

Dear Paul,

1/31/85

Thanks for your 1/27, its enclosures and for your letter to Rose. I did not subscribe because those conjectural and theoretical scivinnings do not interest me, are generally readily faulted and, because I believe those kinds of things to be counterproductive, sometimes annoying.

I've read the piece about Comer Clark and to the degree that he once was allegedly a responsible reporter I found it interesting. There is, in my view, nothing of factual nature and nothing that can give Clark's piece any credibility.

It is more complicated with Solo, but whatever he said and whyever he said it, it just isn't credible. It is that simple. The world just is not that way and there is no ruler who would have thought for a minute of maintaining silence after he got any such report.

Moreover, there is now a new and major falw in it. In his deposition in his lawsuit against Don Freed Phillips testified to having a souce inside the Cuban Mexico City embassy. With such a source if anything remotely like what Solo and Comer allege, there simply is no possibility of the CIA's preserving silence about it.

The Turner trash is typically Turner, with his typical dishonesties, omissions, etc. He and Hinckle have written only in self-protection because it all started with them as they've never ever really recounted. I met Rose at that time and was immediately suspicious of him. Turner's account is bobtailed to cover his and Hinckle's incredible gullibility and stupidity, they and Rose had additional roles, and even Turner's account of the movie is unfaithful. Nor does he refer to any motive behind it. The day they tried to palm it off on Garrison I met them at their hotel and provided all their transportation until they-literally-fled, ~~except~~ Jaffe and Lamarre (Turner doesn't even spell the name correctly.) I am the one who blew their fake, which Garrison's staff immediately interpreted as designed to get a mistrial in the Shaw case. I thought I've written about that contemporaneously and that you knew.

If Turner had any of the talents his FBI employment required other than being a crook he'd have devoted himself to trying to determine the reason for the obvious SDECE project. (He even has the original title wrong and omits that "Farewell America" was Garrison's suggested title, accepted.)

It was when Garrison's staff got concerned about the book that they enlisted me in blowing it. Ivon as I recall first, then others. Garrison gave me a copy of the major part once as I was catching a plane, I read and analyzed it then and wrote as soon as I was home. It was an obvious fake and that after just looking at it Hinckle and Turner had anything to do with it discredits both.

There are minor clues to credibility I'm surprised others do not pick up. Take the Comer crap, is there any "Central American country (not a banana Republic)?" Is there such with a "ruling family?" Is there any basis for even suspected that Gilberto Alverado "was too close to Phillips?" "Close" at all?

Have you ever wondered where SDECE really got a clear Zapruder copy? Not from the Kennedy family, as Lamarre told me. Not from LIFE, which asked a fortune. Isn't the most likely source official? And as we know and I published in the PW reprint, the CIA had a print and deceived the WC about this. Turner, Hinckle and all the others go only in the wrong direction and for the wrong reasons.

Hastily,

Handwritten signature



Farewell America

How French intelligence wrote a book about the Kennedy assassination

By William Turner

He was slight and fidgety, with a wispy mustache and fingertips yellowed by countless Gitanes. He called himself Hervé Lamarr, but in the twilight world of intelligence that may not have been the name on his baptismal certificate. The Frenchman had called the day before, long distance, saying he had to see me. It was September 1968, three months after the assassination of Robert F. Kennedy in Los Angeles. I was familiar with Lamarr's project: a book titled *Farewell America*, which contended that the assassination of John F. Kennedy at Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963 was a conspiracy that robbed America of her future.

As we sat in the coffee shop of the Fair-

mont Hotel on top of San Francisco's Nob Hill, I wondered what the great urgency was. Lamarr chitchatted earnestly, but had no punch line. I introduced Lamarr to Jim Rose, who was driving me to the airport to catch a plane for New York. Rose was a pilot who had flown CIA missions against Fidel Castro and Belgian Congo insurgents in the early 1960s. He had come in from the cold and done some chancy investigative work for New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison, whose damn-the-torpedoes-full-speed-ahead probe into the JFK murder had fascinated the world until it grounded on an evidentiary reef.

The punch line came that night when Lamarr called Rose and instructed him to

pick up a package at the St. Francis Hotel, at the bottom of Nob Hill. Rose approached the bell captain, gave a password, and was handed a sealed can of film. When I returned from New York we screened what turned out to be a motion picture version of *Farewell America*. As a sonorous narrator chronicled John Kennedy's political career, still photos of the President with kings and kids, pols and the people, rolled along with shots of his grim-faced enemies: Dallas oil croesus H. L. Hunt; the pro-Blue General Edwin A. Walker whom Kennedy had cashiered; the Big Steel executives he had forced to rescind price hikes; FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, who considered Camelot subversive; Richard Nixon; and on and on. There were digressive interludes, as when Frank Sinatra was heard singing "It's the wrong face" while visuals suggested secret amours. Then the music became dramatically somber as actual footage showed John and Jacqueline Kennedy boarding Air Force I in Fort Worth for the short hop to Dallas. There was the motorcade to downtown, spliced together from the home movies of spectators lining the route. And then—the Zapruder film.

