

18 March 1968

Dr. John Nichols
University of Kansas Medical Center
Rainbow Blvd. at 39th St.
Kansas City, Kansas 66103

Dear Dr. Nichols,

In reply to your letter of the 16th: you will find a Secret Service report on the source of the scope in Commission Exhibit No. 1331 (XXII page 528). I assume that you have at your disposal the 26 volumes of the Hearings and Exhibits; but just in case I am mistaken in this assumption, let me specify synoptically that the scope was traced through its inscription "Ordnance Optics, Inc., Hollywood, California." Although no trace of a firm with that name could be found in the Los Angeles directories, police informants steered the Secret Service and LA police investigators to Martin Retting, owner of the Retting Gun Shop, 11029 Washington Blvd., Culver City. Retting said that he was the only importer (from a Japanese company) of this kind of rifle scope (marked, he said, "4x18 Coated, Ordnance Optics Inc., Hollywood, California, O10 Japan with a cloverleaf with the initials enclosed of OSC"—the first half of which inscription corresponds with the description of the scope rendered in the Warren Report, page 553, while there is some doubt about the second half, since the WR describes "Made in Japan" while Retting specifies "O10 Japan" etc.).

Retting said that he had been selling these scopes for 3 or 4 years, mainly to Klein's Sporting House, Chicago; he thought that the rifle and scope found in the Book Depository had been purchased "in a packet deal" from Klein's. (This interview took place on 11/23/63.)

According to the Los Angeles police officers who were present during the interview of Martin Retting (whose report on the interview I found in the Hearings of the Dodd Subcommittee on a Federal Firearms Act, May/July 1965), Retting said that "the scope is not sold by itself but is sold as a package deal only." This may account for the difficulty you have encountered in purchasing an identical scope. Perhaps you will be able to get some help if you contact Martin Retting; if not, I just don't know where you might find a duplicate of the scope, since the Japanese firm from which it was imported is not specified in any of the documents.

There is no likelihood of my being in Washington in the next few months, unfortunately, as I am anchored to my desk (at UN Headquarters) by temporary understaffing in my office. I am disappointed to lose the chance of talking to you about your work. If you do get to New York, my phone numbers are: At the office—Plaza 4-1234, Ext. 2024; At home, Chelsea 2-4293 (Area Code 212 in each case). Should you want to discuss any of the information given above about the scope, please phone me at home in the evening, since my source material is kept at home.

Yours sincerely,

Sylvia Meagher
302 West 12 St. NYC 10014