

3/13/72

Dear Mr. Stoner,

I was about to go to bed when Jerry called to report he is returning to stay with you until we do the St. Louis TV show. I again raised the question of any leads or information that I can use in investigating or to put together with the investigation I have completed for James. Jerry repeated what he had said earlier, that you fear I will find some way of using anything against you.

There is no basis for this fear. I have no intention of writing about you or the NSRP or any of its members. My sole interest in this matter is James' defense. The only basis that would justify this fear is that you or one of yours is responsible for the assassination, and that I neither believe nor have reason to believe or suspect.

We both want to defend James, to see that he gets his day in court. Among the things that this requires is the most complete investigation possible. I have done what I can under the limitations of little time and no funding. I have gone much, much farther than what is in my book. Among the things I now have is the deliberate withholding of totally exculpatory evidence by the prosecution and by the FBI. I have made and I intend to make no public use of this or any of the new investigation until the time is right, and I do not think this will be on TV. My purpose is to help prepare the most solid case possible. This serves the obvious purposes in court and can be used, at the right time and under the right conditions, to help get the case into court.

But neither you nor any of your people figure in any way, no matter how indirectly, in this new investigation. And with my book completed, it should also be obvious that my purposes are not literary.

So, I am writing to ask that you let me have the results of the investigation you have conducted, and you have my assurances that I will not use it against you. James told me you had conducted some investigations in Memphis and were supposed to do some in Louisiana. In fact, a year ago he told me he had given you some leads to check out in Louisiana and that after you did he would give them to me to check further. The last I heard from him he had not seen you in a year. You should have had some means of doing things not available to me. The opposite is true, too. I can do some things you may not be able to. I know I can tap sources you cannot.

Without your saying so, I would presume that until court all sources would have to be protected and unless used in court would thereafter, too. Without your saying so, I would not presume this extended to counsel. If there is anything you can send me, no matter how irrelevant it may seem, I would protect it in any way you specify.

I do hope you will see your way clear to do this. By the time you can get this Jerry will be back there and can do the copying. This will give me the chance to digest it, see how it fits with what I have, do what I can from here, and then carry it further on my way home from St. Louis. It will also provide the opportunity for us to discuss it in St. Louis and for me to then better understand any suggestions you may have. As Jerry will tell you, I plan to get to St. Louis early to provide opportunity for discuss with you and Bevel. I also plan to write Bevel as soon as I get his present address.

As I told Jerry, I have no intention of picking any kind of fight with you in St. Louis. If you will examine the history of the past, you will find that Dr. Fields started it with me, not I with him.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg