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Mr. Harold Weisberg
7627 Old Receiver Road
Frederick, MD 21701

Dear Harold,

Thanks for yours of March 25, which I am answering hastily as I leave for Easter in Ireland. I have made the changes you wanted, and have discussed the proposal with Sterling Lord. It will be with him shortly, and then we shall see what he thinks, and suggests.

Very best,



P.S. Final version enclosed.

"THE KING CONSPIRACIES"

The Murder of Martin Luther King - A proposal for a book by Harold Weisberg

Harold Weisberg was investigator for James Earl Ray, the accused assassin of Dr. King, when - in the early seventies - he sought what he had never had, a trial. Weisberg, now 75, is a former reporter, Senate investigator, and decorated wartime intelligence analyst. His Ray investigation overcame judicial refusal to grant Ray a hearing to determine whether he would get a trial. The evidence he gathered rebutted the official case against Ray, but the judge in the case held the facts immaterial because Ray had originally pleaded guilty, in 1969. Ray claims that his original guilty plea was coerced.

Since 1974, to prepare for the book he now proposes, Weisberg sued the Department of Justice, the FBI, and the CIA, for pertinent records, using the Freedom of Information Act. After more than a decade of litigation, Weisberg has obtained some 75,000 pages of formerly secret government documents.

Point by point, the government's own evidence - either withheld at the time or misrepresented - proves the very opposite of what the government claimed it proved. Astonishingly:

(1) The FBI's own evidence, including more than a thousand pages of laboratory examinations, indicates that Ray could not have committed the crime, and that the fatal shot could not have been fired as alleged. This includes photographs and police reports

indicating that the window through which the shot allegedly was fired was not open enough to accommodate a rifle. No Ray fingerprints were found in the entire building. Many witnesses told the FBI that Ray's car was not parked where it is supposed to have been parked. About ten witnesses, including Memphis police and firemen, indicated to the FBI the different point, from which the shot was probably really fired.

(2) Before the murder, when Ray was on the lam in Los Angeles, he was phoned and then visited by an FBI "symbol" (official) informer from the East Coast. (Weisberg has the FBI's records, which were withheld from the prosecution on this and other matters dealt with in this proposal. He prefers, however, to withhold several names for the time being, for security reasons.) Soon after the visit by the FBI informer, Ray drove east, and Dr. King was assassinated.

(3) Weisberg has obtained a tape-recorded admission by a former official of the union whose strike Dr. King was in Memphis to support. The official says the assassination was carried out at the behest of the Louisiana hierarchy of the Teamsters Union. The tape was at one stage provided to the FBI, which did not investigate it at all.

(4) Weisberg followed the clues supplied by notes Ray had given to an earlier counsel, Arthur Hanes - himself a former FBI agent and CIA contract employee. One phone number in the notes, Weisberg found, was that of a close associate of Edward Grady Partin, head of the Teamsters in Baton Rouge. (The FBI's records show that the key to a safe deposit box he used was mailed from Baton Rouge shortly after Ray had left that city.) An address in Ray's notes led

Weisberg to a house in New Orleans owned by the same Partin associate. Partin, who had been close to the late Teamsters' boss Jimmy Hoffa, became a spy for the Justice Department. This led to Hoffa's conviction. For this service, twenty-five criminal charges against Partin, two of them relating to capital offenses, were dropped.

(4) Three days before Dr. King's assassination the FBI was warned that he would be killed in Memphis. The FBI did not warn Dr. King, and long tried to suppress the records that reveal the Bureau had advance warning. They were eventually disclosed to Weisberg by compulsion of a court order.

(5) Ray's communications with his lawyers were systematically intercepted and Xeroxed, in violation of the court's order. So was correspondence with the original trial judge himself. Weisberg has copies from the files of the FBI and the prosecutor. The judge died in troubling circumstances while drafting what Weisberg and Ray's then counsel believe was an order for a trial. The judge's chambers were immediately cleansed of everything to do with the case. Even his desk calendar was removed.

Weisberg and Ray's former counsel believe that the previously secret official evidence - the backbone of the proposed book - are enough to force a reopening of the criminal investigation, and ultimately to Ray's release. The only legal channel open to Ray is "New evidence," and this is it.