

CHAPTER 21

The Living Orwell

Garrison was not only fond of quoting George Orwell he practiced it in his statements and particularly in his book, On the Trail of the Assassins (New York, Sheridan Square Press, 198??). As I've said and written often, that is the one trail Garrison never took. I was involved in a number of the matters of which he gives his own accounts that bear no relationship to reality as he wrote and published them. Because when that book appeared I annotated it for my friend Dave Wrone and returned it to him, I am not now able to cite the pages numbers. Nor am I able to remember all those fanciful accounts all in one way or another designed to make Garrison even more heroic, and level-headed and persecuted in the self-serving record he made of himself in his book.

He was, in fact, paranoid.

A story I was told by his staff one of which I have no personal knowledge, as I do of what follows, is that although he had needed a hernia operation, and delaying it did present some hazard, he simply would not trust the fine hospitals New Orleans had.

It also has excellent medical schools. My step-brothers, the late Siebert and Jack Kety, elected to get their medical educations in those fine medical schools. They were so favorably impressed with the medical care available in New Orleans that although neither practiced there, each did select a small town only an hour or more away in which to live and practice, When their father needed cancer surgery they brought him more that a thousand miles from his home for the surgery to be done in New Orleans.

But the excellent quality of the medical care in those deservedly famous New Orleans hospitals did not overcome Garrison's paranoia. Instead he waited until a small rural clinic could be cleared of all

its patients, until he would be the sole patient, and then and only then did he have his hernia corrected.

But even then he took no chances. He took a crew of his staff investigators, all New Orleans city policemen, public employees, to guard him around the clock against his imagined enemies.

Those federals, in his mind, were out to do him in and what better chance did they have than when he was hospitalized for surgery and would then be immobile for a while?

Despite this and innumerable other extravagances and utter wastes of money, in his book he portrayed himself as a public official always careful with the people's money.

In his book he tells the story about Bill Boxley suddenly appearing at Albuquerque, New Mexico, when Jim was to make a speech. In the book Garrison quotes himself as speaking severely to Boxley and telling him to get back to New Orleans pronto and get back to work and not to waste money on such trips.

It made a flattering self-portrait and a nice story.

The only thing true in it is that Boxley did go to Albuquerque when Jim was there.

It happens that I was involved, very much involved in that business. It is nothing at all as Garrison wrote it for the pleasure of those so devoted to him and bought his book, his record for history that is other than the incredible fiasco it so tragically was.

Every once in a while when Garrison knew I was in New Orleans he would have one of his detectives look me up with the message, "Hal, the boss would like to see you." It was usually the detective who was most often Garrison's driver, Steve Bordelon. When it was not him it most often was another detective, Lynn Loisel. Both were always friendly with me and both were dedicated to Garrison. That Albuquerque time it happened to be both of them. They were loyal men who regularly gave up their nights with their families to serve the man they liked so much.

That particular night was the night he flew to Albuquerque where he was to speak at the University of New Mexico the next night.

We drove to the airport in Jim's official Buick. It was well supplied with cassettes of The Canadian Brass, whose music he liked so much. With the detectives in the front seat, Jim and I chatted in the back to the accompaniment of The Canadian Brass about whatever was on his mind.

We drove up to the main entrance off Airline road and, security being such a big thing with Garrison, both detectives went to park the car. I walked up to the ticket counter with Garrison. Garrison, then the most famous man in the entire area, the man whose picture was daily in the papers and all over TV, all the towering six feet six inches of him.

When the ticket agent came he told her, "My name is Robert Levy. You have a ticket for me."

With a visible double-take and a couple of blinks she said merely, "Yes, sir." She got it and gave it to him. He really did have himself ticketed as "Robert Levy." He gave me no explanation and I asked for none.

Some anonymity.

We stood near the counter and chatted until Bordelon and Loisel joined up. The four of us they walked down the correct corridor until we got to the gate of the Albuquerque plane. The four of us talked until the hostess opened the door.

As soon as that happened one of the detectives ordered, "Hold it Boss. Gotta check it out." So, that probably being the usual procedure - I started to say "normal" but normal for normal people it would not have been - both entered the plane while Jim and I continued to talk, more likely me listening, until after some time the detectives returned.

"OK boss. All clear. Have a good flight!"

Jim bid us adieu and entered the plane.

He had hardly disappeared into its interior when both detectives started laughing and laughing, slapping themselves in glee.

"We've got the boss fixed up," they told me. "We told the hostess who he is. So, he'll get two steaks, not just the one they are serving."

Anonymity indeed!

They drove me back into town, to where I had work planned in the French Quarter, and then went to their homes and late suppers. As I now remember it, I got a Po' Boy on St. Peter Street near Decatur, ate it standing there and then went back to work.

It was two a.m. or perhaps later when I'd bathed and was abed in the Fountainbleau Motel when the phone rang. The operator told me it was a Mr. Harv Morgan calling. I asked her to hold the call. I knew that Harv, a former reporter, a fine man and then a dear friend, would not have tracked me down and called me at that hour unless it was about what he considered important. He then had one of the top talk shows on the west coast, on the CBS clear-channel San Francisco radio station, KCBS. Whenever I was I was in the Bay area I always did his show and spent a night with Harv, his wife Judy, who was also his producer, and their fine, bright and pleasant little boy Mike, then about five years old.

When I was not there and Harv had laryngitis, Judy would phone me and ask if I could do that night's show by phone. I did, with Harv saving what voice he had for commercials and an occasional interjection of a short question.

His three hours began at 11 p.m. our time

In those days, writers who tape recorded telephone interviews used a suction-cup microphone that attached to the phone. I grabbed my tape recorder, stuck that microphone on the phone, plugged it

in and took Harv's call. I knew he regarded it as that important.

"Hal," he began, "I would not have bothered your wife to learn where you are and to call you at this ungodly hour if it were not serious. There is a partly-confirmed report of a mob hit ordered on Jim from here in 'Frisco. The hit man is on his way now."

