

Those very few things I asked of you, you never did. The one important sewer picture, the one I asked of you, you did not make. Instead you made pictures that are utterly immaterial, as the most rudimentary knowledge of the established fact of the assassination would have told you. The result was effective propaganda, only because Jim is luckier than most (but we may yet have to face it in court), the ruin of what could have been an important part of the untold story, and a number of very decent people and stalwart workers on our side quit.

I could go on at some length, but because my purpose is not to berate you but to open your eyes and mind and put you in a position to understand the possible consequences of what you have been part of - and this you will have to live with - I think this is enough. Leave for one thing: you must learn that the way to help a man, particularly an egocentric man of some genius, is not to whim and cater to him and his vanity, not to be an apologist and a lickspittle, but to exercise your own independent judgement, not give and tell him what you know he wants to hear. In telling you this, I want you to know that I have read a number of your memos, aside from that awful one on the Zapruder film (where, armed only with the most profound ignorance, you undertook to explain to him what he did not know - and were completely wrong).

You kid yourself if you believe what you say in saying this: "I know I prevented a disaster by making sure to see that film - because by doing that I have prevented the film by being shown in the very dangerous state it was in. I did that and cut off all association with Lamarre as I have promised".

As you know, I have from the first been more than skeptical of that entire operation. We discussed this at some length in Charlie Brown's the end of October. You were still sold on it. I know the book is a phoney. I read part of it last summer. You cannot know anything at all about the subject and trust this book. Could I expect more of the movie? Especially when its failure to appear coincided with other things of which you had no knowledge?

Recall that I offered to chauffeur you and Lamarre around. Remember I was a bit late? Remember I made bad turns? From this you will certainly recall that I got you to the office much too late to show it and catch your plans. You would not have shown it in any event, for once I knew they have the Zapruder film in it (and I do not for one minute believe the story of how they got it), had I gotten you there on time the office would have prevented its showing. Without Jim there, I doubt any member of the staff would have permitted it. Are you now aware of the possibilities just this: the stolen Zapruder film, of which Jim has the only known unofficial copy, is in it? How could they have gotten it? From LIFE? FBI? Secret Service? CIA? Do you think that when LIFE had a year ago paid Zapruder a half million dollars for the right not to show it anyone in any responsible position was going to give it away if he had a copy?

The reality is that you did not prevent a disaster by making sure to see the film. It has yet to be learned whether your association with it will yet be a disaster. More, there is nothing that can be done to that film to make it anything but dangerous. I am willing to assume, from what you say, that you are responsible for certain changes in it. That cannot possibly be enough. I have to be persuaded it is less than an enormous trap for us.

In the course of all of this, how much office money did you spend? What is there to show for it that Jim can take to court, now that he will be there, at long last? Not a single thing. Now ask yourself what could have been done with just the money alone that you so happily pissed away. Suppose some of that could have been spent in New Orleans (as 100% of it should have been)? Can you begin to imagine what the results could be? Have you the remotest concept of the work yet

to be sure these work there will that be time for before the trial? While you were enjoying the good life in Europe, at the expense of others, working on what

could not possibly bear fruit, I was going deeper in debt to try and do some of this work, abandoning my own work in order to be able to, and even paying my own expenses. While you were living it up I spent two weeks in New Orleans, with so little money that in this period I had but four meals, each as a guest. I began the day with a glass of powdered skim milk, had a 19¢ hamburger for the evening meal, and rarely had more. There was a bonus. I lost 15 pounds I had to. But this is only a sample of what you have cost. That money spent in New Orleans could have yielded much of the still-missing information. The leads are viable, many, if not most, already developed and authenticated, and no one to do it and no money to pay for it. And did you get good movie footage you can use for your own purposes? You brought nothing back but a potential disaster.

Here again I do not exhaust the possibilities. For example, I could go into how you spent your time in Dallas, and what it cost, and what could have been done there. However, my purpose is not to abuse you, so I do not.

This cannot be pleasant for you. It is not for me. I could let it go, I could send you a polite thanks for the card. And I have other things to do with the time, so many things I do not have time for, aside from a few moments for a personal life. Why, then, do I take the time for what cannot be pleasant for both of us? Simply because you are not, in my belief, what Vince accused you of. You know and understand considerably less than you think, but I do not consider you this or a crook. I think you are a nice guy who is simply over his depth. However, you are not a complete fool, I am satisfied you also want the truth, and you are going to have this history to live with and survive. Therefore, I write you so you can begin to be honest with yourself, not half-honest, as you were in this card. You must begin by facing the reality of this awful period and your part in it. If what can eventuate does, you will be better able to face it and live with yourself. Even if it does not, as you grow older, unless you are corrupt (and I neither think this nor imply it) you will have the greatest difficulty rationalizing this record. Face it now, try and understand it, and do what you still can to undo what may be undone. The Warren Commission had no monopoly on error. I am not and have not been immune. However, I had certain advantages you did not: more years from which to profit and a background from which to benefit. Nonetheless, I also have erred, as who cannot and has not?

"But you should know the whole story before you judge", you conclude.

If there is anything I should know and do not, I encourage you to put it all on paper, and immediately. Forget about self-justification. That is meaningless and self-pitying. It sometimes comforts, but the comfort is induced and unreal. Give me what fact you can. About Lamarre and his associates, get it all down, in the most elaborate detail possible. Who. Where. Assume nothing to be innocent, and let the checking out determine. Please leave nothing out. Give what descriptions where possible, and do not load it. Do not say how extremely important things are, just say what the things are....I think you owe this. I think we need it immediately to prepare for anything that might require preparation. I also think you very much owe it to yourself.

Steve, I have not cushioned this as much as perhaps you'd like, but if I did I'd not be honest and I'd not be acting in your interest as I see it. I really do think you have to face those many things that should not have been (here I remind you of Broshers) and what may flow from them. Imagine what can be done in court with some of these things and you carrying Garrison's credentials. Please do it, immediately, thoroughly, and accurately, without the sales stuff you gave Jim. Let me remind you, if it has not dawned on you, that in thinking and writing this way you also condition yourself and your own thinking...As an older man who has too-often evaded, I tell you there is but one proper way of addressing

Harold,

This is not the proper course procedure for discussion, however I hope you will remember my efforts to prevent the ongoing fight for truth when (if) things are needed.

I have tried to help, whether efficient or not, while I have been inexperienced and made bad judgments I have tried to do my best.

I guess that I prevented a disaster by making sure to see that film - because by doing that I have prevented the film from being shown in the very dangerous state it was in. I did that and then cut off all association with someone as I have promised.

But you should know the US Story before you judge.

ATY

Happy Christmas

and a

Happy New Year

Very very best wishes for you & your wife this year.
Stephen D

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AT Day
Mary Elizabeth
and a
Happy New Year

Very very best
wishes for you and
your wife for this new
year.
Stephen D. M.