

Letter from  
Shirley Martin

1/8/66

Sylvia:

back that  
Let me know if you want the papers you sent ~~me back~~.

It seems to me they will have a definite value someday  
as a glaring example of the inability (and refusal) of  
the Warren Commission to answer questions. Certainly  
no one else I know ~~of~~ has done as penetrating a job  
as you into the general cowardice of the Commission and  
Commission attorneys. It is ridiculous (to quote Lee)  
that the group should disband without making any allowance  
whatsoever for legitimate questions which would arise  
after some of us had waded through the 26 volumes.

There are so many things I want to say this morning (it's  
very early, I'm the only one up; the sunrise is really  
something; very cold and clear; I can see for miles).

I am in the process of househunting (nothing is more  
boring) and if I don't get to work early on what I want  
to say on the case, I won't have another chance until  
tonight, when I'll probably be too tired.

You leaped into my mind first thing. I think there are  
so many things I can say you'll understand with an in-  
tuition some of my male friends see blind to. (This type  
"scientific" approach puts men into fits; best not to  
mention it outloud!)

My conversations with Ruth Paine have been most interesting.  
As you know, I've talked to her on numerous occasions, both  
in person and on the phone. With her permission, I taped  
her in April, 1965 for five hours. With Ruth Paine, I  
always play the addled little housewife (because it is  
the easiest part to play, being closest to what I am).  
In our discussions I have been most interested in her  
attitude towards Lee more than anything else. I have  
been interested in getting her to admit that some of the  
gravest charges she made against Lee (in the press and  
before the Commission) were based on what I suppose is  
called hearsay. This never did seem fair to me, small  
things generally; but everything adds up when you are  
searching for an ATTITUDE. (Besides, it is Ruth herself  
who has made a fetish out of her own "fairness" and  
"honesty." Right?)

As an example of what I mean: Ruth implied in her testimony to the Commission that Lee was generally rude and abrupt. On the evening before the assassination (when Ruth returned home and found Lee and Marina and June on the front lawn), Ruth remarked to Lee: "Our President is coming to town." According to Ruth (in her conversation with the Commission) this minor exchange took place at the entrance to her front door, and when she made the remark Lee just brushed rudely past her without a word. The unsaid implication was that Lee was feeling guilty ~~xxxx~~ even at this point (being aware, of course, of what he had come home to get and of what he intended to do the next day). But I asked Ruth: "You said Lee brushed past you. Wasn't he going back and forth carrying your groceries to the house from the car?"

"Oh, yes," she said. "that's right." In other words, if Lee was so damn rude and abrupt, too rude and abrupt to answer a civil remark made to him by our gentle lady, why in hell was he making an ass of himself carrying groceries back and forth? Or--if Ruth is going to make statements to the Commission giving them an uncomfortable feeling about Lee's social responses (and leaving them with a bad taste in their mouths about his personality) why not fall out the picture and at least give Lee ~~xxx~~ credit for being a good Southern boy who lugs groceries without being asked?

This is a very small point; practically worthless. Still, it helped picture Ruth for me. When there were things extant which she could ~~use~~ use to build Lee, she deliberately discarded them to use instead those character-destroying innuendoes which both the FBI and the Paines found so delicious. (This attitude is even stronger in Michael and is handled more poorly. Michael is not half the poised creature Ruth is. Poor Michael. When I finally met him, he had been told (I'm sure): Now flatter that broad. He tried. But he did a terrible job. By the time I left, his hands were like ice. This was the time Vince talked to him and Vince scared him to death. I was a little angry at the attack Vince made on him, because I had taken Vince to their house without telling them in advance that he, Vince, was coming. The fact that Ruth has retained communication with me even AFTER Vince's hysterical visit is fortunate enough. However, I am of the opinion at this time that Ruth wishes she'd never hear from me again.)

In a long, ~~heavy~~ <sup>heavy</sup> discussion, too boring and detailed to put down, Ruth almost reversed her position that Lee was even kind to his children and hers. By the time we had gone over the ground a few times, she was so anxious to impress me with his worthlessness that she was beginning

to paint him as an indifferent father and as almost anti-small children. Which is ridiculous. Lee may have killed the President. But he liked children and he loved his own. Killing a President and being fond of children are not incompatible. Yet, <sup>AS FAR AS</sup> ~~by the time~~ my conversation ~~with~~ with Ruth on this subject was concerned, one could almost imagine that it was unAmerican to describe Lee as loving June and Rachel. Small, unimportant points. But the question always remains: why is it so necessary to tear Lee down? Isn't the fact that he killed the President enough? Why must we go on and on destroying him and at the same time building up all the ~~xxx~~ other peripheral individuals involved? (FBI, A.D., James, etc.)

Another small item: Ruth rushed to Hosty's defense when I remarked that Surrey (Gen. Walker's aide) had said to me that he and Surrey were friends, "old bridge playing partners." "Well," said Ruth, "that doesn't mean a thing. I use the same dentist Walker does." She's right. The fact that Surrey and Hosty are friends doesn't mean a damn thing. Nor had I said it did. ~~only mentioned it~~ <sup>only mentioned it</sup>. But I thought her retort was too quick, a little too defensive. (My comment that Ruth and Walker use the ~~same~~ same dentist is not accurate. She compared herself in this regard to someone, but I can't remember who. I made the link only to show her reaction.)

