

Attachment 10 -- Letter from John W. Thomas re  
Testimony of Mrs. Martha Oswald

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January 14, 1964

Mr. J. Lee Rankin  
Attorney at Law  
Veterans of Foreign War Building  
Washington, D. C.

In re: Mrs. Marina N. Oswald

Dear Mr. Rankin:

I am writing this to accompany the handwritten work of Mrs. Oswald which is enclosed herewith. There are certain understandings and agreements between you as Chief Counsel for the President's Commission and myself as counsel for Mrs. Oswald that have been agreed upon heretofore which I now commit to writing for our mutual benefit.

We are agreed that the contents of this writing is given confidentially only to the Commission and is not in any form or manner to be published nor released for publication by the Commission. That this writing is subject to examination by the Commission and clarification if some points contained therein are obscure and need to be enlarged upon. That any additional matter arising out of this writing is equally confidential and that all such writing and information shall not at any time be released by the Commission for publication.

It is understood that at time of delivery of this writing, Mrs. Oswald will again be interrogated by the F. B. I. on three matters which have not heretofore been touched upon. Mrs. Oswald is now ready to hold such interviews as she, through her agent, deems necessary for purposes of selling her story, either in memoir form, hardback book form or for newspaper or magazine release. That such story in whatever form or forms it takes is subject to credit by me. It is understood and agreed that this story or stories, in whatever form will not be released until after Mrs. Oswald appears before the Commission to give her testimony.

Again, it is absolutely necessary that we be able to furnish a deadline date for the release of this story or stories. Unless and until we are able to do so, we do not have a marketable product. Arbitrarily permit me to use the 15th of February as a final date for our purposes, and present the matter to our prospective buyers in such a way that I may assure them a release of the story or stories on or before the 15th of February, 1964, and this must assume that the Commission will have ample time between now and that date to hold its hearing and have the testimony of Mrs. Oswald before it. In view of the problems

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that arise from our stand point, we request that the hearing be delayed until after the 1st of February, 1964, this will give us sufficient time for our interviews and an opportunity to complete such contracts as we may make.

It is my further understanding with you that the testimony given by Mrs. Oswald, of whatever nature, will not be released by the Commission until after the release of the story or stories by whatever media purchases the same.

Finally we are agreed that all of the items of personal property, which were seized by the Dallas Police Department as evidence, subsequently delivered to the F. B. I. as evidence and which is presently being held by the F. B. I. for examination by the Commission, will be returned to Mrs. Oswald at the termination of the investigation.

As you understand, it is most difficult to talk in generalities with the media who are interested in the story, book or memoirs without a definite date of release. I am and must under the circumstances assume that the foregoing will be satisfactory to you and the Commission.

In that time is of the essence to both of our interestes, I must again assume that if I do not hear from you to the contrary on or before Friday, January 17, 1964, that the above and foregoing does and will continue to constitute our mutual understanding of the matters set out.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Very truly yours,



John M. Thorne, Attorney

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