

26 July 1968

Dr. A. George Abbott
Assassination Inquiry Committee
4718 Saratoga Avenue
San Diego 92107

Dear Dr. Abbott,

In my letter of yesterday (inadvertently dated "26 July" instead of 25 July), I indicated my disinclination to be diverted from the primary question of the Warren Report by expending time on the preposterous Garrison "investigation." I am compelled to do so, however, after receiving in the mail this morning your Newsletter of 4 July ("Extradition Extra") and the New Orleans States-Item of 23 July 1968.

It is impossible to let pass in silence the shocking and--let me be blunt--disgusting statement by Prescott Nichols on page 1: "According to our information, Bradley is a right-wing, Christian anti-communist. We'll let that speak for itself." The last time I read such a shameless demagogic smear was in an anonymous letter received after I did a broadcast attacking the Warren Report, in which the anonymous writer suggested that all or most critics of the Report were left-wing Jews and Communists animated by sinister plans to undermine and destroy the Republic. I am appalled that a committee purporting to hold high purposes and to seek truth and justice is no less ready than the worst riff-raff of the radical right to engage in character assassination of the crude and ugly nature of the statement quoted above.

The second half of Mr. Nichols' commentary deals with the apparent discrepancy or anachronism of the claim that flags in El Paso were at half-mast at 12:55 p.m. which, in the light of the "Correction" on page 5, turns out to be no discrepancy at all. I regret that your committee and Elliot Mintz as well as other supporters of the New Orleans District Attorney have never, to my knowledge, paid the smallest attention to the incessant stream of discrepancies, contradictions, and outright absurdities on the part of Mr. Garrison. You say on page 5 that you "are genuinely concerned for the truth." Let me suggest that you prove that by taking up, seriatim, the serious charges against Garrison detailed in the New Yorker article by Epstein. The fact that Garrison declined the opportunity to refute any and all of those charges should give even his most ardent supporters a sobering pause, if they are indeed "genuinely concerned for the truth."

I cannot take the time to analyze the many other statements in your issue of 4 July which require comment but I will mention a few at random. On page 2 Bradley is said to have conducted publicity-seeking press releases. What about the numerous Garrison press releases? And are not press releases by definition "publicity-seeking"? I regard the characterization as applied to Bradley another innuendo designed to discredit him and to create prejudice against him for exercising his elementary right to deny publicly an accusation made publicly by his would-be prosecutor. Also on page 2, there is the perjorative statement that Bradley submitted to private polygraph testing but that his attorney refused to permit him to submit to such testing by a law enforcement agency. Nothing is said about the charge--not denied or refuted by Garrison to this day--that Perry Russo and Vernon Bundy failed the lie-detector tests administered by the District Attorney's office but were permitted to testify anyhow. Nothing is said either about the conduct of polygraph tests by the FBI in the case of Warren Commission witnesses, or the manner in which the Commission utilized the results. As for witnesses Craig, Gonzales, Hall, etc., with their splendidly precise if belated accounts of events almost five years in the past, to say nothing of their respective dealings and

relationships with Garrison, I can only conclude that those who treat their allegations with uncritical solemnity, like Mr. Mogilner, do not mind having their intelligence insulted.

I mentioned at the outset that I had received the New Orleans States-Item in the same mail as your Newsletter. A huge headline on the front page states: "U.S. Court Refuses To Halt Shaw Trial." The story reports that almost every motion by Shaw's attorneys was denied by the three-judge federal court.

How does that compare with Garrison's press release of 29 May 1968 on the temporary restraining order then issued by the federal district court? Garrison said: "It is pretty plain that this unauthorized and unprecedented federal maneuver is the beginning of a power play by the federal government to interrupt and obstruct a State prosecution where the federal government has a special interest in the outcome." His grandiose and sensational charge looks pretty silly in the face of the ruling now made by the federal judges; but I doubt if his supporters will scold him for his irresponsibility. In their eyes, only the Shaws and the Bradleys come under the merciless eye of suspicion, while the prosecutor (deemed in other contexts as "The State" or "The Establishment") in the person of Garrison has somehow become entitled to the benefit of doubt normally given the accused.

I have listened to a variety of attacks on the temporary injunction issued by the federal district court in May, by supporters of Garrison who constantly reiterated the unprecedented and sinister nature of the ruling. Perhaps it was "unprecedented" at that time; but in the same issue of the States-Item, I find that another federal district judge has issued an injunction prohibiting Plaquemines Parish from prosecuting a Washington, D.C. civil rights lawyer. The federal court issued the opinion that the arrest of the lawyer after he had conferred with a local judge about a bond for a Negro defendant was "an unlawful prosecution which was undertaken for purposes of harassment."

Those who protested so vehemently the temporary injunction against the trial of Shaw are all strong civil rights supporters and sympathizers with Black militancy, as I am myself. I am delighted that the federal court intervened to prevent the prosecution of a civil rights attorney, as I was also gratified that the federal court agreed to entertain motions by Shaw's attorneys. What will Garrison's supporters have to say about the injunction against Plaquemines, I wonder? Should they not protest with equal vehemence this act of federal interference and obstruction with local authorities? Obviously, they will not maintain their arguments, for in this instance they would be placed on the same side with the Southern bigots and racists and in opposition to the Black Americans whose cause they embrace. They will again apply a double standard, in typical opportunism and hypocrisy, as they applied one standard to the Warren Report and a completely different standard to the Garrison "investigation."

"Protest" that adopts every dirty technique of the power structure is not protest and not reform but corruption on the outside striving to unseat and replace corruption that is "in." It is no prettier by virtue of the self-delusion and good intentions of its practitioners. And it is the most charitable epithet that can be bestowed on the Garrison clique.

Yours sincerely,

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