

CC Scherer

Rt 8, Frederick, Md. 21701

10/5/69

Dear Gary,

When you were not manly enough to answer my previous letters, I decided that with all I have to do, I'd just forget it. However, because of a series of coincidences last night and this morning and because of what I have learned since the last letter, I engage in this new futility. If you will stop and think about it, it should be clear to you I have no personal motive in taking this additional time and that there is no chance of personal profit in it for me. I can do no more than consume time for which there is much other use, unless, possibly, this can be of value to you.

My files just grew. I have several different sets of them. A year ago I began to consolidate them, with some kind of system that should make information retrieval less dependent upon fragile and failing memory. Periodically, as a surcease from more taxing work, I plunge into this consolidation. Having just completed the fourth unprinted book, to sort of test up, I've been doing more of this filing.

Last night I came upon a letter written me by a stranger who had been motivated by WHITEWASH II to phone Zepruder in early February 1967. This morning I came upon my Allman file, then on the fine memo on other rifles I asked you to do. These are the triggers.

Now it happens that there were a number of people I'd never met personally, but with whom I had been working, on whom you are one, who all turned off at the same time. I thought this strange, for while I am always in too much of a rush, I was not aware of any serious offense I had given any and certainly there is little likelihood I could have offended all simultaneously. This was a bothering mystery until something else happened.

It seems that Dave Lifton had been waging a real campaign against me, but was restricting it to those I'd never met in person. The one error he made was Gary Schoener, who I had met. Gary had come here, lived with me, knows the openness with which I work (for I turned him loose in my files and made copies of whatever he wanted for him), and read my unpublished writings. Gary was unwilling to believe the real rotten stuff Dave was sending him, but he apparently kept telling Dave his disbelief. Dave persisted, and at one point got overconfident. He dared Gary to confront me with a series of charges involving him and a number of other Californians and me, and usually in the form of my stealing their work. Gary accepted his challenge and send me a series of questions. Were it not for the high regard I have for Gary and my desire to preserve as much unity as possible among our small band, I'd not have taken the considerable time this required, and the cost, for when you have no income, the cost of the considerable photocopying this entailed was burdensome. I went through my files and made copies of everything applicable with all of these people. In every case except one I was able to give Gary unequivocal refutation, in every case save that one, from correspondence with these people diametrically opposite Lifton's representation. In that one exception, the material was pretty compelling the charge was false, but it was not unequivocal. It was not precisely on the point, but it was confirmation of what had been dealt with by phone.

Where the charge was that I had stolen from Fred Newcomb, for example, I

had Fred's handwritten note of thanks for my sending him that material. Where the charge was my stealing Fred's observations about the Zapruder film, I had my letter, of earlier date- much before he ever saw the film- pointing out just this character. Where it was that Maggie always thought I was trying to steal her book (which to this day I have never seen and was dated before I ever met her), I had numerous cases of my sending her Archives material she could use in her special format, of my offers to get other things for her (and doing it and sending them), and the opposite of this slander, my sending her a copy of the manuscript of WHITENASH II in the later summer or early fall of 1966. I could carry this on indefinitely, for there was a long list, and in each case Dave's rottenness was exactly opposed to the reality. In the course of tracing these things out, I saw what I had forgotten, warning from others on the west coast that as early as the summer of 1965, long before we had met or had any correspondence, Dave was engaged in just such a campaign against me.

To the best of my recollection, I met Dave just once. Because of this warning and my deep apprehension about his papier-mache assassination scheme and those mysterious tunnels he had Brown and Root making all over Dealey Plaza in advance of the assassination, I tried to avoid Dave. In December 1966 I was in LA for the first time. I did avoid Dave until it became an embarrassment for the man with whom I was staying. Then we met briefly one Sunday. On my other trips, I was able to avoid meeting him. But Dave was persistent. For example, the time I stayed with Fred, 2/68, as I recall, when I didn't know when I left where I'd be staying and it was being kept secret, Dave spied around until he learned where I was staying and phoned me to try and pick a fight about a debate I had scheduled with Liebeler in Reseda, Calif, for a little later. I never even phoned him, except one time, just a year ago, when Paul Hoch and Hal Verb asked me to (and I'm glad I did because of what I learned from his babbling. On this Reseda thing, he has made charges I had seen when I was there 10/68. One of those he sent them to showed them to me. When he raised the same question with Gary, I sent Gary a copy of my correspondence with the school. It proves that without exception everything Dave alleged was false, the opposite of the truth. Where he accused me of trying to milk them, my written offer was to speak without fee if Liebeler would (Liebeler, who lives there would not, as Dave is careful to omit, and he has had a strange relationship with Liebeler). Where he accuses me of building up my expenses, my letters show I told them my expenses would consist of the cost of transportation only, mileage to and from the airport and the cost of the ticket. Where he accused me of picking a date that would get me a free trip to California (as though I spend my time looking for junkets), I told them when I'd be there but they wanted a specific date they could advertise.

