Chesterin 4/14/77

P.S. What is the "Walter bit"??? You said Lane had it handed to him and messed it up. What is it? Could it relate to the bit about smoke from the fence or the railway man's story?

Dear Harold,

Received your letter today.

I can't say I feel sorry for Kay. If Lane quoted her properly about her recollection about when the grass was cut in back of the rooming house, she deserved it. I hope Lane didn't quote me. He called me and told me what Kay's recollections were, and I told him she was definitely wrong. I told him there was a time lag--perhaps as long as six weeks between the time King was shot and the time Mayor Ingram and Russell X Thompson raised the question about the grass cutting.

I have a new agent in New York. He isn't a New Yorker though, but a Memphian who went there to sell my book and another book, which has nothing to do with the King murder. He placed it with Doubleday. A reader there was very interested in reading it, although Doubleday did publish Frank's book, which is no longer in print. He said he would have an answer in one week.

Meanwhile, my agent has obtained an advance copy of the Lane book, so he told me today. He wants to read it in New York and then he will send me his copy. My agent is reviewing it for a Canadian newspaper.

Holloman and I have not been close for several years. His office is in the same building, with a law firm, where I am currently doing some legal research and working with an attorney on a contingent fee case. I might drop up and talk to Holloman. The only thing I would be interested in finding out would be if Lane obtained an interview with Holloman by fraudulent representation.

Since I last wrote, Scripps-Howard newspapers in Cleveland broke a story about a $1 million offer to kill Dr. King by Columbia, Ohio FBI in January 1968 to the Gambino family in New York. The source is Paul Buccilli, who claims he was a FBI informer, who was the go-between top FBI agents and Carlo Gambino, whom he met with in January 1968 at a hideaway in Appalachin, N.Y. (Why do Mafia types always meet in Appalachin, N.Y.?) Gambino turned the offer down, according to Buccilli, as he is quoted in the S-H copyrighted story, on April 12, 1977.

What is your analysis on the Buccilli story?

My agent in New York sent me a Jack Anderson-les Whitten story dated 4/6/77 appearing in New York Daily News. It did not appear in CA in Memphis, and CA regularly runs the Anderson column. Neither did the Tennessean, although it carries Anderson's column. I believe the Washington Star carries the syndicated column, but the Memphis library does not get the Star.

The Anderson story quotes our late friend, William Sartor, and his so-called information pertaining to a Dixie Mafia contract on King. New Orleans was where it was made--between a Southern racist organization and organized crime figures. Then it mentions the memphian Frank Liberto, but does not say he is from Memphis. It relates the John McFerren story that he overheard Liberto say over the telephone to kill King on the balcony of the Lorraine and that his brother would pay him off in New Orleans. Then Anderson comes up with a new angle which I have never heard before. Namely, that a Birmingham, Ala.,

Dear Wayne, 4/26/77

Reur 22: I do not recall individual details of the Lane monstrosity. On Holloman I do not now distinguish between what he said in the book and what he has said elsewhere. I believe I have him on tape on a talk show saying that Holloman went right from Hoover's office to Memphis, in the sense of beginning to set the deal up then.

When you read the book you'll see if Lane said he did interview Gracie. My recollection is that he makes the claim. When last I heard Gracie was at Bolivar. Lane had no time to go there and no need. If what he says is not in your piece I'm sure it is in Valentine's, which he does cite. I'd be interested, after you read the book, in knowing if there is anything not in your piece or Paul's in his supposed personal interview.

I think your agent is interpreting what Lane says about how he got to see Holloman. However, the interpretation is precisely accurate from what reporters have told me Lane told them: Hollman would not see him but what cop would not see Kojak? Neither time nor need to comment on the Reddick.

The Enquirer centerfold comes entirely from me and my friend Dan Christensen. The part from me is from Oswald in New Orleans and Frame-Up. They merely went to Gelber and got the same tape to pretend it was "new."

I am interested in documentation of King's abandonment of non-violence. You refer to an SCLC January 1968 meeting on this. Have you any story, etc ot it? But I have no reason to believe either the FBI or the CIA did the dastardly deed. No matter how many it either agency may have wanted it.

Your second point on establishing conspiracy is the correct one. On the basis of what I believe you lawyers call the corpus delecti. The difference between us here is that you begin with a presumption of a conspiracy you then want to tie into this evidence. My way would bt to follow the evidence to the conspirators. In this case you have little choice because you do not know who any conspirators are. You may guess but no more.

You are correct in your understanding of what I wanted from the Loeb (or any other) archive, on the closeness of a strike solution. If you can get me a statement from any of those involved on this I'd like it to leave in my files. Not essential in writing. You recall correctly. We did discuss this a year ago when I was there with Les.

My book: I had a long and definitive one drafted a year ago. I've laid it aside in favor of a shorter work of narrower focus. I have not begun to write it.

Not because I don't want to. No time with all else I'm into. But I do want to begin soon.

I have neither an agent nor a contract.

So I can t say when it will be out.

Heavy mail today and reporter due soon.

Thankns and best wishes,

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April 22, 1977

Dear Harold,
good to hear from you.

My agent in New York read a few paragraphs from Lane's book to me over the phone. I see what you mean, as far as Kay Black is concerned. Lane, however, did quote me correctly. He originally had me saying I stood in the bathroom window on the night of the slaying and saying I said it was physically impossible to have fired off a shot. I never said it was physically impossible, I merely said it would have been difficult and perhaps impossible to have gotten a clear shot, as a result of protruding brachhes, treees and the heavy vegetation and cited the AP Paragraph.

Harriet Van HORNE ??? , New York Post columnist either misquoted Lane, or Lane made one bad bobo. She quotes Lane as saying Holloman spent 25 years in J. Edgar Hoover's office. She also quotes Lane as saying he talked to Grace Walden. I don't believe he did. Instead, he read my Computers & People article, number 10, and talked to Charles Murphy, Mrs. Walden's lawyer. He really gave a snow job to Murphy who was impressed by him.

According to my agent, Lane admits in his book, that he trick or hoodwinked Holloman into the interview by introducing Abby Mann as the author of Kojak, which he is, and that they were in Memphis to get scenario ideas for the Kojak program. Then, they got him to talk about the King case, etc, etc...he tells me that he gives you hell in your book for spelling Redditt in"Frame-Up" as Reddick. Minor error compared to his gross errors in facts.

No word on my book. My agent was told by one of the readers that Doubleday --or at least some of its editors-=want to vindicate the name of its company, as there have been so many complaint about Frank's book. So my book will be read by at least nine officials my agent said.

What did you think about the National Inquirer's centerfold piece on JFK and the Dade County Circuit Court judge's view on the Milteer development?

As far as the Mafiaso's story that the CIA-FBI was willing to pay $1 million, it is significant that this move was made in January 1963, [redacted] the same month King had a savage debate in an open SCLC meeting where many of his SCLC ofificials bitterly criticized King for the June March on Washington. That was when King slipped, and dropped his nonviolent approach, by saying something to the effect of paralyzing the city and shutting down the nation's capital. There was overtones of violence to what he said, but whether he was speaking in the [redacted] heat of passion, one will never know.

As far as [redacted] relevance, the Mafiaso 's story--if it can be verified--would seem signficant in that it would tend to prove the CIA and FBI were capable of planning and executing such a crime, a proposition many people--and sometimes myself--have difficulty in believing.

There are only two ways to proceed in investigating a conspiracy. In the King case, you can start with the man accused and go backward, trying to pick up clues as to whether there was a conspiracy. However, as Ray either does not know too much, or is afraid of telling what he knows, you can only go so far in that direction. On the other hand, if you have evidence that there had been a conspiracy to kill King, then the investigation must then proceed to the point where you can determine if there was any definite link between the conspiracy itself and the actual killing itself. Or in the language of a lawyer, it must be determined if there is a chain of actual causation between the conspiracy itself and the actual killing. Then, one must determine if the proximate cause of the assassination [redacted] sprung from the influence of those [redacted] conspiring, or whether the actual trigger man acted on his alone and would have acted on his own without the influence of other conspirator acting upon him.

I think I know what you are driving at when you asked me to see if the Loeb archives revealed any information as to whether the strike had been near the settlement point at that time. That was exactly the fact I was looking for when I researched the file.

No, there is nothing in the Loeb's written memoranda, etc, logs, pertaining to the substance of any negotiation settlement discussions. The best sources [redacted] for the proposition that the strike was close to the settlement [redacted] before King, came to Memphis to march with the sanitation workers on March 28 comes from Rev. James Lawson, and two members of the city council: Jerri Blanchard, and J.o. Patterson.

I remember discussing this with you at our last long discussion in Memphis when you came here with Les Payne. (you probably thought I was too drunk to remember huh).

I remember citing you the authority of a master's thesis written [redacted] by Robert Bailey and on file with the Memphis State University"s history department. This was the opinion of the writer, Bailey.

I respect Bailey's scholarship and his ideas in general, but since I have talked to you, I have become more cautious concerning this proposition.

For instance, Loeb's silence or less vehement language at that point might have created in the minds of those city council members trying to settle the strike that Loeb was weakening. No one knows what was going on in Loeb's mind. There is no evidence in the public records or the rhetoric of Loeb quoted in the press at that time that the strike was near settlement. The best case Bob can make for the proposition is that there was, at least in private, a majority of city councilmen willing to deal with the union and negotiate [redacted]

settlement. However, merely having a majority on the council would not be enough to settle the strike if Henry Loeb did not want to negotiate with the union. The city charter gave powers of administratic to the mayor not the council, the legislative arm. Whether the council could supercede the mayor, take matters in its own hands, and sign a contract with the union andmake it binding on the city, [redacted] was an issue being fiercely debated by council members at that time. While some council members said they would vote to approve a move by the executive arm to recognize the union, they would not vote in public on a resolution urging Mayor Leb to recognize the union. These members took the [redacted] position that it would violate the principle of the city charter if it sought to dictate to the executive arm on important issues where the charter gave administrative control to the mayor.

Of course when King was killed, I think Loeb threw in the towel because of big pressure from big businessmen, who, hithertofore, had remained aloof on most municipal affairs. One such businessman was a multi-millionaire, philantrophist, Abe Plough. Loeb is basically an establishmentarian in a crisis, and he could no longer take his stubborn, independent stance when the forces of the establishment closed in on him. So he recognized the union and the union ended up getting more than it had originally asked for.

How long will it be before your book on the King case comes out?

Your friend,

Wayne

Wayne