

Harold Weisberg
Rt. 8, Frederick, Md. 21701
8/26/74

Dear Mr. Murtagh,

Bob Livingston has sent me a copy of your letter of the 19th. I am the investigator on the Ray case. And I am familiar with your views (and appreciate them) having caught you on TV.

Unlike those called "buffs" and "researchers" interested in the political assassinations I have a non-criminal investigative background (U.S. Senate and worked with FBI) and was an intelligence analyst. You probably are not familiar with my work on the JFK and King cases. A new JFK book is about to appear. But it stacks. So well that after flying all the way to New York City for some free publicity, Percy Foreman fled the studio with his make-up on when he learned he was to confront me. We were on TV with an empty chair for he who asks to be called "The Texas Tiger."

There is no reasonable doubt that Ray was not at the scene of the crime at the time it was committed and for a period prior to that. Trials record few such airtight and completely legitimate alibis as I have. In an ordinary criminal proceeding, the state's evidence would not be enough for the case to go to the jury. It is quite unlike what the FBI told its agents. And were they not FBI agents, some of those who filed affidavits would have concerns about perjury.

Because the evidence I have gathered is so definitive and because I do not believe what I have done is all that secret, I am anxious to prepare against a new frame-up. The nature of one is known to me but I also do not assume that of the locals is or need be the ~~xxx~~ only one. The FBI did virtually 100% of the work on the Ray case and when we get to trial it is going to have some problems.

My problems are greater than they would ordinarily be in a case where one man is pitted against so many all of whom have official status, influence and means. This ~~xxx~~ work, which is volunteer, has left me broke and in debt.

I believe that both before and after the Bureau decided to pin a lone-assassin bum rap on Ray it distributed much information and many leads the import of which may well not have been comprehensible to agents working out of various field offices. I know of some. I know of others who were sought, for example. I would like to be able to discuss this with you at some mutually-convenient time and place. With the work I have done something might come of it.

I live about an hour from Washington, if you ever get there. And it is not unlikely that when my new book comes out I will be in New York City. If there is anything you can send me I would, of course, appreciate it.

I subscribe to your theory about the Right, by the way, and have evidence that tends to accredit it. Not just theory and belief. It thus may be that if you know former agents in the cities involved whose principles and beliefs are like yours they could be helpful.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

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August 19, 1974

Robert I. Livingston, Esq.
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Re: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
James Earl Ray Case

Dear Mr. Livingston:

I know the source of the information that you received indicating that I might be helpful in connection with your defense in the James Earl Ray case.

I am afraid that I would be of no great value to you. I did work on the case since I was assigned to the Atlanta office of the FBI at the time Dr. King was murdered. Since I retired from the FBI I have made some critical comments regarding the Bureau and much of what I had to say involved what I believed to be the improper or perhaps illegal use of wire tap information concerning Dr. King by the FBI.

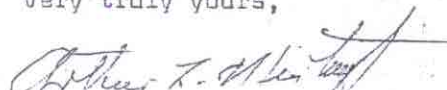
Regarding the Ray case, from my vantage point and what I knew of the case, I had little doubt but that Ray was involved in the murder of Dr. King. However, I also have little doubt but that had the FBI been willing to proceed with adequate investigation of the whole affair a great deal of information relating to Ray's participation could have been uncovered. It is my feeling that if this had been done it would have lead to revelations indicating a carefully planned conspiracy. It is my ~~feeling~~ that the conspiracy would have been masterminded by Right wing extremists and in all probability involved links to the Kennedy murders, particularly John F. Kennedy, and many other things of this nature.

The Bureau was not administratively structured so as to permit intensive investigation of espionage activity from the Right. All assumptions on direction were made from the vantage point that the enemy was from the Left. There also was the habit or in a sense defense raised by my contemporaries that the jurisdiction of the Bureau in a matter like Rays should be strictly construed and that once Ray was identified and connected with the murder that was the end of it.

I am hopeful that some day there will be some dramatic breaks in this sordid period of our history and many of the uncovered leads will end up being run out and the source of the conspiracy identified.

If you have some specific questions I can help you with, I would be glad to respond.

Very truly yours,


Arthur L. Murtagh, Esq.