

James Lesar  
1231 Fourth Street, N. W.  
Washington, D. C. 20024

March 9, 1976  
Rt. 4, Box 137  
Franklin, Tenn. 37064

Dear James:

On March 5, 1976, I met with Circuit Judge Hal Hardin, Haile's attorney John Buffaloe (Suite 911, J. C. Bradford Bldg., Nashville, Tenn. 615-255-3439) and my newly appointed court attorney.

First order of business was the shedding of my newly appointed court attorney. He had earlier in private meeting suggested that he did not want to represent me because of reasons of (1) finances, (2) fear for his own license, (3) the feeling that I needed a large group behind me. I had reported all of this to the court. Before Hal Hardin he couldn't remember having made statement number (2), but he did emphasize number (3). Later I also learned that he was independently wealthy, and therefore had no real fear for his family's finances, as he'd indicated privately.

Hardin released the new attorney, and then I asked for permission to speak informally, which I got. I indicated that this suit under the proper Tennessee Code was being brought on behalf of the "image of the bar" and the citizens of Tennessee, not for my personal gain. For personal reasons I already had a Civil Rights suit filed in federal court covering the same facts. Therefore I could not see why the brunt of costs, or the need to find an attorney was being placed upon my shoulders.

Hardin asked John Buffaloe what his view of the court's responsibility was. Buffaloe properly echoed the law, and I agreed.

The Court then indicated that it had already been in contact with the Chief Justice of the Tenn. Supreme Court, Fones, and that they had agreed to bring in an outside-of-county judge to begin the matter again. The law requires that a master be assigned to study the allegations for 20 days and thereafter report back to the court. If cause is evidenced, then the court must issue a citation.

The court, as well as Buffaloe, has constantly been concerned over the acceptance of an affidavit from you. Although my study of case law states that this is proper for this kind of case, they feel that the inability to cross-examine is crucial. (I personally agree, although case law says otherwise. I, myself, would hate to be brought to task for anything without opportunity to face my accuser and to cross-examine).

There is another obvious factor. Chapdelaine has already proved to be a persistent embarrassment, and they've reached the point where the courts no longer can take me as a nut. My own attorney, who is highly respected, has laid his own reputation on the line on my behalf (Jim Petersen of Franklin, Tenn.) Therefore I am not to be shrugged off any longer. However, the James Earl Ray affair is even more embarrassing than Chapdelaine. I can almost hear their wheels screech and grind when they view possible consequences. They are unusually touchy about accepting your affidavit, and -- in my opinion -- are using the false due process issue as cause for probably not accepting the affidavit, although we'll know for sure when the new out-of-county judge is

Over

assigned.

I'd like to pull their plug on this aspect. Would you be in a position to come before the court here in Tennessee to provide opportunity for cross-examination?

I can most certainly put you up at our house, and provide you with necessary transportation during interim. Probably you'll be comfortable, however, at the house of one of my attorney friends; although I haven't asked them yet, probably one would find room. Your costs, therefore, would most likely include simply transportation to and from your home.

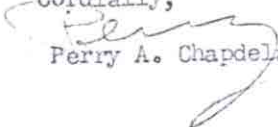
As an alternative, would you submit to deposition, either verbally or in written interrogatories, where you are? If so, perhaps it would be wise to let both the court and John Buffaloe know.

In either event, I'd appreciate your comments on the matter, ~~with~~ one to Judge Hal Hardin, Metropolitan-Davidson County Circuit Court II, Nashville, Tennessee (Davidson County Court house), and a copy to John Buffaloe with a copy to me.

I suspect that your willingness to answer interrogatories, one way or another, will be most frightening to several parties, and do hope it is in the affirmative.

Case number in Davidson County Circuit Court II is B-16721, under Hal Hardin.

Cordially,

  
Perry A. Chapdelaine

C: Newspaper clipping.