

Mrs. Jan Diaz  
120 Burbank Ave.,  
Oxnard, CA 93035

8/27/88

Dear Jan,

Your offer is beautiful and we do appreciate it very much. I'll return to this.

I'd forgotten but Jonn did tell me, years later, that the tape had been destroyed. That would have meant also that the film was destroyed because in those days they used film and it had a sound track. I guess it was destroyed because Jonn delayed getting it. And I don't blame them for destroying it. Especially not Sam Banks, a real nasty one, a real stinker used to intimidating and abusing people. He certainly didn't want any record of being hoist on his own kind of petard kicking around. However, especially now after all these years, I think I'd enjoy listening to it again.

To be fair to ABC, in those days, especially in the Bay area, it was as fair as any other, more so than most and perhaps overall it carried more of the anti-official side than anyone else. This evaluation is from personal experience and cannot include the experiences of others.

Yes, I know Phil Melanson. Although for some reason he hasn't told me, he <sup>has</sup> or has been working on a book on the King assassination. He consulted me on some of his research and theories and I gave him what help I could. He didn't ask for ~~any~~, if any, records. The work he, Greg Stone and others did to get the RFK files out is really fine. And important. I hope his book is good and succeeds.

Lillian was modest and sought no attention. Back in 1966 or 1967 she sent me some useful information, some duplicating what I'd done and I think some I'd not seen. However, she asked me not to credit her...What may amuse you is that the FBI had a spy at a meeting out there and they don't have her identified by name. She is referred to only phonetically and a file was started that way, "Lilyan" as I now recall.

I've cut the shrinkwrap on the Wrono book only enough to autograph it. I've forgotten much of the content, other than the texts of the transcripts, but I've not forgotten the changes at that university at about that time - more of a focus on teaching business things than intellectual and historical and they lost interest in the series this was to have begun. Later I forced all but one of the other transcripts out. That one defames Norman Redlich, which is the legal reason for its suppression, but the real need is because Ford was a racist that day, trying to get Redlich fired for the right-wing extremists.

Now I explain the realities of my physical/medical condition. Back in early 1975, when Lil and I were members of the nation's first HMO, Group Health Association, in Washington, and my health had been extraordinarily good, I began to get sharp pains in my left calf when I was walking. The walking I did not only then but from the time I was a boy is probably the only reason I'm alive today. Jonn may remember that when I was last out there, in October 1968, and Joan Hitchcock had taken us to lunch in a Mexican restaurant, I raced them both up one of your steeper hills and they quit. Not running, just walking fast. The GHA doctor kept telling me I was getting old and this is what happens when you get old, it seemed reasonable and I believed him. But when I was having the pages of what was published as Post Mortem photographed in Washington the pain got much worse and I was hospitalized. I'd suffered severe thrombophlebitis and most of the leg and some of the thigh veins were gone. Thereafter, with further complications in 1977, I was able to lead a vigorous life, living on a dangerous dosage of a dangerous anticoagulant. I had severe hemorrhages twice. In September 1980 I had a plastic artery inserted in my left thigh, from the torso to the knee, actually it is teflon. The operation was a great success but in addition to more venous thromboses while I was in the hospital there was a massive blockage that could be removed only as far down as the left ankle. This severely limited what I was able to do, how much I could walk without being forced to stop from pain, etc. Then, the next April, there



was a total blockage of the left side, as I recall the explanation of the cause it is that a piece of my natural artery had broken loose and caused the ~~blockage~~ blockage. I was told the next day that only this walking had strengthened my heart so that it could withstand that trauma, that ordinarily the heart just quits. I've been even more severely limited since then and gradually I'm weakening more and more. In part I think this is from not being able to get the physical activity one needs, complicated this summer by the worst combination of high heat and high humidity I recall. This kept me indoors most days, except for their beginnings. Jim Lesar was in the emergency room that night and he told me my right side was black. But I've been on a walking program since 1980. I go to a local mall, sent there by the family doctor, because there are no extremes of temperature, no hills, and I can sit every hundred feet or so. They let me in early and I'm usually there about three hours. I walk, sit and elevate the left leg, walk again, etc., reading while I rest. I still get up early, I leave the house, depending on the time of the year, as early as 4:30 and sit in the car at the end of the lane, with a good stereo and the morning papers, and as soon as there is a sign of dawn and the glare from oncoming headlights is reduced, I drive to this mall, about two miles, except for Mondays and Thursdays, when I go to a local medical lab first for testing of the time it takes the blood to clot, called prothromes. This is no burden because I can enjoy good music when it is very quiet without disturbing Ed.

