

Dearest Editor,

The Weisberg letter [in issue #59 - first of two such letters] contained some untruths.

For example he implies that there was something sneaky about picturing me with a beard - and yet his own false

Oswald [see "Oswald in New Orleans"] had such a beard.

My testimony before the grand jury released to the press as the "perjurious" portion [and punctuated so as to make me sound like a moron] contains my denial that a woman named Barbara Reid - in my considered present opinion - saw me with Oswald in 1963, at about the time she was also boasting to having hexed a Bourbon Street stripper with a Voodoo doll.

Mr. Weisberg described my book as a pamphlet in order to give the idea it was something I'd run off in my basement on a ditto machine and was passing out on Canal Street. I edited the version of my Commission testimony which appeared in that book in order to protect one innocent person who had been inadvertently dragged into the proceedings and to make it clearer and smoother reading. A note was appended at the beginning of the reproduced testimony explicitly noting that it was edited.

My testimony does not paint a "new kind of Communist" - for I said I'd gotten the impression that Oswald was "idle in his admiration" of the Soviet system.

That he admired Orwell, got a Russian newspaper openly in the mail, and was rumored to at one time have had a Secret clearance are things I cannot help. Both Garrison and Weisberg have displayed astonishing chutzpah in misrepresenting that testimony, a matter of public record which can be checked against their assertions, to give you some idea of where they are at.

Donovan's statement quoted by Weisberg, "He must have had a secret clearance to work in the radar center, because that was the minimum required by all of us," is in error. I myself did not have a secret clearance at that time, but worked in the MACS-9 radar center.

I am indeed a defender of widows and orphans, because I am opposed to a money system - controlled through a Federal Reserve Bank - which enslaves them. What Mr. Weisberg fails to add is that along with my "rightwing" economic views I am also opposed to an imperialist foreign policy, in the tradition of the principled isolationists who supported Robert A. Taft. "Confessions of a Rightwing Liberal" by my good friend Dr. Murray N. Rothbard in the June "Ramparts" will give you some idea of my political views, and Harold Weisberg's paranoia.

That Mr. Weisberg should call me a "stool pigeon" because, when Oswald was murdered, I went to the FBI and offered to do whatever I could to assist in the apprehension of whoever had used him as a pawn [as I felt someone had at the time] makes me wonder what this little man who boasts of a history of Establishment finkery for spy outfits and Senate investigations would call himself!

When, where, and under what circumstances did I pin a "bum Communist" rap on the murdered Oswald when my other Marine buddies would not? Garrison made this same charge in his infamous press release, offering nothing but butchered-out-of-context quotes to back it up. There were people who knew Oswald before he went in the Marine Corps who recall him as a Marxist! And as looking up the affidavits and depositions of Oswald's other fellow-Marines will prove, I was certainly not alone in my observations on this score. It seems that my "crime" is having drawn Oswald out - being thus able to testify in more detail.

The way I learned of the comment of my former girlfriend about me - "If Oswald hadn't killed President Kennedy, he would have done it himself?" - was through Mr. Jenner, Warren Commission counsel.

Weisberg knows this and there is no excuse whatever for his laying the blame to me if my notion of when that comment was made is inaccurate. The Garrisonites seem to take a sadistic delight in punishing others for the mistakes and 'deceit' of Warren Commission personnel - presumably because they are afraid to go after the responsible parties and must release their aggressions on someone. [Notice that Earl Warren, for example, is not on trial for perjury - nor any other member of the Commission or its staff!]

I have never denied that I was caustic and sarcastic about John Kennedy's murder. Having been shocked by the butchery of Katanga - which was U.S. financed and sanctioned by JFK - my political opposition to Kennedy's domestic and foreign imperialism became a deep personal disgust. Of the Katanga atrocities, Lord Bertrand Russell said they surpassed anything brought up in the trials at Nuremberg for cruelty. Assassination had not yet become a disturbing national pastime, and the tears of people who never cry when the powerless and helpless go down offended me. So I let them have it, man - I celebrated, openly and in public.

Garrison and Weisberg consider this damning evidence, one would have it, that I took part in a secret assassination plot as a secret agent.

I do not think my opposition to JFK deprives me of my civil right to hold a flower in my mouth.

I have never been offered the opportunity, by the way, to confront Weisberg at my local radio station or anywhere else. I did not even learn he had been on the air until I heard a tape of his lies about me three days after the fact.

As for Bolton's open letter to me, I am having copies offset printed for mass distribution precisely to show the many editors and other media personnel who have gotten poison pen letters from Weisberg on the subject of that article, what a willful and malicious liar he is. Let me say now, though, that the "anti-Semitism" of Clint Bolton's piece was that, genuinely mistaken, he understood Harold's last name to be Weisberger.

Apparently they were introduced with a loud Dixieland band playing in the background because, elsewhere, Harold refers to Clint as Cliff. I keep trying to find something sinister about THAT, but I simply do not have Mr. Weisberg's talent.

I think the nicest thing I can say about Harold is that on one occasion he told what is obviously the truth: "It's wonderful. You ought to see the letters. I've got over 500 unsolicited letters. My eyes water when I read some of them. My telephone rings in the middle of the night with people who are troubled. I have insane people who have escaped from the insane asylum, calling me up as

the White Knight, to try and help them. They reach out and I can't quite give it to them." ["The Scavengers" by Richard Warren Lewis, Delacorte Press 1967, page 122.]

Poor Harold. When will he get the mass recognition he deserves?

Yes, baby - peace and freedom,
Kerry Thornley