

30 April 1969

Dear Cyril,

Yes, I do think it would be helpful for you to write to the NY Times Magazine with copy to Epstein at 295 Harvard St., Cambridge, Mass. At least they will know that not everyone in this wretched country has become indifferent to blatant falsehoods and deliberate deceit by propagandists for the fraudulent WR, which is exactly what Epstein has become.

My letter will not be printed, since a similar letter from Tink Thompson will be published, I have been informed. I wrote again, on receipt of this intelligence, noting that while Tink's letter showed Epstein to be wrong about the CBS "findings", my letter showed him to be consciously and deliberately palming off as valid CBS claims which he already knew and had acknowledged to be invalid and deceptive. I asked them at least to publish the second paragraph of my letter, which makes that point clear, but I expect they will decline. It would make them, as well as their running-Sammy-author, look bad.

I did read your Washington testimony with the greatest interest and thought you were extremely forceful, convincing, and damning to Russell Fisher et al. You were correct and courteous but showed them up for scoundrels and/or fools. Any repercussions from Fisher or the others? By the way, I have the impression (I will not take time now to find the transcript and check it) that you or more likely it was Fensterwald inadvertently misstated Forman's point about the lower position of the wound when the body was erect, and suggested that the wound was lower when the body was prone. But apparently that was straightened out somewhere along the line. What is shocking and incomprehensible is the failure of the press to give an account of this very significant testimony—mentioned, if at all, only in the most cursory manner. I think it is tantamount to outright censorship, even if it is self-imposed (which really makes it worse, in the last analysis).

Please regard this next as confidential, as I don't want to get into still another scrap with Weisberg. Did you read his Post-Mortem III? I think his critical analysis of the several reports on the autopsy photos and X-rays was a real tour de force, absolutely relentless and quite brilliant. But I also thought it suffered from over-kill, and was so very badly written as to be unpublishable and therefore doomed to be withheld from the public and wasted. I therefore urged Weisberg to extract the major points of conflict and contradiction and do a magazine piece. When he said that he could not find time, I decided to do a short article myself, giving Harold exclusive credit for all the research in the most generous full-page tribute, offering him carte blanche to change the tribute in any way he wished, review the ms., veto it in whole or part, and if he agreed that I should try to place it, offering him any payment in entirety. He appreciated the proposition, he replied, but wished to preserve the exclusivity of his findings. I regretfully filed the ms. away, as I felt I had no moral right to proceed with it (I also think he has no moral right to proceed in such a way as to prevent his own important discoveries from seeing the light, by his or by another's efforts, but he is the only one who can decide where his best interests lie). Having turned me down, Weisberg then offered me a "compromise suggestion"—that I do a magazine article on the theme that it is impossible to get serious, solid work on this subject published commercially. That led us into a rather unpleasant exchange, when I replied that it would come with poor grace for me to write such an article, as I did not consider my own book to be frivolous, and because a very substantial number of serious works had in fact been published by established houses. I won't bore you with a blow by blow account of this exchange except to say that I am even more discouraged about the possibilities to conduct any meaningful dialogue with Harold where his own work, reputation or recognition is at stake.

While I kept my promise to proceed no further with the article on the 1968 panel, I did make a parenthetical reference to some of the discrepancies in its report in my letter to the NY Times Magazine, as you will have noticed. I sent Weisberg a copy of that letter and, to forestall any possible gripes, said that I hoped he would not object to those references, which were based on the transcript of your testimony, which was in the public domain.

Well, he did not exactly "object" but did point out that he had given me the information in question on the phone before your testimony, and that he did not consider it was necessary to use it in my letter to the NY Times. Though he did permit me that prerogative. (Handsome.)

I have gone into all this petty detail not for the pleasure of gossip but because I still feel very strongly that there should be a forceful attack on the 1968 panel's report without any further loss of time. I feel certain that Harold's book will not get published (or read, even if published--no one takes him seriously except the imbecilic LA Free Press and its ilk)--I cannot do anything with the article I attempted--which leaves only the transcript of your testimony, as a viable possibility. Is there any chance of placing it in, say, the Journal of Forensic Sciences, or some such professional journal, where it may be picked up by the press at large?

I don't know what Fensterwald and his group are doing. I recently declined a second appeal to join, since I will not agree under any circumstances to any association with the likes of Garrison, Mark Lane, or some of the others involved. But he has surely muffed a great opportunity to call a press conference for you, to discuss the autopsy, the 1968 panel, Finck's testimony in New Orleans, etc.

You probably know that Tink has a fellowship and leaves for Denmark in June, for a year. That is about the only news that comes to mind. Between that horse's ass Garrison and that Establishment poodle Epstein, we have been cast into a period more bleak than any other I can recall. I have never been more disheartened, or more disgusted. Really, Cyril, I think you and maybe Nichols (about whom I am very tentative, after only one brief meeting) are about the only hopes left for any kind of breakthrough. Let's hope I am wrong.

All the best,

As ever,

Sylvia Meagher  
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*P.S. What goes on with  
Dr. Noguchi, the L.A. coroner??*