

3/6/70

Dr. Russell S. Fisher  
111 Penn St.,  
Baltimore, Md. 21201

Dear Dr. Fisher,

Cast yourself in the role of God if you like, but I'd like to keep from casting you in the role of the devil. Unless you have already done it, which would make it impossible, wouldn't it?

You are as consistent as man can be and evasive as none in my experience in a field in which such men have predominated. Again you go into (welcome) detail about what I didn't ask and avoid what I did ask.

If your letter of the fourth is the last you will write me in answer to my perfectly proper requests, I encourage you to look forward to making your responses in court, for if you were unaware of it, if I do not get what I believe the law entitles me to, it is my intent to seek it in court. I would much prefer to avoid this. I would suggest you, all the other members of both panels and the government should also. I do not seek and I would like to avoid scandalous treatment of this subject.

In the event you are capable of what I do not detect in your letters, detached thinking on this subject, perhaps it will occur to you that I am going to more trouble than is necessary for a prelude to legal action. In turn, this might suggest that I do seek to avoid it if at all possible. You should also be able to understand that if I go to court I will attract more attention to myself and my work than I can in any other way. Therefore, is it not possible that in trying to obviate the need for legal action my purposes are not selfish, not to needlessly hurt others, not to create scandals?

All I want is what should never be hidden, what I am entitled to, and what your undeviating evasiveness is enough to cause the deepest misgivings about.

I accept your assurances that you destroyed "all intermediate copies of the report". I would like to know why, for this is unrelated to your alleged agreement; whether this was approved by the other panel members, including Mr. Bromley, the government; and whether any were consulted in advance.

You make no mention at all of the indispensable working papers of your panel. I again ask what disposition was made of them.

No other member of your panel or the autopsy doctors has responded. I have sent copies of my letters to them. I therefore assume you speak for them and with their assent. If you make the record they want to live with, so be it.

cc members both panels

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

Dou, Paul, Gary, Dick, Howard

5/6/70

I begin by emphasizing I ask you to keep this in strictest confidence. The reasons should be increasingly apparent. I am sorry I do not have enough copies of either Fisher's latest (he says last) letter to me or my reply. I therefore ask Paul if he will make copies available to Gary, Dick and Howard if they want, but for no use of any kind, direct or indirect. Fisher is God's gift to the devil loving scripture or, to mix metaphors, he is a maker of self-hoisting petards.

He goes into detail on the history of the report, leaving no doubt, as I had earlier suggested, that he actually wrote it, got the assent of the others and changes they suggested, or took pieces other wrote and "pulled this together" with what he wrote, got it all signed, delivered it personally to Bromley, and, "Mr. Bromley and I, or I, independently, destroyed all intermediate copies of the report".

Now what better proof does reasonable man require that there were no substantive changes, no serious disagreements, that the final product is consistent with the initial observation and scientific opinion of all? How could one possibly suspect so completely open a thing, or wonder if, after all, all copies are destroyed by either the lawyer, certainly an expert on evidence, or the eminent expert on medical evidence, or both, together.

If Fisher is truthful in saying that they drafted that report on the 27th, then they had little time for anything else that day and their actual "study" extended for but a single day or so. On the other hand, it is possible to interpret this letter as I do, that they agreed, verbally, on what the report would say and he did the actual writing. Maybe a few considerate helpers, like Hardley or Bromley might have been around to replenish his beer or cigarettes, little things like that, one might also conjecture.

The alleged agreement he cites, if as he described it to me, bears no relationship to the destruction of the various drafts. They claim to have agreed to keep no personal papers. The various drafts should have been given to the government, with the final copy.

I don't know where he got that crap about New Orleans, so this time I just ignored it.

Meanwhile, I have not heard from anyone else, not a single member of the autopsy-panel. Nor has Rolapps phoned me further. I'd like to think it possible he is doing what I suggested and getting a little shock up in the process. Those clowns even told him this was not an official thing, that Justice had no connection with it! I am leaving it up to Fisher to post him and Bromley. My letters clearly state I am not sending them copies.

I would also like to think that some of the panel members might by now be getting a little disturbed, assuming, as I do, that they were not consulted about the destruction of the drafts and know nothing about the disappearance of all the working papers.

That Humes malady sure is contagious! Even those who seek to cure it get it. What an eloquent description of the cure!

I'll keep you posted. Any comments or suggestions?

Harold