

Route 12 - Old Receiver Road
Frederick, Md. 21701

October 28, 1978

G. Robert Blakey, Chief Counsel and Director
Select Committee on Assassinations
U. S. House of Representatives
3369 House Office Building, Annex 2
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Blakey:

If you taught law students the way you wrote your letter of October 24, I can understand the Chief Justice's comment on the incompetence of lawyers better than I could before receiving your letter.

If a nonlawyer can presume to give advice to one who insists on being referred to as Professor, then I think the beginning of your convoluted first sentence is an unwise description of pursuing a Congressional investigation under the pretext of a legitimate legislative purpose.

The final words in this long sentence are more suitable for use before a jury you want to prejudice. While I am required to work when I am too tired and at a pace I would prefer to be not as rapid, I doubt that I ever said, in my letter of October 7 or anywhere else, that I found anything you or the committee have done to be "of use to the public." If by any remote chance I so misspoke myself, then this is my correction of it.

There can be values in some of what you saw no value in. This perhaps explains your refusal to provide copies of the public record when I was specific in telling you I want it for use in court.

Some of what you refuse to provide me you gave to the press. As I told you, I heard some of it broadcast, which is a pretty public use.

Those of your staff who run the xerox machines are hardly those who are "currently working long hours" on "the final report" and "to prepare for the upcoming public hearings on the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr." (You have separate subcommittees, separate staffs, and I asked for JFK public records, not those on the King case. Your JFK hearings are not until December.)

If either the House or the Committee rules prevent your providing me with xerox copies of the public record, you fail to say this while contorting yourself to imply it. Without the most radical change in the policy of the Congress since I had the responsibility for making the public record available, you do not reflect it faithfully and invoke the Committee and House rules in what amounts to false pretense.

What you are really afraid of is any use that could expose what you are doing prior to your dumping of an indigestible mass of preconceptions on what will amount to a captive press because of time pressures. I had no such thing in mind but maybe I will think about it and find some means of doing something about it prior to your coming news-management stunt of withholding copies of everything until you can present a report that nobody can check against its alleged sources. Which are carefully enough selected in advance in any event.

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If what you put into the public record does not immediately then go into the public domain, please correct me promptly because if there is a convenient opportunity I may convey this to a reporter and I do not want to err.

If I am not incorrect, then all your who-struck-John is no better than a law professor's Rube Goldberg contraption for refusing to provide me with xerox copies of the public record for which I offered to pay in advance. All I asked for requires no more than giving a clerk public records to xerox and mail. You know that it is not possible because of my condition for me to go to your offices and merely read records there, as it also is not possible for me to file with any court what I can do no more than read.

If you really must write self-serving letters, why don't you turn the task that clearly is too much for you over to one of the bright kids you have hired with the largest investigative appropriation in Congressional history? A kid on your staff might have had more concern for your reputation than your own letter reflects.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg