

NY POST APRIL 21 1976

Jim Garrison's Crusade Turns Novel

If the message of Jim Garrison's just-released novel of presidential assassination and intelligence community intrigue is "believe the unbelievable," the message of Jim Garrison in person is "don't believe anything at all."

Unless it comes from Jim Garrison. It's a curious position the former New Orleans district attorney—famous for his belief that there was a plot to kill John F. Kennedy, and for his unsuccessful prosecution of Clay Shaw as a CIA conspirator in the assassination—finds himself in today: he's more convincing as a fiction writer than he was at times as a lawman.

And Garrison, then and now, has wanted nothing more than to be convincing.

'We Weren't Speculating'

"We weren't speculating," he says of the Shaw case. He's said it before and he repeated it yesterday in an interview here. "The facts have all been borne out."

"Not a line of *Heritage of Stone* (his non-fiction first book, the case against a lone JFK assassin) needs changing. It's all coming out in the news."

About his new book, *"The Star Spangled Contract,"* Garrison was just as firm. "Yes, it is possible," he said of the plot—conspiracy, indeed competition, within the White House, the Pentagon and the intelligence community to "terminate" a President. (It is not, he emphasized, a fictional



Post Photo by Frank Leonardo
JIM GARRISON

The incredible is possible.

retelling of the JFK assassination.)

"The story seems incredible, but the situation in this country is no less incredible."

It was early morning. The 54-year-old lawyer-turkey-d-writer ("I'd like to write more, in the daytime instead of staying up all night, and practice law more selectively") bent his 6-6 frame over a quickly-packed suitcase in his hotel room. By afternoon he'd be off on a 20-city tour, promoting his book first ("it's a pain, this traveling, but it seems to help"), his cause second.

That cause is to get across his "truth," an America knee-deep in its own spies, up to its fractured spirit in lies and double deals.

It sells well in these post-Watergate, post-CIA-probe years. His publisher, McGraw-Hill, reports the first printing of 50,000 copies "almost run through," paperback rights sold for \$250,000 and movie rights being negotiated.

'Alice in Wonderland'

The government, Garrison said, has a "vested interest

he said, referring to the intelligence community, "they gang you out. They work to discredit you."

"The Star Spangled Contract" is full of Garrison "monsters." It describes a "future ruled by the invisible machinery of power-crazed men and computer-deduced international planning."

Garrison doesn't deny his obsession. "I'm not a genius. But I can analyze and I have

a one-track mind. I can dig away and find things it would take blindfolds to hide."

But he also describes himself as an idealist. too much of one, perhaps, for his own good. "Is it realistically rational to be so committed to one's country," he asked, "when that country may not any longer be what you think it is?" He didn't have an answer.

in concealing the truth. It's a hall of mirrors, Alice in Wonderland."

From his briefcase, Garrison pulled a copy of the *Village Voice* containing parts of the leaked House investigation into the CIA. "In the Shaw trial, we were scared to death of using the phrase 'domestic intelligence' in front of the jury. They would have thought we were crazy."

"Now we could use it. People know about it now."

After Clay Shaw was acquitted, Garrison was criticized in the press—"an obsessed man," he was called. Now a divorced father of five, he is still upset by what has happened.

"When they can't kill someone, someone like me,"

Meredith ...