

4406 Holland
Dallas, Texas 75219
April 18, 1970

Mrs. Sylvia Meagher
102 West Twelfth Street
New York, New York 10014

Dear Mrs. Meagher:

This morning's mail brought a letter from George Rennar and he asked me about the arraignment procedures in Dallas. I have been a legal secretary in Dallas for almost 18 years... and was a legal secretary almost 10 years before coming to Texas. (needless to say, this does not qualify me as a legal "expert" by any stretch of the imagination)

So far as I have ever known, the charges are always read at the arraignment. The newspaper articles were a little confusing on the point of whether there was one arraignment and then a press conference, or actually two arraignments. I have copied the pertinent parts of these articles from several newspapers and am enclosing them. I will be happy to have them (the actual clippings) Xeroxed for you if you wish.

My youngest son, a 20-year-old college student, was picked up in February and charged with loitering. They questioned him for several hours concerning narcotics before arraigning him on loitering charges. When my husband and I went down to the police station with lawyers, we wanted to be sure that he wasn't charged with being a "pusher" or rapist, etc... We were assured by our lawyers that the boy was only charged with loitering and there was no mention of narcotics in his file. He told us later that he was taken before a Judge (he was not sure whether it was a Justice of the Peace) and all the "prisoners" had the charges read against them at that time. He seemed to think the charges were read in their entirety... Of course, we all knew that they were not interested in him for loitering at all. He was running around with a group of college kids who smoked grass and used L.S.D., etc.

Mrs. Meagher, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for all the wonderful work you have done on "the case." There have been so few of you who have done outstanding and intelligent work. And, we have been so plagued with idiots, or worse, during the past six years... Of course, I appreciate all the efforts, as long as they are sincere and not intentionally trying to make us all look stupid...

My husband helped to open Downtown Lincoln Mercury when it originally opened. Then, just a few months before the assassination, he moved to Eagle Lincoln Mercury as Sales Manager. He worked with the Secret Service in preparing the Lincolns for the motorcade and had one ready for the President. He did not know until the morning of the 22nd that they were going to use the President's own car.

I had a luncheon engagement at the Chapparel Club in the Southland Center (which also has the Sheraton Hotel in it). At 12:35 p.m., I left the Club and walked downstairs and went out the Elm Street door. A very tall Negro man came up

to me with tears running down his face and said, "Is it true that they shot our President." I backed away from him, thinking he was insane. However, I noticed that the streets were almost deserted at that end of Elm but squad cars were speeding toward the opposite end of Elm with riot guns pointed out the windows. I ran into a bookstore and called my husband and asked him if he had heard it. He said the President was "dead as a door knob"... I asked why he thought so and he said that he heard that the President was hit in the head and "spun around" in the car. He said no one could survive that kind of head shot. Then I heard the first, meager description of the wanted man. I stood on Elm and thought that they would never find him with no more than that to go on, in an area containing over a million people. Then when they caught Lee about an hour later, I've been working on it "ever since."

In 1966, I received a letter from New Orleans asking if I would harbor a "friend" from there who was coming to Dallas to do research on the assassination. When Tom Bethell arrived in November, I learned about the Garrison investigation. I was extremely excited and optimistic and offered to do anything I could. (Living in Dallas, I have always asked that my name not be mentioned in anything.) In the Spring of 1967, I went to New Orleans with my daughter-in-law, who is a Physics teacher, and my youngest son, who was then 17 and a very bright boy. We spent two whole days in Garrison's office completely spell-bound by his charm. HOWEVER, the first day, as we left his office and walked down the steps to Tulane Street, my son and daughter-in-law were almost ecstatic... "Mother, isn't he great?" "Don't you like him?" I said, "Yes, he is the most charming man I've ever met but I've never felt as sorry for anyone in my life." They were appalled and wanted to know what I meant. "I said, "The man is completely insane. He has let this drive him crazy." Of course, I was later to decide that he had been insane long before he ever heard of Kennedy or the assassination. When I told my friends here in Dallas about my impression of Jim, they thought I was "crazy." It took the Clay Shaw trial (or fiasco, as far as the prosecution was concerned) to convince them that I had been right all along.

Well, I have rambled... Please forgive me for doing so...

If there is anything I can ever do to help you, please call on me. I have quite a collection of newspapers, books, pictures, microfilm, tapes (I have both Channels of the Dallas Police tapes that day-11/22)... I also have over 12,000 3X5 index cards I've been adding to since the 22nd... Naturally, many of these are completely out in left field, but I add any name I run across that might be even remotely connected, and then I add data to the cards as I run across it. We also have several volumes we call a Chronology. We started with the 22nd, then went back to 1959 when Lee went to Russia, and now it goes back to the Galveston flood... We just keep finding something that might be important.

Oh, I should tell you that all the records from Nov. 22nd are now on microfilm at the City Hall. I have tried to get permission to view some of them but without success...

I do hope that this unnecessarily long and rambling "epistle" has not frightened you of me.

Sincerely,

Mary Ferrell
(Mrs.) Mary Ferrell