Then came the Thornley matter. Dave was taken in by Thornley and had become his friend. Therefore, whatever Thornley said became automatic truth. I was accused of being responsible for Garrison's interest in (persecution of) Thornley. The truth is I had neither interest in nor knowledge of Garrison's interest. My own was and is separate and entirely distinct, in an entirely different area, and I had gone to the trouble of looking up Thornley's strange friend Bolton to warn him in advance that Garrison would develop an interest in Thornley. I went farther, presuming Thornley to be innocent of serious involvement, and offered to get together with him to see if what he might have known of Oswald could have had significance unknown to Thornley- and I guaranteed that because he considers himself a writer, the literary value of anything that evolved would remain with Thornley. But what Dave did here forced me to make an investigation that otherwise I would not have made. In it I learned that it is Dave who took the initiative with Garrison on Thornley and went so far as to provide a perjurious affidavit (a crime for him as for Thornley), the net effect of which was to frame John Rene Heindell (in Garrison's defense, he has said nothing of this and done nothing with it).

Dave's idea of scholarship and making constructive contributions to the

work so many of us have worked so hard on, at a great cost, was to do a pseudo-scholarly debunking of part of WWII (Z camera and its speed) and to distribute it widely, including to the New York Times, where it had the intended purpose of diminishing the interest I had been able to develop there. Now in this he made invalid assumptions and equated them with fact. His commentary on the Zepruder camera is from his "study" of Nix's, which is entirely different, with an entirely different mechanism. But he made charges based upon his belief Barret, the FBI agent, had had no interest in the speed of the camera and had confused the ASA speed of the film with the camera speed. What I found last night, in this letter from the stranger (who is still a stranger), is his phone call to Zepruder in which Z told him Barret had come to his office for the purpose of discussing just this, how the camera was set! Some "scholarship".

In this case, let me point out, Dave was taking up the cudgels for Liebeler, who made the erroneous record and ignored the Barret report. This is precisely what he did at Mesa, where his intervention brought to an end a debate with Liebeler- the only debate with an organized format, where each would be limited to so much time in each speaking and where each would have had a tape recording of the entire procedure to use without restriction.

Gary later told me Dave accused him of stealing something about James Powell, the Army intelligence man, from Dave. Now it happens Gary had given me a copy of his file on this before he was in touch with Dave, Gary's reason for mentioning it. But what was there to steal? I have just found my own 1966 file on this. I came across it filed under the interest that led me to it, then man on the first floor of the TSBD. Mine was filed under Pierce Allman, who I was checking out when I found out about Powell being teapied in the building.

There are people I have trusted with my unpublished manuscripts. I find that over a period of time Dave has been on a systematic campaign of trying to get from them this content. At best, this is unethical. I find him writing letters about other of my activities, such as helping in a lawsuit, where his (garbled) knowledge could have come from espionage only. Again, this is the height of impropriety.

Until recently I have adhered to my original belief, that this very bright young man is also a very sick one. What I have learned to date, recently, without conducting any investigation, makes it clear his sickness is not the only possibility and may not be the probability.

In any event, it has also become clear that every one of the people with whom I had been in touch who all turned off at the same time were either in communication with Dave or with those he expertly manipulates.

For all of his brightness, he has produced nothing. A year ago he told me he had a book about to be published. He has had articles coming out in magazines, etc. - all fiction. If he ever publishes the book he described to me, we are all ruined, for there will be no credibility remaining.

I have taken this time, I believe, in your interest. I have regarded your unmanly silence as just that, unmanly. If a man has a complaint against another, he articulates it, as close to face-to-face as he can. You have just been what I regard as cowardly. Yet when I was over my head, way behind on my own work, and with countless notes of my own investigations to make while they were still fresh in my mind, I dropped everything and wrote a foreword for your book, for which I asked nothing. I ask nothing of you now. My purpose is a simple one. Your silence denies me knowledge of the cause. If it is Lifton, I do not want you to be hurt needlessly, to later look back with regrets. Hope you and your family are well. Sincerely, Harold Weisberg