



Darric Altman, the Garrison of New Orleans, has put forward his own theory of the Kennedy assassination. That it was planned and carried out by a group of neo-Fascists and neo-Fascist anti-Communists, who were based in New Orleans and involved with the C.I.A. They were angry at Kennedy because of his decision to limit the Bay of Pigs invasion and because of his efforts to establish a "Letter to the USSR." The group included Shaw, Ferrie, Oswald, Ruby and others. Clark Blaise's story, we feel, adds some new evidence supporting Garrison's case.

Neo-Fascism and the Kennedy Assassins

by Clark Blaise

Two crises afflict America — race and Vietnam, as everybody knows — but there is a third crisis far less volatile yet somehow related: the "credibility gap" as it affects the report of the Warren Commission.

In each case the prestige of the government is under a curious siege; a majority disbelieves its very elected officials, yet assents to its clandestine operations. Viability for the Johnson administration depends upon the peevish disarray of the majority. It is a significant and, I think, dramatic departure from the ritualistic "closed rank" mentality that seems to have guided American policies in the past.

One sees this most clearly in the debate over the Warren Commission report. None of the emotional and historical pressures quite apply — no lives are being lost, no money is being spent. An idea of conspiracy, a book, was submitted for public ratification and the public didn't buy.

As critics of the Report, we must admit that the great weakness of our position stems from the diversity of its appeal. Legalists, such as Yale's Alexander Bickel and ex-Cornell's Jay Epstein, can make a credible attack on juridical grounds. On a more emotional level, so can Mark Lane. From the dry stuff of form and precedent, however, we can leap to Perry Mason-ite legal research: Leo Sauvage, Sylvia Meaghan, Ramparts, and others have dabbled with gun-sights, the Zapruder films, the so-called "super bullet" that emerged so chastely from its gory trajectory. Most dissenters, I imagine, have indulged in precisely this type of private investigation, for it is an honorable form of rugged individualism. Sixty-five percent of Americans, if we can believe the poll, "smells a rat" somewhere in the works. A similar percentage has its own solutions to the "mistake" in Vietnam — that does not mean they are heretics.

Heresy begins as always with constructing an alternate myth. Instead of worrying how Oswald could have fired three shots (or four) in 5.5 seconds, heretics begin with the assumption that Oswald did not fire a shot at all. Or that he was a patsy. Or that there were two assassins, or more. And if you're heretic enough you begin populating your alternative myth with fresh names — Clay Shaw, David Ferrie, Perry Russo, — and you suggest their connection to higher and more obscure personages and you give them names, too, such as CIA and FBI. From there, it's open-ended. In the material that follows, I am offering more names, more connections, more exist for Garrison's mill.

On March 16, 1967, the French-language Montreal paper *Le Devoir*, published an extraordinary article entitled, "Will Garrison's Inquiry into Kennedy's Assassination lead to Montreal?" (*L'enquête du procureur Garrison sur l'assassinat de Kennedy conduira-t-elle à Montréal?* — I include the French to indicate the informality of my translations that follow — and to emphasize that I am merely the translator). The author is Louis Wjzmitzer, *Le Devoir's* regular New York contributor. I quote in part from his long article and assume, in many occasional deletions, that the reader is aware of many of the well-publicized facts concerning the underworld that Garrison has exposed. The rest, I think, is fresh:

But here the affair takes on even stranger dimensions. One finds the name Clay Shaw among those of the eleven officers of a company that until 1962 had had its headquarters in Montreal. (Next three words are missing in the original — C.B.) . . . to Rome, entitled "Centro Mondiale Commerciale" (World Trade Mart); and whose other directors were: Prince Guterez di Spadafora, (a minister of Mussolini in 1936) and father of a boy who married the daughter of (Hjalmar) Schacht, the finance minister of Hitler; Ferenc Nagy, exiled head of the Hungarian People's Party (parti paysan hongrois), which maintains ties with the CIA analogous to those which bind the Cubans in Miami to it; three other Hungarians; Giuseppe Zigiotti, who was a "gerarcha" fascist; Faruk Churabi, an Egyptian who was assassinated; and L.-H. Blumfield, of Montreal.

Mr. Blumfield, Major (retired), served with the O.S.S. (predecessor of the CIA) during World War II, and is very highly respected (*très honorablement connu*) in Canada. (n.b. no one with this precise name and initials appears in the current Montreal directory, C.B.). "He was also at that time the principal stockholder in a corporation named Permidez which had its offices (siège social) in Switzerland, and was affiliated with the Centro in Rome. The other stockholders of Permidez Corporation were more or less phantom banks based in Lichtenstein: Miami Anstall Vaduz, De Famaco Vaduz, and the Banque du Crédit de Genève. Among the administrators, one notices the name of Max Hagerman, director of the *National Zeitung*, a paper that specializes in anti-communist diatribe. Whatever they were, the Centro Commerciale and Fermi-

dex were in disfavor (eurent maille à partir) with the Swiss and Italian governments: they (the companies) transferred (remuaient) considerable funds which were — to say the least — of uncertain origin, and they never carried out any real commercial transactions. They were kicked out of Switzerland and Italy in 1962 and went on to establish themselves in Johannesburg, South Africa. The Swiss press accused Permidex at the time of having financed the actions of Soustelle and the OAS, among other things. One of the directors of the "Centre" was Mr. Damelio, solicitor of the Italian royal family and attached to the Italian Monarchist Party. Finally, another detail that doesn't lack for a certain spiciness: in his youth Clay Shaw published a story from which John Ford took his film, 'Men without Women.'

