

22 February 1969

Dear Cyril,

For once the newspapers listed the guests scheduled to be on the Long John program, so I was able to listen to you last night at midnight. As usual, you were forthright and authoritative on the subject of the autopsy findings, the single bullet theory, etc. I was especially interested in your account of the hearing before Judge Halleck on the autopsy photos and X-rays, of which I had had only very general or fragmentary reports.

A couple of very minor corrections: Seth Kantor did, in fact, testify for the Warren Commission, by deposition (transcript in Vol. XV; Seth Kantor Exhibits in XX). He was not an eyewitness to the assassination, being too far behind the presidential car, but was an important witness to the events at Parkland Hospital and to Ruby's presence there just about the time the announcement was made of JFK's death. The witnesses (who saw a puff of smoke, etc.) who testified at the Shaw trial (Simmons, Walther, Carr, etc.) have long been known by reason of interview reports published in the Hearings and Exhibits or on file in the Archives—they were not "discovered" by the critics, who merely called attention to the published reports of their observations. The stretcher bullet was discovered quite early in the day, about 1 or 1:30 p.m., not in the evening. There were no CIA men present at the autopsy (to the best of our knowledge), just FBI and Secret Service.

While no one would be bothered by these insignificant details, I certainly was unhappy when you were described several times as a prosecution witness in the Shaw trial and by the implicit respectability conferred on Garrison. I think that it is of utmost importance to make a clear separation between the Shaw case as such, and the assassination evidence. I cannot imagine that you want to be identified in any way with that preposterous and pathetic array of liars and psychopaths who testified for the prosecution and against Shaw—Russo, who recanted and re-recanted, I don't know how many times; the mail-carrier, who said he had delivered mail addressed to a name just then invented by the defense attorney; the policeman who was such a blatant liar that even the prosecution-biased judge denounced him as such and refused to let him testify; the assistant DA who "burned his notes" just about as innocently as Dr. Humes burned his; and the paranoid accountant who has been hypnotized, tortured, and deprived of his virility by a Communist/Pinkerton conspiracy.

That scruffy collection is what Garrison "dug up." The Dealey Plaza evidence was the work of many researchers and critics, and from what I read in the New Orleans papers Garrison did not even make effective or intelligent use of it. I can only hope that for the sake of your own reputation and effectiveness you will not permit any ambiguity about your involvement in the Shaw trial or your relationship with Garrison.

As you may know by now, Ted Kupferman has been named to the State Supreme Court bench. I am happy for him but I suppose he will no longer be able to take any public position on the autopsy photos and X-rays or the WR. I think you would have got to see that material, had Garrison not hemmed and hawed so much and then rested his case so abruptly. As Bob Forman wrote me the other day, the operation was a success but the patient died. I feel sure that we all owe the success mainly to your performance as a witness, which I am told was brilliant and devastating. I knew it would be.

All the best,

Sylvia Meagher  
302 West 12 Street  
New York 10014