



At the October 15 Press Conference of the Citizen's Research and Investigation Committee (CRIC) at KPFK-FM in Los Angeles. Free Press photo by Art Kunkin
 From left to right: Michael McCarthy and Marilyn Katz of CRIC; former police informer Louis Tackwood; Attorney Dan Lund representing Tackwood; and Attorney Joan Anderson of CRIC.

Informers says Police officials discussed bomb plot

ART KUNKIN

Last Friday, Louis Tackwood, a self-admitted informer for the Criminal Conspiracy Section (CCS) of the Los Angeles Police Department, said at a press conference held at radio station KPFK-FM that he had knowledge that the CCS and the FBI had organized a special squad, "Squad 19," to provoke violence at the 1972 Republican National Convention in San Diego, which violence could be blamed on leftists. The object of all this was "to create a situation which would permit the President to invoke special emergency powers leading to the arrest and detention of political activists throughout the country."

Tackwood made a number of other astounding charges Friday, and at a subsequent press conference the following Tuesday, in connection with the very many areas in which he worked for the CCS and other police intelligence agencies. These charges related to CCS prior knowledge of both the Marin County Court House shoot out (for which Angela Davis is to be tried) and George Jackson's alleged escape attempt from San Quentin without CCS stopping either event; provocations in which he was personally involved under police direction to crush the Black Panther and Black Muslim organizations, political surveillance of the Berkeley City elections; purchase of arms and dynamite to protect his "cover" while infiltrating the Black Panthers; a "license to steal" and once even to kill, in return for his services as an informer; and other very hairy tales which, if only partially true, demonstrates that the community needs protection from the police, not by them.

For the moment, however, we will set aside Tackwood's specific statements on these many aspects of his more than nine years experience, and the important matter of how we can have confidence in a man for whom conspiracy and duplicity and perjury is second nature by his own admission (most convincing are the lie detector tests financed by the *L.A. Times*), to focus on the matter of disruptions at the San Diego convention, which we have researched before under other circumstances.

Somewhat over a year ago, in the Spring of 1970, William Howard, Washington, D.C., based reporter for the conservative Newhouse newspaper chain, published a story about a contingency plan to cancel the 1972 elections, which he claimed he learned from the wife of a Rand Corporation executive.

According to Howard, President Nixon had ordered the Rand Corporation "think tank" in Santa Monica, California, to do a "feasibility study" of the cancellation of the 1972 elections because Presidential advisers are increasingly concerned about the

country's internal security and the chances of radical elements disrupting governmental operations, including national elections.

The Rand study would "envison a situation where rebellious factions using force or bomb threats would make it unsafe to conduct an election, and to provide the President with a plan of action."

Howard believed that the sources for his story were "good", and maintained that he believed them despite formal denials from both Rand and the White House.

Reporters from the *L.A. Free Press*, the *Village Voice*, and the *Nation* magazine began to dig into the story. The *Wall Street Journal* of April 24, 1970, commented, "Nixon men find a rumor hard to spike — that the Rand Corporation 'think tank' is studying the idea of cancelling the 1972 election if radicals threaten to disrupt it." And although the Rand Corporation sent the *Free Press* (and others) a letter denying the rumor, and the *Free Press* has not been able to discover any documentary proof of the allegation, persons at the Rand Corporation privately told *Free Press* reporters that we "had done a good and right thing in publishing the story."

Now Louis Tackwood appears, not with confirmation of a theoretical feasibility study about cancellation of the elections but with testimony of discussion among police officers of a plot to bomb the convention in San Diego for the purpose of providing Nixon with options to declare martial law, round up radicals, and cancel the election. And Tackwood, under the probing questions of newsmen, named specific L.A.P.D. officers who participated in such discussions including a Lieutenant in charge of CCS, two CCS Sergeants, and a Special agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Last year, while commenting on the implications of the story about the Rand feasibility study, we said that the 1968 elections were held "only after a series of political assassinations, including a former President, a leading presidential contender, and several prominent black oppositional leaders. They were held after the police riots and political chicanery of the Chicago Democratic Convention, the emergence of the CIA as the molder of American foreign policy, and the whitewash of the Warren Commission (which even ex-president LBJ now admits did not tell everything to be known about the Kennedy assassination). The 1968 elections were held, in other words, under conditions which suggested that the mere 200 year history of American democracy was coming to an end."

And we continued, saying things which we feel must be said again as a response to Louis Tackwood's allegations: "You think Nixon can't cancel the elections in 1972? Do you

really believe that elections are inevitable just because they've happened less than fifty times in American history? Read the headlines in your friendly conservative newspaper and see the monstrous and ruthless mode of operation of the man in the White House. Do you think he is beyond cancelling the elections for the sake of instituting a dictatorship and blaming it on the radicals, just as Hitler set the Reichstag fire and blamed the Communists, wrongly, as we know now? If there is any trace

of this belief in you, dear reader, history is sure to judge you the fool!"

Louis Tackwood was born February 20, 1942, in New Orleans, Louisiana. At the age of seven, he moved to Los Angeles and lived with his father. After his father's death in 1954, he lived with his grandmother and attended 118th Street grammar school and Fremont High School.

He was arrested on several occasions for gang war activities at the Manchester Theater. In 1962 he was

stealing cars, selling the parts and engines, when he was arrested in a stolen car. He was then approached by E.C. Williams, a Los Angeles detective, to help arrest some members of other car rings. He agreed to do so, on condition he was permitted to "stay on the streets," and began to inform on other car thieves.

In 1963 the Los Angeles Police were trying to arrest a big narcotic pusher named Mexican Joe who lived at 111th and Avalon. The LAPD had Tackwood make a few sales and introduce an undercover LAPD agent to Mexican Joe. Subsequently Mexican Joe and others were arrested.

In 1964 Tackwood was again arrested for car theft and taken to the University Police Station. After many hours of arguments with officer E.C. Williams, he was introduced to an officer Edward Watkins (whom Tackwood identified today as being a Sgt. involved in Police Academy Recruiting) and another officer, Larry Brown (whom Tackwood identifies today as being a Sgt. of the "White Radical Desk, Special Identification and Investigation (SII) division of the LAPD).

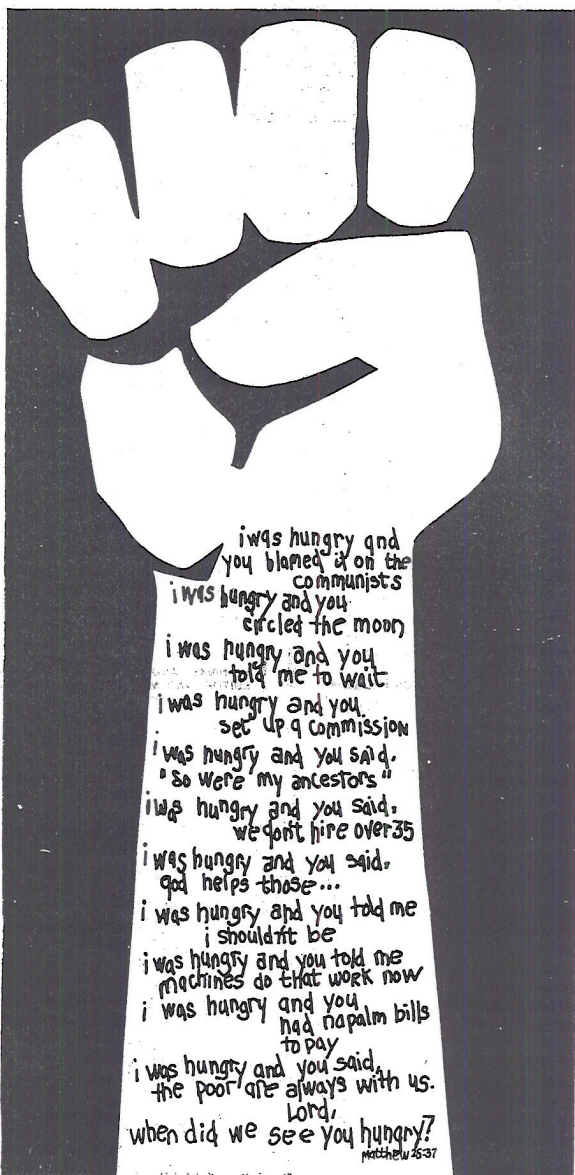
Tackwood alleges that Watkins and Brown, then with the 77th Division area, arranged for Tackwood to join an armed robbery team as an informer. Tackwood "set up" some members of the gang for the police during a robbery of an Inglewood liquor store.

