

1/25/72

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

Dear Dr. Rhoads,

although limited in the use of one hand by an accident, i make immediate response to your letter of 1/21, which did not reach me until today. i cannot conveniently use my files, so i will be forced to depend upon recollection in saying that i believe i referred to more than "the examination by dr. john k. lattimer of the materials transferred..." to which you make no response.

with my standing request for all regulations, etc., a subject of some and to me unsatisfactory correspondence, and with you pre-existing regulations, i believe you were required to send me the new regulations on "warren commission items of evidence" as soon as promulgated, not three weeks later, and you did not. this, too, seems to be a discriminatory and consistent practise.

there seems to me to be a conflict between #5 of this 1/2/72 revision and the alleged contract in that as this revision reads it broadens access to the film and other materials covered in the contract to include "researchers" and is not limited to pathologists and those in related fields of science and technology. parenthetically, i think not for the first time, i ask how this can include urology.

as i recall the correspondence, of which i provided you copies if mr. marshall did not, i had what amounts to his approval prior to my suit for pictures of the clothing. you then swore that this contract prohibited the showing of this clothing to anyone. this would seem to include dr. lattimer. now you have again revised the regulation you would not and did not provide me prior to this suit and withheld from the court and say that the clothing can be and under certain conditions will be shown to researchers, the word you use. it includes me. i have raised the unanswered question of false swearing, again not for the first time and again without response.

it is becoming clear that the regulations are revised with one improvisation after another and in each case to cover an official violation or in preparation for more official propaganda, not for reasons of genuine scholarship. if i do not forecast to you my belief about the reason for this newest revision, i do ask the official explanation, the need for it other than enabling impropriety, and why at this rather remarkable time, more than six years after you received this material and more than five years after the signing of the alleged contract.

in any event, i believe the letters from mr. marshall to me do authorize access to the clothing, the official exhibits rather than all of it, and that if you do not now provide it promptly it will be your refusal, not his. i would like this to be as soon as possible, and i would appreciate prompt responses to those things to which you have not responded. i would also like to know if this change in the regulations regarding the clothing have anything to do with dr. lattimer's known interest in the ace bandage and the brace. the coincidence of this change and his exclusive and improper access is remarkable.

sincerely,
harold weisberg

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

National Archives and Records Service

Washington, D.C. 20408



January 21, 1972

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

Dear Mr. Weisberg:

This is in reply to your letter of January 6, 1972.

I assume that your letter refers to the examination by Dr. John K. Lattimer of the materials transferred to the General Services Administration under the letter agreement of October 29, 1966, between the Administrator of General Services and the Kennedy family representative, Mr. Burke Marshall. That examination took place on January 7, 1972. Dr. Lattimer's application to examine the autopsy X-rays and photographs had previously been approved by Mr. Marshall. We also showed President Kennedy's clothing to Dr. Lattimer because of the approval of his application to examine the autopsy material.

Enclosed is a copy of the regulations relating to the Warren Commission material, which we have revised to provide for showing the clothing to researchers whose applications to examine the autopsy material are approved by the Kennedy family representative.

If you will select a pathologist or any other qualified person and secure the approval of his application by the Kennedy family representative, we shall be pleased to show the autopsy material and the clothing to him. The "memorandum of transfer" was not made available to Dr. Lattimer, nor were any copies of National Archives photographs of the clothing sold to him.

Sincerely,

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

JAMES B. RHOADS
Archivist of the United States

Enclosure

Regulations for Reference Service on
Warren Commission Items of Evidence

1. Documents (paper records) will be furnished to researchers in the research rooms of the National Archives Building. Items of particular value or fragility may, at the Archivist's discretion, be photocopied and the copies furnished to researchers in lieu of the originals. Copies will be furnished on request for the usual fees. Copyrighted material will be reproduced for research only after receipt of a release from the copyright holder.
2. Still photographs will be furnished to researchers in the research rooms of the National Archives Building. When negatives are prepared incident to filling a request for copies, the negatives will be retained. Copies will be furnished on request for the usual fees. Copyrighted materials will be reproduced for researchers only after receipt of a release from the copyright holder.
3. Motion picture films and sound recordings will be made available to researchers on appropriate equipment in the National Archives Building. Use copies will be prepared and the original materials withheld from normal reference use as a protective measure. Copies will be furnished on request for the usual fees. Copyrighted materials will be reproduced for researchers only after receipt of a release from the copyright holder.
4. Oversize charts, graphs, diagrams, and other means of two-dimensional presentation will be furnished to researchers in the research rooms of the National Archives Building. Copies will be furnished on request for the usual fees. Copyrighted materials or items incorporating copyrighted materials will be reproduced for researchers only after receipt of a release from the copyright holder.
5. Three-dimensional objects and materials that have been subjected to techniques of detailed scientific examination (the aforesaid provisions notwithstanding) will be withheld from researchers as a means of protecting them from possible physical damage or alteration and in order to preserve their evidentiary integrity in the event of any further official investigation of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. The National Archives will prepare special cases of varying sizes, constructed in part or entirely of translucent materials, in which objects or materials that do not present unusual problems of size or shape may be viewed by researchers. The Archivist reserves the right to limit the number of such items that may be shown to a researcher within a given period of time, as it will be necessary for a member of the staff of the National Archives to be present at all times during the viewing of such items. Researchers will not be permitted to view the incased items unattended or to touch or handle in any way the items themselves, either manually or with instruments. To the extent possible, photographs of these materials will be furnished to researchers as a substitute for visual examination of the items themselves. In the event that existing photographs do not

meet the needs of the researcher additional photographic views will be made. A charge may be made for unusually difficult or time-consuming photography. Photographs reproduced from existing negatives or prints will be furnished on request for the usual fees. The clothing of President Kennedy will not be shown to private researchers, except those researchers whose applications to examine the X-rays and photographs relating to the autopsy of President Kennedy are approved by the Kennedy family representative. Photographs of the clothing will be shown to other private researchers. No copies or enlargements of photographs of this clothing prepared by the National Archives will be furnished to researchers in order to avoid any possible violation of the provision of the letter agreement between the General Services Administration and the Kennedy family representative dated October 29, 1966 (page 2), in regard to preventing undignified or sensational reproduction of the clothing.

6. One photocopy or photograph of an item of evidence will be furnished without charge to persons presenting proof of prior ownership.

Rev. 2, January 10, 1972

JL, MC, PH, JU
1/25/72

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