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October 29, 1969

Mr. Mike V. Gonzalez
Attorney at Law
501 Garza Street
Del Rio, Texas 78840

Re: State vs. Natividad Fuentes

Dear Mike:

I wanted to give you a report on the Fuentes case that might serve to bring others up to date as well. As you know, the case was set for trial for October 27 and was tried in County Court on the 27th and 28th. The jury convicted Mr. Fuentes of driving while intoxicated and assessed a punishment of one year in jail and a \$200.00 fine with probation. I explained to Mr. Fuentes that this meant that he would not have to actually pay the fine nor serve the jail sentence. I am not sure whether or not he will have to pay court costs.

The case was a swearing match from beginning to end. The State called the three Highway Patrolmen involved in the arrest plus one deputy sheriff (Barrow) and a liquor control agent who was with Barrow (Wilson) and a young man named Glen Muecke. Wilson and Muecke contributed absolutely nothing to either side of the case. The three Highway Patrolmen and Barrow contradicted themselves beyond belief. I could not conceive of any jury anywhere else convicting Fuentes under that state of facts, but unfortunately we were not trying the case anywhere else.

The jury panel was something to behold. Of the 24 persons on the panel, only two were Latins. This was not too bad, but the panel was something else again. I will not elaborate other than to state that the case was lost then and there. I explained

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to Mr. Fuentes to some extent the cost of appeal and recommended to him that the case be left as it is. Even if the case were reversed, he would never obtain a jury acquittal in that county assuming that the jury makeup in this trial is typical of the jury panels.

Dr. L. E. Guice testified in behalf of Mr. Fuentes and was cooperative in every way that he could be.

There remained pending against Mr. Fuentes the two cases filed in Justice Court for speeding and driving on the wrong side of the street. I want to remind you that they are still outstanding and that something will have to be done on them.

Mr. Fuentes is under the impression that you have been paid \$2,000.00 for handling his case. I explained to him that I did not believe the figure was correct at all and further, that I had received absolutely no compensation for my work in his case nor did I expect him to pay me anything. I have paid my own expenses. I think it would be wise for you to clarify the situation with Mr. Fuentes.

If you want any further information on this please let me hear from you. I hope I won't have any more cases like this to try in the pecan grove.

Sincerely yours,

EDWARDS & DE ANDA



James DeAnda

JD/go