

Harold Weisberg Rt. 8, Frederick, Md. 21701
2/22/74

Dear Mrs. Kaiser,

I welcome your letter of the 20th and its candor. It comes at as close to an ideal time as is possible for me, in between periods of excessive activity, so I make hasty response before getting in too deep again.

Jim Lesar has just left. We are preparing one of my suits for suppressed evidence. He will undoubtedly supply David Wrone a copy of an affidavit I drafted and a few evidentiary cookies from my deep bag of them plus the pleadings on which we agreed.

In writing David recently I tried to recall more that might interest you. However, I am confident there is much of which I did not think and I do believe that a perceptive and informed interviewer could bring much back to my over-filled mind.

There has been a development of which I should inform you. There is a small local college where a similar interest has developed. They have your problem with financing. Some of the students are already working with some of the materials for a seminar, but not with the more sensational materials, which is too advanced for beginners. One has undertaken what I think can be the beginning of a very worthwhile project, consolidating the indexes to all my completed work, whether or not printed. This should facilitate retrieval from more than the completed work, because we plan to include in it other materials, including some 2,000 pages of FBI reports I have not yet had time to read. And other materials if she has time. I regard this as merely the beginning of the most basic work that needs doing.

Please understand that the financial hardships brought to us by this work makes me rather sensitive in such matters. I will not do anything about arranging any financing but I can and will make suggestions, as I have already to Lesar. Is it possible that the form of the proposal I made to Ms. Roth can be more attractive because it can provide a regular tax deduction to any prospective donor(s)? It was not that we agree on a sale price but that in return for just keeping me going, annually a nominal sum, all my files and work to date and all I will do would be turned over?

If you get to this area, I see no need to await the completion of any arrangement if you would like to do some taping if you would agree to provide dubs of the tapes in the event we come to no agreement or I make another one prior to your ability to arrange one. Our hardships are such that I will have to take the first acceptable offer. We have a spare room for you or there are two rather decent motels less than 10 minutes away. We are about an hour from downtown Washington and Baltimore. If you would like to do this, I would suggest not including the assassinations work (at least to begin with) for the reason you give. Some of the older matters might lend themselves to this better.

Never having had occasion to prepare a biography, let me answer your question with what comes to mind in the few moments I have. In high school I edited the paper that won Columbia's All-American honor rating. I worked for the duPont papers in Wilmington when I went to the University of Delaware. I was then also a by-line contributor to the fore-runner of the weekly supplements of today, that of the old Philadelphia Ledger. I went to Washington and became, successively, investigator and editor-assistant secretary of a subcommittee of the Senate Education and Labor Committee. Then Washington correspondent for a number of magazines, the largest the third largest picture magazine of the day. Plus lobbying and writing free-lancing. Then Army and OSS, where I was also as a civilian, then intelligence in State Department, then radio news, then farming and then back to the work of which you know. We can expand this later.

Sincerely,

THE STATE HISTORICAL
SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN

816 STATE STREET / MADISON, WISCONSIN 53706 / JAMES MORTON SMITH, DIRECTOR

Office of Field Services

20 February 1974

Mr. Harold Weisberg
Route 8
Frederick, Maryland 21701

Dear Mr. Weisberg:

Before leaving her position here at the Society, Ms. Jane Roth discussed with me and also wrote a report of her phone conversation with you during her January trip to Washington. She regretted that she was unable to examine your materials personally, but her report provided some idea of the wealth of resources in your files which are unavailable elsewhere, and the variety of subject areas which your files include. Both her summary and additional information from David Wrone indicate that your materials would be a very valuable addition to the Society's research resources. In many cases, your files would enrich some of our present holdings, i.e. labor history and Hollywood Ten materials. In other areas, such as the assassination materials, your files would expand substantially the scope of our twentieth century resources. I am writing now to express our interest in the Weisberg Papers and to explore the feasibility of the Society becoming the repository for your collection.

Unfortunately, the Society does not have a budget to purchase manuscript materials and must rely upon donations. I understand, however, that there is some possibility of locating a buyer who would purchase the materials from you and then donate them to the Society. We would be glad to work with you and Mr. Lesar in pursuing this possibility. I am also writing to Mr. Lesar to express our willingness to do so. He had mentioned to Ms. Roth that he could probably suggest the names of several prospective buyers. I am not sure how the Society can best help in this effort, but I will be glad to have suggestions from you and Mr. Lesar.

Mr. Harold Weisberg - 2

20 February 1974

If this prospect materializes and mutually satisfactory arrangements can be made for the Society to acquire your collection, I would also like to suggest the possibility of interviewing you on tape. I've talked about this with David Wrone and agree with him that your taped recollections would enhance the value and research potential of your materials. Ideally, it would be best to hold the interview after we became familiar with your files, but since they are quite voluminous and we have the problem of distance, I believe we might get very satisfactory results if I could have a resume of your varied career. After some basic background preparation, I could arrange to visit you on one of my trips to D.C. for one or more taping sessions. I hope that you will be receptive to this idea and I would be pleased to have your reaction.

With all good wishes,

Sincerely,

Barbara J. Kaiser

[Mrs.] Barbara J. Kaiser
Director
Division of Field Services

BJK/da-1

cc: Mr. David R. Wrone
Mr. James H. Lesar