

Rec'd 7/2/69

Tom Bethell Diary

One

I began to get interested in the Kennedy assassination in the Fall of 1966. I had a temporary teaching job in Baton Rouge, and one weekend we had to go to Dallas for a Teachers Convention. I took the opportunity to visit Dealey Plaza while I was there. The deserted looking Texas School Book Depository stood there quietly guarding its secrets, while the Plaza itself was smaller than I had expected (as everyone finds.) I was surprised that there were no markers or memorials of any kind to be seen. I walked back up Commerce Street and bought a few paper-back books about the assassination then on sale at a newsstand near the Adolphus Hotel. I spent most of the remainder of the weekend in my room reading the books. Edward Epstein's Inquest seemed particularly good. This was in early October, I recall.

About a month later I quit my job and decided to go back to Dallas to look into the matter further. By this time I had read all the books available at that time about the assassination. The one thing I had not read was the Warren Report. In any event, about a week after leaving my job I drove to Dallas. By that time I had contacted Penn Jones, the author of a book entitled Forgive My Grief which dealt with the so-called "mysterious deaths" resulting from the assassination. Penn very kindly allowed me to stay at his house in Midlothian ~~which is~~ ~~25~~ (25 miles south of Dallas). As I recall, I accomplished little while I was there, although I did go and see Mary Moorman, a bystander in Dealey Plaza at the time of the assassination. She took 2 polaroid photographs, one of which nobody had seen, and it supposedly depicted the front of the motorcade against the background of the Book Depository. Thus it might show whether or not Oswald was in the window at the time. On a later visit Mary Moorman showed me this picture but it did not show the 6th floor of the building. Besides, it was far too blurred to show anything in the way of detail.

On Nov. 22, 1966, I went with Penn Jones to attend a ceremony in Dealey Plaza, commemorating the 3rd anniversary of the assassination. I remember there was excitement among critics of the Warren Report at the time. Life had just come out with a cover story calling for a new investigation, basing its story on a study of the Zapruder film which it owned, and arriving at the conclusion that there was a good chance that there might have been two assassins. Senator Richard Russell--a member of the Warren Commission--made a public statement to the effect that he had not been entirely happy with all of the findings of the Warren Commission, and then Senator Russell Long joined in the fray and expressed his doubts, too. It was beginning to look as though the Warren Report would soon topple.

While at the ceremonies Penn Jones and I met a reporter from the New York Times named Martin Waldron, a genial man with of disarmingly rustic speech and appearance. He told us that the New York Times was conducting an investigation of the assassination, and he had with him a several page list of questions which he was looking into. I did not see the questions, but he told me that most of them were about New Orleans aspects of the case. I later learned that a good many of the questions specifically concerned David Ferrie. By this time, Jim Garrison's investigation had barely begun, if at all. (The precise date on which Garrison began his investigation has never been pinned down, but when I later worked in his office all the indications were that it did not seriously get under way until about the first week of December, 1966.) Thus, it is worth emphasizing, the New York Times was looking into David Ferrie independently of Garrison, and most probably even before Garrison.

After the ceremonies Penn Jones advised me that it might be more valuable for me to look into the assassination in New Orleans than in Dallas. He said a number of questions about Oswald's activities there had never been answered, and as I was living in New Orleans and had friends there it would be easier for me to get around than in Dallas. It seemed like a good suggestion. Penn

suggested that I go and interview one man in particular: a lawyer whom Oswald had visited in the summer of 1963, named Dean Andrews.

I returned to New Orleans a few days later. I had been living there for over a year and studying the city's traditional jazz, and so I was returning to a city which was familiar to me.

Thursday, Dec 8, 1966

This evening I went to see Dean Andrews. Penn Jones had particularly requested that I establish whether he was still practicing law in the same office as in 1963, and it turned out he was not, (as he makes clear in his testimony before the Warren Commission.) Andrews was sitting in his office giving some advice to a young colored guy who was apparently setting up as a mechanic—just before he came out I heard Andrews advise him not to lend his tools to anyone. I told Andrews I was interested in the assassination and would like to discuss it with him. It will be recalled that Dean Andrews testified to the Warren Commission that Lee Harvey Oswald had come to him in the summer of 1963 to do some legal work in connection with Oswald's dishonorable discharge from the Marine Corps. Then, the day after the assassination, when Dean Andrews was recuperating from pneumonia in the Hotel Dieu, he testified that he received a phone call from "a voice I recognised as Clay Bertrand" who asked him to go to Dallas to defend Oswald. Andrews also speculated that it may have been Clay Bertrand who sent Oswald to see him in the first place.

