

A Warren Commission Critic Attack

Garrison Case

New York

Edward Jay Epstein, one of the first bestselling critics of the Warren Commission's investigation of President Kennedy's assassination, has written a 25,000-word attack on District Attorney Jim Garrison's inquiry and charges of conspiracy in the President's death.

A Federal judge has currently stayed the New Orleans district attorney's prosecution of Clay L. Shaw, a businessman arrested March 1, 1967, on such charges, pending a ruling on defense complaints of "misuse and abuse" of the district attorney's powers.

MAGAZINE

Epstein's report said that "in the year I have been studying Garrison's investigation and have had access to his office, the only evidence I have seen or heard about that could connect Clay Shaw with the assassination has been fraudulent — some devised by Garrison himself and some cynically

culled from criminals or the emotionally unstable."

The new report by Epstein, whose book, "Inquest," was published in 1966, appears in The current New Yorker magazine.

In Cambridge, Mass., the 32-year-old author, who is teaching urban politics at Harvard University this summer, said he was expanding it for December publication by Viking Press as "The Tangled Web."

Epstein wrote that he had been "prepared to believe that Garrison's claims might have some substance" when the Shaw arrest was first announced. This was because of his own view that Chief Justice Earl Warren's Commission had been constrained by "bureaucratic pressures" and "limits of time."

INVESTIGATION

He said he had been welcomed by Garrison in mid-April, 1967, and, with Jones Harris, a New York independent investigator, he had been "allowed to examine objects seized from Mr.

Shaw's home and designated 'evidence' " despite a judge's order against disclosures.

Harris, he said, found a five-digit number, "19016," in a Shaw address book identical to a number preceded by two Cyrillic letters in an address book owned by Lee Harvey Oswald, the man the Warren Commission concluded was the sole Kennedy assassin. He charged that Garrison had "constructed a piece of evidence" by an alleged code seeking to link the two.

The case on which a three-judge panel ruled Shaw could be held for trial, Epstein wrote, "was based on the allegations of two witnesses who had both waited four years before disclosing uncorroborated stories and who both subsequently cast considerable doubt on their own testimony."

Epstein wrote that Garrison's statements had built up to a theory of a 16-man team of assassins at five spots.

A man Garrison theorized

as diverting attention from the assassins by simulating an epileptic fit has been identified, Epstein said, as an employee of the Dallas Morning News who fainted 20 minutes before the Kennedy motorcade arrived.

Epstein analyzed "eight specific items" that he said Garrison had cited as linking the Central Intelligence Agency with a Kennedy assassination conspiracy.

CLAIMS

Three of these, he said, were "unverifiable" claims of (1) a picture of Oswald with an agent in Mexico City, (2) files on Ferrie and (3) Kennedy autopsy pictures and "other vital evidence."

A fourth item, he said, was a misinterpretation of a document title to suggest that Oswald was involved in a spy plane project.

A fifth, he went on, was a contention that the CIA had destroyed a memorandum on Oswald's activities, although a copy appears in Volume XVIII of the Warren documents.

A sixth item — the contention that Oswald had a "CIA 'babysitter'" — refers, Epstein asserted, to a New Orleans order of January 20, 1961 for 10 trucks for a purchaser named "Oswald," accompanied by a "Joseph Moore." Epstein said Lee Harvey Oswald was then in the Soviet Union.

A seventh item — a reference to a "CIA 'courier'" — involves a convicted bank embezzler whose story of delivering \$50,000 to "a dead ringer for Oswald" in Mexico

in 1962 has been rejected by the Garrison staff, Epstein said.

And the eighth item, Epstein said, was Federal refusal to provide Garrison with "any information" on a CIA assassination role.

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PETER KAHSS
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