

DEC 1 1975

Mr. James H. Lesar, Esquire  
[REDACTED]  
Washington, D.C. 20024

Dear Mr. Lesar:

This is in further response to the pending administrative appeal under the Freedom of Information Act filed by you on behalf of your client, Mr. Harold Weisberg, from the denial by Director Clarence M. Kelley of the Federal Bureau of Investigation of Mr. Weisberg's request for specific records and photographs relating to the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

After careful consideration of this appeal, I have decided to modify Director Kelley's action in this case and to grant access to every existing written document, photograph and sketch which I consider to be within the scope of Mr. Weisberg's request. Minor excisions have been made from the documents to delete purely internal agency markings and distribution notations, as well as the names of Bureau personnel. In my opinion, the matter so excised is not appropriate for discretionary release.

The results of all "ballistics tests" [item number 1 of Mr. Weisberg's request], as performed on either the death bullet or Mr. Ray's rifle, are included with the materials to be released. "Spectrographic or neutron activation analyses" [item number 2 of the request] were made only on the clothing worn by Dr. King at the time of his death. All eight pages pertaining to such tests will be released. The results of all "scientific tests made on the dent in the windowsill (sic)" [item number 3 of the request] are available for release to your client, including both written reports and photographs of the window sill and rifle barrel. All "photographs or sketches of any suspects in the assassination" [item number 5 of the request] are to be released. These photos and

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cc: Federal Bureau of Investigation

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sketches portray only Mr. Ray, as there never were any other suspects in the case. It may be that the Department has no photographs "taken at the scene of the crime" [item number 6 of the request], in the sense your client uses the phrase. To the limited extent that we have photographic and other materials that depict physical conditions or events, they will be released to Mr. Weisberg. In the event that the non-photographic materials are of no interest to him, they may be returned.

The Department of Justice never received any "butts, ashes or other cigarette remains" from the "white Mustang abandoned in Atlanta," and for that reason did not perform any scientific tests thereon [item number 2 of Mr. Weisberg's request]. A two page schedule of all evidence acquired from the Mustang is included, without charge, in the package to be released. Similarly, as to item number 7 of the request, no "information, documents, or reports made available to any author or writer" can be identified as such in our records. To avoid any misunderstanding, I wish to advise you that no release of any materials relating to the death of Dr. King has been made to any person other than law enforcement or prosecutive authorities, except for the so-called "extradition papers" which were shown in 1970 to Bernard Fensterwald, Jr., Esquire, then the attorney for your client Mr. Weisberg, and which are in the public domain. In 1971 these same papers were made available to another person not named in item number 7, who may or may not be a writer. In any event, if Mr. Weisberg wishes access to the extradition papers, his written request in that respect should be addressed to the attention of the Freedom of Information and Privacy Unit in my Office. Based on the foregoing facts, I have concluded that there are no records within the scope of either item number 4 or item number 7 of Mr. Weisberg's request. There can, of course, be no denial of access where there is no record; there can be no appeal where there has been no denial of access.

In adjudicating this appeal as to item number 1 of Mr. Weisberg's request for "results of any ballistics tests," I have not included as matters for consideration the results of a great number of ballistics tests performed on rifles other than the one owned by Mr. Ray. If Mr. Weisberg wishes access to them, he should make a specific written request to Director Kelley, attention Special Agent Thomas Wiseman, agreeing to pay both the costs of reproduction and the special search fees which



will be necessary to locate and identify the same, as provided by 28 C.F.R. 16.9(b)(6). In addition, in an effort to save your client considerable expense, I have construed item number 6 so as not to encompass the several hundred photographs in Bureau files of Dr. King's clothes, the inside of the room rented by Mr. Ray, or various items of furniture and personal property. If Mr. Weisberg does, in fact, wish copies of these photographs, he should make a further request for them and agree to pay the reproduction and special search costs which will be involved.

Your client will now be furnished seventy-one pages of material for which the charge is ten cents per page, the two-page schedule of evidence at no charge, fifteen black and white photographs at their reproduction cost of forty cents each and three color photographs at their reproduction cost of three dollars each. Please remit \$22.10 to the F.B.I. headquarters office, Washington, D. C., 20537, attention Special Agent Wiseman, specifying whether you wish the materials mailed or held for you to pick up. As a matter of my discretion, I am waiving \$80.00 in special search fees which could be charged for non-clerical work in connection with this request and another one for many of the same materials.

Because of the nominal excisions of agency markings and the names of agents, I am required to advise you that if Mr. Weisberg is dissatisfied with my action on this appeal, judicial review thereof is available to him in the United States District Court for the judicial district in which he resides, or in which he has his principal place of business, or in the District of Columbia, which is also where the records he seeks are located.

Very truly yours,

Harold R. Tyler, Jr.  
Deputy Attorney General