

Dear Gerry,

7/18/90

Glad you all enjoyed the visit with relatives as you did.

I can't begin to tell you how terribly bad Melanson's The Murkin Conspiracy is. After reading it and more, after also reading the ms of his manuscript on the JFK assassination, I think it is obvious he is trying to stake out a claim for ownership of those subjects. The crap is really frightfully bad, ignorant, egotripping and sometimes really stupid. When I read it I made a record for history because I believed that should be done. But I've made no uses of what I did in haste and disgust as I read. Only Jerry and Dave have copies. But if you want one, I'll make it. I don't want to get stirred up and I believe that any arguments might be bad for my health. ...He is also dishonest.

You refer to Kimble. He made it all up and on its face it cannot be believed.

No police protection was withdrawn. The police did provide an exceptionally high-level escort, not the best, and it was not withdrawn, if that is the right word, until long after repeated demands that they go from the Memphis King party. Redditt was not there to protect King, which was impossible from the firehouse, and had it been possible to protect King from there, Redditt's purpose in being there was limited to spying.

Melanson had no need to mention Foreman. He mentioned nothing about the crime, for that matter. He merely assumed Ray's guilt. As in his JFK ms. he assumed Oswald's guilt.

Perhaps worst of all other than the permeating dishonesty is the ignorance he flaunts about the spookeries. He has written about them but he knows nothing at all other than he's read in silly novels or ignorant newsletters. Perhaps trifling books, too.

I'd like to read that Robeson biography. I knew his son was writing one but I'd not heard of Larsen's. You are correct on his having the courage of his convictions. He also displayed physical courage. What I did not tell Hanh-Trang is that in singing the song he made famous, Old Man River, he included a last stanza that is close to, for the period, revolutionary, but it is never sung....It also took courage and principle to do The Emperor Jones.

On the Vitamin E, I was told that there was controversy about its effectiveness but that separately, two clinics, one in Calif. and one in Canada had had good results in using it after venous thrombosis, the reason I started taking it. One clinic was of the Shute (phon) Brothers.

Al, who is working on a flower bed with someone I have doing what is forbidden me, will be quite happy to get the Vietnamese tea. Thanks to Hanh-Trang.

Nothing really new here. Had a disagreeable call from Harry Livingstone, High Treason, and I'll enclose my letter telling him I don't want to hear from him. He has flipped out again.

Our best to you all,

Dear Harold,

July 15, 1990

This past Tuesday (7/10) we arrived back home after a ten-day vacation to Milwaukee for a family reunion. It was the first time my side of the family had gotten together as a whole since Hanh-Trang and I were married ten years ago. We had a good time, especially Claire and Nick who got a chance to play with their cousins who they do not often see.

I did manage to finish Melanson's book during the vacation. It seemed to me that there was not a whole lot to it. Although I realize that I have more background than most people to critically evaluate the book, I must say that even without that the book does not seem to stand on its own two feet. For all the attention Melanson pays to such things as the Galt alias, Jules Rico Kimble, or the withdrawal of police protection for King, he does not prove anything about some intelligence conspiracy to kill King. I was also disturbed at all the attention he paid to the HSCA investigation and at how little he said about the original travesty of justice. I don't believe there was one reference to Percy Foreman. Nor did he mention anything about FBI deceit in the original investigation. I did not even think it was particularly well-written or organized. I should be meeting with my history colleague soon and I don't believe I will have much problem pointing out some of these weaknesses. Also, I hope he has had time to read Frame-UP, which he said he was going to do when I last spoke to him about 3 weeks ago.

I have been working through the Sanitation Workers' files slowly. I am just getting back to them after the vacation. I am taking notes as I go. One thing seems clear so far -- that is how thoroughly the FBI seemed to have it covered.

A few days ago I picked up a new short biography of Paul Robeson by Rebecca Larsen, entitled: Paul Robeson: A Hero Before His Time. It was only 140 pages but I learned much more about this great man who I remember you had known and were highly praised. He truly was a "renaissance man", as you told Hanh-Trang. But for all his intelligence and talent, the thing I admired most about him was that he had the courage of his convictions. He always tried to speak and act according to a clear sense of justice and principle, insisting on playing only in theaters which did not discriminate and never faltering through all the abuse he took at the hands of HUAC and the press. The author also mentioned FBI snooping and dirty tricks aimed at him.

Hanh-Trang said she would write to you soon about the question you asked about vitamin E. As far as she knows, nothing has been proven about any harmful side-effects of taking it, but at the same time she is also not sure about the claims made for what it is supposed to do. She is having the hospital library do a search for any recent studies. She is also planning to send Lillian some of that Vietnamese tea she promised.

Hope you are well, and thanks for all the recent letters.

Yours,