I asked Dean Andrews about Oswald's visit. "Oswald came in here with a bunch of kids. Don't ask me who they were, I didn't get their names. There's no question that boy Oswald didn't shoot the President. He couldn't have hit a bull in the ass at five paces. He was just the patsy."

Clay Bertrand? What did he look like? Andrews looked over at me. "Looked a bit like you, only fatter in the face. Who killed Cock Robin, that's what everyone wants to know, who killed Cock Robin? Well, I'll tell you, I like to live, it's as simple as that, so I've learned to keep my big mouth shut." Then he added, "If you want to find out the truth, go to Chicago. You might find it there. But I ain't giving you any more clues, except this. The assassination was done as a diversion, in order to get a certain piece of news off the headlines, which it succeeded in doing."

The phone rang and Andrews end of the conversation went something like this: "Yeah, speaking (sitting up in chair and paying closer attention), I've got that somewhere, and my interviews with the beardies...(pause), the Feebies, you know, the federal men, (pause) yeah, I'll get them together for you, and you're the only one I'd do that for...(pause) everybody seems to be interested, I've got a boy in here right now, kicking it around...(pause) just a fella from England who wants to know who killed Cock Robin like everybody else...(pause) that's right, Captain Ferrie, pilot, that's right...(pause) yeah, he called me...(pause) I don't know, I wasn't in, he left a message...(pause) OK, I'll let you know, and I'll get those reports for you....."

Andrews put the phone down and looked over at me. "Seems like everybody is waking up to the possibilities. That was the Giant. They call him the Jolly Green Giant. You don't know who that is? Jim Garrison, the District Attorney of Orleans Parish."

I asked him who Captain Ferrie was. I had never heard the name before. Andrews went on looking in my direction, thinking about something. "I've got news for you," he said. "My phone is tapped. How else did the giant know that Ferrie had been calling me? Got to be the ear is listening in." He then picked up the phone and made two or three very odd phone calls. He dialled a number (remembered out of his head) which was evidently answered immediately, and then in a deadpan voice said, "Eleven and a half, my mince pies are over-cooked."

Three

Without waiting for a reply he replaced the receiver. This procedure was repeated once or twice. I asked him if his phone was tapped and he said he would find out tomorrow.

After working on some legal papers for a short while Dean Andrews invited me to join him for dinner, which we had at a Chinese restaurant on Decatur St. We then went on together to Dixieland Hall, where he knows the manager, Al Clark. I soon left and went down to Preservation Hall. There I met Rae Mathews, whom I had not seen for some time. We went out and had coffee and I told her that Garrison was apparently investigating the assassination. She told me that she had once worked at the DA's office, knew some of the assistants there, and suggested that I might be able to get a job working for Garrison. She said he was the kind of man who didn't bother too much about red tape, etc., and might hire me on the spot. She offered to introduce me to one of Garrison's assistants.

Friday, December 9, 1966

Decided it might be worth while to find out something about "Captain Ferrie", if I am going to see the district attorney about being hired. Went to the library at Tulane University and looked through the 26 volumes of the Warren Report. The index in vol 15 lists 2 references to him: when he was questioning witnesses in New Orleans, Commission counsel Wesley Liebeler brought his name up twice. Edward Voebel, a high school friend of Lee Harvey Oswald said that Oswald and Ferrie may have known one another in the Civil Air Patrol in the '50s. Frederick O'Sullivan, a detective in the New Orleans Police Department also knew Oswald at that time and he went into more detail about Ferrie. He said that Ferrie had been arrested after the assassination as a fugitive from Texas, and that he and a lieutenant Dwyer went out to the New Orleans airport to check to see if Ferrie's plane was in flyable condition. Apparently it wasn't: it had flat tires and broken instrument panel, etc. At any rate, Ferrie sounds like an interesting suspect. Question is, why was he arrested, and on what evidence?

On my way back I called in on Dean Andrews again. I asked him if his phone was tapped, and he said it was, and had been "since December, 1963." I've no idea how he knows this.

Monday, Dec 12, 1966

I met Rae Mathews in the afternoon and she drove me out to the district attorney's office, located at Tulane Avenue and Broad Street, and the big grey stone Criminal Courts Building. We went upstairs and in through big doors at the end of the hall. "DISTRICT ATTORNEY" written in large letters above the doors. We waited in the lobby, where there was a Christmas tree, a couple of policemen lounging around with hats off, etc., an assortment of unspecified people walking to and fro with files in their hands, and a loud-speaker system which constantly called for people--"Officer Ivon" seemed to be pretty much in demand. After a while we were shown through into the interior of the office, through a door which said "No admittance" or something, and into a tiny little office occupied by John Volz, an assistant district attorney. He knew Rae from the time she worked in the office. She told him I was interested in the assassination and had been doing some work on it. He was non-committal, but asked me what I knew. In the course of my spiel I let drop that I knew something about David Ferrie, and thought he seemed like an interesting suspect etc. At about that time another man, Charles Ward, came in and Volz turned to him and said that I "knew about Ferrie". Ward seemed more or less unimpressed, but I got the impression that Volz was on my side. He seemed to be willing to put in a good word for me, if necessary. He ended up by telling me to write a report on what I knew, and to bring it back tomorrow if possible. Meanwhile he would tell Garrison about me.

It was getting dark when Rae and I left. She told me it was her impression

that there was a good chance of my being hired.

~~Friday~~ Tuesday, December 13, 1966

I worked on my report for John Volz today, but realised I wasn't going to be able to finish it in time. I therefore called up the DA's office in the afternoon and asked the telephone operator if I could speak to John Volz. I added something about the Kennedy assassination. I spoke to Volz and he said that tomorrow would be a better day for him as well.

Wednesday, Dec 14, 1966

This has been quite a day. I finished off the report and went over to the DA's office again, around 2 pm. I waited out in the lobby for some ~~time~~ time, but finally Volz came out and beckoned me in. He took my report (6 pages, single-spaced,) and somewhat to my surprise, started to read it through carefully as I sat in front of him. I was afraid he would just take it and say "We'll call you." He read it with attention and asked for clarification on a few points. He then said that he would show it to Garrison and that I should wait outside in the lobby again. The usual procession of detectives etc. were walking back and forth, most with guns sticking out rather obviously under their coats. After about half an hour Volz came out again and I was ushered back to a carpeted region in the inner recesses of the office. We went into a more elegantly furnished office (Charlie Ward's, I later determined,) where Garrison was sitting at the end of a sofa. Ward sat at a desk at the end of the room, eyeing me circumspectly, I thought. I noticed my report was spread out on the sofa beside Garrison, and it looked as though he had at least looked through it. I had heard that Garrison was a large man, and even sitting down he looked huge, his legs sprawling out across the room. Elegantly dressed, in a 3 piece suit.

"You've obviously been doing some work on this," he boomed out in a deep, clear voice. "We're very interested in this man David Ferrie," he went on, (passing me a mug-shot of him,) "he's a very strange man. Doesn't have any hair." He certainly looked odd from the picture. Garrison then handed me another mug-shot. "This is a friend of Ferrie's we're interested in, too. He's supposed to be Ferrie's godson—Morris Brownlee. He's highly intelligent, but we haven't been able to find him. We think he may have gone to Mexico." I immediately recognised Brownlee from his picture. I had seen him several times in Robert's, (a coffee place on Toulouse Street in the French Quarter.) I told Garrison that I had seen Brownlee fairly recently. "Good, maybe you can help us find him. As it is, we're going to pay you a month in advance, and we want you to go back to Dallas and find out what you can. You might be able to help us there. You will be working under Louis Ivon, and he will be able to fill you in on some of the details of the case."

We discussed Ferrie a little, and I said that it appeared from O'Sullivan's testimony that Ferrie could not have flown to Dallas. (I don't think Garrison was familiar with O'Sullivan's testimony at that point.) Garrison seemed very confident about the whole subject. I said that Liebeler hadn't asked O'Sullivan if he knew whether Ferrie and Oswald had been together in the summer of 1963. "Well, we know they were together and we know Ferrie was in Dallas," Garrison said. He did not elaborate, but sounded very certain about it.

Garrison said he was hiring me because he "could no longer trust the FBI," and was therefore prepared to turn to amateur assistance. Garrison impressed me very favorably. He ~~seemed~~ seems intelligent, speaks well, and of course it is flattering to be hired in such an informal manner. Nobody in the DA's office even knows my address, and I must represent very much of an unknown quantity

to them. Garrison impressed me that he had gotten hold of some solid information about Ferrie, implicating him in some way. It's still not clear to me why Ferrie was arrested in 1963. I was shown out of the office by Volz, and introduced to Louis Ivon. I was taken down to the basement of the building by a detective and photographed, and Ivon told me to come back in tomorrow.

While I was in Ivon's office (located in the corner of the building) Volz came back in and told me that while I was in Dallas I was to call collect every day, and send in a written report every week. In my report to Volz I had mentioned a photograph which the Saturday Evening Post supposedly had, which showed what appeared to be a gunman on the grassy knoll. Matt Herron (a free-lance photographer) had told me about this, and that some photographer in New York had made very large blow ups of the picture, and that a rifle was visible in the blow-up. Volz asked me for more details about this, remarking that they had a man from Life magazine in the office right now, and that he wanted to know who the photographer was. I gave Volz the man's name. I had also dropped a hint in my report about the Baganov story which Herron had told me about (he had heard about it from Vincent Salandria, a lawyer in Philadelphia who has been conducting an independent study of the assassination.) I deliberately had not given the name in my report—in order to hold something back. But now Volz wanted to know his name, so I gave it to him. (Baganov, or Vaganov, was a suspect in the Tippit killing, unearthed by Salandria. Later Esquire did an article on him, with Vaganov's consent, which clearly indicated that it had been a false lead. Nevertheless, the Vaganov story is quite an interesting one.)

