

8 February 1972

Dear Cyril,

Your letter of the 3rd arrived yesterday. Two days earlier I had had a phencall from Jones Harris and I took the occasion to mention that you had still not heard anything from Burke Marshall and to ask whether he still considered that the information he had received shortly after the Lattimer story broke, from a person "very close to Marshall", continued to hold good. Jones insisted again that according to his informant Marshall will accede to your request.

I have a suspicion that Jones' source for this information may be Robert Silvers, the editor of the NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS. Silvers and Marshall were both participants in the recent Princeton symposium on the FBI, parts of which were shown on NET-TV; and I knew that Jones Harris and Silvers are extremely close.

So, assuming that there is some substance to Jones' information, I agree that you should call and/or write to Marshall, and avoid giving him any pretext for denying your request.

Before I forget--will you appear on the Long John program on the 11th? With or without Lattimer? If the "debate" is on, please try to let me know in time for me to notify several others who want to be certain not to miss it.

Returning to Burke Marshall: I cannot say that I place great faith in any assurances that he intends to let you see the photos and X-Rays, even if he has told Silvers or anyone else that he will do so (perhaps out of a desire to avoid arguments). If there was nothing to hide from independent, objective, competent scrutiny, your request could have been granted many months ago. I infer that at this moment Marshall is in a real corner, in that he cannot permit you to view the photos and he also cannot find any pretext for turning down your request. I suspect that he has decided to do nothing, in the hope that you will become discouraged and stop pursuing the matter. That is the only way he can get off the hook, but I feel certain that under no circumstances would you give him such an out. The only recourse for the time being, then, is to keep up the clamor, by letter and by phone and any other means available.

At least we have the satisfaction of knowing that there is a desperate fear of critical evaluation which has produced this obstinate suppression of the photos and X-rays, as well as of the spectrographic test results. The official case hinges on this hard forensic evidence and clearly those who control access to it knew that to make it available to you is to destroy their position entirely.

I am enclosing a copy of a letter I have just received from Howard Roffman. It is disappointing that there is no prospect of immediate publication of his book, but perhaps it will be accepted after he has

made the revisions. Last week an "emissary" went down to visit Harold Weisberg for the express purpose of trying to persuade him to channel his discoveries to Howard Reffman for inclusion in his manuscript, since Harold himself has no possibility of getting any public attention for any evidence he has acquired. No publisher will touch his work and his reputation is simply terrible, thanks to the continuous flow of abusive and irrational letters he has sent to all and sundry over the years.

No soap. Harold "agrees" with all arguments put to him, but then remains fixed in his course, which he describes as "building a record". Incidentally, the emissary has succeeded in pulling out of Weisberg his reasons for the stream of dire warnings of disaster with which he tried to pressure you not to request examination of the autopsy photos. The reasons are, as was to be expected, ludicrous and deranged--that (1) it would be embarrassing to Ted Kennedy, and/or (2) it would be some kind of advantage to J. Edgar Hoover. There is no basis for either of these postulates; even if there was, who gives a damn? What is perhaps really behind the dire warnings is Harold's fear that someone other than he will get the headlines and the kudos, and if that is so it is a very sad commentary on a man who claims that he has sacrificed himself purely for the sake of uncovering the truth.

I hope that you will succeed in obtaining a personal meeting with Burke Marshall, although he will probably resist that, too. I wonder if the time has not come to enlist Ted Kupferman's help? You will remember that he said that if you did not get the okay within a month, he might be willing to exert some pressure. His phone numbers (and I hope they are correct) are Regent 7-8823 at home (Area Code 212), and at the State Supreme Court (212) 566-6700.

Patience and fortitude!

Yours faithfully,