAY, YOUR STUDY OF THE ZAPRUDER FILM CONVINCED YOU KENNEDY DID NOT CLUTCH AT HIS THROAT, WHY WERE YOU NOT ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE THIS TO KERN? MY EXPERIENCE WITH HIM PROVED HE WAS OPEN TO REASON ON SUCH OBSERVATIONS, ASSUMING THEY ARE VALID, FOR MY SINGLE VISIT WITH HIM ON OCTOBER 15, '66 WAS SUFFICIENT TO DEMONSTRATE TO HIM (AND TO BILLINGS AND WAINWRIGHT) THAT CONNALLY'S SHOULDER DROPPED DRAMATICALLY IN 238.

WITH THE ABOVE IN MIND, LET US TURN AGAIN TO THE COLOR ENLARGEMENT OF 225 ON PG 44 OF LIFE, NOV 25 '66. WE CAN DETERMINE FROM ITS SHAPE AND RELATION TO

THE CUFF THAT, REGARDING THE LOWER FLESH TONE (WHICH BY NOW I'M SURE YOU'LL AGREE REPRESENTS HIS LEFT HAND) THAT WHAT WE CAN SEE IS ONLY THAT PORTION OF HIS HAND NEAREST THE WRIST; THAT THE PORTION AWAY FROM HIS WRIST IS ASCENDING TOWARDS HIS UPPER CHEST; AND THAT THE PORTION NEAREST THE FINGERS IS HIDDEN FROM OUR VIEW BY HIS RIGHT HAND (AS YOU ALSO KNOW, I BELIEVE HE WAS STRUCK BY A SECOND BULLET, THIS TIME IN THE BACK, AT 226). FROM THIS SINGLE FRAME, 225, I CANNOT SAY THAT THE FINGERS OF HIS LEFT HAND ARE EXTENDED TOWARD HIS THROAT, SINCE THEY ARE BLOCKED FROM VIEW; BUT IN THEIR ZAPRUDER COLOR PANEL #3 (FR. 258) OF LIFE, OCT 2, '64, AT LEAST JFK'S LEFT INDEX FINGER SEEMS CLEARLY POINTED AT THE SITE OF THE THROAT WOUND. THIS IS CONFIRMED IN ANY DECENT REPRODUCTION OF THE ALTGENS PHOTO, EQUIVALENT TO 255.

ANOTHER DIFFICULTY WITH YOUR THESIS OF A MINOR BACK WOUND IS THE APPEARANCE OF JFK IN THE FRAMES BETWEEN THE POSITED TIME OF YOUR FIRST SHOT, AND THE HEAD SHOT(S). REFERRING AGAIN TO LIFE, OCT 2, '64, PANELS 3, 4, AND 5 (FRAMES 258, 277, AND 309 RESPECTIVELY) DOES IT APPEAR PROBABLE THAT WE ARE LOOKING AT A MAN WHO HAS SUSTAINED ONLY A SUPERFICIAL BACK WOUND; ONE, ACCORDING TO YOU, THAT PENETRATED PERHAPS AS LITTLE AS ONE INCH, STRIKING NEITHER BONE NOR ANY INTERNAL ORGAN? OR DOES IT APPEAR MORE LIKELY THAT WE ARE VIEWING A MUCH MORE SERIOUSLY WOUNDED MAN? IT APPEARS CLEAR THAT THE LATTER IS THE CASE.

YOU CITE KELLERMAN'S STATEMENT THAT HE HEARD THE PRESIDENT SAY, "MY GOD, I'M HIT", AS SUPPORT FOR YOUR THEORY THAT NO DAMAGE WAS DONE TO JFK'S THROAT UNTIL 313. OBVIOUSLY, A SLIGHTLY WOUNDED JFK, WITH THROAT INTACT, WOULD NOT BE COMPATIBLE WITH TOTAL SILENCE ON HIS PART. YOU RECOGNIZE PART OF THE PROBLEM WITH KELLERMAN'S ASSERTION BY NOTING (SIX SECONDS, PG 40) THAT ". . . NONE OF THE PASSENGERS IN THE REAR OF THE LIMOUSINE HEARD THE PRESIDENT'S CRY". BOTH CONNALLYS GAVE TESTIMONY ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED IN THE CAR THAT WAS QUITE EXPLICIT, AND IN GENERAL CONFORMITY WITH THE EVIDENCE OF THE ZAPRUDER FILM (A NOTABLE EXCEPTION WAS CONNALLY'S STATEMENT THAT HE WAS HIT AS HE TURNED SLIGHTLY TO HIS LEFT OF CENTER). ON READING THEIR TESTIMONY IT SEEMS INCREDIBLE THEY COULD DESCRIBE WHAT THEY DID WITHOUT HAVING HEARD OR REMEMBERING SUCH A CRY, EVEN IF ONE CHOOSES TO DISMISS JACKIE'S RECOLLECTIONS (AT LEAST THOSE PRESENTED IN VOL 5) AS CLOUDED BY SHOCK. NEITHER DID GREER HEAR IT, NOR DID ANY OF THE NEARBY MOTORCYCLE OFFICERS. OF THESE, CHANEY ESPECIALLY SHOULD HAVE HEARD SUCH A CRY, IF IT HAPPENED. BUT IF IT DIDN'T HAPPEN, IT IS VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO BELIEVE THAT JFK HAD NO THROAT DAMAGE PRIOR TO 313; AND IF HE DID HAVE SUCH DAMAGE, THERE GOES YOUR ENTIRE SHOT RECONSTRUCTION. AND FURTHER, IF ONE ACCEPTS THE EVIDENCE THAT A THROAT WOUND EXISTED PRIOR TO 313, AND SIMULTANEOUSLY REJECTS--AS REASONABLE PEOPLE MUST--THE SINGLE BULLET THEORY; IT THEN FOLLOWS THAT THE THROAT WOUND WAS MOST PROBABLY AN ENTRY WOUND, WHICH IN TURN CLEARLY IMPLIES AUTOPSY REPORT FRAUD. THE LATTER, OF COURSE, UNDERMINES YOUR THEORY OF A CONSPIRACY (IF ANY) OF LOW-LEVEL KOOKS.

(MANY PEOPLE, WHO HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENTLY INTERESTED IN THE CASE TO BE AWARE THAT THE POSITING OF JFK HITS FROM MULTIPLE DIRECTIONS DOES NOT SQUARE WITH A BELIEF THAT THE AUTOPSY REPORT WAS HONEST, EVENTUALLY FEEL FORCED TO FALL BACK TO THE LONE-ASSASSIN THEORY. THIS IS BECAUSE THEY FIND IT IMPOSSIBLE, EMOTIONALLY AND/OR INTELLECTUALLY, TO BELIEVE THAT THE AUTOPSY SURGEONS WOULD DELIBERATELY ISSUE A FALSE REPORT. I HAVE LONG FELT THAT SUCH PEOPLE, HAVING CONFRONTED THE WRONG QUESTION, THEN FIND IT IMPOSSIBLE TO ANSWER IT AFFIRMATIVELY. RATHER THAN, "WOULD THE AUTOPSY SURGEONS DELIBERATELY ISSUE A FALSE REPORT?", I BELIEVE THE PROPER QUESTION IS, "WOULD THESE MILITARY OFFICERS FOLLOW THE ORDERS OF SUPERIORS FOR REASONS, AS THEY UNDERSTOOD THEM, OF NATIONAL SECURITY?". I BELIEVE THAT THE LATTER QUESTION AT LEAST PLACES THE MATTER IN TRUER FOCUS. I THINK YOU AND I AGREE, HOWEVER, THAT THE DOUBLE HEAD-HIT DOES NOT NECESSARILY CONFLICT WITH THE AUTOPSY REPORT.)

EVEN IF, DESPITE THE HEAVY WEIGHT OF CONTRARY EVIDENCE, JFK DID MAKE SUCH AN OUTCRY (WHICH I ADMIT WOULD BE STRONG EVIDENCE THAT HE HADN'T YET SUSTAINED A THROAT INJURY) YOU WOULD STILL HAVE TO FACE THE PROBLEM OF WHY HE SAID NOTHING FURTHER PRIOR TO THE HEAD SHOT. AFTER ALL, THE MINOR BACK WOUND YOU POSIT WOULD, NEVERTHELESS, HAVE TO BE QUITE PAINFUL. WHY ONLY ONE OUTCRY, AND THEN SILENCE IN THE INTERVAL BEFORE THE HEAD SHOT? AND WHY WOULDN'T SO SLIGHTLY WOUNDED A JFK RETAIN SUFFICIENT PRESENCE OF MIND TO DUCK TO SAFETY AFTER THIS FIRST INJURY? COMPARE THIS, FOR INSTANCE, WITH HIS QUITE AMAZING AND HEROIC PERFORMANCE WHILE INJURED DURING THE WELL KNOWN PT-109 INCIDENT.

NO TINK, AN HONEST ANALYSIS OF THE FACTS LEAVES NO REASONABLE POSSIBILITY THAT JFK'S THROAT WAS UNINJURED PRIOR TO 313. A CRUCIAL THEORY OF YOURS IS, OBJECTIVELY, INVALID; AS ARE MANY OTHERS THAT WERE QUITE CLEARLY CONSTRUCTED TO AVOID CONFRONTING THE IMPLICATIONS OF HIGH LEVEL CONSPIRACY, EITHER BEFORE OR AFTER THE FACT.

NEVERTHELESS, KELLERMAN'S STATEMENT, WHICH I BELIEVE REPRESENTS HIS HONEST (THOUGH ERRONEOUS) OPINION, MUST BE CONFRONTED. HOW COULD HE BE SO MISTAKEN, WHEN HIS TESTIMONY SEEMS SO CLEAR ON THE POINT?

THE FIRST THING TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT IS THAT THE EVIDENCE INDICATES KELLERMAN WAS BADLY RATTLED BY THE SHOTS. THERE IS SIMPLY NO OTHER WAY TO EXPLAIN HIS COMPLETE FAILURE AT ANY TIME, IN THE SHOOTING SEQUENCE OR THEREAFTER, TO THROW HIMSELF OVER THE BODY OF HIS CHIEF; SUCH AS YOUNGBLOOD DID WITH JOHNSON. THIS IS PRECISELY WHAT IT WAS HIS DUTY TO DO. TO ANY MAN IN NORMAL PHYSICAL CONDITION, AND THERE IS NO INDICATION KELLERMAN WAS NOT, GETTING OVER THE SEAT BACK AND CONNALLY SHOULD HAVE PRESENTED NO SERIOUS PROBLEM; AND THERE WAS MORE THAN AMPLE TIME TO DO THIS, HAD HE REACTED AS HE SHOULD HAVE AFTER THE OPENING SHOTS. THAT HE DID NOT EVEN ATTEMPT TO DO SO, EITHER DURING THE CRITICAL PERIOD WHEN JFK'S LIFE HUNG IN THE BALANCE; OR EVEN AFTER THE HEAD SHOT(S) WHICH ENDED HIS CHIEF'S LIFE BUT NOT KELLERMAN'S RESPONSIBILITY, IS A PERSONAL TRAGEDY FOR HIM AS WELL AS FOR JFK, HIS FAMILY, AND ALL OF US (COMPARE ALSO WITH CLINT HILL'S PERFORMANCE; WHICH INVOLVED LEAPING FROM THE MOVING FOLLOW-UP CAR, CHASING THE PRESIDENT'S CAR AND OVERTAKING IT, AND THEN CLIMBING OVER THE REAR DECK WHILE IT WAS IN MOTION).

THIS TRAGIC AND HISTORIC FAILURE OF KELLERMAN'S CAN BE EXPLAINED IN NO OTHER WAY, EXCEPT TO ATTRIBUTE IT TO A MOMENTARY BUT DECISIVE WEAKNESS THAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED TO ANYONE IN A SIMILAR SITUATION; UNLESS ONE CHOOSES TO BELIEVE HE WAS PART OF THE PLOT, A POSSIBILITY WHICH I COMPLETELY REJECT.

ACCEPTING AS HONEST ERROR HIS BELIEF THAT KENNEDY CRIED OUT, AND ACCEPTING FURTHER THAT HE WAS BADLY RATTLED, AN INCIDENT WHICH OCCURRED ON THE MORT SAHL RADIO SHOW IN L.A. (IN JANUARY '67, I BELIEVE) OFFERS A PLAUSIBLE EXPLANATION. SAHL HAD ANSWERED AN EARLIER CALLER'S QUESTION RE THE SHOT SEQUENCE BY STATING MARK LANE'S BELIEF THAT A FIRST SHOT STRUCK JFK IN THE BACK, AND A SECOND IN THE THROAT; AND EXPLAINED FURTHER THAT A FIRST SHOT TO THE THROAT WAS PRECLUDED BY KELLERMAN'S RECOLLECTION OF JFK'S "MY GOD, I'M HIT!". A LATER CALLER, WHO SOUNDED SOBER, RATIONAL, AND INTELLIGENT, SAID HE WAS VISITING DALLAS ON NOVEMBER 22, AND WAS A SPECTATOR ON THE NORTH SIDE OF ELM STREET. HE SAID THAT IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE FIRST SHOT, SOMEONE IN THE CROWD NEARBY SAID SOMETHING LIKE, "MY GOD, THEY GOT ME!"-- IN JOCLAR FASHION, AS ONE SOMETIME WILL WHEN STARTLED BY A LOUD REPORT. THE CALLER DID NOT ASSOCIATE THE CRY WITH ANY PARTICULAR PERSON. ACCEPTING THIS CALLER'S STORY AS HONEST--AND NO REASON IS APPARENT FOR HIS DELIBERATELY INVENTING THE INCIDENT--IT SEEMS ENTIRELY PLAUSIBLE THAT IT WAS THIS REMARK THAT KELLERMAN OVERHEARD, AND THAT THE EMOTIONAL SHOCK OF THE ASSASSINATION CONFUSED HIM INTO ASSOCIATING IT WITH THE FAMILIAR VOICE OF HIS CHIEF.



AN ALTERNATE POSSIBILITY IS THAT IT WAS GOVERNOR CONNALLY'S EXCLAMATION, "MY GOD, THEY'RE GOING TO KILL US ALL", THAT KELLERMAN OVERHEARD; AGAIN, CONFUSING IT WITH JFK'S VOICE. THIS POSSIBILITY IS STRENGTHENED WHEN NOTING THAT, WHILE IT SEEMS WELL ESTABLISHED THAT CONNALLY DID INDEED MAKE SUCH A STATEMENT, KELLERMAN DOES NOT REPORT HEARING HIM SAY ANYTHING LIKE IT--DESPITE THE FACT CONNALLY WAS SEATED CLOSER TO KELLERMAN THAN JFK.

YOU SAY ON PAGE THREE OF YOUR LETTER THAT YOU ARE SENDING COPIES TO THOSE PERSONS ON MY LIST THAT YOU ALREADY KNOW. I AM TAKING THE LIBERTY OF SENDING COPIES OF YOUR LETTER ALONG WITH MINE, TO THOSE YOU OMITTED.

SURELY, YOU KNOW STEVE BURTON, CHAIRMAN OF THE (L.A.) CITIZENS' COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY; YOU MUST HAVE HEARD OF HIM BEFORE, AND YOU MET HIM IN PERSON AT YOUR PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE BEVERLY WILSHIRE HOTEL. I REALIZE YOU HAVEN'T MET LILLIAN CASTELLANO IN PERSON, BUT SURELY YOU KNOW OF HER, AND OF HER WORK DEVELOPED YEARS AGO IN WHICH SHE PROVES--ABSOLUTELY PROVES--THAT WILLIS #5 IS NOT EQUIVALENT IN TIME TO ZAPRUDER 210, AS SHANEYFELT CONTENDS, BUT ACTUALLY TO 202; NOT 201, OR 203, BUT 202. SURELY YOU WERE AWARE OF THIS, DESPITE YOUR BRILLIANT MACHINATIONS IN YOUR BOOK TO AVOID ITS UNMISTAKABLE IMPLICATION--THAT A SHOT WAS FIRED PRIOR TO 202; JUST AS YOU WERE CAREFUL TO AVOID CONFRONTING THE EVIDENCE FOR A JFK HIT AT 189-190, AND FOR THE SAME REASONS: THAT AN "EARLY" HIT, FOR REASONS YOU WELL UNDERSTAND, MOST PROBABLY IMPLIES A THROAT ENTRY; AND A THROAT ENTRY ALMOST CERTAINLY IMPLIES A FALSIFIED AUTOPSY REPORT; AND A FALSIFIED AUTOPSY REPORT POINTS TO HIGH LEVEL ACCESSORIES (AT LEAST) AFTER THE FACT; AND THAT IS A ROAD YOU HAVE DARED NOT TRAVEL.

(IN THE CASE OF WILLIS #5, THOUGH FAILING TO IDENTIFY IT BY THAT NUMBER, YOU CAPTION ITS APPEARANCE ON YOUR PAGE 34 AS FOLLOWS:

"PHILIP WILLIS' PICTURE, SNAPPED IN THE RANGE OF ZAPRUDER 205 TO 225, WAS TAKEN ACCORDING TO WILLIS AS THE FIRST SHOT WAS HEARD"

HOW COME THAT "205 TO 225" STUFF? SURELY, AN EXPERT IN THE PHOTO EVIDENCE SUCH AS YOURSELF SHOULD HAVE HAD NO TROUBLE NARROWING THAT 20-FRAME SPREAD JUST A BIT--ESPECIALLY WITH SO FAMILIAR A PICTURE--EVEN IF YOU NEVER DID HEAR OF LILLIAN CASTELLANO. I MIGHT SAY HERE THAT IT IS MANEUVERS LIKE THIS, A PATTERN WHICH IS CLEARLY THOUGH SUBTLY EVIDENT THROUGHOUT YOUR BOOK, THAT LEADS ME TO CONCLUDE YOU ARE A MASTER (EXCUSE ME, J. EDGAR) OF DECEIT. TO COMPARE YOUR TECHNIQUE TO THE RELATIVELY CLUMSY EFFORTS OF A LIEBELER OR A SPECTER IS TO COMPARE A BRAIN SURGEON TO A BUTCHER. WHEN SIMILAR PATTERNS OF "ERROR" WERE DETECTED IN THE WARREN REPORT, ALL TENDING TO SUPPORT ITS CASE, CRITICS GENERALLY DID NOT REFUSE TO DRAW THE OBVIOUS CONCLUSION; THAT WHAT WAS INVOLVED WAS PURPOSEFUL FRAUD, AND NOT HONEST ERROR. I REFUSE TO APPLY A DIFFERENT STANDARD IN ANALYZING YOUR WORK).

AND WHAT ABOUT MAGGIE FIELD? SURELY YOU 'VE HEARD OF HER? DON'T YOU REMEMBER, YOU AND SHE AND SYLVIA SPENT A GOOD PART OF A DAY TOGETHER AT VINCE'S HOUSE ONE DAY LAST FEBRUARY? THAT WAS THE MEETING DURING WHICH YOU CLOSETED YOURSELF ALONE WITH SYLVIA IN VINCE'S OFFICE ". . . FOR TWO HOURS OR MORE" . . . DURING WHICH TIME YOU OFFERED TO SYLVIA "EVERY SINGLE ONE" OF YOUR FINDINGS. SYLVIA CHARACTERIZES THIS OFFER AS BEING ". . . EXTRAORDINARILY GENEROUS" AND ". . . MOTIVATED BY A DESIRE TO PLACE ALL THE FACTS BEFORE THE PUBLIC, AND NOT BY ANY CONCEIVABLE FORM OF SELF-INTEREST."

I FIND SUCH "GENEROSITY" INCREDIBLE, QUITE LITERALLY INCREDIBLE; FOR IF ACCEPTED, WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE LEFT FOR THE BOOK YOU HAD ALREADY CONTRACTED TO DO? AND ISN'T IT ODD THAT YOU WOULD CHOOSE A TIME WHEN MAGGIE WAS VISITING AT VINCE'S --AFTER ALL, SHE WAS IN THE EAST FOR JUST A FEW DAYS; AND SHE, NO LESS THAN SYLVIA,

IS THOROUGHLY EXPERT IN THE VOLUMES, AND ALSO HAD A BOOK READY TO PUBLISH--  
 ISN'T IT ODD THAT YOU WOULD CLOSET YOURSELF WITH SYLVIA FOR SO LONG? IT SEEMS  
 RATHER RUDE MANNERS FOR ONE DESERVINGLY NOTED FOR HIS THOROUGHLY CHARMING WAYS.

BEING A DEMONOLOGIST, I BELIEVE YOU HAD ANOTHER MOTIVE, ONE WHICH I AM  
 FORCED TO CONCLUDE SUCCEEDED ADMIRABLY: THAT OF FLATTERING SYLVIA BY YOUR  
 SPECIAL ATTENTIONS AND CONVINCING HER YOU WERE AN "EXTRAORDINARILY GENEROUS"  
 (AND THEREFORE TRUSTWORTHY?) FELLOW.

