

Garrison & JFK's assassination

The whole story & nothing but the whole story

by Ron Rosenbaum

It's official now. The legal proceedings of District Attorney Jim Garrison in the matter of the death of John F. Kennedy are officially over. On November 20 the Supreme Court ordered Garrison to cease prosecution of State of

Louisiana v. Clay L. Shaw. It was a perjury case. Clay L. Shaw perjured himself, according to Garrison, when he denied meeting Lee Harvey Oswald. It was the last active case in Garrison's six-year-old assassination investigation.

When the end came, Garrison did not take it quietly. Twenty-four hours after the adverse ruling,

he issued an intriguing nine-page statement. On the first page Garrison promised to reveal for the first time ever exactly how, why, and by whom President Kennedy was assassinated. All the details which Garrison maintained restraints upon pre-trial publicity had forced him to keep quiet about until now. At last in this statement, said Garrison, he would unveil the whole story for the press and the public. The press ignored it. The Supreme Court ruling of the day before barely rated one wire set-

vice paragraph in most papers. Garrison's statement rated one paragraph less.

Ten days later a Xerox copy of the former statement arrived in the mail at The Voice. On the top of the first page was a handwritten note: "Local press not interested. Perhaps you will be." I.G.

I was interested. I was particularly interested in names in the six years since his investigation became public. Garrison had named a few names, even indicted two people as middle level conspirators. But he had never, to my knowledge, named the men at the top and the bottom of the conspiracy he said he had uncovered—the men at the top who plotted and ordered the assassination, and the men at the bottom—the ones who actually fired the shots in Dallas on November 22, 1963.

In this farewell statement Garrison does name certain names, he hints at others, and he leaves certain others pointedly unnamed. David M. Shoup, retired general of the Marines, is one name named. According to Garrison's statement, President Kennedy was murdered upon the direct orders of the powerful military chieftains of the Pentagon—the notable exceptions of the Marine Commandant General David Shoup who remained loyal to him—in concert with the dominant elements of the Central Intelligence Agency. (Italics mine.)

Garrison does not, however, go on to name the names of these powerful military chieftains of the Pentagon at the pinnacle of the conspiracy. Nevertheless, by declaring General Shoup innocent, Garrison implicitly points his finger at the remaining four generals who comprised the Joint

Chiefs of Staff in November 1963.

Then there is the name Lee Harvey Oswald. Oswald is mentioned in passing in Garrison's statement, but only as a scapegoat planted in the Texas School Book Depository, the instrument by which the government drew the eyes of the world away from its professional assassins.

And those "professional assassins" Garrison does not name them. From his statement it seems there were at least four of them: two riflemen firing from the grassy knoll in front of the President's limousine, and two firing from behind.

The names of those four Joint Chiefs of Staff are in the public domain. According to the World Almanac of 1964 they are: Maxwell Taylor, Earl Wheeler, Curtis Le May, and David McDonald.

But now that his last case is closed, the names of those four "professional assassins" are the private property of Jim Garrison.

On December 12 I placed a call to Garrison, hoping that, among other things, he would tell me the names of the men who pulled the triggers.

The first thing I did, however, when Garrison returned my call, was clear up the identity of the "powerful military chieftains." Were they in fact the Joint Chiefs of Staff sans Shoup? If so, why didn't Garrison come right out and name them in his statement?

"Yes it was the Joint Chiefs," Garrison told me promptly. "It's been apparent to me that they've obviously been the instigating source. I don't name 'em by indi-

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know that he was one of the two riflemen at the front.

Jim Garrison's term as district attorney has two more years to go. He was re-elected in 1970, even after he lost his case against Clay Shaw, but he lost a race for a State Supreme Court judgeship last June. Not long after the vote was in on that loss, Garrison's wife filed for a divorce. Close friends of Garrison believe his health is failing. He has, this spring, a trial on Clay Shaw's \$5 million suit against him for malicious prosecution. Then there is a strange federal bribery conspiracy indictment still pending, despite the recantation and mysterious behavior of Pershing Gerovis, the chief informant against Garrison in the case.

Garrison discusses troubles such as these with a fair degree of equanimity. "I don't know, maybe there's something wrong with me. They seem to have a way of scaring the hell out of everyone else. Of course I still got to go through with this fucking trial (the Clay Shaw suit), but hell, I know they would charge me a price when they realize who was involved and what the price is. I've got to pay it."

Then, once again, Garrison talks about a "communication problem." "Communication problem" is a staple of his speech, even when he speaks of himself. What he means by "communication problem" is that almost no one believes him.

any more. No one ever listens to him any more. He is paying the price for nothing.

I asked him if anything came rushing into his mind when he thought of what happened and how communication problems were available than "know what happened and find that the national press does not want to hear. I don't know the facts so clearly, you know what I mean. It's not my guess. It's not my feeling. It's so clear that it's goddam clear, and all of a sudden I find that you can't communicate."

For the most part he has given up trying. For instance, he is very reluctant to be told me to attempt to contact General Shoup, the man he sees as the lone innocent in the Pentagon case. "I can't," he told me. "No, I can't. Tell me what the government does to you when you get in their way. They do such a selected, nation operation that I'm reluctant to try and contact. It's like that. He doesn't know me and all he does know is what I am, I am and so on. They're very efficient. I that."

Nor will he make any attempt to reach the Kennedy family. "I've leaned over backwards to avoid contacting the Kennedys because I feel like so many nuts have."

Garrison's anger is not one of the private assassins and investigators who pulled the assassin's nation nuts. "A one punk in our house. One of our calls. Garrison referred me to some point in 'Heritage of Honor' his own book on the assassinations which led me to warn me about other books by critics of the Warren Commission."

"Now my book is different from

