

4/30/69

Dear Peter,

Thanks for taking the time to write when no answer was required.

It is obvious to me that Epstein was fed much of that thin gruel. I never worked for Abt. You may have noticed he at no point quoted me, especially not when he referred to my saying I found certain things strange. There was a time when I did ask a series of questions beginning this way. But not once where he could have heard me, not once on a network or reported in any paper. Always very far away from Cambridge. So, how did he know? I can guess, for I have a real stack (entirely off the record) of carbons or my appearances, made for the CIA (not the FBI). This might be one possible source, might it not?

Perhaps someday I will write the New Orleans story. I tell you some things off the record, so you will understand. I went to New Orleans to work when, in November 1967, I discovered no investigation was being conducted there. Garrison was and apparently remained persuaded that the government would never let him bring the case to trial. Aside from the fact and witnesses I uncovered, I have enough for several unusual novels, for that non-fiction would not be believed presented as non-fiction. I have in my hand what should be enough proof to get a non-Louisiana lawyer disbarred and a Warren Commission witness (not Andrews) convicted of perjury. Most people were cooperative. Almost everyone I wanted to interview on tape permitted it. I developed quite a different picture of Oswald, pretty solid evidence of the counterfeiting of Oswald, duplicating and independent identifications of the man (not Oswald) who got the leaflet he gave out printed, pretty much of the story of the Cuban training camps (I identified four existing at the same time, three visited the same night by the sheriff's office and my source is the ~~lieutenant~~ lieutenant who was in charge), have first person accounts of the breaking up of Ricardo Davis' camp (he says CIA) from him and the girl-friend who accompanied him when he sounded the alarm, and much, much more. Although I did not set out to investigate Shaw, I did come across some solid material I am surprised Garrison didn't use. I could prove two charges of perjury not yet made. And charges against some of his witnesses. Some of it will sound wierd but is true. I am not a James Bond, so I sometimes interviewed witnesses in the presence of their lawyers, at my suggestion. There have been kidnappings (confirmed by witnesses and principal), one man is confined apparently illegally for the security of the President. Some of Shaw's friends levelled with me, gave me honest information (not incriminating) about him and his operations. Dean Andrews became my friend, though I was instrumental in convicting him. Some of the outraged Commission witnesses helped. One provided me with fine transportation (Cadillac, air conditioned), lined up witnesses, acted as interpreter - even took me to the Playboy Club! In short, there is and was a world of pertinent data readily available, some of which I got with no difficulty at all, some of which I had to leave incomplete. I haven't had witnesses ready to testify to what the FBI did.

My going down there and doing all these things, with no sweat, everything panning out, did not endear me to the men who should have been doing it and wasn't. I became no more popular when I went out and did what had been attempted unsuccessfully, like cracking witnesses who had lied, getting those who had refused to talk to agree to interviews, etc. Perhaps this is why my New Orleans evidence was not used. Or, I should say one of the reasons. I think I understand others that may seem incomprehensible, with two years to prepare a case. One of these is that when the case came to trial so fast, there were no lawyers who had been working on it, hence none prepared. One of the lawyers had not even read a book on the case two weeks before the jury-selection began. He is one of the two who handled the Texas aspects.

There was, in my opinion, a major and insurmountable flaw in the indictment. There was a way around it. "either Garrison nor his lawyers would go for it. It simply was not possible that the man said to have been at Ferrie's was the real Oswald. There are abundant, really solid evidences of the counterfeiting of the accused in New Orleans, at that time. There should have been undisguised provision for a "False Oswald" in the indictment. Failing that, when the case came to trial, the "and others unknown" conspirators provision should have been invoked to establish this part of the operation.

I was in New Orleans when the jury selection began. Before the beginning of the trial proper I was so certain of the outcome I left New Orleans to do work I thought would serve a constructive end. I wrote a book I began there and finished well before the trial was over. I now have three limited editions of books I cannot afford to print.

Garrison, who in some ways borders on genius, is even more trusting than I and cannot be shaken in his faith and trust in those he considers friends. Thus his office was penetrated at least three times, for I personally exposed all three. This did not help. The same people led him off on more wild goose chases than you are likely to believe possible. They were able to persuade him to waste himself, believe it or not.

The campaign against him was enormous. It extended to the federal judiciary. Here my information is first-person. I knew in advance and told Jim he would win in federal court and why. He just could not believe it. I was right because my source was.

It is all so incredible-and so true.

So, yes, I did work with Garrison, but not for him. He used some of my material, like the medical stuff that was used in the trial. I did some work in Dallas that made everything he wanted from there easy. He had Dallas help. I now have friendly relations with a number of people there, including officials. Some have done work for me, others have had work done for me. There is not a single person I wanted to interview there I didn't, and only three, Zepruder, Chief Curry and Dr. Perry, declined to let me tape. I found and interviewed the made-mysterious, very decent Father Machenn. He confirms the Odio story. He also immediately surrendered his charge, has not been a priest since. The church carries him on leave.

In fairness to Garrison, I encourage you not to judge what happened there from the news stories. The transcript will tell you a different story.

Maybe this will clarify it a little.

The Sunday Times replied with an inappropriate form letter!

Sincerely,

The New York Times

TIMES SQUARE NEW YORK NY 10036

April 26, 1969

Mr. Harold Weisberg
Route 8
Frederick, Maryland 21701

Dear Harold:

Thanks very much for sending me that copy of your letter to the editor on Edward Epstein's Times Magazine story. I passed it on, per your request, to Harrison Salisbury's office mailbox, although I haven't seen Harrison around lately and he and I haven't crossed paths much lately--you know he was busy writing that "900 Days" book, and he's probably out of town in that connection now. *P.S. - I find he has gone to South Korea.*

I was obviously interested in Epstein's article, although I haven't done any work on the Kennedy or Garrison stories for a long time. You pick up the original "Inquest" argument, which I noticed his article ignored, about the FBI reports on the autopsy.

I noticed the references to you. One seemed to ignore the fact that you did have Dell commercial publication. That question about the lawyer Oswald asked for puzzled me in the way it was phrased--I assume the reference was to John Abt, but it wasn't clear whether Epstein was implying as a fact that you might have worked for Abt. Anyway, you are certainly the best authority on that point.

You know I don't always get the same answers from the same set of facts as you do, but you certainly have labored and dug up a great deal of data. I did think myself, based on those calls from you, that you had been working with Garrison more than just the grand jury appearance. On the other hand, much of the material you brought out in your book wouldn't have been too closely admissible in most courts on such a case as Shaw's. Just from reading the news stories--never having seen the trial transcript--I thought a great many of the critics' points did get taken up during the trial with apparently considerable latitude allowed by the judge. Sometime one of your analyses might bring some of these out for some wider circulation.

With all good wishes,

Sincerely yours,

Peter Kihss
Peter Kihss