

A Friendly Dissent

Sylvia Neagher
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I do not share my colleague Joachim Joesten's confidence in the disclosure by District Attorney Garrison of a TWX message which alleged originated with Lee Harvey Oswald and was moved through FBI channels on 17 November 1963, warning that an attempt would be made to murder President Kennedy in Dallas on 22 November 1963. Mr. Garrison, when he announced this evidence on a nation-wide television broadcast on 31 January 1968, specified that his authority and source of this information was "an affidavit sworn to by Mark Lane...that in January 1968 he interviewed William S. Walter in New Orleans..." which Mr. Garrison proceeded to read. Walter, describing himself as a former FBI employee, in no way connects the alleged TWX with Lee Harvey Oswald. And this curious question must arise: How is it that Mr. Garrison has complained bitterly and repeatedly that his investigation was being frustrated and obstructed by refusals to extradite witnesses and that those refusals were part of an all-out effort to impede the truth; but when he finally has a witness like William S. Walter with crucial and decisive information as to Oswald's FBI links and FBI foreknowledge of the Dallas assassination, Garrison does not call Mr. Walter before the grand jury to give sworn testimony, nor does he even rest on a sworn affidavit signed by the said Mr. Walter, but contents himself with hearsay evidence from Mark Lane? Mr. Walter is within Garrison's jurisdiction. If he made the asserted allegations to Mark Lane but refused to repeat them under oath, one may draw the same conclusions about Mr. Walter as were so readily drawn about witnesses hostile to Garrison who refused to repeat allegations made on television when called before the New Orleans grand jury, and invoked the Fifth Amendment.

Nor do I agree with my friend Joachim Joesten's reasoning, on the same page of the same issue of Truth Letter (Vol.I, No.8, January 1, 1969, p. 2), that Richard Helms and the CIA are inculpated by virtue of the mere fact that Garrison has "stated repeatedly" that the Dealey Plaza (should it not be renamed "Deadly Plaza"?) assassins were "recruited, trained and equipped by the CIA."

Those of us who refused to accept the repeated declarations of Oswald's sole assassinship, by the Warren Commission and other authorities and eminences, even when the accusation was accompanied by a profusion of so-called "evidence," surely may not abandon the rigorous standards by which we judged our adversaries and give carte blanche to friends and colleagues to make unsupported or ill-supported charges which we will then elevate to the status of definitive proof.

A final comment, with respect to the criticism of William Bradford Huie in recent issues of the Truth Letter: I fully understand why Mr. Joesten inferred from Mr. Huie's LOOK articles on James Early Ray that Huie was engaged in a sinister attempt to divert suspicion in the assassination of Martin Luther King to the "Communist conspiracy" and/or Black militants. That was my own impression when I read the second LOOK article. But a few days later, Huie said during an interview on the Barry Gray program on WMCA radio in New York, explicitly and unequivocally, that it was the right-wing, and not advocates of black power or leftists, to whom the evidence pointed and toward which his suspicion was impelled as a result of his investigations. If so, it is most unfortunate that his LOOK pieces created an entirely different impression.