

is Jim Garrison

OUT OF HIS MIND?

by DAVID LIFTON

Kerry Thornley is one of four defendants who have been charged in DA Jim Garrison's New Orleans assassination investigation. The other defendants are Clay Shaw (for conspiracy); Edgar Bradley (for conspiracy); and William Gurych a former investigator, (for theft).

When he defected from the Garrison probe in June 1967 and publicly denounced it, Gurych allegedly took with him a copy of the master file valued at, according to Garrison, \$10.

The crime of which Thornley is accused is perjury, based on his testimony before the New Orleans grand jury on Feb. 8, 1968.

For those who have been following the controversy surrounding the Warren Report, and who optimistically believe that Jim Garrison will bring the Kennedy assassins to the bar of justice, the Thornley case is crucial.

It has been instrumental in convincing me that Garrison is an investigative impresario who has enveloped himself in the rhetoric of the stylishly New Left politics pursued by most critics of the Warren Report, many of whom he has seduced into thinking that he has "solved" the assassination; that he is a man subject to a considerable amount of self-induced paranoia (to such an extent that he is incapable of distinguishing plot from circumstance) and that he is now trying to weave meaningless threads of information - threads which go off into the nowhere land of right wing militant obscurism - into a braid of assassination conspiracy.

Furthermore, I think that any credibility that he does have stems largely from the manner in which he has associated himself with the published critics of the Warren Report, some of whom worship him as some sort of Messiah who is their only hope for catching the assassins, and whose published critical literature has been responsible for creating much of the credibility gap that exists in this country with respect to the Warren Report.

Unlike other Warren Report critics who have had to budget their time and money to pursue a serious research interest, Garrison's thing is chasing assassins on company time. The company is the Office of the District Attorney, City of New Orleans, state of Louisiana. Its facilities include one grand jury, the power of subpoena, a court system, and facilities for the issuance of arrest warrants which are tele-typed anywhere in the country. Garrison is having a ball doing his thing.

I am afraid that before it is over, he will either have

become a Hugginsstock (and in the process may bring to structure much valid research by serious critics of the Warren Report) or innocent men such as Kerry Thornley may be sent to prison.

If the above sounds harsh, it is perhaps best to postpone further opinions of Garrison and his investigation until the reader can be acquainted with the story of Kerry Thornley.

Like most other aspects of the assassination, it is still another detail-filled microcosm, loaded with names, dates, and events, with which the average reader is simply not familiar.

Kerry Thornley was a Marine who met Lee Harvey Oswald in the service in the spring of 1959. Their paths crossed briefly at that time when they were both stationed at El Toro Marine Base in Orange County.

Thornley was about to leave with his unit for a tour of Japan; Oswald had just returned from such an overseas tour. At El Toro, for about three months, Thornley became a close acquaintance of Oswald. Thornley found Oswald to be an interesting character, who professed beliefs quite the opposite of his own.

Oswald read Russian newspapers, and professed a devotion to Marxist ideals. Thornley, the right winger, and Oswald, the professed Marxist, discussed philosophy, politics, and religion.

During these discussions, Oswald would tell Thornley about the insulting manner in which Marines stationed in Japan behaved towards the Japanese. "If you ever go overseas, Thornley, you'll see what I mean," said Oswald, according to Thornley, who added: "He said in effect... that my fellow Marines equaled any Nazi storm trooper for brutality, given the opportunity to get away with it. His face became chalky as he discussed this matter and he appeared to be genuinely sickened; so I did not press him for details." ("Oswald," by Thornley).

Since Thornley's ambition had been for many years to be a writer, and since going to Japan was the first thing that had ever happened to him which he could imagine as an interesting starting place for a book, he went there with "a definite desire and indefinite plan to write a book about some aspect of Japan."

After his arrival, Thornley became increasingly perturbed over the incidents he saw, and which he and Oswald had discussed: "...I came to feel that the book I was to write should deal with this problem as well as other things centering around the existence of peace time Marines in Japan." Thornley decided to title his book "The Idle War-

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tions."

"Yet I still lacked an essential ingredient for a good novel," he said. "I needed a central theme that would tie in all the many minor themes I wanted to handle."

Three months passed. It was now September 1959.

"One afternoon in the barracks, after work, a friend of mine who had also been in MACS-9 (Thornley's unit) and who had known Oswald handed me a copy of 'The Stars and Stripes.' There, on page three, was an article about a United States Marine who, after getting out of the service, had gone to Russia and requested Soviet citizenship. Of course it was Oswald."

"It was not until then that I really believed his commitment to communism was serious. I was surprised. I wondered how he had come to his decision. I began to ponder the problem. And then I sat down and began work on 'The Idle Warriors.' I had my theme."

Convinced that the "Idle Warrior" experience played a key role in Lee's disillusionment with the United States, Oswald became one of the key characters in Thornley's original manuscript. There he appears, under the fictional name of Johnny Shellburn.

And so, in the fall of 1959, five months before John F. Kennedy would announce (in Jan 1960) his intention to seek the Democratic nomination at the convention the following

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summer, 17 months before Kennedy's inauguration, and at a time when Dwight D. Eisenhower was still President, a Marine named Kerry Thornley had started work on a manuscript built around a character who would become the accused assassin of the next President of the United States four years later.

Shortly after his release from the Marines, Thornley studied at USC for a while, then decided to leave school and finish the book he had started. He left home and, with a friend, went to New Orleans, where he completed "The Idle Warriors" in February of 1962. He submitted it for publication and it was rejected twice. He put it aside for an eventual rewrite. In June of 1962, Oswald returned to the United States. Kerry's parents clipped the news story about that event, and Kerry seriously considered going to Dallas/Ft. Worth to meet Oswald again, and to find out if his reasons for defecting agreed with Thornley's reasons for the defection of Johnny Shellburn, his hero in his unpublished manuscript.

If there's any doubt in your mind that KTVT has this telephone, instantly erase it by calling Ft. Worth information (area code 817-555-1212, it's a toll-free call) and ask for Channel 11's number. But don't tell Jim Garrison you did it. He may charge you with being an accessory after the fact.

Thornley never did go, but he crossed Oswald's path again in September of 1963.

Kerry, who in the meanwhile had returned to California, went back to New Orleans. Because he had taken Spanish in high school, he went there by bus via Mexico City. He arrived in New Orleans the first week in September, 1963. Oswald was spending the last two weeks of an intriguing summer there, participating in various provocative left wing activities.

Just two weeks before Kerry's arrival, Oswald had been in a radio debate with Carls Bringer, on the merits of US foreign policy.

The first two weeks of Kerry's stay marked the last two weeks of Oswald's summer stay there.

Kerry had not the slightest idea that Oswald was in town at that time. He later wrote.

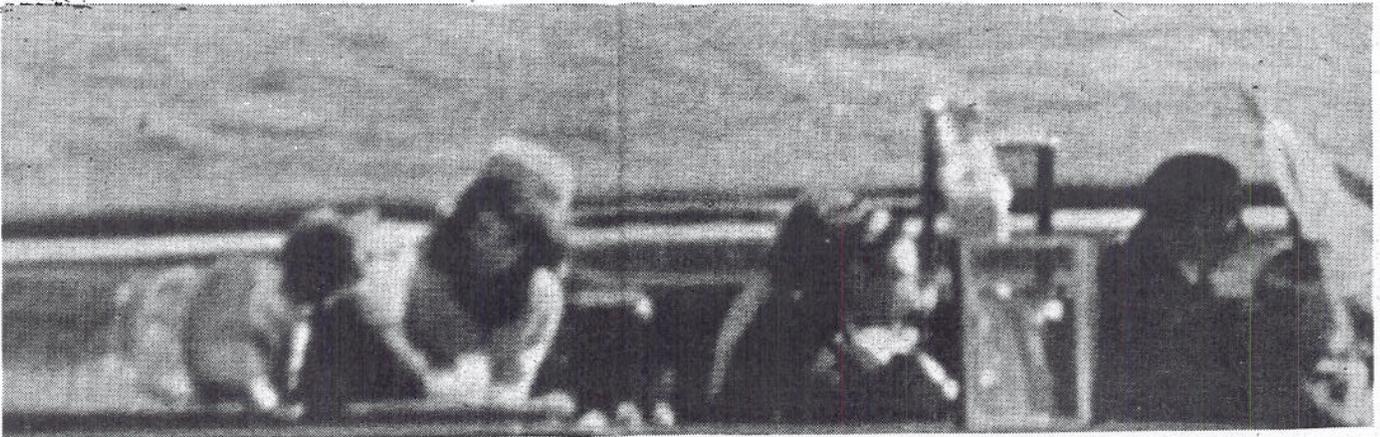
"He (Oswald) was even reputedly stopping in now and then at the bar where I hung out. We may have passed on the streets but, if so, we didn't recognize each other. Only after the assassination did I learn that Oswald had been right under my nose for over two weeks!" "Oswald," by Thornley.

On the day Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas and Oswald was arrested as the accused assassin, Thornley, still in New Orleans, learned for the first time that Oswald had been there and found himself the possessor of an unpublished manuscript which contained a study of the accused assassin of the President of the United States, written almost two years before the fact!

He testified about this before the Warren Commission.

He told the Commission: "I was entirely caught unaware when it turned out that Oswald was involved in the assassination, to such an extent that for some time afterwards, I thought he was innocent. But as the facts came in, as the evidence piled up, I decided there must have been more violence in him than I thought."

Thornley retitled his book "Oswald," and completely rewrote it. It was now the strange story of the crossed paths of two men, the evolution of his old manuscript, and an attempt on Thornley's part to explain to the reader how the Oswald he knew might have evolved into an assassin. The new book contained certain key material from the old manuscript, without any changes, so that the reader might see for himself the Johnny Shellburn Thornley knew from 1959. Thornley testified before the Warren Commission



attorney Albert Jenner, on May 19, 1964. The published 33 page transcript starts on page 82 of Volume 11, of the Commission's 26 volumes.

The portion of Thornley's book, and his testimony, in which he speculates as to how the left-winger he knew could have evolved into an assassin has deeply offended certain critics of the Warren Report.

To them, Thornley was a callous right wing Marine, capitalizing on a relationship with a left wing patsy. It was easy to conceive of Thornley's book as part of some type of plot to help create a left wing image for Oswald. These same critics do not seem to be disturbed by the fact that if Oswald was indeed a CIA agent, he created his own left wing cover, and Thornley's book is as much a part of the objective reportage of how that cover looked at that time, as were the news reports that resulted when Oswald "defected" to Russia, or handed out Fair Play for Cuba literature, or debated on the radio with anti-Castro Cubans.

But the offense was felt. For at the time Thornley's book appeared, the anti-Commission literature which would appear on the national scene one year later was then in the stage of evolution. And if this literature is correct, then Oswald was innocent, was elaborately framed, and was probably some type of agent.

Thornley's book did very poorly. So poorly, that he received no royalties whatsoever, and the publisher wrote him a letter apologizing for the low sales figures and saying that he could not afford the advertising Kerry wanted.

Yet to history, it is a most valuable document. For if Oswald was establishing himself as a left winger at that time, Thornley's reportage represents an invaluable account of how he appeared in the spring of 1959. And, as has been stressed, some of this was written before the assassination.

I first read Kerry's book in June of 1965. I, too was offended by it. I had just been put in touch with California critics of the Warren Commission who had convinced me that the official assassination story was false. And, just then, I read Kerry's book, or rather, a series of articles run in "The National Insider" with very grotesque headlines implying Oswald was some type of psychotic idiot who had lurked in the woodwork, to come out on November 22 and assassinate the President. To read a book at the time which accepted Oswald's guilt aroused me enough to attempt to find the author and discuss the matter. It turned out that Kerry lived nearby, and I visited him.

We spent several hours going over the evidence. He had never seen any of this material before. It blew his mind, and deeply disturbed his girl friend (now his wife) who was crying when left.

During the next two years, I spoke to Kerry regularly and got to know him quite well. Thornley's position changed on the Warren report. He expressed some of those changed opinions in a KPFK radio interview on the Harry Pollard show, on the Joe Dolan show (summer of 1966), in a Fact

Magazine interview of Dec. 1966, and in an article he himself wrote for "Innovator," a newsletter he edited. The article was entitled: "'Oswald' Revisited."

