

ART BUCHWALD

Crime and Comedy

LAT- 3/2/67

The New Orleans TV drama titled "Mr. District Attorney" has been playing nightly on all the news shows. The district attorney of New Orleans, Jim Garrison, keeps holding news conferences announcing that he has solved the Kennedy assassination. Since Garrison has produced no evidence or information to back up his news conferences, many publicity-hungry district attorneys have been angered by all the space Garrison is getting.



I just received a call the other day from the district attorney of Total Swamp, La., who told me that he had startling information concerning "another crime of the century" and I immediately flew

out to see him.

"What is your startling information?" I asked.

"I can't reveal it at this time, but I believe everyone is going to be terribly surprised when I do."

"Well, can you tell me what kind of crime it was?"

"I'd rather not say until I've made my arrests."

"Can't you give me some clue?"

"All I can tell you is that I have a witness who will reveal all the details in due time."

Witness Is Dead

"Where is this witness?" I asked.

"He's dead. The coroner said he died of natural causes, but I insist it was a suicide."

"But what good is the witness if he's dead?"

"Ah, that's just the point. Why is my witness dead?"

"I don't follow you."

"Why did my witness die just at

the time I was going to pick him up for questioning?" "Wouldn't you say it strengthens my case?"

"It might if I knew what your case was," I said. "Have you told the FBI what you know?"

"Why should I tell the FBI? They'll only take the glory away from me. I'm trying to make a name for myself, boy."

"I can see that. Let me ask you this. Why do you claim to know

something nobody else knows about this startling crime?"

"Because I've solved the case."

"But if you solved the case, why don't you make the arrests?"

"I don't have the evidence. But I'm not defeated. The fact I don't have any evidence makes me even more certain I've solved the crime."

"How do you figure that?"

You Can't Lose

"If you have evidence some wise guy lawyer can disprove it. But if you don't have any evidence they can't lay a glove on you."

"Don't you think it's premature to make these startling revelations?"

"I should say not. Some of the leading businessmen in this town are giving me money to continue my investigation. It isn't going to be easy because I may have to go out on a lecture tour. Did you want to take my picture?"

"I'd like to very much."

"What you've told me is dynamite. I only hope you're as successful in prosecuting the case as you've been in solving it."

"I probably said too much already, but all I'm trying to do is serve justice in the best possible way I can." **END**

Garrison Accuses Shaw of Plot With Oswald and Others

BY NICHOLAS C. CHRISS
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Times Staff Writers 3/3/67

NEW ORLEANS—A district attorney's affidavit alleged Thursday that civic leader Clay L. Shaw plotted with Lee Harvey Oswald and others "the means and manner" of assassinating President John F. Kennedy.

The affidavit said the plot was conceived at a series of meetings in September, 1963—two months before Mr. Kennedy was killed—in the uptown apartment of David William Ferrie, 48, who was found dead there Feb. 22.

The information, it said, came from an unnamed informant who was present at the meetings. The informant, according to the affidavit, verified his allegations while under the influence of sodium pentothal, the so-called "truth serum."

Affidavit Lacks Details

The affidavit did not indicate how the alleged plot was carried out. The Warren Commission found no evidence that Oswald was involved in a conspiracy, that he acted alone in shooting Mr. Kennedy, and that his presence in the Texas School Book Depository, from where the fatal shots were fired, was the result of a series of happenings unrelated to the President's trip to Dallas.

Ferrie was the only other alleged conspirator, besides Shaw and Oswald, identified by name in the affidavit. However, it referred to "other persons" as involved, and Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison has forecast more arrests, "more than most people expect."

Shaw, 54, denied any implication in the death of Mr. Kennedy in his first public appearance since his arrest Wednesday on a charge of "conspiracy to murder." Shaw, who was released on \$10,000 bond, said:

"I am shocked and dismayed at the charges which have been filed

against me. I have not conspired with anyone at any time or any place to murder our late and esteemed President, John F. Kennedy, or anyone else."

Denies Acquaintance

He added:

"I do not know Harvey Lee Oswald (sic) nor to the best of my knowledge know anyone who knew him, I have never seen or spoken to Oswald where anyone I knew was associated with him."

But the affidavit stated that the informant "heard these subjects (Shaw, Oswald, Ferrie and "others") agree to kill John F. Kennedy and heard these subjects discuss the means and manner of carrying out this agreement."

In Washington, the new attorney general, Ramsey Clark, said an FBI investigation in late 1963 had not found anything to connect Shaw with the assassination. However, it was not clear whether the FBI had actually interrogated Shaw.

Telephone Call

The investigation by the FBI and the Warren Commission stemmed from a report by Dean Andrews Jr., a lawyer, that he had received a telephone call the day after the assassination asking if he would defend Oswald.

Andrews had identified the caller as Clay Bertrand. The district attorney's affidavit identified Shaw as "alias Clay Bertrand."

In an apparent move to link Shaw to Oswald through the name of Bertrand, Garrison Thursday afternoon questioned Andrews, now an assistant district attorney in neighboring Jefferson Parish (county).

In November-December,

1963, FBI agents and other investigators undertook an intensive hunt for "Clay Bertrand." They could find no one by that name.

The Warren Commission

stated that Andrews informed authorities about the call from Bertrand while he was a patient at the Hotel Dieu, a New Orleans hospital.

Under Sedation

His physician told commission investigators that Andrews had been under "heavy sedation" at the time and was believed to have been incapable of using the telephone.

After his interrogation by Garrison, Andrews first denied he knew Bertrand, but said later through his attorney, Sam (Monk) Zelden, that he had had some "relationships with Bertrand, mostly by phone."

Zelden said the "relationship" involved Bertrand interceding on behalf of various clients to help bail them out of financial difficulties.

