

6/14/69

Dear Dick,

While I appreciate the fine motive that inspires it, I am not happy with the effect of reminding John of the unpublished material he is already forcing out of me despite his contrary word winter before last, when he alone had access to all of this. Perhaps you have begun to glean from the letters what is afoot.

Now I told him when we first met and I first showed him the documents and loaned him a copy of the MS of POST MORTEM that I would sue when I could get a lawyer. When he told me he was going to sue, on a number of occasions I asked him to make a joint suit of it, pointing out he'd need me and my material. He never responded...

Thereafter, I think I helped him persuade his lawyer, for he had me stop off there one night and address a small group, including lawyers, doctors and a judge or so. This was a year and a month ago.

I have already been forced to do an enormous amount of work to merely backstop him, and he'll be using my work for his gain, denying me even the initial use and quite likely the chance of using the value of the material as a means of achieving its publication. In short, what I might have gotten from this rather large investment of time and money will be used for his personal benefit and denied me if it continues this way. Yet it is not possible to avoid helping him if the alternative is his losing his suit, which would damage everything. This is not the first time I have been put in this position and I do not relish it. There was a very simple alternative John had and I offered it. You know his attitude on LOOK, which is his right, but is not the other side of this coin.

When I read Lettiner's second piece and the reference to John in it, I sent John a copy and a few comments. He then indicated no awareness of those things you note and did agree partial agreement with Lettiner, as I now recall it. I find this disturbing for, as I told John long ago, he does not know enough about the material to carry this off alone. When I realized that he was simply going to take what he wanted of my material by his own duplication of it, I suggested he hold this off for court (which he should do for selfish reasons anyway). He has not yet responded.... What prompted your comment on Lettiner? He indicated no interest to me when I sent these things to him.

From what I have sent you and from what I pr

6/14/69

Dear Dick,

Read the carbon of your letter of the 10th to John just before retiring and as I awakened, the sun not yet up to blind me, it is clear you have penned a great if unintended kindness to Lattimer, deriving, no doubt, from not having read his first piece. All of what you say is true, and more, but it is worse because he either knew better or he knew enough to know his inadequacies yet he did these things. If one might be inclined to pardon it in, let us say, a literary whore, like an Epstein, one cannot in a man from a scientific discipline, trained as he is and must be.

For some strange reason (and I do not take offense at it) the eminent urologist has broken off correspondence with me. And do you know, all I had done was offer a commentary when he had indicated he'd like to hear from me. I don't think I sent John the first article when I got it. I had sent him the second on the chance Lattimer might surface as a witness or the author of an affidavit, or his work might be misused, etc.

I was not aware of the weight difference you postulate coming from just the firing. I'd be interested in the results of tests on that.

I can save you money on the shots of the base of 330 by taking them to my local camera shop where they will make a 6x7, which is, I think, adequate (and I'll get a negative that way so we can make more) for about half of the ~~xxxxx~~ cost of a print from the Archives. I'll get two prints and send one to John, if you think or he thinks he'd like it. He saw these going on two years ago, when he saw the one of POST MORTEM. This reminds me, your point on Lattimer-Connally X-rays is not only well taken, but if you recall RM, Lattimer also had to be overlooking the size of the thigh fragment, which I have. It outlaws his eliciting and establishes that he was slicing language only. John can use pictures only through witnesses. If he wants to use this, he'll have to use the archives or me or perhaps, he'll be able to order his own from them and testify to it. But, the central point I made with that base shot, which I had taken with millimeter scales in it is that it was not possible to attribute the thigh fragment alone to this bullet. I'd be only too happy to take that, step by step, from the stand and really lay them out. For, it is much worse than this. Apparently you forgot that part of RM, with the subsequent letters, etc. I also think I have a duplicate set. If I can find them I can send one to John, who can see if he wants it and make his own copies, including for you. And the second shot, rather, perspective, is from the sides, flatwise and broadways, to show the imperfections of the hands and grooves and the absence of anything that could account for the "squeezing".

By now you know I did nudge Tom about sending the Archives pictures to you. I regret the delay. I believed it would be potentially valuable for him to have a set. It is before daylight, so I cannot phone him now, but I'll try later and see if I can learn the status. He knows he is now holding you up. I hope he is not away for the weekend.

CC: John Nichols

Best,

Harold Weisberg