He then told me how he learned about it and how much the police had checked.

It was not confirmed but there was enough substance to the report to take no chances. Of the details I do remember, and I remember more than I here include, the report originated at a bar know as The Purple Mushroom.

The call lasted a little less than a half hour as Harv, former reporter that he was, gave all the details he had been told and all that had been done to check it out.

I thanked him, we hung up, and I wondered only briefly what to do. Really whether to do what I knew immediately I should do.

That was to phone Louis Ivon, the police sergeant who was Garrison's chief investigator.

What made me hesitate is that Ivon was going to college at night, despite his more than full-time work for Garrison, to get a degree in criminalistics.

On my first trip to New Orleans he had had the detective who met me at the airport drive me not to the motel but to his class to speak extemporaneously to it. Then we went to my motel, the Fountainbleau. When Harv phoned I knew Lou was in the midst of finals and without that extra work rarely had time for a decent night's sleep.

But I did rouse him, by then I suppose after four a.m. He listened to what I told him of what Harv had told me and then said, "Be ready in a half hour. I'll pick you up."

He did and as we drove on Tulane Avenue toward the river to the office at Tulane and Broad

Avenues, Lou told me he had phoned others who would meet us there. Of those others I remember Jim Alcock, the experienced lawyer on Garrison's staff I held in high regard, and Alvin Oser. Both were later New Orleans judges. I saw them both sitting on cases in later years.

I sat in the reception room and worked on something in my attaché case while they huddled over the tape in an inner office. I also thought of what I would suggest if asked what should be done. Of the three things I later did suggest, one was approved, that I notify the FBI. Normally one police department would communicate with the other and I'm sure that was done. But I thought it would be a good idea to let the FBI know, they agreed, and I have the FBI's record's on it. The New Orleans FBI did inform FBIHQ immediately. I also have a short FBIHQ memo on the call to it.

Ivon, Alcock and the others decided that Jim should be told and that he should have some protection. New Orleans police, like other city police, are cloaked with authority only in their own jurisdiction. Protecting Garrison, should he heed it, required someone armed. They did not have authority to leave New Orleans armed and work in a different jurisdiction. But as everyone knew because he showed it often enough, Boxley had and carried a weapon. If I remember correctly it was an automatic pistol.

So, Boxley was sent to Albuquerque to bodyguard Big Jim, The Jolly Green Giant.

I have no idea why Garrison did not use the truth in his book, that a hit on him reportedly had been ordered by the Mafia, but he did not.

Instead he used that incident to portray himself as the exact opposite of what he was in all particulars, chinchy with public money.

Which Boxley did not get in any event. He was not a city employee. He was paid from private funds from friends and political supporters who grubstaked Garrison's "probe".

What actually happened is that instead of chasing Boxley back to New Orleans post haste, Garrison took him to Los Angeles where the two of them lived it up for a week. With Garrison holding court in their nice hotel and wherever else he could.

Shortly after they got there, when Boxley was in Garrison's room, there was a knock on the door. Pistoled Boxley answered the knock and accepted the package handed to him.

It was addressed to Garrison and it was firm. But instead of handing it to Garrison, Boxley rushed to the bathroom. He ran water into the tub as fast as he could and then held the package under the water, long enough to immobilize the bomb he imagined was in that package.

When he was sure that bomb would not work, he removed the package, opened it, and instead of finding a ruined bomb he found a ruined book!

Lest those addicted to Garrison still have doubts, I have records on all of this. I do not remember whether Ivon returned the Harv Morgan tape to me but I do have the FBI reports of my call, of my reporting the tape and offering it to them and other such details.

It really happened. This was the reality of Garrison and his "probe". Alas!

This one that I remember so clearly is funny, really ludicrous.

Not the other one, the only one other one of the many for which I now take time. My purpose is not to write the history of that Garrison fiasco. To a limited degree that is done in some of my records. Rather do I here try to give a fair and an accurate account of what reality was in that New Orleans madhouse I was so much to late in admitting to myself was that and only that.

That it was a madhouse is tragic because Garrison was an able and a personable man and an excellent lawyer. He even took a case against himself by local judges all the way to the Supreme Court. It decided in his favor when he argued and with his success established it as a principle of law that

public officials are not immune from criticism and that such criticism be free is a requirement of a free and democratic society. He did have principles and he did run risks to establish them as rights. That dispute began after he had convicted a Bourbon Street stripper and after getting her convicted said her children needed her at home more than New Orleans needed her in jail. He and the judges got into a real hassle over that.

But he also missed real opportunities that were at hand in New Orleans on JFK assassination matters.

In October, 1968, when I was about to leave for speaking appointments in Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego, with some work in several of those places, the late Bernard "Bud" Fensterwald asked me if on the return I'd stop off in New Orleans and, having heard that others and I had expressed some misgivings about what Garrison was doing, return and tell him what I thought. When I agreed, Bud, then counsel for the Senate Administrative Practices subcommittee of the Judiciary committee, reached into the center drawer of the table he used as a desk, took out a folder of travelers checks and handed me - one, for \$100. For the extra fare and other costs of the side trip to New Orleans and for living there for as long as what he asked of me required.

In San Francisco that trip I was the house guest of one of John Kennedy's pre-presidency women friends, the late Jean Hitchcock. She had a fine mansion on Metropolitan Avenue. In hilly San Francisco, its massive living room was the back room on its second floor. That room has a glass wall, a wall entirely of window overlooking the waterfront, a magnificent view of the waterfront, especially at night.

We spent what time we had together talking about their relationship, and when I left we agreed that when I returned we'd make an oral history the tapes of which she would put in her bank vault for

75 years.

I regret very much that I was never able to return because I was not able to afford it and had no more work to do there or speaking engagements to pay for the trip. She died before I was able to afford it. I have no way of knowing whether she did make and leave a record for the future but from what she told me I do hope very much that she did.

After doing what I had planned in California that trip I left Los Angeles for New Orleans the day Richard Nixon was elected President.

In New Orleans I stayed with the friendly Matt Herron family and while trying to get a line on what Fensterwald had asked me to learn - to which he paid no attention when I told him - did more of my own work trying to learn more about Oswald.

When I was about to leave Louis Ivon asked a favor of me. He wanted me to get a copy of the manuscript of a fake French spook book into the hands of the late H.L. Hunt's chief of security.

That book, by the French counterpart of the CIA, known by its initials SDECE and pronounced sih-dick, was masterminded by the French spook who used, among other names, that of Herve Lamarre. His name on the book when it was published is "James Hepburn". As he explained that to me, he had a thing on Audrey Hepburn so J'aime Hepburn was a natural and he Anglicized it. That fake book is still believed by a wide variety of assassination aficionados and just plain nuts. In his Killing the Truth, so aptly self descriptive, Harry Livingstone adopts its essence as his own and he told me when I told him it is a fake, "what is wrong with it? It tells the truth doesn't it?"

It does not tell the truth. That truth is not known and now cannot be. It is a work of fiction. Even superficial examination by one not addicted to all theories of any conspiracy no matter how impossible on its face discloses that although the author claims to have been in personal contact with the

assassins, it has virtually nothing at all about the assassination, only a page or so. It is a diatribe against a vast number of wealthy Americans all of whom, it says, a virtual brigade of them, conspired to have JFK killed, with the oil magnate H.L. Hunt one of the major alleged conspirators.

On my previous trip Garrison had given me the chapter that supposedly deals with the assassination to read. I read it on the plane home and immediately wrote him it was a fake, with details. But like Livingstone and a multitude of others, he liked what it said so to him the clear fake was not a fake at all. That they like what it says is all that is necessary for the assassination nuts to love it.

It was done professionally and although it was undoubtedly the most libelous book ever written and could not be legally imported into the United States, it got to be popular and is still sold by second-hand stores. But it is a fake. It was originally titled L'Amérique Brule, or American Burns. Garrison suggested the title Farewell America. Lamarre and SDECE adopted it.

Ivon said he'd pay my expenses from the special fund he administered, of contributions from Garrison's friends and supporters. But when I phoned Paul Rothermel, Jr., then the Hunt chief of security, his immediate response was there would be a ticket waiting for me at the airport, to to the statue of the Texas ranger in Love field (the new Dallas airport had not been completed) where he or someone he'd send would meet me, and they'd have a hotel room in my name. But because that coincided with the trip Matt Herron's friend, John Pilger, a young but by then already much honored London reporter, planned for a fifth assassination anniversary story and because I could help with that, I stayed with Matt in his hotel room. I accepted only the ticket from Rothermel, instead of Ivon paying for it.

Pilger got what he needed for his story. He and Herron left the day before I did.

Before they left, Garrison phoned me.

"You've just got to come back. I've got the most important thing yet and I want you to see it," he said, for him excitedly.

"I've got to go home, Jim," I told him. "I've been away almost a month and I've developed a dental problem. I want to see my dentist."

"Oh, that'll hold for another day or two. This is really so important I do want you to see it as soon as possible."

Matt said he'd meet my plane and he'd take me to his dentist, so reluctantly, I agreed. By then I knew of nothing that was both factual and related to the assassination that for all his work and help and the powers of his office Garrison had yet come up with. I hoped that this once he had but I did not expect it.

I took a Friday afternoon plane, Matt did meet it, and Saturday morning I was in Garrison's office. His private office. He had it rather full of people. The one who was a stranger to me I had wanted to speak to but he'd gone into the military. That was Charles Hall Steele, Jr. who as a boy had been picked up by Oswald in the unemployment line to help him distribute those handbills outside the old Trade Mart building that Clay Shaw managed.

Jim had his detective named Clancy who handled his photographic work there with a movie projector. With great fanfare Garrison intoned, "Wait until you see this."

Clancy turned the projector on. It was immediately apparent that what was so important to Garrison was what remained of WDSU-TV's Johann Rush's footage of Oswald picketing the Old ITM building, the caper that got him on TV. What Garrison had was a rather poor print of it. I knew its antecedents.

A Secret Service record I have referred to Rush making 17 prints from the film he exposed that

day and gave the Secret Service. They were not in the Archives. I had asked Sciambra to phone Rush's parents who I'd located in Shreveport and ask them where Johann was and whether he'd left copies of those prints with them. They would be more inclined to respond to a district attorney's office than to a writer, particularly if their political views were like their son's, from the right. They did not have any of John Johann's films but they did tell Sciambra where he'd gone. He was working in San Francisco. So, Sciambra phoned William Weygandt Turner who was high on Garrison. Garrison returned the favor that was entirely undeserved. Turner was a rarity, an FBI special agent who after 10 years had been fired by Hoover. Hoover considered having to fire an agent a reflection of himself and on the FBI so instead of firing them he usually banished them. In those days he particularly liked to lose them in Butte, Montana. But Turner was canned. After a 10-year FBI career in which he was reportedly a "black bag" expert. That is polite FBI lingo for thief.

When the FBI wanted to burglarize an embassy, which was not always of a country regarded as unfriendly, or any other installation, office, or home, foreign or domestic, of those in which it had political interests in particular, a crew of agents remained outside on guard to sound warning while one or more agents became thieves, criminals, by "breaking and entering" those premises to search for what the FBI wanted. (There was a similar procedure for planting electronic bugs or to tap telephones.)

Rush was in San Francisco, and Turner lived in its suburb of Tiburon.

So, demon investigator that he was, former FBI agent and all that, and then also on the staff of Ramparts, when he was part of SDECE's attempt to booby-trap Garrison (which is another story of which I have a fairly complete account on file) Turner was asked to look Rush up and see if he could get those 17 still pictures he had made from the 16mm film he had exposed of Oswald that day.

Turner got no stills. But he did get a copy of what Rush had of that footage he had exposed of

Oswald at the Trade Mart. On that day Rush was so little interested in getting that film to the WDSU-TV news room he asked Delores Neeley, who worked in that building, to go to lunch with him. My source on that is the fine prototypical southern gentlemen who was always that with me, Jesse Core. In 1963 Jesse was the ITM's public relations officer. He then also officed his own public-relations business in that building. It was Jesse who was outraged by Oswald's demonstration outside it and phoned the FBI to tell it about Oswald's demonstration.

When Sciambra told me that Turner had gotten no prints from Rush I asked Paul Hoch, of Berkeley, to go speak to Rush and ask for them. Paul said, "I've never conducted an interview before. I do not know what to do. I can't do it."

"Sure you can. Nothing to it. Just tell Rush who you are and ask him to lend you those prints. Just talk to him. No need to make a 'interview' deal of it."

Paul did that and Rush told him that Turner had not mentioned any prints. He had bent Rush's ear telling him about how important he was and about his years in the FBI. Rush also told Paul that the Secret Service had made a mistake because he had made only a few stills, not the 17 prints the Secret Service said it got from him.

It was from Rush that Turner got for Garrison, what Garrison referred to as his greatest of discoveries. In fact it was a poor, remote-generation copy of that footage most of which had been discarded as outtakes of no value. At that time it had no value and none that could be anticipated.

Clancy had not projected very much of it. Whatever Garrison regarded as so important had not yet appeared on the screen. So I interrupted to ask, "Jim, would you like to see a much clearer version of that?" Surprised he asked if I had it, I told him I did, and I gave that reel to Clancy.

I had gone to WDSU-TV to see if it had copies of those stills. It did not. But its then news

director, Ed Planer, was friendly and helpful. He offered me instead his remaining original footage so I could have a copy made. He also phoned Pan American films on as I remember Ramparts street and told them it was OK for them to make a print for me. I took it there and they made me a first generation copy.

"There are only two restrictions I place on this," Planer told me. "One is that you do not make any public use of it without permission of and credit to WDSU. The other is that you do not give it to Garrison."

I never made any public use of it and Garrison already had it, but what he had was not a good print. It was fuzzy. So, believing that no breach of my word to Planer was involved because Garrison did have a copy, Clancy let it roll. There was not much of it, only what WDSU had aired on the evening news the day Rush made that film.

As Rush had panned his camera to his left while he was facing to main ITM entrance on Camp Street he had a short sequence of people walking toward the main entrance from the Canal Street direction.

"Here it comes!" Garrison exclaimed. "Now watch closely."

Then, after a second or so, "There he is! There is Clay Shaw!"

Nobody present expressed any agreement with him for the obvious reason that quite obviously Clay Shaw was not in the film. But had he been, even with Oswald then picketing his building, what was so exceptional, or of such great importance in the man who managed the building walking up to its main entrance?

Only to Garrison was that of any importance, of the greatest significance to him.

"Roll it back a little, Clancy," he said, "I want to show them something else."

Clancy did that and then let the film run forward again.

"See that? See that?" Garrison exclaimed pointing to a door toward Canal Street from the main entrance. "That is Shaw's secret entrance!"

Why Shaw needed any secret entrance to his own building and if he did, why it was so conspicuous, so anything but secret, nobody asked. Nor did any of us call to Garrison's attention that the door had no handle. It was a fire door, one that could be opened from the inside only.

Nobody was impolite and nobody told Garrison he was crackers. And Clancy returned my roll of that WDSU footage to me. It also includes scenes of people, including Carlos Bringuier and his bunch, those who had started that fracas that Oswald used so effectively, showing them and Oswald in the court building and leaving it.

Disappointed but bravely not articulating it, Garrison then said that with Steele home on leave - he was a lieutenant, as I remember, in the Marines - he had asked Steele to come in and tell what he remembered about his brief experience handing out Oswald's handbills with him that day outside the old ITM building. Garrison and his staff asked questions and Steele answered them. When that was all over he had not been asked anything to which he had not testified to before the Warren Commission and what there was in that testimony that he should have been asked about he was not asked.

When it was all over and Steele was about to leave, I asked "would you mind if I ask you a few questions?"

"No, go ahead," Steele replied.

"Was there another young man with you and Oswald at that time?" I asked him, knowing from Jesse Core, who saw that young man, and from the FBI records that there was an unknown young man in addition to Steele Oswald was then using. The FBI had no interest in him.

Steele said there was but Oswald had not introduced them and they were not standing side by side as they handed those handbills out. So he knows nothing about that other man who was already passing the handbills out when he got there.

So much for Garrison's great discovery and how he questioned witnesses and leads he did not follow.

Garrison had no interest in any others who might have been associated with Oswald, I knew I would not be able to investigate that, so I asked no more, only what Steele said that I report above.

Matt then took me to his dentist. That worthy, a friend of Matt's, an inveterate fisherman who had invented a tool for scaling fish, practiced his profession in a single room in an old section of town, with the patient sitting in an ancient wooden dentist's chair, one clearly out of date when I was a child in the 1910s because I have some recollection of those chairs then already made largely of metal and none made of wood.

When the dentist looked at my four lower front teeth he said, "My, you have a real infection there. Those four teeth have to come out."

He had no sooner said that then he asked, "Did you say you were going home this evening?" When I told him I was he then said, "Well you'll be more comfortable if your own dentist pulls them and I want to go fishing, so all I'll do is lance the gum and let that infection out."

He did that and am I lucky that he loved fishing more than he loved dentistry on a nice Saturday afternoon and he lived so close to the river! After more than 25 years I still have those four lower teeth.

What I had was a case of pyorrhea.

