

Mr. Wayne Chastain
Exchange Bldg., #512
9 N. Second St.,
Memphis, Tenn. 38103

3/21/77

Dear Wayne,

The letter you mailed the 18th awaited me this evening when I returned from D.C.

I appreciate the time you took and the detail, some of which I might want to quote in the future. I'd like to take more time in response but I'm more tired, have more to do and daily get farther behind.

I do not always succeed, sometimes I lean too far backward, but I do try to simplify and for the most part it seems to work. I have in mind the foul lies passed around down there about Jim and his wife. The stench of Lane is all over it. Few people know that Jim's wife is a radiologist. What is said about her can't be true. It can have no basis justifying even a suspicion. It is, in short, a malicious fabrication. Jim had a black friend who is a college professor. He is a large man, compared to me. And a very fine one compared to anyone. I know him a little. But they are not together all that often because they both stay busy and he is on a year of sabbatical. The give-away on this stranger is interviewing Livingston at all, leave alone twice, on the case. You know Bob has never done any work on it and has no real knowledge of it. He can't even bullshit effectively about it.

Now on the allegations of charges against Jim, by suggestion on behalf of Griffin Bell and over his representation of Ray, there is no possibility and the detail is un-factual. This detail is that the charges have been filed with the ABA. It does not work that way, barrister. Charges must be filed where the lawyer is a member of the bar. With Jim this would have to be the DC bar. The bar then informs the members against whom charges have been lodged. Ray knows all there is to know about Jim and in detail what Jim has done to represent him. Jim asked to be relieved and the 6th circuit refused. It ordered him to continue. There is nothing that even a monster like Lane can torture into the unprofessional in anything Jim has done and I think I have to have some idea of what he has done because we work closely together.

In short, this is fabrication, total and deliberate fabrication. One of the reasons Lane is the obvious suspect is that he has been unprofessional. You have learned he is a liar. To call him no more than a liar is to overwhelm him with praise. His unprofessional conduct has to do in part but is not limited to his going in to see another man's client without consulting the case lawyer and the means by which he did this. My knowledge comes from Lane's big mouth, from a place he had no reason to suspect I have friends and people who have seen through him. In fact from several places. He boasts and blabs.

I think I told you the Galt in LA 3 weeks after the crime can't be credited. Now that you add the large black man I think I can see the basis for the fairy tale. This is for you only because I do not want to contribute to the mythology. In the Mustang when it was wound was a scrap with the names of two women on it. The FBI checked this out and another nickname on the same scrap. The woman claims not to have known or seen Ray and the nickname was rightly or wrongly but not definitively attributed to a large black musician one of the women dated a couple of times. All of this was in the area around the St. Francis and those couple of bars.

Mary is very bright. I've never known her to fail to spread and enjoy rumor. She goes for the wild.

I'm sorry you can't tell me more. There are some confidences that are not real. This fabricated malice is unreal and I do not think there is any reason to regard it as legitimate because it is obvious malicious and baseless. It is probably some kind of disinformation operation in which you are being used. Nothing else in this story sounds straight, either.

LBJ and King: you may see motive for an LBJ involvement in the killing, I do not.

But if you talk about motive do you not begin with at least 5,000,000 killers?

What you say Reddick says is about what he told Les. It may be precisely that. I was not there and memory is never perfect.

When you report something as fact to me I have no questions. I have never known you to misrepresent fact. The problems develop with theories, interpretations and meanings. I must be the one who dropped the negative on Holloman because you now say, in more and interesting detail, what you had before. I have no trouble accepting your representation of the kind of person he is as a person. However, he did do what he did do and he did fail to do what he failed to do. With his FBI experience he had to know all the flaws in the official mythology.

I may want to use the story of the false arrest of the week before the violence. It was fuelled awaiting the torch. If it enable honestly saying that he had done a good thing I would like to do that.

I may start writing a different book soon and might want to use this. I think probably as the prelude to the riot.

There are different Courtneys. I know of Kent and of Jerry's silly effort with him and I had the report on the other Courtney whose first name I don't recall, the Florida broadcaster one, on my pre-Garrison work and not from him.

So you have finally learned that Lane is what Howard Roffman describes as a walking encyclopaedia of misinformation. If I pay any attention to him I might want to use some of these virtuoso displays of ignorance because he is now making a high thing of what he calls his early investigation, especially at the flop house. and didn't know the name of the manager? But why should he? He claims Charles Stephens was the most astute of all the witnesses.

I doubt he took the time to read "es' articles. The west-coast branch of Zipoff Associates had either them or the syndicated version. So Jeff Cohen flew east to educate Lane. On fact he does not educate easily. It is the rejection of a tissue transplant with him. (I once told Les that as an investigator Mark could not find pubic hairs in an overused and undercleaned whore house. Les added "at rush hour.")

I doubt there was much print press attention to the Somerset-Sapp story which is not new. Dan Christensen printed all that and much more in Miami mag for 10/76. They merely fed it to CBS and then pretended to be aghast at the accurate leaking of their innermost secrets. Great committee!

There have been several long calls since I began this. I've not opened some of today's mail and there will be people here most of tomorrow. It is bedtime for one was up before 5.

Let me close with another simplification for you in your own thinking: the killers had to be those who were in a position to set Ray up and were in a conspiracy with him. If ~~they~~ your candidates can't meet either standard, forget them.

Sorry about the typos,