

Rt. 12, Frederick, Md. 21701
11/16/76

Mr. Peter C. Grenquist
President, Trade Book Division
Prentice-Hall, Inc.
Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 07632

Dear Mr. Grenquist,

In your letter of the 12th you ask for "the ample proofs referred to" in my letter of the 9th. It is my letter, although my wife signed it in my absence. She also signed the registered receipt for me today when she saw the rural mail carrier.

You also say "Prentice-Hall would not knowingly publish plagiarized material." Had I thought otherwise I'd have gone to court immediately. Instead I wrote to notify you. I appreciate that you have to take authors at good faith.

My files on Mark Lane are, unfortunately, extensive. This was made necessary by what I have no reluctance in describing as a career of utter irresponsibility and unclever thievery. Copying them all is an impossibility, although if so counselled I will make them all available to you subject to one restriction only: the rights of privacy of others than Lane. I have asked Mr. James H. Lesar, Esq., a friend and associate and my counsel in numerous FOIA suits including the current one for the FBI's suppressed King assassination evidence, to represent me. His address is 910 16 St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20006.

As a sample I enclose a duplicate of two New Times clippings sent me by others. Both are considerably understated but they give you the general idea. Les Payne is in Africa. He left later than Lane and gang thought so before he left he was informed by those to whom Lane represented himself as Mr. Payne's representative of this deception and misrepresentation. It is by this means that he was able to pretend, as he has with explicitness, that Mr. Payne's work and mine are Lane's and his friend Abby Mann's. I have both on tape on radio and TV appearances making this claim. Repeatedly. I have the same in print. I think also in a letter of Lane's that was sent me.

I reply in haste, without consulting counsel, in your interest. I have heard that you put out a generous advance. However, I hope you can understand that I also want to protect my own interest. It is for this reason that I do not want to go too far without counsel. While Mr. Lesar has had his own experiences with Lane he is not familiar with my files, having had no occasion for it. I will see him later this week.

You will find that there is virtually no work other than in support of the official account of the King assassination that is dependable that is not mine or as with Mr. Payne, begins with me. I was recovering from an acute thrombophlebitis when I turned some of this over to Mr. Payne. He carried it forward with exemplary professionalism. If Mr. Gregory is going to contribute anything other than his name and reputation I would guess it is the thoroughly discredited Byron Watson story. This is not original with Mr. Gregory. I have it from the original investigator in his own hand as well as from several official sources. It is a disinformation operation that I am confident will result in a severe black reaction against Prentice-Hall. The official investigations prove it has no connection with the King assassination. It is a youthful criminal's effort to exploit the King assassination in the hope of getting out of jail.

You will also be clobbered by Lane's improvisations when he tried to steal the Redditt-Holloman story. If he sticks to the version he gave out the FBI will batter you and ruin the book. If he changes it reviewers and I will. I have forced four internal re-investigations of the FBI by the Department of Justice and they are well prepared to

cope with Mr. Lane's improvisations on the theme I copyrighted some six years ago and then turned over to Mr. Payne with my later work. This was with the understanding that I would use it in my current book and in fact I had that part written in February or March of this year.

Believe me one of Lane's associates tried to get this work from me through what he thought were cunning contracts and glittering promises not at all in the written offers. There are witnesses besides the written records I have. When these meaningless offers were made I asked a friend in the movie industry to represent me. There were phone calls to others of which I also have the records.

Lane also misrepresented himself to James Earl Ray, for whose habeas corpus petition and evidentiary hearing I also conducted the investigations. In this Lane violated the standards of the bar among other ways by not asking the permission of Mr. Ray's only court-recognized counsel, Mr. Lesar. Lane knows Lesar and knows that he also represents Mr. Ray. Lane got to see Mr. Ray only because the warden was not at the jail and because of false, written promises he made. I have this. If this wretched misconduct were not enough Lane then blabbed on a radio talk show that he intended using his credentials as a lawyer as a device to see Mr. Ray, even though as a lawyer he knows this is improper.

There is more. I tell you these things in your interest. With Mr. Lesar's permission I am quite prepared to go much farther and in detail if he thinks it is necessary. My reluctance to do more now without counsel has nothing to do with you. I know Lane as others, including you, do not. As a liar, ~~knave~~ thief and propagandist he has skills he lacks as an investigator. (He went to Memphis the week of that crime and left empty-handed.) With Mr. Lesar's assent I am more than willing to confront both Lane and Mr. Gregory if you want this. I am also willing to discuss this by phone if Mr. Lesar agrees. If you want this and it happens I urge that it be taped in both our interests and as an historical record.

Both our interests are served, I believe, by your providing Mr. Lesar with the details of your arrangements in this matter, including the representations made to you. I consider it possible that you may at some point want to recover your advance. I am confident I can make this possible and will in return for a public statement by you because the word of your contract ⁱⁿ the Lane ripoff has already been hurtful to me. This is how I know of it. I have seen no announcement by you. (The same is true in Hollywood where my knowledge comes from the damage done me.)

You refer to plagiarism only. Mr. Lesar informs me this is not the only actionable offense and cause of damage. Also, your counsel can give you an idea of the cost of about 15 court sessions this year alone. This is only a small part of what I have had to do to develop what is being stolen.

While I want to be as informative as possible I do hope you can understand my feeling that it is better that this be through counsel or with his sanction and advice.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg