

Mr. Wayne Chastain
810 Washington St., #408
Memphis, TN 38105

4/9/77

Dear Wayne,

Relet 4/5:

On the committee and the stories about it, there is nothing I can add except that most of them certainly have no basis in fact. What may be real is the report about the fragments. Seems hard to believe that the doctors would have forgotten but perhaps they did. The reality is worse than the Post quoted me on, much worse. My opinions about deMohren-schildt are unchanged. However, I think I drew a distinction between being a regular CIA employee, like an agent, and being what might be called a source. I cannot imagine a man with his experiences not being interviewed on returning home and fully debriefed. This is the essence of real intelligence collection. Spooking is not. For years I have known that he was seen by J. Walton Moore, well-known CIA station chief in deM's line of work. Nothing wrong with this. It is like a reporter when he has no conflict telling police what he thinks they should know.

I'm sure deM was sick and I'm sure that all the pressure from the nuts had much to do with this. I do not know but with what Olstans has said and done if you were deM would you not be "terrified?" He had been to the committee two weeks before the suicide.

There is more than a threat against Jim. Lane is bad, even for Lane, in his book about Jim. Wrongfully. I think that unlike him you are, innocently, and that the distinction will be clear. However, please understand that in what follows when I speak of others it is confidential. Without my doing this you cannot understand.

Lane is sick in the head. An odd schizo, able and a fuckup. I once told Les Payne that as an investigator one could not find public hair in an overpriced and undercleaned whore house. Les laughed and added, "At rush hour." I don't know what kind of lawyer he is (pisspoor from his writing, which is no measure) but he is an utter incompetent in the work itself. It kills him. Here he is, in his own eyes this great man, the one who owns the subject-ask him- and in meaningful accomplishment he is limited to propaganda. In all these years, aside from enriching himself and getting himself known, there is nothing of significance he has brought to light. Once when a real story was handed to him he made a mess out of that, the Walter bit. When he had made a mess of his JFK efforts on the Hill there was nothing left but King. This meant thievery. You know how little he knew. He is not a regular thief so he has to kid himself about his stealing, making the victim the villain. In the King/Ray part he has to build himself up. He can do this only at Jim's expense.

Meanwhile he has behaved very unethically with regard to Ray. In time you'll know what I do. People are turned off by his broadcasts and send me tapes, how I know.

You recall correctly, it is the part about the ABA supposedly looking into Jim's record as Ray's counsel. First of all it does not work that way-it is always the local bar. Then there is no basis for any complaint about Jim. Confidentially he has been trying to get Ray to fire him and Ray won't.

Whatever you have in mind - and you did not give me the clues you thought you did-it has to originate with Lane. And it has to be the need of his twisted mind.

I think Jim will appreciate what you say, in part, so I'll share it with him when he returns from a trip he is now on. What you do not know is that once Jim started doing the real work on the case Bud withdrew more and more and turned it over to him. In time Jim knew what no other lawyer did. He did much work. Bud did increasingly little as his paying clients required more and more time.

The decisions on who would handle what were Bud's. Bud was abroad when Jim and I were down there on discovery. The only real preparation time he had was after we got to Memphis. Before he returned I outlined one part of the case. But went over it and agreed. His examinations at the evid. hearing came from this. Bob was worse than useless. He wasted much time we did not have. So there was no choice, Jim had to carry the load. There never were any arguments between him and Bud on this. Jim did what Bud wanted. Needed, too.

I don't think anyone will appreciate the tremendous load Jim carried at the hearing. The amount of work was incredible. He did not have even a typist or a clerk. He grew so exhausted that medication would not put him to sleep. Under the circumstances I believe his performance was superb.

The same is true of oral appeals arguments. Bud talked to me about that. He told me he felt that in Jimmy's interest Jim had to argue. Jim did not want to because Bud was senior and had courtroom experience Jim lacked. I cannot argue with Bud's decision and in fact I agreed with it and told Jim. Bud said that only Jim knew enough about the fact of the case to be able to handle questions. He was correct. I was not there but I do know there was a point at which Jim just did not understand what one of the judges was asking him about.

All the decisions were political. Arguments had nothing to do with the end. McRae's prejudice was visible from the first. But who could do anything about it?

Prentice-Hall was generous with proofs of Ark's book. It is so bad a book that the Enquirer rejected it out of hand as saying nothing. It is worse in ways the Enquirer does not understand. I have a set of proofs. This is not known and please do not tell anybody. When the book is out is time enough. When it has been in page for some time no changes could be made if anyone wanted them made.

Unfortunately you were right about Kay. Lane uses her and through his ignorance badly. It will be a slight embarrassment to her if this part gets any "emphic attention. I'm inclined to believe that will not be likely. I wish I could do something because Kay was always honest with me. And helpful. I like her. I think it is probable that with all the talking her recollection failed her, no more. But she is factually incorrect and as quoted by Lane, in quotes, very wrong. So please do not tell her. If I do get there before the book is out, not likely, I'll discuss it with her.

From Lane's account you would never know, as you now tell me, that Holloman was not in bed with Hoover until he resigned or when he resigned. One gets the impression from Lane, and it is fairly explicit in some of his statements outside the book, that Hoover sent Holloman down to Memphis and Holloman and Hoover are responsible for the King killing. This is really what turned the blacks on.

The handling of Holloman is vicious. The handling of Holloman and Reditt together is even more vicious.

I have no reason to question your representation of him. As I've told you before I sometimes disagree with your opinions but I have never known you to tell me something is a fact and I learned it was not a fact. I have known some very fine people who were FBI agents. I am not again them all. On the other hand I am critical of what some have and have not done. On an individual basis.

P-H was on notice, believe me. Especially about Lane and his dishonesties. At the same time I'm sure they have experienced counsel. So I'm not saying that what Lane does in the book is per se libel. I am, however, of the opinion that in the overall he libelled Holloman. Among others.

If Holloman would keep to himself anything I would tell him I'd be willing to let him know in advance of publication. This is a book that is going to get a major play by the publisher. The advance was in six-figures, so you know they have a hell of a lot to get back. This means heavy ads and promotion. I've seen a number of full-page trade ads. In addition NBC is doing something.

I'd go farther. I can't go there and I can't send copies of the proofs. But if Holloman ever gets to Washington we are only an hour away and he can read the whole thing. It won't take that long because he can skip all the Gregory part.

What makes this much worse is that in the first 75-80% of the book the only Memphis official named is Holloman. This is an old "Lane trick, to focus the reader's mind. In this case, with the publisher effort in particular, it will include the media mind.

Whether or not you discuss this with him I leave up to you. I have not even asked you how to reach him. I knew Reditt was yanked within a week of the crime. It is in name-up. I do not believe that if he knew about it in advance Holloman did it so "ing

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could be killed. There could be no connection between the two. On the other hand, if you do speak to him, he should know that I thin all officials who had any connection with the crime after the fact failed, most of all the FBI. And that I am suing them to obtain the withheld records. And am getting them.

I will be writing about this again. Soon. For my purposes I need nothing from Holloman, I've got more than I can use now.

I wish the so-called Establishment down there could come into the modern world, as I wish the FBI could. I could get them all over the agony, I'M sure without political consequences in Memphis and with benefir to the FBI. I guess you've heard me say this before. In my own way I'm going to try

Cohen article: Bullshit.

Baird not only irrelevant but not his first story. In his first there was not even a suggestion of the FBI offering him \$500,000. I'm sure it did not happen. I spoke to him about 11/75. I was not impressed with his dependability and I was impressed with the total irrelevance. What appearsk to have been the case is that he was suspected of racial dynamiting and he was tested by the police, not the FBI, with an offer to off King.

Whether Hagin is a nat of just evil is immaterial. I am certain Holloman had no connection with the crime, that it was not Memphis based and that the FBI did not do it.

However you believe Seigenthaler thinks Ellington and Armour were used in I do not believe it.

Id Bobby Kennedy had been friendly with the "okers you'd never know it from the Hooker record.

Wish I had time for more. Best and thanks,

4/5/77

Harold,

I forgot to tell you: don't send your letters to my office, but to my home: 810 Washington, Apt. 408, Memphis, TN 38105...My practice non-existent except now is ~~for~~ for a hand full of clients, and legal work farmed out to me by other lawyers. I work at home except for a couple ~~of~~ times per week, I go to my old office to check for mail. That is why I ~~was~~ delayed in responding to your last two letters--the second of which is dated 3/26, 77 and which I did not get until today...4/5/77

Many things have happened since my last letter:

- 1) Sprague's firing following ~~whining~~ ^{whining} Gonzalez's almost incredible whining before the entire body of Congress and which certainly cannot enhance his present poor rating among fellow congressman ...it ~~was~~ struck me as a cry ~~by~~ approach.
 - 2) de Mohrenschildt's death and Olthmans story
 - 3) Washington Post's April 3 story pertaining to "Tales Told Twice" and a quotation from you concerning the sad affair of the House ~~Committee's~~ Committee's bungling...
 - 4) ~~Gold's~~ ^{Gold's} story in April 3, 1977, Dallas Morning News concerning statements made by Charles Harbison, Texas Highway Patrolman guarding Connally's room at Parkland Hospital, and Miss Aubrey N. Bell, supervisor of ~~Parkland's~~ Parkland's Operating Room.
 - 5) Dallas Morning News story, April 2, 1977, reporting that three handwriting experts have ~~confirmed~~ confirmed that the handwriting in the note to H.L. Hunt was indeed that of Lee Harvey Oswald.
- Naturally, I am asking your responses to all of these new developments.

I recall you and I had long conversations about Mohrenschildt. As I recall you rather liked him and saw nothing sinister in his brief association with Oswald and Marina.

Also, as I recall, you challenged the assumption that Mohrenschildt was CIA connected. The question that arises in my mind: why did he commit ~~suicide~~ suicide? Especially when he learned a House assassination committee investigator was waiting to see him? I can't buy his daughter's explanation that he was terrified of Oltmans. Why should he be? As far as having a record of ~~being~~ ^{being} a mental patient, how valid is that explanation for dismissing his possible involvement in a conspiracy? ~~(our friend, Hugh Stanton Jr. has been in the big house since the 50's, senior member of the break-ins, etc., etc., etc. rumor but ...)~~ There was no talk about his so-called mental instability back in 1963-64? Possibly, he could have developed a guilt complex based on the fact he was involved in the conspiracy? The fact he went to such inordinate lengths to depict Oswald as an unstable, deranged individual before the Warren Commission suggests he was protesting too much. Parts of his testimony indicated he liked Oswald because Oswald was "humble." Yet, there was nothing specific he could give the Commission to conclusively prove that Oswald did fire the shot into the window of General Walker back in March 1963. From reading Mohresnchildt's actual testimony, Oswald made a face and remained silent when he asked him if he had fired the shot at Walker. And what was Jeanne Mohrenschildt doing when she was snooping around the Oswald's shack and found the rifle crammed into a closet? Why did the Mohresnchildts take such control ^g over the ^{Oswald} household, etc, etc?

as to questions you raised in your 3/26/77 letter:

1. You wrote: "I have not made sense out of the threat against Him.."

The word "threat" threw me. I suppose you mean the statement that the ABA was looking into ~~Dia's~~ ^{Dia's} role ~~in~~ as Day's defense counsel.

My answer: No, I did not save a carbon copy of my letter. I am not sure I know what you are actually asking me to do. You have convinced me that this was irresponsible nonsense and that my source was repeating hearsay two and three times removed.

I think Jim is a fine person and a brilliant attorney. The second fact is proved by his excellent appellate brief. As I state in my book, he raised all of the pertinent questions in that brief and I was appalled that the high court ignored all of them.

Jim, however, does not escape criticism in my book. I pointed out that I thought it was a mistake for ~~him~~ ^{him,} rather than Fensterwald to ~~conduct~~ conduct the oral arguments. It was a matter of judicial politics. ~~Fensterwald~~ Fensterwald was highly regarded by the late Justice Miller, and is especially ~~respected~~ respected by Justice Phillips. From my reports, all three of the judges acted in a hostile ~~manner~~ ^{manner toward} Lesar, who ~~seemed~~ seemed to unnecessarily argue with the judges when they asked questions seemingly designed to elicit responses favorable to Ray's cause. It is a matter of common knowledge that most appellate judges do not read all of the briefs submitted to them. In 75 per cent of the cases, they are briefed by clerks and then rely on the oral arguments before rendering their final decision. They refer to the written briefs to answer or resolve any questions that may remain in their minds after hearing oral arguments. I was hoping that because at least two of the justices expressed interest in the Ray case back in 1973-74, they would have read Lesar's memorable brief before hearing arguments. From reading Haynes' brief, I am sure the justices did not make up their minds based on ~~Haynes'~~ reasoning. If they did, then Justice Miller and Justice Phillips did 180 degree turns in their legal reasoning of 1973.

As a fellow attorney, I have been put through the same ordeal that Jim was, ^{substantially} except at a much lower level of the judiciary. I recently argued a case before a Memphis judge. ^{learned} He is regarded as one of the more knowledgeable judges on the bench, but his mind was closed to every point I raised. My arguments were based on long established

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legal principles and case law. This judge ~~_____~~ does not like me for several reasons, ~~but I~~ ^{him} I would like to think that his dislike of me alone would not have prompted to rule against me. I ~~_____~~ feel that he just did not like the result that would follow if he followed my line of legal reasoning. It would have put him in an uncomfortable political position. Again, judicial politics, I believe, lay at the basis of his decision. I lost the case. It was a civil case and I represented the owner of a dog that was shot by two Memphis policemen, who were apparently drunk or high on drugs. We could not prove either, but could only create by inference that conclusion based on the irrational acts they committed on the night in question. As witnesses on my side, we had the Memphis police chief and four policemen who testified ~~that~~ ^{that} the dead dog was an extremely gentle German Shepherd dog. The police chief fired both policemen--a rare precedent, but they were reinstated by the civil service commission where the city attorney (~~an~~ an appointee by the Mayor who in turn is strongly supported by the police union) made a feeble effort to present evidence that the officers acted in gross violation of police regulations, gross disregard of the civil rights of my clients (one a black attendant, the other a white service station owner) etc. Also, note, that the chairman of the commission was the appointee of the Mayor, etc.

This particular judge just didn't want the police union to go out and campaign against him the way the union did against my friend, and legal ~~associate~~ ^{associate} Judge Churchill, who was defeated by 400 votes last year. He knew I was a friend of Churchill, and that was reason enough for his personal dislike. His decision was ^a politically expedient one.

I believe the Sixth Circuit decision in the Ray was a politically expedient decision. I believe that Judge McRae's decision was a politically expedient decision, and that immense local pressure was brought to bear, although I can't cite one concrete clue to back my opinion ~~_____~~.

2. What was your impression of Baird?
3. Cohen article ~~_____~~.

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I was not surprised to hear about the Hagin-Cohen article which they attempted to and almost sold to the Tennessean. I believe Hagin led Cohen down the primrose path on that one. I found out ~~that~~ he also attempted to sell that thesis ^{is} to Zodiac press, but good sense prevailed there, and John ^{Newman} called me and asked me ~~what~~ what I thought about Hagin. I said he had a detailed knowledge of Tennessee politics, especially about what was happening in the legislature, ^g but no deep or profound knowledge of the Ray case. John told me that Hagin claimed that Ray had confessed to his attorney--implying the attorney was Livingston--and said that Stoner and Jerry were involved. I checked with Livingston and Livingston said: 1) Ray never told him that. 2) Hagin had expressed that view on several occasions, based on conversations he had with several ~~state~~ state officials in Nashville. Hagin also believed that Frank Holloman, whom we both discussed in our last two letters, was a ~~knowing~~ knowing member of the conspiracy. ~~I~~ I did not know he had almost succeeded in selling it to the Tennessean. I hope it was the good sense of Seigenthaler that stopped publication. For good reasons, Seigenthaler believes that the late Buford Ellington (governor of Tennessee when King was killed) and his public safety ~~commissioner~~ commissioner, Claude Armour (formerly Public Safety ~~Commissioner~~ Commissioner of Memphis) may have been involved in a conspiracy to kill King. Their motives would have been primarily political rather than racial, as both were conservative Democrats who hated Henry Loeb, a political ^g independent, who was drawing conservatives out of the Tennessee Democratic Party. Armour had more control over the Memphis police department in Nashville, than either ~~Holloman~~ Holloman or Loeb in Memphis. Memphis police and firemen supported Sheriff Morris against Loeb in the 1967 election. It was hatred of Loeb by Memphis policemen and firemen that prompted Loeb's decision to reconsider his decision to run for re-election for Mayor in 1971. Instead, Loeb stepped down.

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NOTE: Buford Ellington was a very close friend of Lyndon Johnson and served as head of the Small Business Administration while waiting his turn to run for governor in 1966. Johnson flew to Nashville to visit Ellington after he was elected and that is when Johnson made his stupid, cruel and politically inept speech "Nail the Coonskin to the wall..."

Armour was one of the last powerful vestiges of the Boss Crump machine.

Armour and Armour's father were products of that machine. Ellington was a Crump candidate when he first ran for Governor back in the 1950s.

He had always carried Memphis until the gubernatorial election of 1966, when blacks poured out and carried Shelby County for John Ray Hooker Jr. Although Ellington could not succeed himself in 1970, King's assassination would have broken up the powerful coalition ~~built~~ built up in Memphis by Hooker, who had already announced he was going to run again in 1970. This coalition involved labor-blue collar and blacks. Riots, martial law (which only the governor could declare) would splinter the coalition, evoke the George Wallace racist tendencies of Hooker's blue collar support, and alienate black political leaders from the ~~black~~ Democratic coalition. Ellington's motive, of course, would be to allow his ally, former Gov. Clement, to win the Democratic nomination in 1970. Clement and Ellington had played a game of political leapfrog in occupying the governor's chair since 1952, as a governor in Tennessee cannot succeed himself, but can come back four years after he has left office and ~~again~~ ^{campaign} again.

As far your using the Fanion- Withers incident, It is in the public domain. I have used it in my book, and you are welcome to it.

I do believe that Holloman was genuinely shattered by the assassination as it was a reflection on his ability to maintain law and order. On the other hand, other members of the Loeb ~~political organization~~ ^{may} not have had such pure motives. As far as Holloman being an ex-FBI man, remember that he retired in 1964. This was shortly ~~after~~ ^{after} the Project Zorro had been launched. Holloman, who had not been assigned to Hoover's office for several years before ~~his retirement~~ ^{his retirement} may not have had any direct knowledge of the dirty tactics Hoover was using against Dr. King.

When the King assassination occurred, he was in the vortex of so many conflicting currents, he may not have had sufficient information to make a wise decision as to security for Dr. King.

I realize that motive alone is not ~~en~~ enough to prove conspiracy, but until evidence of the details of the ~~conspir~~ conspiracy is bared, I believe all possibil ties should be explored.

Ellington was a hawk...as said at the top of Page 6. Johnson, at the heighth of his ^{pro} Vietnam War madness, flew to Nashville and made his "Nail the Coonskin to the wall" speech--evoking the bellicosity of native Tennesseans, who remember the heroics of Davy Crockett, Andrew Jackson, etc, and their cruel and indiscriminate campaigns against the Cherokee tribes, whom they almost decimated.

In late 1967, Bobby Kennedy--despite his silence--loomed ~~over the~~

~~in the paranoid mind of Lyndon Johnson as the man who was out to steal the 1968 Democratic nomination from him. Bobby Kennedy was a friend of John Jay Hooker and his family(John's older brother was a roommate of Bobby's at Harvard). John Jay Hooker ran as a Kennednesque candidate in 1966 and had it not been for the crossover of some ^{40,000} ~~40,000~~ Republicans into the Democratic primary, he would had trounced Ellington. Ellington, fearing Hooker's election, made a deal with the Republicans and sold down the river his old ally, Gov. Element, who was a lame duck governor running for the Democratic ~~nomination~~ nomination for U.S. Senator. If the Republicans agreed ~~not to run a candidate for governor~~ not to run a candidate for governor and allow the Republicans to come into the Democratic primary to vote for him, he would ~~surreptitiously~~ surreptitiously support the GOP candidate for U.S. Senator(Howard Baker) in the general election. The Democratic State Convention would occur after the Democratic primary. At the convention Ellington, as the Democratic nominee and certified as the nominee on the general election ballot, would become the nominal head of the State Democratic Party. When November came, Clement lost out to Baker and later ~~expressed~~ expressed the belief that his old friend Ellington had not done all he could to help him. He was supposed to have summoned his old friend~~

President Johnson down to campaign for him, but Johnson didn't come. Ellington tried to assure Clement that because of ~~his~~ ^{Johnson's} avid pro-war stance, Johnson's appearance in Tennessee at that time would have hurt rather than helped Clement. But note, Ellington didn't think President Johnson was so unpopular the following year, when he invited the President to Nashville to ~~celebrate~~ ^{commemorate} dead Tennessean veterans on ~~November 11~~ Veterans Day. That was when Johnson made the "Nail the coonskins to the wall speech." Blacks, already opposed to the Vietnam War, extremely resented the expression "coonskins" as containing racial connotations. "Coons," of course, ~~is~~ is used by rednecks to describe blacks.

If you are looking for a local nucleus for the conspiracy, I don't think you could start with better candidates than Armour or Ellington. Armour had made noises about returning to Memphis and running for mayor in 1971, if his protege, Bill Morris, did not run. Two things occurred. Armour's wife, who had refused to move to Nashville when Armour took Ellington's appointment, denounced him and jumped on Henry Loeb's bandwagon for Mayor. That's pretty embarrassing when a wife of a politician comes out for her husband's political adversary. Second, Bill Morris decided to run a second time for Mayor. Both Armour and Morris had some strong support in the black community. After the tumult and chaos following the King assassination had died down, either Armour or Morris could step in the political picture in 1971 and pick up the political pieces, ~~that way~~ so their ~~reasoning~~ ^{could} have gone. And that is exactly the type of campaign Morris ran in 1971. He came in third.

Best regards,

Wayne

Wayne