In 1965, Watkins and Brown were transferred downtown to a special police squad doing surveillance, intelligence and investigation and Tackwood was transferred with them. Now he was involved in informing on two gangs called The New Breed and The Magnificent Seven, the latter a group of pimps involved in stealing. They were subsequently arrested on a variety of charges from conspiracy to robbery.

In August of 1965 the Watts riots took place and officer Watkins was assigned to training undercover agents. Watkins recommended Tackwood for undercover work in political activities. Tackwood became familiar with the Black Muslims, and specifically with the local Muslim leader, John Shabazz.

In Tackwood's own words, "I was subsequently told by Watkins and Brown to set the Muslims up for a raid. I was told exactly how to do this by making a telephone call to a police station, informing them that there were guns stashed in the mosque, or temple. This would give them the excuse they needed to raid the place. They didn't find no guns, and there was no conspiracy, but they built one anyway."

In 1965, Tackwood's first intelligence assignment was under an officer named R.G. Farwell. (Tackwood now identified Farwell as Sgt.



Matthew 25:37

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Washington merry go round Did favored cronies get million dollar secret?

JACK ANDERSON
WASHINGTON — Treasury Secretary John Connally met privately in secluded Smoky Mountains lodge with some of America's most potent corporate panjandrums exactly one week before President Nixon's wage-price freeze.

Connally landed secretly at McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base outside Knoxville on August 7. About the same time, several sleek Gulfstream IIs rolled in at Cherokee Aviation, the civilian facility just across the airport from the base.

From these carpeted executive jets stepped John Harper, the folksy, capable boss of ALCOA, one of America's industrial giants. Another arrival was Baxter Goodrich, the new chairman of Texas Eastern Pipeline.

Still other titans of industry stepped from their gleaming jets. Among them, said witnesses, were executives from Standard Oil and U.S. Steel. By the time the moneyed men had assembled, there were \$12 million worth of corporate jets parked at Cherokee Aviation.

Connally and the moguls climbed into expensive cars and sped southward toward the dusky Smokies near Chilhowee, Tenn., where ALCOA maintains a richly paneled "rustic" lodge for secret discussions.

So carefully concealed from the public was the conference and its guest list that ALCOA spokesman H.T. McDade refused to say where the lodge was located.

"I don't think ALCOA would want these men's names bandied about," huffed McDade, who then refused even to spell his own name.

At Cherokee Aviation, manager Don Strunk had also been struck

dumb. "It's none of my business who flies in and out of this airport. I was told to hush up," he said nervously. Strunk wouldn't say who silenced him.

Inside Information?

Throughout the weekend, Connally talked earnestly with the industrialists. One report has it that he briefed them on the forthcoming wage-price freeze, information worth countless millions to their corporations.

At the Treasury, a spokesman "categorically" denied wage-price freeze information was passed to the industrialists. He acknowledged warily that the economy was discussed in general terms.

From participants, we have learned that Connally discussed the economic outlook, confided his own views on economic controls and spoke of foreign investments, overseas marketing and the difficulties of foreign operations by American firms. Significantly, his economic views were adopted by President Nixon a week later. One participant said it was "mostly social."

On Sunday, Aug. 8, the convivial weekend broke up and the corporate bigwigs boarded their high-priced private jets, left the cool, clear air of the Smokies and flew home, presumably to use the wisdom they had learned to mint more profits.

