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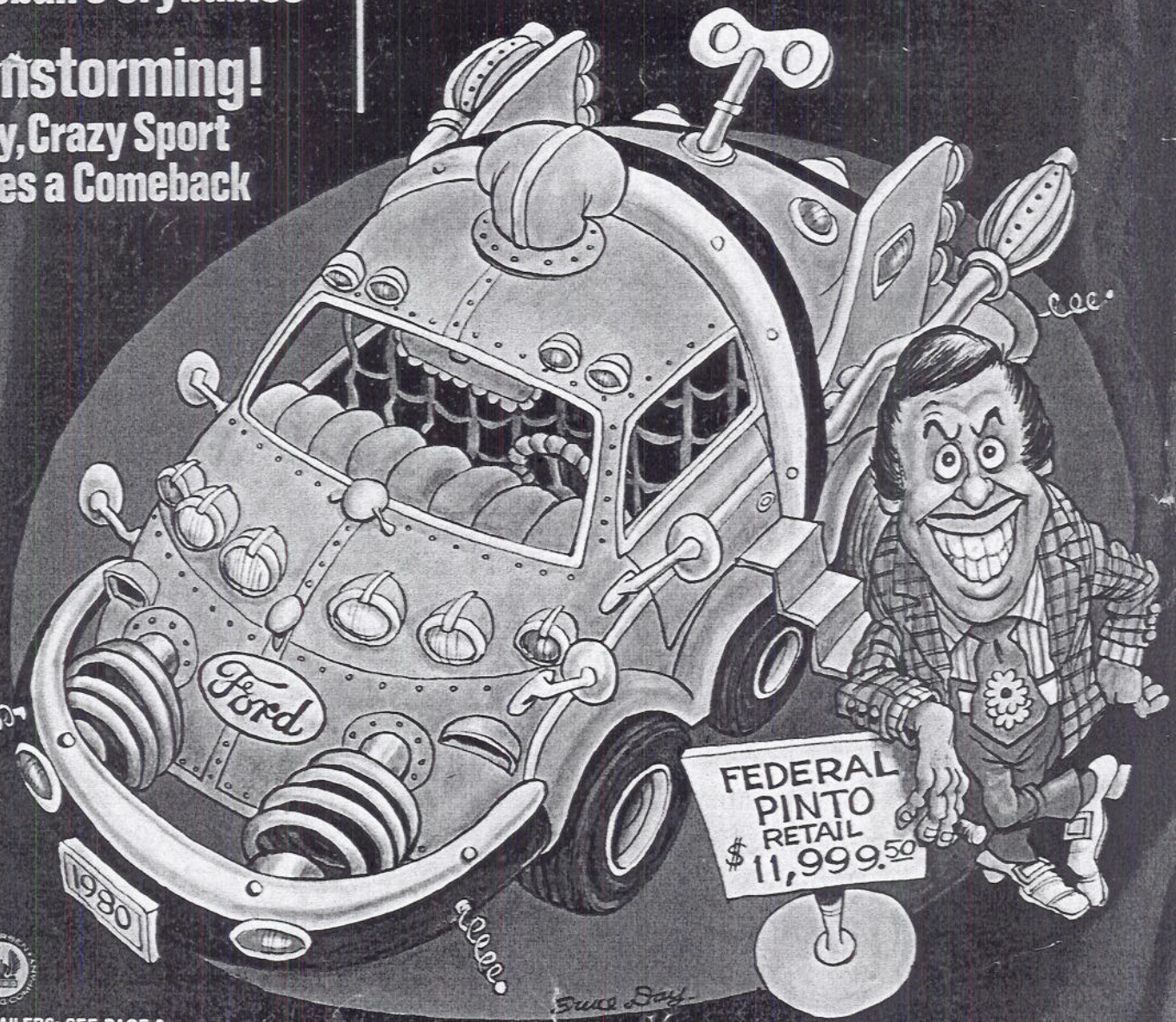
JFK Plot Revived
The Strange Death
of Clay Shaw

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Baseball's Crybabies

Barnstorming!
Risky, Crazy Sport
Makes a Comeback

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RETAILERS: SEE PAGE 3
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□In the summer of 1974, Jim Garrison, the former New Orleans district attorney who cried *conspiracy* in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy but couldn't prove it to a jury, seemed about to make a political comeback. Garrison was running for a seat on the Louisiana State Supreme Court, and his chances seemed good.

The fact that Garrison could command votes in Louisiana, or anywhere else for that matter, seemed surprising. He is the man accused by his critics—and they are legion—of virtually crucifying Clay Shaw, a soft-spoken, meek-appearing businessman Garrison accused of conspiring with others to kill JFK in Dallas in 1963. Garrison's almost daily revelations in 1968 leading up to the trial of Shaw attracted front-page space in every newspaper in the world, in addition to nightly coverage on network television. The long, complicated and indecisive trial of Shaw received equal attention, but in the end, Garrison could not convince a jury that the aging, sympathetic gentleman was a part of a plot to commit the most monstrous political assassination of the century.

Shaw was found innocent, and suddenly Garrison's credibility had vanished, as did his political future. After the trial ended in February 1969, Garrison disappeared from the headlines. Further, newspapers in New Orleans called for his removal from office, and he eventually was defeated for reelection. Garrison faded into political obscurity and Shaw filed a multi-million-dollar lawsuit against the former district attorney.

Shaw had become the object of national sympathy, seemingly an example of what one over-ambitious politician could do to an innocent man. Shaw was seen as a man whose life was left in a shambles, emotionally and financially. (There are those too who hold that the media, in appearing to fawn over Shaw's plight, seemed to be cleansing itself for having run all those scurrilous Garrison accusations.)

Then in December 1973, a small San Francisco news agency—Zodiac News Service—published a report that seemed distinguished largely by the fact that few newspapers gave it any real play. The agency reported that a former CIA official identified as Victor Marchetti stated that Clay Shaw had, in fact, been a contact for the CIA and that the agency wanted to keep those connections quiet. Not many editors could be faulted for not rushing to publish a news story from a service with a name like Zodiac, particularly headquartered in San Francisco, despite the fact that the agency distributes daily to hundreds of radio stations around the nation. Marchetti's credentials would later be solidly established as genuine, but it was a story that was semi-reported.

THE STRANGE DEATH OF



CLAY SHAW

Shaw's untimely death is just one of many bizarre "coincidences" that stretch from the Bay of Pigs to the doorsteps of Watergate.

By Richard Boyle

Meantime, two months later in February of 1974, Clay Shaw suffered what was reported as a "seizure" and was hospitalized. He appeared to recover, was released from the hospital, but was again hospitalized in June. At the time, Garrison was cranking up his campaign for a political comeback.

And then, on August 15, two days before Garrison faced election, Clay Shaw died. The newspapers carried extensive rehashes of the entire Shaw trial. Perhaps to many voters, the recounting of that trial may have brought back memories of Jim Garrison leaning over the jury dock, speaking dramatically of those dark "sinister forces" and America's "secret police" plotting a criminal *coup d'etat*. In 1969, Garrison's public contention that the President of the United States was assassinated "by employees of the CIA" seemed fantastic indeed.

Two days later, on Saturday the 17th, Garrison missed a runoff spot on the ballot by a few thousand votes.

Is it hairbrained to question the timeliness of Clay Shaw's death as nothing more than a coincidence? Perhaps, but I decided to go to New Orleans a month later and check into the story further, starting with Jim Garrison himself.

For the past two years, Garrison has refused to talk very much with the press, but after some persuasion, he agreed to meet me for dinner at a Bourbon Street hotel. I recognized the big, heavy-set man in a well-tailored blue suit as he entered the cocktail lounge.

Apologizing for being nearly two hours late, he ordered a drink and then complained that he had been "dirty-tricked" before, even by seemingly sympathetic journalists, and was now reluctant to talk to anyone. After a few drinks, he loosened up, and we went into the dining room.

Garrison still carries with him a tremendous bitterness, a conviction that he was fighting a one-sided battle against the CIA and something he refers to as the "warfare state." Garrison says that since he first got a tip shortly after the assassination of JFK that Lee Harvey Oswald and David Ferrie had been associated together in the Civil Air Patrol, and since he first ordered his DA's staff to begin its own investigation, he has been the victim of a slander campaign. Garrison said he was accused of everything from beating his wife to working for the Mafia, in addition to what he calls vicious personal attacks at the hands of the news media.

But the more he looked into the case, he recalls, the more he became convinced that Kennedy, who in 1963 was trying to reverse the U.S. war policy in Vietnam, was the target of a

political "hit," little different from the assassination of presidents in Latin American banana republics. Only this time, Garrison believed, it was done with the computerized efficiency of a highly advanced technology, including Orwellian manipulation of public opinion and distortion of historical fact.

Over the dinner table that night, Garrison remembered that he was "leading in the polls," that he was very pleased that his elderly mother would see her son on the state's highest court. And then, staring into his martini, he said, "I thought they would let me have that much."

With Shaw's death, the complete trial seemed to reappear in the newspapers. "The press said I destroyed a fine businessman." Garrison, with irony in his voice, chuckled. "I thought they'd let me get away with it—win this election. I should have known..."

"What was the reported cause of death?" I asked.

"Cancer," he replied.

I recalled aloud what attorney Melvin Belli had told me about one of the last visits he paid his client, Jack Ruby, in his prison cell. Ruby was sick, and pleaded with his lawyer to get him out of jail before it was too late. Ruby later won a request for a new trial, based largely on the fact that he announced he had something to say. But he was afraid he'd never live to talk while in prison. Jack Ruby died not much later. The cause of death, according to prison authorities: cancer.

And now Clay Shaw was dead. The last principal in Garrison's alleged conspiracy was dead—joining Oswald, gunned down while under police protection; David Ferrie, Garrison's touted star witness who died of a strange illness before his court appearance; and Ruby. It was too much like a piece of paperback spy fiction.

Garrison suggested I look further into the death of Shaw.

"Like what?" I asked.

"I hear the coroner wants to have Clay Shaw's body exhumed."

After that conversation, I decided to poke around New Orleans. I would need police reports, coroner's reports and a check of the daily newspaper morgue, where old clippings are kept.

In New Orleans, as in most cities, when a person dies, even if it appears to be from natural causes, the police are called in. But in the case of Clay Shaw, that was not done.

New Orleans Parish Coroner Dr. Frank Minyard, a physician, said a few days after the death: "No police were called to Shaw's residence to ascertain if there was evidence of foul play. Instead, Shaw's personal physician played the part of coroner and police investigator and pronounced the man dead."



Jim Garrison

"Garrison still carries with him a tremendous bitterness, a conviction that he was fighting a one-sided battle against the CIA..."



David Ferrie

“In 1966, David Ferrie told a friend, ‘I’m a dead man.’ Less than a year later, he was indeed dead. The signatures on two suicide notes, however, were typed.”

There was never an official examination of Clay Shaw's body. It was taken from his home to the funeral parlor, his blood drained, and a few days later he was buried. The case aroused the suspicions of some newsmen, and Minyard, at a press briefing, expressed "great annoyance" over the physician's actions.

"How can we know for sure the man didn't commit suicide, wasn't given a mercy-killing shot, or wasn't murdered?" The coroner added that in this case, Shaw had not been protected at his death, as required by law. "All we're trying to do," he said, "is prevent someone from dying at the discretion of someone else and not by that of the Good Lord."

Did Mr. Shaw die naturally, or at the hands of someone who wanted to silence the last central figure in the alleged Kennedy assassination conspiracy?

A few days after the election, a television reporter investigating the story got a call from a woman who said she had seen something strange on the morning of Shaw's death. The caller would not identify herself, but told the reporter she saw an ambulance pull up in front of Shaw's house at 1024 St. Peter about 1 a.m. and that a dead body covered with a white sheet was removed on a carrier. After the body was brought into Shaw's house, she claimed, attendants returned to the ambulance with an empty carrier and drove away. The official time of Shaw's death was given as 12:40 a.m.

After the story was reported in the press, New Orleans police canvassed the neighborhood in an effort to find the mystery witness. At this writing, she remains anonymous—if she was genuine at all. "If we come up with a lady who will testify to this, we will take legal steps to exhume the body," Minyard told reporters.

Although some in New Orleans speculated it was a crank call, Garrison told me he would not be surprised at the reluctance of any witness to come forward in the case. Everyone in New Orleans knows what bad luck has befallen those who had important information. David Ferrie told a friend in late 1966, "I'm a dead man." On February 22, 1967, Ferrie was found dead in his apartment. The cause of death was certified as "natural," due to massive brain hemorrhage. On Ferrie's piano and table, however, were two typed suicide notes.

"What was really strange," Garrison told me, "was that each signature on the notes was also typed. I wouldn't blame a witness for shutting up."

The police never located the missing witness in the Shaw case. Then the press started hitting Minyard, speculating that his interest in Shaw's death was politically motivated by his friendship with Garrison. Although Minyard told newsmen, "Mr. Garrison

and I are very friendly, but I have not received a call from him about this," the press continued to imply that the controversy over Shaw's death was political.

Then, suddenly, Minyard called off the investigation. I called him to ask why the investigation was being terminated, and he answered, "No comment."

"Are you going to have Mr. Shaw's body exhumed so there can be an official autopsy to determine cause of death?"

"No comment."

The case of the death of Clay Shaw, as far as the coroner of New Orleans Parish was concerned, was officially and finally over. Cause of death: "Natural."

But I still wasn't fully convinced that the case of the seemingly strange death of Clay Shaw was over. During his conspiracy trial in 1969, Shaw's defense lawyers pictured him as nothing more than a respectable businessman, certainly not the secret plotter with a double life, as portrayed unsuccessfully by Garrison.



In its coverage of the trial, the press often seemed to be putting Garrison, not Shaw, on trial. (On January 22, the *New York Times* reported: "But also on trial, to some extent, is Mr. Garrison, who has contended that the CIA concealed the conspiracy that resulted in Mr. Kennedy's death.")

Garrison, as the *Times* duly reported, produced at least 10 witnesses to testify they had seen Shaw with either Oswald or Ferrie in 1963. Some of Garrison's witnesses, under cross-examination, appeared to be shakable. C.I. Speisel, for instance, testified that he was hypnotized by New York City police as part of a Communist conspiracy.

Other witnesses, including a police officer and an ex-airline hostess, seemed more credible. Ferrie never took the stand, and another Garrison witness, Gordon Novel, simply vanished.

Novel, who Garrison asserted was a CIA agent, was subpoenaed before the grand jury to testify about the activities of Cuban exiles in the early 1960s. Novel had been linked to the burglary of a munitions dump in 1961, in connection with Cuban exile activity centered around the Bay of Pigs invasion. Slated for a second appearance before the grand jury, Novel instead left the state and resisted all efforts by Garrison to get him back.

Novel disappeared until 1970, when he was arrested and subsequently convicted in Reno, Nevada, on a charge of interstate transportation of an unlawful eavesdropping device. Novel then dropped out of sight again but, according to columnist Jack Anderson, continued his clandestine activities at levels reaching all the way to the White House. Anderson last year, in a syndicated column, reported that Novel worked with former Presidential aide Charles Colson on a scheme to erase the Nixon tapes. The two, Anderson reported, also discussed leaking a phony tape in hopes of discrediting the Watergate investigation.



PHOTOS: GEORGE SMITH, WILLIAM ALLEN

One of the least-publicized conspiracy theories centers on the three "hoboes" (above), rounded up at the railyard behind Dealey Plaza minutes after JFK was shot, and taken to a command post where they were questioned. However, no record of their arrest and/or booking, nor a record of their names, has ever surfaced. So what? Theory 1: If they're bums, why do they have barbershop haircuts (photo left)? Why is there no record of their interrogation? Is the "hobo" outlined in the box above the same man as pictured below? If so, the man below turned up years later in connection with the investigation of a right-wing group in the U.S. For the photo that created the most excitement among conspiracy theoreticians, turn to page 78...



Not only did Garrison have trouble bringing witnesses back to Louisiana, but he also had difficulty securing vital evidence he needed to debunk the Warren Commission's assertion that Oswald was the lone assassin.

He had to fight to win court approval to subpoena an 8-mm film of the assassination taken by an amateur. *Life* magazine had purchased rights to the film and had refused until then to allow its complete showing. The jury in New Orleans eventually saw the film, which Garrison claimed left no doubt that the fatal shot slammed Kennedy backward and to his left.

"Unless the laws of physics have been revised," Garrison said, "the Zapruder film clearly indicates that the fatal shot came at the President from in front and to the right of him." Coupled with the fact that the overwhelming majority of witnesses in

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"Garrison produced at least 10 witnesses who said they had seen Shaw with either Oswald or Ferrie in 1963."



Lee Harvey Oswald

CLAY SHAW

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Dallas' Dealey Plaza distinctly heard gunfire in front of the President's car, Garrison tried to build a case that there were at least three gunmen firing from two directions.

The most critical evidence Garrison sought was to be found in the secret autopsy photos of the President's body, locked up in the National Archives. Garrison, blocked by the federal government, was unsuccessful in his attempts to subpoena the photographs. In frustration, he at one point considered dropping the case, but went ahead anyway.

Without that evidence, and without his vital witnesses, his case was certainly weakened, yet he pleaded for a guilty verdict as a sign that the citizens of the United States were finally fighting against the "secret police." In an impassioned final summation, Garrison warned the jury that the government could get away with killing anyone it wanted by conjuring up an elaborate cover story.

During the trial, however, Garrison was never able to link Shaw with these "sinister forces," and the jury voted to acquit the New Orleans businessman.

In an interview published at the end of the trial, Garrison said that the Cold War was worth \$79 billion a year and that some forces, primarily the CIA, wanted Mr. Kennedy killed to preserve it.

Why wouldn't the jury buy his theory? he was asked by the reporter.

"I was forced to present a James Bond novel type conspiracy in a trial bound by the old rules," he said, "in an Anglo-Saxon courtroom."

At the time much of Garrison's theory did in fact seem like a plot from a badly written spy story. Most Americans in 1969 simply wouldn't accept Garrison's hypothesis that "sinister forces"—namely CIA operatives who were disgruntled with President Kennedy's handling of the Bay of Pigs invasion—were conducting covert operations in the United States.

To understand Garrison's James Bond scenario requires a brief examination of the political situation during President Kennedy's three-year term of office.

When Kennedy took over the White House in 1961, plans were already in operation for the overthrow of Fidel Castro's revolutionary Communist government in Cuba. The CIA planned to land a mercenary force of Cuban exiles on the coast of Cuba, with air cover to be provided by U.S. fighter planes. Although Kennedy went along with the early plans, he was reluctant to order U.S. combat planes into action, fearing that direct involvement could bring the United States into a full-scale war.

When the CIA mercenary force



A number of writers contend that the officer leading the three hoboes, above, rounded up after JFK was shot, could not be identified by Dallas police as a member of that department. The corker: Look closely and you'll see that there is something in the officer's ear that appears to be a hearing device, or radio communication device. Two months ago, the officer in charge of this detail refused to discuss anything about the "hoboes" incident with TRUE magazine. Another officer involved in the roundup said he knew of no Dallas policeman who used a hearing aid.

landed on the beach, it was quickly overwhelmed by the Cuban militia. As the mercenary force was being flattened, the CIA pleaded with Kennedy to save the 1,400 men by ordering carrier-based fighter planes to provide air cover for the mission. Kennedy refused, and the mercenaries were wiped out. Some were killed and others were captured, paraded through the streets of Havana.

There were elements of the CIA which were furious with Kennedy for declining to call in U.S. air strikes. The men who planned the Bay of Pigs operation were outraged with their President, who they believed had betrayed them. Kennedy, according to several historians, also felt betrayed by the CIA and planned to get rid of those he felt to be disloyal.

During the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, Kennedy worked out a secret deal with the Soviet Union in which the United States promised not to invade Cuba if the Soviets would agree to remove their missiles from the island. Soviet leader Nikita S. Khrushchev later revealed that Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy had told the Soviet ambassador to the U.S. that the President was fearful of some sort of coup by the military. When Kennedy learned that the CIA was still running two secret training bases for Cuban exiles in Florida and Louisiana, he ordered the FBI to close them. That was in the summer of 1963, only a few months before his death.

Kennedy reportedly vowed to "splinter the CIA in a thousand pieces and scatter it to the winds," and one of his early targets was Major General Charles Cabell, the Deputy Director of the CIA. Cabell came from a long line of Dallas politicians and, Garrison claimed, it was Cabell who ordered the President's motorcade route changed at the last minute so that it would pass the grassy knoll near Dealey Plaza. It was from this grassy knoll, Garrison charged, that two and possibly three crack marksmen waited in ambush for the President's car to pass.

Shortly after the President was shot, press photographers took pictures of Dallas police arresting three "tramps" behind the grassy knoll and marching them off to jail. While they wore shabby clothing, the tramps, oddly enough, all had neatly trimmed haircuts.

Some investigators of the Kennedy assassination claim it was these men who fired on the President, and that one of the policemen escorting them wasn't a policeman at all. Some photos showed that the "policeman" had some kind of listening device in his ear. One of the "tramps" later was identified as having been seen at the same CIA training camp on Lake Ponchatrain where Ferrie was reportedly seen with Oswald. While that hasn't been verified, Dallas police have never released the names of the three men, or explained what hap-

pened to them.

And then one night, police in Washington, D.C., found several men in the act of burglary at the Democratic Party headquarters in the Watergate Hotel complex on June 17, 1972. Later it was discovered that a key figure in the burglary was E. Howard Hunt.

The Watergate affair would have remained a low-level burglary, as the White House claimed, if it were not discovered that Hunt was a former CIA operator, and even one of the key planners of the Bay of Pigs operation.

A bombshell exploded early this year when the *New York Times* revealed that Hunt testified before the Senate Watergate Committee, in still unpublished testimony, that he served as the first chief of covert action for the CIA's Domestic Operations Division. The super-secret unit was set up shortly after the failure of the Bay of Pigs operation, and many agency men were shunted into the new domestic "dirty tricks" section, it was reported.

Hunt's disclosures, while not substantiating Garrison's theory, do support at least one element of his thesis that was discounted six years ago. Hunt's testimony confirmed that the CIA did in fact conduct clandestine missions in the United States against U.S. citizens. And that is in violation of the charter governing the CIA.

One of the difficulties in checking into Garrison's claims is that no high-level official of the CIA has been willing to talk openly about what really went on in the halls of the CIA secret complex at Langley, Virginia.

That was until Victor Marchetti, a 14-year veteran of the CIA, decided to call it quits. An expert on the Soviet military, Marchetti had been recruited to the agency by a CIA-connected college professor. He rose through the ranks to become executive assistant to the Deputy Director of the CIA and finally made it to the agency's executive suite, sitting in on the CIA's most secret, highest-level staff meetings. But the more he learned, especially about the dirtier aspects of the CIA murder campaign in Vietnam, the more disenchanted he became. In late 1969 he resigned from the CIA.

When he decided to write about his experiences in *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence*, his book became the first in U.S. history to be censored by the government before publication. The CIA felt that Marchetti knew too much, would compromise the agency, and arranged to have key passages deleted. Although he is under strict court restrictions as to what he can reveal about his tenure with the CIA, Marchetti did agree to discuss the Kennedy assassination with *TRUE* magazine.

Marchetti was attending high-level staff conferences in early 1969 when Clay Shaw was being brought to trial

by Jim Garrison. At these conferences, he said, it was determined to "give help" in the trial.

"I sure as hell knew they didn't mean Garrison," Marchetti said.

Whenever they talked about the trial, they spoke "in half-sentences," he said, cutting off discussion before getting to the main point. "They'd say, 'We'll talk about it later,' meaning a private chat after the meeting," Marchetti recalled.

When Marchetti tried to find out what was going on, he was informed that Clay Shaw at one time had been a contact for the CIA. His job, Marchetti was told, was to monitor businessmen going behind the Iron Curtain—"you know," Marchetti said, "to try to find out if so-and-so was going to a denied-access area." The businessmen would then be debriefed by the CIA and questioned about what they had seen and done. Often this was very useful in gaining information about activity in Communist countries.

But Marchetti and the others were told that the CIA's connection with Shaw was to be top secret. The agency did not want "even a remote connection with Shaw" to leak out, Marchetti said.

Marchetti now states that Shaw's links with the CIA could have been much more extensive, and that he and the others could have been given a "cover story" to explain the agency's interest in the Clay Shaw trial. "They often lied to us," he said. "They use the term 'need to know.'"

The branch of the CIA that interviewed U.S. travelers who might pick up interesting information abroad was called the Domestic Contact Service. Although the name sounds innocuous enough, the unit may have been a cover for illegal and covert domestic missions.

Hunt, for example, went to CIA supply officer Cleo Gephart with a request for the equipment he used for what became known as "dirty tricks"—a reddish wig, glasses, a speech-alteration device, a tape recorder concealed in a portable typewriter case, two microphones, and a camera disguised in a tobacco pouch. Gephart, according to columnist Jack Anderson, testified under oath that he thought Hunt was a member of the Domestic Contact Service.

Gephart did not explain why Hunt would need such weird James Bond paraphernalia to conduct interviews with businessmen returning from abroad unless the Domestic Contact Service was indeed an elaborate cover for more sinister operations.

While Marchetti held a high position in the CIA, there was a lot that he didn't know, such as exactly what kind of secret missions Hunt's men performed. "That was a weird division," Marchetti said of the Hunt covert-activity section. "They were in the dirty part of the business."

Garrison tried to prove that Shaw, Oswald and Ferrie were all linked to the Bay of Pigs operation. When I asked Marchetti if it were possible that Hunt, Shaw and the others stayed in contact after the Bay of Pigs invasion failed, he replied, "Sure, I think it's possible. Many of them who were involved would stay in contact. Friendships were formed," he said, "binding links."

While working for the CIA, Marchetti said, he sometimes grew curious about the more bizarre activities of the agency, but he was always told, "Don't worry about that."

Since leaving the agency and conducting his own research into the CIA, Marchetti said, he has begun to have doubts about what he was told.

"The more I have learned, the more concerned I have become that the government was involved in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Maybe it was just in the covering up," he added, "but sometimes I wonder if it doesn't go deeper than that."

While working for the CIA, he "accepted the company line" about the assassination of the President, "but now I am very dubious." Marchetti now believes that the Warren Commission, which included Gerald Ford, then the Republican minority leader in the House of Representatives, was "a whitewash."

Now Mr. Ford, who has since been elevated to the Presidency by Richard M. Nixon, has appointed a commission to look into charges that the CIA may have violated the law. That commission is headed by Vice President Nelson Rockefeller.

It is Marchetti's opinion that the reason Ford "moved so fast" to set up the Rockefeller Commission was actually to suppress the truth, in much the same way he contends that the Warren Commission whitewashed the Kennedy assassination.

The U.S. Congress is also conducting its own investigations of the CIA. Marchetti, who lives in a suburb of the nation's capital, is now heavily in demand as a lecturer since his book has become a best seller. He is also a favorite in the Washington cocktail circuit, where Congressmen are now openly speculating that their probe into illegal, covert CIA missions may turn up evidence even more explosive than the Watergate scandal.

People now feel that much has been swept under the rug, he said, but "once they begin to dig, there is going to be real embarrassment at what they'll find."

Will Congress really probe into those dark, hidden secrets that have been protected for so long?

"Now is the time to clear the air," he said. But, he added, many in Washington sense a "smell of fear," which clouds even Congress itself.

"People are damn scared," the ex-CIA man said.