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Berkeley, Calif. 94704  
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Vincent Salandria  
2226 Delancey Place  
Philadelphia, Penna. 19103

Dear Vince,

In reply to your letter of 11/23, let me say that on the basis of my own limited contacts with him, I have no real reason to believe that Bill Turner is anything other than what he purports to be.

I have no knowledge of what work Bill has been doing for Garrison - no direct knowledge, that is. My own contacts with him began in the summer of 1966, when I was sort of working with Ramparts. In 1967, Bill twice asked me to check certain individuals in the public ~~white~~ directories at ~~the~~ U.C., which I did promptly. I have met with him on several occasions, and sent him some of my work. Recently, he provided some useful comments on my memo on the FBI's reporting of Oswald's ~~the~~ FPCC activities. He tends not to answer my mail promptly, but I do not have much difficulty in reaching him by phone. He has not asked me and/or Jim ~~the~~ Schmitt to do Archives work for him, although I think he knows that we are available and willing to help. I recently advised him that we probably had documents that ~~we~~ he would find useful, and suggested that we should get together at his convenience. He did not ~~we~~ reply, but when I called after 2 weeks to follow up, he agreed that we should get together in the near future. (As an example of something we had and did not know if he would want, I mentioned the original FBI report of Giesbrecht's story, which, it turned ~~we~~ out, he was interested in seeing.) In summary, I am sure that if you or Harold or Sylvia were in Bill's position, you would have maintained ~~we~~ closer contact with me. But I definitely don't think this ~~we~~ casts any ~~we~~ doubt on Bill's motives.

I have never met Boxley or Rose (or Garrison). Naturally, I am very skeptical of two ~~we~~ "ex"-CIA agents popping up to help with the investigation. I think that Bill is a very different kind of "ex," since he was quite well known some time ago and has written much that discredits the FBI.

Some question has been raised about the quality and ~~we~~ originality of Bill's work. Certainly I would not trust what he says without checking it, but that goes for almost everyone. I have never found Bill doing the sort of thing Mark Lane does, especially when speaking: choosing words very carefully so that what he says is correct but the impression inevitably left is not correct. I am fairly sure that he does not deliberately present other people's work as his own. I expect that he, like I, probably takes a relatively casual view of giving credit to ~~we~~ other critics. As I understand it, his ~~we~~ background is technical and investigative, not legal or literary. In my own scientific work, I would cite someone ~~we~~ else for 3 reasons: in decreasing order of importance, so that the reader can find earlier and related papers and check the work; to pass the buck on arguments I don't really ~~we~~ believe myself; and to give "credit" (i.e. as a courtesy). I think a case can be made for not generally giving credit for the discovery of documents in the Archives, or for obvious interpretations of them. In any case, if Bill were some sort of agent, it would seem senseless for him to antagonize other critics by plagiarizing ~~we~~ their work. An agent could be expected to come up with enough ~~we~~ really good work to win the confidence of the other critics.

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Incidentally, I ~~re~~ remember once asking Bill about a major work by one of the other critics which had recently been published. He indicated that he probably should have read it, but had not. I don't think he was putting me on. But being lazy or too ~~much~~ busy is not, I think, what is worrying you about him.

Some time ago, I convinced myself that if the "other side" could get us ~~out~~ worrying about who among the critics was or was not an agent, that was almost as good as having a couple of extra agents at work. We ~~we~~ concluded that each of us could be sure only of himself. Fortunately, the sort of work we were doing (Archives, etc.) obviously had to stand or fall on its own merits; nobody was being asked to accept our judgment. I think we have to keep in mind that the agent problem is now so important because it is apparently quite easy to persuade Garrison ~~in~~ of some rather far-out stuff. If he were more critical, it might not matter so much who was feeding him what. Remember that some time ago, many of us toyed with the possibility that Garrison was, wittingly or not, acting on behalf of the Department of Disinformation. ~~On~~ On the basis of what I ~~personally~~ personally know - such as the way Garrison has made inaccurate ~~statements~~ statements about Archives material that lots of people could have corrected for him - he is a much more likely candidate for agent than Bill Turner. (After all, Bill just used to work for the Government; Jim works for them now. My natural inclination is not to trust DA's with conspiracy stories.) ~~I~~ I am ~~personally~~ personally quite confident that Bill is not a witting agent (although I have no experience picking such people out.) Fending disclosure of Garrison's now-secret evidence on ~~Shaw~~ Shaw, I am not at all convinced that he is not at least an unwitting agent of the ~~the~~ Disinformation people.

I certainly don't consider your concern frivolous, and I hope you can straighten Garrison out a bit. (Incidentally, you might get someone to ~~explain~~ explain what "hardwar" means - it's not what he said in the Crisman press release. That's the sort of thing that bothers me.) Feel free to call me (station-to-station, 415-845-4669) if you wish to discuss this further, although I don't think I have much more to add. This is obviously a rather hasty and rambling letter, but I want to get it in the mail right away, hopefully so that you can get it before you leave for N.C. (If I can find a copier at this time of night, I will ~~send~~ send one copy Special Delivery and one just air mail; it's hard to guess which will be quicker.)

Sincerely yours,

*Paul*

Paul L. Hoch