

JDW: I did not think of making a carbon of the Leiser interview and I do not know if you want it. Please return it when you've finished with it. *It will be in the next mailing*

SEP 13 1975

Dear Jim,      Leiser's visit

9/11/75

I had been told by Jerry that Leiser is a "slick article." I think he is pretty transparent. However, my options were limited and throughout all I had to consider the possible impact on Ray. After the tick he pulled on you I'd rather not have anything to do with Leiser of the CBS Ray program. Were I alone involved I'd have done what my letter to the fun-mail dept. forecast. But I got to thinking about it and the nastiness they can work into a script they alone control and felt I'd best see him.

I had hardly taken the paper out of the machine on the memo I've laid aside for Ed to read when I thought of other things. He asked me about my Ray tapes, whose they are, can they be heard and had Ray placed any restrictions on them. I said that when you could you met the plane and debriefed me and that we dubbed those tapes when there was but the two of us. That no other had had any need to hear them so no other did. That Ray placed no restrictions but I did even though I regard them as my property. I made it clear that nobody will hear them unless it serves Ray's interest and that I have my set put where it can't be found easily and one set out of my possession. He asked me what we talked about and I told him everything, all sorts of things. That I never conduct a pre-structured interview but instead engage in and take the time for conversations in which I can more easily learn if I get different versions of the same incident. That I'm convinced that Ray has not lied to me but I was initially aware that in seeming to be responsive he wasn't. That then and more frequently later there were some things about which Ray simply said he did not want to talk. Leiser didn't even ask me what things. Nothing except what he could have asked as a prelude to a request for the tapes or access to them.

Reporters, writers and interrogators can differ in their methods and interests but this guy did not ask me what I would regard as preparation for the rather interview. If he had do you think that after coming all the way here Waldron would have left 15 minutes after the time I said was the maximum this guy was going to stay? Would it have been that dull to Martin, even he if Leiser had asked any probing questions of any kind?

There were a number of occasions on which I found it not easy to explain to myself his appearance of annoyance when I corrected a misrepresentation or misinterpretation of what I'd said, to the point that after it was over and I had a chance to think about it I actually wondered if he had an FBI bug hidden on himself and a receiver-recorder in the nearby car. I don't think so and didn't while we were talking but when as soon as I could think for a second it was so apparent that he was not engaging in a normal preparation for rather I had to wonder why and why he misrepresented what was plainly other than he said. On possibly not in the memo is on solving the crime and what I'd said. I then made it specific that I'd never made any effort to solve any of them, as my work shows. Martin laughed when I said I have no idea who killed anyone and said he does. I didn't ask who.

Ed said afterward that I should have taped it. I told her that I had made him the offer and felt it would be wrong to press him or make a unilateral decision.

Martin was careful not to give him a personal endorsement and to suggest that he has questionable connections, mob-type, but he did tell me that a Waco lawyer, David Copeland, has the Ruiz story about Foreman and that it was in Colliers. We should be able to get a xerox from Copeland. He should be listed in the directory. Copeland at one time represented one of the accused.

Leiser again: when an interviewee offers to tape the interview for the interviewer and the interviewer, who takes no notes, has no interest, it occurred to me after he left, there is something odd. I didn't even ask him to pay for the cassettes and he didn't take any notes. If I'd thought of it I'd have asked him why. But we began with

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The nature of his departure made no wonder if he is uncertain or overcertain of himself. Aside from being needlessly secretive.

I said it he'd tell me where he was going I'd tell him the best way for the traffic conditions he could expect and the shortest. He said he knew how to get back. He had options that could have made a big difference and if he took wrong turns that a stranger could easily he'd waste much time. So, I told him to take exit 14 on the Beltway and it would take him around northwest Washington traffic. When he seemed reluctant to tell me what part of Washington he was going to I told him to take the Roosevelt bridge if he were going to anywhere near the CBS offices and how to know when he heard that exit. The man's attitude was odd. What is wrong with asking or being offered suggestions when he is strange to the area? What would be strange in about his going to his own offices or to a hotel or to a friend or anywhere? I was not prying and it made no difference to me where he went or why. I was trying to be helpful, no more, but he had some kind of block against it. His attitude was such I can imagine his going wrong although he had expressed gratitude for the details and accurate instructions that made getting here so easy.

I walked out to his car with him to help him turn around. Waldron's car was in the way as he came in. I explained that he could not go back too far because I had a log firmly attached to the earth with steel, to back into the railed-off area until he hit and he would then make the turn in a single operation. He said he understood. I watched. He was going back too far before starting to turn, so I signalled him and he did turn sharply. I kept signalling him to go back farther but he didn't. He then found he could not make the simple turn and had to back again, toward a side rail. I signalled him to keep coming back. ~~HE~~ He knew I was there watching. But he did not heed my signals, started forward again and had to drive over grass because he was not able to turn sharply enough to stay on the lane. He did no damage to any plantings but he did it the hard way merely because as was apparent throughout his visit he has this compulsion to be at cross-purposes. (I measured the turnaround with a Cadillac and the fuel-oil truck makes it in a single operation but Ernie knows better and does it harder.

I asked Ed to read the memo and suggest anything I may have forgotten. There came a point when, after he had argued rather than asked questions I apparently asked him a series of questions or made statements that began like questions, "Do you think that..." and he said, "I'm not here to answer questions." (I asked him nothing about their show except was he working on more than MIA.) The kind of "do you think" I can recall are about the "window dressing" part of the indictment as he had quoted Beasley. Did he think the prosecution was composed of highly incompetent lawyers who did not know what they were doing, that they'd have gone to all the trouble to present all the irrelevant if they had no purpose or perceived no need. If there were other areas where this happened I do not recall them but I was responding to his defenses of the prosecution with rhetorical questions that required no answer. I remember following this with asking him what real evidence they had against Ray, how they could even place him at the scene of the crime or even in the city for two hours before it, matters dealing with evidence and his presumed purpose in coming here. In the end he was faced with his inability to respond. He didn't think of Carpenter, so I offered Carpenter as a witness. He said Stephens and I laughed. He said Gump and I said maybe, who else? He had none to offer except what is in the earlier memo on Brewer (a reflection of his knowledge or his honesty). It is then that I noted the list of 400 witnesses and how any defense could prepare for so many and the purpose of listing so many when they had nothing to do with the crime itself. I am sure that he said what Ed remembers. I do not remember it.

Ed noted her concern about the few things I told him off the record. She doesn't trust him to be honorable.

When she told me these things and that what I'd put in quotes attributed to Policoff was her representation of what Jerry had said and not necessarily his, I was reminded that there is no real purpose in his having lunched with Policoff, if that is what happened if he is working on the King case only except to try to get what he can use prejudicially against us.