

March 5, 1977

Mr. Perry A. Chapdelaine
Route 4, Box 137
Franklin, Tennessee 37064

Dear Perry:

Thanks for your letter of December 16 and the briefs sent later on. Things have been so hectic here I haven't had time to read them yet.

On Jack Kershaw: Harold and I formed a negative impression of him even before we knew his name. My first inkling came last summer when Ray tried to discharge me but the Sixth Circuit ordered me to continue representing him. Ray then wanted to drop his petition for a writ of certiorari to the Supreme Court even though it was the only hope he had at that time and he had nothing to lose by pursuing it. It appeared that one consideration in his desire to drop his petition for certiorari was that an anonymous attorney had promised to represent him in a civil suit if Ray would dismiss all other attorneys and give up his appeal to the Supreme Court. Ray would not tell me the name of this attorney, but I finally managed to learn it was Kershaw. To give the devil his due, I can't be sure that Kershaw actually laid down these conditions; it is possible Ray embellished on Kershaw's desire control Ray's legal affairs at some point.

Apparently, Kershaw had been in contact with Ray for quite some time before I learned his identity. The fact that he did not get in touch with me added to my negative impression of him. I assumed that like most of the other attorneys in this case, he was primarily interested in milking it for publicity. Subsequent events have not diminished my suspicions.

Kershaw now says Ray has made him chief counsel. He called last week saying he'd like to associate me as counsel in a habeas corpus petition he planned to file (on a ground that has already been decided adversely to Ray). I don't intend to enter into any such arrangement with him. I don't think it is in either my interest or Ray's. The information you provided on Kershaw simply confirmed the suspicions I had already formed.

My hands are pretty well tied in this, since Ray is no longer rational where it comes to the course of action he should follow. Although Ray's situation is not nearly so desperate as he believes, the Kershaws and Mark Lanes will soon have him testifying before a Congressional committee which already believes he is guilty.

Actually, Ray's chances for getting a trial are probably better now than they have ever been, which is the best possible reason for not jeopardizing anything before testifying to a congressional committee that is sinking into the mire very fast.

If you see anything in the Nashville area papers about either Kershaw or Ray, I would appreciate it if you would send it to me.

Best regards,

Jim Lesar