

7/15/70

Dear Mr. Walton,

I remember Tom from his Washington period, when he interviewed me for his underground paper. And I'm an alumnus of the News, from an era that would make Tom think his experiences were sheer joy.

I didn't know the Huntley-Brinkley Report carried that item. It is SOP for the government to seek to draw the wrong kind of attention to what I force out. In this case I'm surprised that they used the item you cite, for I have a friend there, had backgrounded him, and he'd agreed not to call attention to that particular thing. I knew in advance DJ was making copies available to a few selected media people, one of whom told me.

Essentially, there is nothing new to me in the papers I got. I had all of it in the book, having gleaned it from other sources. The chief value here is first, their official confirmation and then the official misrepresentation. However, by accident I did discover something I cannot discuss and do not want mentioned, something they foolishly think they are withholding from me still. That will be litigated 8/12 unless they deliver it before then. It is but a single xerox, and I'll get it, one way or the other, and it has considerable value but is not part of the extradition.

I ~~plan~~ plan no further suits on the Ray material, but I do plan other suits for the JFK material, on some of which I've been working since 11/66, laying a foundation and painstakingly doing two things: exhausting administrative remedies and building a record that will withstand courtroom attack.

I cannot refer you to a single trustworthy recent book or a single dependable news or magazine article of recent date. I have written on on this suit for the National Enquirer. I presume it will be out around the first of the month, but I have no knowledge. Just a guess. Unfortunately, most of what gets into print is wrongly-angled plagiarism, plain crap or sycophancy.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

July 12, 1970

Albert S. Walton Jr.
R. D. 2
Newark, Delaware 19711

Mr. Harold Weisberg
Route 7
Frederick, Maryland 21701

Dear Mr. Weisberg:

This is in response to your letter of July 9th. You asked me a few very important questions, and I will get to these first.

The editor of the Wilmington Independent is Tom DeBaggio. He came from Indiana to work for the News-Journal, and was a reporter on that paper for about nine months. I am sure that you are familiar with the fact that the News-Journal is owned lock, stock and barrel by the DuPonts and that they censor stringently through their lackeys on the editorial board. Tom DeBaggio is the kind of brilliant journalist who refused to be muzzled by the DuPonts or anyone else. Many of his stories would tread on pet institutions or taboo subjects, and the editors would censor them outright or scissor them up so badly that their meaning was miserably distorted. Finally, they cut up one too many of Tom's stories, and in August, 1969, he resigned from the News-Journal.

It is only recently that Tom has been working on his Independent. It is certainly no underground paper; it is on sale on newsstands statewide. The first issue is already out. It is 24 pages long and is priced at 50 cents a copy. It is supposed to come out each month, and I have great faith that it will, but the financial condition of fledgling newspapers is usually precarious. Especially with the News-Journal as competition.

You asked how I found out about your suit. Luckily, Tom spotted the Washington Post story and sent it to me. There has been very little coverage of the Ray case recently, with exceptions such as an item on the Huntley-Brinkley Report, stating that the FBI said it found Ray's fingerprints on the gun but could not link the gun ballistically to the bullet that killed King. This sounds strange indeed. Is it correct?

I realize that you cannot divulge specifics of your investigation, but let me ask two questions. Have you gleaned anything from the extradition record that is of value? And where do you go from here (for example, are you suing for release of any other documents)? Also, could you point to any recent books, magazine or newspaper articles which have shed new light on the case.

Thanks very much for your help.

Sincerely,
Albert S. Walton Jr.
Albert S. Walton Jr.

PS If you wish to contact Tom DeBaggio for anything, his address is:
1624 Bonwood Road
Albany Plaza
Wilmington, Del. 19805