

Criminal Record

Fact

He Slew the Dreamer. By William Bradford Huie. Delacorte. \$5.95. Mr. Huie paid James Earl Ray \$40,000 for exclusive rights to his version of the killing of Martin Luther King, Jr. He was never allowed to meet Ray, but correspondence between them—sometimes truth, sometimes lies—set the reporter off on the trail. Near the end of his book, Huie writes what may serve as a review: "The story is of relatively little value because it's only the story of another Oswald, another Sirhan, another twisted nut who kills a fa-



mous man to get on television. That's all there is to it. I'm going to complete the book for what it's worth, and try to present a true picture of a twisted nut and all the damage he can do. But far from making any money, I don't expect to get back what I will have spent."

Trade Winds

Cleveland Amory

Finally, perhaps the most memorable interviewee of all was Southern liberal William Bradford Huie—author of the Martin Luther King assassination story *He Slew the Dreamer*. "The Gallup poll shows," Mr. Huie said, "that 84 per-

SR/JUNE 27, 1970

cent of the American people still want to believe in a conspiracy for all three of our assassinations. But Dr. King's was not a conspiracy. You have to go back to your Dostoevsky. Ray killed Dr. King to be somebody. Ray was a nothing—in prison for the fourth time, he didn't even have status among prisoners. He wasn't, for example, a murderer or a bank robber—they have status."

Incredible as it may seem, Ray's principal desire was to be on the FBI's "Most Wanted" list. In Toronto, after the crime, he was almost caught because, on the first Sunday when he knew he would make the list, he went from bar to bar to find which would be



showing *The FBI* on TV. The trouble was, Huie said, most of the bars were showing *The Ed Sullivan Show*. Huie also told us that Ray admitted to him he had already decided to kill a famous good man before he picked out Dr. King. "Who else?" Huie asked. "If he murdered a man who wasn't famous, he couldn't make the list. Nor could he have made it with a famous evil man. It had to be a famous good man. In the end, it all boiled down to Dr. King."

"We can expect more of these killings," Huie warned. "More and more." At this we asked Mr. Huie if he himself wasn't contributing to this awful cycle, and, since he had paid Ray money, wasn't he also, in one sense, going into partnership with the cycle? "Well," he said, "perhaps I am. But at least now we know about what's happening. Otherwise we might still have believed it was a conspiracy. At least now we know the type we have to protect ourselves against—the outsider who wants recognition."

And did he, we asked finally, protect himself. "I carry a gun," Mr. Huie said quietly. "And in doing things like going into and out of my house, I am very, very prudent."