I read this with breakfast on Thursday, March 16, and I translated it for my university colleagues, then wrote out a detailed translation for a few friends in the States and mailed them out. I was confident that the *Devoir* piece was merely a compilation of free-circulating rumors from predictable American sources, and my intention in mailing the Montreal article back to the States was to show my friends that I wasn't entirely out of touch. I fully expected to see the story spelled out that afternoon in the Montreal *Star*, or at least to see a solid article or two appear in the liberal journals. Nothing more ever appeared.

One problem with living here (if you try to keep up with American news) is that you never really know when you are receiving second-hand pap from the Associated Press, or when it is the inside stuff that not even the English-Canadian papers will touch. In general, *Le Devoir* is an indispensable guide to Quebec politics, and a reliable recorder of European events. I find its national coverage a bit too selective and its treatment of American news shrill and abstract. Witznitzer, a man I know nothing about, reveals a bracing contempt for American values (Canadian too, no doubt) and is probably the only journalist on the continent to dismiss every American journal except *Ramparts* and *L. E. Stone's Weekly*. One notices in the above selection a European flair for innuendo (maybe Hyacinthe Schacht's daughter was a luscious leftist), and a breezy disregard for documentation. He is, after all, *Devoir's* man in New York. If he dug all this up in New York, why didn't anyone else, including the *Times*, ever spot it?

A warning that something more sinister than whips, masks and manacles might lurk in Clay Shaw's secret life had appeared eight days earlier in *LeDevoir* (March 8, 1967), and it may disclose, in part, the sources that Witznitzer did not divulge.

"PRAVDA: 'Clay Shaw, Accused of Conspiring against JFK, Was under CIA Orders'" (*La Pravda: la CIA avait sous ses ordres Clay Shaw, accusé d'avoir comploté contre JFK*).

Moscow: "Clay Shaw was an agent of the CIA in Italy," *Pravda's* Rome correspondent M. Ermakov wrote today.

"For several years, Clay Shaw directed a so-called 'World Trade Mart' which, in reality, subsidized the activities of Italian parties of the extreme right-wing, especially the neo-fascists.

"He added that one now learns in Rome that the 'World Trade Mart' was the Italian arm of the Permidex Corporation, which was established in Switzerland. The latter 'financed the OAS in France' and even in Switzerland, indulged in 'criminal acts' which were denounced on several occasions by the Swiss press and politicians.

"In fact, the names 'World Trade Mart' and 'Permidex' protected a far more important organization, the CIA itself, the Soviet journalist declared. He indicated that the 'World Trade Mart' 'having attracted a great deal of publicity to itself' had to be dissolved in 1964, but that it consequently reorganized itself under the same name in Johannesburg, South Africa."

CANADIAN DIMENSION

Whether or not all of the facts in the Witznitzer article derived from a longer, unreported version of the *Pravda* piece, I cannot say. It would seem unlikely, unless the unnamed wire service that carried the *Pravda* disclosure were itself exercising a certain self-censorship. If *Pravda* had indeed supplied all of the names and dates that Witznitzer used, I should think the original March 8th source would have mentioned them.

What can we conclude? Witznitzer himself ends with a series of questions. As for myself, I waited two months for a rebuttal or confirmation. The *New York Times* "Sunday Magazine" did a full profile on Garrison and his "case" and not a mention was made of Shaw's alleged connection to the tin-pot fascists (remember, Shaw was painted as a "Kennedy liberal"). I wrote the *Times* bureau chief in the South, the author of their piece, requesting that he enlighten me: 1) Had he heard these "facts" that I included? 2) Are they shoddy old rumors long since discredited? 3) If they aren't — why haven't they been mentioned before?

I received no answer.

A month later, *Ramparts* wrote a more sympathetic piece. I wrote them a more sympathetic letter and received a note: "We've passed your information on to the author of the Garrison article." Again, after two months, no follow-up. CBC and NBC did whitewashes of the Warren report and attacks on Garrison — useless to write them.

Witznitzer's same article led into another tangle, which I shall now relate. It seems, according to a book by *Look* editor William Atwood, *The Reds and the Blacks*, Fidel Castro wanted closer ties with the United States. Atwood, as then-ambassador to Guinea, had gotten a "feeler" from Cuba's ambassador to that Marxist African state. Atwood took the news to Adlai Stevenson, who carried it to the top, and a secret meeting was to be set up between Atwood and, presumably, Fidel Castro himself. But the U.S. State Department, before giving a final clearance, wanted to know precisely what Castro had in mind. For that purpose they contacted Lisa Howard, an ABC-TV reporter who had often visited Cuba and had interviewed Castro. She was "briefed" (esquissée) on the situation by McGeorge Bundy, then put in contact with Castro's aide-de-camp, Maj. René Vallejo. She reported back that Castro would agree to any arrangements (for the meeting) that would convenience the United States. On November 19, 1963, Bundy informed Atwood that the President wanted to see him as soon as he got back from a trip to Dallas.

A day after the trip to Dallas, Castro announced that he was ready to talk.

Bundy said (and it makes just as much sense this way), "Il fallait remettre l'affaire a une autre fois."

And shed a tear for Lisa Howard, the amateur diplomat. Her quiet professionalism, and much more, perhaps, was disrupted by the government (the government raids the TV studio perhaps more ruthlessly than the campus).

"The 4th of July, 1965," writes Witznitzer in conclusion, "Lisa Howard who was made the Apostle of Reconciliation between Cuba and America and who had knowledge of the first stage in a thaw between Havana and Washington, died under mysterious circumstances in East Hampton, Connecticut. As in the case of Ferrie, an empty bottle of sleeping pills was found near the body.

"Coincidence? Suicide? Accident?"