

ASSASSINATION INQUIRY COMMITTEE

NEWSLETTER

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PEACE

If you caught the last AIC Newsletter, you know that it was devoted to the "War of the Critics". We are glad that we did it, and we are happy to report that the "war" issue was very well received, especially by the critics. We would like to take a moment here to thank some of these fine people publicly for the positive response they have shown toward AIC. We thank Harold Weisberg for his article; we thank Richard Popkin for the interview; we thank Raymond Marcus for the copies of the Moorman photograph (more about this later); we thank Maggie Field for the money; we thank Penn Jones for reprinting us in the Midlothian Mirror; and we even thank Sylvia Meagher for her criticism.

Above all, we salute all of the critics for their persistent and patient efforts in tracking down the truth concerning the assassination of President Kennedy. We have only two things to ask of all of them: (1) FOR GOD'S SAKE, STOP ATTACKING EACH OTHER! (2) FOR GOD'S SAKE, SUPPORT JIM GARRISON! In regard to point one, that isn't too much to ask, is it? It seems to us that, if nothing else, a little peace would preserve us from a needless diversion of our energies. In regard to the second point, it seems to us that Garrison is the only public official in the United States who is actively pursuing the truth of the assassination (K-1). Doesn't it make sense to support him until he brings his case to court? Once again, we are glad we aired the "war" among the critics, but we hope our readers will join us in our desire to put that issue behind us and get on to the problem of the assassinations.

P.S.Nichols

FORMER DALLAS DEPUTY SHERIFF "TELLS THE TRUTH"

The Elliot Mintz' Looking Out program on KPFK-FM (LA) presented an interview with Mr. Roger Craig a few weeks ago. Craig, age 31, is a former Dallas Deputy Sheriff. He served in this capacity for eight years and was the youngest person, at age 22, to ever be hired for this position. He received the Man of the Year Award from the Dallas Police Department in 1960 for heroism and courage. He was fired by Sheriff Decker on July 4, 1967, in essence for "telling the truth".

Mr. Craig relates that on the morning of Nov. 22, 1963, Sheriff Decker briefed about 150 men in his department. He told them not to take any part in the security of the Presidential motorcade. This security was up to the Dallas Police and the Secret Service. The Sheriff's Department was to watch the motorcade and nothing more. Mr. Craig was standing 15 yards from the Book Depository when he heard the shots. He ran to the grassy Knoll where he encountered witness Arnold Roland, who said he had seen two men, one with a rifle, in the 6th floor Depository window 15 minutes before the shooting. He turned Roland over to another authority and began looking around the south curb of Elm Street for evidence of bullet marks. Then he heard a shrill whistle, which came from the north side of Elm Street. He saw Lee Harvey Oswald run down the grassy knoll and enter a light green Nash station wagon which had just driven up alongside the grassy knoll. Oswald was then driven away.

That same evening Craig was in the office of Dallas Police Captain Will Fritz. Oswald and another man were also present.

Fritz: "This man (Craig) saw you leave."

Oswald: "I told you people I did!"

Fritz: "What about the car?"

Oswald: "That station wagon belongs to Mrs. Payne. Don't try to drag her into this. (pause) Now everyone will know who I am."

This evidence of course refutes the conclusions of the Warren Commission.

Roger Craig then reveals information he obtained from an officer assigned to the Dallas Police Intelligence Bureau. First, there were 15,000 rounds of ammunition, 15 M-16 rifles, and a case of hand grenades confiscated by the Dallas police from the storage house behind Jack Ruby's apartment. Second, \$2000 was found in Jack Ruby's pocket when he killed Oswald. Third, \$10,000 in cash was found in Ruby's apartment. Fourth, an "uncountable" amount of cash was found in the trunk of Ruby's car. Fifth, Officer Tippett went to Oak Cliffs despite the fact that the police radio had ordered all units to report to Downtown Dallas shortly following the assassination.

Craig asks us why these facts were never made public by the authorities. He states that all of the men stationed in the basement of the Dallas Police Building when Oswald was shot were members of the Dallas Police Intelligence Bureau, given police uniforms for the occasion. There were plenty of regular uniformed officers for the job, but they were not utilized. Mr. Craig states that Dallas Intelligence Bureau officials assigned their people to areas where they were needed. All others were assigned to areas "where they couldn't find out what was going on."

Mintz: "Were members of the Dallas Police Dept. actively involved in a conspiracy to kill President Kennedy?"

Craig: "Yes."

Roger Craig told all this to Jim Garrison on November 1, 1967. A few days after talking to Garrison in New Orleans, Craig was contacted by a "friend" and asked to meet this "friend" in his club. On his way, Craig was followed by two cars. He arrived early, and the cars circled the block outside. The "friend" arrived, and they went to a coffee shop. One of the followers entered the shop after they did, and left just before they did. Craig and his "friend" walked to Carol and Columbia Streets and there stopped for a red light.

"For some reason", said Craig, "I stepped off the curb before the light changed, and a bullet shot past my head above my left ear, raising the hair on my head. My 'friend' had ducked prior to the shot." His friend had been deeply in debt; but shortly after this incident, he became financially independent.

Roger Craig said it was "shame within myself for keeping silent that forced me to tell the truth." When he saw the investigations Mr. Garrison and Penn Jones had undertaken, he asked himself the question we ask all you to now ask yourselves: "What am I sitting here for? Let's tell them the truth. Let's get the ball rolling!"

S.M. Pauley

ABE FORTAS AND THE WARREN COMMISSION

Once when Earl Warren was asked something about the Garrison investigation, he remarked that he didn't feel he should comment because the case might someday reach the Supreme Court, where as Chief Justice he would have to hand down an opinion. But it looks as if the suit by Shaw's lawyers requesting an injunction against the trial will be appealed to the Supreme Court. But when it gets there, Earl Warren will be conveniently absent; in all probability, he will have been replaced by Justice Abe Fortas.

Apparently Abe Fortas had something, perhaps a great deal, to do

with President Johnson's decision to set up the Warren Commission in November of 1963. During the week that elapsed between the assassination of Nov. 22 and the appointment of the Commission on Nov. 29, Mr. Fortas headed the investigation himself. According to the notes of Waggoner Carr, who was Attorney General of Texas, "Mr. Fortas informed me that he had been assigned to co-ordinate the FBI, Department of Justice, and Texas' Attorney General's efforts regarding the assassination of the President."¹ This conversation between Fortas and Carr apparently took place on Nov. 26, only three days before the White House announcement of the appointment of the Commission. According to Fred Hoffman, writing in the Los Angeles Free Press, "Fortas worked with President Johnson on the first speech he delivered to Congress after the assassination, and it was Fortas who suggested a special Presidential Commission to make the investigation."² "Fortas pointed out", says Hoffman, "that the credentials of the members of such a committee should be impeccable. It should control the developing controversy about the Kennedy slaying and give a single report that would command the Nation's full confidence."³ It was Fortas, continues Hoffman, who "chose the liberal jurist, Chief Justice Earl Warren, to lead the closing of this most dangerous credibility gap."⁴

During the recent hearings by the Senate Judiciary Committee on the President's appointment of Fortas to Chief Justice, Senator McClellan asked him to elaborate concerning the matters on which he consulted with Mr. Johnson, whereupon Fortas replied that among other things they had been "matters of critical, critical importance." When McClellan asked for an illustration, Fortas responded, "Well, Senator, perhaps I can, without doing something you wouldn't want me to do and I wouldn't like to do." Said McClellan, "I'm not insisting that you do that." Finally, McClellan asked, "Nothing the President has consulted you about can become an issue for the court's to resolve?" Replied Fortas, "Yes, sir."

It may be that the real thing that is bothering the Senate is Fortas' role in the assassination controversy and not his judicial decisions concerning allegedly pornographic movies. FOOTNOTES BELOW:

- 1) Quoted by Sylvia Meagher, "Wheels within Deals: How the Kennedy 'Investigation' was Organized", The Minority of One (July-August, 1968)
- 2) "What Price Justice: The Story of Abe Fortas", Los Angeles Free Press, May 17, 1968. 3) and 4) Ibid.
- 5) Reported by Ronald J. Ostrow, "Fortas tells role in Viet Nam, Riot Strategy While on Court", Los Angeles Times, July 17, 1968, page 1.

P.S. Nichols

RECENT PRESS ABSTRACTS OF SIGNIFICANCE

"Garrison Challenges 2 Justices" (from San Diego Tribune, 8/15/68): NEW ORLEANS (AP) Dist. Att. Jim Garrison has vowed to challenge the right of Chief Justice Earl Warren and Justice Abe Fortas to pass judgment on his presidential assassination plot case. Garrison, who has charged Clay L. Shaw with conspiring to murder President Kennedy, declared his intent yesterday and lashed out at a federal court order delaying Shaw's trial pending an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court. The DA said he would challenge Warren's right to sit on the appeal because "he played corner linebacker and captain of the President's defensive unit back in 1964" as chairman of the Warren Commission. He claimed that Fortas "helped work out for the President the creation of the Warren Commission whose findings have now been totally discredited."

"Shaw Trial Scheduled Sept. 10; Delay Possible" (from New Orleans States-Item, 8/1/68): The conspiracy trial of Clay Shaw was rescheduled for Sept. 10 today by Criminal Court Judge Edward A. Haggerty Jr., but action taken a couple of hours later by Shaw's attorneys could block the trial once again. Shaw is accused by DA Jim Garrison of conspiring to murder the late President John F. Kennedy. The September trial date was requested by Assistant DA James Alcock and approved by the judge today. Shortly after the new date was announced, Shaw's attorneys filed a notice of their intention to appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court on a decision by the three-judge federal panel that refused last month to stop Garrison's prosecution. Whether the trial will begin as scheduled now depends upon action by the three-judge panel. The judges can grant or refuse Shaw a stay of trial pending a hearing of his appeal by the Supreme Court, which is in recess until October. Shaw originally had been scheduled to go on trial in February. When his attorneys filed a motion for a change of venue, the trial was postponed. After his plea to move the trial from New Orleans was denied, the trial was re-scheduled for June. The defense then filed the injunction suit in Federal District Court here asking that Garrison be prevented from further prosecution of the case and that the conclusions of the Warren Report be declared valid and admissible as evidence in all courts. Federal Judge Heebe issued a temporary restraining order which blocked the trial once again, pending judgment in the suit. (The three-judge panel) denied Shaw's plea for relief in federal court July 23. Shaw was arrested and charged with conspiracy March 1, 1967.

"Shaw Booking Sheet, Bertrand Alias is Bared" (from New Orleans States-Item, 7/30/68): The New Orleans Police Dept. has released a Central Lockup booking sheet and a Bureau of Identification fingerprint card for Clay L. Shaw, which lists his alias as Clay Bertrand... Police Supt. Joseph I. Giarrusso said both records released were compiled Mar. 1, 1967, when Shaw was arrested and booked on the conspiracy charge. Giarrusso said today he revealed the documents to the press after Garrison authorized their release. Police Officer Aloysius J. Habighorst, who revealed the contents of the documents last week, helped compile the B of I card the night of Shaw's arrest. The fingerprint card is signed by Shaw. Habighorst has stated that Shaw freely admitted he used the Bertrand alias. Shaw has denied any knowledge of a Kennedy assassination conspiracy and has stated flatly he never used any alias.... The name "Clay Bertrand" first appeared in the Warren Commission Report in testimony by New Orleans Attorney Dean Andrews, who told Commission lawyers that he had received a call shortly after the Kennedy assassination asking him to go to Dallas and defend the accused killer, Lee Harvey Oswald. The man who called, Andrews said was Clay Bertrand. Later, Andrews identified Clay Bertrand as New Orleans bar operator ~~XXXX~~

Eugene Davis. Davis denied that he used the alias. Andrews has been indicted and convicted for perjury (EDITOR'S NOTE- Accompanying this article is a photograph of the fingerprint card in question, listing as the charge, "Conspiracy to commit murder of President John F. Kennedy". Most of the card is taken up with the set of fingerprints, as well as a detailed physical description of the accused. In the upper left hand corner is the name of the accused, Clay Lavergne Shaw, below which is typed "alias Clay Bertrand". Police Officer Habighorst has sworn that Shaw freely admitted this alias when asked during booking proceedings, "Have you ever used an alias?")

