

The four notarized statements which are dated Sept. 28, 1967 should be considered one self-contained unit. This is how Kerry was originally brought to Garrison's attention. I had known about the material discussed in them for some time. In September, Kerry told me he would be moving to Florida. At the same time, Garrison's interview was appearing in Playboy. I thought that before Kerry left California, I ought to spend some time getting all the material he and I had discussed into some sort of written statements. I had contacted Eric Norden, who called back and told me that Garrison was interested.

I spent almost two entire days on these first four statements. The first was spent at Kerry's apartment, where, with me at the electric typewriter, and he talking, we carefully and slowly went over his deposition, and the conversations we had been having for some time.

Almost the entire following next day was spent putting together the various things Kerry had said in some coherent order, that would be relevant to any future scholar studying his deposition. That is the 12 page statement. The material concerning the U-2 and the Russian instruction came out during that day, and so were added as separate statements.

On September 28, Kerry and I met again. He went over the entire batch of statements, initialing and correcting where necessary. He signed them, we had them notarized, and Xerox copies of the originals were sent to Garrison. I still had not spoken to or met with Garrison; my liaison with that office had simply consisted of a few phone calls to Eric Norden, and one with Tom Bethol; and, I think, one with Bill Turner.

(Later, Garrison and his fellow investigators would charge that Kerry Thornley went to Florida, and deliberately avoided meeting him in New Orleans. At that time, I had not yet even met Garrison, and was in fact finding it most difficult to bring anything to his attention, let alone set up meetings between him and Kerry). I believe that Kerry flew to Florida, direct. I'm not sure.

Sometime later, Garrison was in town. This was in the middle of October. I think he had dinner at Maggie Fields house, which was attended by Ray Marcus, Lillian Castellano, Steve Burton etc. He made no effort to contact me on his own, at that time. When I learned that he was in town, I called Ray Marcus and raised quite a fuss, practically demanding that he at least tell me the hotel at which Garrison was staying, so I could contact the man. No, I was told; I could not be given that information. However, after raising a big enough fuss, Ray did communicate to Garrison that I lived in LA, and was most interested in knowing what he was going to do about the Heindel business, now that he had those statements. For a while, my curiosity had to subsist on phone calls from Ray, which would start: "Jim said to tell you...". Anyway, finally Big Jim decided to see me. In fact, he asked me out to dinner. I was now going to meet "the man".

I arrived at the Century Plaza Hotel where he was registered under his pseudonym; I think he was using Frank Marshall that time. The next time he was in town it was "Claude Culpepper". My first impression of him, when he opened the door to his room, is that he is much taller and heavier than I had thought he was, and almost a bit shy and self-conscious. The very next "first impression" I had was that he was going way out of his way to impress me, intellectually speaking. After all, HE is the DA of New Orleans who is conducting an assassination investigation, and his whole tone and manner was simply not that of a person who is really in charge of his own thinking, and quite confident about it. Having gotten something of a runaround from the staff, bureaucrats, and heroworshippers who surround him, you would think he would at least be consistent and behave like some kind of a king. But instead, there was this obvious attempt to flatter me.

At the dinner table, the conversation turned to Ruby. He expressed the thought that they were so well known to each other, before the assassination, and that there was so much evidence to this effect. I told him that this was news to me. That although I wouldn't be surprised to learn that there may have been some connection between them, I had as yet seen no solid evidence to that effect. He jeered me a little bit at this point, and I was dutifully humble. He told me to write down certain page numbers from the 26 volumes "on your napkin", and that when I went home I should look at them. Citing one reference by heart, he stated that that page of the volumes contained a phone bill of Jack Ruby, and on that phone bill was number FE 8 1951, Ft. Worth Texas. He then cited another page number which was Oswald's address book, and stated that the number appeared there too. "Fort Worth?" I asked. He assured me that it was. I had never heard about FE 8 1951 before, and I was most impressed. I assured him that I would look it up as soon as I got home. Meanwhile, the conversation went on. I don't remember everything that was discussed. I wrote some notes on it, at the time, which I have not located, but are somewhere in my files.

One thing I do remember is that I was very unimpressed, so unimpressed that I started to feel a bit guilty; that maybe I was some sort of bigot who simply didn't understand the way a "southerner" thinks. But Garrison struck me as being such a slow-thinking plodder; so utterly simple minded that I couldn't really believe he had any answers to "The Crime of the Century".

When I came home that night, I looked up those Ruby references. When I examined the one in the LHO address book, I found that Garrison was right. Turning a few pages further on, I discovered that it appeared again, only this time the phone number was identified in the LHO address book as being K U T V, a Ft. Worth TV station. This completely invalidated its use in the context of proving that both men had a joint private acquaintance. I met Garrison for dinner again, and I brought this to his attention. I'll never forget what happened.

"David, stop arguing the defense", he would say, raising his voice in a threatening manner. "But what does it mean, Jim? Is there someone at the TV station whom you can prove knew both men?" "It means whatever the jury decides it means," he would say, with considerable annoyance. "But what do you think, Jim. What is the truth of the matter."

And then came the shocker, for in reply to that, he stated, with considerable annoyance and contempt: "After the fact, there is no truth; there is only what the jury decides." (emph. in original)

I have repeated this story many times to many people since that time. When I first heard him say it, I had to expend a considerable amount of energy to keep my face from reddening and saying some nasty things. I remember thinking that perhaps this is just the way some DA's think. But in retrospect, I think it is the most important thing he ever said to me. I think it represents Jim Garrison's approach to fact-finding and truth-finding and justice, all in one convenient nutshell. And the pity of it is he is just so utterly simple minded that he does not see how corrupt it is. I should have reacted much more strongly than I did to statements such as this. At the time, I kept writing these things off, with the idea that I had never met a DA before, and that I was perhaps a bigoted fast-talking New Yorker who was not appreciating the "basic goodness" of DA Garrison, whose "style" was simply different from mine, and was one with which I was not prepared to cope.

The main subject of our conversations at the Century Plaza was John Rene Heindel. I told him that I thought the following ought to be explored: that "Hidell" appearing on that Klein's rifle order form, was the remains of a disbanded attempt to frame LHC and Heindel as "co-patsies" in a two shooter "scenario". What I had in mind was that if the authorities had been able to ~~XXXX~~ frame two "ex-Marines" for the shooting, and murder both, they would never have had to cope with all the problems which have been raised by the fact that---today---it is only necessary to prove that more than one shooter existed to prove a conspiracy existed. A two shooter framoup would have had its implausibilities, but I think they would have been far easier to handle than the problems of one shooter doing it all alone. Anyway, the very least Garrison might do is call in Heindel, question him, and find out where he was on Nov 22; also, perhaps there had been some attempt to get Heindel to go to Dallas on Nov 22. This would be important. Finally, since Heindel was in the same outfit, perhaps he could shed some light on LHC and on his activities in NC, since Heindel lived in NC.

Garrison had already called in Heindel, and told me he was most suspicious of him. He acted, Garrison told me, like a man who had something to hide. It was clear, however, that Garrison had gotten no information from Heindel at that point.

Then Garrison started to ask me whether or not I could get Thornley to cooperate with Garrison's office by coming to New Orleans to "identify" Heindel. I explained, as politely as possible, that there are several real difficulties associated with this. First of all, Kerry---philosophically speaking---is opposed to ~~XXXXXX~~ testifying in court where the state might use that testimony to send a man to prison. I explained that Kerry is a "libertarian", and tried to explain what that was. Finally, I broached the most sensitive subject of all. I told him that Kerry knew Garrison from when Kerry had previously been in New Orleans, and did not like him for a number of reasons. I did not go into the reasons, simply saying that as far as I was concerned, the whole thing was a matter of personality, but that the problem did exist.

I asked if wouldn't a picture of Heindel do, just as well. I explained that Kerry had done me a real personal favor by extending to me the cooperation he had extended to get all these statements worked out, that they were accurate, and that I wished he wouldn't push the matter any further.

I tried to handle the whole thing as diplomatically as possible, and I told him that frankly I was putting myself in a position where by trying to effect communication between Garrison and Thornley, both of whom I would like to consider as friends, I might lose the friendship of both.

Garrison was rather wishful and wistful on the subject. He expressed great respect for Kerry, and asked me to communicate to him the idea that he, Garrison, was as libertarian and anti-establishment a DA as one could be. Wouldn't Kerry please reconsider? With Kerry's aid, he, Garrison could "throw a couple of bricks through the windows of the establishment."

Here is what Garrison wanted. He wanted to have Kerry come to New Orleans and "identify" Heindel as the man he named in his statement. Then, he wanted to get Heindel before the Grand Jury and let him deny that he knew Oswald or spoke Russian with Oswald. He then was going to charge Heindel with perjury.

This was made perfectly clear and it was made quite explicit,

I had no reason, at that time, to doubt that Kerry's identification of Heindel was accurate. I was most sure that was true. Since that time, I have learned that when Kerry did see pictures of Heindel, it was not the man he saw speaking Russian with Oswald. Also, since that time, I have interviewed another marine in that unit who is quite definite in his recollection that Oswald spoke Russian with someone. But again, the description simply doesn't match that of Heindel. What is clear from both Kerry's recollection and that of the other Marine (Donald Erwin Lewis) is that Oswald spoke fluent Russian with someone at El Torro, Calif., but that the identity of that person is still in question. Furthermore, it may have been more than one person, because Thornley's "other person" and Lewis' "other person" are not the same person. (Thornley's "Russian speaking incidents" were also witnessed by Nelson Delgado.) (See Thornley's statement)

Because I did not doubt Kerry's identification of Heindel, I realize now that I had, in effect, prejudged Heindel. It's a mistake I now regret. Had I not prejudged Heindel, I would have realized the legal crudities and cruelties inherent in what Garrison was going to do.

Garrison wanted to establish a conflict of testimony between "A" and "B". He was then going to arrest "B" and charge him with perjury. In this case, "A" was Kerry Thornley, and "B" was John Heindel. Thornley, in other words, was to be Garrison's star witness against John Heindel.

As we sat at the Century Plaza hotel and talked about this matter, there are several things I now realize have significance but was too dumb to realize at that time. Garrison would constantly brag to me about how much power he had. "I can pick up that phone" (pointing to a phone) and have Heindel charged right now". (He later did this to Thornley, ordering his arrest without giving him the benefit of a preliminary hearing). Garrison would talk about the great news stories that would develop, should such an arrest be made. He would say: "John R. Heindel, alias "Hidel", was today arrested in New Orleans in the conspiracy investigation being conducted ...etc."

We both wondered aloud what effect that might have, when reporters learned for the first time that the rifle really wasn't ordered under Oswald's name at all, but under the nick-name of another man, but had only been sent to Oswald's post office box. I asked Garrison whether he thought that the DA's office, when such an arrest was made, shouldn't explicitly indicate that the gun was ordered under the name "Hidel", and that a document in the 26 volumes over Heindel's signature established that Hidel was his nickname. "No," he said. "Let them look that up for themselves."

At another point during this session, Garrison looked up and mused: "John Heindel; John Carter. (Pause)" Then, as if announcing a certainty: "John Heindel is John Carter, and they both lived at that rooming house together." This jolted me. It was, after all, a possibility; but nothing more. "No" Garrison answered, it was obvious that this was in fact the case. And for the most of that meeting, John Carter was John Heindel! My two-patsy hypothesis, which I hoped Garrison would merely consider and investigate, was now an established fact, by mental edict.

As far as Garrison was concerned, John Heindel was John Carter who lived in the rooming house with Oswald; "The Warren Report could not have been written without Heindel's cooperation, which had to begin the moment that shooting took place in Dallas," said Garrison.

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Thus, as of that morning, Garrison was convinced that Heindel was at least cooperating with "the bad guys"; and if Garrison could charge him with perjury, using Thornley as his legal lover, perhaps Heindel could be induced to talk and confess to anything he knew.

Garrison kept saying "This could be the break I've been waiting for", or words to that effect. He was really quite excited about the whole thing. Although I was quite happy to see him finally interested in Heindel, I was perturbed to see him escalate a mere hypothesis of mine into established fact, complete with such detail that he "knew" now that Heindel must be, in fact, Carter.

During this meeting at the Century Plaza, Garrison kept pointing to other people who would walk by, and especially to anybody who had a briefcase, and tell me that "that's an FBI agent".

The entire hotel, it seemed, was flooded with FBI agents. People were "tailing" Garrison. He seemed really frightened. There is no question about that. He thought he might be killed. He insisted we talk either at dinner, or out by some chairs near the pool or pond, so that our conversations not be picked up by all the bugging devices. Anybody with a briefcase was carrying, he said, ~~was~~ very sensitive "directional" microphones. Any doubting looks I might give off were met with "I know; I once worked for the Bureau."

I left Garrison that morning, and he took a plane home to New Orleans. I fully expected to hear about the arrest of John Heindel, within a day or two. October 19, 1967 was a Thursday, and I distinctly remember discussing with him the fact that it would make the Sunday papers, if done soon. I wrote a letter that day to Vincent Salandria, telling him how I thought Garrison would arrest Heindel and charge him.

That night, I finally succeeded in contacting Donald Erwin Lewis. I learned then, for the first time, that Lewis's memory was quite vivid, on the subject. He, too, remembered Oswald speaking Russian with someone, but the description was completely different. This, I realized, could not possibly be Heindel; for the first time, I started to realize that Korry's identification might really not be that solid. Anyway, on the evening of the 19th, I sent Garrison a telegram informing him of what I had learned. He knew that I had been trying to contact Lewis, as well as Delgado, and wanted to know what either of them said, should I find out.

My telegram (of which I have a confirmation copy) reads, in part; (referring to Lewis as "Larry") : "Dear Jim, Larry Called. Had Substantial Conversation with Him. Please note: Incident vividly repeat vividly recollected but description definitely repeat definitely does not match, and is totally inconsistent. If I had a photo at this end, Larry will easily be able to identify. Has clear recollection. Provides vivid description of individual plus other now details. On basis of what I have been told by you... Larry would ~~definitely~~ definitely be able to rule out (Heindel). Am Genuinely concerned that incident is valid but Square Peg is being put in round hole as far as this specific incident alone is concerned. Please call me further details which I can supply, if and as you want them."

I also called Garrison's office to make sure that this information was understood by Bethel, and would be passed on to Garrison.

(on October 18, 1967)

Meanwhile, Kerry Thornley called me collect in response to a telegram I sent him, requesting that he do so. I told him of Garrison's wish to have him come to New Orleans and see if he could identify Heindel. (The exact date of all phone calls can be established from my phone bill.) It was on October 19 that I met with Garrison and told him of Thornley's response.

I had told Kerry that if he agreed, Garrison would send him a telegram asking him (Kerry) to call Garrison collect. The telegram would be signed Frank Marshall. Kerry finally agreed. This phone call with Kerry occurred the day before Garrison left the Century Plaza Hotel on October 19. It was then, I believe, that I gave him Kerry's address in Tampa Florida so that he could contact him by wire.

I did not hear from Kerry again, nor from Garrison again for weeks. I was busy at the time, and simply assumed that Garrison was following it all up. There had been no arrest of Heindel, but that didn't surprise me either. After all, it was now apparent that Oswald spoke Russian with at least one person other than the one Kerry saw him do this with. The situation obviously did not warrant any perjury charges against Heindel, who might very well be telling truth.

Meanwhile, some very interesting things were happening with Kerry and Garrison, of which I had no knowledge. I learned of them for the first time. I learned of them for the first time on November 19, 1967. Garrison was back in Los Angeles. I think I called him at the hotel. I had done so much phoning for his office, in trying to track down Delgado, and Donald Lewis, that I wanted to give him an expense voucher that totalled almost \$60, for my phone bill.

I was about to leave my apartment for Garrison's hotel on Sunday, Nov 19, 1967, when I met my girl friend, Judy. Since she had never met Garrison, I asked her to come along. I'm glad I did. For what happened so frightened me, that I was thankful to have a witness, and afterwards, I was so conscious of its significance, that I went to a restaurant so that I could immediately create a set of notes, under that date, of just exactly what he had said.

Ray Marcus was meeting with Garrison when I arrived. Ray was just leaving. Garrison was in his bathrobe, and he was very apologetic and charming, as I had my girl with me. It makes all the more significant what he said, for there is no doubt in my mind that he would have been far less polite were she not there.

We sat down in chairs. Garrison then fixed me with this "mystical" stare of his, and said, in a slow even tone, as if making some type of biblical pronouncement: "Thornley lied." (He stretched out the word lied, by pausing on the "i" sound for about a second or two.)

This took me quite by surprise. After all, only three weeks ago, Thornley was to be Garrison's Star-witness-to-be.

Why, I asked, did he say Thornley lied?

Pause.

Again, "Thornley lied," (as if, by repeating it, it gained in validity.)

Then Garrison told me: "Thornley lied when he said he didn't know Oswald in September 1963." Again, I was dumbfounded. I politely offered the thought that I would go wherever the evidence led; what evidence did he have that this was the case?

Then, Garrison told me: "We have so many witnesses who saw them together at that time we have stopped looking for more."

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Then, another pontifical pronouncement:

"Thornley's with the CIA."

"But why do you say that, Jim?" I asked.

"Thornley worked at a hotel in Arlington, Virginia."

So what, I wanted to know. My "so what?" type of rebuttal was met by his incredulity, as if "What do you mean, "so what?"; isn't it ~~AM~~ obvious to you what this means?"

Then, Garrison informed me that on the night of the assassination, Kerry was witnessed to be quite elated over JFK's death. It's true that Kerry saw great irony in the death of JFK, and might have even expressed happiness over it. This may even have been in bad taste. (Kerry has some remarks to say explaining this, and he did so quite well on one radio broadcast that will soon be transcribed). Kerry's humor, however in bad taste it might be interpreted to be, had more to do with his own sense of irony and his own ideas about government and the type of man that makes leading other men his life's work. But this is really besides the point. (This is one of the reasons Kerry came to the attention of the Secret Service so quickly, that weekend.)

Garrison had the stupidity and nerve to think that Kerry's actions that night were that of a member of a conspiracy who was openly applauding the success of a plot of which he was a part!!!
This is exactly what he said.

(On January 18 1968, before Kerry went to New Orleans to testify, I executed a signed notarized statement on what had taken place at this Nov. 19 meeting with Garrison)

What had apparently happened between October 19 1967 and November 19, 1967 is that Kerry Thornley had gotten himself placed on Garrison's "shit list". How had this occurred?

I was so frightened by what I saw in Garrison's hotel room, but I really didn't know what to do next. On the one hand, there was a real desire just to not take him seriously. After all, Garrison has changed his mind so frequently on so many matters of importance, that who really cared, anyway? I had just about concluded that "Garrison" represented a phase a lot of critics had to go through in their pursuit of the truth; I had just about written him off; I was grateful he would reimburse me for my fifty five odd dollars, and that was the end of it.

Later, Garrison issued a subpoena for Kerry to appear in New Orleans. It's at that time that I contacted Thornley for the first time since I had made the arrangements, back around Oct 19, for he and Garrison to get together.

Kerry knows this end of the story much better than I do. But it goes something like this. After October 19, here is what had happened. Garrison had sent Kerry a telegram asking him to call the office, using the name Winston Smith (the man in 1984 who ends up loving big brother). There were two phone calls, before Kerry got to Garrison. Kerry thinks that on the first call, he was actually talking to Garrison, who was pretending to be someone else. Kerry may be wrong, but anyway, Kerry finally got fed up with Garrison's antics and wrote him a letter telling Garrison where he could go.

The letter attacks Garrison for so freely using the power of subpoena, and ends with a quote from Robert Ingersoll to the effect that it is better to let the guilty go free, than punish the innocent.

That did it.

Shortly after this, within weeks, Kerry was shifted from the list of Garrison's "star-witnesses-to-be", and to Garrison's "bad guy" list.

And what is really outrageous is that Kerry's subpoena to come to New Orleans to testify was not issued by a man who sought to find out facts, or find out truth, but to do to Kerry exactly and precisely what Garrison had intended doing to Heindel!

In other words, Garrison had a theory about Heindel, a theory which posited Heindel's involvement in the assassination, at least after the fact. The point is, Garrison thought Heindel "know something" and was "hiding" it.

The method for "breaking" Heindel was to get Heindel to testify, get Thornley to testify, establishing a conflict of testimony. Then Heindel was to be charged, with perjury, with Kerry (and others) presumably being the witnesses against Heindel.

Now, Garrison called Kerry to New Orleans to do the same thing to him. (This is said in hindsight. I should have realized it at the time, but it was really not at all apparent to me what was about to take place.)

Kerry testified. The trap was baited with the truth. For when Kerry said he had not had anything to do with Oswald in September, 1963--- which as far as Kerry is concerned is the truth, with absolutely no qualification---there was then established a conflict in testimony with another witness who said otherwise.

Who is the other witness? A girl named Barbara Reid,

Kerry knows his case better than I do, and this short writeup is purely to give a running account as to how it evolved from this end. But it is important to note that Barbara Reid leaves much to be desired as a credible witness. Among other things, I have interviewed people ~~XXXX~~ who tell me that it is well established that she had an altar in her home, and was actually a practicing witch! This, and other equally fascinating things will all have to come out at a trial.

The point here is to examine Garrison's methodology. On October 19 1967, Garrison had made up his mind, ~~XXXX~~ in some mystical way that "only he knows, that Heindel was John-Carter was a liar and a bad-guy." The solution, I now realize, was to establish a Thornley/Heindel conflict in testimony, and then charge Heindel with perjury.

When Thornley said "no go", Garrison turned on Thornley.

Meanwhile, certain critics have apparently egged Garrison on in his venture against Thornley.

(One person, here in California, recently expressed "regret" at the role she had played in getting Thornley arrested.)

"Regrets" aren't enough, however. Arrests hurt people and disrupt lives, and violate civil liberties, and cause great mental anguish.

I recently had a conversation with a critic who is an ACLU attorney, on occasion. I pointed out that there was absolutely no "beyond-a-reasonable-doubt" type evidence indicating Kerry's involvement in anything.

"Don't give me that civil liberties bull shit" he replied. "We're going after the assassins of President Kennedy."

It is in this manner that the complete suspension of judgment and standards occurs.

Certain Warren Report critics are playing the same role, today, with respect to the Garrison investigation, that one might expect be played by some members of the John Birch Society with respect to an HUAC investigation. Garrison is "their man". They try to steer him in the right direction. And it does take some steering, for in many ways, Garrison has become the Frankenstein of a small group of Warren Report critics.

My realization as to what Garrison's methodology really boiled down to did not hit home, until he had actually charged Kerry with perjury, in February. Had I realized that this is what was in the works, I would have urged Kerry not to have gone near the state of Louisiana, no matter how guilty he might look if he refused to testify.

I cannot understand, at this date, why I didn't realize then that Garrison's summoning Kerry to Louisiana to testify was no more than a legal ploy, to establish a conflict of grand jury testimony, which would then be used as a basis for Garrison to order his (Kerry's) arrest for perjury.

It now all seems so obvious. It didn't at the time. Thus, when Kerry and I had conversations in January, 1968 about Garrison's recent subpoena of Kerry, I urged Kerry to go to New Orleans and testify, really thinking that if he did so, it would clear the air once and for all. Garrison would see that Kerry was innocent, that he had nothing to hide, and a silly theory expressed in a Los Angeles hotel room on November 19 would have bitten the dust.

I was so naive, it was really pathetic.

And during this period of time, I actually phoned up certain other critics innocently asking for advice as to what I should tell Kerry, who was wondering what tack he should take. "Tell him to go to New Orleans" said one. "If he has nothing to hide, he has nothing to fear", or words to that effect.

Later, this same man, the former ACLU attorney, would outdo Henry Wade; for he is the one who said to me:

"Don't give me that civil liberties bull shit. We're going after the assassins of the President!"

And the pity is, he really believes it! With any of these people, whenever you try to cite evidence that Kerry might be innocent, they simply jack up the conspiracy theory one more notch, so as to include that one item of evidence.

Today, in the case of Thornley, there are many critics who assume that Garrison "must have something" on Kerry, merely because he has charged Kerry Thornley with a crime, and enunciated various theories to the New Orleans States Item that Kerry was part of "covert federal operations" in New Orleans in the fall of 1963.

