

Rt. 12, Frederick, Md. 21701  
8/7/76

Mr. James J. Kilpatrick  
White Walnut Hill  
Woodville, Va. 22749

Dear Mr. Kilpatrick,

Several times since receiving your kind letter of June 11, 1975, I've been tempted to write you further about my efforts you then approved, to force out of official suppression records I seek via the Freedom of Information Act. However, because none of the cases has come to a conclusion I have not. If you have any interest I will be glad to fill you in.

My efforts represent about as lengthy a job of investigatory reporting as I can imagine. I doubt there has ever been one of this volume. Or scope. You are more than welcome to see for yourself. It is unlike the work of those you referred to as my "colleagues." They are not. They are, essentially, publicists. I seek to make our basic institutions work while drawing on the earlier reporting, investigating (Senate) and war-time intelligence experiences that I believe have made this work rather successful whether or not the press so regards it.

In this work I have been James Earl Ray's investigator. My investigation did reopen the case until a phony "liberal" judge flew into the face of fact, justice and law to try to close it again. If that should interest you - and it is not my immediate purpose - I have the court transcripts in which we totally exculpated Ray of the charges against him without succeeding in getting him a trial. Most people are not aware that there has never been a trial, that our system of justice was and remains frustrated.

As Ray's investigator I was able to spend many days inside maximum security jails interviewing a number of prisoners. A pattern began to emerge: those who had known him had been jailed. This is complicated by the fact that criminals and jails go together. He had been a petty thief and his associates were petty thieves. His brothers had been minor offenders but both had straightened out.

I spent an entire day in Leavenworth with John Larry Ray and another prisoner, Walter Rife. Rife had been Ray's companion, James Ray's, that is, on a southern vacation financed by stolen postal money-orders. However, his case worked was frank in the opinion that Rife was in Leavenworth on a bum rap. I am without doubt that John was also framed and by the FBI.

Prior to going to Leavenworth I had heard often from both men. John in particular wrote me laboriously and extensively although he could mail but two pages at a time. He has neither lied nor exaggerated in anything he has told me, some of which appeared to be farout.

What is different about the Rays is their belief. All consider themselves conservative. I have never discussed race issues with James. The world abounds in people who hated King. All could not have killed him. The evidence is that James did not. John, Jerry and their sister Carol are racists. They say so. They believe in racism. They are followers of J.B. Stoner and his group. Stoner's belief can be simplified into the only thing wrong with niggers is Jews.

They know I am Jewish, of course, and that my interest is in justice.

I have just heard from Jerry and John about the denial of parole to John despite an absolutely clean prison record. The authorities say in the record I have that they do not like John's thinking and therefore he should not be released. This recent record is defective in other ways, as in its pretense that the disposition of the case of one of John's alleged partners in crime is unknown.

Aside from considerations of justice, if John is forced to serve the balance of an 18-year sentence when he is released his choices will be between a life of crime or becoming a public charge.

John sent Jerry a copy of a St. Louis Post-Dispatch column made on the jail copier. The quality is diminished further by the machine Jerry used and my need to recopy. I hope it does not strain your eyes too much. It is an accurate if bobtailed account. If it interests you I can provide many more details.

After I first interviewed John and others on his case my lawyer/associate Jim Lesar pursued the court records. Superficially it appears that Miller received special treatment because he was an informant in other matters. Lesar believes that if he had not made inquiries Miller would have been released in California even though he was then under added charges. This is the claimed unknown disposition in the parole proceedings at the Marion, Ill., federal jail where John now is. Not only was Goldenstein released - he was actually allowed to keep the money supposedly stolen from the bank!

If John were actually guilty, as I believe he <sup>is</sup> was not, the situation would be this: the actual robbers are free and the alleged driver of a car who picked them up some distance from the bank will serve 18 years.

At the time of the crime John was in good financial shape. He also had a good relationship with the local police, one of whom sent him word he was about to be set up.

McCarthy's column refers to Jerry's acquittal on a shooting charge. Jerry was then Stoner's hand-man. He caught the man he shot in a robbery. Then as now Jerry was a watchman. When he was not with Stoner his employment record is solid and satisfactory.

None of these people has a good education. Communications from them are not always fully informative. I thus lack details of John's parole appeal. I understand it will be in Washington, probably some time the week of the 23. He has asked me to intercede on his behalf. I have told him I am willing but asked that he consider the dislike I enjoy in the Department of Justice, which I sue with some regularity. I will attempt to see him in any event, if that is permitted. If you would care to I'm sure John would want this very much. He would tell you some apparently farout stories I can in part confirm. I think I could be helpful in other ways, too.

My apologies for the typing. Last year I had a heavy phlebitis with permanent damage. It requires that I type with my legs horizontal.

If you would like any further information, my phone is 301/473-8186.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg