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January 19, 1979

Mr. Quinlan J. Shea, Jr., Director  
Office of Information and Privacy Appeals  
Office of the Associate Attorney General  
United States Department of Justice  
Washington, D.C. 20530

Re: Lesar v. Department of Justice  
Civil Action No. 77-0692

Dear Mr. Shea:

As you have requested, I write to state the reasons justifying a waiver of search fees and copying costs in this case.

The documents involved in this case pertain to the January 11, 1977 "Report of the Department of Justice Task Force to Review the FBI Martin Luther King, Jr. Security and Assassination Investigations" and its appendices. More than 2,000 pages of documents were released as a result of this request. The vast majority of these records are the typed pages of notes made by members of the Department of Justice Task Force as they reviewed the FBI's files on its investigations of Dr. King and his assassination.

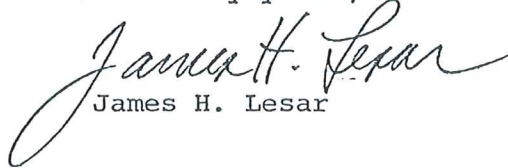
At my request, the Department sent these records directly to Mr. Harold Weisberg, who I regard as the leading authority on the assassination of Dr. King. Mr. Weisberg has preserved the documents he received from the Department in tact; ultimately they will be deposited in the Weisberg Archive at the University of Wisconsin/Stevens Point. In addition, Mr. Weisberg has provided me with a free copy of these records.

The release of these records has been of substantial benefit to the public. They enable those who are knowledgeable in these areas, such as Mr. Weisberg and myself, to assess the work of the Justice Department Task Force and the validity of the conclusions stated in its Report. They make it possible for those who are knowledgeable in these matters to compare the work of the Task Force with that of the Church Committee and the Select Committee on Assassinations, and to evaluate the performance of all three, as well as that of the FBI. Furthermore, the records released provide information not previously public about both the King assas-

sination and the FBI's campaign of harrassment against Dr. King. Finally, the records released also disclosed the existence of other records of great value to subject area experts. An example of this is a memorandum of an interview in Appendix B of the Report which disclosed the existence of the "Long Tickler File," an important record on the FBI's handling of the MURKIN investigation.

I hope that the above information is sufficient basis to justify the waiver sought. If it is not, I would appreciate it if you could inform as to the nature of any additional showing you desire.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James H. Lesar". The signature is fluid and extends to the right.

James H. Lesar