

Two Congressional Bodies Eye Garrison, Probe Acts

By PAUL SCOTT

WASHINGTON, D. C. — District Attorney Jim Garrison's controversial New Orleans investigation of the Kennedy assassination is beginning to attract some belated congressional attention.

Staffs of the House Committee on Un-American Activities and the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee are quietly checking into Garrison's wide-ranging inquiry to determine exactly what he is up to. At present, the attention of these congressional probes centers around Garrison's interest in and handling of (1) an official of the Ku Klux Klan and (2) a former congressional committee employe, who has given secret testimony before the New Orleans grand jury.

RELUCTANT WITNESSES

Significantly, both of these persons were reluctant witnesses in past congressional investigations not related to the Kennedy assassination.

The KKK official involved in Garrison's investigation is Jack M. Helm, the former exalted cyclops of the New Orleans, Louisiana, unit of the United Klans of America. He is now head of an independent KKK group which he organized.

Summoned before the House Un-American Activities Committee in January 1964 during the committee's probe of the KKK, he was an uncooperative witness.

Helm, an operative manager of a New Orleans construction company, invoked the fifth, first, fourth, and thirteenth amendments of the Constitution in refusing to answer any of the questions put to him by committee members.

The transcript of the committee hearings shows that one of the questions Helm refused to answer concerned his appearance on a speakers platform with three persons who were arrested in connection with the slaying in Philadelphia, Mississippi, of three civil rights workers.

Details will be revealed during next month's trial of Clay Shaw, the New Orleans businessman charged with being involved in a Kennedy assassination conspiracy.

Garrison is also probing an allegation of Kimble that Walter Sheridan, the former Justice Department trouble-shooter for then Attorney General Robert Kennedy, once counseled him not to talk to anyone and to go to Canada.

The former congressional employe whose furnishing of information to Garrison has interested congressional probes is Harold Weisberg, author of books on the Kennedy assassination attacking the Warren Commission, the FBI and CIA.

According to records of the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee and the House Un-American Activities, Weisberg is the same man who testified in 1963 before a House committee that he bought forged documents in an attempt to link the Dies committee to the Silver Shirts.

At that time the Silver Shirts was a militant right-wing organization of the attorney general's subversive list. The documents were used in an abortive attempt by a Michigan congressman to smear the Dies committee, forerunner of the present House Committee on Un-American Activities.

The records of the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee also show that Weisberg was dropped from the staff of the late Senator La Follette's Special Investigating Subcommittee for allegedly leaking subcommittee confidential information.

Weisberg, whose latest book carries a foreword by Garrison, has appeared several times before the New Orleans grand jury being used by the district attorney for his inquiry. In his publications Weisberg contends that Lee Harvey Oswald, accused Kennedy assassin, was trained by an impersonator.

The congressional probes are now checking Weisberg's long-time contacts in the Central Intelligence Agency and State Department, including several persons who transferred to those agencies from the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) after World War II.

FREEZING FUNDS

The so-called "Percy fund" may never be spent.

Aides of Senator Charles Percy, R-Ill., say that none of the money has been used from the \$100,000 fund which a group of wealthy private individuals set up to help the Senator pay some of his office expenses.

Supporters of Percy, who believe the GOP freshman senator has a chance of becoming the GOP vice presidential candidate in 1968, are urging him not to use the fund, since it would put him in a position where he would appear to be obligated to the donors.

While these backers now feel that the Republican senator has been hurt politically by the fund, they contend it would be soon forgotten if he should make a quick move to discontinue the fund before any of the money is spent.

Although Senator Percy has said publicly he sees nothing wrong with the fund, he is giving the suggestion serious private consideration.

Until he makes a decision, he has adopted a policy of paying from his own pocket the extra expenses for his office not covered by congressional appropriations.

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Testimony was presented during the hearing by a committee investigator that "At the rally Helm stated, 'No congressional investigation will ever deteriorate this (KKK) organization... are dead and buried — and I hope it will be soon."

Garrison began his probe of Helm on a tip from Jules Rocco Kimble, a self-avowed member of the KKK, who also claimed he once worked special assignments for the CIA. This the CIA denies and Garrison claims he will prove.

According to Garrison, Kimble reported that on the death of David Ferris, one of Garrison's suspects in the alleged Kennedy assassination plot, he drove Helm to Ferris's apartment. Helm then came out with a satchel full of papers which, Kimble says, the KKK official then placed in a bank safe deposit box.

At this stage of his investigation Garrison refuses to say whether he has located the safe deposit box or recovered its mysterious contents.

However, aides of the district attorney are hinting that he has the key and that the box's con-