Connally himself flew to Texas for a vacation from which he was shortly recalled by President Nixon for the formal announcement of the wage-price freeze.

Footnote: The Treasury spokesman contended that Connally didn't know a week in advance that the President

had decided upon a wage-price freeze. Yet he was intimately familiar with the backstage discussions. This raises a question at least whether Connally — on purpose or inadvertently — let drop secrets worth hundreds of millions of dollars to his favored cronies.

WASHINGTON — The oil giants, after promising President Nixon to abide by his wage-price freeze, have quietly inched up the price of liquified petroleum gas.

Texaco, Gulf, Phillips, Cities Service and other companies expect to squeeze an estimated \$110 million increase out of the small distributors and rural home owners who can least afford a new price gouge.

The way the oil men have manipulated liquified petroleum prices not only appears to violate the freeze but raises antitrust questions. Gulf was so nervous about the legal implications that our inquiries were referred to an attorney.

Liquified petroleum is gas used in stoves and furnaces beyond the reach of the natural gas lines. More than 11 billion gallons will be sold this winter alone. Thus the furtive penny-a-gallon increase will bring the oil industry a thumping \$110 million windfall.

The oil men contend that liquified petroleum follows a "seasonal" pattern of increases which would make the hike legal under President Nixon's freeze. The pattern is supposed to be determined over a three-year period.

We have carefully examined the industry's own data going back three years. The "seasonal" claims are pure poppycock. In 1970, for example, the prices went up in mid-summer, not in the fall. And in 1968, prices actually decreased in mid-winter.

Far from being seasonal, the rise and fall of liquid petroleum prices have been governed, apparently, by supply and demand.

Nevertheless, Gulf's Warren Petroleum quietly notified

distributors of its price increase on October 5, explaining piously: "The increase is in strict conformity with the Office of Emergency Planning's application of the President's Price Stabilization Order to seasonal price change."

Error Repetition

Two days later, Texaco raised its liquified petroleum gas prices and, astonishingly, used the same language to notify its distributors. Even more astonishing, Texaco repeated an error that appeared in the Gulf announcement. Both companies mistakenly referred to the Office of Emergency Planning.

It is against the antitrust laws, of course, for corporations to conspire together to raise prices.

Texaco's administrative supervisor who deals with liquified petroleum, Hugh Siler, refused to explain to us the peculiar similarity between the Gulf and Texaco notices. Instead, he

demanded to know how we had learned of the price increase.

At Gulf, Warren Petroleum's blunt lawyer, Warren Sparks, suggested that "Texaco may have seen our announcement and copied it." He stoutly denied any antitrust collusion. But he conceded that Gulf had jacked up liquified petroleum gas prices without consulting the government.

Correcting this oversight, we have brought the price increase to the attention of the Nixon Administration which denies it has okayed the hike and is studying the possibility of court action against the oil companies.

Footnote: Ironically, the independent retailers had agreed at a confidential meeting in Vancouver, British Columbia, on September 29-30, to try to hold down prices. The price hike by their Big Oil suppliers, however, now puts them in a squeeze and may force them to pass on the increase to their customers.

lettersletterslettersletters!

Dear People:

You must have been paid off by Pioneer Chicken. At the time I was reading your article I was eating Pioneer Chicken. It was tough and tasteless, and had too much crap around the chicken. Give me Colonel Sanders' anytime. These facts of course would apply to Pasadena where I live.

Piece of Chicken
Ray L. Simpson
Pasadena, Ca.

Dear 18 yr. olds:

You've registered in droves. Where were you yesterday? I choose to believe that you would have passed the bond issue. Where were you?

Disillusioned,
Becky Bright

Sirs:

The Big Chicken Contest "that will be fair to all" (October 8th issue) demonstrates unquestionably the racist psychology of our dominant group.

Did you know that a chicken house, the Golden Bird, operates six restaurants in Los Angeles and environs?

No? It is Black owned and operated, therefore it doesn't exist like the (invisible) man who is black.

I am told that among the finest Native American cooks the Negro rates highest. Didn't it occur to you that a black establishment could compete with the white chicken fryers?

Look alive man! Your philosophy is good — but let it be more than rhetoric!

Mrs. Naomi Thomas
Hollywood

Infomer for L.A. Police surfaces to gain safety

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Ronald G. Farwell, Black Radical Desk, SII division of the LAPD. Tackwood was told by Farwell to stay abreast of developments in the Black Panthers. He claims to have been told by Farwell of another agent in the Panthers named Melvin Smith. (Melvin Smith recently became the main prosecution witness in the trial of thirteen Los Angeles Panthers. Officers contend Smith turned state's evidence only after the Dec. 8, 1968, raid on Panther headquarters which led to the arrest of the defendants.) He worked on this assignment for eight months but "nothing actually happened." (Tackwood's brother-in-law is James Carr, a ranking member of the Panthers according to the *Washington Post*.)

Finally Tackwood was contacted by Larry Brown, told there was an opening in the Criminal Conspiracy Section and met Dan Mahoney and Robert Keel. (According to Tackwood, Lt. Robert A. Keel of the LAPD is now Chief of CCS, while Daniel Mahoney is a Sgt. in CCS.) Tackwood says, "At the time they stated they were an organization (whose) sole purpose was to create conspiracy against militants and against types of people in militant type organizations. I stated I would work for them." Tackwood said at the press conference that while there were only fourteen or fifteen LAPD officers assigned to CCS, their association with over 200 informers kept CCS abreast of radical activities throughout the State of California.

Tackwood says that CCS has its own radio cars and is not funded through normal LAPD budgets. All of its transactions with informers are by cash, so there are no records.

Tackwood claims that he was the contact between the Los Angeles Police and Ron Karenga, formerly leader of a black organization in Watts known as US. Tackwood said he delivered money and orders to Karenga to "take care" of the Panthers. (Two Panthers, Bunchy Carter and John Huggins, were murdered at UCLA in late 1968 and two US members later convicted.)

Tackwood says he made an \$1800 purchase of dynamite from a man involved in two bombings and two deaths under CCS instructions, but

the man is still walking the streets. According to Tackwood, the CCS often prefers to let known militants or criminals, alone hoping CCS will be led to sympathizers.

Tackwood claims that Sgt. Robert Sharatt of CCS told him that a code used in letters to and from San Quentin was broken by CCS, giving the police knowledge of an escape conspiracy but that CCS let the plans mature to where a number of guards and prisoners were killed.

Tackwood says a similar misjudgement of events took place at the Marin County Court House, where CCS knew about a conspiracy to free prisoners in a courtroom, and CCS intervened in a tragic way, leading to the death of a judge only after Jonathan Jackson was driving away in a truck with court officials as hostages.

Tackwood also claims that he was sent into Northern California to infiltrate the Angela Davis Defense Committee, was a walking bug recording strategy meetings of other black organizations in the Bay Area, and was reporting the source of funds for political candidates in Berkeley to various police intelligence groups.

Somewhere along the line Tackwood decided to write a book about his life. He contacted Michael McCarthy, a writer at the *Los Angeles Free Press*, in July and was put in touch with a Venice collective doing a book on police intelligence activities. The Venice collective, according to one version of the events, gave Tackwood a cover story to explain his frequent associations with them. However, the LAPD evidently became suspicious of the relationship and began to tap Tackwood's phone. Tackwood learned of the tap when he was planning to move last month and discovered that an extension of his phone had been put into the Newton Street station of the LAPD.

