

6/7/68

Dear Earl,

Your letter of 6/1/ sent regular mail. just arrived. What you say of Latham is true and known. The last I heard of him he had or was about to ship out from San Francisco. He did see Thornley's first manuscript of the Idle Warriors. He was, as I recall, bartender at the Bourbon House.

Now that Dave is starting up a "Fair Play For Thornley Committee", please encourage him to organize subsidiaries for Bolton, INCA, Butler and J. Edgar Hoover. Rexis absolutely a nut. He does not know what is known of Thornley, does not know what Thornley may or may not have said before the grand jury. But what he does know is that he fed Garrison an awful lot of crap about Thornley and Heindell, stuff that for the longest time had Jim on the wrong track. Knowing him to be capable of this additional stupidity, I wrote him within the past two days asking him if he really knew enough to even have an opinion? I asked him to answer some questions to himself and to then ask himself if he really knew anything about Thornley.

Because of all the trouble he has made, perhaps it is best that he take this open stand. Then others will know where he is. Thornley, from the public record, did a rotten thing: he helped frame Oswald and was the only Marine-mate willing to do this. From the private record, my own work, I tell you his great ambition, in his words, was to piss on Kennedy's grave. Let Dave have him and his concept of "fair play" with it.

I think Calixto and Calixtas are not the same. However, for my purposes, can you get me a copy of the original letter? I will then show it to someone. It will be much better than the typed copy. If necessary, mask any names. The ancestry of my subject is, I think, Greek.

The second name Lifton mentioned as knowing Thornley must have been not Covin but Lovin. I know him. And many others. If Jim had not mislaid copies of a series of Thornley letter I gave him more than a month ago, I'd have done more work on this when last I was there. I now have to supply him more copies and make a spare set to be worked on. Bolton's column of which I know was inspired by my visit to him, well before Garrison developed his interest (I suppose largely from my work). I then told Cliff that Garrison's interest in Thornley was inevitable, that I thought Thornley's interest lay in offering to say what he knew, that if he feared contact with Garrison and the grand jury, I would be happy to talk to him. In garbled, anti-Semitic form Bolton wrote a letter he then used as a column. But even he wound up encouraging Thornley to take my advice. Now I have never sought access to the grand-jury testimony, never asked what Thornley swore to. I know that there is enough in what I have to convince me he is an essential part of the story of the faameup at the very least and an unfit object for crocodile tears, even Dave's. Dave, for all his high IQ, is really not competent or responsible. He always manages to help or try and help the other side. And he has acted as Liebeler's agent, to my knowledge for he so told me in complaining of the arrangements for a debate between Liebeler and me. He loused it up, personally, by interfering with the school.

Can you go over your letter and give me a memo on the Thornley part that I can give to Jim, with your sources? I try and keep a fairly complete file here because there is more work I will do on it and him. I just love a guy whose great ambition was to piss on JFK's grave and think he is worthy of any attention I can devote to him!

The evidence is lacking, but I'm told Thornley did a little work for Kent Courtney. I have a witness who so decalres and another to support the first in saying he tried to land with Courtney. This is 100% consistent with his writing that I have.

Still, perhaps, on "bornley, if you recall my comments in O in N.O. on the police-mind presumptions about the finding of Oswald's handbills near Reisman's home on Pine St., let me point out it was at least as close to Courtney's. I have been there and checked this hunch. The pictures didn't turn out, but it is so. "interesting? And the man who sent Oswald out from an employment service for a job is the same man who sent an employee to Courtney, the man who got the job KT wanted.

What is your source on Clay Shaw's having bailed out Philip Geraci III "after a raid on someone where a party was being held." This could be very, very important, but I think it is probably another Philip Geraci, not the young man but an old one of whom I know. I get nothing from LA and little from elsewhere. This is particularly true of my own work that I leave behind. I am unhappy about it, am seriously inhibited by it, and have learned to accept it and do what I can. I spend the same amount of time. I wrote of my interest in P.G. III a long time ago. I never got any response of any kind from anyone.

There is other reason to have interest in the Universal Life Church, reason from Dallas and the fleeing Tip it killer and the search for him. I understand Al Chapman was shamas there (he has helped me). If you spend any time here, I'll give you the address of a guy named Fairbanks who was in Ferrie's church. He is in D.C. I sent him what I got from him and it never reached him or got lost in the office. I believe the latter.

Please let me know your schedule for your trip, particularly when you plan to be here, so I can try and arrange to be here the same time. I must return to New Orleans as soon as it can be financed.

As you know, partly in preparation for your departure, I have been keeping in touch with Paul who continues to do wonderful work.

Thank you for the check. I've already used it, and it came today. However, I repeat what you evade, that the responsibility is not yours. Can you imagine, aside from our acute personal needs, what I could do with that money and what John helped ABC cost me by intruding when I warned them not to and giving them time to stick me with transportation on the last trip? They would finance two two-week trips to N.O. for me. Why these people behave that way escapes and astounds me.

Last two pages of Gary's 2/18 ltr enclosed.

The name Sylvia Bartin sounds very familiar. I think he knew her. I forget too much, probably have it in files or notes. Ditto with Warden save where I have a feeling he is connected with violence, Cubans or both. What you say of this couple could be interesting, as are certain locations on St. Charles Ave. Can you speak to them and get all they have? The name Radelat escapes me. If it is in CD75 and I do not know it, I suspect the document is suppressed. I have everything not suppressed on Ferrie. Can you tell me what he ties to?

Nothing re: Laymen's Commission.

Never heard of Golden Eagle, La. I am inclined to doubt the story because most of those munitions were for part of the Bay of Pigs. However, if I ever knew the source of those raided 7/31/63, I have forgotten, so maybe it is right. Gretna is a suburb of N.O. If Ferrie and others flew simultaneously with Steven Romero, Romero has quite an expensive helicopter. To whom are you referring in the last part of the first paragraph on page 6?.. Included, from that description and the name of the organization to believe Bernie not Shaw.

I regret all these things are learned in areas in which I work and they are kept secret from me while I go to great lengths to let others know what I learn

Why I can only guess, and none of the guesses are pleasant. It does me no personal good to have such information, for during the past more than nine months I have worked on things I do not intend to publish, just to help Jim. However, there is nothing to be gained by making an issue, so I don't. I have yet to get from LA the documents Larry Howard turned over to me and I to Steve, never got the documents offered by a witness I turned over to Jaffe. Much of what was sent to Jim has already not gotten there but has gotten into private hands that will publish as original.

Thanks for the thing on Goldberg at UCLA. I wish I could get to talk on that series, to present a few things I have over Goldberg's signature, aside from addressing his nonsense.

Sincerely,

June 1, 1968

Dear Hal,

I returned a few days ago from my two-week visit to Los Angeles and will try to bring you up to date on what I have learned.

Before I get into that I want to point out something which you once requested of me concerning two individuals, one of them dealing in some way with Thornley. Their names are Deyahn Calixtas and Vic Latham. If you'll recall you mentioned these in your letter to me dated 4/5 and your letter to Paul dated 4/16.

I believe that Vic Latham (see your letter 4/5) is most likely the same person I wrote to you about of whom Dave Lifton once mentioned to me that he had seen Thornley's manuscript. When I saw Dave in L.A. this time he referred to what sounded like a "Victor Alachem" as the man who was shown Thornley's ms. According to Dave, this person is (or was) from LSU (Louisiana State University). My letter to you pointed out that Dave said he was a professor of English but I did not get to ask Dave if the "Alachem" he spoke of was in this department. It is my belief that this is the same Vic Latham you inquired about.

Another inquiry you directed at me concerned a person known as Deyahn Calixtas who was also known as Dion(e) Turner and had other aliases. Refer to the letter I gave you a copy of from William R. Klein to Garrison (dated May 4, 1967). There is a name there of a Juan Calixto Garcia. Garcia was the grandson of the famous Garcia who received the famous message. It is believed he owned a plantation in Cuba and for one reason or another left after the Cuban Revolution. He was a Tulane U. student and worked part-time in the school cafeteria. Now Klein says that Garcia was president of the "Free Voice of Latin America". (It was Klein who drew up the Articles of Incorporation and became its secretary-treasurer).