WHAT KIND OF SOCIETY? A REVIEW OF MARK LANE'S A CITIZEN'S DISSENT

Call it what you will. Call it a conspiracy of silence; call it, as

Mark Lane and Jim Garrison do, an "orchestrated silence". The inescapable fact is that the P. A. system, by which I mean the system used to address the public, is simply turned off, at least when certain persons step up to the podium. No wonder they have to go about shouting from group to group. No wonder their voices sometime sound a little strident.

Let me give an example with which many people in Southern California are familiar although many more, for reasons that will be immediately clear, are not. On November 13, 1967, New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison gave a speech in Los Angeles. In my opinion it was one of the most important speeches of our decade. You might call it a "State of the Union" address by the U.S. Government in Exile, for in it Garrison analyzed our society as it stands today and found it tragically wanting. About half-a-year before the murders of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy, he argued that this is not a "Great Society" as our leaders would have it, but a "Dangerous Society". The speech was not given in an obscure cloak room or to a handful of left-wing intellectuals; it was delivered to the Southern California Association of Radio and TV Newscasters, a group that would seem to have some small access to the public ear. The following morning, however, those citizens who ritually read their daily newspapers learned nothing. It was not even reported by the Los Angeles press that such a speech had occurred. It fell upon the "underground" media such as the L.A. Free Press and KPFK-FM to report the event and present the text of the speech to their small public.

Mark Lane gives an even more graphic example of this kind of deafening silence in his latest book, A Citizen's Dissent. In a chapter titled "The Debates that Never Occurred", Lane describes a debate between himself and Melvin Belli, the well-known attorney for Jack Ruby, which took place in 1964 at the Manhattan Center in New York. Although this hall holds close to 4,000 people, the event was sold out early and hundreds were turned away. Says Lane, "One hundred and seven representatives of the press were present. Radio reporters and entire television crews were on hand. Many of the delegations at the United Nations had requested tickets and many were represented. XM I was interviewed by two reporters from the New York Times before and after the debate, and the proceedings were punctuated by exploding flashbulbs as photographer after photographer took picture after picture." As Mr. Lane points out, there were at that time six daily newspapers published in New York City. Not a single one-- including the New York Times, which refers to itself as a newspaper of record-- reported that the debate had occurred.

A Citizen's Dissent does not attack the Warren Report. It does not attack our federal government. It does not even attack the CIA. It focuses its attack on the so-called Fourth Estate-- the nation's communications media-- that institution whose main function should be to insure we have a free society. Mark Lane demonstrates the way in which book publishers, newspapers, television networks, and, yes, even professors have participated, whether willfully or not, in a vast effort either to ignore or to discredit his efforts to communicate his point of view. Only the reviewers of Lane's first book, Rush to Judgment, seem to have remained independent of these forces, and there were a great many reviews indeed. Mark Lane has recently pointed out that within the first few weeks after it was published, Rush to Judgment, which quickly became a national best-seller, received something like 450 reviews. It thus becomes most interesting to contrast this figure with the mere handful of reviews that A Citizen's Dissent has received at the same stage in its career. Could it be that the Fourth Estate is more sacrosanct than our federal government?

A young man, who has admitted participation in a plot to kill Robert Kennedy, was detained in Juarez. Crispin Curiel Gonzalez, 17 year old friend of the assassin of Robert Kennedy, Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, has declared moreover that he is prepared to kill Edward Kennedy, the last still alive of the famous family, "if there is good enough pay." The boy myth-maker according to many people is a Mexican-American. Though only 17, according to the police he is already capable of committing the crime to which he says he is disposed... In front of ~~xxxxdaary~~, called "Zaragoza", a letter was dropped; the owner of the dairy picked it up and read it, to his great surprise. The letter said:

"It is very clear. The Kennedy Family wants to conduct itself in the US like dictators. For this, Robert Kennedy died. I have thought in a determined fashion to kill Edward Kennedy. Why? Because he is the one left. Not now, because he is not running. But when he makes a move, it will be very easy; there is nothing more to do than to wait. In the primary elections, when he has to go into the cities, it will be very easy..."

