August 29, 1969

Dr. James B. Rhoads
Archivist of the United States
The National Archives
Washington, D. C. 20408

Dear Dr. Rhoads:

One of the tragedies of the official mishandling of the investigation of the murder of the President is the unquestioning acceptance by each official of what he is told by those under him, even when he has to know better, has reason to know better, or to look further, in each case something else, apparently, being more important to him than his own integrity. Nothing, it seems, is less important than the integrity of the government or of the country.

I cannot let your letter of the 27th go without challenge. It cannot be factually correct, is not in accord with the established record, and openly fails to respond to much of my letters of July 29 and August 13.

You have not told me why there is no file designation on the copy of the authorization you belatedly supplied. To the best of my recollection, it is the only paper in that entire series of files without file identification, often multiple. It was not in the file when it was copied for me. Your own records will substantiate this, but you have not checked them and will not. I did not examine the file in advance. I ordered every paper in the entire series of JFK-4 and JBC files. Most definitely, this paper was not there. It is, transparently, from a different file, not the JFK or any related file, where it also appears without file designation. Furthermore, it bears imperfections identical with the copy I have from this other file. And while it was in this other file and not in any of the autopsy files where it is required to be (or else the autopsy could not legally be performed and government regulations were violated), your agency was saying it did not exist. Not until it became known to government agents, apparently, that the document removed from every file it was required to be in was known did it, mysteriously, get added to the JFK file.

This is an unscholarly, disgraceful, deceitful record. As a citizen, I most vehemently protest it. As a researcher, I complain that it is consistent with other improprieties that have the effect and, I have come to believe, the intention, of suppressing what the government has come to realize is in its files that proves the dishonesty and error of the official investigation.

I note the ambiguities built into your letter by its drafter. Example: "... the authorization is part of the autopsy file ... It was in the file at the time the file was received by the National Archives among the records of the Warren Commission ..." This falls short of saying what you imply, that from before the JFK file was transferred into your custody, this paper was in it. That it was in another file is beyond question, save that your agency said otherwise, in writing. Hence, it is in "the file".

I leave you with the record you are making, recognizing that you have become part of the cover-up, are no longer a dependable repository of untainted records, no longer an institution whose word can be accepted by those dependent upon it.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg