

Bill Pepper and his Orders To Kill

9/25/95 -10/8/95

When out of the blue I got Bill Pepper's letter of 8/27 with all the nice things he said in it about me and my work I wondered why, particularly because his book ^{was} he said about to appear. I responded with a police letter wishing him well and when he told me his publisher is Carroll & Graf, I wrote with some cautions about them and asked him to have them send me a copy because otherwise they would not. It was a pleasant surprise when one he ^{from London by} send air mail came day before yesterday. Without reading any of it I again wrote and thanked him. That relieved of ^{writing him} doing that after I read it and I'm glad I anticipated that.

Long, long ago he was in touch with me seeking information about ~~the~~ ^{the} King assassination. Whatever he asked, I told him, sent him or both. But before then I'd heard that he was writing a book on it and when he did not tell me that while seeking my work I did wonder why. That was some time before he moved to England. Later he came, I showed him where which files are and how to use the copier and told him to help himself. He did. And when he said he'd like to do more but did not have the time, I got a Hood senior, ^{Amy} Ray Stevens, who'd searched my files for John Davis, to work for Pepper. As with Davis, I should say with all others, unless I am asked I do not know what interests them and what they copy. But whatever Pepper wanted, Amy did get and copied for him. *when he came he was Ray's lawyer.*

I started to write this after reading and annotating the first third of his book, to Chapter 18, and finding few references to me and an enormous amount of avoidance of it and of what I did. ^{JUST} I read his acknowledgements (506-49) for the first time. There after effusive thanks to many, including a not inconsiderable number of phonies and finks, he has this sentence (508): "The considerable previous research and investigative efforts particularly of Harold Weisberg as well as Mark Lane have provided an essential foundation for my own work."

Of ^{what} his own work that to now I've read remarkable little is his and what that little can be is worse than worthless. When he talks about the books he's read he does not mention "Frame-Up". It is not in his index but I've ^{passed} ~~passed~~ one unindexed reference in a footnote.

Where he lists the judges he make no reference to the evidentiary hearing in the federal district court in Memphis to determine whether Ray would get a hearing, or the the prior litigating of the habeas corpus petition which got that hearing. In fact, as far as I've read the reader has no way of knowing ^{whether} ~~it~~ ever existed. Or that I did the investigating for both and lined up and prepared most of the witness for their testimony. (Which when he uses it he presents as his own work often by saying that "D learned" and never saying how he "learned.")

He uses FBI and DJ records he got here as his own work not saying how he got them in his rather brief notes some of which do not relate to what is cited to them. He

after all this time ^{is} so ignorant he does not even know how to cite them and his citations of them cannot be ¹ used to locate them. He knew I'd gotten that about 80,000 thousand pages to which he had access by an FOIA lawsuit that lasted 10 years. He makes no reference to the ¹ existence of those records or how they were obtained. Which he ¹ knew. In fact, when he does mention what he says were my sources, that is not mentioned and he misplaces emphasis on what he says and also says what is not correct. This is also true of what he says I told him about the shooting. He says I told him it was from the parking lot next to the firehouse. This cannot be a simple error because where King was hit eliminates that as a possibility. Moreover, I told him in detail why I believe what I believe is the only possibility but his book would be undermined by that as would his pretense of his being the one who figured that out. I told him the getaway car was on that parking lot and the shooter in the bushes facing the motel. I did not tell him my reasons and he did not ask me.

There is very little nonsense he had not gone for to the point I've reached and he is big for a wide variety of ponies, frauds and finks.

The one thing he seems to have taken from Lane is the impossibility that Gracie ~~Step~~ Walde, ^{of what she saw,} Charlie Stephens' common-law wife, was a witness ^{allegedly} and was abused because she ^{is.}

Just about ^{the rest of} all this nonsense was in the FOIA records I got and also to a large degree in the media, but he presents it all as his work, saying that he "learned" it or got in his investigation. That, to this point, is worse than a farce and from what Jerry McKnight told me it gets even worse than that.

Including this nutty stuff as real, I cannot think of anything other than his self-promotions or his linking himself with King and his family and friends that was not all public 25 years ago and more and then again at the time of the House assassins committee. But ^{some of} even that gibberish he uses as his work. He even interviewed ^{some} of those people who were fabricators or just plain wrong and presents his interviews as the origins of that stuff when even after his interviews he has ^{some} less than was public and published for so long.

There is, I believe, a fair means of evaluating his work both of investigating and in court for James when he made no use at all the transcripts of the two weeks of evidentiary hearings, where evidence was produced by us under oath and cross-examined by the State the only time evidence in the King case was tested in the system of American justice. He also does not mention but he did use ^{some of what I got in} the lawsuit in which I got what our government used to contradict Ray.

