

11 April 1967

Miss Margaret Simmons
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Dear Margaret,

I wish I felt able to utter authoritative pronouncements on Garrison and the New Orleans investigation; but I am generally baffled and vacillating in attitude. On balance, I would see considerable reason for confidence in Garrison. First, because I was greatly impressed by his quotation of the classic principle, "Let justice be done, though the heavens fall." Second, because I was even more impressed when Garrison said that there was no evidence that Oswald had killed anyone in Dallas on 11/22/63. Third, because several researchers and reporters whose judgment I respect have been to New Orleans and spent time with Garrison, coming away with very high regard for him and for his main investigators. Of Garrison personally, they report that he is a man of considerable intellectual stature and cultivation, personal courage and incorruptibility, and deeply immersed in the complexities of the evidence as well as thoroughly versed in the WR and 26 volumes. Even Mark Lane, who is not notorious for the credit he gives other researchers (or even for recognizing their existence), did a one-hour telephone broadcast to Los Angeles from New Orleans, in which he could scarcely find enough superlatives to use in describing Garrison. He claimed that he had been made privy to all the evidence; that he knew who had carried out the assassination and who had planned it; that no foreign power was involved; and that when the American people learned Garrison's evidence, there would be political chaos and a tremendous upheaval in the country, in shock and revulsion.

On the negative side, I must admit that I am dismayed by the parade of seedy and degenerate witnesses whom Garrison called during the Clay Shaw hearing. I would not accuse a dog on the strength of Russo's testimony nor would I give a plugged nickel for the story told by Vernon Bundy, the ex-addict. True, Garrison has every reason to withhold his real evidence and make do with such witnesses, to protect his case from premature disclosure and countermeasures by those who have reason for desperation. Yet, can those of us who have been animated for three long years by outrage at the injustice suffered by Oswald, countenance what is prima facie unjustified accusations against Clay Shaw? As I said to one of my colleagues, we may find ourselves compelled to take up the cudgels on Shaw's behalf, because justice must be indivisible and indiscriminating and what we are unwilling to tolerate for one "accused" we may not tolerate in the case of another. I must admit that I am in a minority in holding this view, which is shared only by one other critic (Sauvage) --all the others, certain that Garrison is the Great White Savior and resisting all questions, doubts, or criticism. I am much tempted to share their zeal, emotionally tempted--but I cannot help but feel troubled for the reasons already described. However, I am certain that Garrison is NOT a planned operation, with or without his consent--that much I do know, from visits I have had before the story broke, and subsequently, from one of his investigators. ## I was glad to have news of you; I'll try to write as time permits, but a visit to Dallas does not seem in the cards. I would really like to go to New Orleans--but I doubt if I can make that either. All the best, Margaret, as ever,