Either there was something else I wanted to do with or talk to some of Garrison's staff about or they did with me late that afternoon because just before I was to leave for the plane I was in

conversation with Ivon and Scimabra. I now do not recall whether I blundered into what was bothering them or they wanted to call it to my attention. Whichever it was, they were deeply disturbed by another exploit Garrison had in the works.

The entire staff opposed it. Jim Alock, they told me, had talked Garrison out of all but one sensation with which he was going to mark the coming fifth anniversary of the JFK assassination. He was going to charge Edgar Eugene Bradley and Robert Lee Perrin with being the actual assassins on the Dealey Plaza grassy knoll!

He was so determined the staff could not persuade him to abandon that.

It was too close to plane time for us to discuss this further. They asked me to try to talk Garrison out of that preposterous impossibility, but I did promise to return, as soon as I could and try.

"Let me see my dentist and get fresh clothing," I said, "and meanwhile, will you please give me two sets of those "tramp" photos, Louis, and plain envelopes, with no DA return address, in which I can mail them? I'll start at the airport or if there is no time then I'll do it from the Baltimore airport."

Louis did that, one of the detectives took me to the plane. I had enough time before the plane was called to write brief notes on pages from the stenographers' notebook I carried and to address the two envelopes. I sent one to my friend Henry Wade, then still the Dallas County District Attorney, the other to Rothermel, who owed me a favor because I had taken the Farewell America manuscript to him. I sent Wade all three pictures. Ivon did not give me a second full set. I sent the incomplete set to Rothermel. I asked both to please have those pictures checked out and get the full story behind them.

Wade sent one of his staff investigators to investigate, Rothermel did it himself. I heard from Rothermel first.

"My old boy at the post office tells me you do not have the whole story. There were three of

those guys. The pictures you are showing me include only two." Or, his "old by at he post office" knew what he was talking about.

The report Wade phoned to me was identical to what Rothermel did. Those men were winos. They were found drinking it up on a parked railroad boxcar behind the Central Annex Post Office. It was at 217 South Houston. They were found when the police shook the whole area down. That was some time after the assassination and they reeked of what they'd been drinking. Other than heisting them up to the level of the railroad loading dock and then marching them with weapons drawn through the busy post office the only way to get them off the tracks and to the Sheriff's office en route to the lockup was to walk them north on the tracks and over the triple-overpass and then taken them east past the Texas School Book Depository Building, which was across Houston street from the sheriff's office. That was about one hour and a half after the assassination. The news photographers then were photographing everything that moved, including those three innocent tramps.

Garrison and many others had made up many stories about and supposed identifications of those tramps. Those pictures never had any relevance to the assassination. There certainly was in them no identification of Bradley, then west-coast representative of the east-coast right-wing preacher who was one of the first to milk radio, the Rev. Carl McIntire, based at Cape May, New Jersey.

It is not easy to believe that grown and mature men could make up and firmly believe all they made up about those innocent winos or that there could have been any assassination relevance. I do not know who made the first "identification" of Bradley, but I do recall that Mark Lane, who had moved to New Orleans to be where the action was, did some of the investigation to "prove" that the tallest of the three was Bradley. Which he obviously wasn't.

Not matter what I debunked there was an immediate mythology to replace it. When I asked if

anyone knew if the CIA had invented a rifle that would shoot around corners and sights that would see around corners so such a rifle could be sighted accurately, that being necessary because that boxcar was a block west of the scene of the crime and two blocks south of it, those men were immediately converted into "paymasters". They hung around to pay the assassins off. There was no explanation for why after that they still hung around. Or looked so bedraggled. Nonetheless that "paymaster" mythology was durable.

The shortest of the three was "identified" as Lyndon Johnson's farm manager! He was given the nickname "Frenchy" because those messed up and rumpled clothing he was wearing were said to have been of a French cut.

After the Watergate scandal some of them were "identified" as Watergate figures by their ears! Even with special overlay pictures in the Weberman and Canfield book that E. Howard Hunt took to court because of its "identification" of him with an assassination connection.

Were there ever "identifications"!

In still another picture when Garrison spotted an imperfection in its printing that made it appear that something like a wire was hanging from Jim Hick's left rear pocket, Garrison knew immediately and said that he had spotted "the communications man" of the assassination. What "communications" were needed and from the middle of the street at that and after the assassination Garrison did not bother to explain. No wonder. It made no sense at all. But he did hail Hicks to testify to the New Orleans grand jury and before poor Hicks was back in Dallas he got beaten up and hospitalized.

I anticipated no insuperable problem making it impossible for Garrison to charge Bradley based on only the pictures that did not show him at all, pictures taken so long after the crime. What was more troubling is that Garrison knew very well that his other candidate for assassin on November 22, 1963,

Robert Lee Perrin, had killed himself in 1962, in New Orleans. Most using those Commission 26 volumes knew it. His remarried widow, Nancy Perrin Rich than, testified before it. (14H33Off)

It was all crazy, very, very crazy, even for Garrison who by then had voiced and then forgotten many, many doozers.

So, on the two hours of the plane trip home I wondered how I could persuade Garrison not to pull the most irrational of his ample store of impossibilities when his own staff could not. I wound up with the rather simplistic thinking: if it takes a crook to catch a crook, it takes a nut to reach a nut.

Then I had to figure how to catch the nut who was to reach and persuade the nut.

Vincent Salandria, a lawyer in Philadelphia and one of the early critics, doted on long dissertations relating the JFK assassination that of Trotsky in Mexico. I knew also that Garrison respected and liked him and that he liked Garrison. So, I phoned Salandria and made the only pitch I believed had any chance of working.

"Vince," I told him, "I've just returned from New Orleans. Just as I was leaving I learned that the CIA is trying to wreck Jim's investigation from the inside." As he asked questions I answered them.

