

Ellen Ray and William Schapp
Covert Action
P.O.Box 34583
Washington, D.C. 20043

7627 Old Receiver Road
Frederick, Md. 21701
7/6/90

Dear both,

It is too bad that those of you intending to expose the transgressions of the spookeries wind up, as you do in "The Murder of Martin Luther King, Jr.," in doing their dirty work. The Johns, Edginton and Sergeant, produced this disinformation. Much of which they simply took from as crappy and disreputable a work as anyone with authentic scholarly credentials, ever turned out - Phil Melanson's The Murkin Conspiracy.

As they say, I was Ray's investigator. As they do not say, it is I who filed costly and lengthy FOIA litigation against the CIA, FBI and others, to bring to light the FBI's Murkin and other files and the CIA records they ^{also} attribute to others. They had unrestricted access to all I got and to copies. (The suit against the DJ and FBI and other components, filed in 1975, still has not had its last gasp.)

If they had used, as they could have, these files, or had they checked out some of the streetgarbage they were being fed, as on occasion they did by phoning me, they'd have known that what they say about Kimble, Billet, Baird and perhaps others whose names I do not remember, was in all instances merely made up. There is absolutely no question at all. The FBI, for example, had to defend itself, and it did, effectively and fully.

Long before Kimble made up the fairy tale of his King assassination involvement he went to Garrison, which is not precisely the way the Johns put it, with his silly JFK assassination concoction. This forced the CIA to inform its higher echelons. They lie, but not internally, on such matters. That could mean disaster. If you want what I got you are welcome. He had no connection with the CIA at all but he did approach its Domestic Contact Service in New Orleans.

When just before their show was to air I heard that they'd gone ^{for} from Melanson's stupidities I sent them copies of the CIA records. His, of course, was long before your publication of their story. They knew. And if they did not believe what the CIA told itself, they also did not mention it.

The writing itself is sloppy and disreputable. Take The first mention of Kimble. He had these alleged intelligence connections solely because he said he did. Following up on Melanson, they interviewed him and he said it. Then the quantum leap: "He is known to have been in contact with David Ferrie..." How is this "known," to which I added my emphasis? Because Kimble said it. Do you have any idea how many people went to Garrison and others and claimed to have had contact with Ferrie and others? When they'd had none at all?

All such significant events bring the worms out from under the rotting wood. The MURKIN file alone has many dozens of such false claims, made up from reasons ranging from vengeance to hope for reward. Many, many prisoners made up stories hoping to get a reduced sentence from "helping" the FBI. (The crook/phony who made up the baseless St. Louis conspiracy story is one who did profit.)

Even on the basic and well-known facts of the crime the Johns do not get it straight. King was not killed by a "dum-dum bullet." It was ordinary hunting ammunition.

Percy Foreman did not spend two months trying to persuade Ray to cop a plea. He waited two months to propose it.

Here they take the guilt-ridden DA, Phil Canale, at his word in an interview. In the Ray evidentiary hearing he testified under oath, as did others on this. They could have had access to and copies of the transcripts if they'd wanted them. But they preferred to pretend to doing original work when they did not. Thus they pretend that Arthur Murtagh told them in an interview what he in fact testified to on coast-to-coast TV when he was

before HSCA. I referred ^{to} them to that testimony and to Murtagh, but they got nothing new from him.

In their version, the copped plea led to a "slightly reduced" sentence. It in fact was the maximum sentence short of death, which had a good chance of being ~~reversed~~ ^{reversed} in those days. Ray got nothing but screwed from the deal.

They quote Canale's self-service, that Ray had the notice ^{on} that if he entered a guilty plea he "could dismiss Foreman and demand a new lawyer." The judge had told Ray he could not again change counssl, so he knew he could not fire Foreman before the plea.

They refer repeatedly to Ray's ~~a~~ "trial." He never had a trial. He had two hearings, one in state court after the plea and one in federal district court.

They did consult with me on the Dollahite story, which he made up with the FBI, as I told them. But after all our conversation and all their interview of him the Johns don't even have the direction in which ~~Dollahite~~ ^{Dollahite} allegedly went right, having it exactly backward, and they omit all he said he did to make the time appear to be less than had to have been required. They could have had the ~~Dollahite~~ ^{Dollahite} FBI reports here if they'd wanted them. They did get anything they wanted. They even have him afoot, "he raced around the corner onto Main Street." He used his police car and he went first along Mulberry Street, made a left turn, into ~~Huling~~ ^{Huling} or Butler, I've forgotten which, and then made another left turn onto ~~Mian~~ ^{Mian}, making stops and observations rather than racing as he did.

"He and the FBI agreed that whomever was about to drop the bundle had probably seen him coming and hidden in ~~up~~ the staircase, behind the door, until he had gone into the grill..." I recall no such thing, not even a hint of it, from the FBI reports.

Contrary to what the Johns write, Dr. King was not under any intense surveillance when he was in Memphis that time. None at all by the FBI and by the police it was from what they do not spell out, a doorway in the fire station a half-block away, two cops, both black.

This is so very bad they even manage what ordinarily I would regard as close to impossible, being unfair to the Memphis police. They say that ~~it~~ ^{it} is "incredible" that the police "bodyguards" were "removed the day of the shooting." The one correct statement in this is of incredibility. They were not bodyguards but high-echelon police officials. They were not merely "removed" and it was NOT the day King was killed. The Memphis ~~police~~ ^{police} ~~party~~ ^{party} insisted that the police be withdrawn. Originally the police did not honor this request and stationed themselves at the Lorraine motel. But when the ~~King~~ ^{King} people insisted that they leave, the police did. And that was the day ~~before~~ ^{before} the assassination. Saying it was the day of the assassination does smack of devious conspiracies, of course. But it wasn't so.

Throughout they pretend the work of others that they use without credit is their work. That Ray had Galt's signature comes from my (unmentioned) book, ~~Frameup~~ ^{Frameup}. Kimble is ~~Maln-~~ ^{Maln-}son's fiction. You add to this in your editorial in which you stake out their claim to "new evidence." Neither word applies. They have nothing new and nothing that reasonable people can call "evidence." ~~Kimble's~~ ^{Kimble's} word, entirely unsupported, is to them "compelling." Or is that what they call "strong"? Evidence indeed!

The political ~~assassinations~~ ^{assassinations} were the most terrible and costly crimes of my lifetime (I'm 77 now). They turned not only this country - they turned the whole world around. I doubt that anyone alive today will live long enough to see the end of their ruinous costs of all kinds. Our government, on all levels, could not have been more dishonest and corrupt in pretended investigations of them. (None was really ever investigated officially.) But this kind of combination of literary ~~theft~~ ^{theft}, utter incompetence, fabrication and resolute irresponsibility serves only to further deceive and mislead the sorrowing people and to tend to exculpate the offenders. You should see the hundreds of illustrations I have of the agencies taking such stuff apart and using it to prove to the executive and legislative branches that all criticism is wrong and baseless.

Send them a copy if you'd like. Regretfully, Harold Weisberg

Harold Weisberg