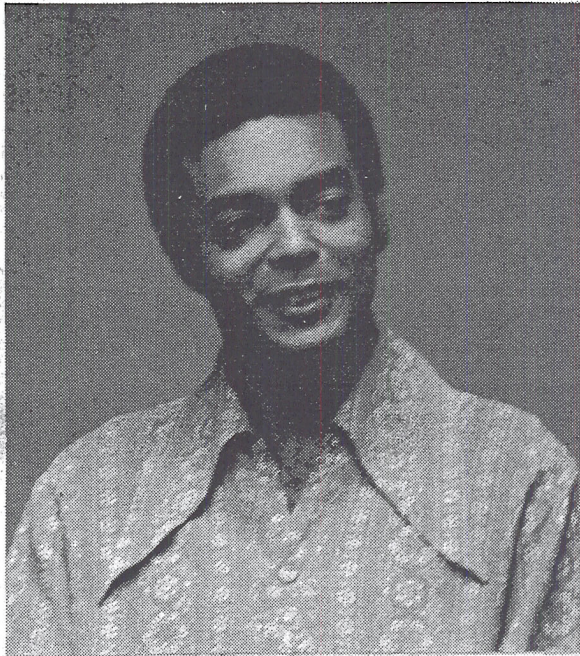
Tackwood disappeared from sight; and the Venice collective, fearing foul play and that they might be charged by the LAPD with having purchased stolen material from the police, informed reporters from the *Washington Post*, the *L.A. Times*, and *Newsweek* of the Tackwood story and began writing letters of protest to Joseph Busch, District Attorney of Los Angeles County.

Tackwood finally reappeared (this writer has not been able to determine whether he was under arrest, as some claim, or merely hiding out from his Venice writing friends and/or the police, as others claim).

The three establishment papers then financed a lie detector test which Tackwood willingly took from Chris Gugas, a nationally known polygraph expert. According to all three establishment reporters in-

(Tackwood's attorney, however, has said that all relevant information has been transmitted to the appropriate defense attorneys).

These limitations in the lie detector tests and Tackwood's unwillingness to talk about these two areas in his press conferences have led many establishment reporters to express scepticism, but no one at this point denies that he actually did work for the police. Too much



Louis Tackwood

Photo by Art Kunkin

involved. Leroy Aarons of the *Washington Post*, Carl Flemming of *Newsweek*, Jerry Cohen of the *L.A. Times*, and Gugas, Tackwood "did answer all of the critical questions truthfully on his examination."

However Tackwood, on advice of his attorney, did not answer questions which could implicate him in criminal activities or would involve him as a material witness in such pending court trials like that of Angela Davis.

evidence of that has come out, including probation reports which include him as an informer and court records which show Tackwood as a prosecution witness. (Tackwood went so far at his last conference as to say that under police instruction he gave perjured testimony during the trial of a Joseph Jenkins, and Jenkins is consequently now on death row.)

Tackwood is now claiming that Jerry Cohen of the *L.A. Times*, who

published a rather murky and sceptical story about Tackwood in last Sunday's *Times*, should really be working for the District Attorney's office instead of appearing as an impartial reporter. He says that Cohen editorialized so much the facts were smothered. Tackwood claims that Cohen attempted to make a deal with the D.A.'s office on Tackwood's behalf and had Tackwood taken into custody by police last Thursday. At this time it is impossible for this writer to say with certainty what really happened then.

Tackwood is certainly telling the truth about a lot of things but he is also obviously holding much back, perhaps for a good reason. He says that he was not planning to make any of his story public prior to the publication of his book until he learned that the police were becoming suspicious of his activities. Then he decided that for his own protection he had to publicize his situation.

Tackwood says, "I am not politically right or left. It's not a thing where I feel I am politically obligated right or left. It is a time when political right and left (should demand) that the police department of Los Angeles stop being provocateurs. I feel once this atmosphere is cleared up that the black man and the chicano can clean up their own houses."

Tackwood is hoping that publicity around his case will result in a Senate or Congressional Investigating Committee coming into Los Angeles and subpoenaing witnesses and files. He says that he went through two days of lie detector cases and that now the officers he is naming should also be examined. Without this, he says, the corroboration of what he is saying will be very difficult.

(However, he always claims that he has documentation about the San Diego Convention plans which he is showing no one, not even his Venice collaborators, until he is sure of his safety.)

The press conferences were arranged for Tackwood by the Citizen's Research and Investigation Committee (CRIC), whose representatives at the conferences were Marilyn Katz and Michael McCarthy.