

New Address: Rt. 7, Frederick, Md. 21701  
10/11/67

Dear Mr. Arnoni,

Your piece, "Garrison and Warren: Anything in Common", is based on factual error, faulty reasoning, is constructed as a piece of propaganda, and labels those you are careful not to name, of whom I presume that this time I am not one.

I haven't time for a lengthy, organized response, and I think the time would be wasted if I had it. I recognize Sylvie's inspiration, and much as I respect her and her work, I fear this time she has gotten herself emotionally involved. There is nothing wrong with emotion, nor is there on this subject. Sylvie, like you, assumes what is neither true nor probably true, seizes on a few isolated things she takes out of context (as you do) and weaves her unhappiness from it. I regret she feels as she does. There is no doubt in my mind of her complete sincerity and integrity. I cannot say that about this article.

I make a few comments only.

Garrison's "conclusions derived from no critical general view of the U.S. power structure..." False.

"...no social philosopher, no social critic..." I think it is fair to take these words literally and declared them false also.

I ignore your obvious literary devices and straw men. They are inappropriate in your publication. They are not honest. They build up, unfairly, to: "Days of waiting for the Big Disclosure grew into weeks and then months". This is plain crap. The place for revelation is in court. Garrison never made any public announcement of his case. He tried and for months succeeded in keeping it secret.

"The reliability of new witnesses was by no means better than that of the first ones." I am unaware of any he produced in any proceeding that he did not in the first. The absence of names in your story is appropriate: there are none.

Did you expect Bishop Pike to be working for the CIA? Or angels talking of murder:

"...distressingly frequent accusations of attempts to influence or outright coerce witnesses..." Save for the blasted and false accusations of Aynesworth, of whom you should know enough to credit nothing he says on this subject, and those even more disreputable by NBC, what can you possibly have in mind with this fiction? In the case of Beauboeuf, he has voluntarily admitted to a reporter friend of mine that no effort was made to corrupt him, that all that was asked of him was the whole truth. Note that nothing has been said of this unfortunate young man by Garrison (only NBC, with Sandra Moffet, made these hints). It is now unquestioned that the tape cited by NBC was edited. I was offered the John The Baptist Cancler ~~was~~ story May 28, a month after I had finished my own book on this subject (now being printed by Parallax) by two good New Orleans reporters. I did not use it for the same reason they would not: Cancler would not swear to it. He would not before the grand jury, would not before a judge, and was convicted of contempt. He refused to answer the simple question: did you tell the truth on NBC. After getting the conviction, Garrison's office moved for the setting aside of the sentence. I also know something of NBC and its function in this matter. They tried to plant bad information (and of the vilest sort) in the Garrison investigation, through me. Fortunately, with permission, I have a tape of some of it. I offered it to NBC, without response.

I am no defender of police methods. Thirty years ago I investigated and exposed them. Garrison, to my observation, has not exploited them. I know the policeman against whom the charge is made. He is no fool. Were he to have engaged in any such scheme, it is much more likely he would have had other ends, like getting information for a search warrant. I do not believe he did anything wrong or unusual and have seen no evidence that he has. He has a vulnerability that is being exploited by the other side. The Cancler story did not surface spontaneously. It was offered these reporters by defense counsel, who at the same time acknowledged payment by the CIA and said it would be denied if the reporters printed it. As you should know, the CIA involvement is no longer secret.

I developed a witness of my own, a man who had been cut off every time he ~~to~~ volunteer before the Commission. He has been intimidated, by the other side.



What he wanted to tell Wesley Liebeler and what Liebeler did not want to hear is that an FBI agent regularly attended meetings of one of the right-wing Cuban groups, of which he was then a member. Oswald also had connections with these people. He phoned to tell me when he would call back, so I could prepare to tape record him. On his way to the phone at the appointed time he was leadpiped. He phoned me from the hospital. This is not the only attempted intimidation of him, but it should be enough. The second was after he agreed to testify before the grand jury, on my introduction of him to a member of Garrison's staff, an assistant DA.

What is doing the coercing? Which witnesses are being coerced? Perhaps you'd like to hear these tapes and those I also supplied Garrison, used in the Andrews trial, in which Andrews told a reporter friend of mine that he would perjure himself because he wanted to live. Garrison is doing the intimidating.

Your paragraph about "flattery" and the "basking in the power" of all the critics except Sylvia is really disgraceful. It should require only rereading to make you ashamed of such slanders. The same is true of what follows, that nonsense of psychological benefactions, whatever you mean by that.

William Gurvich, save by self-appointment, was never "chief investigator". When I was first approached, January 1, I was told Louis Avons was chief investigator and how to get in touch with him. His predecessor was Pershing Gerveis. These men are not exactly the usual pattern of police investigators (aside from Gurvich, of whom I cannot speak). The first thing they asked of me was that I address the history course they were taking nights at Loyola.

Speaking of Gurvich, does it not strike you as unusual that he turns his coat only after conferences with Senator Robert Kennedy. Picture of Kennedy associating with peephole professionals! This alone is a tipoff that Gurvich was a plant. And where are your polemics about his intervention into a legal proceeding? He publicly acknowledged he was in open and deliberate contempt of court in commenting on the case, particularly as he did. Do you think this sort of thing does not influence jurors. Or than any potential juror was not reached by his prejudicial statements? Society also has rights, including the right to a fair and unprejudiced trial before a jury of that character.

Only your limited circulation and political angle puts you out of this class, for such writing denies an unbiased jury, just as much as in the Shepard case. The difference is between the rights of one and the rights of all.

Attributing "procrastination" to Garrison is a plain lie. You certainly cannot be even reading the New Orleans papers. He has from the very first pressed for a speedy trial. It is 100% the other side that is causing all the delays, with the cheapest legal devices. Just last month the judge (and remember Garrison's feuds with the judges went to the Supreme Court) excoriated the defense for its delaying tactics. Now they seek a delay of an additional six months. And you charge Garrison with procrastination. It may be normal and proper for the defense to use such tactics, but how do they compare with the use you make of them?

"Garrison's trust account is exhausted". Before trial, when he has satisfied a grand jury and a panel of judges that he has probable cause. Your exhaust easily, and prematurely.

"It is time for Mr. Garrison to prove himself...." To you, with your obvious prejudices, or to a judge and jury. He wants to get there but is denied that by the other side and is further impeded by such articles as yours, which is poisonous.

It is the cheapest kind of journalism to go into the digression that critics by "coincidence" have been sought out by those seeking to plant information in an effort to make it seem that this is what is involved in the Garrison case. I wrote a 180,000 word book on the subject, completed in early April and with an appendix of more than 300 pages of documents, once secret, before I had met or even spoken to Garrison. Your own ignorance is understandable and needs no justification. You are more than busy with your regular work. But how dare you write so without the most exhaustive kind of personal investigation. How dare you equate your own solid ignorance with knowledge, fact?

I write you because I presume this was your purpose in sending me a copy of this issue, with this story marked. I have not gone into the fact of the case - for example, the unquestioned fact that David Ferrie was known to the FBI to have threatened to shoot the President - for I haven't the time and have put much of it in a book that almost any day now should be available to you (who will you accuse me of stealing this



book from<sup>2</sup>) any day now (~~Parallax~~ told me today they have the first bound copy).  
 I have been silent since your first slanders because I intend you no harm or bad  
 luck, <sup>But I was</sup> disappointed that you were not honest enough to apologize and, frankly, sur-  
 prized that you have since had your own boycott. I think your readers, with your  
 representations, are entitled to those disclosures + have made. Vince also made the  
 same false accusations at the same time. The difference between you is this: he at  
 least made a gesture and apologized, without insipidation. When I decided to go ahead  
 with a private printing of my first book, I knew it could be bankrupting. Since then  
 I have been aware that each new book presented me with a new potential disaster. It  
 has not been encouraging to find that those who profess similar beliefs have expressed  
 them with suppression.

You will eventually learn that from what the Commission had and didn't  
 use there is a prima facie case, that Oswald had connections with the anti-Castro  
 Cubans (who I have from the first believed framed him), that there was an intercepted  
 plan to assassinate the President in Miami, another in Dallas dating to early October  
 1963 (for what I believe good reasons I left this out of my New Orleans book but told  
 a major periodical about the existence of a tape recording of the threat and they now  
 have it), and many other things. You will learn of the involvements of the FBI agents  
 in New Orleans (how odd finding you their protector) and probably of CIA agents.

