

"All the News That's UNFIT to Print"

Joachim Joesten's

TRUTH LETTER

An Antidote to Official Mendacity and Newsfaking in the Press

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Highlights and Lessons of the Clay Shaw Trial
A Searching Look at a Generally Distorted Event

I

The Great Fallacy

As was to be expected from an institution as supine, corrupt and chicken-hearted as is the so-called free press of America, the acquittal of Clay Shaw has given rise to a veritable orgy of misrepresentation, following a trial "coverage" that was a textbook study in misreporting.

In their comments on the verdict of the New Orleans jury, the news-fakers, from The New York Times down, really outdid themselves. Never, since Hitler's gagged and muzzled press went out of business, has a great body of news media cooperated so perfectly to create a totally false impression of a major event. If, in the words of a former Newsweek slogan "a well-informed public is America's greatest security," then our country is now in mortal danger, for the public is constantly misinformed and misled by the media that pretend to enlighten it. The most conspicuous example yet of this consistent policy of obfuscation is the way the American people have been duped about the real outcome and significance of the Shaw trial.

For, the simple and demonstrable fact of the matter is that while the defendant was acquitted, mainly because the old maxim "in dubio pro reo" militated in his favor, the principal objective District Attorney Jim Garrison had set out to achieve, i.e. to demonstrate that President Kennedy, far from having been the victim of a lone and unbalanced assassin, was executed in a military-style crossfire ambush, was fully accomplished. This must be clear to anyone with the faculty to reason freely and logically who has had access to the transcripts of the trial proceedings.

Because the newsfakers were well aware of this, they went to great pains to deny such access to the American people. Outside of New Orleans, where the "Times-Picayune" and the "States-Item" willy-nilly had to give extensive coverage to what was after all the top local event, readers and listeners everywhere were treated to the leanest possible fare of flawed and fragmentary news items, followed and submerged by a spate of misleading editorial comment. While the trivial and sometimes bizarre aspects of the trial were blown out of proportion, essential matters, such as the conclusive pictorial evidence and eyewitness testimony presented at the trial concerning the events in Dealey Plaza, were either entirely omitted or so distorted by the news media that their meaning was perforce lost on the public. Never before in history, I submit, have so many people been fooled so completely through news slanting, biased comment and the consistent suppression of elementary facts and circumstances.

At the core of the immense fallacy that has been foisted upon the American public through the flawless synchronization of all news media (made possible only by the unlimited control the C.I.A. exercises in this country today) is the specious argument that the conclusions of the Warren Report have been vindicated by the acquittal of Clay Shaw. While only comparatively few editorialists and commentators went so far as to state this absurdity explicitly, all sought to implant that false impression in the public mind by one means or another.

Nothing could be more remote from the truth. As a matter of fact, all the central conclusions of the Warren Commission - that Lee H. Oswald killed the President, that he acted alone and that there had been no conspiracy - have been shattered forever by the evidence presented at the Shaw trial, as will be detailed in subsequent instalments of the present review and analysis of proceedings.

Our approach to the subject will be diametrically opposed to that of the newsmakers. There will be no lengthy discussion of Vernon Bundy's propensity for taking drugs; of Perry Russo's hypnotic séances; or of Charles Spicel's tales of goings-on in the French quarter. Nor is the question whether or not Clay Shaw is identical with Clem Bertrand a key issue, really.

What matters is how, why and by whom President Kennedy was murdered. The suppressed evidence (suppressed, that is, by the great majority of American news media) of the Shaw trial has shed a good deal of fresh light on this subject. Our attention will be focussed, therefore, on such matters as the Moorman photo showing one of the snipers on the grassy knoll in the act of firing at the President; the testimony of the Newmans who were directly in the line of fire from the grassy knoll and who threw themselves on the ground to protect their children from the fusillade with their bodies; the deposition of Richard Randolph Carr, who watched events from a high vantage post and observed things so contrary to the official version the FBI sternly warned him to keep his mouth shut; the expert evaluation by pathologist Dr. John Nichols of what the Zapruder film and the nature of Kennedy's wounds reveal about the direction of the shots etc.etc.

Clay Shaw may or may not have been involved with David Ferrie and others in a conspiracy that led to the ambush in Dallas. The fact that he was acquitted does not prove his innocence; it merely shows that the case the prosecution had built against him was not strong enough to overcome the natural reluctance of the jury to convict one of the city's leading citizens on anything but overwhelming evidence. Present indications are that Shaw was involved in the plot to assassinate the President, but that his role was a rather marginal one. Others, more powerful and also more clever than Shaw, really pulled the wires.

That Shaw knew Ferrie and Oswald - both the real and the false one - is a near-certainty in spite of his denials for which he has again been charged by Garrison, this time on perjury counts. And Ferrie was a key figure in the plot, that is a certainty. So was the man who called himself Leon Oswald and who looked so much like Lee Harvey Oswald that he was able to pose as the latter on numerous occasions and get away with it.

Garrison, who had previously - in particular in his "Playboy" interview - admitted the existence of a False Oswald, which was indeed a key element in the successful execution of the plot, failed to press this point at the Shaw trial. That was a grievous mistake which went a long way towards ruining his case. The DA, unfortunately, committed other serious errors which will be examined in the following instalment of this series.

In the next issue: Where Garrison Went Wrong.

Dead Men Tell No Tales

Now that the Sirhan show trial has achieved its purpose of impressing on the public mind that there had been no conspiracy to kill Robert Kennedy, the murderer himself has become expendable. Hence the resoluteness and rapidity with which he has been shipped off to the death cell at San Quentin in spite of Sen. Edward Kennedy's highly publicized plea for mercy. Don't be surprised if Sirhan becomes the first of the 485 criminals under death sentence in the U.S. to be executed since June 1967. His death will come as a great relief to those who instigated his foul deed; there ought to be dancing at the LBJ Ranch.

Ironically, if Sirhan is sent to the gas chamber, as seems likely now, the decisive cause may have been Ted Kennedy's rather clumsy move to save his life. While the sob sisters have been burning incense to the great humanitarian, the sharper minds that plotted the assassination most likely did not miss the real motivation: If Ted wants to spare Sirhan now, it is with an eye on 1973. The Kennedy "restoration", which Lyndon B. Johnson and his cohorts so effectively stopped on June 5, 1968, now is again the wave of the future. Under it, Sirhan, if alive, might become one of the greatest songbirds of the century. LBJ and the CIA can't afford to face that kind of music.

"Liberals" We Can Do Without

A great wail is being heard in liberal circles, not only in the U.S., but also in England and other foreign countries, because that staunch "Liberal," Abe Fortas, has been forced from the Supreme Court, and Earl Warren is to follow suit shortly. A "Nixon Court" is in the offing - how dreadful!

What kind of "Liberals" are these two men who along with their master, Lyndon B. Johnson, the phoniest of all phony Liberals, plotted and carried out the most shameless coverup of a political crime in history - the Warren Commission investigation?

If Fortas, Warren and LBJ are representative of Liberal thought in America - give me a Conservative every time.

Who Is James Hepburn?(ctd.)

Herr von Wehrenalp replied on Feb. 5, 1969 as follows:

"Dear Mr. Joesten - We bought the Hepburn book from Frontiers Establishment, represented by Fiduciaire Wanner, 18 Cours des Bastions, Geneva (Switzerland). The data about Hepburn which we put on the book jacket were obtained from the same source, as was the information published by the BILD-Zeitung. Since then, we, too, have been informed by American sources that Hepburn is a cover name for a group.

"What you wrote under (3) is news to me. I can't very well imagine that the French intelligence service is behind this matter. Rather, I'm inclined to suspect that American circles are behind it. However, the only source of real information would be the above-named firm to whom I have forwarded your letter, for we, too, are interested in getting to the bottom of this matter..."

A few days later, the German publisher sent me a photostat of a letter he had received from his contact in Geneva. Dated February 18, with a letterhead inscribed "FRONTIERS Company - Vaduz, Principauté du Liechtenstein," this letter read in part as follows:

"Dear Mr. von Wehrenalp, - Please excuse our delay in replying to your letter of February 5th concerning Mr. Joesten's inquiries. Since this book

was first published, we have in fact received numerous letters of this nature from various sources.

" Mr. Joesten's letter:

"In reply, we emphatically maintain what one of our representatives imparted to you on June 8, 1968, i.e. the description of the author which was given to you at that time and which you printed on the back cover of the book.

"The S.D.E.C.E. which you mention is in no way connected with 'Farewell America.' However, before deciding to publish this manuscript and to propose it to you for publication, we consulted various specialists in top security intelligence and police services in Western Europe; they confirmed unanimously the substantial importance, the validity and the quality of James Hepburn's investigation.

"That 'James Hepburn' is a pseudonyme (sic) is therefore not self-evident. It is possible that Mr. Joesten is right, and the author is a citizen of Virginia; it is also possible that the present Kennedy family, reduced to its simplest expression, does not care to talk about 'James Hepburn' any more than it cares to talk about the two assassinated heads of the family..."

As the discerning reader will have noticed, there is an unmistakable French quality about the style of this text, which is most noticeable in the French spelling of "pseudonym" (with an "e" at the end). The writer, while fluent in English, is most likely a Frenchman, or French-Swiss. Could he be "James Hepburn" himself?

