

Telephone call from Ed Epstein, Friday night 7/12/68, 11:30 p.m. and again at midnight

Ed called to gab about the reaction to his New Yorker piece on Garrison...said, Billings sore at him...Salisbury was impressed enough to put ms. on desk of Peter Kihss, asking him write 3 columns...Ed worried or disappointed, he had not heard from Time or Newsweek...Wanted ~~such~~ information of some kind from Life, but had other contacts there than Billings...Felt he had forced Billings hand in re testifying for Clay Shaw, that he should have done so voluntarily because he was in a position to corroborate Jim Phelan and others...Jones had called him Wednesday night and in a weak moment he had agreed to appear on the panel when Garrison is in NY on 8/7/68...but now he intended to back out, had already called Dwight Macdonald and persuaded him to decline also, had to call Jones, would do it now, obviously reluctant and uncomfortable...In course this conversation, Ed volunteered that in the book, he would elaborate on the palmprint and the alibi etc., referring in footnotes to AAF and SSD, and indicating things were not entirely clear and simple...a sop to my displeasure re tone and contents his article, though he claimed he had not yet received my letter of 7/11/68.

Shortly afterward Ed called again, laughing heartily after having talked to Jones ...seems that Jones claimed to be disgusted by Garrison's response when asked to comment on Ed's article, e.g., with the sensational new invention of contacts with a foreign intelligence service, so he was pulling out of the 8/7/68 arrangements and disassociating himself completely with the whole Garrison circus...But the real reason, according to Ed, is that instead of blaming Tom Bethell for the stuff in the New Yorker piece, Garrison and his staff blame Jones Harris, are furious with him, and furious that he invited Epstein to be on the platform...G. said if Ed appeared, he would refuse to take part...So the apostasy seems to be more of an excommunication.