Andrews said he had represented Oswald on "several occasions on minor matters." He said he was consulted by Oswald "three or four times in person."

A puzzling aspect of the case was, if Shaw and Bertrand are the same man, how a man of Shaw's prominence in New Orleans could have concealed double identity—particularly in light of the FBI's efforts to identify Bertrand.

There also was the apparent contradiction between the affidavit which asserted that Oswald conspired to kill Mr. Kennedy and Garrison's statement to newsmen last week that he believes there is a good chance Oswald "didn't kill anybody."

Some skepticism here

also was being based on the fact that homosexual activity is clearly a major thread in Garrison's investigation. Ferrie was a homosexual. Andrews testified under questioning by a Warren Commission attorney that Oswald came to his office in 1963 accompanied by several Mexicans who appeared to be deviates. There was no

suggestion in the Warren Commission report that Oswald had any homosexual associations.

Nor was it clear whether Garrison was accusing Shaw of actual involvement in the assassination or was one of those whom Garrison had said earlier—

he would prosecute as accessories-after-the-fact—persons who purportedly withheld information and, according to the district attorney, were "almost as responsible as the perpetrators of the crime."

The affidavit, filed Wednesday night and made public Thursday, was used as the basis for a three-hour search of Shaw's luxurious residence at 1313 Dauphine St., in the French Quarter. It provided investigators with the following:

A rope, chains, whips, a leather strap, a cartridge belt, a black hood and cape, a black gown, a shotgun and gun case and miscellaneous papers, books, including three calendar appointment books.

March 14 was set for a preliminary hearing for Shaw. The request for the hearing was made by Garrison's office, an unusual move for the prosecution.

Guy Johnson, one of Shaw's attorneys, said, "We do not understand the motivation of Mr. Garrison. There is no argument that Mr. Shaw has a right to a preliminary hearing, but I'm not asking for it."

Asked for comment on the allegations in the affidavit, Johnson said: "I guess it all depends on who the informant is, doesn't it?"

The hearing will consider the booking under a Louisiana law "relative to conspiring and entering in an agreement or combination with one or more persons for the purpose of committing the crime of murder of John F. Kennedy."

The affidavit detailed what the district attor-

ney's office said were the circumstances of the plot.

It said Oswald, Shaw, Ferrie and others "were discussing how they would kill John F. Kennedy, president of the United States."

"At these meetings there was discussion and agreement to carry out this conspiracy.

"One of the sources of information of the affiant is a confidential informant who was present at these meetings and saw the conspirators and heard the plan."

The affidavit said the informant, "after giving this statement to the affiant, voluntarily submitted to sodium pentothal, commonly known as truth serum, which was administered under the care

and control and supervision of the coroner for the Parish (county) of Orleans, a medical doctor.

"That the confidential informant while under the sodium pentothal verified, corroborated and reaffirms (sic) his earlier statements."

Coroner Nicholas Chetta was asked if he had administered the "truth serum" to the informant. "I was present. That's all," he said and referred all other questions to the district attorney.

Chetta has disputed Garrison's statements on the cause of death of Ferrie, a free-lance pilot who was found dead in the apartment where the alleged plot was formulated.

Garrison, who has called Ferrie "one of the most important men of history," has said the death was suicide. Chetta said an autopsy showed Ferrie died of natural causes—a brain hemorrhage.

Shaw, a silver-haired debonair bachelor, immaculately tailored in heavy brown tweed, read his statement in the office of one of his attorneys, Edward Wegmann.

Amid the jam of newsmen, Shaw, perspiring profusely but reading his

statement and answering reporters' questions with ease, denied he had ever used the name Bertrand.

"I don't know of any Clay Bertrand," said Shaw, "and I never used any aliases."

Asked about Ferrie, Shaw, described as a politi-

cal liberal who had supported Mr. Kennedy's election in 1960, replied: "I never met, as far as I know, Mr. Dave Ferrie. I was never in his apartment."

He said he had not been "apprised of the basis of these fantastic charges and assumed that in due course I will be furnished with this information and will be afforded an opportunity to prove my innocence."

Shaw said he had initially been questioned by Garrison "around

Christmas time" and was asked about the "Cuban incident" involving Oswald.

The incident occurred outside Shaw's office in the old Trade Mart building in August, 1963, when Oswald scuffled with anti-Castro Cubans. He was distributing pro-Castro leaflets at the time.

Shaw was arrested after another interrogation in Garrison's office Wednesday afternoon, but he declined to discuss it.

"After all," he said, "Garrison isn't talking."

Shaw's arrest triggered a series of reactions and developments Thursday:

President Johnson said at a news conference in Washington that he knows nothing about Garrison's probe except what he reads in the papers and sees no reason to change his previous statements accepting the conclusions of the Warren Commission.

In Philadelphia, Dist. Atty. Arlen Specter, a top

counsel to the Warren Commission, said the federal investigation of the Kennedy slaying should remain closed until "we know that Garrison has some new facts to back up his charges."

In Lubbock, Tex., R. E. Denson, of Dallas, who

headed an intensive investigation for the defense of the late Jack Ruby, killer of Oswald, said he had been unable to uncover a New Orleans conspiracy. "Frankly, I didn't know of anything that could develop," Denson said.

In San Francisco, an official of the World Trade Center there said Shaw, who retired as managing director of the New Orleans International Trade Mart in 1965, was touring the Bay city facility at the time Mr. Kennedy was shot in Dallas Nov. 22, 1963.

"We spent most of the morning of the 22nd together at the World Trade Center, comparing our trade centers and discussing their functions and financing," said J. Monroe Sullivan, executive director of the California center.

"We heard before lunch that the President had died. Only 14 persons attended the luncheon."

Shaw was the main speaker at the event. *EAD*