

ASSASSINATION INQUIRY COMMITTEE

NEWSLETTER

vol.1,no.6

A NEW PHASE?

As we approach the 5th anniversary of John Kennedy's murder by cross-fire in Dallas (November 22, 1963), we are prompted to wonder if we are now entering a new, and possibly more fruitful, phase in our assassination inquiry. For the first time in five years, three things have taken place that could alter the whole situation.

First, the presidential election has finally taken place, and we are assured that as of the beginning of next year, the Johnson regime will no longer be in charge. If it is possible to say, as does Walter Lippman, that because Johnson got us involved in Viet Nam he cannot extricate us from Viet Nam, so it would seem possible to say that because Johnson got us involved in the Warren Commission cover-up he cannot extricate us from that cover-up. Maybe Nixon can.

Second, by the time of Nixon's inauguration, Sirhan's trial will most likely have begun. Ray's trial is now set for early March. The last shoe to drop would then be the first to have been removed-- the trial of Clay Shaw. The latter hinges on what course the Supreme Court decides to take. It seems probable that the high court will rule on the suit against prosecutor Jim Garrison but only after Chief Justice Earl Warren and possibly also Justice Abe Fortas have resigned to be replaced by Nixon appointees.

Third, the defense in the case of James Earl Ray is now allegedly claiming that Ray was no more than a decoy in a larger conspiracy. We would like to point out that we conjectured this was the case in our first AIC Newsletter (June 24, 1968). Harold Weisberg, moreover, has been claiming this since April. We feel that Ray's revelation is a significant new development. (See article on Ray in this Newsletter.)

P. S. Nichols

HAROLD WEISBERG DAZZLES SAN DIEGO WITH FOOTWORK AND FACTS

October 28 and 29 were fact-filled days for those who attended the combination speech-question-answer events at San Diego State College and the University of California at San Diego (sponsored by the AIC, the Experimental College at San Diego State, and Tuesday The Ninth Committee, UCSD), featuring noted Warren Report critic, Harold Weisberg. The attendance each evening was approximately 400. Weisberg also appeared on two local TV shows, both on KFMB-TV (CBS in San Diego), and participated on extended call-in sessions on radio stations KGB, KFMB, and KPRI. These appearances generated great enthusiasm and interest, involving audiences and studio staffs as well. Weisberg was repeatedly requested to revisit these shows on his next sojourn West, to answer numerous questions this time necessarily unasked due to time restrictions.

One of the topics with which Mr. Weisberg dealt in detail was the movement in New Orleans of individuals connected with the JFK assassination. He is particularly knowledgeable about events that transpired in New Orleans because of his own intensive investigation in that city and his close association with Jim Garrison. The following account furnishes excellent example.

The Los Angeles Free Press, on June 21, 1968, featured an article by Mark Lane asserting that "over a period of several weeks, two different emissaries had arrived in New Orleans. Each had sought out Jim Garrison; each stated that he was carrying a message from Robert Kennedy; each was known by Garrison to be associated with Robert Kennedy;

each carried almost the identical message; each said that Robert Kennedy did not believe the conclusions of the Warren Commission, and agreed with Garrison that a conspiracy had taken the life of President Kennedy." Lane went on to say that "the essential purpose of the visits was to 'reassure' Garrison that, despite his public utterances, Robert Kennedy very firmly held a different private view" regarding the credibility of the findings of the Warren Commission.

As Weisberg's familiarity with Garrison's investigation became apparent to his audience, one listener at San Diego State was prompted to ask Weisberg about the incident reported above. Relevant excerpts from Weisberg's reply are as follows:

"On about November 6 or 7, 1967, I was in New Orleans. Oswald In New Orleans had just appeared, and I was with Jim Garrison...He (Garrison) said that a man, one Charles Lind (spelled phonetically, ed.), who he knew to have been Bobby Kennedy's roommate in college, was in New Orleans, and while he did not know if Mr. Lind was going to see him or not, it was conceivable that Mr Lind might, and on the chance that he was an emissary from Bobby, what in my opinion ought Jim to tell him? And up until this point Jim had had some pretty unkind things to say about Bobby Kennedy. Many of us had an opinion, that was an understatement of Garrison's, that Bobby was a little bit on the yellow side.

I suggested to Jim that in order to accomplish what all of us wanted to do, we could use every ally we had, that events could force Bobby to take a position, that he could not conceivably ultimately not agree with us, and that pending that day we should not make his lot more miserable. But the best thing to do was to leave him alone and let him work it out himself until such a time as he might conceivably come to us. That if he had to send a message, it might be that he understood the position Bobby was in, he was full of sorrow for Bobby's suffering, and that if there was anything he or I or any of those of us for whom he thought he might speak could do, we would be happy to help in any way. Jim agreed, and from that time on he never ever said an unkind thing about Bobby-- from that time until today...

On April 7, of this year I was in New Orleans investigating, and another man known to me-- a friend of mine, a friend of Garrison's-- in New Orleans on entirely other business, also a friend of Bobby's, called me. He said he wanted to talk to me. This was right after Bobby's speech at San Fernando Valley-- remember the speech? where he said he had seen everything in the National Archives, and that was a complete lie, and that nothing there was inconsistent with the Warren Report, and that is perhaps the most total lie in history, and that he endorsed the Warren Report, and that may have been true, I don't know. But in any event, Bobby never saw all that trash, trivia, and junk. He didn't try, and he didn't. I know now from Frank Mankiewicz, his press secretary, that he didn't even read any of the books. So I had a rather long and pointed, I guess you might call it "discussion", with this man, who I emphasize was not an emissary from Bobby, but was in New Orleans on other business...

The long and the short of it is this. He said that Bobby was buying time. He said that Bobby was afraid that there were already too many CIA guns between him and the Whitehouse. And he agreed with me that if Bobby were elected, his position would be untenable if a single unasked or unanswered question remained about his brother's murder...

I'll tell you the rest of it. On the 9th of June, I was asked to go to New York and speak at a rally for Bobby in Central Park, and I did. As you realize, that was four days after Bobby was killed. The

next day I called this man, who lives in New York, not in California, and we both recalled this New Orleans meeting. He said, 'I have to see you', and...we spent about three hours there (at dinner) and we were both pretty uncomfortable about it because this man knew that I had predicted Bobby's murder in a letter to your Speaker. Mr. Unruh, on January 17 of this year, saying that unless Bobby found his legs and became a man and spoke out, he would be assassinated. I regret that I was right. This man then told me (and the reason I say 'this man' is because he does not want his name used; I have asked him. I can understand his reason for not wanting his name used. I regret very much that the misuse of information has closed the mouths of too many of Bobby's people, some of whom might have helped us, and two of whom I was in touch with, and now they will not talk because they think that everything they say will be blabbed all over radio and television), this man then told me, 'It's worse than you know, because after I saw you I learned more.' Remember, he saw me in April. He said that three weeks before the assassination he had told Bobby's entourage that he had information an attempt would be made on Bobby's life in California and in a crowded environment. Because so much is out and because Bobby is now dead, I think it only right that I give you this much more of the rest of the story."

(We suggest that the reader compare the preceding account with Garrison's account of the same incidents, given during an interview with Art Kevin of KHJ News-Los Angeles, and transcribed in AIC News-letter #1.)

We also note with interest that Harold Weisberg has been maintaining consistently that James Earl Ray was a "patsy" or "decoy" in the King assassination. It has recently been announced that Ray's defense will depict him as a decoy and the "dupe of a communist or possi-