There is much more I can add but do not take more time for it. I will not unless what I see in the rest warrants it. My copy of the book will be annotated. But I think the minimum I can fairly say of this sham of a serious book that begins with

many dishonesties that are not accidental. of which some are above is that it is a rather poor effort by a would-be Perry Mason to present himself as the real thing. That he has no better judgement as an experienced lawyer, a barrister in England and a lawyer who in the book boasts about his foreign-government clients is his own characterization. It is incredible that he can treat as serious the obvious fabrications of so many. But there is not one he raises that he discards. He does express a mild question or two about some aspects of some of them but he does not reject even the most obviously ridiculous.

One of his most common cheapskate tricks is to interview those who were interviewed two decades ago and more and who were reported in the media and write about it as though it all originates with him. This is so omnipresent it also was by design, not by accident.

He does this also with MSCA witnesses who were in the press before called by MSCA.

Pepper, continued 9/26/95

I've read through what he calls the trial and was actually an agreed-to TV show but what he refers to ^{as} an actual trial and through the decision and into the beginning of his Part V. I've continued annotating the book. Here I make only a few general comments,

First it is clear that he thinks he is and wants to be regarded as Perry Mason.

Second is that he has gone for a remarkable collection of the most irresponsible junk that all those who enjoy doing that or hope to benefit from it were able to make up. Little of it is new. Except perhaps to him. What is new is at best dubious and if it has any truth he has contradicted himself on it.

Third, this is where his determined refusal to learn what we adduced under oath at the evidentiary hearing - of which he has yet to make any mention at all - hurt his case albeit a TV case and no more.

Fourth, I have trouble believing that he could himself believe a large part of what he put on. I am sure he believed some of it and that he is as susceptible as those who merchandize phony JFK conspiracy cases. But like them, if he believes one of these theories he believes them all.

Some of what is new and I do not believe relates to Lloyd Jowers, who then owned the restaurant in the flophouse building. The essence of it was fed to the papers locally and they carried it. It was that Jowers was essentially the payoff man in the assassination, acting for Frank Liberto, of the produce company and alleged acting for Carlos Marcello. Jowers allegedly picked up the assassination rifle, too. Supposedly he also had a black waitress working for him as his mistress. *The Liberto line started with Bill Satter.*

He features Jules Ricco Kimble as I believe, he has it Kimbel, who fed the wildest stuff to Garrison, who did not use it. Kimble also made up an obviously madeup self-involvement in the King assassination. He connects himself with both the CIA and Marcello and says he flew two gunmen from N.O. to Memphis to do the dirty deed. An internal memo to the CIA director, and I doubt there would be lies in it, states that the CIA had nothing to do with him and that he had tried to interest his public office in New Orleans in himself and failed. They wanted nothing to do with him. Melanson also bases part of his book on Kimble.

Pepper is obviously building to an army conspiracy and that appears to have begun in his mind when he saw the expose of army intelligence's anti-black and anti-King activities edposed by the Memphis Commercial-Appeal.

Where he needs sources notes he has none. It is take his word for it and the reader has to do that or reject what he says. Which is so juvenile it should be rejected.

Most of this trash is not new but the average reader will not know that or even have reason to suspect it.

This is one of the more reprehensible characteristics of the book. And he a lawyer! He does take advantage of the reader and it is not easy to believe he does not intend that.

But then with the records of some lawyers in the JFK matter this may be unfair. But if he does really believe it he says much about himself in that.

Up to 338 in what he called "The Continuing Investigation" he has gone into a string of bring double-crossed by those he employed and trusted. With a consistent record of following the queen in Alice, doing or thinking of all those impossible things before breakfast.

Resumed 9/27: It seems that little by little, the more he writes and adds detail and complaints, just about all of those on whom he depends he says, without using the word, are liars. Only he continues to have steadfast belief in what they said that he wants to believe. Only what he likes is not lies from his lying sources.

It is also clear that he has spent, meaning wasted, a fortune on this. Aside from all of his and other travel, which was quite expensive. He hired a rather large number of investigators. *Some were probably in touch with me.*

He tried to get court authorization for test-firing the so-called death rifle. He did not get it. But he tells about his preparations for it. They began by getting a bale of cotton and making boxes to stuff with cotton into which they would fire and retrieve specimens. And Wallace Milam was to be his replacement for what he refers to as a chemist based on the knowledge he says Wallace has on spectrographic examinations and on neutron activation analysis. Wallace is bright and may have learned something about those tests but that would hardly be good enough for court use. Besides which firing into cotton has not been the preferred means of retrieving samples for comparison for years. Cotton does leave microscopic marks on the bullets. Firing into water-tanks seems to be the preferred means. And that can be done almost anywhere. Pepper says they were to use the Police range and were frustrated by various means. He hardly knows much about such things because after the assassination that rifle was fired many times. All that firing would alter the marks that would be left on the bullet after all those uses of it.

