Congressman Trent Lott
House of Representatives
Washington D.C. 20515

Rt. 12, Frederick, Md. 21701
3/22/77

Dear Congressman Lott,

Your comments on the assassinations committee @ I cannot call it an investigation- trouble me much. I know, of course, only what is quoted in the morning paper.

I get the impression that on the one hand you know you are being had and on the other you fear trying to do anything about it.

Well, you are being had. I'm dismayed that all the lawyers in the House can't see this and establish it to their own satisfaction from their knowledge of the law. You have been paying this sideshow for six months and what has it accomplished in that time? Has it begun to establish the corpus delecti? Without doing this can it even begin to conduct anything you or any other Member can call an investigation? On either crime?

Is there any limit to the number of threats against each victim it can flash in your faces and thus intimidate you? These known threats are in the thousands. All these thousands cannot have killed either the President or Dr. King. This committee and Dick Sprague in particular set out not to establish those basic facts that could easily be established after agreeing to do this. Instead it also began with preconceptions as irresponsibly as all other prior official inquiries of any nature and no less indecently than those like Mark Lane who have been milking speaking engagements with the most paranoid of fabrications that need only excite the audiences and thus attract more fees and public attention.

Lane is merely an example, appropriate in this case because he has already commercialized the conning of you (committee and Congress) into six figures. He is an example because what Delegate Fauntroy got from him and used unquestioningly is garbage, as is the Morrow manufacture I'm astounded adults with any sophistication had no questions about.

You did approve an "investigation" from a presentation of fictions. Now you abdicate farthur by asking no questions, seeking no truths, permitting yourselves to be intimidated by a series of staged leaks of the irrelevant, in each case guised as the result of the committee's own original work. Rather than investigatory derring-do it is plain ordinary plagiarism. None of it is new and new is relevant.

I have done most of the real work done by others than officials on both crimes. An inquiry of the Library of Congress should satisfy you on this, or of the federal courts in Washington. Even your own files, for one of your constituents, then a law student, saw you and told you that if you ever have any questions about the JFK assassination to ask me. The Department of Justice told the federal court in my C.A.75-226 that I know more about the JFK assassination and the FBI's investigation of it than anyone in the FBI. In No. 75-2021 the federal appeals court held that what I do serves not only my interest but that of the nation. My work differs from that of those you see in the newspapers in that I do not theorize idly about limitless conspiracies. Without seeking personal publicity I do try to establish fact. To a large degree I have.

When asked I offered all of my work to this committee subject only to its being responsible. It never asked a thing of me until this past Saturday when it all over again established that it is no better than Keystone Kops. I did force some basic evidence in the King assassination on it last October but you'd never know this from the transcript of the committee session at which it was misrepresented to the Members. Now after six months, after I told counsel where all the official court records are, even the names of the clerks of the court, it did not have even the readily-available public records. What it asked me for Sprague has acknowledged it is not prepared to use or understand and I tell you represents his persistence in what at best is the deliberately improper, the use of the lawyer Ray says coerced him into pleading guilty to establish Ray's

alleged guilt as the shooter. What else can the wily Percy Foreman say when it is he who prevented any trial by really coercing the guilty plea, negotiating it directly with the judge, which is improper, and then negotiating the maximum sentence possible and calling it a compromise? What else can he do when in another case he has been charged by the federal government with the identical offense, shutting a client up? In that case for $100,000.

But what kind of investigators are you giving my money to when in six months they have not had the gumption to write a letter to the clerk of the federal court in Memphis and ask for a xerox of the premature deposition of Percy Foreman that is on file, a deposition engineered as a substitute for his personal appearance in open court and prior to the essential discovery?

What kind of counsel has Sprague selected when just yesterday, following the Saturday call, the lawyer second in charge of the so-called King investigation told me he had not read the extraordinarily slim committee report because it was filed a day or two before he went to work for the committee? (If you or he had read that report you'd know it presume's Ray's guilt without even the claim to an investigation.)

And so today the headline-hunting Sprague is questioning Ray without knowing what to ask him about and totally without concern for legal proprieties. My knowledge of both is personal and comes from personal meetings and correspondence with Sprague. Have you as a Member no concern that the prestige of the House is used in this manner and for the unhidden purpose of bamboolzing you further, from today's paper beginning with another $2,500,000?

Sprague's offense, as a lawyer and as your representative, is even greater because he knows that Ray is no longer rational and is desparate. I have spent more time with Ray than any of his counsel. My correspondence with him and his family also is greater than that of any other. I conducted the investigation that led to the successful habeas corpus petition and the investigation for the unsuccessful evidentiary hearing. In the hearing and subject to cross-examination there is no doubt that it was proven that the factual allegations against Ray as the shooter were totally destroyed. The judge held that the issue was not guilt or innocence but had Foreman coerced Ray. On this the phoney liberal judge elected to ignore all the evidence and the refusal of Foreman and others to comply with his discovery orders or to appear and testify. Last November Sprague told me and Ray's counsel, Jim Lesar of Washington (484-6023; 223 5587) that he had told his counsel not to read the briefs of <u>both</u> sides because that would somehow prejudice those lawyers he personally selected! It was then that I told him Ray is not rational and was supported in this by Lesar. So today your Perry Mason is questioning the man whose mind has been influenced as you should expect when he is the American who has spent most time in solitary confinement. If any real work has been done to prepare for this questioning it cannot have been done by Sprague. He is the headline-grabber.

It is not easy for me to oppose a Congressional investigation because mine was the first book on the Warren Commission and it concludes with the hope that the Congress would hold a full and open investigation. But I must oppose this one because it is not an investigation, is deliberately dishonest, beging with preconceptions and is all in secret except when it needs to influence the Congress, when it engages in spectaculars that are without established relevance. I am certain that all you were given in secret was secret so the committee would not be exposed for what it is, a fraud trying again to defraud your committee. I am certain I can vaporize most if not all the representations made to you even though I do not know what a single one is. I know these subjects as nobody else does. I am certain George Lardner will confirm that I told him this past Saturday night, as soon as the newest super-spectacular was aired, that the name of that man is Clifton Baird and that I had satisfied myself in 1975 that if he were credible, as I thought he was not, his allegations were not relevant to the actual killing. Unless AP used a story based on their call to me yesterday, Baird's name is still an unnecessary secret, a non-secret, in fact, except for the further deception of the people and of the Congress.

Before it is too late I ubged you to satisfy yourself. Ask me what you will, check what I will tell you in any way you see fit. I am more than willing to do this inconfrontation with those who are deceiving you and have all along.

All the reports I receive is that the committee and the leadership have decided that the Congress will not permit the Warren Commission or its Report to be questioned. It is claimed that this would be unacceptable.

Unless this is done there can be no investigation.

More, there will be a continuation of the blaming of the executive agencies for all that is wrong in the JFK case. This has taken pretty extreme form, as with Lane and Fauntroy in blaming the FBI for the King assassination.

If those agencies are held to account for what they did do, not for what all the nuts imagine they did, it should be sufficient for the nation and in my belief for the good and the futures of those agencies.

There is no way of establishing fact and truth without addressing the performance of the Warren Commission. The late chief justice should be no more sacred a cow than the late J. Edgar Hoover. Neither the partisans nor the opponents of either political view ordain "truth."

In recent weeks I have undertaken to inform the Speaker. He has no interest in being informed, being content with having - quiteoveviously - been misinformed.

If there now seems to be little reason to hope the Congress will not be intimidated and steamrollered into perpetuating what will shame it and the country still more, I do take this time to offer what help I can to those of the Rules committee who would want to be able to evaluate the representations made to it. If it desires I will help it to the degree of my capability.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg