

FBI Files implicate ACLU General Counsel Morris Ernst in murder cover up

A recently released FBI document supports prior charges made by several groups that ACLU General Counsel Morris Ernst participated actively in the cover up of the murder of Professor Jesus De Galindez-Suarez. It is widely believed that Dominican Dictator Rafael Trujillo murdered De Galindez, who was kidnapped after giving a speech at Columbia University in 1959. De Galindez was advocating for the overthrow of Trujillo, the stone cold killer who slaughtered 6,000 Haitian squatter farmers who were farming land along the Dominican Border.

Lucille Milner, the long-time manager of the ACLU National Office, and a committed civil libertarian in her own right, cited Morris Ernst's long time work for the Dominican dictator as one of the reasons for resigning from the only career she knew. The FBI files now confirm what Milner charged regarding Morris Ernst' conduct in her resignation from the ACLU

Further, FBI agents mock Ernst's claim that he is advancing democracy in Central America. Ernst's report, paid for by Trujillo, goes on to smear Galindez, charging that Galindez had mysterious dealings with the CIA which probably led to his death. The FBI addresses charges that Morris Ernst had made that connect De Galindez to Cuba. The FBI review indicates that Ernst's charges concerning Cuba were based on a planted report in Cuban police files by a Dominican agent. Ernst attempts to blame Fidel Castro, who was attempting to overthrow Cuban Dictator Fulgencio Batista, hiding in the Cuban foothills at that time. The FBI completely cleared De Galindez of any involvement with Castro. While ACLU General Counsel Morris Ernst is trying out the communist smear approach on a dead man, earnest, young FBI agents call Ernst's story "planted." The FBI has found one honest man in Batista's government, and their trusted source assures them that Ernst's story is bogus.

The absolute scorn shown by FBI agents is rather remarkable, given Ernst's bragging that he is a close friend of J. Edgar Hoover. The report addresses charges Ernst had made that De Galindez had stolen money from the Basque Government in Exile. The FBI report indicates that these old charges are patently false, as an extensive investigation was conducted two years earlier. It further charges that Ernst appears obsessed with the Galindez case, and that Ernst's testimony before a congressional committees consists of "... a rehash of rumors, half truths, innuendoes, and speculations that he previously advanced. " And those particular statements were written by more senior FBI officials. At the time, the FBI must have heard numerous stories around Washington about how much money Morris Ernst was being paid to write this fantasy to deflect suspicion that Trujillo had murdered De Galindez. It provides the spectacle of the FBI working overtime to clear the name of De Galindez, who had already met his mysterious, unfortunate fate, while the ACLU General Counsel was working to destroy his memory. The speculation on how much money Morris Ernst was paid ranged from \$75,000 to one million. Later FBI reports would indicate that the amounts were probably in the one million range.

Further derision of Ernst is evidenced in the FBI agents comments that Ernst's statements are " generally vague and disorganized, and in many instances, is unintelligible. The following statement, quoted exactly, provides this example of the incoherent nature of his testimony:"

The report goes on to mention that Ernst charged that the mysterious one million dollars could only come from one of four places, and one was the Vatican. It appears to be a revelation of anti-Catholic bias on Ernst's part, and if so, would reveal a side of Morris Ernst never seen before. For the ACLU General Counsel to use the most hackneyed, low brow bigotry to justify mysterious millions floating around Washington, and trying to sell this conspiracy theory to high government officials would have been an extreme embarrassment to the ACLU had it gotten out to the press. FBI agents assure us that the only million floating around Washington was the one million paid by Dictator Trujillo, and that it all landed in Morris Ernst's pockets. The heavy WASP orientation of the ACLU board has long left the ACLU vulnerable to anti-Catholic bias. Morris Ernst served as ACLU General Counsel for 27 years.

While there is no evidence linking the ACLU itself to his actual murder, it certainly puts the ACLU on the wrong side of history. It further provides more troubling evidence that the ACLU was working with the extreme right and the extreme left in Central American affairs. It appears that checkbook advocacy, not ideological beliefs, drove the process.

The FBI file is enclosed for your review. Judge for yourself.