It is unfortunate that, for whatever purpose, you found it necessary to ally  
 yourself with those who I think are not normally your allies, including those working  
 with, if not for, the CIA. It is also unfortunate that no matter how weakly, you also  
 struck a blow against a free and fair trial, something we so much need on this subject.

Sincerely yours,

Harold Weisberg



## Garrison and Warren: Anything in Common?

When, in February of this year, New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison assured the public that he had "solved" the enigma of the Kennedy assassination and gave us his word of honor that he would soon make arrests and obtain convictions, he certainly sounded like a sincere man who knew what he was talking about. Not only his personal style was reassuring but also his speaking, not as a private man or amateur researcher, but as a law officer. Here seemed to be a man who had no ideological incentive to reject the Warren Commission's findings and whose conclusions derived from no critical general view of the U.S. power structure; here was a cop who, having come across criminal evidence, was determined to proceed professionally. Mr. Garrison was no social philosopher, no social critic, and no political dissenter. He was a district attorney and acted as such. And as such, he seemed to be adding a new dimension to the dissent from the Warren findings: positive evidential material was soon to supercede negative analytical conjecture.

Promises on record, the district attorney made his first move by arresting Clay Shaw on a charge of conspiracy to assassinate the late President. In going about justifying this charge, Mr. Garrison appeared to be proceeding with all too understandable caution. Certainly, he would not let haste ruin his case. Certainly, he would not let premature legal steps offer an opportunity for the enemies of truth to block its exposure. These imputations appeared to justify a patiently tolerant attitude toward Mr. Garrison. When he produced witnesses of as questionable a character and caliber as Perry Russo and Vernon Bundy, one "knew" by instinct that this was not all the district attorney had up his sleeve and that he was merely exposing the non-essential, perhaps even expendable, part of his evidence. The real, overwhelming truth was yet to come: Garrison, while in court presenting the fringes, must be mastering such an expose as would preclude failure by intrigue, suppression, or violence. The Big Case was in Garrison's hands and before long would be fully known.

Then factors began to emerge that did not quite square with this view of the Garrison investigation and the presumptions that formed a part of it. Days of waiting for the Big Disclosure grew into weeks and then months. The convergence of disquieting symptoms sharpened an observer's critical faculty in reviewing Garrison's performance and in registering its new phases. The reliability of new witnesses was by no means better than that of the first ones; characters were paraded each of whom was in one way or another vulnerable to manipulation or blackmail. Their thin web first assumed to be a mere fringe of the body of Garri-

son's evidence was now emerging as its heart. There were signs of growing desperation on his part, such as distressingly frequent accusations of attempts to influence or outright coerce witnesses. The district attorney's "scientific" methods, such as administration of sodium pentothal, use of hypnosis and lie detectors on witnesses, hardly bespoke a man aware of the differences between scientifically determined evidence and black magic.

### Cop or Researcher?

At the same time, Mr. Garrison was ever more heavily relying on independent, private researchers of the published evidence. These people fall basically into two categories: students of the released Hearings and Exhibits of the Warren Commission and other related evidence, and political hypothesizers. Garrison wanted them all in his corner and carefully cultivated their friendship and support. He has been doing this with such determined solicitude as to suggest *dependence* on their work. Indeed, he seems to have become one of them.

Evidential analysis and informed speculation are, of course, perfectly legitimate, nay, indispensable, preoccupations in criminal cases, especially when involving the most powerful country's most powerful man. Those who have undertaken these ostracism-inviting tasks will eventually be thanked by historians. But Mr. Garrison's own emergence in this capacity is disillusioning. For he was not to be a social critic, or even an analyst of the 26 Warren Commission volumes; he had promised us not speculation, however intelligent and plausible, but an official investigator's solution of a mystery, prosecution of the guilty, and vindication of evidence in due process of law.

The more Garrison was courting the independent researchers, displaying equal attention for serious and frivolous people, the more did they reciprocate. Often mocked and ostracized, many of these individuals derived desperately needed reassurance from personal closeness to a man in office and power. Flattered, some did not remember to demand from Garrison and his evidence such rigorous standards of objectivity as they criticized the Warren Commission for not having. They were basking in the power attractions of the only law enforcement officer in the country who would show them respect, and that was enough for some, at least, to be less procedurally meticulous and ethically demanding than they had been when facing adversaries.

