

Rt 12, Frederick, Md. 21701
7/5/76

Dear Peter Honerkamp,

Enclosed is a carbon of my today's letter to Harry Wachtel. After I sealed the envelope I remembered I had not signed it.

Jim Lesar sent me a copy of your letter of the 23rd to him.

Your p̄sumptions about what happened in the Ray case are mature, sophisticated and less than the full story. That is too complicated for me to go into now. A major part is the strange Ray personality. Another is the consequence of more than 5 years of solitary confinement.

On the other side the system of justice malfunctioned. Totally. The record does not justify the decision of either court. I suspect there is fear of facing what a real trial means.

The proof that Ray did not do the shooting I did bring to public attention. When it was ignored I decided to put it all together in the new book. I held a press conference and gave it all away. Now that it has not been used I'm saving it for the book, with other evidence that fits with it and builds a rounded case. I had not planned the book earlier.

Because it was not reported there was no public outcry, as you expected.

Jim has copies. You can see them there or here if we can help you with your paper. I'm sure Jim is willing. We both have the same time problems.

There is now another reason I want no public use. It ~~has~~ has become apparent that there is poor internal communication in the Department of Justice, between the various divisions and the FBI. All fail to properly inform the Assistant United States Attorney who represents them or they ~~are~~ and he are even more devious than I'd suspected. By using only what we must in court we continue to obtain from one proof that another is still withholding. The AUSA has been claiming mootness since February. What we have done with their record has led the judge into an unreported denunciation of the FBI as I am not aware of from any judge. It is because of this record we have built that she has ordered full and instant compliance. The AUSA asked for a written order. In time she'll file it. They'll probably appeal to stall further if they can find a device for it.

What is not reported includes our catching Levi's new "investigators" in non-compliance, too. This gives you a notion of what to expect of them.

And unlike his public image what he wants of them.

With the political assassinations it never goes by the book. In every one there is an official record to hide. Even with Wallace. The FBI's search of Bremer's car was so slipshod that after it was returned to the local cops they found a pistol the FBI missed. Didn't even look for after obtaining the ammunition for it.

If we do not know when the judge will file the order, we think it will not be very long. Because we feel it will be strong we also believe the thing to do is wait in public silence.

If we get becalmed then I'll be willing to go public again. At that time, as I forget to tell Mr. Wachtel, black interest and participation following examination of some of the evidence, could be valuable. I might then play the taped voice of the chief prosecutor describing how the crime was committed and display the FBI records until now suppressed showing the impossibility of it. And every official's knowledge. Of those directly involved in the investigation and prosecution.

Sincerely,

6-23-76

Dear Mr. Lesar,

Harry Wachtel recently informed me of the decision of the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit.

I assume the case will come up before the Supreme Court in the fall. Could you please apprise me of the reasons for the court's decision. It just couldn't have been based on the merits of the case. Was it therefore based on the fact that James Earl Ray's original plea of guilty was concurrent with an agreement that he forego his right of appeal?

I also heard that Ray fired Bernard Fensterwald. Since you obviously don't believe this was some tactic by which Ray hoped to continue to draw attention to his case, why did he fire Fensterwald. Fensterwald has clearly fought for Ray's right to a new trial. Did Ray, out of a sense of frustration, mistakenly blame him for his failure to get a new trial. I'd like your views on why Fensterwald was fired + whether you believe there was any justice in this action.

Finally, please send along Harold Weisberg's address which I've misplaced. Weisberg told me he had proof from official files that Ray didn't do the shooting and the FBI, DJ, + local prosecution all knew it. What is this proof + why hasn't it been brought to public attention.

Surely the subsequent outcry would force the government to grant Ray a new trial.

Weisberg recommends I try to offer you any help I can. While I'll be working full-time till Labor Day I'd be interested in helping you (free of charge, of course) in any way I can till then. When Sept. comes around I intend to compile my notes + write a paper for Wachtel. If there's any work then relating to this investigation I'll try to find it then.

Let me know if I can help you at all. Tell Weisberg I'll contact him soon but that he should write Wachtel (Apt. 9F, 211 Central Park West, N.Y., N.Y.) direct if he wants interviews with black leaders connected with King. He'd know

better how to contact them. He'd certainly abide by Weisberg conditions (I enclose a copy of the letter so you understand my point). Wachtel knows I'm available to help him if he needs it. You see, I can help Wachtel due to my familiarity with the written material concerning the case. I'm not sure if I can be of use to you but I hope so. This case has just caught me + I'd like to get involved extensively. So I'll wait + see.

I almost forgot. What does Weisberg mean when he says "these people might need protection."

Anyway best of luck.

Sincerely
Peter Honickman