While I have no present recollection of them, I fear that it was necessary that I made those answers up, too. I told him that I had promised to return after seeing my dentist and taking a brief rest and getting clothing washed and dry-cleaned and I hoped he would go with me and help me frustrated those dirty dirties of the dirty CIA.

"Sure, I want to. Jim is my good friend," he said, or words to that effect.

"Let's go together," I said, "so we can discuss it on the way down." I then told him of an Eastern Airlines plane I had taken often. It originated in New York. It then stopped in Philadelphia, where Vince could get on, and it made its next stop in Baltimore, where I would join him in the seat he

could hold for me. Thereafter it was non-stop to New Orleans.

That is what we did. Matt Herron, also a friend of Salandria's, met us and we both stayed with him.

Garrison loved seeing Salandria. Both loved their long bull sessions and never got enough of them.

While I worked, Salandria did nothing but pal around with Garrison, largely at the New Orleans Athletic Club, which Garrison used as a second office. He had the childish notion that he and his phone calls were more secure there.

Ivon was as good as his word. "Tell me what you want, Hal, and I'll give it to you. If we do not have it I'll send the boys out to get it."

Boxley was not long on memos. Mostly he reported to Garrison verbally and Garrison made any notes he wanted to make. But his building the case to validate what Garrison had made up did require some memos and Ivon did give me them. They turned out to be ludicrous on analysis but impressive as written to those who did not give them real thought.

There is no point in reliving that nightmare and there is no need to. I remember enough not to have even to look at the long memo I prepared on it.

From his memos Boxley had investigated and built a case - except on the killing.

He had "found" a New Orleans communications center where the conspirators met, beginning more than year before the assassination, when they conspired in New Orleans. They had, in his memos, communications equipment in an empty apartment in a small apartment building owned by a man named Kruschevski. That was when the Russian dictator still ran the USSR and was much in the news.

On investigation it did turn out that Khrushchevski was the name of the owner, but unless the

communications equipment was made of empty beer cans or cigarette butts and ashes, there was no communications equipment in it all the many months it was not rented.

All Boxley's details were of this degree of authenticity - none at all.

Of all the many exhibits I attached to the ribbon copy I kept only a few for my carbon copy. I did not take the time to make copies when I was in the DA's office. For the record of history the few of which I kept copies were more than enough.

For the nitty-gritty - and I never did understand why the staff did not make this investigation on its own - true to his word, Ivon sent one of his senior detectives, Frank Meloche, out to get me a copy of the page of the handwritten morgue book on which Perrin's death was posted. It is a ledger-typed book with a sewed binding. Stealing that and changing any entries is no simple matter. It had not been done and it could not have been. Sure enough, Perrin's death was posted there in handwriting, near the middle of a page.

I also asked for the Charity Hospital records of Perrin's admission and what was found at the hospital.

These too I kept copies of.

I also asked Ivon to get me copies of the reports of the State trooper who had been a friend of Perrin's and who Perrin phoned as soon as he took the poison that killed him.

There just was no question when I finished that part, it was Perrin who had killed himself. Garrison had undertaken to explain that away by saying that the farsighted conspirators, 15 months in advance, had waylaid an unknown Venezuelan seaman, killed him, and had had him buried under the name Perrin. Perrin, in Garrison's invention, lived and thrived writing pulp fiction under the name "Starr."

Boxley's "investigation" would up with nothing but more fiction in support of Garrison's fiction.

In all, my investigation report was more than enough to end forever the fiction that Garrison had invented to get around Perrin's 1962 death that precluded his being an assassin 15 months after he was buried.

It was a lot of intensive work because there were many invented details in what Boxley had phoned up to help his good friend Jim, the man who had befriended him and who trusted him and gave him a job.

The only place I had to work was the Herron's dining-room table, a bit high for comfortable typing. The only typewriter I had available was defective one of East German make Matt had picked up somewhere and it could not be repaired in New Orleans. but I kept at it and on a Saturday evening I finished it. I did not take it to the Garrison office to xerox it. But I did make and keep a carbon copy.

"Moo, you can come pick it up?" I asked Sciambra when I phoned him. Salandria, with whom I discussed what I was doing when he was not with Garrison, was overjoyed at what from the accounts I gave him convinced him I was doing the CIA in. Sciambra drove from his home on Crystal Street on the opposite side of town to that of the Herron's, in "downtown", in the 1000 block of Pine Street, and picked the ribbon copy up.

"Hal, Vince and I will have breakfast with Jim at the club in the morning. Why don't you drive Vince to the office, where I'll pick him up and let you in the office. You always have work with you and we can pick you up there after the session with Jim?"

That is what we did. I drove the souped up Chevy II the police had taken from a mobster and given to the Garrison office to use, the dangerous car nobody else in the office would dare drive and Ivon had checked over and gassed up for me.

It was not a safe car. But I never drove it out of New Orleans.

Even for New Orleans, that was a particularly damp morning. Salandria knew that car was ordinarily hard to start and that it was so unsafe nobody in the office would use it. When the motor finally did kick off he turned to me and said, "Hal, you deserve the Congressional Medal of Honor for using this thing."

Sciambra let me in the office and he and Salandria drove off to the NOAC and the big confrontation with Garrison over what Salandria was really convinced was the job the CIA was doing on him. I could hardly let him suspect otherwise. I had him convinced.

He probably still believes it.

I was deep into the work I had carried with me when at about noon Sciambra phoned.

"Hal, you old bastard you did it! I'm picking you up and taking you and Vince to my home for the best Italian meal you ever had."

Although I was raised in an Italian neighborhood, he did not exaggerate his wife's skills.

On the way out there he turned to me when we had to stop, I think at a drawbridge over a bayou, and he said, "Hal, you just saved Garrison from being disbarred by the You-nighted States SOOOpreme Court," the way he pronounced it.

The Shaw case was then before that court.

Whether or not that was an exaggeration, as I believe it was, it reflected how he felt and how I felt. Salandria was in his private seventh heaven because the CIA he so hated had just been frustrated.