The local authorities quickly captured him along with the help of the FBI, and two agents of this famous North American police participated in his interrogation. The young man moreover wrote another letter:

"I am going to lose my memory completely soon. If the world only suspected that I planned entirely the assassination of Robert Kennedy. That crazy Arab had a tremendous hatred for all that Kennedy stood for. The world knows that the assassination was a great plot, but unfortunately nobody knows the entire truth...I probably will die very soon in some part of Mexico...My parents live in Colima, 156 Medellin Street...I am in love with a girl named Emily Biukreyi, who lives in Los Angeles, Calif., on Vaness Street, 602 S..." (signed by Gonzalez on 6/4/68)

In truth, did he participate or not in this great event which has upset the whole world? Nobody knows all the truth. In the opinion of the investigating agents, he is treated as overly imaginative, nevertheless since many crazy people have freedoms in the US, the possibility still exists that he committed the crime as announced...The detention of Gonzalez in Juarez may be very important for the security of Ted Kennedy; but, who knows how many more locos are loose in North America? Gonzalez is a Mexican born on the other side...who has had many privations, including a detention in El Paso, Texas. Now, in order to not attract suspicion to himself, he tries to conduct himself like a North American. And according to Gonzalez, to appear loco is the best manner to be considered a North American.

TRANSLATION OF ARTICLE IN ALAPMA, MEXICO CITY NEWSPAPER (7/17/68)

On July 4th, when the US was celebrating the anniversary of its independence, in a locked cell in Hospital Libertad, Crispin C. Gonzalez was found hanging...Gonzalez, according to the Police Chief, tried to escape from the hospital the day before his suicide. His death occurred at 7:30 pm, before that he suffered an attack of madness, and the rope broke...The psychopath declared that days before the assassination he held a meeting in a library in Los Angeles with Sirhan B. Sirhan to plan the death of Senator Kennedy...The suicide coincided with the attempted murder of Sidallah Sirhan, 36 year old brother of the assassin of Robert Kennedy, in Pasadena, Calif., while traveling on the highway at 4:30 am on 7/3/68...

(EDITORS COMMENT: It is possible that Crispin Gonzalez was merely one of many psychotics at large whose grandiose delusions represent nothing more than a red herring. Alternatively, it is also possible that he

was involved in Robert Kennedy's murder, to some degree at least. Readers are urged to recall Kennedy campaign-worker Sandy Serrano's contention that a girl in a polka-dot dress, accompanied by a Mexican-American youth, fled the assassination scene exclaiming, "We shot him! We shot Kennedy!" AIC is anxious to show Gonzalez' picture (a copy of which is in our possession) to Miss Serrano and to others who claim to have seen accomplices of Sirhan at the scene. Also, any information on Crispin Curiel Gonzalez, or his relatives and friends in Southern California, should be forwarded at once to AIC.

CLOSING NOTE

With this, our fourth Newsletter edition, AIC embarks upon a massive drive to increase circulation, broaden our readership, and thereby enlighten more people. To this end, readers are themselves urged to solicit new subscribers. Names, addressed, and zip codes should be sent to us at the address below. Remember, the newsletter is mailed free of charge to all who request it. Therefore, publicize our paper on radio talk shows all over the country, and especially in California. Since it is free, you will probably be permitted to give our name & address over the air. Inform your friends of what we offer. Also, please contribute a little bit of money, if you haven't already, to help defray our expenses. Send checks to: ASSASSINATION INQUIRY COMMITTEE

4718 Saratoga Avenue, San Diego, Calif, 92107.

Editors of newsletter:

A. George Abbott, M.D.

Prescott S. Nichols

Stephen Pauley, M.D.

Jon Olson

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ASSASSINATION INQUIRY COMMITTEE
4718 SARATOGA AVENUE
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92107



Kennedy Assassination Truth Committee
GPO Box 2691
NY, New York 10001