

2/1/68

The Texas Observer Hates Criticism

We did not like the article, "The Assassination," by R. D. in THE TEXAS OBSERVER of January 12, 1968, which is reprinted below:

Josiah Thompson's work on the assassination is important. He has worked out with congency and clarity the insufficiencies of the Warren Report and the main lines of the neglected evidence. It is very much to Tink Thompson's credit that when he is all said and done, he asserts that he has proved nothing except the insufficiency of the Warren Report. In the course of his work he declares and argues that several men killed Kennedy, and he has marshalled a convincing case that this was so. But he knows well that he has not thereby solved the assassination. Indeed, he had a prime suspect, whom I discussed with him when he was in Austin some months back and agreed to help him investigate; he chose to do this himself, and satisfied himself, as he has reported, that the man was not guilty. Nevertheless, Thompson has done a valuable thing. No one can go forward on the assassination without his Six Seconds in Dallas.

William Turner's piece in the January Ramparts embodies some of the information—evidently much of it—that New Orleans DA James Garrison has turned up. Turner, who has been working with Garrison for months, has written a serious specification of data. In his work once again we are back in the realm of highly startling circumstances, clues tending to reinforce dark suspicions, and inexplicable coincidences. I have the feeling Turner's mind is biased on this subject in a way that Thompson's is not. This is a fundamental feeling because on the assassination, a man can make what case he wants to and only by painstaking reflection and work can another evaluate it. Yet Turner's work, too, must be considered attentively as Kennedy's death lives on in our lives.

In its characteristic sensationalism to destroy, Ramparts plays up Garrison's charge that Johnson controls the agencies that Garrison charges have suppressed relevant evidence on the assassination. On Dec. 29, 1967, the Los Angeles Times carried a story from Washington disclosing contents of military medical records showing that Garrison was diagnosed, in the early 1950's, as suffering from a psychoneurosis. The story alludes to "Garrison's records in the National Guard Bureau in the Pentagon." How did the reporter, Russell Freeburg, get these records? They are confidential and cannot be released without the permission of the person concerned. Freeburg does not say in his story.

The American Civil Liberties Union should investigate this. However Garrison's investigators are evaluated, this is a dirty way to fight him.

Our letter to the editor, which Observer Editor Greg Olds refused to publish, follows:

Dear Ronnie,

Only those who are indifferent to the truth, or have not read the Warren Report and the twenty-six volumes can refer to the Report as having "insufficiencies" as you say in your article on the assassination January 12, 1968. It is much more criminal than that, and you know it.

Further in your article you say:

On December 29, 1967, the Los Angeles Times carried a story from Washington disclosing contents of military medical records showing that Garrison was diagnosed, in the early 1950's, as suffering from a psychosis. The story alludes to "Garrison's records in the National Guard Bureau in the Pentagon." How did the reporter, Russell Freeburg, get these records? They are confidential and cannot be released without the permission of the person concerned. Freeburg does not say in his story.

Did Freeburg really see the records? If you had ever been in the Army, the National Guard or the Reserve, you would have known the Freeburg story was untrue.

You also failed to tell your readers that the Army records story on Garrison broke shortly after he had charged that a TWX was delivered to J. Edgar Hoover on November 17, 1963, advising Hoover that Oswald had informed the Dallas Office of a plan to assassinate President Kennedy during the Dallas visit.

Instead of a trial or a Congressional investigation to determine the truth or falsity of the Garrison charge of FBI prior knowledge, a lie about Garrison makes the headlines in many papers other than the one you named. And you helped to spread only the lie.

Penn Jones, Jr.

The OBSERVER article gives more credit to Josiah Thompson than he is due.

We overlooked the sentence: "I have a feeling Turner's mind is biased on this subject in a way that Thomp-

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son's is not." There is an old expression: "Son, I have been further in a sack after cheese and crackers than you have been around the world." Bill Turner could well say this to Ronnie Dugger. Turner spent ten years with the FBI before he was fired. Turner, once a professional hockey player, can beat Dugger in most fields including writing.

The assassination mystery may some day be solved, but the liberal press of America seems determined never to lend a hand.