

Dear Dave,

11/27/90

Jerry was as stunned as I when I told him that Praeger had published Melanson's 'Spy Saga'. After we spoke I got a copy locally. What obviously should be done I don't want to do - check the book against my criticisms of it to Greenwood.

Which, by the way, did not publish the book. It bears the Praeger name, that of the company that took Greenwood over. But the request to me was by Greenwood, Not Praeger, as, to the best of my recollection, was the insulting check.

I did check three other things in haste and then laid the book aside.

First I looked in the index under Jules Ricco Kimble on whose fictions Melanson built a big part of his ephemeral case. No mention. If I did not tell you, when I sent the ms back with my comments I enclosed an internal CIA record that said Kimble had never worked for it in any way or capacity. This was a memo in which they'd not lie because the director himself could not be caught in a lie. This also is the same Kimble who is such an important part of "The Murkin Conspiracy" conspiracy that Melanson invented.

Because I'd noted that he plagiarized from Oswald in "New Orleans" I check the bibliography. I don't recall whether he had originally listed any of my books but it now includes none. (Getting even?) *see below*

I also check the index under my name. A single reference, to my having gotten one off the executive session transcripts I got by FOIA action.

What took my attention first is the blurb on the back of the dust jacket: "Philip H. Melanson, renowned expert on U.S. political assassinations, examines every available record of FBI, Secret Service, and CIA files on the Kennedy assassination and sheds new light on Oswald's role as a U.S. intelligence agent." (my emphasis)

He must have invented speed reading! and just have forgotten about Kimble records?

What may amuse you from this emphasis on his alleged scholarship is the fact that Praeger was the second publisher I went to after the one who'd ordered the book broke that deal while still drooling into the till - Praeger. I was sent by a friend to a friend of his, then director of Praeger's special projects. He read the manuscript of Whitewash overnight and told me the next day he liked it and they probably do a first printing of 50,000 copies. That, he said, indicated expectation of a best seller. But, he said, it would require Mr. Praeger's approval and he was in or on his way back from San Francisco. When I returned after about a week he told me that Mr. Praeger had decided ~~not~~ not to do the book. I asked him, ~~when~~ when he'd had such high expectations. He said that Mr. Praeger published only established scholars and I was not a scholar.

We did not know then that Praeger was a CIA publisher.

Oops! I was wrong. I must have been checking sources when I thought bibliography. He does list "Oswald in New Orleans" and "Whitewash."

I just noticed in flipping the pages to see if I'd recall something else to check before going on to something else that he cribes extensively from Oswald in "New Orleans, uniquely it, what I wrote about the New Orleans entries in Oswald's notebook. Again, I'm rushing too much. He does say "assassinologist Harold Weisberg and others found that two listings were significant." His footnote is to Halperin's Lawless State. I've rechecked his index. I'm listed as on page 12 only. (page 36)

I flipped a few pages of his Chapter 4 on Ferris, "the Mohair Maurader". He used mohair in his wig? He was a Maurader? Well, I noted that he says (page 41), and I'm sure I corrected this if it was in the ms., that Ferris "was taken in for questioning by the FBI but was released." He wasn't "taken in" by the FBI but when Garrison suggested they should question him while Garrison had him in jail, they did question him. Sources, for what as he knows was first in "Oswald in New Orleans", first my cited source, "CD75, pp. 285-97" then two who got that from me, HSCA and Henry Hurt. As I recall this is typical of his "scholarship". Best, Harold

*Harold*