

October 22, 1966

Mr. J. Edgar Hoover
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Department of Justice
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Hoover,

After reading the TIME Essay "Autopsy on the Warren Commission" in the issue of September 16, 1966, I addressed a letter to the editors of the magazine which included the following passage:

Apparently Time believes that the Director of the FBI made a formal Summary Report on December 9, 1963 and a Supplemental Report on January 13, 1964, purely on the basis of the hearsay information given by FBI agents Sibert and O'Neill in their report of November 26, 1963, without making any further investigation into the autopsy findings and without taking account of the contents of the official autopsy report (transmitted to the FBI, according to Fletcher Knebel's inquiries, on December 23, 1963). This hardly seems conceivable, given the importance of the case.

The editors of TIME have replied to comments in a letter dated October 20, 1966, which includes the following paragraph:

The FBI Report. This point involves the FBI's complicated reporting methods. The fact that in December 1963 and January 1964 the FBI was still reporting that the bullet did not exit from the front of President Kennedy's neck does not necessarily imply a difference with the autopsy report. The dates of the reports indicated the dates of submission to the Commission of narratives of the FBI investigation as it had unfolded. On a regulation FBI report three dates are given: the date of the interview, the date the agent dictated the interview, and the date it was typed. By the time an interview is in final form ready for submission the agent may have gone well beyond the conclusions it contains, but it must be filed anyway. The reports to the Commission in December and January revealed the course of the FBI investigation; they did not state that the FBI believed in January everything it was told in November. However, explicit disavowals of abandoned lines of investigation are not usually issued by the FBI.

I should be most appreciative, Sir, if you would indicate whether or not the editors of TIME have described correctly the reporting practices currently in effect in the FBI, or in effect in 1963 and 1964; and whether or not the paragraph quoted above is a faithful account of the actual circumstances and status of the FBI Reports of December 9, 1963 and January 13, 1964.

With sincere thanks,

Yours respectfully,

Sylvia Meagher
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