I've known Kerry for about 3 years; I first looked him up after I read his book about Oswald, because I was so upset that he accepted Oswald's guilt, and the Warren Report. (Kerry has since written articles, given interviews (Fact, Dec 66), and personally appeared on radio (Joe Dolan Show, San Francisco, summer of 1966) modifying his position on this whole matter. Kerry changed his position on the Warren Report and was publicly propounding his changed position months before James Garrison ever became interested in the case.)

In addition to knowing Kerry, I also know the 26 volumes, and I am pretty familiar with large areas of the evidence, having spent almost 3 years with the material. Finally, I've had a potent dose of Jim Garrison and his methodology. I have witnessed the genesis of a case against Heindel, which was aborted at the last minute, probably by sheer chance, barely avoiding the false arrest of an individual on insufficient information.

I have also listened to Garrison's varying public pronouncements on this case. I still would like to hear satisfactory explanations for the fact that well after Garrison claimed to have "solved the case" "weeks ago", (a claim which was made in Feb 1967, a scant 12 weeks from the time he first received his set of the 26 volumes) he changed the number of shooters involved in the case he had "solved" from 2 (March 1967) to 5 (May, 1967) to 7 (Playboy interview Oct 67 and later even 15.

Correspondingly, the same is true as to the nature of the plot. In his Playboy interview, for example he is on public record as not taking seriously the idea that the assassination was a high level plot, but rather the work of a group of politically insignificant right wing nuts who were "sick". To quote Garrison in that interview: "The assassination was less an ideological exercise than the frenzied revenge of a sick element in our society"; and "If you go far enough to either extreme of the political spectrum, Communist or fascist, you'll find hard eyed men with guns who believe that anybody who doesn't think as they do should be incarcerated or exterminated." (Playboy, Oct 1967 page 158)

I don't know too many "hard eyed men with guns" on the left, but that is beside the point. Garrison soon was appropriately scolded by certain critics for having copped out. (When I brought the subject up at the time I was meeting with him, he said he had absolutely no evidence that it went any higher, or included President Johnson or anything of that kind. So how could he say so? Many people pointed out to him at the time that Johnson was certainly vulnerable on the charge of covering up.) One month later, in November 1967 at Century Plaza Hotel, he upped the ante in his famous "your friendly President" speech. "Who had the most to gain?" Garrison asked "Your friendly President, LBJ" etc.

Now one asks: Had Garrison made some startling new discovery, between October and November, justifying Johnson's inclusion in the plot talk? Or is it, as in the case of the changing number of shooters, simply the fact that he had been scolded by enough of his critic befrienders for not being "hard line" enough? From what I know, the latter is undoubtedly the case. These changing statements, among many others, have made Garrison a justifiable target for ridicule. Any man can change his mind on the basis of new evidence, but Garrison seems to change his because of an inability to have made it up independently in the first place, compounded by an inability to distinguish between what is merely hypothesis, and what is provable fact.

When such fluid hypothesizing carries over into the area of charging people with crimes and making arrests, innocent people are going to get hurt. I think Kerry Thornley is just such a case.

Rather than trying to be all things to all Warren Report critics, I wish Garrison had instead professionally stuck to the evidence and made his contribution in court, whatever that may turn out to be. The fact that Garrison gets a rise out of the establishment when he shouts "conspiracy" does not mean his investigation is solid, or its charges just. Because of the credibility gap, any public official who alleges to have discovered the existence of a right wing conspiracy to assassinate JFK would immediately attract the kind of hostile attention that Garrison has attracted.

Of course, I have prejudged Kerry's case. But then, I can't claim to be objective about it. I could never serve on his jury. I know Kerry, for 3 years now. I know Garrison, the 26 volumes, and the way he treats the evidence, in general. Finally, I know the details of how Kerry and he came to clash, in this manner, with Garrison now becoming Kerry's prosecutor, with his goal being to convict Kerry of perjury and send him to prison.

To those who read this who find it incredible that Garrison might be wrong, despite the fact that he has charged Kerry with a crime, that Garrison surely "must have something", be reminded of what occurred a few short years ago, when millions of people thought that a particular document must be the Absolute Truth, because it was signed by Earl Warren.

Davis Lifton
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