

11 January 1971

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Dear Dick,

Many, many thanks for your letter of the 4th. In view of your welcome interest in the matter of the arraignment (that did not take place), I am sending you herewith a xerox copy of the CD which so elated me when I saw it (CD 5 page 400). I am sending you also a copy of the article on Givens which is still pending at The Texas Observer and which I hope will ultimately be published. I would be glad if you find time to read it very critically and point out anything which you consider vulnerable or unclear.

I am delighted that you have made such good progress with your monograph. Perhaps it will be really completed before too long so that you can turn to possibilities of publication. That will need careful thought. Because the monograph is somewhat technical, it will be more attractive to a specialized periodical interested in such questions as forensic medicine and/or ballistics, I imagine, and less to a publication that reaches a large general audience. Among the latter it may prove possible to interest Ramparts, or its rival, Scanlon's; unlikely, but not impossible, Commentary, Harper's, or Atlantic Monthly. To be realistic, it must be acknowledged that the prospects of getting anything on the assassination printed seem never to have been more negative than now. When the time comes, I will be glad to write a covering letter, if you wish, to people like Harrison Salisbury and Peter Kihss of the New York Times, or Fred Cook, of The Nation, or anyone else whom I know who might be helpful. As I think I said in an earlier letter, I know that The Texas Observer would be very receptive to your thesis, but the length of the monograph would seem to rule out publication--unless you feel able to do a separate, short summary about the length of the enclosed article on Givens.

I am interested in what you tell me of Howard Roffman. Heavens! If he is only 17 now, he must have started work on the case at a really tender age, which suggests a very superior and precocious mind. Any evidence that narrows the time lapse between the shots and Baker's entry into the TSBD (and thus his encounter with Oswald) is immensely important, since it strengthens still further what is already a powerful "alibi" in terms of presence on the 6th floor at the moment of the shots being fired, from that or any other location.

Needless to say, I am equally excited and impressed by the new evidence you mention on the bullet wound at the Adam's apple and will look forward very eagerly to the further information you intend to send--which I will of course keep confidential. The same goes for your memo on CE 399, and to the additional information you will send on the fragments in the neck.

As I perhaps told you already, I got a "season's greeting" card from Hoch, just as if nothing had happened. Naturally I ignored it. I am so embittered about his dirty melon tests that I am also ignoring a circular letter he sent out to a number of critics about some newly-declassified CD's, offering to provide sets at a very low price. Incidentally, I had a phonecall the other day from Dick Sprague--a terribly nice and well-motivated guy who nevertheless does immense harm to our position by wildly irresponsible articles and lectures--and we talked briefly about Hoch's melon paper. Sprague told me that he had met Hoch in Washington in late August or early September 1970 (I had not known that Hoch was in the east at that time) and was flabbergasted to realize in conversation with him that Hoch had "done an Epstein" and become a complete defender of the WR. Peace,

S. Bernabei