Forgetting that at times opposition to opposition may be justified, or at least coincidental with justified rejection, these people interpreted each sign of official displeasure with Garrison as an indication of his being on the right track. Why would anyone be against him, unless he posed the danger of exposure? By this logic, it could perhaps even be argued that the real Kennedy assassins were the Warren Report critics. . . . But once emotional investments have been made, the logic of arguments had no unlimited reign. And should need arise, some of these people, eternally grateful to their psychological benefactor, will carry the remains of his sadly deceased "solution" not to its de-

served grave but into the mausoleum of imaginary martyrdom.

In the meantime, real disasters have struck Garrison's case. His claim of having deciphered the code of Ruby's telephone number in Oswald's notebook, and in Shaw's, turned out to be based on a misreading of the alleged code. Informed of this, Garrison, even while privately indicating awareness of error, did not forego contrary public claims. Then came the defection of William Gurvich, his chief investigator. Garrison's response lacked in integrity, the D.A. no longer acknowledging the defector's previously acknowledged position on his staff.

### A Scoop or a Trap?

There are several criteria of judgment which Mr. Garrison cannot escape. He publicly gave his word of honor; he must keep it or be compromised. Procrastination may not serve as escape from responsibility, and no district attorney may be allowed infinite time to substantiate or withdraw his charges. Mr. Garrison's trust account is exhausted, and no latitude may any longer apply on grounds that it would take propitious circumstances for him to share his "solution" with the public. Great as Mr. Garrison may emerge as a philosopher, analyst, conjecturer, or hypothesizer of the Kennedy assassination, this could not substitute for the effective police investigator he had committed himself to be. It is time for Mr. Garrison either to prove himself in this latter capacity or to disappear from public life as relatively gracefully as is possible for a punctured windbag.

Mr. Garrison's preoccupation with the Kennedy assassination coincides with what appears to have been an extensive campaign of an unidentified source to plant misleading "scoops" with many interested researchers and publications. Researcher after researcher was approached by mysterious characters, each claiming to have first-hand, or at least second-hand, information. Elaborate tales were told, in some instances by people with considerable mastery of impersonation and impressive acquaintance with the voluminous assassination evidence. Their eagerness to be "used," in dramatic press conferences, for instance, was only thinly veiled in a pretense of being in personal danger. This publication, as others that have been exposed to these phony characters, concluded that they had been trained and delegated by some authority to trick the critics of the Warren Report into compromising themselves and their criticism.

It is conceivable that Jim Garrison did fall into the trap which other people were smart enough to avoid. It is equally conceivable that once publicly committed, he kept sinking into the trap ever deeper, becoming a case rather than solving one. But whether or not such is in fact the genesis of the Garrison investigation, more than Mr. Garrison's personal future depends on its outcome. Having received more public notice than any other non-believer in Warren, Mr. Garrison, if finally compromised, may well take with him a great deal of the popular distrust of the solitary assassin theory. However unfounded such a reaction, it is nonetheless likely. Indeed, such precisely may



have been the intent of whomever got Garrison into these deep waters in the first place.

But no single individual should be allowed to serve as a foolproof lightning rod for the Warren story tellers. However counter-productive his involvement in the case, this does not add even one iota of evidence in favor of the Warren Report. That tale is discredited irrelevant of whether or not the Warren critics will ever produce positive evidence as to what really happened in Dallas on November 22, 1963. Whether positive evidence will be produced does not merely depend on the astuteness or correctness of the Warren critics. Nor does it depend exclusively on its potential availability. It also depends on the effectiveness of the conspiracy to preclude disclosure. Other historic conspiracies are known to have remained effective for a period of four, fourteen, or forty years. Some probably remained effective forever, for who could allege that every last political assassination in history has in the end been resolved? The fact that Jim Garrison may not have resolved this particular one, least of all suggest that Earl Warren has. The Warren theory is discredited by virtue of its own presumptions, inconsistencies, and fallacies. Even at worst, Garrison's investigation may merely turn out to be as compromised as Warren's investigation has been.

## Poetry for All Seasons

Soviet poet Andrei Voznesensky publicly expressed bitterness over the cancellation of his June visit to the United States by the Union of Soviet Writers. His is not the only visit cancelled. The others include those by

*U.S. tour, November 1966: On stage—Yevgeny Yevtushenko, in audience—U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara.*



the Bolshoi Ballet and Opera companies, the Russian Festival of Music and Dance, the Moscow Circus, Soviet delegates to the 27th International Orientalists Congress at Ann Arbor, Mich., and athletic teams. The Soviets have also barred some of their would-be American counter-visitors.

