

8/7/69

Memo to Bud, Gary, Paul on Secret Service response to my letter of 7/31.

My copying machine has stopped working entirely, as I learned in trying to make copies of Kelley's letter and the enclosure. When it is repaired I will make and provide copies. If Lil types it in time, I will include herewith my today's letter to him.

He tells me they have no copy of the autopsy authorization, which I just do not believe (and I think his evasion is in his reference to "our file", singular), but they do have a copy of the "death certificate". This he enclosed. It turns out to be other than that, one of the pages of the State of Texas inquest, dated December 6, and cannot be referred to as transmitted by 11/26, the date of Burkley's receipt to Duck. Moreover, their copy is two separate sheets he has scotch-taped together.

One of the things this discloses is that the Secret Service has kept files of its own, of which I never had any doubt anyway.

Here again we have the Secret Service and the National Archives contradicting each other. This does not permit, in all probability, a later purging of the files. The National Archives says these items are not in the Warren Commission files. You have this and my response that I don't give a damn what files, please may I have it (not yet answered). Now Rowley wrote me that pursuant to Clark's executive order they turned everything over to the National Archives. This, unless there is some tricky language or cute evasion, means after 10/31/66, unless there are items given earlier and after the end of the WC. But, whether or not in the EC files, this has to be at the NA or somebody has cleaned out the files on the President's murder and its investigation.

I will be wanting to use this, so I ask that none of you mention it to others. However, I believe it advances our knowledge of the file situation or the integrity of the officials involved or both, therefore I believe you should know it. When I use this, which I anticipate will be in the near future, you who do not by then have copies will get them promptly.

It is becoming increasingly my belief that this is the short-hair department and that at least some of the officials know it.

For whatever it is worth, the SS copy of that page of the Inquest is both smaller and sharper. I believe it is a copy of original pages, actual size and that CDS7's copy is enlarged or, vice versa. The content seems identical, as does the document itself. But, compared to standard, one is over-sized, the other undersized. Neither is standard-sized paper.

Any suggestions? I know Paul, and perhaps Jim have been thinking of this, or rather what this is part of.

7/14/69

Dear Mac,

I think we know each other well enough for me not to hide my dismay that the new administration is no less the practitioner of the fascist-like abuses of its predecessor. I now have official confirmation of the fact that the Secret Service memo of transfer of the autopsy pictures and X-rays is at the Archives. This makes everything that has been done of deliberate dishonesty. My last letter is still unacknowledged. In fact, it is two months since I asked for certain charges I advanced for an associate and charged to my account, and they have ignored repeated requests for even this simple thing. You never get a bill from them. You merely give them money and when you run out they stop filling orders until you renew the account. I have never asked for a bill in all these years, nor has an accounting ever been volunteered. Which is one way of running a government agency.

Enclosed is a copy of the indignant letter I have written Dr. Rhoads.

It is not short of completely outrageous that government can so conduct itself. These people are not naturally dishonest. They do not do those things that can be no better than a blot upon them without someone demanding it.

The Department of Justice has on every occasion failed to respond to my requests, including the knowledge and documents required for use of the Freedom of Information Act. It makes no difference what administration is in power, you boys are just a bunch of bums to them. Pass laws as you will; those uncongenial to the devious purposes of the bureaucrats will be ignored.

Now it happens that with regard to this autopsy material, the record is much worse than I have sent you. I asked for all of it in the spring of 1966. I was not given all of it. Tediously, I have dug more out. When they leaked the Kennedy-family contract to the New York Times, secure in the knowledge the uninformed reporter would misuse it and kill the story, they never made proper response to my inquiries, not to this day. When they did the same thing with the Commission executive sessions, all over again, the same. Now I have proof that this papers I have sought since January, when its official existence was disclosed by the Clark "Panel Report", has been in the Archives all along and merely suppressed because a citizen does not have the power to make them obey the laws. However, it falls within the description of what I asked for in 1966!

Nothing remains but the trappings of freedom.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg