wmc tv 5 NBC
1960 Union Ave. · Memphis, Tenn. 38104

November 12, 1968

Hon. William Morris
Sheriff of Shelby County
Criminal Courts Building
150 Washington Avenue
Memphis, Tennessee 38103

Dear Bill:

The WMC stations alone among the media have supported fully and publicly, the efforts of your offices and those of the Criminal Courts in the pending trial of James Earl Ray. We shall continue to do so.

It is therefore with pain and regret that I must protest the poor coordination between Mr. Charles Holmes of your office and this station on arrangements for the November 12th hearing on continuance motions in the case.

In the court order of October 14th, the WMC stations were assigned seat number 11 in the courtroom, but this position had been given some other news service when Mr. Ed Goetze of WMC arrived at the appointed place, and by our information, at the appointed hour on the morning in question. Mr. Holmes informed Mr. Goetze that his seat had been forfeited because "they all went upstairs five minutes ago."

Mr. Holmes later told WMC that he "thought" he had notified all of the media whose representatives were accredited for courtroom seats that they should be present at 8 AM to begin the security procedure.

Mr. Holmes did not so inform this station. Neither did Mr. Holmes inform this station that its seat could be forfeited at anytime prior to the beginning of court proceedings and there is nothing to that effect in the October 14th court order.

WHEN TOLD THAT THE WMC STATIONS HAD NOT BEEN FOREWARNED, AS OTHER MEDIA HAD BEEN, OF THE 8 AM ARRIVAL TIME NECESSARY TO CLAIM RESERVED SEATS, MR. HOLMES REPLY WAS "THAT'S THE WAY IT GOES."

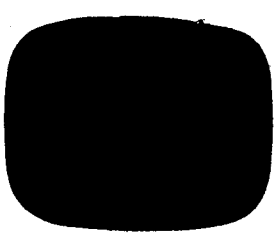
I CERTAINLY APPRECIATE THE DIFFICULT RESPONSIBILITIES ASSIGNED TO MR. HOLMES AND HIS HERETOFORE EMNEST EFFORTS TO MEET THEM. BUT I DO NOT APPRECIATE HIS APPARENT DISINTEREST TOWARD A SERIOUS PROBLEM CREATED BY HIS OWN ERROR.

MR. HOLMES MISTAKE MAY BE UNDERSTANDABLE UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT IT IS NOT EXCUSABLE.

MAY I RESPECTFULLY SUGGEST THAT STEPS BE TAKEN TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN MR. HOLMES AND THE GENERAL PRESS, PARTICULARLY LOCAL MEDIA, BEFORE THE TRIAL BEGINS MARCH 3RD.

I WOULD EMPHASIZE THAT THE WMC STATIONS DO NOT REQUEST, AND DO NOT EXPECT PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT. THEY DO, HOWEVER INSIST ON EQUAL TREATMENT.

PERSONAL REGARDS

Norman Brewer

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