

6 January 1971

Mr. Arch P. Kimbrough
4008 Shannon Lane
Dallas 75205

Mrs. Mary Ferrell
4406 Holland
Dallas 75219

Dear Arch and Mary:

I have received from Paul Hoch a copy of his letter of 29 December 1970 to Arch regarding the list of materials just declassified and released by the National Archives. I have also received a letter from Harold Weisberg dated 3 January 1971, and perhaps Mary has received a similar letter from Harold, warning against premature and piecemeal use of the declassified material.

Frankly, I do not know why Harold is so anxious about disclosure of material that has finally been placed in the public realm. Little or nothing is being published about the Dallas assassination except in cruddy little newsletters like the Joesten one and now the one started by Fensterwald, which reach only a small group of critics and pseudo-critics. But in any case, I am completely in favor of disclosure of any and all material of significance, insofar as it is possible to obtain publication—in order to continue to build a public and historical record, and in order to keep the issue alive in the hope of a breakthrough in terms of a new investigation and the official nullification of the Warren Report, however dim the prospect admittedly is for such a development.

The Texas Observer has the manuscript of a short article I did some months ago on the Charles Givens testimony, copy of which was sent to Ball and Belin (whom I charge in the article with perjury and collusion in re: the Givens testimony) to give them an opportunity to comment in advance of publication. The last I heard was that Belin had denounced the article as false and libelous, but without specifying a single instance of anything "false" or inaccurate or incomplete in factual terms. He has demanded a guarantee that any rebuttal he prepares will be published in full simultaneously with my article. I have urged the Texas Observer to call his bluff and give him the guarantee, for I am convinced that he simply cannot refute either the facts set forth in the article nor the evaluation of those facts. (Just to reassure the editor, I sent the ms. to Sauvage, Stamm and Wecht for extremely critical examination. None of them raised any questions or voiced any reservations; Sauvage and Stamm felt that the article made a fool-proof, iron-clad case against the lawyers and the Commission and the investigative agencies involved in this particular part of the evidence.) So far as I know, Ball has not responded at all. I do hope that the article will be published before too long.

On the question of the declassified documents, I have mixed feelings. I have already acquired, at considerable cost, huge masses of CD's that are generally without interest or value. I have a problem with storage space as well. And, in the light of Paul Hoch's "melon experiments" and his disgusting attempt to vindicate the specious Warren Report while masquerading as a so-called "critic", I am bitterly reluctant to have to conduct any business with him, even for the sake of acquiring the declassified CD's.

Essentially, what I would like to do is have the opportunity to scan the material, all of it, and to select only the CD's that hold some interest for me—generally speaking, that would consist of CD's related to the evidence discussed in Accessories After the Fact or in my various magazine articles subsequent to the book.

I am so reluctant to work with Hoch, or appear to do so, even on the limited and mechanical question of obtaining the declassified material, that I would prefer to obtain it elsewhere at a higher cost than his rate of 3¢ per page (or less). But I am also reluctant to impose on either of you two good and generous friends, who have already gone so far out of your way to be helpful during my visit to Dallas and in other ways.

So I am just thinking out loud, so to speak, and if either of you have any suggestions I would welcome them, so long as they do not involve placing any burden on yourselves. One item that I would appreciate, if it is available, is the list of the now-declassified CD's, so that if necessary I can resort to the desperate remedy of ordering the documents from the Archives directly.

Mary, I do not seem to hear from you very much any more--perhaps because of your house-improvement project. I miss your letters! I have been at fault too, during the very hectic day-and-night work of the General Assembly, which is finally over, thanks be.

Best love to you both and to the Ferrells and Kimbroughs who were so hospitable to me last summer.

Sincerely yours,

Sylvia Meagher
302 West 12 Street
NYC NY 10014