My first contact with Ruth was on the day Marina testified for the first time to the Warren Commission (was this February 3, 1964?). This was seven months before the WCR was issued. Yet even then Ruth was INSISTENT, VEHEMENT that Marina SPOKE NO ENGLISH. During this first interview I had nothing contrary to this to argue on, ~~and~~ aside from a few newspaper items allegedly recording what Marina had said on that fatal weekend. I protested Ruth's insistence.

"Marina said 'Lee no bad man. Lee good man. I love Lee.'"

Ruth replied: "No; that's impossible. Marina can't say that much English."

"But I read in the papers that Marina at the grave said: 'Everyman should die for a good cause.'"

Ruth: "No; that's impossible. Marina can't say that much

English."

In August, 1964, I talked to Mrs. Tobias. The WCR was still not out, so I was at a disadvantage. But Mrs. Tobias confided ~~freely~~ that Marina COULD speak some English and COULD UNDERSTAND QUITE A LOT. (Mrs. Tobias testimony is almost exactly what she told me. Actually almost word for word and I spent an hour with her. One could almost say she had it pretty well memorized.) Since Mrs. Tobias and Marina were in contact (almost day to day contact at times) from November '62 until March '63 this rather destroyed Ruth's allegations about Marina not knowing a word of English.

But Ruth maintained her posture. In April, 1965 I was back talking to her and reviewing the Hosty, license plate story. The discussion got around to Marina's one exhibited moment of anger as far as Ruth was concerned. This followed Hosty's visit when he asked for Lee and Marina's new "address" when and if they moved, and Ruth, faithful little American, promised it to him. Ruth then went on to say that after Hosty was gone, Marina approached her in the kitchen (they were always making a pot pie or some other damn thing) and remonstrated with her about giving out Lee's address so freely to the FBI without asking Lee's permission.

*Admitted*

"But," I asked, "how did Marina understand Hosty's question if she didn't speak or understand any English?"

Seriously, there was a pause. Ruth is very quick. "Oh," she said, "the word 'address' is the ~~xxx~~ same in Russian and in English. She only heard the word 'address' but she knew immediately what this meant, that Hosty was asking me for Lee's new address when and if they moved."

To me this story stinks. I offer it for your opinion. In other words the Russian-speaking Marina, standing in the doorway, eavesdropping on the conversation between the Agent Hosty and Ruth Paine, hears only one word of the entire conversation that makes sense to her (that word being "address"); whereupon she instantly knows that the use of this word means Hosty is asking Ruth to tattletale on a new, as yet unsecured address, which she and Lee hope to have in the near future.

There are other inconsistencies. Ruth admitted to me on tape that all the bad things she told the Commission about Lee (his not wanting to support Marina, his desire to send Marina against her will back to the USSR) were things she had not heard him say, but had heard only from Marina. Yet in her presentation to the Commission it was not qualified that they were hearsay, but rather that she knew these things innately. I objected to this. She

brushed my objection aside.

When I asked her why she was unwilling to trust her car to Lee (according to what she told the Commission), but was more than happy to trust her children to him as a babysitter, she replied: "My remark to the Commission was based on the fact that he seemed mechanically inept."

No; I don't think so. It does not read that way to me. Her remark to the Commission was made to infer the untrustworthiness of Lee Oswald as a man, as a human being, as a civilized citizen. *Too semi-uncivilized to care for Lynn & Chris? Apparently not.*

Sylvia, I have got to stop. Talking about the case is like a drug with me. I am pleased that you are willing to put up with my lousy typing and my form of expression. If I try to make my letter neat, I will never get it written. I would rather be in contact than worry about my pride.

Tomorrow (Sunday) I want to answer your papers in detail. I am particularly interested in your Oswald-Jarman remarks. I have something I want to add here. Also I have (somewhere in my files) a copy of a letter from Joe Goulden to Lonnie Hudkins which Vickie copied from Hudkins' briefcase one day when he was here and I was engaging him in conversation. At the time it seemed of minor importance. Now after seeing Ford's first chapter, it may be of interest. It will take Vickie awhile to find it in our cluttered files. I know where Hudkins is now. If necessary I can talk to him for you by phone. Let me know. He has come into a strange piece of luck recently, after having told me: "I've GOT to get out of the South. I can't find a job anywhere." Suddenly he is (I am told) in charge of a newspaper at Farmer's Branch, Dallas. Apparently the money behind it is Dealy money (Dallas Morning News).

I won't discuss your papers marked Confidential with anyone. I am very interested in your remark that <sup>apparently</sup> Lee never knew what kind of weapon killed President. *A*

(Back to Hudkins: I am a close friend of his mother. But he's a real pill, woman-crazy, really a disgusting little man. Still, I think I can approach him again if needed. I always have the kids with me so I don't worry about my "reputation." HA! But, dear God, I loathed him. He told us Ruth Paine was a sex-fiend and that she interviewed reporters (vice versa rather) stark naked! What rot. Ruth is about as sexy as I am, which is pretty sad. Angry as I get at Ruth, I am not in the market for all the filth stories I am ~~told about~~ *told about* her, mostly originating from frustrated men who haven't even met her. Vince is bad on this. All he could say on his ride home from Dallas after meeting her ~~was~~ *was*: "My God! what a sexless creature." But what has this got to do with the price of corn? *Do you have to be sexy to work for the FBI?*

Sylvia, I have a date with a realtor. They are a bunch of vultures. Letter tomorrow with the Goulden letter on Lee being a "symbol-informant." Love, S.

Thank you  
very much!

Yours

Igor Yefimov