NOTE THAT YOU INCLUDE IN YOUR LETTER SEVERAL REFERENCES TO MY HAVING  
 CHARGED YOU WITH BEING A CIA AGENT. YOU MADE A SIMILAR REFERENCE TO THIS CHARGE  
 TO AL WYMAN OF KLAG RADIO, WHEN YOU WERE HERE, WHILE OFF THE AIR. I HAVE NOT  
 CHARGED YOU WITH BEING SPECIFICALLY A CIA AGENT. ALTHOUGH IT IS BY NOW NO  
 SECRET TO THE CRITICS THAT I SUSPECT YOUR BOOK TO HAVE BEEN CONSCIOUSLY EXECU-  
 TED BY YOU ON BEHALF OF ONE OR MORE INTELLIGENCE, POLICE, AND/OR INVESTIGATIVE  
 AGENCIES OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, MY SUSPICION DOES NOT INCLUDE SPECIFIC  
 IDENTIFICATION WITH A PARTICULAR AGENCY.

THIS STRONG SUSPICION GREW FROM A SECOND, AND MORE CAREFUL READING OF YOUR  
 BOOK, AND WEIGHING OF EXTERNAL CIRCUMSTANCES. SURPRISINGLY, THOSE WHO HAVE  
 REACTED MOST VEHEMENTLY AGAINST MY SUSPICION ARE THOSE WHO KNOW LITTLE OR NOTHING  
 OF THE BASIS FOR IT. I CONFESS TO BEING REMINDED OF A FORMER TIME WHEN CRITICS  
 THEMSELVES WERE ANGRILY CONFRONTED WITH SUCH "COUNTER-ARGUMENTS" AS "YOU DARE  
 SAY EARL WARREN PUT HIS NAME TO A FRAUDULENT DOCUMENT?" YOU ARE FREE TO CONCLUDE,  
 AS SOME OTHERS APPARENTLY HAVE, THAT THIS SUSPICION IS THE RESULT OF MALICE  
 ASSOCIATED WITH AND ARISING FROM MY PREVIOUS CHARGES--THOSE OF PLAGIARISM, FAILURE  
 TO PROPERLY CREDIT AND ATTRIBUTE YOUR SOURCE (AT LEAST WHERE I AM CONCERNED),  
 AND INTELLECTUAL DISHONESTY. THOSE WHO KNOW ME WELL WILL UNDERSTAND THAT I NEVER  
 HAVE AND NEVER WILL MAKE SUCH A CHARGE WHILE BELIEVING IT FALSE. IT ALSO HAPPENS  
 TO BE THE CASE THAT IN THE VERY FEW INSTANCES IN THE PAST (NOT NECESSARILY CON-  
 NECTED WITH THE ASSASSINATION) WHEN I HAVE FELT SUCH SUSPICIONS JUSTIFIED,  
 THEY EVENTUALLY PROVED WELL GROUNDED. FURTHER, THE OBVIOUS DIFFICULTY IS THAT  
 NEITHER AGENT NOR AGENCY OFTEN REVEALS THE FACT OF THEIR RELATIONSHIP. THIS  
 LEAVES ONE WHO BELIEVES THE QUESTION TO BE OF IMPORTANCE WITH TWO ALTERNATIVES:

1. ANALYZE SUCH INFORMATION AS IS AVAILABLE, AND FORM A TENTATIVE CONCLUSION  
 FROM IT.
2. DRIVE THE THOUGHT FROM ONE'S MIND.

OBVIOUSLY THE LATTER IS QUITE IMPOSSIBLE, IF ONE SINCERELY BELIEVES THE FACTS  
 SUPPORT THE SUSPICIONS.

AS TO THE TWO REQUESTS I MADE OF YOU AT THE END OF MY LETTER OF DECEMBER 15,  
 I WITHDRAW THEM. IN LIGHT OF MY SUBSEQUENT CHARGES, IT IS NOW A MATTER OF INDIF-  
 FERENCE TO ME WHAT YOU CHOOSE TO DO OR NOT DO ABOUT THEM.

SINCERELY,

  
 RAYMOND MARCUS

P.S. AS YOU KNOW, VINCE DOES NOT SHARE MY SUSPICION AS TO YOUR ROLE AS AN AGENT.

COPIES: VINCE SALANDRIA, M.S. ARNONI, SYLVIA MEAGHER, BILL TURNER, DICK SPRAGUE,  
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 STEVE BURTON, BILL O'CONNELL

ENC. TO THIRD PARTIES: THOMPSON'S LETTER OF DEC 15, 1967