In my discussions with Thornley, back in 1965 when I first met him, he told me about his experiences in testifying before the Warren Commission. Oswald, he said, used to speak Russian in the ranks at El Toro with some Marine whose name he thought was John Renee Heindell.

This was quite surprising to me. First of all as will be presently explained, the name Heindel figures in the Kennedy case in an important way. Secondly, Kerry's Warren Commission testimony showed no such thing, although there is a portion where he is trying to recollect the name of the man who speaks Russian with Oswald, but cannot do so. Kerry then remembered what had happened; he had recollected the name afterwards; he and attorney Jenner went out to lunch together after his deposition and, at lunch, Jenner provided Thornley with the name. Thornley was positive Jenner had given him the name he had been trying to recollect.

John Renee Heindel is a former Marine who lives in New Orleans. In an affidavit filed with the commission, he reveals that his nickname in the Marines was "Hidel."

"Hidel" was the name used which appears on the order for the "assassination rifle" which was shipped to Oswald's post office box, and allegedly found in the Book Depository. The commission said that "Hidel" was merely an alias used by Oswald, ignoring the fact that a real person exists who once knew Oswald who used Hidel as a nickname.

Since John Heindel lived in New Orleans, when the Garrison probe hit the newspapers in February 1967, I had the idea of going to Garrison with the information. Heindel lived right in Garrison's jurisdiction, and I felt he might call in Heindel for questioning.

After all, Russian speaking Marines are pretty rare. Perhaps he had been another "agent in training" stationed, like Oswald, at El Toro.

I called Garrison's office several times in mid-September, 1967 about this matter, as Kerry was about to move from LA to Tampa, Fla.

On the strength of the information I had transmitted in the phone call, Garrison called in Heindel and questioned him. On September 20, I spoke to the man who was performing liaison work for Garrison's office.

He told me that Garrison had just questioned Heindel; that Garrison thought Heindel was "lying through his teeth," that he had something to hide, and that the office already had evidence of meetings between Heindel and Oswald at several New Orleans bars during that summer of 1963.

Garrison wanted Kerry to come to New Orleans and "confront" Heindel and "identify" him. But short of that, he wanted Thornley to fill out some statements summarizing the entire incident, and send them to Garrison.

The statements took several days to prepare. They were mailed to Garrison's office on September 28, 1967. Three weeks later, Garrison was here in Los Angeles, staying at the Century Plaza Hotel under the alias of Frank Marshall. I spent over 15 hours in private meetings with Garrison. What he said and how he acted are a small story in themselves.

Suffice it to say, that I have never seen a man so utterly frightened, and so convinced that he was constantly followed, bugged, etc. If a man walked by with a briefcase, Garrison would point to him and whisper, "That's an FBI agent." Any skeptical looks on my part were greeted with: "I know. I once worked for the bureau."

During one of our conversations, Garrison told me that his office had established an ironclad link between Ruby and Oswald. As evidence, he cited the fact that a Ft. Worth telephone number PE 8-1951, was listed in Oswald's address book and also was found on Ruby's phone bill. Astonished, I went home and checked it out. That telephone number as clearly indicated in Oswald's address book, is television station KTVT, Channel 11, Fort Worth Texas.

At the end of the book Johnny Shellburn defects to Russia. I confronted Garrison with this the next day. He became very truculent and annoyed.

"David, stop arguing the defense," he would say.

"But what does it mean, Jim?" I demanded. "Is there someone at the TV station whom you can prove knew both men?" "It means whatever the jury decides it means," he said, adding that "Law is not a science."

Finally, I asked: "But what do YOU think, Jim? What is the TRUTH of the matter."

His answer is one I will never forget. He said, with considerable annoyance and contempt, "After the fact, there is ONLY what the jury decides."

From what I have seen in the Thornley case, this statement explains much of what has happened. It is a convenient and accurate synopsis of Jim Garrison's approach to fact-finding, truth-finding, and justice.

Meanwhile, Garrison spent much time explaining to me that he wanted to get Kerry to come to New Orleans and "identify" Heindel. He then wanted to call Heindel before the Grand Jury, have him swear under oath what he had told him in his office (that he did not know Kerry) and then prosecute Heindel for perjury. Thus, Garrison had a theory, provided by me, about Thornley's involvement in the assassination.

Garrison may seriously hurt innocent people before he reaches the end of his own rope, and becomes a laughing stock. Does it really matter if he "means well" if, in his own bumbling way, he inflicts severe damage on a single innocent individual?

It is not possible for the DA to be "just mistaken" on Thornley. A fork in the road has been reached, for those who want to judge Mr. Garrison. Either Garrison now convicts Thornley (and he just might) or he backs off.

If he convicts him, I think that enough information will come out to show any objective observer that Garrison's Thornley theory makes no sense and is a creature of his mind, his ego, and the false Oswald theories of Harold Weisberg.

On the other hand, if Garrison drops charges, or a jury frees Thornley, Garrison will go down with a thud. The statements he has already made about Thornley, the charge for perjury at the arraignment - these are events that have already passed. They cannot be undone. To reject the Thornley affair is valid as to indict Garrison as a reckless, irrational, even paranoid demagogue.

Garrison's foot is too far into his mouth on this one. Someone recently expressed the opinion that the only thing that will save him is either a false conviction, or a can of raspberry flavored Desenex.

by KERRY THORNLEY

"A young man approximating Oswald's description and using Oswald's name - we believe we have discovered his identity - engaged in a variety of activities designed to create such a strong impression of Oswald's instability and culpability in people's minds that they would recall him as a suspicious character after the President was murdered."

--Jim Garrison

(Playboy interview,
October, 1967)

When the Majority Whip of the United States Senate promotes a playboy Southern DA to undertake an anti-Establishment investigation, those who are not half-mad with vengeance-driven post-assassination hysteria or half-blind out of political prejudice are prone to look for hidden motives. When a District Attorney whose harassment of homosexuals has been notorious in the past begins to name names in the New Orleans homosexual community, after announcing that he has "solved" the assassination - remarking by way of psychologically penetrating explanation on par with that of an Iowa farm boy that it would be hard to find NORMAL men who would plot to assassinate a President - many people are liable to suspect a frame job of some kind is in the making.

When a man who was until recently defending U.S. involvement in Vietnam gets up before a microphone in public and seriously asserts that one of the fatal shots fired in the assassination he claims to have solved came - at what could only have been a physically impossible angle - from a Dallas sewer, a few are likely to worry over the possibility that a Second Cover-up to the Kennedy assassination is in the making.

And when the Establishment press, Bobby Kennedy, the U.S. Attorney General and Johnny Carson attack this man in such a rude and crude manner that for what is probably the first time in history we have a Persecuted Prosecutor evoking the heart-throbs of the Great American Underground, one or two paranoid lunatics here and there might wonder why the Establishment has suddenly, overnight, abandoned the sophistication with which it has held the levers of power since the time of Alexander Hamilton in this country.

I must confess that until I was "Hereby commanded" to go to New Orleans in a subpoena initiated by a man who calls himself a "libertarian conservative," of all things, I myself entertained some of these highly paranoid fantasies. After all, isn't Mark Lane right when he says it is getting RATIONAL to be paranoid in this nation?

Well, I might as well come clean - as a matter of fact I kept entertaining these sick delusions even AFTER I got ready to go, mainly because both Jim Garrison and his summons expressed the incriminating and false opinion that I had been in close association with Lee Harvey Oswald (whom I had known in the service for three months) in New Orleans in 1963. And while I did not cling to these suspicions rigidly, I did turn them over and over in my mind, changing perspectives on them as the days passed.

No sooner had I decided to go and co-operate fully with Big Jim than Harold Weisberg, a former intelligence agent for the Federal government, rekindled my paranoia by coming up on the air in Tampa - calling from his goose farm apparently in Maryland - and uttering what I can only in politeness call a number of half-truths and otherwise morally dubious remarks.

The people of Tampa were told by Mr. Weisberg, repeatedly, that my book published in 1965 on Oswald was "NOT a BOOK, but a PAMPHLET," and were also informed that the reason Mr. Garrison wanted to speak to me was because of my comment in my Warren Commission testimony that I'd once heard scuttlebutt that Oswald had a Secret clearance - a subject on which Garrison's office was later to dis-

play a conspicuous lack of interest. (Mr. Weisberg was not, however, the only Goosestepping Garrisonite to make this party-line assertion in the days prior to my visit to testify in New Orleans.) Most disturbing of all, however, were Harold Weisberg's prissy seat-of-authority-kissing comments that it was for Mr. Garrison, NOT me, to decide whether or not I ought to go to New Orleans. Why? Because Mr. Garrison is conducting an "official investigation!"

The Spanish Inquisition was an official investigation. Cotton Mather was conducting an official investigation. So was Joe McCarthy. And Mr. Johnson is conducting an official war - does that mean it is not for me to decide whether or not I ought to go to Vietnam?

I could not perceive a difference in principle between Mr. Weisberg's opinion that I should go to New Orleans because Mr. Garrison was conducting an official investigation and that of a certain mass murderer that he should be excused for his acts because he was "only following orders."

I shall have considerably more to say about Roving District Attorney Weisberg in the future. For the present I'll only say this: He is an official idiot.

Weisberg's slander had the effect of changing my mind again, and an article in the "Los Angeles Free Press" indicated besides that Garrison's witnesses were being, among other things, shot at and thrown through plate glass portals. (It did not mention that the man who claimed to have been tossed through the glass was inebriated when it is supposed to have happened and that there is considerable scepticism both on the New Orleans police force and on Garrison's staff that he didn't just put his elbow through it.) I came to wonder why I should risk life and limb lending moral sanction, even indirectly, to people like Weisberg.

Meanwhile, though, there was a different force exerting influence on my mind, slowly quelling my paranoia about Garrison. I'd spoken to Bill Turner of "Ramparts Magazine" on the telephone and had indirect communication with Vincent Salandria, both of whom felt that if I had nothing to hide I had nothing to fear from Mr. Garrison - whom both seemed to regard as a paragon of rationality and honesty. (Later Bill Turner was to say he didn't want to "get involved," after my arrest, and Salandria was to express the opinion that if I was being unfairly charged, well, it was "poetic justice" because in 1964 I wrote a book on Oswald that failed to challenge the conclusions of the Warren Commission, a book which he had not yet read, by the way.)

Moreover, most of those friends of mine whose political opinions I happened to respect, did not share my distrust of Garrison - in fact, until I was arrested for perjury, they were

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KERRY'S STORY

(Continued from Page 1)

among his admirers.

So I went to New Orleans feeling that if Mr. Garrison was sincere and that if he was not simply criminally incompetent, the explanation for his press-conference attack on me must - if I was not being framed by whoever REALLY committed the assassination - lie after all in that, by refusing to co-operate with him voluntarily, I'd challenged his ego to a duel of some kind. I now felt the thing to do was to get on his trip with him, his adrenalin bummer, and gently and tactfully help him down out of his paranoid hang-ups about me - just as I had been helped out of mine about him.

When I was there I did everything I could to avoid a clash of egos. I made excuse after excuse for Mr. Garrison. I explained to his investigators how I understood that they might be suspicious of me, and whenever they claimed to have witnesses to fictitious happenings, I made every attempt to offer suggestions as to how and why such witnesses might be mistaken through no fault of theirs OR mine. In order to prove to them my good will in this matter, I made repeated offers to submit to lie detector tests, questionings under truth serum, and examination under hypnosis. I further pointed out many lines of investigation by which they could prove to themselves the truth of my assertions on relevant matters. On top of all this, I made what I thought was the most creative and constructive suggestion of going out and rounding up everyone still in the Quarter who'd associated with me during the critical time period of September 1963, inviting them to attend a brain-storming session in Garrison's office in front of Garrison's eyes, in order that these many dozens of individuals and I - plus anyone Mr. Garrison might want to throw in - could endeavor to reconstruct my activities on a day-to-day, hour-by-hour basis. (Mr. Sciambria, who has apparently been assigned to my investigation and who acted as a go-between between me and The Greatest Man In America Today, told me that Garrison was not interested in accepting this particular offer "because he thinks you are lying or holding something back, or something.") I also offered, in answer to a question by Mr. Sciambria, to stay in New Orleans indefinitely, at the five-dollar-per-day expenses provided by law, in order to co-operate in whatever way was desired in further examination and investigation of my case. Not a single offer I made or agreed to was accepted.

Now as I've indicated I don't regard paranoia as necessarily a manifestation of insanity in the particular State society in which we all live, and from what Mr. Sciambria and other of Garrison's men told me, there seemed to be any number of what Big Jim would out of the corner of his mouth call "interesting coincidences" linking me with his conspiracy theory. (As it turned out, many of these - including the one which most blew my mind because it seemed most incriminating - fell apart under independent research later.) But just how do you confront absolutely rigid Total Paranoia?

There would be no point in even attempting here to cover all the bizarre details of my direct dealings with Garrison's crew in February of this year, but I want it on the record that I came away almost certain that no deliberate Second Cover-up was being fabricated by the New Orleans District Attorney and his staff.

Jim Garrison radiates the vibrations of a sincere man who, whatever reservations one may have about his abilities to do so, appears genuinely interested in solving the Kennedy assassination. Further, the hysteria which prevails among his workers would, if faked, certainly rate at least an Acad-

emy Award. On top of which it is only fair to add that while Mr. Garrison is indeed a powerful Louisiana DA with a somewhat dubious record from the standpoint of the arch civil libertarian, he is neither a machine politician nor the sort of man known for accepting bribes.

On the other hand - even though he claims to be a DA whose sympathies are always on the side of the individual against the State, he does not for reasons of conscience which ought logically to extend from such feelings, appear to be on the verge of renouncing his political career or even of resigning his commission in the National Guard. Still, as he is quick to point out, there are certainly no obvious or immediately foreseeable political advantages in the course he IS following.

One formerly pro-Garrison Commission critic is now of the opinion that Mr. Garrison's actions can be explained by giving him credit for an unusual amount of stupidity combined with an ailing ego which finds nourishment in the dubious admiration of the more reckless and less responsible members of the critical community. "On the other hand," this individual remarked to a formerly pro-Garrison reporter over the phone recently, "maybe he's just nuts." The reporter said that in the past he had himself been reluctant to consider this because it seemed just to simple. "...but I must admit it's a hypothesis which accounts for all the known facts."

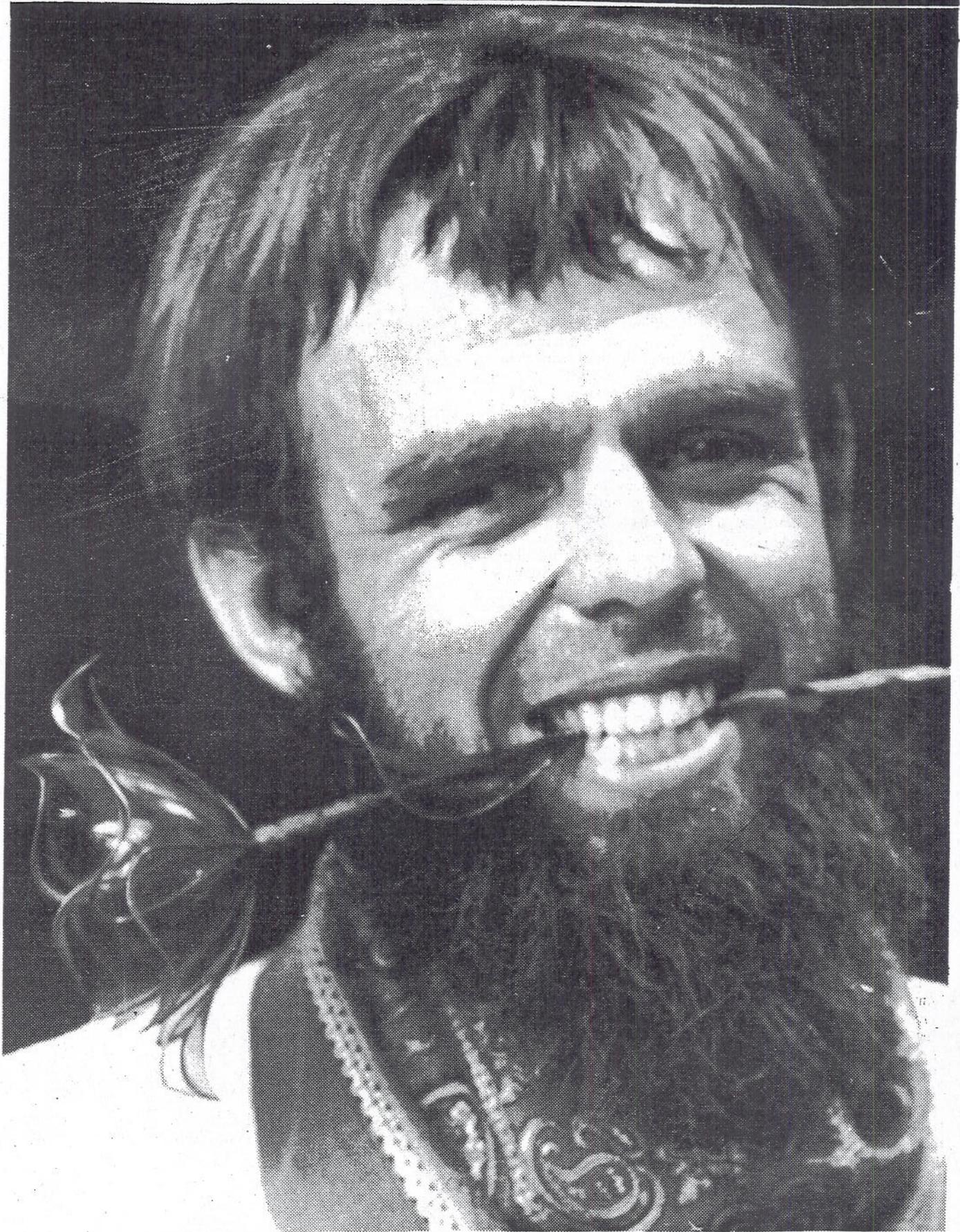
That there are unknown facts, which cannot be revealed until Clay Shaw goes on trial, is something of which the Goosestepping Garrisonites have made much - certainly too much when, like Elliot Mintz, they have asserted (without themselves knowing) that Mort Sahl in his capacity as one of Garrison's investigators KNOWS who committed the Kennedy assassination, etc. Once upon a time there prevailed in the Great American Underground the civil libertarian premise of innocence until guilt was proven. Today those who stand by this principle of old are accused of, yes, PRE-JUDGING GARRISON!!! Apparently Anglo-Saxon law applies to those accused of lesser crimes than Presidential assassination, with Roman Law coming into operation for accused conspirators and known rightwingers. How this courtroom cheering section is able to distinguish itself from the mob outside the Texas Theatre in Dallas might make a good theme for a masters thesis on the psychological roots of American fascism.

The best argument I have heard for the theory that Garrison is both sincere AND right - in spite of screwball "corkscrew codes" and post-office-box paranoia - is that after so much floundering around he could not possibly have failed to uncover something somewhere. Personally I wonder if he didn't have this same optimistic ace-up-the-sleeve hope in mind when, one year and a half-dozen theories ago, he announced having "solved" the assassination. What this assumes, however, is some measure of competence on the part of a criminal investigator who has, in my own experience, so far only succeeded in making Fearless Fosdick look like Sherlock Holmes.

A man who "never discusses his cases with anyone," Jim Garrison let it become an open secret in the critical community shortly after my arrest that he was toying with the possibility that I might be the Second Oswald.

This should not have come to me as the surprise it did. I was misled, I guess, by Mr. Garrison's comments on the Second Oswald in the Playboy interview, as these did not apply to me. Further, I reasoned that - contrary to all appearances - some kind of gesture toward an investigation aimed at finding out the facts (instead of persuading potential witnesses of my guilt) had been made or was being made.

But I should have realized that on the last day of my forced participation in the Battle of New Orleans, Assistant District Attorney Jim Alcock's joking about there being a slight physical resemblance between me and Lee Oswald, to which I readily responded in good humor, was not simply idle, friendly chatter.



THE GENTLEMAN ABOVE IS KERRY THORNLEY...LOOK MUCH LIKE A DOUBLE OF LEE HARVEY OSWALD TO YOU?

I must admit, though, he did make it rather pointed - finally coming right out and saying, with a grin, "Maybe you're the Second Oswald."

"I FEEL like the Second Oswald," I snapped back, won-

dering when they were going to handcuff me and escort me through the basement of the police building.

What are Garrison's motivations? Why don't you ask Mr. Garrison?