Garment manufacturer Abraham Zapruder was a spectator at Dealey Plaza who captured the entire shooting sequence with his cheap movie camera. *Life* magazine immediately snapped up the film for an untold sum. Although *Life* ran several frames in its cover story on the Warren Commission Report, the motion picture itself had never been shown in public (not even members of the Commission had seen it). Now it had surfaced, courtesy of La Belle France.

The Zapruder film is horrifyingly graphic. It shows Kennedy clutching his throat as a shot from the rear goes through his neck. There are agonizing moments as he slowly slumps forward in the limousine. Then his head literally explodes, sending up a blood-mist halo. The force of the hit rocks him back so violently into the rear seat cushion that it is compressed. He bounces forward as Jackie grabs for him. There is no mistaking that he was killed by a shot from the front. Suspect Lee Harvey Oswald was at the rear.

I rushed to Hollywood with the film to have it analyzed by experts. They pronounced it authentic, probably a second or third generation copy. I then understood why *Life*, which had taken a stand in support of the Warren Report and featured Gerald Ford's rendition of how the no-conspiracy conclusion was arrived at, had kept the film sequestered. In fact an anonymous caption writer at the magazine had described the head-shot frame as a shot from the front, and a number of subscribers received copies with that caption. But the press run was quickly stopped at tremendous expense, and the offending plate broken and replaced by one whose caption was in conformity with the official position.

An explanation of how the French had pierced *Life's* right security over the film was offered by Richard Lubic, at the time a staffer on *Life's* sister publication *Time*. He told me that very early in 1968 the film was missing for several days from its vault in the Time-Life headquarters in New York. There was quite a stir. The FBI and CIA investigated, and even Mayor John Lindsay came over to ensure that the New York police gave it their best Kojak try. Although the obvious conclusion was an inside job, no suspects were ever hauled on the carpet.

The Zapruder film was offered to the major networks, but perhaps fearful of treading on *Life's* proprietary rights, all declined to air it. Bootleg copies were a smash hit on college campuses, however, and in time the film became so widely shown that it fell into the public domain. It became a kind of *McGuffey's Reader* of the assassination, a socko illustration that there were at least two shooters.

L'affaire Farewell is a story so convoluted it seems borrowed from John LeCarre. Gen. Charles de Gaulle, the haughty President of the Republic bent on restoring France as a world power, never believed that Oswald acted alone. "You're kidding me," he scoffed to an interviewer. "Cowboys and Indians!" De Gaulle, himself the target of an assassination attempt by right-wing military officers the year before Dallas, reflected the deep-seated skepticism that prevailed in Europe following publication of the Warren Report. From London to Moscow American travelers were braced with the question: Who was behind it? In politically-sophisticated Europe, the "lone nut" theory was as ludicrous as square wheels.

But it was not until 1967, when Jim Garrison burst upon the scene, that an inner circle of the French government, including de Gaulle and his secret service chief, André Ducret, made a move. The first overt act came in the form of a phone call from New York to Garrison. The caller identified himself as a representative of Frontiers Publishing Company of Geneva, Switzerland. He said that his firm had an important work in progress on the Kennedy assassination which would soon be published in Europe, and wondered if Mr. Garrison would be interested in taking a look. It was like dangling a carrot in front of a rabbit.

Within days the D.A.'s mailbag brought three black-bound volumes of manuscript. The title of this *opus magnum*, *Farewell America*, seemed to say that the rest of the world should bid adieu to the country it had known. The author of record was James Hepburn, whose name was nowhere to be found in the *Writer's Directory*. A brief bio of Hepburn stated he attended the London School of Economics and Institute of Political Studies in Paris "where he prepared for the public service." It claimed he had lived briefly in the United



Jim Garrison

States, making the acquaintance of Jacqueline Bouvier (Kennedy) and Sen. John Kennedy. The 1,000-odd pages were impeccably typed on an IBM machine, a clue that Hepburn was not an impecunious freelancer. The text was sprinkled with European metaphors, such as the description of the Presidential limousine swinging into Dealey Plaza: "Then the leaves began to fall, and soon the traces disappeared."

The manuscript borrowed liberally from published critics of the Warren Report, but it also displayed a remarkable breadth of knowledge about the roots of the Cold War, the interlinkage between the large corporate and banking interests and ever-growing American intelligence apparatus, and the inner workings of the international petroleum cartels. Brought alive by sinister portraits of CIA spymaster Allen Dulles, the cantankerous H. L. Hunt, Roy Cohn and a bevy of military brass and Mafia chieftains, the manuscript clearly was staff-written or at least scribed by Hepburn with the aid of resources far beyond the reach of the ordinary author. This was later confirmed when the manuscript saw the light of print and the dust jacket declared: "*Farewell America* was begun in the spring of 1967 and written in New York, Spain and Paris with the assistance of various European and American specialists."

The theme of the manuscript was that JFK was killed by an amalgam of powerful interests, both public and private, that had nightmares about a Kennedy dynasty that might extend through a Teddy presidency.

This amalgam, which is called The Committee, perceived Kennedy as a menace to the global superiority of the United States by his week-kneed stand on relations with the Soviet Union and his determination to bridle the nuclear arms race. Despite his uppercrust upbringing he had caved in to the racial-equality rabblers such as Martin Luther King. And he had landed on such mighty corporations as U.S. Steel with the memorable line: "The American people will find it hard, as I do, to accept a situation in which a tiny handful of steel executives whose pursuit of private power and profit exceeds their sense of public responsibility can show such utter contempt for the interests of 185 million Americans." As *Farewell* put it, "There is no better way for a President to attract a growing number of enemies than to express himself too explicitly on the multitude of subjects with which he is concerned."

One of the opening chapters in the manuscript, called simply "King" and dealing with John and Jackie's White House, offers a sharp contrast between the style and substance of the Kennedy Administration as opposed to Reagan's. There was elegance and wit—and care. The gossips, *Farewell* noted, complained that "the Kennedys spent \$2,000 on the food for one of their parties, neglecting to add (or perhaps they did not know) that the President donated his entire salary to charity." Another chapter, "Warriors," was a telling expose of the might of the military-industrial complex in its struggle with the Presidency. It began with a quote from Sen. J. William Fulbright: "There is little in the education, training or experience of most military officers to equip them with the balance of judgment necessary to put their own ultimate solutions . . . into proper perspective in the President's total strategy for the nuclear age."

Farewell's bottom line was that JFK's enemies, collaborating with CIA headquarters and other parties at interest, moved to exorcise the Kennedy curse. As engineered by The Committee, it was a scheme of Machiavellian complexity that at the same time was diabolically simple: a sponsorship level, a supervisorial level, a "gun" level—possibly professional assassins recruited from the ranks of Cuban exiles embittered over Kennedy's failure to supervise with military forces in the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion and to invade the Red island during the 1962 missile crisis. According to *Farewell*, "President Kennedy's assassination was the work of magicians. It was a stage trick, complete with accessories and fake mirrors, and when the curtain fell, the actors, and even the scenery, disappeared . . . The plotters were correct when they guessed that their crime would be concealed by shadows and silences, that it would be blamed on a 'madman' and negligence."

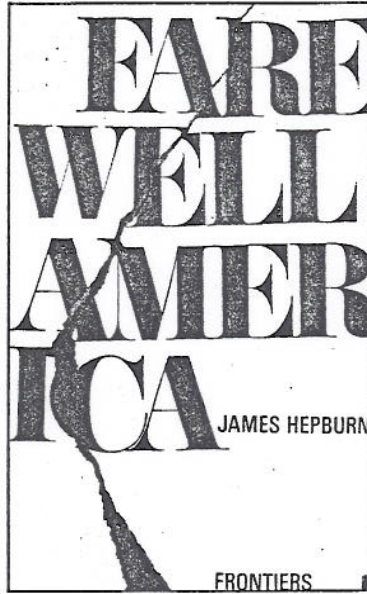
When Jim Garrison began to pore

through the black-bound manuscript he wondered whether it was as fake as the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* or *The Right Stuff*. The more he read, the more he found that it squared with his own theory: the very core of the government was riddled with moral corruption right down to its CIA spooks. If the manuscript was not entirely forthcoming in pinning proper names on dirty deeds, that was Garrison's job. Bringing in the suspects is what prosecutors are for.

Garrison was hooked. He sent one of his corps of young volunteer investigators, Steve Jaffe, to Europe to track down the mysterious James Hepburn. Jaffe went first to the address of Frontiers Publishing in Geneva, only to find that it was the office of a large law firm specializing in Swiss banks. Frontiers was incorporated in Liechtenstein, he was told, but its editorial suite was in Paris. Again he found himself in a prestigious law office, but this time his entreaties produced Hervé Lamarr. Lamarr informed Jaffe that, regretfully, James Hepburn was not available. In fact, the Frenchman finally confessed over Pernods, Hepburn didn't exist as such. He was a composite. Lamarr had concocted the name out of flaming admiration for actress Audrey Hepburn. The James had come from *j'aime*—I love.

As they bistro-hopped Jaffe discovered that the Frenchman's background was every bit as exotic as his taste in actresses. He had been in the French Army, attended Harvard, served in the French diplomatic corps in Vietnam—and was highly connected with French intelligence. This last bit of biography was confirmed when Lamarr took the young American to the Elysée Palace to see if Gen. de Gaulle was busy. He was, but André Ducret, the secret service head whose office adjoined de Gaulle's, graciously made time to see them. Ducret told Jaffe how vital his mission was, and how France appreciated what was being done. Then he ducked into de Gaulle's office and returned with the general's personal card on which was written in French, "I am very moved by the confidence you have expressed in me."

Jaffe left the City of Light with more than a calling card. Lamarr had confided to him that on the day after the assassination, Bobby Kennedy called in one of the family's most trusted aides, Daniel Moynihan (now the senior senator from New York) and instructed him to quietly assemble a small staff to explore two possibilities: that Bobby's mortal enemy Jimmy Hoffa was behind it, and that the Secret Service had been bought off. In due time Moynihan submitted a confidential report concluding that Hoffa was not involved, and the Secret Service had not been bribed. But the report was highly critical of the Secret Service's performance. Through "personal friendships" with Kennedy insiders, Lamarr said, the report was delivered into the hands of French intelligence.



Indeed, the *Farewell* chapter called "Secret Service" detailed the "glaring errors" of the President's guards, even to the number of bourbons and water they downed the night before. But it also credited the agents with professionalism in recognizing the work of other professionals. "They were the first in the President's entourage to realize that the assassination was a well-organized plot," the chapter disclosed. "They discussed it among themselves at Parkland Hospital and later during the plane ride back to Washington. They mentioned it in their personal reports to Secret Service Chief James Rowley that night. Ten hours after the assassination, Rowley knew that there had been three gunmen, and perhaps four, at Dallas that day, and later on the telephone Jerry Behn (head of the White House detail) remarked to Forrest Sorrels (head of the Dallas Secret Service), 'It's a plot.' 'Of course,' was Sorrels' reply. Robert Kennedy . . . learned that evening from Rowley that the Secret Service believed the President had been the victim of a powerful organization."

This pretty well explained a cryptic passage in the chapter, "Only Daniel F. Moynihan, a former longshoreman, had some idea of such things."

Not long after Jaffe's Parisian sojourn *Farewell* was published in France under the title *America Brule* (*America Burns*), perhaps a takeoff on *Is Paris Burning?* German and Italian editions followed. *L'Express* termed it "the hope of one America against another," and *Bild*, Germany's largest daily, serialized it with the blurb "explosive as a bomb." Unfortunately, there was no author's promotional tour. But Frontiers Publishing began searching for an American distributor. By this time a one-page sequel had been added which was headed "The Man of No-

ember Fifth." "The choice made by the people of the United States of Nov. 5th, 1968, will have profound and far-reaching consequences for the life, liberty and happiness of the universe," it began. "The peoples of the earth are awaiting new decisions." The whole tone conveyed the hope that Bobby Kennedy would be successful in his Presidential bid.

But then, as if the clack of the typewriter had been interrupted by a news bulletin, the text lapsed into the past tense. "There was another funeral. Once again the Green Berets formed the honor guard; once again the Stars and Stripes flew at half-mast. On an evening in June, Robert Kennedy joined his brother beneath the hill at Arlington, and those who pass by can bring them flowers.

"The tombs are splendid, but the scores have not been settled.

"Who killed them?"

"And why?"

When Bobby was shot the *Farewell* project seemed to die with him, as if its sole purpose of life was to boost his candidacy. Lamarr's visit to the United States a few months later appears, in retrospect, to have been a settling of the estate, a passing of the torch. When he phoned Jim Rose to arrange getting the Zapruder film into our hands, he declared, "You're both professionals. There's an important package I want you to have."

There was, finally, an American edition of the book, but it was never displayed in the windows of Brentano's and Doubleday. At the coffee-shop session at the Fairmont Hotel Lamarr had casually replied, "Sure." A few weeks later a notice arrived from a freight forwarder in San Francisco that a consignment of books from Montreal was waiting to be picked up. The shipping bill of \$282 had not been prepaid, but the money to pay it was on deposit in a Swiss bank in San Francisco. To the end Lamarr was playing at foreign intrigue.

There were six cartons of some 100 books each, which I stashed in the garage next to the lawn mower and rakes. *Farewell* took on an afterlife, copies finding their way to the Library of Congress, college bookstores and municipal libraries (the Los Angeles Library has five, the Australian Embassy one) as a kind of underground National Archives.

Although Frontiers Publishing vanished as quickly as it had sprung up and Hervé Lamarr slipped back into the intelligence shadows, a flicker of the Camelot flame still burned. ■

Bill Turner is a former FBI Agent (Badge #6627) turned investigative journalist. He is a former editor of Ramparts and is the author of numerous magazine articles. Among his seven published books is The Fish Is Red, co-authored with Warren Hinckle.