

Prof David Garrow
Dept. Political Science
City College of C.U.N.Y.
New York 10031

8/11/86

Dear Dave,

My desk has been an uncleaned mess for so many months! And the rest of my tiny office. Now I'm trying to clean it up so I can work on an appeal in which I am, involuntarily, pro se. (Additional surgery, new thrombosis, more limitations.) I've come to your letter of Oct. 15, 1985, which holds some advice for Jerry McKnight. By coincidence he'll be here later today to pick up some fresh-pulled corn I got for him when I got us some a little while ago and I'll mention it again.

The FBI is stonewalling him on the POCAM request. He was to have gotten some records months ago, from their schedule, and he hasn't had a word. They wasted much of his sabbatical. (He's working again, seeing students today.) Jim Lesar has filed suit or will. They also rewrote his request to eliminate the Washington field files. From what I remember of what Washington field sent to Memphis, they have reason to. Some pretty nasty stuff in it. (As I recall then ran some informers in the camp.)

Is your book on the wiretaps out? I've not seen any mention in the Wash. Post. I hope that does not reflect its reception.

Jerry did an article for South Atlantic Quarterly on the Memphis strike. He has done another on The Invaders's files, HQ and Memphis, which they accepted.

I have a rather strange situation in the case in which I'm pro se. The government fabricated a conflict of interest between Jim Lesar and me. The suit is for the Dallas and New Orleans field offices' JFK assassination records, more elaborate a request than this shorthand reference indicates. Before a rubberstamp judge they got a money judgement against us both, since dismissed as it relates to Jim, over a phony "discovery" motion. Since I'm pro se I've gotten the thing reduced to my unrefuted and thoroughly documented allegation of fraud, perjury and misrepresentation to obtain the discovery order. Discovery in FOIA cases will effectively gut the Act and nobody cares. Nor is there any interest in undenied charges of felonies by the FBI and DJ, not merely alleged but stated and undenied in court. While I imagine that most lawyers would be afraid to handle this, I sure regret that it is left to a nonlawyer who also can't do much. (I spend five hours a day now taking doctors' orders—three in therapy and two lying flat on my back with my legs elevated.) I've sent copies of the pleadings of both sides to about 30 in the press without any reaction except that two reporters said there is no news interest! I was represented on an earlier appeal by the ACLU, which then said it would do now more and what it did do it was extremely timid about. It made no reference to these felonies which I've been able to go into again vis new evidence disclosed to another requester. Among other things, the FBI supervisor who swore in my case that certain records do not exist simultaneously disclosed proof of his perjury to this other requester. (He'll get promoted—they all do after this kind of misconduct.) If by any chance you know a lawyer who'd like this kind of battle, I'd sure like to know!

Best,

THE CITY COLLEGE
OF
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10031

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

(212) 690-5468

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Dear Harold:

Thanks for your letter. It was good to hear from you. Although I've never met Jerry McKnight, I've corresponded with him a few times after I saw his commendable article in South Atlantic Quarterly to encourage him to go ahead with the "POCAM" file and to tell him that a microfilm firm called University Publications of America--and located right in Frederick--is quite willing to pay the photocopying costs for getting FBI files that are of enough substantive value to publish in microfilm editions for sale to research libraries--as UPA did with me on the main file on MLK, and as we're proceeding to do with the main file on SNCC and probably CORE & NAACP as well. I think it's likely that in time UPA and I will do an edition of files on various movement campaigns--Montgomery, Albany, Selma, etc.--and when we get to that point I may well approach you about the Memphis strike file you have. If UPA were willing to use that one, they'd give you 10¢ per page for every page they film, which ought to buy groceries for a few weeks at the least.

Wachtel was never wiretapped himself, though he was overheard countless times on the King-Levison-Jones-Rustin taps, and hence I doubt there's any Bureau record of your conversations with him.

I'll be in touch whenever that Memphis thing pans out.

Best,

