

SW, HR, GRS PH, RB, JL - mly

7/23/71

Dr. James B. Rhoads, Archivist
The National Archives,
Washington, D.C. 20408

Dear Dr. Rhoads,

Your letter of July 21 has just reached me. In it, you say with surprising casualness that "We have found that at some time in the past the knot in President Kennedy's necktie was untied." No more.

No sorrow, no regrets, no apologies, not even the slightest expression of concern.

And what is most significant, no statement that you have made even the most perfunctory investigation or what it discloses. The most reasonable interpretation of your lack of concern is that you have not made and do not plan any investigation.

I learned of the fact, not your attitude, when I appeared at the Archives yesterday to see what you had promised me in writing and in court only to find that it no longer exists.

There is no complaint about the quality of the photographs taken. They are up to the usually high professional standards of your photographers. Nor of your clerk, who was, as usual, polite and considerate.

By now you should have come to understand me and, I would hope, the seriousness of my intent and my work, despite the misrepresentation of it on your behalf in court records. So, with all the seriousness I can, I ask you if you intend to conduct an investigation and, if you do, when I can expect to know its results. I look forward to hearing from you about this in something less than your customary 60 days plus.

As a consequence of this, shall I call it an unfortunate accident? some of the pictures taken are meaningless. In one case, if the picture was taken, it is not clearly identified and seems to be other than what I asked for. I have described what I would like to see to your staff. If you will please let me know when I may expect to be able to make that examination, I would appreciate it. If there is any question, as I think there should not be from my correspondence, please phone me yourself and be satisfied. You should realize that the requests I made are not harrasing, not excessive, and are the minimum for any such study as I have undertaken. And when you consider, as I think you should, what the enormous cost to me of your forcing me to go to court on this was -and how it is not within your capability to make any kind of redress for it -and then compare this with the modest nature of my request, you should, if at this very late date, get some understanding that my purposes are only those as transparent as I represent them to be, serious scholarship that you have now permitted to become impossible.

I await your explanations with as much anxiety as you should be able to anticipate.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

W, RB, GRS, PTT, JL

MOST CONFIDENTIAL

7/23/71

Dear Howard, and very few others, all of whom I expect to preserve total silence on this and the enclosed, including internal discussion. I have with this communicated with all those with whom I want to and I want to handle 100% of this my own way, it coming as the consequence of my work and what for me was enormous cost and drain.

Some time ago you questioned my use of the phrase indicating that I had actually won a considerable victory in court in my suit for pictures of the clothing. I caution you(plural) that there are remnants other than the obvious that remain and remain to be handled as none of you can know.

I then told you to think about it and you would come to understand.

The simple truth is now apparent, that they never had any intention of making such pictures as I required possible. They and the Warren Report cannot co-exist. As you know, I held off for a long time in filing this suit, until I had in my possession what could preserve what I knew would either be refused me or destroyed. As you know, having seen it, I have this proof in my possession.

With the court record I have made, I regard this as the most important single development to date in our effort to establish truth. I will not take time for full explanations, enough being obvious.

And, I tell you I know more than is indicated in this or my enclosed letter to "heads. This includes 100% of the possibilities of responsibility. I have shared this knowledge with someone not a critic for reasons that include but are not limited to security.

Although it is not possible, without having pictures in my possession, to be 100% certain, I give it to you as my opinion that he has yet to confess 100% of the destruction. On this, I had also anticipated and had made the proper arrangements with the proper experts (no typo, plural). I think the proof in my possession is adequate on this point, if, as I say, I can't be absolutely certain.

I think you can understand why I must with all dispatch return to the completion of POST MORTEM and one of the reasons I have insisted vigorously on the preservation of my confidence on all I have gathered for it.

You should also understand that this letter to "heads is but a beginning of the additional record I must make in writing. You know the extent of the record I have already made on this point alone, on this evidence alone.

There is no surprise in any of the other pictures save as indicated with ellipsis above. I believe there has been more destruction of evidence than confessed, and on that in my own way and time I will make a record while writing.

Meanwhile, this case is still in court, there having been no response to the appeals papers I have filed and it is now more than a month after the decision. I suspect the government is playing tricks to make that impossible.

Remember, friend, love thine enemies.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

National Archives and Records Service
Washington, D.C. 20408



July 21, 1971

• Mr. Harold Weisberg
Coq d'Or Press
Route 8
Frederick, Maryland 21701

Dear Mr. Weisberg:

This is in further reply to your letter of June 16, 1971.

We have found that at some time in the past the knot in President Kennedy's necktie was untied. We have therefore prepared photographs of both the front and the back of the tie in the knot area. The photograph of the front of the tie shows the "nick" or damaged area. We have also prepared the photographs of the inside of the damaged area of the collar of the shirt and front of the collar with the tie under the collar. The last of these photographs, of course, does not show a knot.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'James B. Rhoads'.

JAMES B. RHOADS
Archivist of the United States

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