

# Saturday Review

ADVERTISING AWARDS

**FRAME-UP:  
The Martin Luther King/  
James Earl Ray Case**

by Harold Weisberg

Outerbridge & Dienstfrey/Dutton,  
518 pp., \$10

---

*Reviewed by Fred J. Cook*

---

■ On March 10, 1969, in a Memphis courtroom, the curtain rose on one of the most brazen travesties of justice ever to disgrace America. James Earl Ray, the accused killer of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was to go on trial. But there was no trial. There was instead a deal between judge, prosecutor, and defense attorney. Ray would plead guilty in exchange for a life sentence, and the court would return the verdict so much desired by the American Establishment: Ray had acted alone.

The drama ran as smoothly as a well-plotted Hollywood film—up to a point. Then James Earl Ray spoke. He did not agree, he said, with Attorney General Ramsey Clark and FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, who had been insisting there was no conspiracy. Here was the man who had to know, and, at some risk to himself, he was telling the court that the script was phony. Defense Attorney Percy Foreman, who had had to browbeat his unwilling client into copping a plea instead of standing trial, leaped into the breach. It was not necessary, he said, for Ray to accept everything; all that mattered

was that he was pleading guilty to the crime. Was he? the judge asked. Yes, Ray said, and the juggernaut of official machinery rolled over his feeble but courageous protest.

Harold Weisberg, a onetime government investigator who has devoted himself to a pursuit of the ignored or suppressed facts about political assassinations, has now turned to the case of James Earl Ray in the book he calls *Frame-Up*. He does not doubt that Ray was implicated in the King assassination, but his thesis is that Ray filled the same role Lee Harvey Oswald did in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in Dallas. In Weisberg's view Ray, like Oswald, was not the killer; he was the decoy, the patsy, the man meant to be caught.

Weisberg shows that in the King case, just as in Dallas, a baffling use was made of doubles. Just as there is evidence that two men used the name of Lee Harvey Oswald, so is there evidence that someone besides James Earl Ray knew and used some of his various aliases. Here are a few of the points Weisberg raises:

*Ray's arrest at Heathrow (London) Airport, June 8, 1968.* According to Scotland Yard, Ray, traveling under the name of Ramon George Sneyd, came into the airport about 6:15 A.M. on a flight from Lisbon. While waiting for his plane to refuel and fly on to Brussels, he wandered unnecessarily into the immigration section for incoming passengers and was spotted and detained. But on that date a man using the name of Ramon George