The curious wording of the denial that the French intelligence service S.D.E.C.E. was in any way "connected" with 'Farewell America' rather seems to bear out the assumption that it had a hand in the matter. If the prospective publisher of the book was in a position to consult "specialists in top security, intelligence and police services in Western Europe" he must have had excellent contacts in these circles and it is evident that they contributed specialized information and knowledge.

After reading this rather self-betraying letter, and pondering over it, I became more and more convinced that the book in question is a cooperative effort of several people active in intelligence work, including at least one Frenchman prominent in the field. Von Wehrenalp's suspicion that American intelligence circles were behind the book also served to bear out that impression. My feeling was, and is, that "James Hepburn," whatever his real name may be, is a prominent C.I.A.-man belonging to the dissident faction loyal to President Kennedy which has become identified with the name of Gary Underhill, who was murdered by the Johnson faction in the agency when he moved to expose the true facts of the assassination. Hepburn may have been able to draw on the same inside sources of information as Underhill and possibly the two men were acquainted or had even worked together in intelligence. But it is also evident from the circumstances that in writing his exposé he got powerful support from S.D.E.C.E., which at an early date had exhibited an uncanny inside knowledge of what had really happened at Dallas (for details, see my book "How Kennedy Was Killed") and which also cooperated with Garrison in his investigation.

Almost simultaneously, a letter of the same date and on the same letterhead, with an illegible scrawl for signature, reached me directly from "Frontiers Company." It read:

"Dear Mr. Joesten - It was with great interest that we read your letter addressed to Mr. von Wehrenalp of 'Econ-Claassen' concerning the book 'Verschwörung.'

We are at your entire disposal to furnish all information you desire relative to the points raised in your letter, if you are free to come to Geneva in the near future. We could even introduce you to the person of whom you speak.
(to be continued in No. 19)

The new book by Joachim Joesten TRILOGY OF MURDER
 An analysis and interpretation of the John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy and
 Dr. Martin Luther King assassinations. - Copyright by J. Joesten, 1968-69 (ctd.)

On Monday, June 3, 1968, the day before the California Democratic primary which Sen. Robert Kennedy won, the Rev. Owens picked up two hitchhikers in Los Angeles, one of whom he subsequently identified as Sirhan. The other was taller, but also Arab-looking.

A horseman by avocation, who buys and sells horses and Shetland ponies, Owens had embellished the hood of his car with an ornamental silver horse. Sirhan, riding beside the minister, noticed the figure and told Owens that he was interested in horses because he had been a racetrack exercise boy and would like to have a horse himself. Owens then told the young Jordanian that he had a palomino he would sell for \$ 300.

The two men came to terms and arranged to meet again at 11 o'clock that night; Owens gave Sirhan his card with his telephone number on it. Sirhan then asked the minister to give him and his companion a ride to the Ambassador Hotel where he wanted "to see a friend in the kitchen." Owens obliged and the two Arabs got off at the kitchen entrance to the hotel. It was at the same place the deal for the horse was to be clinched that night.

Sirhan effectively showed up at 11 p.m. and produced a \$ 100 bill, saying he wouldn't have the rest until 8 a.m. on Tuesday. At that time, however, he did not come. Instead there was an older man, who also looked like an Arab, who came to meet Owens and told him, "Joe couldn't make it." He said Sirhan really wanted the horse and could pay for it Tuesday night at 11 p.m. if Owens would deliver it at the same spot - the kitchen entrance to the Ambassador Hotel.

As Owens later put it in his interview with the National Enquirer:

"Something interfered with my own schedule so that I was unable to keep the 11 o'clock appointment. It is just as well that I did for it is perfectly plain to me now that the conspirators intended to use me in their escape plan following the killing. In fact, I believe the assassination may have been scheduled originally for 11 p.m., possibly in some other area of the hotel, after which the conspirators would leave in my car. But when I did not show up at 11 p.m., the conspirators probably were thrown into some confusion. They were forced to revise their plan with the result that the assassination was put off for an hour and a half."

In fact, the slaying took place at 12:30 on Wednesday June 5 in the kitchen passageway, precisely 1 1/2 hours after the scheduled appointment outside the kitchen entrance. This can hardly be dismissed as coincidence.

Owens did not hear of the murder until he was having lunch with friends on Wednesday. At that time, a picture of the still-unidentified assassin was flashed on a television show and the minister instantly recognized the youth who had pretended to be interested in the horse.

Later that day, Owens went to police headquarters in Los Angeles to tell the story of his experiences with Sirhan. The police listened politely, and recorded the details, but showed little interest in Owens' story.

What happened next follows exactly the familiar pattern of the John F. Kennedy and Dr. King assassinations. Before the day was out, Owens got an anonymous telephone call from a man who warned him: "Keep your... mouth shut if you know what's good for you and your family."

In the words of Owens' attorney, the nationally known criminal lawyer George T. Davis (of Caryl Chessman fame):

(to be continued in No. 19)