Mr. Voznesensky's bitterness reminds us of that with which some American friends of the USSR reacted to our own criticism of friendly visits by Soviet cultural personalities even while the host country kept increasing its Vietnamese mass murder. One publication found our criticism to have been "tragic" and an obstacle to that "unity of all progressive forces" on which an "end to the barbarous war in Vietnam" depends. A historian-turned-poet published a "poem," in which he not only asked us, "Is all the world your enemy/Mr. Editor?" but also answered that this editor is not so lonely after all, having "join (ed) that unholy chorus" of "Billy Hargis, Edgar Hoover, H. L. Hunt." The poet-for-a-moment then defined our criticism of Yevtushenko's U.S. visit as a "stab in the back" of a "comrade whose face is to the enemy." (Smiling and reciting?)

Our critics have so completely committed themselves to the indispensability of Soviet cultural visits that, if they have any integrity, they should now join Voznesensky in denouncing those who have cancelled his and others' visits. They should castigate them for having joined Billy Hargis and that ilk . . . It is a safe guess, however, that they will do nothing of the sort. On the contrary, they will undoubtedly continue to praise the Soviet authorities even if for reasons precisely opposite to the ones they invoked for past praise. In fact, no sooner has the preceding sentence been written than we encountered another poem on the subject. This one was addressed not to ourselves, but to Voznesensky. It admonishes the Russian to "stay home . . ."

A juxtaposition of a few lines from the two above mentioned poems is interesting, because, although motivationally identical, the elapse of a few months between them accounts for directly contradictory admonishments.

From "Letter to a Certain Editor"  
by Oakley Johnson  
(*New World Review*, January 1967)

The Far Right patriots . . .  
They say (of course!) go home  
They want Yevtushenko kept out  
They want a law  
They'd like to drive him out  
And you, Mr. Editor  
With all the bravura of your eloquence  
join that unholy chorus?  
You join Billy Hargis, Edgar Hoover,  
H. L. Hunt?

Oh, I know  
You escaped from a Concentration Camp . . .

But once joining H. L. Hunt has apparently become acceptable, this poem was published:

From "Letter to Voznesensky"  
by S. A.

(*The Worker*, Sept. 3, 1967)  
The C.I.A. loves you. Its eyes warm you  
until you begin to melt and lose form.  
You are a poet, but you do not know the world.

You are innocent. The United States will

applaud you.  
Flush your cheeks—not with "shame"

but with pride:  
they will make you feel important as the glow  
that has just routed the night—show you off  
before television; pick the softest straw  
for your bed; accommodate you with beautiful  
women . . . Stay home, my  
wobbly friend, you are no match for  
Madison Avenue . . .

It grieves me to part thus, but, dear poet  
Voznesensky, in reading you  
I smell the reek of Svetlana.

With all this poetry at its best around,  
sensitive cords in our own soul have been  
moved:

With everybody so very lyrical  
perhaps also I may be forgiven  
for succumbing to the Muse.  
By God, I too am confused  
as to who was good, who cynical  
when urging, "Stay home, refuse!"

I said, don't recite to McNamara,  
so they called me every bad name.  
Now you are compared to Svetlana  
for wanting to come here to declaim;  
they demote, defame, insult you, Andrei,  
for keeping yesterday's order today.

You are so right, Oh, poet Andrei,  
if virtue it was, why isn't it today?  
But think hard and you'll comprehend  
that in your country, as in my own land,  
the people are there merely to obey  
orders only leaders need understand.

And thus it turns out that we beat our  
critics to being right, except that in being  
right we were wrong; and they turn out  
to have been wrong even if in so being they  
were right. Which is by no means the last  
mix-up in tenses on the part of authors  
whose very last, and least, ambition is to  
author what they are credited with authoring.  
But less professional, if still automatic,  
supporters of one political force or another  
may try to realize the absurdity of situations  
in which they put themselves while retired  
from personal thought and conscience.

Prevented from a second U.S. tour, Andrei  
Voznesensky accused the Union of Soviet Writers  
of "Lies, lies, lack of decency and lies."

