

Bud, David- he almost turned on. When his staff was silent and I reached him by accident by phone he directed them to read the work, anyway. Like others, he was scared. But I do not think he'll turn on with coaxing, hence I eschewed that approach.

1/15/71

Dear Congressman Conyers,

It is perhaps appropriate that this is the day on which I can find the time to write. I hope you succeed in obtaining official observance of Dr. King's birthday, though I'd prefer that it be his assassination that be marked, finding that more meaningful and believing it would, at least once a year, remind both whites and blacks of what neither should either forget or be permitted to forget.

An abbreviated version of the book your staff read, still close to 600 pages but confined to what is most relevant to the King assassination, will soon appear. It is being published by Outerbridge & Dienstfrey and will be distributed by Dutton. It also contains material not in the version your office had, dealing with my successful suit against the Department of Justice to get what I could under the Freedom of Information law and what I extracted from that suppressed evidence. A small part of it will be reproduced in facsimile. The new title is FRAME-UP!

One of the most painful aspects of this unhappy task I undertook was the total abdication of blacks, the refusal of any of Dr. King's many friends to lift a finger to help, to interest themselves in any way, even to answer a letter, as not one of so very many would. In having the book read, which did my work no good, you came closest. You alone would do that. Typical is an SCLC letter not to me but to a friend, "...it is my personal conviction that there was a conspiracy; it is also my feeling that Establishment power forces (rather than right or left wing extremists) were behind the murders...but I do not think you or your associates will be permitted to discover and expose the truth..." And nothing more. Just as it was with John Kennedy. (I address this in the epilogue to my second book. I do not single out blacks to charge with the crime of silence.) This man has evidence - "I have definite reasons for saying this (that there was a conspiracy)" - yet he is silent, and my many letters to his office went unanswered.

There is evidence of such a character I could not include it in the book. Had I, I would have been signing death warrants. With help, we can develop more. I think there is much more at issue and at stake than the solution to a major crime, important as that is. Since I saw Mr. Hemmingson, I was able to arrange for a friend to become Ray's counsel. Motions are pending for a trial. New counsel is unpaid, without prospect of pay, and without means of recapturing even out-of-pocket costs.

I do hope that when the time is appropriate you will find it possible to do something meaningful in all of this, and that you will not be alone.

Mr. Hemmingson told me you had doubts about some of the things I wrote about the Robert Kennedy assassination. I now have official evidence I cannot make public that, if it doesn't change your mind, should at least shake you up a bit. As with the evidence I had to withhold from the book, it is available to you, but in strictest confidence.

Best wishes,

Harold Weisberg