

April 23, 1969

Mr. Carl W. Belcher, Chief
General Crimes Section
Criminal Division
Department of Justice
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Belcher,

If you were a judge rather than an attorney, would you say the record is consistent with the content and tone of your letter of March 26 to me or inconsistent, that you have been open with me, that through you the government has been responsive?

I asked of you certain material to which I believe I am entitled. I asked questions the answers to which had been promised in the previous administration. I believe, without benefit of a law degree, that the material I seek is guaranteed me by the law you are supposed to be upholding.

And there has not been even the pro forma denial that might have been expected to the report that agents of the FBI had defamed me.

I asked for the promised farther word on the suppressed David Ferris documents. With his death so long ago, there is hardly justification for withholding this information on the ground it would damage him (and he has no heir, having been unmarried and childless). I remind you that I have part of this file, despite its restriction, and that what I have does not qualify for withholding. I repeat my previous request for this material or for an explanation of its being denied me.

On March 31 I asked for the evidence presented in court in England in the case of James Earl Ray. Now it would seem that what was presented in open court is public, that you have copies of it, having presented it, and that there should be no problem in providing copies to me. I asked for permission to read the transcripts of the court proceeding. Are you classifying this as "secret"?

It is now a month since I requested copies of or access to the statements and questions of Department of Justice attorneys in Judge Bellock's court the afternoon of the hearing on the pictures and X-rays and copies of the subsequent motions and the affidavits then filed. Certainly this, what your department presented in open court, is not restricted. Can it be that the government does not want its side included in a book about the matter? In any event, I want to include it, for I do want to present both sides - not eliminate one, as the government did. I do hope the new administration will not follow the restrictive practices of its predecessor, and that the inordinate delay that in itself is an interference with a free press will continue.

Sincerely,