

# KENNEDY ASSASSINATION INQUIRY COMMITTEE

G.P.O. BOX 2691, NYC, 10001

VOLUME 2 - ISSUE 1

Our first hello to members, new and old, in 1968: these newsletters will continue to come to you throughout the year. We ask non-members reading the newsletter for the first time to donate a minimum of \$5.00 to our work. This will keep it coming. We are now four years removed from the assassination, but activity is on the rise. In New York we have been presenting a series of public programs, and preparing to move our activities into other cities. In New Orleans, the trial of Clay Shaw is approaching - although not before late April, at the earliest. We'll discuss Jim Garrison's case later - first let's talk about what's been happening.

## PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Our first public program was held on January 22nd in Chapter Hall, part of the Carnegie Hall complex, in New York City. Subsequent programs are being held on Monday evenings at the Orpheum Theatre, 126 2nd Avenue. The first program was "An Examination of the Photographic Evidence", with Richard Sorague, the photographic researcher, projecting and discussing photographs for a period of four hours, and answering audience questions as well. A huge undertaking, and it could have gone on another four hours. From there we went into "The Shots - Where From and How Many?", again with Richard Sorague, and with Josiah Thompson, author of "Six Seconds in Dallas", and Vincent Salandria, a lawyer in Philadelphia who wrote early articles on the assassination for *Minority of One* and *Liberation*. This second program flowed naturally from the first, although it did not result in unanimity on the part of the critics. It was generally agreed that President Kennedy was killed in a crossfire; as to precisely when and where the shots came from, there were differences.

On February we went further in the same direction with a discussion on "The Autopsy Report", again with Josiah Thompson, and with Jones Harris, an independent investigator, who has aided several critics in finding publishers. This program discussed all aspects of the autopsy, including the suppressed x-rays and photographs in the Archives, and the bullet that turned up on a stretcher. On March 4th we discussed "Oswald in New Orleans" (our first time really discussing Oswald), with Jones Harris again, and Harold Weisberg, author of "Oswald in New Orleans" and the Whitewash series. We hope Mr. Weisberg will appear again.

We have plans for further programs along this line - an evening on "The Counterfeit Oswald - One or More?" and an evening on "The Death of Tippit and 35 Witnesses". (A figure we have from Penn Jones, Jr.). Also, more photographic material will be presented as it becomes available. The dates for our forthcoming program are contingent upon critics, including those from the West Coast, and upon our finances. To date, it is our fortune that critics like Sylvia Meagher, author of "Accessories After the Fact: The Warren Commission, the Authorities & the Report", have joined us from the audience in asking pertinent questions and volunteering information. We invited J. Lee Rankin and Norman Redlich, General Council and assistant council of the Warren Commission staff respectively, to the last program. They did not reply.

## THE OPEN LETTER

On January 16th we commenced mailing an open letter addressed to the attention of the U.S. Navy, the Kennedy family, Mr. Burke Marshall, The Warren Commission, the National Archives, and the New York Times, to our members, and to the press at large. The Open Letter dealt with the text of the agreement between the Kennedy Family and the General Services Administration, primarily regarding the now notorious x-rays and autopsy photographs. It also touched on the Times' handling of this material. (For those of you who do not have our letter, we'll mail you a copy when you become a member). Since mailing it, we have received three replies from those involved. A letter dated January 30th from Mr. Marshall's secretary, promised us a reply from Mr. Marshall after his return from abroad on February 12th. To date, we have had no reply. We have had a reply from Lawson B. Knott Jr., the Administrator of the General Services Administration, who carefully refrains from referring to the x-rays and autopsy photographs as 'personal effects' of the late President, a term the Times article (and the text of the agreement), consistently and misleadingly employ. Writing on the agreement and our letter, he says "We believe that this agreement speaks for itself and that it would be inappropriate for us to comment on the other matters discussed in your letter. Yes, the agreement does "speak for itself" - it is the contradiction between the agreement and Mr. Marshall's words and actions that is so disturbing.

And finally, we have heard from Fred Graham, the New York Times correspondent assigned to the Supreme Court, who wrote the two New York Times articles we discussed. As to why the text of the agreement was released at this time, Mr. Graham says "Dr. Bahmer explained to me that Mr. Marshall asked initially that the agreement be kept confidential. But after the Freedom of Information Act was passed by Congress last year, Dr. Bahmer felt that he had no alternative but to release it." We might then ask Mr. Marshall why he initially requested that the terms of the agreement itself "be kept confidential" for so long.

To continue, Mr. Graham writes "Why did he wait until Jan. 5th to do so? Because nobody asked him until then. I became curious when I read the quoted statement in Miss (sic) Meagher's book. I asked him for the text, he informed Mr. Marshall that it was being released, and he gave it to me." If Dr. Bahmer felt he "had no alternative but to release it", why did he wait for Fred Graham? Should we be grateful to Mr. Graham as a reporter who digs out stories? Mr. Graham also mentions his irritation over the Times typo of Mrs. Meagher's book as "Accessories After the 'Act'", instead of "Fact". An interesting mistake.

## BOOKS

We have recently mailed a book list to our members, as a means of making hard-to-find material available, and as a fund-raising activity. We will be adding more titles; meanwhile, ask for a copy, if you don't have one. Recent additions to this list include: "Plot or Politics? The Garrison Case & Its Cast", by Rosemary James & Jack Wardlaw (Pelican Publishing House) at \$1.75; "Marina Oswald" by Joachim Joesten, at \$3.50; and "Oswald: the Truth", also by Joesten, at \$6.50 (both published by Peter Dawnay Ltd., London). Any of these books can be ordered from us now at the above prices, plus .25¢ postage and handling, and 5% tax for residents of New York City (2% in the rest of N.Y. state).

## THIS SPRING

Due to rough winter weather and our other activities, our petitioning has been limited. We have, however, been testing the effectiveness of the petition at various political and entertainment events. On the whole, the returns have been encouraging. This spring and summer our various activities will be greatly expanded. We expect maximum volunteer work from now on through the election.

## PETITIONING

In New York, we will have card tables on street corners, where we can collect signatures - something we hope will occur in many other cities. We will be particularly active on campuses, where students are seeking involvement and a positive way of expressing dissent. We need your assistance in this campaign - we need you out on the streets, collecting signatures. Wherever you live, write the Committee and tell us what work you can do in your city. We will put you in touch with your local organizer - or perhaps offer you the job, if you're first!

## CLASSES

In New York city we are planning a series of classes on the assassination. This will help see to it that our volunteers are well-informed people. The series will be for members only, and will be held once a week in the Village. Tentatively, there will be a registration fee of \$5, and a charge thereafter of \$1.50 per class. The series will start in May, following some introductory talks on the assassination by our National Chairman, Trent Gough. Those who are interested in attending should write us; application forms will be mailed later.

## SPEAKING TOUR

Trent Gough will be doing a series of public lectures this spring and summer, on campuses, for clubs, etc. If you are interested in having a speaker for any local club you may belong to, anywhere in the States, then write us now.

## RESEARCH

We are moving into research areas now - there is a great deal of investigative work ahead of us. We need people to assist us, in crucial areas such as Dallas, etc. We also need funds for research; as it's an expensive undertaking. Money has never been more important in our search for the truth, in this new area now, as well as our public activities. Expenses involve transportation, etc., as well as financial resources to back up any material we may wish to purchase. Send what you can, both for this and our other expenses - if you wish, you can indicate which area you would like us to spend it in - we'll keep all of you informed on our progress.

# DISCOVERIES

"... in one compartment of the security room, are 25 boxes containing documents that no one outside of the Government or the Warren Commission has read. By estimate of the National Archives, 10 feet, or approximately 25,000 pages, of Warren Commission files remain closed in these boxes. Many of the closed documents are classified, some bearing the red-ink stamp: TOP SECRET". So says David Wise in a Saturday Evening Post article in the April 6th issue. For details, read the article; following is a sketch of it to give you the feel of the material, and to say something of the omissions that will be of interest.

Mr. Wise says there are 11 transcripts of commission meetings, of which four "remain stamped TOP SECRET". The other 7 "were declassified as the result of a request that I made." A fortunate request, apparently made directly of the Archives, as Mr. Wise says the task of reviewing the closed executive-session transcripts "fell to Marion Johnson". (Mr. Johnson is custodian of the commission files, under Dr. Robert H. Bahmer, director of the Archives). The FBI, CIA, and Secret Service reports, are, according to Wise quoting Bahmer, "not normally made public 'for 75 years'". There was apparently a storm about this in 1965, causing McGeorge Bundy, then special assistant for national security affairs, to order "the Justice Department to find a way around the 75-year rule." Nicholas de B. Katzenbach, then Attorney General, "submitted a memorandum to Bundy proposing a set of guidelines to govern the release of the commission's files, and the White House approved". In effect, this memorandum's proposals did not "find a way around", as, "According to Deputy Archivist Dr. James B. Rhoads, 'the final determination as to what was open and closed was up to the agency of origin. The Federal Records Act of 1950 requires us to keep closed the things that the agencies request us to keep closed'". Stalemate.

Dr. Bahmer is quoted as saying "My estimate is that there would be very little still closed after 1975". As to whether any sealed file "mocks the Warren Commission's conclusion that Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone, killed the President", Dr. Bahmer says "From what I know of the records I'd have to say no". What does Dr. Bahmer know of the records? Has he read this extensive secret material? Bahmer's remark and Wise's article indicate there are open questions, but that it's possible and likely that these questions can all be answered within the Warren Commission's conclusion. Possible, yes, but until we have seen all the material, we can't know how likely. Some of this secret material may not have been declassified so that someday we can be accused of crying wolf. Red-herrings may abound. We must keep up pressure to free all of this evidence, so that these questions will not remain unanswered.

Among the more cogent remarks of commission members quoted by Mr. Wise, we have Earl Warren calling "the evidence concerning the bullets 'totally inconclusive'", and Mr. McCloy seconding him with "'This is looming up as the most confusing thing we've got'". It's nice to know some commission members were aware of that before they completed the Report. We are also told that "the commission worried that Marina Oswald might, in Dulles's words, 'just take off and go to Mexico'". As to whether the Secret Service should cease their surveillance of her, Mr. Rankin replied "I said we can't do that because she would slip right across the border and be gone...". Mr. Rankin seems more positive than Mr. Dulles - and with what reason? Has she?

Mr. Wise says the Warren Commission made "perfunctory efforts to obtain the vital autopsy pictures...from..Robert Kennedy". Rankin is quoted as saying the pictures "'just have never been developed because of the family's wishes. And I think the Attorney General (Robert Kennedy) would make them available now - although they were denied to us before because he said that he didn't think there was a sufficient showing of our need'". And then "Warren instructed Rankin to try to arrange to look at the photographs". Apparently this is the last mention of a request to view the photos that Mr. Wise was able to find; surely there is a follow-up to this request recorded in the still classified material.

In our Open Letter we commented on the Kennedy 'ownership' of the autopsy material; now we'll add a couple of things. Considering the efforts that were supposedly being made, why RFK's refusal? And since the "developed" material was given to the Archives in October, 1966, and is referred to as "'never been developed" in April, 1964 - just where and when and under what conditions was this material developed? Some of it did not develop all right. This could be crucially important someday, so we'll try and get an answer now.

Mr. Wise lists a few fascinating titles of secret documents, a list that itself was supposed to be secret, but which the Archives made public. Wise says "Some months ago the CIA attempted to suppress the list...of 50 secret CIA documents,...too late. The Archives declined to classify a document ...public for several months." As with the autopsy material, an attempt has been made to keep the agreements and lists secret - classifying material alone did not satisfy them.

The files also contain "A CIA report on Lee Harvey Oswald's activities in Mexico, dated October 10, 1963, six weeks before the assassination." Prior knowledge of Oswald's activities by various government agencies requires close scrutiny, both for the true facts, and to reveal covering-up, past and present, if any.

Then we have the story of Yuri Ivanovich Nosenko, "a prize KGB defector", who was interviewed on March 4, 1964, and whose interview was sent to the commission. Nosenko is quoted as saying "'Oswald was an extremely poor shot and it was necessary for persons who accompanied him on hunts to provide him with game'". There is also a file discussing "assistance rendered Oswald by Madame Yekaterina Alekseevna Furtseva, member of the Russian Presidium, to allow him to stay in Russia...7/23/64." And there is a Helm's memo to Hoover on "'Lee Harvey Oswald's Access to Classified Information About the U-2'." The article implies that the Russians were able to bring down the U-2 as a result of information obtained from Oswald, who was then helped by Madame Furtseva. (Madame Furtseva was "downgraded to minister in May of 1960 in a shakeup of Soviet leadership that followed the affair of the downed U-2"). The implications in the article are there; but we have little basis for it in fact at this point. It can neither be agreed with or denied, and we are unlikely to know more until we see the classified files.

## LETTERS

Professor J. Vidal-Llecha, of Towson, Maryland (formerly a lawyer and judge in Spain) writes: "From the beginning it seemed to me national security was deeply involved. Government agencies, established press, Kennedy's family, and every VIP were in agreement to forget about finding out who killed President Kennedy and prosecuting them. From 'The National Review' to IF Stone's Weekly, everyone seemed to agree that truth was not important. Few editors seem to believe that 'the truth will make us free', and still fewer realize that the untruth has made us captives. I think the misinformation we are fed about the war in Vietnam is conditioned by the former deception about Kennedy's assassination. Our country and the whole modern civilization may sink in a cesspool of covering up, white-wash, deception, and suppression of evidence."..."Personally I respect Chief Justice Warren and his fellow commissioners, President Kennedy's brothers, the press and government personnel who may have judged secrecy essential for national security. But I do not agree with them. I think they are wrong. In the last result truth and justice are the real interests of the country and of the world."

And Robert Sauer of New York City writes: "Upon McNamara and Taylor's return, in Oct. 63, 'from their fact finding expedition into the embattled official jungle in Saigon' (see Krock Article) Pres. Kennedy announced his attention to withdraw approximately 1,000 U.S. troops from South Vietnam before the end of the year. When pressed by reporters for further details Kennedy said more information would have to wait upon the meeting in Honolulu of Nov. 20 (list of participants enclosed). On the 21st. Nov., at the conclusion of this curious Honolulu meeting, it was announced by Arthur Sylvester that 1,300 American troops would be withdrawn from South Vietnam by the end of 1963; 300 troops would leave Dec. 3rd., and another 1,000 by the year's end. You now hold in your hand the answer to why Kennedy was assassinated. The two truths are joined, Dallas - Vietnam. A president murdered for standing opposed to the murder of a country." (The Krock article is from the New York Times, Oct. 3, 1963, and was reprinted in "The Kennedy Years". It outlines the "bad press" the CIA were getting. Mr. Krock speaks of President Kennedy as having "to make a judgment if the spectacle of war within the Executive Branch is to be ended and the effective functioning of the CIA preserved. And when he makes this judgment, hopefully he also will make it public, as well as the appraisal of fault on which it is based.").

These letters reflect the political concerns many people have about the Kennedy assassination, and the inter-relationships they see between the assassination and the political and moral reality of today. Whether or not we agree to the relationship Mr. Sauer draws between the assassination and the Vietnam war (which is only speculation), we must recognize the dangers in a country where "national security" has taken precedence over "truth and justice". That is our country's fault - we have let it happen.

## THE GARRISON CASE

District Attorney Jim Garrison of New Orleans is prosecuting a conspiracy case against Clay Shaw (of New Orleans), and Edgar Eugene Bradley (of North Hollywood, Calif.), in the assassination of President Kennedy. Following is a summary of developments during the past few months; it is not a judgment of the case. The press should refrain from pre-trial provocations and judgments that belong to the courtroom. (The ACLU, which has been critical of some of Garrison's methods, in their March-April, 1968 issue, has now criticized "the release of the military medical records of...Garrison...", and called for "an overhaul of procedures for maintaining the security of such documents", which were first published in the Chicago Tribune). Space is limited, so coverage will be brief.

In December, Garrison stated he had evidence that the conspirator's final meeting took place on Nov. 17, 1963 (Sent. in the N.Y. Post), and that Oswald tipped off the FBI to the planned assassination. He said that on the same day the FBI sent out a TWX (interbureau telegram) to this effect, and it reached Hoover. He points out that Kennedy was allowed to ride without the bubbletop. Would Oswald have been a conspirator or an assassin if he tipped off the FBI? Mr. Garrison has produced an affidavit from Mark Lane on the TWX message, but has not subpoenaed any officials over it, or emphasized it since.

Mr. Bradley, (Garrison said he tried in 1964 to work up California support for Hoover as President) is the regional representative for Dr. Carl McIntire, of Collingwood, N.J., who directs the conservative American Council of Christian Churches (with a nationwide broadcasting system). Mr. Bradley says he was on a bus bound from Tulsa to El Paso at the time of the assassination, and that it is a case of mistaken identity, at best. From the N.Y. Times of Dec. 28, "I understand there is another Bradley, a man going by the name of Gene Bradley, as I understand it, brought here through some kind of exchange with Cuba". Mr. Bradley took a lie detector test with Professional Security Consultants in California, and Chris Gugas, who administered the tests, said they "indicate Mr. Bradley did not plot the murder of President Kennedy" (N.Y. Times, Jan. 5). Mr. Bradley challenged Garrison to take similar tests, Garrison is attempting to have Bradley extradited to Louisiana, and George Jensen, Bradley's attorney, says they will fight it. Mr. Jensen has asked for a six-month continuance, "because California Attorney General Thomas Lynch has not yet ruled on the legality of the extradition papers" (N.O. States-Item, Mar. 30). Judge Joan Dempsey Klein has granted the continuance, and ordered Bradley to appear for an extradition hearing on Sept. 30, 1968.

In the Clay Shaw case, the past few months have been occupied with change-of-venue hearings, with Shaw's lawyers contending that Mr. Shaw cannot get a fair trial in New Orleans. Press witnesses were called, and Shaw's lawyers attempted to call 1,300 witnesses from the jury rolls, but Judge Haggerty arranged instead for 80 prospective jurors to be called as a test. Only 13 said they had fixed opinions (which they were not allowed to state). Judge Haggerty concluded a fair trial in New Orleans would be possible, and denied a change of venue. Meanwhile, Garrison had successfully subpoenaed a copy of the Zapruder film from Life Magazine, and shown it to the Grand Jury; defense attorney William Wegmann argued "this constitutes a 'judicial admission' on the part of the state that the Shaw case and the Kennedy assassination investigation are one and the same" (States-Item, April 2), and asked for a reopening of the venue hearing. The state Supreme Court refused to grant the change of venue; the defense might now attempt to take it to the federal court. Garrison could appeal any court decision. No trial should be expected before late May or early June, or possibly later, depending on appeals.

It should be emphasized that neither Mr. Shaw or Mr. Bradley have been charged with the assassination, but rather with conspiracy. Judge Haggerty has said "You could have had 50 conspiracies throughout the United States that had nothing to do with Dallas" (N.O. Times-Picayune, Mar. 6), and "as long as there was an overt act in connection with them, they are liable for prosecution. Whether the conspiracy culminated with the actual assassination does not have to be proved." A conviction on the actual assassination would require new charges.

Garrison's success with out-of-state witness subpoenas has varied. Among the witnesses who testified were: James Hicks (Enid, Okla.), Marina Oswald Porter (Richardson, Texas), Mrs. Ruth Paine (Irving, Texas), and Lawrence Howard Jr. (El Monte, Calif.). Howard appeared after successfully fighting extradition, and his testimony was credited by Garrison, who said he was not involved. Garrison has been unable to extradite Gordon Noval (Columbus, Ohio, and other residences), Thomas E. Beckham (Omaha, Neb.), and Loran Hall (Bakersfield, Calif.), as material witnesses. In Hall's case, the judge said Hall would not be returned to New Orleans because "he was either not a material witness in that investigation or that he had committed perjury." (N.Y. Times, Jan. 25). The subpoena for Allen Dulles (ex-CIA chief) was returned by the Justice Department, who refused to serve it in the normal manner (Mark Lane column, L.A. Free Press, April 12). Garrison also subpoenaed the original Zapruder film, but received a substitute copy which contained the four frames damaged in the original, which nevertheless was not quite complete. Senator Robert F. Kennedy recently became his own bizarre kind of witness. To quote Louisiana governor John J. McKeithen, in a conversation with Jim Garrison, "I've never heard from that fellow (Kennedy) before, but he called me just now and asked me if I could keep you from embarrassing him by trying to subpoena him when he speaks in New Orleans" (N.O. States-Item, Mar. 30). Garrison denied any intent to subpoena Kennedy, and questioned the source and integrity of Kennedy's information.

The N.Y. Times on March 26, reported a speech Senator Robert F. Kennedy gave in Los Angeles on March 25. During his talk he was asked about the material in the archives, and its inaccessibility. The Times quoted him as saying "the archives would be opened 'at the appropriate time'", and also that "I would not reopen the



Warren Commission report, I stand by the report." For those who wonder about this attitude of Robert Kennedy's, we turn to an article in the N.Y. Times on April 9, quoting Senator Eugene J. McCarthy, who was speaking of his life in theatre terms (i.e. - Act I). Speaking of Robert Kennedy, he is quoted as saying "...Bobby (Kennedy) is an Act I man. He says here's a problem. Here's another. He never really deals with Act II, but I think maybe Bobby's beginning to write Act III now. Bobby's tragedy is that to beat me, he's going to have to destroy his brother." Perhaps that statement sheds some light on Senator Kennedy's attitude toward a new investigation.

The assassination of President Kennedy, and the impunity of his assassins, made the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., more likely. It will happen again and again if we don't pursue the Kennedy investigation, and if we let anyone try to arrange things in the King investigation. Please: We must all watch the papers and follow the news; let the authorities know, through the press, that we are watching them. Already we can see the possible shaping up of another Lee Harvey Oswald - a "loner", they say. A tendency to political killings can be overcome and defeated by us, by our co-operation, our files, our wisdom, and efforts.

Where do we go from here? 1968, an election year, is an opportunity at the polls and in the public eye. We must ask our candidates how they feel about the Warren Report, and how they would feel about a new investigation, as outlined in our petition. Write your congressman! In particular, keep your eye open for any opportunity to confront Robert Kennedy on this issue, and to get statements from the other Presidential candidates. (McCarthy has come out favoring an investigation to see if a new commission is necessary; a good half-step, so let's see if he'll go all the way). This issue is a true test of a candidate's perceptions and public honesty. Is he willing to put the good of the people before the expediency of politics.

We have just received two more Joesten books from Europe: "The Garrison Enquiry, Truth and Consequences" (\$1.50), and "How Kennedy Was Killed" (\$2.00).

We have delayed printing this newsletter several times because of our debts, and our need to clear the bills. (A newsletter printing and mailing costs \$100; who would like to pay for the next one?). We are unfortunately few and far between, those of us willing to go into action. But then that's true of virtually any crucial issue; the active protester is always hard to find. We, too, need your help. If you aren't yet a member, please send us a minimum of \$5 to join. If you are a member, get a membership for a friend, and send us names for our mailing list. If your friends don't know enough of the facts of the assassination, then buy them a book. Buy yourself a book! Keep up with what's happening; send us the largest donation you can manage. This is the hour of our greatest need; it is a question of survival. We need your money, and we need your minds. Volunteer! Petition!

Dear Sylvia,

I wish to make you, as well as the other critics, an offer. We are interested in printing, in our newsletter, whatever you may care to send us. This can be either material written to us as a letter, or material you have previously prepared which has not been published elsewhere. We hope to hear from you.

Sincerely,

*Turt*