

Control

King assassination records appeals

Harold Weisberg 7/3/80

Information provided by other police - 70

In your 10/26/78 report, page 16, you state that the FBI had collected all RCMP and Scotland Yard documents; that their permission to release would be asked; and that the Atlanta police "specifically requested that any materials furnished by" it "receive 7(D) status." You also say that "the 'Byron Watson Report' furnished by the Atlanta Police Department" had been released by error.

In all of this you mis-state the actualities.

First of all, I do not question the need for there to be a confidential relationship with other police in criminal investigations. That is not in any sense involved in my appeals. I have not asked for any secret information nor have I asked for anything that violates any confidential relationship. To suggest ~~either~~ ^{either} is to mislead and for the FBI to do this is even worse.

In early 1977 it is I who proposed that these other police be written, with a copy to me to assure that the actual questions rather than general theory would be reflected in the letter the FBI would write. The FBI refused this. The reason is obvious: I was asking for only the non-secret, what had been placed in the public domain.

The FBI, these other police and both through permission granted to the prosecution had already disclosed what I sought and seek. The only difference is that in these disclosures emphasis was placed on the FBI's ~~own~~ own interpretation. Or the prosecution's.

You are factually mistaken in your representations regarding the so-called Byron Watson report, which also is the subject of improper GRD withholding pertaining to which my appeals have not been responded to in more than three years.

The FBI has not disclosed the Atlanta Police Watson report to me. I have most of a copy the Atlanta Police itself disclosed to others.

Byron Watson and his mother went public first. In about 1970 I was asked to review the information they had provided by James Earl Ray's then counsel. I evaluated it, as it allegedly pertained to the King assassination, as fiction, manufactured by the young Watson in an effort to escape jail on drug charges.

At that time the FBI, NOT the Atlanta Police, conducted an investigation. Its conclusions coincided with mine. The FBI disclosed its own work, not Atlanta's.

This was proper, not an administrative error.

Ray's counsel took the Watson nonsense to CRD at that time. CRD then withheld what was in the public domain when it processed its records.

Much later, led by Dick Gregory, there was an enormous campaign based on the Watson fabrications. It was all over nationwide TV and in the print press. One of the results is that Atlanta conducted an investigation - of what the FBI and Watson and his mother had already disclosed.

Ray withholding now serves only to tend to validate Watson's fabrications and to injure those he involved in the terrible crime in his fabrications.

That Atlanta information the FBI did disclose was nothing to do with Watson - and it did disclose other Atlanta police information. This ranges from the finding of the Ray Mustang, which was by the local police, not the FBI, to information about individuals.

Both the RCMP and Scotland Yard (among others) have disclosed certain information, much in Canada. I have provided copies since the time of your report. These have appeared in such public sources as the Canadian press. The FBI has disclosed many facsimiles of the documents of these other police - selectively. Permission was granted for use of these records to the prosecution, which also disclosed them. All provided what they wanted propagandized to the press.

One of the FBI's problems is that in this case it has withheld from me what the RCMP has printed in ~~facsimile~~ facsimile in the Canadian press, obviously public domain. The FBI itself disclosed the proof of this, in copies of these stories.

Much Scotland Yard information and documents prejudicial to Ray and to any account of the assassination of Dr. King other than the FBI's has been disclosed by the FBI. Examples include the note used in a bank robbery by Ray and some of the contents of his wallet. How can you justify the selective disclosure of evidence or of some but not all of the contents of his wallet? Is FOIA no more than a cover for FBI propaganda? Is it no more than another part of CoIntelpro?