

2/15/77

Mr. Lou Gordon
WKED-TV
P.O.Box 359
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Dear Lou,

Last week you seemed to have gone big for the McMillan irrelevancies and in particular for the tales made up by the crook Curtis.

My files are full on Curtis but I've had no reason to establish a separate file on him. If I did I'd have a thousand or more separate files, there are so many of these strange people who for various reasons do and say what will receive attention for them. I did not take the time to seek out Curtis records for you.

In going over some records I had not had time to study I found an FBI teletype, from the Special Agent in Charge of the Kansas City field office to headquarters, with copies to the Atlanta and Birmingham field offices. Enclosed is the copy I've made for you. I've made no marks except the one in red on the second page. The obliterations are by the FBI, to protect rights of privacy. I cannot be certain about those on the second page but I think these are fair and proper obliterations on the first page.

Compared with what other records I have show this is an understated condemnation of Curtis. Once he hit the papers with all that McMillan later printed the FBI did have to check it out, the reason for this teletype going to the Atlanta field office. Nothing stacked.

From the earlier records it appears that Curtis and Ray were never in the same part of the Missouri pen, leave alone cellmates.

I know Rife well, from extensive correspondence and a long interview with him in Leavenworth. Of what he told me that I could check he was truthful. At the same time he told me he is a compulsive liar. He has been an habitual criminal and he says so. His present incarceration seems to be illegal but there is nothing he can do about it.

I go into this because of what may become of interest in the future. There appears to have been a determined FBI effort to put everyone with whom James Earl Ray had any contact in jail. There is little doubt that his brother John was framed and none about the gross injustice of his sentence. Rife was picked up in Denver by the FBI on so phoney a deal his case worker told me it was phoney. The federal charge has been dropped and he is now jailed on a State of Illinois charge even though he has produced a notarized confession from the man who did the stealing he was charged with. The exception is Jerry Ray. The FBI is happier with him running around doing and saying the kinds of things he does. They could have put him away legitimately and didn't. He lied to them and he met with James after James' escape from Missouri and did not report it. Both are federal crimes.

You go from one show to another on many subjects and cannot retain an interest in the past. However, when one questions what I say and I am in a position to inform if it is a decent person I do make the effort.

Best wishes,

Harold Weisberg