

3/4/69

Dear Phil,

Although the press hardly gave a fair accounting of the trial, I have no doubt Garrison did not present a "beyond reasonable doubt" case. I also have no doubt he could have presented a much better case than he did, from my own work. Why? I can only conjecture. I think the major explanation is that he really believed what he was saying, that the federal government would prevent the case from ever coming to trial, so he spent himself in other areas, ignoring what was available and local. I also think he over-reacted, still does - hence says what I would not.

I'd prefer to keep the Thornley correspondence until I am certain there is no need for it. There is a copied set in N.C. I have the originals. Which reminds me, Garrison's office was penetrated, so was his mind. Just last week they fired a guy not on the regular staff, hired to research on this subject only (and incompetent), who apparently confessed giving everything to the other side. I think it may be best to assume this includes copies of those letters, even though the arrangement I had was that they would stay in the chief investigator's files only. I say this because Dave Lifton once indicated to me a knowledge of the contents of some of that I had spoken to someone who might have been you. I gave him no hint, and he was not on the button. But what he was probing about is consistent with this. I presume he had this from Thornley (who made no such reference). However, Lifton also conjectures in a way that comes across like he is presenting fact. Bear this possibility in mind if you write Thornley.

As a record for history or an intellectual exercise or a special kind of book, there may be a reason to complete "Manchester/Machiavelli". That will be in the distant future, if at all. It is already book-length and largely on paper, but the time is past. I have, however, continued writing. I have in the past few weeks copyrighted limited editions of three works, one on all three assassinations, dating to June, with a few minor additions since (and no major revisions required, with all the developments, of which I am not unhappy), and two parts of a trilogy on the autopsy. When I clean up odds and ends and decide whether I'll have to or want to do another N.C. book I'll get back to the second of the autopsy books, already researched, and then return to AGENT OSWALD, largely researched and partly written. I do keep busy, and I do churn it out. Thanks for your comment on the butter. Glad you do not find it sour and appreciate my feeling of the need for salt. I couldn't make it any other way.

2905¹/₂ Merlin Ave, Tampa, Fla.

Our weather has just eased. The ice and snow are melting. We've had solid ice on the pond since late October. I have been getting little outdoors work in and feel it. So, I also am looking forward to popping and the exercise a man's body requires. The lack of it ages me. And losing 30 pounds weakened.

Much as New Orleans and what happened there disappoint me, much as I cannot approve some and deplore the incompetent trial, warranted as is the distrust now so often expressed, it nonetheless has moved us forward. Too complicated to explain now, but thanks to it alone I now know what the X-rays show, have a book done on it, and am trying to carry it further.

Best to you both,

PS Thanks for the Trans-action clipping. I'm glad to get and have such things on file. It is always easy for the so-called liberals (who are not, really, that) to pretend what is not fact is and to address that with pseudo-philosophy than to confront reality. They never do this and spew generously their ignorance cloaked in polite, reasonable language.

This sort of writing is a great disservice. The authors haven't the slightest idea of what they write about. No doubt they are sincere and persuaded. But there is science like the geography of the flat world.

What they do not want to believe (or the straw man selected instead) thus, as in this case, becomes "myth". What they want to believe, to have believed, what they want to substitute for it they call "reality".

We live in a world where no one wants to work, where no one puts in the time to learn or to establish fact, where each accepts "authority" blindly but willingly, the alternative being that unwelcome work. We live with more myths than the ancients!

Thanks. Always glad to have this sort of thing and know what the learned fools are saying.

A

d

O

C

1 March 69

Dear Hal,

I don't get it. What happened to Garrison? If the newspaper accounts are at all to be believed (and I found no appreciable difference in coverage between the Omaha World-Herald and the NY Times) one can only conclude he failed, on the face of it, miserably. What happens now? I assume your own work will go on, of course, but the investigation as a whole seems (to me) rather muddled. Still, there is an enormous amount of material--evidence & allegation--I don't, apparently, understand...with the result that I'm not always sure how to effectively relate what I do know. Eh?

The course of the Sirhan trial (again, on the face of it) seems less confusing...but the refusal to consider possible conspiracy tends to undermine credibility. (If, for example, the defendant is really as "suggestible" as the defense contends...mightn't he be an easy recruit?, etc. etc.)

Thanks for the return of the miscellany & for the transcript of our interview. If you ever need any of the stuff again just say so and I'll send it along. I assume you still have use for the Thornley correspondence.

Kennedy's upset of Long a "point for our side" say Jean and I...

Your "Manchester/Machiavelli" remark intriguing. Perhaps we'll sometime have a chance to read your work on this? (Incidentally, did you know that Nicolo also wrote poetry? Hardly deathless stuff, but interesting in light of his other works. Not a well understood figure, more myth than man, even after all this time.) I do hope you can get back to writing and, hopefully, negotiate some reasonable publishing agreements. Incidentally, I don't think I would quite agree with your comment about your published work "showing" how fast you "rough it out." On the contrary, your stuff reads pretty well. I have said that I thought you raised your voice a bit stridently at times when your cause would be better served (in my judgement) by maintaining a more objective tone. I still think so, but I've now read a good deal more on this case than when I first offered this opinion: it is indeed asking a hell of a lot to suggest a need for greater "objectivity" in your writing style! After all the deceit, cynicism, treachery and double-dealing you've had to put up with during your investigations I can hardly in good conscience fault you on your writing style. I do not think, in fact, that I could in these circumstances summon as much restraint as you've generally shown. In any case, I believe the most important thing now is for you to get the material out where it can be examined, i.e. read.

Yes, I would have guessed that Kerry would repay you for your call by getting riled. You make him very defensive, no doubt, and he would resent that very much I think. And he probably cannot permit himself to think of you as other than dreaded enemy, poor fellow. Why don't you send me his address sometime; I'd like to ask about a few mutual N.O. acquaintances & maybe I could gather something of his general overall frame of mind at the same time.

Jeez! The Weather!! Yeah: really gross. April may well be "the cruelest month" but we'll nonetheless be glad when it arrives...

Cheers,

