

9/23/71

Mr. David Frost
Westinghouse Broadcasting Co.
90 Park Ave.,
New York, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Frost,

When I heard that you were airing Jim Bishop tonight, I was prepared to write you for a reason that will become clear. However, your close was so appropriate, I must begin with the end, the part where you called him a great "story teller". In the sense that kids' mouths got soaped when I was a kid, you are so right!

Not one thing he said about Ray or the assassination was even close to accurate. Until tonight I lived with the illusion that the two men who knew least about either the crime or the case against Ray were his prosecutor and his "defender". If you doubt this, I'll be happy to provide both tapes and documentation. Now, however, Bishop has come into his own, writing Manchestrian "history" (your unfortunate word was "significant for students of history"), not the way the day was but the way it should have been for Bishop's preconceptions and market to be served.

My purpose in writing is to ask for equal opportunity to respond. I am the author of FRAME-UP, the first and I believe to date the only real study of the case and that assassination. I believe this falls well within FCC regulations.

Under these regulations, what follows is unnecessary, but I think you may enjoy it. Ray was not broke and in Birmingham. He went there from Canada, and he had no American Express card. He did not buy the Mustang about a week before the assassination. He got it the previous year, the first time he was in Birmingham. Those Bishop called co-conspirators who hired Ray to kill Dr. King (and of neither is there evidence nor did he produce it) did not just give Ray money when he was broke. First of all, he was never broke and second he was engaged in criminal activity for which he was paid.

The rifle did not cost \$137, it was not a Remington 424 repeater, which is to say neither of the two rifles were. Both were Remington Camemaster Model 760 pump guns, the second a .30-06.

Ray was not "provably broke six months before the assassination" but was, for him, then luxuriating in Mexico

It is not that "someone gave him tickets" to Great Britain and Rhodesia. He bought the ticket to England at a travel agency and he never had any ticket to Rhodesia.

Birmingham was not "his favorite spot". He was there but briefly. He spent more time in both Mexico and Los Angeles. And he did not go back to Birmingham for money.

Sharp as you are, the thing I did expect you to catch is the amazing inconsistency in whoever in Bishop's imagination was behind this frightful thing finding Ray a stupid oaf and not hiring him to be the killer for that reason but finding him other than a stupid oaf (Bishop's words) when he was allegedly hired through intermediaries! With two more sets of intermediaries, do you think he'd be fit for the Supreme Court?

Would even a nut hire a "stupid oaf" to be a professional assassin when so many accomplished in that deplorable profession are available?

When you asked him why he said Ray was the assassin -and I take the diametrically opposite position and will prove it with official evidence, not hunches - Bishop's definitive proof was "Nothing on which you can base this except too many coincidences." What a way to stuff more Atticas! Or San quentins!

The other time this reasonable question came up, the proof was "I think". "I think" is neither evidence nor fact nor significant history. Somebody slipped you a sleeper with that line.

Without playing back the tape I made I can't be certain, but I think you asked for this proof early in his appearance. If I am correct, my notes on his answer show that this arcane concept of proof came out, "His history shows he is stupid".

The political assassinations that have taken great men from us are frightening and frightful things. They should not be commercialized this way, with pot-boilers that deceive people and prevent the proper functioning of a representative society. Perhaps all that rubbish about an earlier one of Ray's robberies made good fun stuff, but it had nothing to do with the assassination, the interest you expressed at the outset, and is not the kind of frivolity with which the few questions you had a chance to ask should have been answered. Were it either true or not exaggerated, it remains irrelevant. Because a man is in jail, whether or not with an earlier career of robberies, he ought not be made fun of this way. Nor should so serious a subject. The FCC perhaps has no standards on taste, but in retrospect, especially because you are faultless in it, I hope you will agree. I believe this does not represent your personal taste.

If you will but think of it, in all his appearance Bishop did not address the crime in any way and at no point did he give any reason, unless alleged coincidences, stupidity and I think are in your concept, for claiming Ray fired a shot.

At some point I do hope that we can be given acceptable explanations of how our great men are killed. Not one of the official explanations is acceptable or has achieved any degree of real acceptability. Until then, the task falls to responsible writers.

You have a copy of my book. Your staff declined to air me when it came out. That was their and your right until you presented the other side. From the appendix of this book you will see the kind of evidence I have, some produced by a successful suit against the Department of Justice, which was suppressing it (Civil Action 718-70 in federal district court in Washington). I have a stack of all the court records heavier than I like to carry. I will not give you "coincidences", "I think", "stupid oaf" or other such verbal garbage in response to serious questions to which there should be serious, specific and factual answers, not the tinsel that sells well.

Perhaps the exigencies of a nightly show preclude it, but I will show your staff in advance precisely this official evidence and some I developed after the book came out that has never been aired and is, I think, exciting. And the official evidence is shocking, the more so because of its suppression and misrepresentation.

I think Dr. King was worth more than this kind of treatment. I hope you do, too, and that I will hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg