

3/20/70

Paul and Gary,
WC Files inventory

Among the things I finally got from Rhoads with his letter of 3/12, which I've mentioned to you, is what is titled "Preliminary Inventory of the Records of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy". It says it is "compiled" by Johnson this year. I will be sending you both copies. Because he singles out for mention those things I have fought with them for four and a half years to get and they have refused to get but singles them out for special mention once I force them there, I ask that you do not redistribute this until after I can get these things I have done printed, used the way I want to use them.

This is partly an argumentative document and there are minor errors in it in those areas not part of a "compilation" and not part of an "inventory". For example, in the introduction, where the Commission's purposes are set forth, he eliminates investigation of the Tippit killing (1). In saying, again not basic to an inventory, that Oswald was "arrested within 12 hours of his arrest" (which can be argued from their files), Johnson says this was "On the basis of evidence provided by Federal, State and local agencies", whereas no federal or state evidence was used. Nor was it "the State of Texas" that arraigned him but the city of Dallas(2). He says the "Commission regarded the Executive order by which it was appointed as a mandate to conduct a thorough and independent investigation (3), which is an unwarranted and unnecessary comment, not part of an "inventory" and, in fact, not the fact, for its investigation was neither thorough nor independent and it was not possible for the Commission to conduct an independent investigation when it had no independent investigators of its own and used those already *parti pris*. This is particularly inappropriate for Johnson knew the investigators had held information back from the Commission. In a document like this, such extraneous editorial comment amounts to propaganda.

Interestingly, Johnson says that among the sources tapped by the Commission (3,4) are "four congressional committees". Here he refers to "Entry 11", where there is no reference to anything at all having been obtained from such committees. However, I intend to ask for this to be certain. Among the things that should show up is Butler's SIS "testimony". Here he also had a propagandistic interpretation of the function of Walter Craig, the bar association and his associates that has no place in a work of impartial scholarship or an "inventory". This, he has the gall to say, was in "fairness" to the "alleged assassin".

In discussing the organization of the files, he confirms what I had known, that the Archives assigned a staff member, Josephine Ferrar, "to supervise the creation and maintenance of its files". He does not say it was necessary to send her assistance when she got behind or that some of the work was curtailed, although that becomes clear elsewhere, as I shall note. Interestingly, on the organization of the files, Goldberg "had a leading part in these meetings".(5) Not until page 6 does he get down to describing ("about 360 cubic feet") and breaking down the material.

There are things of interest here that I shall be looking into. We can do it together if you'd like. Aside from transcripts of Commission meetings he says there are "minutes". Because this is plural I anticipate it should include more than that of 9/18/64, which I have forced them to stop calling a transcript in their correspondence with me. There are also what I want very much to see, "minutes of staff meetings". Here also there is an unexpanded reference to "indexes". I will ask what ones separate from CDs, for he refers to but a single one, that of the SS, to be referred to below. In this section he also lists "drafts" of the Report, and I shall want to see what Liebelar eliminated to accommodate Hall, Howard and Seymour, among other things, when I can.

Such extraneous, partial, really propogandistic additions have been made as the CBS 1967 broadcasts (6), which, it would seem, ought not be done unless the Archive is converted into one holding all critical writing. It lists (6,7) as "record Grpup 273" as the place where the pictures and X-rays of the autopst are stored.

Not until he has used up 25% of the space of the entire memorandum does Johnson get gewn to itemizing the "Records of the President's Commission" (7ff), broken down into numbered "Items" and so identified in the right margin.

Item 1, Proceedings and ^{min}utes, makes no mention of those of the staff. Item 2 seems to be the file classification manual only, dates it to 5/64, rather lare unless it is a reorganization. Item 3 (p. 8) may be interesting: "Register of Letters Received", 2" thick only (rather small, I'd imagine, for the volume of letters the Commission had to have gotten, it includes "entries for letters transmitting reports or giving information", with reference to Item 8. Item 4 is "List of Numbered Commission Documents", the "basic list", no more. ~~It~~ is what I have written you about earlier, "Index to names in Secret Service Reports" (9) add takes up 4 cubic feet, which makes understandable their refusal to allow access. These are not the originals but are copies. I take it this is a complete index to all SS materials (given the Commission only).

Down Jim's alley is Item 6, which I'll use for him or he can use himself: "Index to addresses and telephone numbers in Secret Service Reports". 3x5 cards. It seems pretty inclusive, is arranged by address, alphabetically by city, by street, etc. Item 7 is one I've reported earlier, the one killed by Willens as an exonomy measure. It is "Name Index to Certain Commission Documents" and ends with CD 54. But it seems limited to the Ruby area!

Item 8 is the numbered-documents file. "A few of the documents are missing". I should ask for a new list, and ask them to get agencies or origin to replace. Extent: 30 ft.

Item 9: KP file. Name file of 589 persons, but because it includes "witnesses", only 47 others are included. 5 ft on IHO.

Other Ind file is Item 10, 17ft. Of those listed, two should be checked: Parkland and Birch.

GAI is Item 11. There is reference to two foreign governments (presumably USSR, Cuba, bit not named) and to corres with Cong. Committees, but no reference to anything supplied by such committees. Interesting concluding sentence: "There are separate folders for Dallas and New Orleans at the end of the records relating to cities." This also I should check.

Inv & Evid, Item 12, 5 ft. Includes more than excerpts from numbered VDs, unspecified and "Arranged by a subject@numeric filing system". Should this be looked into?

Items 13-19 relate to clippings, tapes, film, photos and includes items the existence of which was denied to me Under 14 is this choice bit of propoganda: "Lee Harvey Oswald distributing literature on behalf of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee" (14). The third item under Item 18 is erroneous in identifying what Wolper provided. Wolper bought DCA, edited it into this 16mm version. I found this in 1966. There is an 8mm UPI item that seems to be neither Nix nor Muchmore. I should check. Number 2 of Item 19 should be checked, "a recording of an interview with Father Huber" The Dallas tapes are outlined. I have seen these while being dubbed, and they are extensive, despite Specter's gross misrepresentation (WW). Should have doctors.

It is possible some of these films (not shown me when I was told I had been shown all) may have information of which we do not know.

Administrative papers begin with Item 20 (16). Includes transfer records to Arch., l.d. phone calls. 201, agendas; "with attached documents for consideration, including investigative reports" of FBI and SS.

Item 21 (I should check), described as of "negligible size, includes staff conference minutes, one listed being on the question of the proper handling of the allegations that Oswald was an undercover agent of the" FBI or other agencies. (p. 17)

Records relating to pub Report begin with Item 27 (20). Includes (Item 27 (1): "Correspondence between the Commission and the Central Intelligence Agency concerning permission to publish certain documents"; (2) various drafts ER; "(3) preliminary summary of evidence available in February 1964...memoranda concerning revisions and corrections, filed by name of staff member preparing the section of the Report involved", both of which I should check. 28 is ms of final report and hrgs. Has editorial corrections (here I should find Libeler's on Odio story). Item 30 is the index to exhibits as printed. But it includes one "arranged alphabetically by name of witness", which might be worth having, incomplete as Sylvia's is. I'll try and examine.

Items 31 and 32 are the corrected Galley and Page proofs, with this error gratuitously added under page, "...contains stylistic changes of words or phrases

"Records relating to testimony" begins with Item 35 (p. 22). There is a "looseleaf notebook containing rough notes" I should check. There is a 5" thick 5x8 card file of "subject index, Item 36. Separate Item (No. 38) on Lane, apparently not those used in Hearings, which is referred to as in Item 28.

Fascinating, with the record I have of destruction is Item 39, "Syno-type notes of Proceedings". This says the original notes are sealed as they were originally, hence should include all withheld ex sess, etc.

Item 42 is "Exhibits and other evidence". Takes up 70 feet and includes photographs, which may be part of "other evidence not assigned an exhibit number" but may include only what has an FBI number.

There is a large, inadequately described "Office File of Staff Members" totaling 18 ft. and includes memos on various areas. *Item 44*

Item 46, "Report of Meeting of Members of Staff" should be checked. Johnson had told me only of a psychiatric evaluation of Oswald by three doctors, apparently shrinks. There is nothing to indicate it is classified and I think I should see it.

Item 47 in "two incomplete indexes" on various matters, including Oswald's "contacts with" the FBI, which I should check.

Described as "Negligible", presumably in volume, is the last item. 52: "Related Material Received in 1969 From the Secret Service". Here is where I'm touchy. And some, received before 1969, is not listed.

I shall be writing a letter of both complaint and inquiry about this and will send copies of it also. When you get the full thing, I'd appreciate suggestion on 1) things you propose looking into, if any and 2) things you think I should (here on 3x5 cards would be helpful, for I can carry them in pocket and remove as I do).