

twenty-five short scenes covering what Victor Hugo called the "legend of the centuries," carrying man from original sin in Eden to power politics, space exploration, and, of course, Vietnam—a theme now so common on European stages that a bulky thesis could be written on the plays devoted to the subject. Reviewer Hans Schwab Felisch, perhaps remembering that Dürrenmatt is the son of a pastor and a former student of theology, saw him "at the parting of the ways, moving toward becoming a religious dramatist but still hesitating." It would be a regression, for Dürrenmatt's *Angel Came to Babylon* (1954) was a religious parable. Other critics missed the "grim wit of old" or found the "satire too heavy and the statement too plain."

Dürrenmatt will be fifty years old on the first of next month. Secure in theatrical and literary history, he feels no need to answer his worried critics. "These matters are my own concerns," he wrote, "and hence it is unnecessary to invoke the whole world and to make out that my concerns are the concerns of art in general, lest I be like the drunkard who goes back to Noah, the Flood, and Original Sin to explain what is after all his own weakness. In art the rule is, 'No excuses, please.'"

Klaus Rifbjerg (born 1931) is a controversial novelist, playwright, poet, and film critic well known around Copenhagen. After a period of writing modernist lyrics, he has turned to plays and novels. His play *The Court Jester* opened a week ago and promises much excitement. Meanwhile the tremendous sensation created by his novel *March 1970* (Gyldendal) has yet to simmer down. In this prose fantasy the heiress to the Danish throne, Princess Margrethe, and Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme fall madly in love and run off together. The sympathetically imagined love affair of these real-life people is not what worried the Danish reviewers. They were more disturbed about the caricatures of other types around Copenhagen: politicians, journalists, members of the Establishment, and even rebels of the New Left. Such audacity leads Sven Holm in the weekly *NB!* to observe that "*March 1970* was not only written with the left hand, but was created by a heavy, clumsy fist of concrete." As for Rifbjerg, he wonders what the fuss is all about. "To me it is exciting that these people, who have official stamps with their names on them, can take on another life. The publishing house asked me if I thought they ought to send a copy to the princess. I said yes. I think she will be pleased, since the book is really almost a proclamation of love."

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**FRAME-UP:
The Martin Luther King/
James Earl Ray Case**

by Harold Weisberg

Outerbridge & Dienstfrey/Dutton,
518 pp., \$10

Reviewed by Fred J. Cook

■ On March 10, 1969, in a Memphis courtroom, the curtain rose on one of the most brazen travesties of justice ever to disgrace America. James Earl Ray, the accused killer of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was to go on trial. But there was no trial. There was instead a deal between judge, prosecutor, and defense attorney. Ray would plead guilty in exchange for a life sentence, and the court would return the verdict so much desired by the American Establishment: Ray had acted alone.

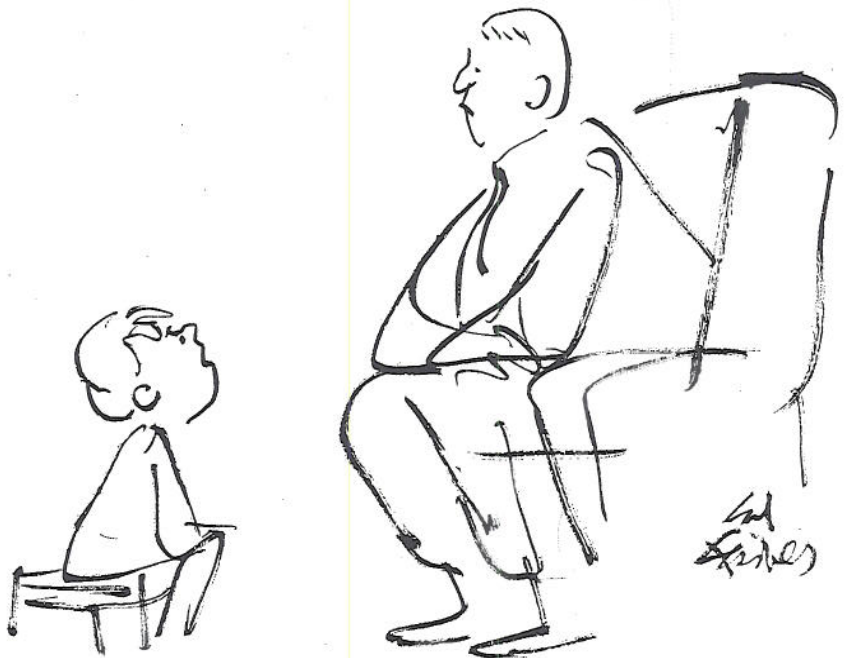
The drama ran as smoothly as a well-plotted Hollywood film—up to a point. Then James Earl Ray spoke. He did not agree, he said, with Attorney General Ramsey Clark and FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, who had been insisting there was no conspiracy. Here was the man who had to know, and, at some risk to himself, he was telling the court that the script was phony. Defense Attorney Percy Foreman, who had had to browbeat his unwilling client into copping a plea instead of standing trial, leaped into the breach. It was not necessary, he said, for Ray to accept everything; all that mattered

was that he was pleading guilty to the crime. Was he? the judge asked. Yes, Ray said, and the juggernaut of official machinery rolled over his feeble but courageous protest.

Harold Weisberg, a onetime government investigator who has devoted himself to a pursuit of the ignored or suppressed facts about political assassinations, has now turned to the case of James Earl Ray in the book he calls *Frame-Up*. He does not doubt that Ray was implicated in the King assassination, but his thesis is that Ray filled the same role Lee Harvey Oswald did in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in Dallas. In Weisberg's view Ray, like Oswald, was not the killer; he was the decoy, the patsy, the man meant to be caught.

Weisberg shows that in the King case, just as in Dallas, a baffling use was made of doubles. Just as there is evidence that two men used the name of Lee Harvey Oswald, so is there evidence that someone besides James Earl Ray knew and used some of his various aliases. Here are a few of the points Weisberg raises:

Ray's arrest at Heathrow (London) Airport, June 8, 1968. According to Scotland Yard, Ray, traveling under the name of Ramon George Sneyd, came into the airport about 6:15 A.M. on a flight from Lisbon. While waiting for his plane to refuel and fly on to Brussels, he wandered unnecessarily into the immigration section for incoming passengers and was spotted and detained. But on that date a man using the name of Ramon George



"That's all you did in the big war, Dad—keep an eye on this guy Hopkins?"