

10/14/69

Dear Att,

Good statement. Thanks for sending. A month ago I wrote Parks (who had phoned me from N.O.). Forget to send you carbon (enclosed).

He hasn't answered. Nor has my earlier communication been acknowledged. Par. ?

Not much new here. Wife has 75% of COUP addition typed. It'll run 200,000 words - too long by far, but necessary record.

I never hear from LA any more. All those who owe me money, have troubling consciences (or both) apparently have gotten together and decided I'm some kind of baddie.

Heard from Moo last week, surprisingly. He said they haven't heard from Mark in nine months and asked if I have. Haven't. That was not the purpose of his call.

Hope you are all well and happy.

Best,

memo from

ART KEVIN

Hal:

FYI - wether they print it or not.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Art Kevin', written in a cursive style with a large loop at the bottom.

93/KHJ 93/KHJ 93/KHJ 93/KHJ 93/KHJ 93/KHJ



**An RKO General Station
5515 Melrose Avenue
Hollywood 38, California
HOLLYWOOD 2-2133**

To: Columbia Journalism Review
From: Art Kevin
Re: Response to Spring '69 article by Roger M. Williams & Michael Parks.

POSTSCRIPT
THE CLAY SHAW TRIAL

by Art Kevin, News Director, KNJ-AM, Los Angeles, Calif.

I found the Spring, '69, Review article by Messrs: Williams and Perks fascinating. Not so much for what it said but for what it did not say. It seems the writers borrowed a page from the same tactics that they accuse New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison of using in his Kennedy Assassination probe.

Let me first take issue with the writers definition of Journalism. I do not believe that any reporter can have a "detached interest" in what he sees and hears. Nor is he likely to be "dispassionate". He cannot, in my opinion, even be objective. The best he can strive for is balance and fairness. Never was this more apparent than in Chicago during last years convention turmoil which many newsmen saw as a "police riot" while many others called it a "hippie riot".

I see nothing sinister, as writers Williams and Parks suggested, that many editors elected to send reporters well versed in the JFK assassination and Garrison inquiry, to cover the trial of Clay Shaw. If there is something wrong with the concept of "specialists", then we must look to abolish political affairs editors, space writers, religion editors, etc. etc.

The authors main argument against my role in the case was my obvious visibility, in that I sat forward of the railing during the entire trial. This came about not "due to a long, friendly relationship with Garrison" but from sporedic meetings with him which began when I invited him to address a banquet of the Radio-TV News Association of Southern California, during my tenure as chairman of the group.

(continued)

I became especially involved with Mr. Garrison and his staff when their web of intrigue spread to Southern California and they subpoenaed several men to appear in New Orleans prior to the Clay Shaw trial. It was obvious to me when this happened, that the death of President John. F. Kennedy had now moved into an area wherein this world tragedy might now have a very local overtone. It would seem to as a journalist and human being, that there was no alternative other than to get involved. Thus in New Orleans, at the Clay Shaw trial, I took advantage of my newsmans interest in the case and of my relationship with the district attorney to get a key seat among the men who might re-write history. As a result, I was able to obtain greater insight into the state's case and hear the internal dialogue which I was able to reveal in a series of post-verdict reports. It was copy no one else had. Is this not also the function of a reporter? I'm afraid that Messrs: Williams and Parks let themselves be led into a very superficial evaluation of my role and those of others they named as being friends of the defense. A reporters efforts in my opinion, should not be judged on what his role appears to be but rather on what he files or broadcasts. Neither gentleman ever asked for tapes of my broadcasts wherein they would have quickly noted that I not only tried to walk the straight, of balanced journalism but in fact did.

^{LHC}
Let me also point out one major area where I think most of the regular press attending the Clay Shaw trial in New Orleans, failed miserably. Very rarely was what happened in the courtroom ever actually reported! From my press phone I could hear other newsmen broadcasting, dictating or updating to their offices with a copy of a Warren Commission volume at their elbow. Instead of reporting what had just happened inside the courtroom, many referred back to what a specific witness had told an official agency at the time of the assassination, or they told what the Commission had concluded about that witnesses particular statement which was not in agreement with their final theorem! I can honestly say that I have never quite heard of a court case ever being reported in this manner before.

I also had occasion to attend one of the nightly gatherings at the spartment of New York Times correspondent Martin Waldren which critic Mark Lane referred to as "ministry of truth" sessions. Lane was not far wrong. The particular evening I attended I found byline writers from some of the countries major periodicals. All were anti-Garrison and all took great pleasure and spent many hours in running down the man and his case. Some made notes and indicated they would ad a particular point to their copy. What more might have been accomplished if these major scribes might have pooled their knowledge and talents for a real examination of the allegations regarding the disaster that struck our nation on November 22, 1963?

(continued)

This is the kind of reporter-participation that obviously did not happen after the Warren Commission report on the death of President Kennedy was issued. And I wonder even today how many newsmen can say that they personally have read and evaluated the Warren report? Much to the chagrin of our industry it took what Messrs: Williams and Parks referred to as "the Dealey Plaza Irregulars" to do our job for us. They went beyond the handouts that we all printed and broadcast and asked the questions and pointed out the disparities of various official reports.

In conclusion let me underscore that what I have expressed is not written to support District Attorney Jim Garrison or his case against Clay Shaw. I too found the case sorely lacking in substance as it unfolded in that courtroom in New Orleans. But I did find the Zapruder film showing the Presidents death (which I had never seen before) utterly stunning. I found much of the testimony by government officials equally stunning as they detailed their oversights, or bungling if you will, in public and on the record for the first time. That courtroom dialogue is now available and waiting for any participating reporter or amateur sleuth for that matter to dig into.