9/28: In his "The Continuing Investigation," to page 430, he has his army conspiracy thing of which the only confirmation is a picture of some rather black typing, seemingly teletype, that appears to have not a single thing giving it any connection with his alleged Army 111th MIG "triangulation" (how Garrison loved that word!) against King and Andy Young. One place from which there were to shoot was 1500 feet away. Another was

from a watertower, out in the open, where nobody was reported seen and where anyone with a rifle could be rather conspicuous. Some of what is essential in this story as he

tells it, all with made-up names for those he says he interviewed, clearly makes no sense at all, like that the Army's supposed sniper did not expect King to expose himself on a balcony! He had no other way of leaving his room! And then he'd be exposed for quite some distance before he got to the stairs. Pepper has the same anonymous sources for the same army gang of assassins just missing out on a shot to kill King at Selma because he turned onto a bridge! But between Selma and Memphis that gang had no other chance? No better spot? When they were allegedly in Memphis also armed with anti-tank rockets that supposedly fit into a bag with many other weapons, they did not think of using one of them sometime when King was going to or coming from someplace in a car? Engraving or leaving an airport, for illustration? None of it makes any sense at all and his one supposed piece of evidence has not a single indication in it of what he says it means, not even the date as I can make the numbers out. The one thing it refers to is "recon" and that can be anywhere in the world. This seems to have its origin in the Commercial-Appeals long expose of the army spying on blacks, King in particular. Why the people involved would talk at all or to Pepper in particular, particularly because they had left the country and were in Latin America, is not clear and makes little sense. But then by this point, after what I've read that Pepper wrote, it is increasingly difficult to credit anything he says.

Next he gets into the Jack Youngblood mythology, one of the very first, returns to it, I should say.

10-8: I finished this trash some time ago and did not take time for making other notes because what I did instead seemed more important.

He says he got the Bill Sartor autopsy, that it shows he used drugs and that means he was killed by someone forcing the drugs into him!

Years ago I located Sartor's former wife who I think had been a reporter and who then had a public relations job in New York City. The new tape recorded I'd gotten that day malfunctioned. I do not recall how much I have on tape but I have a file under her name, Jan Scudder. She said that Bill was onto drugs heavily and was wild and un-dependable. She left him before he finished his Memphis adventure. He'd been with the Hodding Carter paper.

The only reason Pepper suggests for killing Sartor, which did not happen, is because of what he was investigating and that began with McFerrin, who began the story about overhearing what only the utterly insane would do, talk about the assassination with others present at the Liberto produce house. When that story got out the Memphis FBI picked McFerrin up and from their reports he had no support for anything he said. I may be understating this. I have a file on McFerrin that can be checked.

McFerrin had been very brave in local efforts to get some equality of treatment. I'd not find it hard to believe that he made his story up as part of a way he saw

As a means
 for advancing local civil rights. In any event, the FBI reported negatively on what he said to it. And his story makes no sense at all. It had been well reported. Sartor wrote it for TIME.

My recollection of what ~~Suec~~ Sudder told me is that by the time Sartor was into that he was totally undependable.

She said he had detailed notes for a book that his mother in Texas had. She failed to get the mother to talk to me or to let me see any of what Sartor left. As I now recall I was then still the case investigator.

Because the book is obviously an amateurish and silly work I made no notes other than on the book when I laid this aside. It turned my stomach because it has the effect of making it that more unlikely that Ray will ever get a trial.

Pepper's stories about Lloyd Jowers and the supposed death rifle are ridiculous and contradictory. One is that as soon as he returned to his restaurant from the overgrown area behind it he took the rifle apart and then, in the open, took it out to his car that Pepper says was a brown stationwagon. I interviewed Jowers and also the cabbie Jim McCraw and prepared Jim Cesar to question them. Among other things both testified that Jowers that day was using his white Cadillac, and they testified to this separately. When ^{where} Jowers had that parked was important in proving that the Ray Mustang was not where the government says it was. ^{Pepper} Sartor does not mention that they testified under oath in this matter. Cannot, really, because that refutes all the story involving them that he tells. But imagine, with all the cops running all around there, Pepper says ~~at~~ that in the open Jowers took that disassembled rifle which was still quite long and identifiable ~~in the open~~ ^{out} to his stationwagon on Main St. Unseen! In daylight.

The Pepper conspiracy is a rather large one centering on Army intelligence, with King's opposition to the Viet Nam war as its motive. But all his claimed sources on this are anonymous. Only is his version they were beaten to the draw by the mob, by Liberto acting for ^{Pepper} Carlo Marcello, with Rank the actual assassin—and he names a Raoul.

There are details of the actual crime he has incorrect and he even has Rev. Kyles as an involved FBI informer. He does not know the difference between an informer and a source.

I began not trusting him because he began intending a book and sought information from me while not telling me that. I believe the book and what could come from it may have always been what was of greatest interest to him. Otherwise he would have sought and ~~sued~~ used information he knew I had and make available. Like the work I did for the habeas corpus and the evidentiary hearing. He ~~was~~ never looked at any of that or asked me about any of that. And he was acting in Ray's interest?

This is a much worse book than I've indicated but it is not worth more time. It is also in intent a dishonest book by a would-be Perry/Mason who is no more than a Keystone Kop, junior grade, rookie.