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Mr. John Leonard
Editor - New York Times Book Review
Times Square, New York 10036

August 16, 1971

Dear Mr. Leonard:

I meant to write this letter on July 6, the last time I called you. You may recall that you were too busy to speak to me on that occasion, but you were kind enough to relay a message to me through your secretary. That message was that the full page round-up of letters on John Kaplan's review of Harold Weisberg's book "Frame-Up" was still planned. Unfortunately, I was preparing to go on vacation at that time, and events prevented me from writing until now. Perhaps it is just as well that I did not write you sooner, however, because by now it is evident that you are either a liar, or that you have no control over the Times Book Review despite the fact that you are its editor. I do not care to speculate whether the former or the latter is the case, for either way, the results are the same.

I send this letter certified because you and the Times have been completely unresponsive to all letters on this matter -- even to the point of refusing to acknowledge any letters received, and ignoring requests to return certain items after you had inspected them. If I were not witness to this entire affair I would find it difficult to believe.

On March 11, 1969 the Times published a fine editorial entitled "Tongue Tied Justice." It began: "The aborted trial of James Earl Ray for the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is a shocking breach of faith with the American people, black and white." It goes on: "Nothing but outrage and suspicion can follow the handling of this long-delayed and instantly snuffed-out trial." ... "In the ghetto and in the world outside the ghetto, the question still cries for answer: Was there a conspiracy to kill Dr. King and who was in it?" ... "No one was demanding blood; everyone is demanding facts." ... "There should be no Warren Commission necessary -- a month or a year from now -- to still our doubts and do what a Tennessee court has failed to do."

Its conscience apparently eased, the Times went about its business after that memorable editorial. It sought no further facts and raised no further outcry.

Harold Weisberg's "Frame-Up" is the first and only book to date to address itself the demand for facts that the Times made so eloquently. Its documentation is exhaustive, and its implications frightening. This book proves beyond any doubt that James Earl Ray was the victim of a monstrous frame-up. Contrary to public belief, Ray did not voluntarily enter into his negotiated guilty plea. He was threatened, and when that failed to work he was bribed by his lawyer Percy Foreman. Foreman's letters to Ray in which he first lowered his fee on the condition that "the plea is entered and the sentence accepted and no embarrassing circumstances take place in the court room," and then lent money to Ray's brother, also "contingent upon the plea of guilty and sentence going through on March 10, 1969, without any unseemly conduct on your part in court," are both reprinted in "Frame-Up." Weisberg