

MARILYN E. BEDNARSKI, SBN 105322
Kaye, McLane, Bednarski & Litt, LLP
234 Colorado Blvd., Suite 230
Pasadena, California 91101
Telephone: (626) 844-7660
Facsimile: (626) 844-7670
E-Mail: mbednarski@kmbllaw.com

Attorneys for Defendant
JONATHAN M. MARKELL

WESTERN DIVISION
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

vs.

JONATHAN M. MARKELL,

Defendant.

CASE NO. CR 08-975-DDP
& CR 10-925-DDP

DEFENDANT JON MARKELL'S
LETTER TO COURT

Hearing Date: Dec. 14, 2015
Hearing Time: 1:30 p.m.

The Defendant Jonathan M. Markell hereby files his letter for this Court's
consideration at sentencing.

DATED: Dec. 13, 2015

Respectfully Submitted,
KAYE, McLANE, BEDNARSKI & LITT LLP

By: /S/ Marilyn E. Bednarski
Marilyn E. Bednarski
Attorneys for J. Markell

Jonathan M. Markell
4066 West 7th Street
Los Angeles, CA 90005

Honorable Dean D. Pregerson
United States District Judge
c/o Marilyn E. Bednarski
Kaye, McLane, Bednarski & Litt, Attorneys at Law.

December 8, 2015

Dear Judge Pregerson,

I am writing you this letter, Your Honor, as a law-abiding citizen with no criminal record and a lifelong respect for the law who has pled guilty to federal charges for tax evasion and customs violations. I am appearing before you in disgrace in a federal court, which is my most difficult task ever. My remorse over my dishonest actions will continue for the rest of my life, as my actions have put my family in jeopardy emotionally, socially, psychologically and financially for the past eight years. My activities caused the destruction of a business which brought my wife and I enormous pride, recognition for our charity and fundraising efforts, small amounts of income to help us live and the ability to have a stimulating and most enjoyable life with the opportunity to meet a host of special people who taught us a lot about life, friendship, loyalty and fascinating subjects to which we had no previous exposure or knowledge about. My actions caused our family to be shunned compelling us to move to avoid being ostracized, to pay legal fees and to replace the loss of income from our now lifeless business and vanishing savings.

My biggest regret is the devastation to my family. Cari spent years after the raid crying in closets to hide her fear and anxiety from our son Joshua. She was unsuccessful, and we learned it is better to be honest with children, as protectionism often has the opposite effect desired. Joshua still shows the scars of living under a cloud of fear for 8 years, having closed off his emotions and avoided close relationships for fear his world would be taken from him again. It will take us many years to help him learn to trust and open up once more. Although Cari also suffers the consequences of my actions related to Ban Chiang, the irony is that she never liked or had much interest in it and never sold a single piece.

Clearly, no one can ever undo the past, but I will work very hard to make up for my past mistakes in all my future actions. I hope, Your Honor, you will be lenient to my wife, as her involvement with these transgressions was minimal and also, with me, so that I may be a better husband and provider for my family in the future.

One of the greatest humiliations associated with this case is to have my transgressions define who I am and have been, which disregards many of my past deeds. I have an MA in art history from UC Berkeley and an MBA from Columbia University where I was the first graduate with a major in Arts Administration. I inherited my father's business Markell Imports, Inc., a distributor of inexpensive items imported from Asia, and there were never problems with U.S. Customs from 1975 until the raid. I was a friend and colleague of David Gold, founder of the first 99 Cents Only Stores, and with his encouragement became Marketing Director of Concord Enterprises, Inc., an importer and distributor of a large variety items to stores nationally. I became Concord's most profitable salesperson, received compensation that I never imagined possible and was able to save much of my earnings for the future.

The job took its toll: long, boring hours, lack of intellectual stimulation and lots of travel that kept me from my family. After many years I changed to part time work with Concord and stopped all travel to have more time helping Cari raise our special needs child and pursue more personally satisfying activities. In 1998 we opened Silk Roads Design Gallery and with an ample financial cushion our business model was never dominated by profit. Rather, we created a wonderful setting, sold items we loved, educated buyers and helped community organizations. I was the administrator and assured the scholarly integrity of the pieces we offered, while Cari oversaw day to day sales and gallery marketing and design, and we both interfaced with the many humanitarian, cultural and educational organizations and gladly offered them support.

Our lives at Silk Roads were full and satisfying. The gallery had a diverse selection of historical and spiritual art and accessories and one of the largest book selections on Asian art, design, culture, and foods. We met fascinating people from around the world, experts on Asian arts and culture and talent artists and artisans. We hosted scores of events including lectures, book signings, spiritual teachings, meditations, concerts, fundraisers and meetings of designers and decorators. Our lawyers have submitted detailed information to you about our community involvement.


We also concentrated on Joshua. Cari tended to his medical, social and academic needs, while I focused on religious, athletic pursuits and academics as well. We are proud of what he has overcome and accomplished. Because Cari and I are not young, our time remaining with him to strive to get him to self-sufficiency is limited. He still has a distance to go in that regard.

I owe an apology to many people who were affected by or disappointed in what I did, including family, friends, colleagues and professional associates, and also this court. By not being guided by the morality of my actions, I failed myself and everyone I know. I also owe an apology to the people whose heritage is the Ban Chiang civilization, which extended over what is now the country of Thailand. While it is true the Thais did not enforce the prohibition of exporting the Ban Chiang artifacts and sales of those artifacts in malls and galleries in Thailand and on the internet was open and widespread, it was wrong of us to be a part of that. Now upon reflection, even though I was interested in Ban Chiang and interacted with academics and art collectors about Ban Chiang material, it was arrogant of me to collect it, to sell it to others or to donate the items to Museums. The Thai people had the moral and legal right to do that; I didn't.

I have and truly intend to learn from my offenses, have been careful about the way I have lived the past 8 years and never again will pursue anything at all that is legally questionable or immoral. I hope that you, Your Honor, will consider these concerns in my sentencing so I can continue to devote my full attention to my family, work hard to reestablish our lives and engage in productive activities in the future.

Thank you, Your Honor, for taking the time to read and consider the contents of this letter.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jonathan M. Markell". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Jonathan M. Markell