In January 1986 I had a prostate operation. The urologist ignored all my medical history and not only gave me more thromboses, this time they included the right leg which, until then, had had no problems. The change is quite dramatic in my reduced physical capabilities. Among these is standing, a prohibition when avoidable. As an example of what happens, when I went down to the basement, which I can do four or five times a day, and stood still only long enough to raise the box in which this book was and slit it open to remove the book and then returned upstairs, my left leg and foot were swollen and the foot burned and hurt. The burning has not quite disappeared. I now and always keep my legs elevated. I type sort of sidesaddle, which does not improve it a bit.

So, my use of my own files is quite limited, more so when they are in the basement. All the hundreds of thousands of pages of records I got under FOIA are in the basement, the only place we could get 40 or more file cabinets. I therefore can't get to and from the file cabinets very often and I ought not stand still in front of them long enough to remove and refile records, leave alone search for them. My wife is inhibited in this by arthritis, which she has from her neck to both sets of toes.

I'm not supposed to sit still more than 20 minutes at a time, although I do, as when you phoned. I'm to walk around a bit. This interferes with concentration, among other things. And now that I tire more easily and often, I take naps for the first time in my life.

It is not just that I tire easily. I'm often so weary I have to force myself to do anything at all. Never was this way in my life.

Now I need a cataract removal. It has grown to where before long driving will be very dangerous and driving is essential to me. Us. The problem is glare, more from headlights than the sun. A simple accident that would be nothing to most people can kill me. (I've not driven at night for a decade and I've not been able to drive out of Frederick since 1977.) Ordinarily this is outpatient surgery but for me it can't be. I've been consulting with three physicians over this and I see the eye doctor about it day after tomorrow. The problem is that to live I require anticoagulation and that can cause bleeding during and after even this kind of surgery and if during it the changes are that I'd lose that eye. So, although there seems to be a consensus that I should go ahead with the operation, the questions remain about the level to which the anticoagulation should be reduced to balance the hazards. And be as safe as possible. And once the local and Washington doctors are in agreement I then begin with the hospital in Baltimore the Washington doctor recommends. The present consensus is that

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over a period of about two weeks I'll be reducing the dosage of anticoagulant slowly until I reach a plateau of about half longer than the base, without any anticoagulation. (Frankly, I wonder if this is safe.) They think that after I'm first examined at the Baltimore hospital, if those doctors agree to this procedure, they'll want me there for a couple of days before they operate to be sure that the clotting time is not varying. Then they may want me to stay there for some days so they can continue to monitor the blood situation. And, of course, they may have their own ideas. Until after Monday this is the situation. I'm hoping that Monday I'll be referred to the Wilmer Institute at Johns Hopkins and to a surgeon or surgeons the local eye doctor knows and can recommend.

I'll want to do this as soon as possible so that weather will not preclude my walking in our paved lane. It has enough of an incline to be a problem walking back but it does enable walking and that is essential to me, no matter how little at a time. I understand that the eye will have to be blocked from all light for a period the length of which I don't know and I don't know when I would be released to drive again. The vision in my left eye is poor and I'd not risk driving with it alone.

I hope this is enough of an explanation to let you understand why I can't now say anything about your kind offer except that it is wonderful and appreciated.

Anything I might now say might be misleading or entirely wrong.

On the other hand, if everything goes well it is not impossible that my vision in the better eye would be improved. Several years ago the local eye doctor said this is likely.

I forgot: how tall are you and what do you weigh? As originally designed this house had two very small bedrooms for their sons with an accordion divider. Both are used by my wife as her office for her tax work. One has a small sofa in it. It can be opened but you'd then almost have to fly to get anywhere. Because this is an almost all glass house, this is the only place we have for any chests of drawers, and that reduces the free space even more. Comfortable if small house and wonderful location, in woods and quiet but the wealthy people who built it chiselled on themselves. Two feet more in width would have made an enormous difference and as of the time it was built that would not have cost more than \$500, if that much. So, they took it all with them. Yet they spent quite a bit on a 40-foot inground swimming pool! And lived on TV dinners.

I'll try to remember to keep you posted.

