

Garrison

Gentlemen:

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Free Press

It is a little embarrassing to see how easily the Freep, a usually clear-headed observer, can be taken in by a well-mounted propaganda campaign that appears to be mounted against the establishment. I refer to District Attorney Jim Garrison's massive power play for personal notoriety in which he has made it quite clear that he will use anyone he can and grind into the dirt anyone who gets in his way. If our own dear Mr. Younger should mount a campaign against Art Kunkin with as little evidence and as much unnuendo as Mr. Garrison has, the Free Press would blast him from here to Sunday, and with good reason.

You should have been tipped off by Garrison's actions from the first. The whole thing started as an outgrowth of his notoriously vicious and illegal attacks on New Orleans' homosexual community. Remember back in the days when the famous conspiracy was headed by faggots, hippies, Commies, and all the scum of New Orleans' backside, or words to that effect?

But Garrison is nothing if not adaptable, and as soon as it became apparent that his campaign was being backed not by the right wingers but rather by the very people it was being waged against, it took a sudden shift to the right and the evil hippies and queers were replaced by shadowy James Bondish government agents.

You have to give Garrison credit. No one else in recent history has been able to keep a news story alive for as long as he did, or milk it for as much personal attention. Whenever the story began to lag he would craftily reveal some new piece of evidence, each more spectacular than the last, to bring himself more headlines. Slowly the conspiracy spread and spread, eventually taking in the entire government—by Garrison's own avowal every senator and Congressman, every FBI and CIA leader, every court official, and of course, President Johnson himself was involved directly or indirectly in the plot. Now, far be it from me to defend the government's unassailable integrity, but I find it a little hard to swallow the suggestion that every politician in Washington could unanimously agree to ANYTHING, let alone a complex and controversial murder plot!

Please notice, too, where the most damning evidence against Shaw was given—not in the courtroom, but to the public press.

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Despite constant complaints by Garrison that the government was trying to keep his story from the public (using those oppressive, criminal-coddling Supreme Court decisions that hand-puff our gallant police) he still managed to hint to the press about volumes of evidence which he had to link Shaw to Ruby, Ruby to the CIA, Oswald to the CIA, and Old Mother Hubbard to Czar Nickolas II. None of this evidence ever seemed to turn up in court, however, where it would be supposed it might do the most good.

Indeed, when it actually came time to put up or shut up, Garrison was pretty pathetic. His chief witness could remember nothing about any of this until he had been given a post-hypnotic suggestion in a little private session with the DA, and his second most valuable witness could not only give evidence on this conspiracy, but several dozen others which his paranoid schizophrenia spotted all around him. This second witness did, however, relieve the court by leading it on an unrewarding (except in terms of publicity) little Cook's Tour of the French Quarter.

Even now, when any responsible person would think the joke had been milked for just about every ounce of publicity it could yield, Garrison still flails away, charging Shaw with "perjury" because he could not be made to tell the same story as Garrison. This technique, too, is old hat with the DA.

Meanwhile, the Freep continues to be taken in by this transparent hype. The hippie community has frequently been the victim of this sort of Establishment smear campaign, filled with innuendos and descriptions of "proof" which is never subsequently produced, built on prejudice and stereotype, and serving no end but political advancement. It amazes me that the Free Press, the spokesman for the hippie community, could be so blinded to these familiar ploys by their need to discredit the Establishment that uses them. Open your eyes out there and look for a moment at the actual facts and not at what Garrison TELLS you are the facts! You're being led by the nose!

Yours truly,
Marvin Jones