

In JFK case

NOV 27 1968

Photo 'touch-up' charged

By TOM RAUM
Times Staff Writer

Did New Orleans Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison commission a set of deliberately "touched-up" photographs of Tampan Kerry Thornley to show an alleged likeness to accused presidential assassin Lee Harvey Oswald?

The possibility was confirmed to The Times today by Thornley's attorney, Arnold Levine. An aide to Garrison has disclaimed any such order.

The Times learned of the existence of a letter which was reportedly mailed to a freelance artist in California bearing the letterhead of Garrison's office. The letter contained a purported request to "touch-up" photographs "to make Thornley look as much as possible like Oswald."

THORNLEY, onetime buddy of Oswald, is being prosecuted by Garrison on a charge of lying about his connection with the alleged assassin in New Orleans during the months prior to the John F. Kennedy assassination in 1963.

Attorney Levine said he has reason to believe Garrison wanted to use the touched-up photographs to support a theory that Thornley posed as Oswald on several occasions when Oswald was away from New Orleans — apparently on clandestine missions.

The Times has also come into the possession of copies of

photos which Levine said were re-touched by the California artist, as well as another letter apparently from one of Garrison's assistants denying that the district attorney had any intention of using a "touched-up" photograph of Kerry Thornley in his trial.

The 29-year-old Tampa freelance writer, who served in the same Marine Corps outfit with Lee Harvey Oswald, is presently awaiting trial on the perjury charge. Specifically, he is charged with lying before a New Orleans grand jury last winter.

LEVINE TERMED the request to touch-up Thornley's photograph "just another example of the sham" of Garrison's investigation, and the charges which have been lodged against the Tampan.

The letter asking for the "re-touch" job bears the date of March 12, and the name of Harold Weisburg, a New Orleans writer whom Levine said has a "well-known" connection with Garrison.

Written on what appears to be official stationery, the letter, addressed to Fred Newcomb, of Sherman Oaks, Calif., says:

"Enclosed are four sets of pictures of Kerry Thornley printed backwards but otherwise entirely untouched. My purpose was to emphasize the resemblance to Oswald and his receding hairline, which when his hair is combed the opposite of his normal fashion is quite emphatic.

"WHAT I WOULD like you

to do with one of each pair is pretend you were a make-up man doing the minimum necessary to make Thornley look as much as possible like Oswald as for example by pruning off or brushing back the forelock, trimming the eyebrows, shadowing the chin, etc.

"I would like you to keep one pair for your use out there, send one pair to me and the other two to Jim Garrison . . ."

The letter indicates that it was typed by a secretary with the initials "bb."

A second letter, dated May 21, and also bearing the "bb" initials purports to be from executive assistant Dist. Atty. Jim Alcock to artist Newcomb, and reads:

"I HAVE just received the documents you sent concerning Harold Weisburg's request for you to do some photographic touching-up on pictures of Kerry Thornley. So that the record may be set straight, Mr. Weisburg, who is not a member of our staff, made the request without our authority or consent.

"Further, this office has absolutely no intention of using any 'touched-up' photograph of Kerry Thornley in his trial . . ."

Neither Garrison nor Alcock could be reached by The Times today for comment, but a receptionist in the district attorney's office confirmed that there is a typist in the office typing pool with the initials "bb." She declined to give her name.

THE RECEPTIONIST also said that while Weisburg "isn't a member of the staff," he was well known in the office. Weisburg, author of "Whitewash," is presently in Frederick, Md., the DA's office said.

Garrison alleges that Oswald, David Ferrie, Clay Shaw and Jack Ruby, working on the fringe of the CIA, hatched the assassination plot while they were in New Orleans in 1963.

Thornley, who has published a book on his acquaintance with Oswald, denies he met with Oswald in New Orleans.

No trial date has been set in Thornley's case.



DISTRICT ATTORNEY
PARISH OF ORLEANS
STATE OF LOUISIANA
2700 TULANE AVENUE
NEW ORLEANS 70119

March 12, 1968

JIM GARRISON
District Attorney

Mr. Fred Newcomb
4640 Noble Avenue
Sherman Oaks, California

Dear Fred:

Enclosed are four sets of pictures of Kerry Thornley printed backwards but otherwise entirely untouched. My purpose was to emphasize the resemblance to Oswald and his receding hairline, which when his hair is combed the opposite of his normal fashion is quite emphatic.

What I would like you to do with one of each pair is pretend you were a make-up man doing the minimum necessary to make Thornley look as much as possible like Oswald as for example by pruning off or brushing back the forelock, trimming the eyebrows, shadowing the chin, etc. I would like you to keep one pair for your use out there, send one pair to me and the other two to Jim Garrison, District Attorney, 2700 Tulane Avenue, New Orleans, La. 70119.

Best to Marilyn and everyone else and many many thanks.

Sincerely,

HAROLD WEISBURG

HW:db
Enclosure



DISTRICT ATTORNEY MAY 23 1968
PARISH OF ORLEANS
STATE OF LOUISIANA
2700 TULANE AVENUE
NEW ORLEANS 70119

May 21, 1968

JIM GARRISON
District Attorney

Mr. Fred T. Newcomb
4640 Noble Avenue
Sherman Oaks, California 91403

Dear Mr. Newcomb:

I have just received the documents you sent concerning Harold Weisberg's request for you to do some photographic touching-up on pictures of Kerry Thornley. So that the record may be set straight, Mr. Weisberg, who is not a member of our staff, made the request without our authority or consent.

Further, this office has absolutely no intention of using any "touched-up" photograph of Kerry Thornley in his trial. We, therefore, have no objection whatsoever of your sending Harold Weisberg's letter of March 12, 1968, and any photographs of Kerry Thornley he may have sent to you to Mr. Arnold D. Levine, Attorney for Kerry Thornley.

Sincerely,

JAMES L. MCCOY
Executive Assistant
District Attorney

JLA/bb
cc: Mr. Arnold D. Levine
Attorney at Law

The letters in question

Both letters appear to be on official "DA" stationery. Letter on left asks for "touch-up" job, one on right disclaims Garrison's

role. Both typed by secretary with "bb" initials.



Look-alikes?

"Backwards" photo of Thornley (top), and "touched-up" (second). Thornley as he really looks (third), and Oswald (bottom).

Telephone call re Kerry Thornley - Nov. 27, 1968:

As we were preparing to leave today, I got a telephone call from a man whose name I understood to be Raum, who identified himself as a reporter for a Tampa paper and who called, he said, to ask if I had written a letter on DA Garrison's stationery, which he then misrepresented. ~~Then he asked me to read the "letter" which he did and as he did he saw it was not what had been represented to him.~~ I asked him to read the "letter" which he did and as he did he saw it was not what had been represented to him.

I told him I was in New Orleans without a typewriter, that my handwriting is illegible, and that, as a courtesy, Louis Ivon had asked a pool stenographer to type a memorandum for me. I told him I explained to her it had nothing to do with the office, that I had asked her to type it on a plain piece of paper, and that, because it was a memo, I had no cause to see it again and that, in fact, I never had and had not even signed it. He acknowledged it was unsigned. I explained to him that a number of people believed Thornley looked much like Oswald; that there was a question, could he have been mistaken for Oswald; and that this was what I was checking out. He acknowledged there was no misrepresentation because I had asked ~~ask~~ that only one of each pair of pictures be touched up and that I had even pointed out I had printed the pictures backward, whereas, had I not, it would not have been known. ~~He~~ I said, if anything, the artwork was in Thornley's favor and not against his interest because he looked more like Oswald before the artwork than he did afterwards, to which Raum readily agreed. He said this had been given to his paper by Thornley's lawyer, and I pointed out this had been for a special purpose because the incident was quite old and not at all new to Thornley or his lawyer. I explained how they learned about it. He was interested in my interest in Thornley, and I explained it, going back to the December 1966 Joe Dolan show and the caller-in. I told him about my subsequent check of Thornley's testimony and Lt. Donovan's testimony and how Thornley's knowledge of Oswald's high security clearance was inconsistent with his repeated statement of Oswald's "Communism". Raum said Barbara Reid had been represented to him as a "practitioner of Witchcraft" and he said these words had been used. I then told him of Thornley's close friendship with Barbara Reid and his trust in her until he left New Orleans, which Raum agreed did not jibe with later claims she was a witch. I told him the basis, that Kerry claimed she kept a voodoo alter in her home and told him that on one occasion a replica had been erected in her home for TV use and with Thornley's assistance. Raum ~~explain~~ expressed surprise. I told him Thornley and his people regularly represented Barbara as the only or the chief Garrison witness against Thornley and explained neither Thornley nor I or anyone outside of Garrison's office had any way of knowing. I added Barbara was not the only one who told me of having seen Oswald and Thornley together.

Clint(?)

I told him of my visit to Grant(?) Bolton and its purpose. I told him I assured Thornley of the literary rights to any value I might add to his knowledge, which Raum agreed was unusual and fair, and he readily acknowledged not having been told any of these things. I offered him copies of Thornley's testimony, told him how [he could get it from Helen Hartmann, giving him her telephone number and, as a touchstone, suggested he compare the picture of Thornley given to "Open City" as Thornley's appearance at the time of the assassination with the actual picture the Commission's evidence as Thornley Exhibit No. 1. I gave him Barbara's telephone number and offered to answer any other questions he might have or to supply documentary proof of anything I had published.

He did not know I had made no charges against Thornley, did not know everything I had published was of earlier vintage, and did not know of the

allegations Thornley and Lifton are making, so I told him what they were and showed him they are false.

He said they were already past deadline at the time of his call, but that ~~then~~ they would print this story in tomorrow's edition. I told him neither Thornley or his lawyer nor anyone else had ever sought me out to ask me any questions about any of this. He promised to send me copies of their stories and of what had been given to him so that I could compare and see if there are any alterations.

I told him his paper was being used as part of a propaganda campaign and that to accomplish this gross misrepresentation had been made. I also told him Thornley, when given the opportunity by WLCY, did not confront me, that I had agreed to confront through my wife when he was asked in my absence and that when confronted with what I had actually said on WLCY rather than his misrepresentations of it, Thornley was without complaint against me. I told him if WLCY could not supply him with a tope of this, I could.

He was not aware of the "Open City" stories by Thornley and Lifton and was not aware of the numerous errors therein as acknowledged in the errata sheet for he had not been given copies.