As he thought and as Garrison soon said.

And I had made that up as the only way I could get Salandria to help convince Garrison to drop that insanity. Charging a long-dead man as a JFK assassin!!

There was no evidence at all of any CIA involvement. It was perfectly clear that Garrison had made it all up. But he was not about to admit it once it was so totally demolished. Boxley's only sin was trying to make up some semblance of proof for that very crazy thing Garrison had made up.

Garrison never said a word to me about it. I had not done it for him. I needed no thanks but I did get them from those of his staff who were privy to that fantasy Garrison was to have announced as real when he charged Bradley and Perrin.

What I made up about the CIA trying to ruin Garrison, a project in which he needed no help at all, gave him not only an out. It also was consistent with what he had been saying all along and which I believed longer than in retrospect I should have, that in the wild things he said he was "fighting fire with fire" because the federal government was trying to wreck his "case."

With complete fidelity to George Orwell Garrison issued a press release on his firing of the Boxley he had hired over staff objections and paid from private funds, knowing he had been separated by the CIA because of alcoholism he later got under control:

The District Attorney's Office today announced the removal of William Boxley from the investigative staff. Boxley was fired after evidence recently developed by the District Attorney's staff indicated current activity by him and an operative of the Central Intelligence Agency.

The rest of the two page release was more vintage Garrison propaganda.

I think it was on the Tuesday after that Sunday vaporizing of that worst of Garrison's atrocities that he had a group of us to lunch at the NOAC. That may have been before he issued that release because during it he got a phone call. He turned to me and said "It is Boxley. What shall I tell him?"

"Invite him here to meet with me," I suggested.

Garrison did that.

Boxley did not return to New Orleans for the rest of the two page release was more vintage Garrison propaganda.

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Boxley did not return to New Orleans from Texas, where he was when he phoned.

It was a rather imaginative touch for Garrison taking credit for saving himself from himself but then I was not anxious to be connected with it. Penn Jones, who was attached to Boxley, who could be personable and was able - he had qualified for the CIA and had lasted there for years - wrote immediately that I had done the job of getting Boxley fired for the CIA!

Living inside the JFK Assassination Industry is pretty tricky at times.

To the best of my knowledge, more than two and a half decades later, poor Penn is still saying that.

What I did was, may I say CIA-like? It led to the CIA's being blamed for what I knew it had nothing at all to do with, that Garrison nightmare of his "identifying" Bradley and Perrin as the Presidential assassins and his charging them both with that crime. What I personally had done, disagreeable and unpleasant in all ways that it was, was really necessary.

Was not the country better off without that insane plan to "commemorate" the fifth JFK assassination anniversary by charging a man dead for fifteen months with being one of JFK's killers?

What a scandal - what a national - no, an international disgrace that would have been!

In Garrison's book about the one trail he never took, that of the assassins, this is not recognizable

other than that he gives Salandria credit for the work he had nothing to do with other than in reinforcing my fairy tale that it was all a CIA plot against Garrison.

In Garrison's book Garrison himself and his pal Salandria did it. Garrison, his staff and Salandria saved us all from the nefarious CIA, they and they alone.

Shows the benefit of mastering Orwell early in life, as Garrison did.

That helps practicing it. He did that, too.

It did not hurt the CIA any more than blaming it for inventing corn flakes.

And how much more nicely it fit into Oliver Stone's movie JFK, the international hit that two decades later made a hero of Garrison and villains of Bexley and the CIA.

They were far from alone in rewriting over history.

It was not until 1979 that I learned how deeply Paul Rothermel appreciated my letting him know for even that the French spooks were about to blame his boss for the assassination, and that Garrison was, too.

I had hardly left Dallas before Rothermel was at the FBI Dallas office with a copy of the chart of the principals in the vast assassination conspiracy Garrison had made up and Boxley had put on paper. Iron had given me that, too. Rothermel's boss is in the center of that visualization of what was at book length in the French spook production. Rothermel and I had laughed about it but that is not what he told the Dallas FBI. According to its records I got in C.A. 78-0322 it sent FBI HQ an "Airtel" on what its regular source, Rothermel told it.

That at least is what its records say. Rothermel was silent when I sent him a copy of it.

It is not uncommon for these who may want a favor from the FBI to cater to it by giving it what it is known to want, whether or not true.

Early the next year, on January 19, FBI Special Agent Raymond E. Long, who later rose to be an assistant FBI director and may in it have been, as in Gilbert and Sullivan, polishing those doorknobs, got much of it twisted and wrong in a memo intended to be bucked upward. The unidentified regular "source" in his Domestic Intelligence memo is Rothermel:

Attached airtel reports information volunteered by a source of the Dallas Office wherein latter reported contact he has had with Harold Weisberg, author of numerous books on the assassination who had made a bitter and scurrilous attack on the FBI, CIA and other Government agencies. Weisberg has indicated that Bill Boxley, former CIA agent, is cooperating with one Reno Lamaroe who is writing a book entitled "Farewell America." The book allegedly will indicate H.L. Hunt, wealthy Texas oil man, masterminded President Kennedy's assassination. Weisberg furnished Dallas source a chart which will appear the book. Chart refers to FBI, Dallas, but significance is not knew.

"Airtel" is a fancy FBI name for a letter. It made that name up when most mail was net by air, when airmail was separate from regular mail.

I not only did not say that Beoley was working on the book with Lamarre, "Lamaree" to Long, the book had been written and I gave Rothermel a copy of it.

I did not say the chart would appear in the book and it did net. Boxley executed it as Garrison indicated.

If the significance of the chart "is not shown" that is because in the xeroxing its title was left off. Without the title, it is still clear enough, even for the FBI.

It is their schematic of the conspiracy te assassinate JFK as they imagined it.

Pretty much as stated at great length in that French spook book Farewell America.

Pretty much, too as we see later in this book, as in Rothermel's further demonstration of his appreciation, he gave that same swill with amplifications to the dopiest of assassination mythology dopes who did books, Harry Livingstone, for his se aptly self-descriptively titled Killing the Truth.

That was after Hunt's sons fired Rothermel and others as common thieves.

And that was some time before, when Livingstone got to Dallas, all these down there with Brooklyn Bridges to sell, sought him out.

For its part in the JFK Assassination Industry the FBI loved what gave it any excuse at all to defame these who did not agree with it or as I did, exposed its record in the assassinations that is a national disgrace.

As it is, there is so much more that can be said about this strange man Garrison and his strange JFK assassination adventure history can use more but this fragment of what could make several large books is enough to reflect the actualities of the man and his "probe." It is all I can now do.

However, and this indicates how foreign to his interest and efforts the real evidence he had in hand really was, with Clay Shaw dead I can safely tell the story that follows.

I did not tell Garrison when after the jury acquitted Shaw Garrison charged him with perjury.

Four of the most unlikely men from Clinton, Louisiana, which is not far from Baton Rouge, testified to their seeing Shaw with Oswald at Clinton.

I met them while I was still in New Orleans the first part of the week the Shaw-case jury was being selected. I was never in the courtroom, never laid eyes on Shaw. I returned home on the midday plane that Thursday. I was then writing Part II of Post Mortem. I was working in Tom Bethell's office, using his upright electric typewriter, the first time I ever used one of those, when I was introduced to those four.

They seemed to be solidly impressive men. They ranged from a black man seeking to register black voters to a local official who sought to prevent that. And their testimony all agreed on what they said they saw, Shaw with Oswald. Some as I recall also included Ferrie. The story is that Shaw took Oswald to Clinton to help him get a job in the large mental hospital there.

Shaw testified he could not have been the man they saw because he was never away from New Orleans in that period having, as ITM's manager, the great responsibility of renting space in its large new building under construction not far away, at the bank of the Mississippi near the beginning of Canal Street.

Shaw's lawyer cleverly, particularly so because those Clinton witnesses appeared to be solid and dependable men, rather than denying their story, put out one that the man they saw was not Shaw but was Guy Banister. This soon triggered a new school of ever-growing assassination mythologies, about Oswald working for Banister, a former FBI man who had a private detective agency in New Orleans. There is little less likely that either would have trusted the other, Banister was that far to the most extreme of the political right that in New Orleans and Louisiana had a well-stretched extreme. Banister would never have trusted anyone of Oswald's reported political beliefs and Oswald hated those of the right extremes to whom he sometimes referred as "fascists." Beginning then, Banister stories proliferated endlessly. They were aided and abetted by his former secretary and reported mistress, when she allegedly got into a dispute with Banister's former widow over which would get his political files. Until then Delphine Roberts had refused to talk to Garrison or any of his people, as Garrison himself told me.

This testimony by Shaw was perjury. But before anyone thinks harshly of that what should be considered is that the Clinton witnesses did give credible testimony about Shaw even though there is no doubt in my mind that the man they saw was not Shaw whether or not it was Oswald with him.

Shaw did not have to take Oswald anywhere to get him a job, Oswald or anyone else seeking an unskilled job. Shaw did not need to go more than a hundred miles from New Orleans to locate a menial job. By phone calls he could easily have gotten Oswald an unskilled job in New Orleans.

But telling the truth would have been much too risky. Although innocent he could have been convicted. So, Shaw lied. And got away with it because of Garrison's incompetence as an investigator of what was real and from his addiction to his own mythologies.

My lead was on of these pictures on which Garrison lavished so much attention, of Oswald distributing his handbill outside the main entrance to the old ITM building. It was published by the Commission. The people in these pictures were identified by the FBI and the FBI interviewed them. Garrison had a man, Tom Bethell, working in the Archives for months. He should have gotten those FBI reports early eh. One of those pictures shows three men walking out the front door, one of them with a roll of blueprints under his arm.

I knew the names. I emit them to spare them a torrent of assassination nuts.

The truth is that the renting of space in the new ITM building was not Shaw's responsibility. It was contracted to a firm specializing in that kind of work. It had two men handling the rentals of that space. I interviewed both of them by phone after Shaw was dead. They confirmed what I had learned from these FBI reports that Garrison ignored.

One of those three men was locally prominent in New Orleans. He must also have been known to hundreds if not thousands who visited New Orleans. He was the assistant manager of one of the city's finest and most popular hotels. I cannot imagine that Garrison did not recognize him in the picture. Nor can I understand how as an investigator he did not speak to him about at least what he saw at that Oswald-staged handbill distribution. Or ask him who those men with him were.

But then when Garrison cast Shaw in the role he did, he did not once speak to a man he knew well and he knew was and remained a friend of Shaw. Jesse Core had been prominent in Garrison's first campaign for district attorney. He was also the ITM's public-relations director.

But as of the time the Shaw case was about to go to trial Garrison had not spoken to him or asked him anything at all about Shaw.

Those pictures? Apparently Garrison could not find any hidden codes in them! Or "secret" doors.

Those ether two men in the pictures?

They and they alone handled the rental of space in the new building, not Shaw.

Shaw did swear falsely and that false swearing was perjury.

Which Garrison had charged him with and did not know enough about the basic fact of the official investigation to convict Shaw of it.

There must have been hundreds of people in and around New Orleans who dealt with these renters either in engaging space or declining their sale pitches to get them to rent space.

But not a single one ever told Garrison of it.

And Shaw did not get a perjury rap laid on him in addition to the baseless charge that made him and Garrison famous and of which he was acquitted.

The courts threw Garrison's perjury case out.

It did not go to trial, as it should not have. It was Garrison's vindictive indulgence from his frustration when the jury that did believe there had been a conspiracy to kill JFK did not believe in virtually record time that Shaw had net been a part of it.