

That Orchestrated Silence

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Two events regarding the assassination of President Kennedy took place almost simultaneously more than two weeks ago. Most Americans have not been informed of either. The intensification of what appears to be a deliberate effort to suppress the news provides ample proof for the need for an underground press, -a newspaper free America.

The events, the publication of *A CITIZEN'S DISSENT*, and far more important, the intervention of the Federal Government into the trial of Clay L. Shaw, remain two well guarded secrets.

After *RUSH TO JUDGMENT* became the number one best seller in the nation during 1965 and 1967 one of the executives at my publishers told me the importance of that achievement. He said that it is a well settled rule in the publishing industry that any subsequent book that I might write would receive immediate and prominent reviews in publications throughout the country. Of course they need not be favorable, but all subsequent works would be reviewed at once. In addition, he said, radio and television networks would flood me with requests to appear.

Somehow it just has not worked out that way. In fact it seems that Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, after being in the publishing business for more than one hundred years, has published its first underground book.

At this stage following the publication of *RUSH TO JUDGMENT* some four hundred and fifty reviews had been published, which represents a figure above the average for the first book of an author. As this is written *A CITIZEN'S DISSENT* has been reviewed by four reviewers. One of the four was Jack Ruby's lawyer who was given the assignment by the Chicago Sun Times. At this stage following publication of my first work I had been invited to appear on almost every national television program, both network and syndicated. No network program has permitted me to appear in connection with *A CITIZEN'S DISSENT* and of the syndicated programs thus far I have been invited only by Les Crane, who was indeed a most gracious host.

To my knowledge not a single

newspaper story in the commercial press has appeared indicating that the book has been published and various book stores have shown a great reluctance to display it.

One store in New York (it being one of the largest book stores in the country) bought a number of copies and has stored them in the storeroom where they cannot be seen. If a prospective customer is insistent enough a copy is brought up from the basement and made available. Otherwise customers are told that the book is just not available.

When I completed *A CITIZEN'S DISSENT* I was well aware of the fact that I had written a subversive book, one that would in all

probability be widely condemned and unfairly attacked. It does not deal with the Warren Commission. It does not state that an ad hoc committee, however important its chairman, issued a false report and that we just cannot know who killed our president. America had in time been prepared for that unhappy message. Yet I sought to bring another. I sought not to concentrate upon the symptom but to take the full measure of the disease, and this, it seems, is inadmissible in our country.

"The draconic power of those who would negate reasonable disagreement is our subject. In pursuing it we will meet police directors, television commentators, Pulitzer Prize winners, doctors, lawyers and FBI chiefs - the makers of public opinion, except perhaps in this instance. Then we may better know why the freedoms we cherish and speak of have become more and more illusory and why our nation moves, imperceptible to those who will not observe the phenomenon, but significantly, toward the strictures of a closed society."

One television producer invited a large number of media representatives to debate with me regarding the serious charges in my book. All declined and several of them explained why. "We will bury that book with silence." The press has written an epilogue to *A CITIZEN'S DISSENT* and has offered confirmation of its contents as

well.

Readers of this newspaper know that the federal court has issued a restraining order preventing Jim Garrison from trying Clay L. Shaw for conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy. If you do know that you represent a tiny elite, for most of the citizenry has not yet been made aware of that fact.

The federal courts have gone even further. Garrison's various assistants were ordered to tell all that they know about the case, thus making the subsequent trial of Shaw, if it was to be otherwise permitted, an impossibility.

Garrison issued a written order to the members of the staff indicating that while in the federal court they were in enemy territory. "Give only your name, rank and Social Security number" he stated. (Garrison's memo to his staff appeared in the June 14 issue of the F.P.)

The federal government is now moving toward sending the staff to jail while the man charged with conspiracy to assassinate the president remains at liberty and serenely confident that the United States Government will never permit him to be tried.

During the last three weeks I have travelled about the country appearing on numerous local radio and television programs and giving press interviews to reporters who excitedly write stories that are never printed. In every major city that I have visited thus far, including Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Boston, Cleveland and New York among the first answers demanded of me by the inquiring media representatives are these, sometimes with slight variations:

"What about this Garrison? If he had any kind of a case, why wouldn't he have tried it by now? What is he afraid of? When is he going to stop making irrespon-

sible charges and actually put the case before the jury?"

Patiently, almost as if talking to children, I explain that more than one year ago Garrison moved for an immediate trial, that every single delay in the case has been occasioned by moves by Shaw and his lawyers, often over the strenuous objection of the District Attorney, that the federal government has harassed the investigation throughout, and that now, finally, as the case was about to come to trial in spite of the best efforts of the defendant to prevent it, the federal government took a historically unprecedented step. It issued a restraining order which prohibits Garrison from trying the case. (Short pause while reporters drop their pencils and scratch their heads.) How is this all possible, they ask, when they have heard nothing of this?

Recently while I was appearing on a live television interview program in Boston the host asked on what basis the federal government might intervene after I informed him that it had done so. I told him that there was no lawful basis. He said that he would sure like to hear Garrison confirm the fact that there was an injunction since he had never heard about it.

I asked for a telephone. One was brought. I dialed Garrison's home number and his wife, Liz, answered. In a moment Jim was on the telephone and on the air. The interviewer asked him if there really was an injunction and if so on what lawful basis it might rest.

Garrison replied that the injunction was real enough but that there was "no lawful basis-just power". The host said "Well this might have been suppressed up until now but you are on live TV now and this story will be sent all over the country on the

wire within minutes.

Garrison replied, "Well sir, I wouldn't be too confident of that if I were you." The story never did make the wire services and been informed of the alarming actions of the federal government in prohibiting the trial.

While in New York I spoke with a friend whose family is socially prominent and who moves in the same circles that editors at the New York Times do. She called an important New York Times editor the next day and asked why the Times had not reported the startling fact of the federal injunction, then about two weeks old.

He replied that he had heard of no such injunction and that he was quite sure that she was mistaken about it. When he heard that I was the source of her information he was no less certain that the allegations were in error, he said. He said that he would look into the matter and call her back.

He did call back. He said that he had gone through all of the issues for the last two weeks, that his staff had culled the relevant stories and that there was no mention of an injunction. Thus, he concluded, there could have been no such development in the case for such a major step would have been featured.

For some time it had been apparent that the New York Times has deliberately kept from its readers the relevant information about Jim Garrison's investigation. However, during this period it never occurred to me that a policy of self-deception might be so effective with the Times' own editors. Since I believe that personalities have little to do with the subject matter, I have refrained from mentioning the name of the editor at the Times.

However, should the Times deny the accuracy of this vignette or should any reporter challenge it I will reveal the name of the editor and of the person with whom the conversation took place.