

"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 (ctd.)

II

Where Garrison Went Wrong

As one who has consistently praised District Attorney Jim Garrison of New Orleans for his heroic efforts to bring out the truth about the assassination of President Kennedy, in the face of public indifference, official obstructionism and the concerted lies of the news media, I must regretfully concede that Garrison made a hash of his case against Clay Shaw. A great investigation, which for the first time revealed a mass of hitherto concealed evidence pointing to a conspiracy and a crossfire ambush, went on the rocks because of an ill-prepared, insufficiently substantiated and poorly handled legal action against a minor figure in the plot.

Gloating over Garrison's discomfiture (and that of many Warren Report critics who had too closely associated themselves with the New Orleans investigation) in the New York Times Magazine of April 20, 1969, Edward J. (for Judas) Epstein wrote: "In any case, by appearing virtually empty-handed at the trial, Garrison exposed a bluff larger than his own; he left many critics who were instrumental in discrediting the Warren Report looking like something less than the disinterested factfinders they pretended to be. And in view of the discredit he brought them, it is not particularly surprising that now some disgruntled critics have even advanced the theory that Garrison himself was in fact a C.I.A. agent provocateur..."

Epstein, who played himself the part of a C.I.A. agent provocateur in the ranks of the Warren Report critics, did not identify the "disgruntled" ones who allegedly now accuse Garrison of complicity with the criminal organization which he himself has publicly and repeatedly accused of having been behind the Kennedy murder. Monstrous as the suggestion is, there are some indications that suspicions of that sort are in fact harbored in some left-wing circles. For example, one reads in the April 1, 1969 issue of WIN magazine that Garrison "quickly buried" the issues he at first had raised, that his "credibility gap is reaching Johnsonian proportions" and that "if it was a basketball game, we'd say that the fix was on, that Garrison dumped."

I don't believe that Garrison "dumped" or that he willingly collaborated with the C.I.A., as Epstein does, but there are strong indications that he was prevailed upon, or even forced, to spare the C.I.A. and to keep much of his evidence incriminating the criminal agency out of the courtroom. None of the outspokenness with which Garrison had previously exposed the C.I.A.'s role in the assassination, and lambasted its leadership, appeared in the proceedings. The C.I.A. was hardly ever mentioned by name and no attempt was made to bring out the leading part it has played in the preparation and execution of the assassination plot.

One cannot make an omelet without breaking eggs. And one cannot expose a grand conspiracy and spare the principal plotters. Garrison knows all, or nearly all, about the origins of the plot to kill Kennedy, its inspiration and motivation and the way it was executed. He could have shocked the world into entranced attention by laying all the facts in his possession on the table. Had he spoken out in the courtroom with the same ruthless frankness he had used in several interviews before, it would hardly have been possible, even for the professional newsmakers, to ignore what would have been truly sensational disclosures.

Garrison has the evidence, not only that a conspiracy existed, but also that its principal components were a group of immensely rich oil magnates; the militant extreme right wing (especially the Minutemen, the John Birch Society and the American Nazi Party); a powerful faction of the C.I.A.; and, at the very top, Lyndon B. Johnson and his cohorts. Had he exposed the grand design of the conspiracy and produced all his evidence in court, the shock would have been so great no jury would have dared acquit the only defendant in the dock, even though he was only a figurehead and a fringe actor. Instead, he chose to concentrate his fire on Clay Shaw and, while he did "go into Dealey Plaza," he did so half-heartedly and without naming names. Yet he had previously stated on a number of occasions that he knew the identities of the actual killers - a fact the malevolent press lost no time rubbing in when he failed to produce any names in court.

While it is hardly possible to credit the assumption that Garrison deliberately blew his case, the timidity of his approach to key issues, such as the C.I.A. involvement, the cunning use of a False Oswald by the plotters, and the blatant complicity of the Dallas police chiefs makes one wonder whether the supposedly powerful and "flamboyant" DA was in fact a free agent in presenting his case.

Garrison's choice of aides and confidants was in many respects unfortunate. In the earliest stage of his investigation, he attempted to make a deal with LIFE magazine, in hopes of securing a big sounding board in exchange for exclusive information, which fizzled miserably. As was to be expected from such a pillar of the Establishment, LIFE promptly betrayed to the C.I.A. whatever inside information about the progress of the investigation it was able to worm out of Garrison and his aides, and provided nothing but bad publicity in return.

It is certain that the C.I.A., right from the start of Garrison's investigation, made a strenuous effort to infiltrate the investigative camp, which was, unfortunately, very successful. Two C.I.A. agents who did immense damage have been unmasked by Garrison himself; William H. Gurvich, who as early as the spring of 1967 stole a copy of the master file from Garrison's office, and Tom Bethell who kept Shaw's attorneys supplied with the names of witnesses the prosecution intended to call to the stand, the trial tactics it meant to follow etc. Other C.I.A. agents posed as State witnesses while doing their best to undermine the investigation and mislead the investigators.

The C.I.A., well aware that its prestige and possibly its future were at stake in the case, spared no effort or expense in its attempt to wreck the Garrison inquiry. It suborned every venal participant at hand, from staff members of the DA's office, down through his list of witnesses, and of course deep into the "Press corps." It picked up the tab for Shaw's expensive, and, it must be admitted, skilful defense. And it may even have reached into the presumed sanctity of the jury room.

Let us now examine some of the outstanding and grievous mistakes Garrison made in his handling of the Clay Shaw case. (to be continued in the next issue).

With the passing of time it becomes clear that the New Orleans jury which acquitted Clay Shaw has done a better job than the Warren Commission turning The Biggest Lie Ever Told into universally accepted bible truth. Witness these excerpts from a letter I have received from a young writer who has taken an active part in the futile search for the truth:

"... Ever since the Shaw trial ended, all of my close friends and associates have frozen the subject out of their minds. Even my fiancée refuses to discuss the JFK assassination. I am able to get people to talk about the Martin Luther King assassination and I have concentrated more energy and effort on that one lately because I hope that when the one is exposed, the other will automatically be reopened..."

"It's as though the entire establishment, and the national news media have such a deep-seated guilt feeling about the assassinations that they are compelled to go to extra lengths to bury the subjects as far in the ground as possible..."

"The problem (for Garrison) in presenting the Dealey Plaza evidence was to make it convincing and yet simple for the jury. This task turned out to be impossible because it was an extremely complex event, viewed by around 2000 witnesses and over 75 cameras, both still and movie types. As a matter of fact, it is just this complexity which has made, and will continue to make, the JFK assassination so difficult to discuss with anyone. If a friend meets you on the street and says, 'Well, I guess the Shaw trial pulled the rug out from under your theories, eh?' you can only shrug your shoulders. To answer him, in my case, and fully convince him, that the Shaw verdict doesn't prove that JFK was shot by Lee Harvey Oswald alone, would take approximately two full days together -- uninterrupted -- and slide and movie projectors, several hundred photos and movies reviewed, maps, and my entire Shaw trial book.

"I'm not at all sure that we will ever be able to have a fair, thorough jury trial of the conspirators, even in a favorable atmosphere, just for that reason..."

The Fib and the Whopper

William Manchester and his publisher have been slapped with a \$ 250,000 suit for damages. Not, unfortunately, for polluting the historical record in the most shameless manner with "The Death of a President", but because Manchester's latest creation, his book about the Krupps, contains a minor mistake: he included a German auto maker (BMW) in a list of recent business failures in Germany. BMW never was actually broke. It teetered on the brink for a while, but never keeled over.

Big Business doesn't like the spreading of lies about its financial health and so the careless author and publisher are now being haled into court. But who cares if a dead man is slandered and historical truth is slapped in the face?

Who Is James Hepburn? (ctd.)

"It would also be possible for us to show you the 35-minute film we have produced on the assassination of President Kennedy; as they say, a picture is worth a thousand words.

"Therefore, if you are interested, please contact our office in Geneva at the address indicated below and propose the dates convenient to you for a meeting; could you also please inform us of your telephone number in order to facilitate our reply. We are looking forward to hearing from you soon. Sincerely yours - FRONTIERS."

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Most significantly, this letter was postmarked in Paris (8th arrondissement), not in Geneva or Vaduz. Two subsequent communications to me from FRONTIERS, a telegram and another letter, also bore postal stamps indicating they had been sent from Paris.

Clearly, then, the real nerve center of the FRONTIERS operation is in the French capital and the "offices" in Geneva and in Liechtenstein are mere fronts in a carefully camouflaged setup which has a distinct smack of intelligence service. This discovery left me more convinced than ever that "James Hepburn" is really a cooperative effort of French and (dissident) U.S. intelligence agents and subsequent developments added to that impression.

In my reply, which I rushed off on February 20, by Special Delivery, to the address "Fiduciaire Wanner, 18 Cours des Bastions, Geneva" given to me, I expressed my delight at the prospect of meeting Mr. Hepburn in person and announced my intention to go to Geneva on Tuesday, Feb. 25, for that purpose. I also gave a Munich telephone number for quick communication if the date suggested by me should be inconvenient for Mr. Hepburn.

Instead of the expected phone call, for which I waited impatiently up to the last moment, there arrived, in the early afternoon of Feb. 25, a telegram dispatched from Paris that read: "Informed too late stop meeting impossible before week of March 10-15 stop please inform Fiduciaire Wanner of date - FRONTIERS."

The reason the person really in charge of FRONTIERS operations had been "informed too late" was, of course, that my letter, addressed to Geneva, as directed, had to be forwarded from there to the mysterious guiding hand in Paris.

Unfortunately, the week of March 10-15 was not convenient for me and I so informed FRONTIERS by letter dated March 5th. Instead, I suggested a meeting in the days or weeks immediately following Easter, i.e. approximately in the period April 8 to 30.

Easter came and went and there was no reply from FRONTIERS. So I wrote again on April 19, informing FRONTIERS that I would shortly be traveling to the South of France and would be glad to make a stopover in Geneva for the purpose of at last meeting the elusive Mr. Hepburn. Late in April, I received a reply, again mailed from Paris, informing me that "Mr. Hepburn is in the States for the moment" and suggesting further contacts in June for the purpose of arranging a get-together.

I am continuing my efforts to arrange a face-to-face meeting with James Hepburn in spite of my growing conviction that he is not a real person but rather a cover name for a group operation. If that assumption is correct, FRONTIERS most likely will continue to be vague and evasive enough to thwart any meeting except perhaps with a figurehead. But if a James Hepburn really does exist and I can find him, TRUTH LETTER readers will certainly be informed of further developments and also, I hope, will learn more about how his extraordinarily informative and revealing book came to be written.

P.S. Several readers have inquired where they could get a copy of the English original of "Farewell America." I have learned from a source in Canada that the book is sold there by "Tara Editions, 63 Brescoles St., Montreal, Quebec." The French version of the book ("L'Amérique brûle") can be obtained from "Editions Nouvelles Frontières, 27 Rue du Faubourg Montmartre, Paris 9e." Both addresses, however, appear to be mere letter drops.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

If this writer dies in the near future, you will know that he was murdered by the C.I.A., no matter what appearances may be.

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.)

"The call had to come from one of the people the Rev. Owens had been negotiating with because only they had his number, which was on the business card he said he gave Sirhan. He had an unlisted telephone number."

Two days later, Owens received a second threatening phone call, according to the National Enquirer. And on July 1, an attempt was made on the minister's life which the magazine reported in these terms:

"The Rev. Owens, accompanied by a bodyguard supplied by Davis after the telephoned threats, was driving his car near San Francisco when another automobile sped up alongside and tried to force the minister off the road. Only by skillful maneuvering of his car did the minister escape a possibly fatal accident."

Execution by means of a fake traffic accident is of course one of the C.I.A.'s favorite methods of disposing of inconvenient witnesses and other victims marked for death by this criminal agency. It was successfully employed to eliminate at least three embarrassing witnesses in the JFK murder plot (Lee E. Bowers Jr., William Whaley and Albert G. Bogard).

Owens and his family then went into hiding at a secret location on the outskirts of San Francisco, known only to his lawyer and a handful of Los Angeles authorities. He was questioned there by L.A. Deputy District Attorney David Fitts, Police Lieutenant Manny Pena and Sgt. Enrique Hernandez, who recorded his story in full - and then did nothing about it.

"There would be no legal or practical value in having this man repeat his story before the grand jury," Chief Deputy District Attorney Lynn Compton, who was in charge of the Sirhan case, told the Pasadena Independent Star-News and indeed Owens typically was never asked to testify before the grand jury investigating the assassination of Sen. Robert Kennedy. As his lawyer Davis put it, when interviewed by William Dick of the National Enquirer, the Los Angeles police were too anxious to wind up the case in a simple fashion - with just one defendant - Sirhan - on whom they could concentrate their investigation.

No evidence of conspiracy was wanted and therefore none was found officially - the same as in the other two assassinations we are here concerned with. The pattern never varies.

In the words of Davis, "The police should have shown an immediate interest in the Owens story because of what he said about the appointment he had with these people at the Ambassador's kitchen entrance. This was right outside where Kennedy was shot and that should have made the police wonder why they wanted Owens there.

"Personally," Davis went on to say, "I believe everything Owens has said about the attempt to use him as the getaway driver. But to look into a possible conspiracy means a lot of extra work. It is so much easier to lay everything on one person rather than to consider him as a possible patsy. What I am saying, in other words, is that Sirhan could be a patsy in this case."

The noted lawyer, in the same interview, expressed the conviction that a link existed in the killings of President Kennedy, Senator Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King in these terms:

"Every one of these has been blamed on a single individual in almost an identical pattern. But I don't think it makes any sense to ignore the possibility of a conspiracy. I still say my client may be a very important witness in proving that all three killings are linked." (to be continued in No. 20)