Could it be possible that Deyahn Calixtas was the daughter, wife or sister of Garcia? With such an unusual name I should think this a possibility. It is also interesting to note that Clint Bolten wrote for the "Free Voice". As you'll recall Thornley devoted his book to Bolten.

Ed Butler was also connected with the "Free Voice" and he allegedly "induced" every member of the "Free Voice" to join INCA.

When I saw Dave he told me that Thornley admitted knowing Ed Butler which was rather strange for the tape I heard of Thornley when I was in L.A. the last time admitted of no such thing.

Undoubtedly, you are in a better situation to put all this into a better context based on your sources of information but I thought I would pass whatever I knew along. If the pieces fit, then fine.

Lifton mentioned two other people in New Orleans he knew of who knew Thornley. One was named Frazier who is a bartender and the other was a Roger Covin. I didn't recall why he mentioned these two but perhaps you may know why.

Bolten is now writing a column known as the "Bourbon Street Parade" for the Vieux Carre Courier, which is, I believe, published in New Orleans. The Nov. 10, 1967 issue has an open letter addressed to Thornley.

By the way, did you know that Billy Lovelady is now living in Claremont, California? Ask Fred Newcomb about it and he can tell you where he is now residing.

You also expressed interest in learning more about Kent Courtney. While in L.A. I came across the following articles on Courtney in the L.A. Times. I'll quote from them here:

L.A. Times - May 2, 1965
"ANTI-RED PARTY PLANNED BY CONSERVATIVE GROUP"

Plank Urges U.S. to Capture Red Chinese, Russians
in Cuba, Hold Them as Hostages

Chicago(AP) - The Congress of Conservatives approved Saturday a declaration of its "intention to participate in the formation of a national anti-Communist party."

The three-day meeting also wound up with adoption of a program of action that, among other things, called for liberation of Cuba.

Members of the group cheered the reading of that plank and its elaboration of it: "We should capture Chinese and Russian Communists now based on Cuba and hold them as hostages pending release of Americans from Russia and Red China."

NEW PARTY

This had been designated as "New Party Day." The day didn't bring forth a new party but it did lay the groundwork for what the leaders hope may become one in the future.

"We offer the people the skeleton of a ~~national~~ national organization," Bard Logan, San Antonio, Tex., a member of the committee which drafted the approved document, told a reporter.

"It will be a reality only after they organize state parties," he said.

The gathering was sponsored by the Independent American, a political action monthly newspaper published by Kent Courtney.

500 REGISTER

Courtney, who served as chairman of the sessions, said 500 persons had registered.

The participants voted to sit themselves up as an "advanced committee" to "encourage the formation of new state parties, support existing independent parties, seek the achievement of a national committee and encourage the appearance of potential candidates for the new national party's nomination."

The declaration said "final terms of organization will be set by a new national convention." But no time or place was set.

This is from the Los Angeles Times of May 9, 1965:

FEAR AND LAUGHTER: Ultra Right - A View
Under Magnification

by Paul Gapp(Chicago Daily News)

(Note: Paul Gapp attended the recent rally of the Congress

of Conservatives which was held in the grand ballroom of the Sheraton-Chicago Hotel).

" ... The people came from 30 states, with heavy representation from the South and West. Their median age was in the late 40s, although there was a sprinkling of youths and octogenarians. There were many husbands and wives. There was one blind man who carried a placard promoting the third party proposal.

.....Kent Courtney, the New Orleans publisher, is an affable red-haired entrepreneur, a packager of conservative goods. He turned red when Utah Gov. Robert E. Smylie told newsmen in Boise that the Congress was a "money-raising campaign for Mr. Courtney."

Courtney said he must pass the hat once a year to break even. Perhaps the frequent business plugs he salted through the congress will help him ~~pay~~ stay afloat in 1965.

'FREEDOM FAIR'

The "freedom fair," a hotel exhibit hall filled with commercial right-wing sales booths, was Courtney's idea. On sale were conservative books, ~~pamphlets~~ pamphlets, phonograph records, flags, lapel buttons, patriotic pictures and auto license plates that read "Impeach Earl Warren." American Opinion Bookstores, the John Birch Society's literary arm, had the biggest and most elaborate display. There are 300 such stores now, and 700 more planned.

Edwin A. Walker, the former major general who was forced to quit the Army because of his right-wing indoctrination programs turned in the most spectacular performance at the meeting.

Walker began at a press conference where he spent half of the time castigating the press. (Other speakers repeated the "controlled news" theme, and some delegates buttonholed reporters, challenging them to "print the truth for once.")

Walker wandered, wavered, repeated himself, paused, adjourned the press session, reconvened it, tossed off a final string of run-on sentences, then graciously thanked the "Communist-controlled" reporters for coming.

Robert Welch, founder of the John Birch Society, was more concise. He said the entire nation is "one vast lunatic asylum."

Welch made several allusions to sexual subjects (a dance for homosexuals, interracial intimacy, sex stimulants, pornography). Ultra conservatives blame the Communists for all sexual activity that in their judgment is aberrant.

The Birch Society leader, however, is at bottom a colorless speaker, no matter how titillating his subject matter.

The man who really excited the crowd who variously tongue-whipped them into anger and adulation, who shouted into the microphone, who raised more downright hell than anyone else, was Lester Maddox. He is the former Atlanta restaurant operator who closed up shop rather than serve Negroes.

'MAN OF THE HOUR'

Maddox looks like a ribbon clerk, but ~~when~~ when he opens his mouth he is an oratorical tiger. His prescription for the nation's political and social illnesses was shouted at the very end of his address: "What do we need? What do we really need? We need a George Wallace in the White House. He's the man of the hour."

While Maddox is the right wing's most respected hero, the man who appeared to emerge from the conference with the greatest power potential is not a shouter, nor is he equipped with anything approach-

ing the common touch.

He is Medford Evans, a serious, literate, deeply devoted disciple of all that is holy to the ultra-conservative cause.

Evans is a walking paradox. He is a Yale Ph.D. who lives in Jackson, Miss. He is a genuine intellectual in a movement that generally despises and often heaps ridicule on intellectuality. He has taught English and history in southern colleges.

A NEAT BALANCE

Evans' speech was not particularly well-attended. And Evans despite his other skills reads aloud very badly. It was obvious ~~to~~ his audience was restless.

So it went, the Congress of Conservatives. There was fear, there were grim warnings. But there were also lusty rebel yells, band music, flag waving, laughter. A neat balance.

It can be reported that no Negroes were seen in the grand ballroom during the long round of speeches.

But, actually, there was one. He was a hotel employe who quietly slipped into the hall to correct an oversight. He placed an American flag on the stage."

That is all I have on Courtney for the moment and if I come across more I'll let you know.

You also asked if I had any more information on Philp Geraci III. While I was in L.A. I learned that Clay Shaw had bailed out Geraci III and others after a police raid on a home where a party was being held. I presume that this was a homosexual party based on only my feeling. I do not know the date of the raid.

My trip to L.A. convinces me that the Universal Life Church (to which Beckham belonged) is extremely important in this whole affair, both in Dallas and New Orleans. It is my feeling that it served as a front for activities that directly or indirectly related to the assassination. I think it would be very worthwhile to get any information about this church and if you know of anyone who can look into this I think it should be a top priority consideration. There are some things I learned in L.A. which I don't wish to communicate by letter but will have to wait until I see you. You know of one already.

Mentioning my communicating with you in person brings up a thing I'll discuss now. I feel that the N.O. trial will not take place this summer. This being so, I am planning on coming back East to visit my parents (who live in N.J.) and also to see you. I'll probably leave by mid-June and stay for some time in the East unless, of course, the trial should get underway while I'm there. I don't count on this happening (the trial) so I should be there for the good part of the summer.

In my absence Bob Hyatt has agreed to handle the Citizens' Committee and the class I held, although we're thinking of ending the class since we pick up few new people who do research. The only real workers we have now are Paul Hoch, Bob Hyatt, Jim Schmitt, myself and perhaps, occasionally, one or two others who will help out when they are able to. The Whites in Mill Valley continue to be of tremendous help particularly with tapes which they always provide. They can't be thanked enough for what they have done. I'm sure you realize the help they've provided.

I'm also enclosing a check in the amount of \$25.00, most of which I raised for you at one class session I had before I left for Los Angeles. This will be the money that was due you for the first trip you made to San Francisco in 1966. I realize that we still owe you more but we will raise the additional amount and make a final payment just as soon as we can. I hope you'll bear with me. If I could I would pay the balance but at the moment I have been not working for two months, devoting a good deal of my time to the case.

If you can can you enclose me the second (and any other) page of a copy of a letter you sent me which Gary Murr wrote. It was addressed to you and dated April 18th. I've written to Murr and told him who to contact on Similas (I gave him two names). He did not have a copy of this letter and suggested I write you. I'd like to have it so that I can make suggestions for his book.

Before I forget there is a name that Jim Schmitt pointed out to me that may refer to Thornley in CD75. Jim says that page 332 of that document refers to a Sylvia Bartin just following Thornley and he is getting a copy of this to see what it contains. He'll let you know if it is related.

I don't know how helpful this will be, but there is a couple living in San Francisco who once lived in New Orleans. The husband went to see Garrison to see if he could be of any help (They came from ~~NEW~~ S.F., on a vacation). Garrison told the husband to look me up and we met recently.

The wife told me that she knew a Bill Warden who rented office space at the Trade Mart in New Orleans and that a John Hunley was his assistant. These two could provide valuable information if they could be contacted (presuming they're willing to talk about what they know). She also mentioned a beauty salon on St. Charles Ave. which had a white front and doorman. She couldn't recall the name of the salon but did recall the hairdresser there since she went there quite often when she lived in N.O. His name was Edwin Davis and was known as "Mr. Dee". Davis once told her that the owner of this beauty salon was one of Shaw's lovers and that the owner still had dinners with Shaw.

A name I came across in L.A. is also mentioned in CD75 with respect to Ferrie. The name is Radelat and occurs on page 295 & 341. Do you know who this is? I can tie him in with information I learned in L.A.

Do you know anything about a "Laymen's Commission of The American Council of Christian Churches", P.O. Box 8775, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15221? Bradley belongs (or belonged) to it. Others who served on this "Commission" were: George F. Kurtz, Pittsburgh, Pa. (Chairman); Max McCall, Indiana, Pa.; Lorin Oxley, Pella, Iowa; Dr. George Hess, Bunkerhill, Illinois; John Stormer, Florissant, Missouri and Robert F. Kurtz, who was general secretary. Of these names only John Stormer rings a bell but I can't recall where I've seen his name.

A source I learned of in L.A. claims to know quite a lot about Ferrie. He says Ferrie once participated in a munitions raid near Golden Eagle, Louisiana. Ferrie and others flew in a

helicopter owned by Steven Romero from Gretna, La. He claims they "stole" the munitions from Sergio Arcacha Smith and that these munitions ended up into the hands of Richard Lauchli. I cannot vouch for his accuracy but he does figure in this case. Garrison has so indicated, after I learned of him.

This same source, incidentally, claims Courtney gave money to Sergio Arcacha's "Crusade to Free Cuba" and also to the Minutemen. He ~~also~~ claimed a "Bernie" had been a member of the "Crusade to Free Cuba", also. Bernie was described as a "tall, French-looking man who was dark complected like a Cajun." This matches Shaw's description almost to a tee.

I would like to mention more in this letter about some other individuals but this will have to wait until I see you. There's much to discuss with you that simply cannot be put in a letter.

So, I'll close for now and write you when I hear from you again.

Regards to your wife, and best to you also.

Best,

Hal Verb

Hal Verb

P.S. Lifton seems determined to go ahead with the Thornley bit. He's forming (believe it or not) a "Fair Play for Thornley" Committee and, I understand, has an article in "Open City", an underground newspaper published in L.A. on Thornley. He promised me a copy and I'll send it to you when I get mine. It's dated May 29th, I believe, if you write Steve Burton for a copy.

Also enclosed is an article I picked up while at UCLA.