

19 April 1969

Dear Harold,

Thanks for your letter of the 16th. I quite understand your hesitation about my suggestion and, as I promised, I will consider the question closed. I hope that there will be a happy outcome for your ms. with the publishers who have expressed interest and I certainly agree that you should not jeopardize the exclusivity of the material.

I hope that you will have equal understanding for my objections to your compromise suggestion. I cannot honestly agree with your view that it is impossible, for all practical purposes, to get commercial publication for serious work that challenges the official myth of the lone assassin. You did not, I hope, intend to imply that Accessories After the Fact was not a serious work; and the title alone indicates a rejection and indictment of the official thesis in its entirety. Your letter says, "You know your own experience." But in fact my experience was in no way the kind you imply. Bobbs-Merrill took the initiative in requesting me to submit my manuscript and accepted it for publication without undue delay and without any attempt to alter the contents or conclusions. After publication, Accessories was widely reviewed in major periodicals and newspapers, predominantly in very favorable terms. Earlier the Subject Index had been accepted for commercial publication by one of the first houses I approached; after it was out of print, I was approached by University Microfilms with an offer for a xerographic edition.

Also, I have had paid articles in Esquire and Commonweal, and unpaid articles in a number of publications. Since I have never encountered obstruction, it would come with very poor grace for me to write the kind of article you suggest.

As for the books you mention, I have heard from a number of sources that Lane's original ms. was repeatedly rejected because it was poorly written and poorly constructed. Having seen that ms., I am inclined to find that very believable. The ms. as published was almost entirely rewritten by a senior editor at Holt. Epstein and Popkin did argue conspiracy, and were taken quite seriously, however one may regard their inclusion of Oswald among the conspirators. As for Thompson, two things have to be acknowledged: he did not merely rehash (though it was inevitable for any 1967 book to go over some of the ground covered in earlier books) but presented new material such as the quantification of the head shots; and the cover story in SEP with the condensation of Thompson's book hardly testifies to timidity or censorship.

In addition to the books you listed, there was also Sauvage's book, published by World and certainly quite uncompromising; and quite a few major magazine articles, which I need not list. There is in fact quite a large body of published work critical of the WR, and if we include the books by Buchanan, Chapman, Feldman, Fox, *Joan Stein*, Gun, "Lawrence," and Flammonde, it is simply inescapable that the proportion of commercially published material is very high.

Again, I wish you all the very best of good luck with the ms. and the other irons you have in the fire,

Sincerely yours,