

Rt. 8, Frederick, Md. 21701
12/28/73

Dear Elmer,

A well-intentioned Chicago friend has intruded upon what would have been merely a hectic day by sending me a copy of your self-justification disguised as a "review" of Belin's belated self-justification.

Although I tell myself that I have adjusted to reviews that say nothing about the book they ostensibly review, I have read this in awe. You are the new champ! You have said the new less.

The note describes you, I am confident without exaggeration, as a "distinguished" attorney. So, Elmer, "distinguished" attorney and conspicuously, unless my memory fails me, one for the accused, please tell me (if you respond, and you need not), when was the last time that you said the case against my client is solid because the prosecutor claims it is?

This is a reasoning that could simplify justice and save much tax money. Just eliminate trials and act on accusations.

You will not find holy water in lead and antimony. You can write all the reviews you want, but the ghosts will still haunt.

What still shocks me is that people like you actually believe they know what they are talking about. I will not risk offending you, which is not now and never has been my purpose, by taking this scribbling apart. However, I would ask you to tell me when as defense counsel in court you acknowledged on behalf of and in the interest of a client that there is such a thing as a fatal cartridge. Bullets skill, counsellor, not shell casings. They remain behind. And those of which you speak have a history of which you do not speak. You can't and know it and be an honest man.

What drives you to this? What impels you to say that what the Commission lawyers elected to print in the 26 volumes if "all" the evidence? It isn't and what they elected to leave out leaves no doubt that you have here compounded error with defamation, for the Kennedy family suppressed nothing. Those you defend elected not to ask for it. But some of what you say they did not see they did.

Often I wonder if men like you do and say these things in the expectation that they somehow help Warren this way. You can't and you don't and what you really do is assure a place in the hall of villainy for him. You eliminate the comprehensible, what the future will be able to understand, that he was victimized by the Hoovers (and the LBJ political conning).

You have created a whole mythology about this. You have special phrases for it. Like "Malcolm Lane and company." If you knew anything at all that is fact, not your fancy, you would know that there is no single other person popularly regarded as a serious disputant of the Warren Commission who associates himself with Lane. It is your invention. It is not fact.

You met your obligations in the Ruby case. You did your good best there. Why can't you let it rest there? Why do you have to besmirch yourself with rubbish like this? What drives you to this? Must you persist in making a record that you are a fool and a knave? Why, in your own name, not God's? Have you spent your life in court without learning anything, and without learning that you can't have been an active lawyer and learned enough to know that you can't begin to know what the evidence really is?

Next time somebody tempts you with a request for a review, don't indulge this compulsion. It won't make any difference anyway because they can always find someone who will parrot the official mythology, and no other review can be printed.

Except to you. If you like Lane enough, you'll have to be satisfied with that.