

3/24/69

Dear Russ,

Relet 3/18. postmarked 20 and clips, thanks, for I continue to find in these stories what is not appearing in the east. I'll probably quote the editorial in the epilogue. I am beginning to wonder whether CDN might be interested in serial rights at least for NSRP stuff, epilogue.

No word as of this a.m. on copies COUP. Checked to so I could tell you when to expect.

C You did not send the American 3/17 article. From what you say of it I'd like to have it, for in no other story did I see reference to the judge asking "exactly where to fire from and what type of rifle to use". Good questions, from the guy who sealed the deal! He had bought .243 and exchanged for 30.06. Same makes.

O It is not a warranted interpretation that knowing where King was meant King's closest had to be involved. More likely someone following, someone at hotel, someone in his security (i.e. local police, of whom there is already more than enough for suspicion). His shift of quarters presented no problem at all to anyone interested (even press would know).

P If we take Malcolm's thinking as typical of that of the militants, then the argument the militants wanted him dead was invalid at the time of his murder. The infighting within the organization is news to me, but there is so much of this in most organizations of that sort, ~~XXX~~ Is it what causes murders? I'm inclined to doubt it.

Y The "book" did come out. It is a Bantam potboiler. It does have what purports to be the trial transcript, the one thing of value I've found in it. The rest is rally-round trash, irrelevant at best. Please, do, keep me posted on these, for I may miss some, and the promos and broadcasts, where the authors often say what is not in their books, give indications not found in type, etc. I think Huie will be saying more, explaining his change of belief. Foreman interests me very much, too, because, as you can see, the family is now saying what I did, that he did the leaning.

I have written the Archives for anything else on Criley, Hester and the license number, etc. It may be some time before they answer, if they ever do.

Many thanks. Keep sending the clips. Best to you both,

Dear Harold,

I'm sending along a few more newspaper clippings which a friend was kind enough to save for me.

I also wanted to point out something and raise a rather serious question. In the article from the American, 3-17, the judge asks about how Rayknew exactly where to fire from and what type rifle to use. In one of the other stories they mentioned that he had purchased one type of rifle, then took it back & exchanged it for another. It seems that the judge is implying that he had help from inside, which would go along with your theory of them trying to charge that he was killed by his "communist friends."

But considering it realistically, how would he have known this without help from inside? I don't think it's any secret that many Black militants felt that King would more use to them dead. I heard many people discussing in 1963 & '64 the fact that King as a dead martyr would be of more use than as a live leader. Invariably this talk would lead them to the conclusion that the only way it would be successful was if they could get a White southerner to do it. One of the things that has always disturbed me about King's organization was the amount of political intrigue and infighting that went on between the various ~~xxxx~~ factions. Abernathy was in many respects a better man than the King, and yet Abernathy had to fight like hell to take over after the assassination. Is it stretching the imagination too much to suggest that perhaps the people behind Ray found out who was most vulnerable and who had a vested interest to further or protect, and then used him to get the inside information that they needed? Wouldn't this, then, also provide a safety valve so that if worse came to worse they could uncover whoever he was and charge that he was one of the "communists" who was behind it?

That's all for now. Hope to hear from you soon.

Russ

P.S. - There's a book coming out next week that purports to have the full Ray trial transcript. It's a quickie on the trial. If you haven't heard about it I could get the title for you, it was on a show last week.