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The Editor
New York Times Book Review
Times Square
New York, NY 10036

May 10, 1971

Dear Sir,

What John Kaplan sought to pass off as a review of Harold Weisberg's book "Frame-up - The Martin Luther King-James Earl Ray Case" in the May 2 Book Review was little more than a personal vindictive attack by one who has long been a partisan for the official no-conspiracy line in the area of political assassinations against one who has maintained that darker forces are at work than the official liners would have us believe.

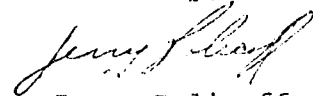
Kaplan's background is one that should immediately have disqualified him as a possible reviewer of Weisberg's book, and I am sure that the Times would have eliminated him as its choice had it been aware of his past.

Kaplan has served the Justice Dep't. faithfully both as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for San Francisco and as a lawyer attached to the Department's Criminal Division. It is the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice which receives some of Weisberg's severest criticism in "Frame-up." In the Spring 1967 issue of American Scholar this same John Kaplan authored a rather lengthy article entitled "The Assassins." The article was a total defense of the Warren Report, and in it, Kaplan described the various Warren Commission critics as "revisionists," "perverse," and "silly." Among those criticized for "adding to the confusion" was the New York Times for an editorial which appeared on Nov. 25, 1966 calling for some official response to the many puzzling questions that had been raised by "responsible persons" concerning the conclusions of the Warren Commission. Then, as in his current review, Kaplan engaged in a personal attack on Weisberg rather than attempting a reasonable analysis of "Whitewash." He described that book as "the most strident, bitter, and generally irrationally biased of all the attacks on the Commission." Kaplan refused to give examples of Weisberg's "irrational bias," however, saying it was "charity" not to do so.

Kaplan's lack of integrity is demonstrated by his snide inferences about Weisberg's qualifications to write this type of a book (he is described elsewhere as a chicken farmer.) He doubtless knows that Weisberg was an investigative reporter, served as an Intelligence Analyst with OSS (predecessor to the CIA) during WW II, and was for several years a highly respected Senate Investigator. That Kaplan did not mention these aspects of Weisberg's resumé points out his own dishonesty as dramatically as does his omission to state his own disqualifying background as a reviewer of "Frame-up."

Whether or not "Frame-up" proved what it alleges - that Ray was part of a larger conspiracy to assassinate Martin Luther King, and that he did not fire the actual shot - John Kaplan is hardly the objective reviewer to pass judgement on its contents.

Sincerely,



Jerry Policoff