

Dec. 28, 1967

Dear Harold,

The letter's each of us wrote to the other, after our phone conversation of this past Tuesday evening, have crossed in the mail, and I just have received your letter of Dec. 26. I am happy to find that almost every point you made in your letter, is already answered in mine. For the sake of clarity, however, I want to reemphasize certain points, and make a few others besides.

1. I clearly pointed out to you on the phone, and again in my letter, (section 2b and 2c, first page bottom, and continued onto 2nd page) that the fact that one can talk of an "average camera speed" (computed on the basis of two different camera speed being used over different percentages of a film sequence) is ~~XXX~~ not the same as, and should not be confused with the two distinct speeds, and only two speeds, at which the Zapruder camera can run.

I stated: "Assuming the hair-trigger mechanism stated before, then it is in principle possible to get different average speeds. You, Harold, do not have the right to confuse AVERAGE camera speed (based upon different ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ constant camera speeds, averaged over time) with the two distinctly different operating speeds of the Zapruder camera."

Despite this simple-to-understand and crucial difference, you insist on introducing this wholly extraneous concept-----evolved from a model of camera operation that is only a possibility, and probably most small at that----and then misuse your own terms!

In your letter, you state:

"Despite your invalid conclusion (page 9) that "it is physically impossible for Zapruder's camera to run at that speed", meaning 24 fps, it is quite possible. That camera can run at any speed from 18 fps to 48, depending on the percentage of the time it was employed at each of the prefixed settings."  
(underlining added) (page 1, bottom, contd on page 2)

Not true!

"For your information, I emphasize the repetition of the egregious error (page 9): "Zapruder's camera runs at only 18 framers per second, and at 48x frames per second...2 These are the settings, but not the actuality, for it can run at any speed between the two also." (page 3, top)

Not true!

No, Harold, it is YOU who are in grievous error here. In the light of repeated attempts on the phone, and in my letter, to clearly define for you the difference between AVERAGE camera speed (a Harold Weisberg concept based on a Harold Weisberg model of how Zapruder MAY have operated his camera) and the two constant speeds, you insist on misusing this language and terminology. In the light of this, I can only ask: how does your foot taste?

You blandly tell me: "This, the central point, is what you seemingly are unaware of and do not address."

So now, if I may mix my metaphors, please put that shoe back on your foot, and wear it!

2a. You have not a shred of evidence that Zapruder, an amateur photographer with lots of experience, in FACT did operate his camera incorrectly in the weird manner you posit.

This is a gratuitous presumption you permit yourself, in order to make it possible that the Barrett report is a literal truth.

This presumption you permit yourself is, as far as I am concerned, as unwarranted and improbable as Thompson's souvenir hunter.

2b. If you insist on positing this model of camera operation, then, as you evolve the terminology and phraseology from such a model, at least define your terms (such as average camera speed) and stop misusing them. Specifically, don't say things like "That camera can run at any speed from 18 fps to 48..." and "it can run at any speed between the two also."

3. This attempt on your part to posit a model of camera operation which could result in a 24 fps AVERAGE speed does not address itself to the question of the Barrett/Zapruder interview.

As I said in my letter (2nd page): "

"But the camera cannot run at that inbetween rate". And, therefore, Zapruder would have not reason to report that it had done so."

Since this is true, the number 24 is not the result of Zapruder saying this is the case. Therefore, the statement in the Barrett report is, by this reasoning, an error made by agent Barrett.

Therefore, any connection the number 24 may have to your model of how Zapruder MAY have operated his camera, or the reconstruction, is purely coincidental.

Coincidence does sometimes occur.

This line of reasoning demonstrates that even IF the aforementioned correlation exists, then it MUST be coincidental, because we know full well that ~~Zapruder's~~ Zapruder's knowledge of his own camera precludes the possibility of the number "24" in the Barrett report having originated from a Zapruder statement to Barrett as to how fast his camera was running.

4. Therefore, you were in error when you attempt to relate the ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ reconstruction "30% error" testimony to the fact that 24 is 30% more than 18. All they have in common is the number "30".

And besides, 24 is 33.3% more than 18.3.

That leaves 3.3% still unaccounted for.

Any explanations for this 10% (3.3% is about 10% of 30%) error in your theory?

5. I am in complete agreement with you that the fact that this report was not dealt with by the investigation is quite serious. Since Specter was the author of Chapter 3, and since Specter took Shaneyfat's testimony, I have assumed that this was his baby. You claim it was Liebler's, because it was he who interviewed Zapruder. Perhaps.

In fact, I don't actually know which attorney it was who had this report, or whether both did or did not. Furthermore, I don't know why and by who it was not dealt with, published in the volumes.

You don't either.

AND WHOSE ACTIONS CAUSED IT NOT TO BE

Instead of offering a reasonable conjecture on the matter, you flatly state, referring to Liebler:

"...it is he who...suppressed the Barrett report..."

Your evidence, Harold?

6. I would now like to address myself to your last page and a half, what you call "a few minor comments I take the time to make." This, in fact, is the entire last half of your letter.

~~XX~~ This page and a half is devoted to a silly, stupid, and badly reasoned attempt to connect my criticisms of your published work with the fact that I know Professor Leibeler.

You have published books on the assassination, and put your ideas ~~XX~~ in print. You are a published critic.

Therefore, Harold, please ~~XXXX~~ address yourself to the issues when I validly, discreetly, thoroughly, and properly criticize your work!

I have sat by my TV screen, when WWII was published, and watched you continually propogate seriously false theories in that book, even after you have had it patiently ~~XXXX~~ thoroughly explained to you that your geometric construction was false, and that you counted wrong when it came to road stripes. (for example)

X At the time, I also knew about the film-speed/camera-speed issue, explained it to you at great length, and then kept my silence.

Meanwhile, you permitted great publicity to flow from the mis-use of the Barrett report, and an attempt to use that to relate it to ~~XX~~ the 30% reconstruction-error testimony.

A full ~~year~~ later, these issues have arisen again. I then completed a half written memo I had started at that time, and had not completed.

Meet the criticism, Harold. Reply to the issues. Don't lecture me on my relationship with Leibeler, and try, in your own cafish way, to smear me. (You're not even very good at it.) Aren't you a bit embarrassed at your heavy-handed, unsubtle attempt?

X I feel a bit sorry for you. Here, you have built your whole case against your favorite, bete-noir, Leibeler, on a premeditated phony reconstruction, only to find that your case is false.

But did you recant, Harold? Oh no. You sat back and watched as a propoganda bonanza came your way, and you looked the other way.

And the, when it is pointed out to you, a year later, and in writing, you have the nerve to lecture me, and to employ pseudo-McCarthy tactics and "Liebeler-bait" me.

Sooner or later, Harold, you must face the question of the intellectual ethics you have exhibited in this matter.

And you <sup>(error)</sup> must also face the fact that you have indeed made a not-so-minor in WW II, in attempting to invalidate the reconstruction with the Barrett report, and then use the Barrett report as a prime example in building your case against WJL.

Sincerely,

David