

MARK LANE

In a one page article (plus a two column photograph) Time Magazine made several allegations against Jim Garrison, his witnesses and his associates. "Time" (August 2, 1968 pp56 and 57). Yet it is difficult to find one assertion that possesses the characteristics of both truth and relevancy.

Among the least harmful and more curious of Time's inaccuracies is the statement that Garrison is "the father of two" as he has five children. Time continues with the discovery that the name Clay Bertrand "cropped up in the Warren Report" while even a cursory glance at the Report's index reveals that statement to be false. Time adds that Garrison's investigation was "financed by a group of New Orleans businessmen".

Garrison is, after all, the duly elected prosecutor for the Parish of Orleans and in investigating a

Lane sees little truth in Time

crime committed within his jurisdiction, an obligation which in good conscience he could hardly avoid. Public funds are available and have been primarily relied upon. Even one accustomed to Time's protruding bias might be concerned with evidence of such slovenliness, make no less disturbing by the fact that Time has worked upon the Garrison story for many months.

Among the most foul of Time's irrelevancies is the charge that Jim Garrison, "has a sister who has been hospitalized as a schizophrenic", sought to appear more germane by its placement in the same sentence that accuses Garrison of having been "discharged from the Army for mental reasons"—a statement Time must know to be false. Garrison was awarded the Air Medal for valor during World War II, was honorably discharged at the conclusion of the war and presently serves as a Lt. Colonel in the reserve. Even the most gross of John F. Kennedy's critics never sought to distort his war record and add that his sister was mentally retarded.

The one charge by Time that is evidently designed to influence potential jurors and the American people as a whole is, of course, the

most serious. In keeping with what is apparently its concept of journalism regarding the investigation into the death of the president, it too is demonstrably false. The one major witness in the case of the State of Louisiana v. Clay Shaw mentioned by Time, is Perry Russo, who is referred to as "Drug Addict Perry Russo" (upper case "D" and "A" in the original, believe it or not) despite the fact that Russo has never been convicted of the use or possession of drugs, has never been arrested for either charge, and in fact has never used drugs. That fabrication may prove to be a costly one for Time, for Russo is presently inclined to sue.

Time adds that "despite his boast of having solved the case, Garrison has yet to charge anyone but Shaw." Yet on December 20, 1967, Edgar Eugene Bradley was formally charged by Garrison with conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy. In this instance Time might have secured the facts by reading an old issue of Time, for I believe that even Time reported the charge against Bradley at the time. This oversight may be understood, however, for the editors at Time know better than most that issues of that magazine, whether current or ancient, hardly qualify as a source of factual data.

It would be unfair to the publication to imply that the article is filled with outright falsehoods, when some merely misleading allegations are also present. For example Time complains, "little has happened since Shaw's arrest. Even some of his supporters are beginning to ask just what kind of a case does he have against

Shaw? Does he have evidence against others? Will he have as much to say in court as he has had to say outside of it?"

Time does not disclose the names of the questioning "supporters." One wonders if they exist elsewhere than in the publication's proven fertile imagination. Much has happened since Shaw's arrest. Every major motion, and there have been scores of them, have been won by Garrison and his staff in the Louisiana courts. A man charged with perjury in denying that Clay Shaw was Clay Bertrand has been convicted. If Time sought to convey the impression that Garrison is not ready for trial, and the conclusion that that impression was at least implied is inescapable, then the magazine appears bemused once again. Garrison's office made a motion for an immediate trial more than a year ago. On several occasions Garrison has set the trial date. Every delay in the proceedings has been obtained by Clay Shaw, the two most recent delays due to the intervention of the Federal Court at Shaw's request and over Garrison's strenuous objection.

Indeed the Law section of Time might well be devoted to the unprecedented action by the Federal court in issuing restraining orders to prevent a local trial from taking place when the law prohibiting such federal interference appears to be well settled.

Garrison stands ready to present the evidence to a jury representing the American people, is Shaw ready? More relevant perhaps is the question--Is the Federal government ready? And is Time ready to report the facts?