With sincerest thanks,

Harold



Wednesday, 8/24/88

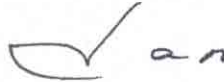
Dearest Harold and Lillian,

It was so wonderful to hear your voice on the telephone, I impulsively picked up the telephone to call rather than sit and write this letter, but here I am writing it anyway. John C. will be writing to you quite soon and said that the tape of the show that you refer to Harold, he did in fact try to get a copy of it and he was told, "it had been destroyed". Ha Ha, ABC in my experiences with them, that is their favorite line, I am of the opinion now that anyone and everyone who hires on with ABC or one of its' affiliates, must sign an oath to the effect that should anyone inquire about anything having to do with President Kennedy's, Martin Luther King, Jr, or Senator Robert Kennedy's assassinations, " you are to reply, that what it is they are seeking has been destroyed or that they have no idea what happened to it".

My offer of assistance to you is sincere and when you feel it is time for me to help you, I will fly there with my typewriter and the supplies I will need and as I said to you over the telephone Harold, I will be your eyes and hands and legs for you. I am not just happy to be of some service to you, I would be greatly honored if you would accept my help, so that you can accomplish what it is you need to do. You may find this interesting ironic, sad, or suspicious, or all of the above, but barely a few days after I had a two hour talk with a Field Producer here in Los Angeles, a Mr. Bruce Carroll, Producer Network New, he suffered a heart attack, his first, he is recovering nicely I understand, his secretary told me he had no previous heart trouble, he is only about 43 years old and in fine physical condition as far as I could tell, but anyway just another one of those "coincidences" I suppose. Dear Harold, if you do find time to mail your book on "The Freedom of Information Act & Political Assassinations" please be so kind as to autograph it for me and please do tell me the cost so that I can send you the money for it. I have sent you two attachments that I am very happy about not because my name is included, I had asked that it specifically not be, but it is so gratifying to me to know that guarding all that massive amount of material for over six years with my life, and after it took the students two years to index it, it is now called the Robert F. Kennedy Assassination Archives, under "THE CASTELLANO COLLECTION". Lillian would never take credit for anything and she might be amused at the "CASTELLANO COLLECTION" part of it, but I know in my heart, she is happy and thrilled that it is open to the public and it is

being used on a daily basis by students and anyone else who knows of its existence. I am trying to get Phil, (Dr. Melanson to add to the title to include JFK and MLK, because all her research, Floyds and most of mine were included, that it would then encourage a wider group of people to use the library if they knew other research was there as well as Bobby's, Jonn was so happy to hear that you are sounding so good, considering all the physical difficulties you are experiencing, but I told him that from the sound of your voice, the physical problems certainly have not impaired your mental facilities in the least. Jonn feels that if you will accept my offer of help that it will be the finest thing I could ever do in my life to further the cause and pursuit of Truth and Justice that you have been seeking so diligently for so many years. No one can put together the facts like you can and I am able to do the physical work that is required so please do give this some serious thought as I am at your beck and call whenever you give me the word.

All My Love to you both,

 Dan



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## Southeastern Massachusetts University

North Dartmouth, Massachusetts 02747

**Robert F. Kennedy Assassination Archives**

**Library Communications Center**

August 27, 1986

Ms. Jan Diaz  
2425 Ocean Drive  
Oxnard, Cal 93030

Dear Jan Diaz:

Let me express at a more personal level my great appreciation for your work as an assassination researcher and as a guardian of history. The collection that you and Lillian and Floyd assembled and preserved is the bedrock for someday giving the country an accurate account of this great tragedy.

Also, the effort shows how a few courageous and determined citizens can indeed make a difference (as you described so well in the tape you made remembering Lillian and her contribution to history). The work you all did is well preserved for scholars, journalists, students and concerned citizens and will, in that sense, continue to have an impact in the decades to come.

I and my university thank you, and, someday, history will thank you as well.

Sincerely,

  
Philip H. Melanson

**SOUTHEASTERN MASSACHUSETTS UNIVERSITY**

**ROBERT F. KENNEDY ASSASSINATION ARCHIVE**

**CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION**

TO

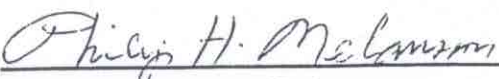
**JAN DIAZ**

**July, 1986**

**It is with a deep sense of gratitude that we recognize your energetic and unique efforts in the pursuit of historical truth and in the collection and preservation of the main body of material, the Castellano Collection, which now resides in the Robert F. Kennedy Assassination Archive.**

  
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**Dr. John R. Brazil, President  
Southeastern Massachusetts University**

  
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**Jennie M. Howard  
Associate Librarian**

  
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**Phillip H. Melanson, Chairperson  
Robert F. Kennedy Assassination Archive**