(1969: December 14, 1966, was "quite a day" in other ways for the office. It is the date which shows up in the VIP lounge guest book signed by "Clay Bertrand," it is the date Jack Martin came to the office and was interviewed by Garrison and told Garrison he had seen Oswald and Ferrie together in the summer of 1963; it is the date David Lewis came in and told the office he had seen ~~Ferrie~~ a "Lee Harvey" at Mancuso's restaurant in 1961 (when Oswald was in Russia); it is the day that Dick Billings arrived from New York. He was the man from Life Volz was referring to. In looking through investigative reports ~~xxx~~ when I was working in the office much later on, I was not able to find a report dated earlier than December 14—possibly there was one on the 13th—Lewis and Martin were their earliest witnesses, and so in some respects this marks the beginning of the investigation.)

Before I left, Ivon cautioned me about my call to the office during which I had mentioned the Kennedy assassination to the telephone operator. He said that only a few people in the office even knew that Garrison had opened an investigation on the subject, and that I should not talk to anyone about it.

Wednesday, December 15, 1966

I went to the DA's office in the morning, and Ivon introduced me to David Lewis, who he was questioning in his office. Lewis says he saw a man he was introduced to as "Lee Harvey" when he was working—doing what he described as "leg work"—for Guy Banister, a man who ran a private detective agency at 544 Camp St. This makes sense as Oswald had that address stamped on his literature. Trouble is Lewis is positive it was around December, 1961, when Oswald was in Russia. (Lewis said he worked for Banister only between Jan '61 and Jan '62.) Lewis knew ~~xx~~ Ferrie, apparently, recognized a picture of Ferrie which Ivon showed him, and then said that he ~~had~~ remembered seeing Ferrie and Oswald together at Mancuso's restaurant (located underneath Banister's office.) Lewis said he had never been interviewed by the FBI about this. After he left Ivon asked me what I thought of his credibility and

I raised the problem about Oswald being in Russia, adding that on the other hand Lewis didn't seem to be just making the whole story up. Ivon hadn't realized that Oswald was in Russia at the time. Incidentally, when I told Lewis about this—at one point Ivon went out and told me I could go ahead and question him—he seemed amazed and said, "Well, if it wasn't Oswald it was his double." Lewis said he had been introduced to "Lee Harvey" by one Carlos Corego. On another occasion Carlos took Lewis out to Ferrie's house with two other people; one was Jack Martin, the other's name I can't remember. Lewis mentioned the name of another person who had once solicited him to perform some kind of "subversive" activity—Thomas Edward Beckham.

Lewis advised us that if we wanted to know more about this whole picture we should contact Mrs. Louise Decker, who was Guy Banister's secretary. Another person who knew something about it was Hugh Ward, another investigator for Banister. As Lewis pointed out, it is unfortunate that Hugh Ward and Guy Banister are now both dead, as they might have been able to tell us a great deal. Banister, a man in his sixties, died "in bed", according to Lewis, and Ward was killed in a private plane crash, in which the then mayor of New Orleans, Chep Morrison, was also killed. Both of these deaths were about two years ago.

After Lewis left, Ivon did not exactly give me the briefing which Garrison said he would, and he was more or less vague about what precisely was going on in the office. He treats me cordially, and in fact warmly, but I sense that information very much goes one way with him, which is fair enough and to be expected. However, he did let me read two reports which he had on his desk, one of the statement which Lewis gave yesterday, and the other a police report on the arrest of David Ferrie. This latter goes some way to explaining the Ferrie situation, but still leaves unanswered questions in my mind. Here are some excerpts from the report:

"At about midnight on November 24, 1963, officers Comstock, L. Ivon, C. Jonau, C. Neidermier and F. Williams met assistant District Attorney Frank Klein in the office of the District Attorney. At that time Mr. Klein began an investigation as to the possibility of David Ferrie being involved in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Information had been brought to the attention of Mr. Klein that David Ferrie and Lee Harvey Oswald had been friends and associates in the past.

"With this information at about shortly after midnight these officers went to 3330 Louisiana Avenue Parkway, knocked on the door and same was opened by a subject who identified himself as Alvin Beaubouef. The officers requested the present whereabouts of David Ferrie and Beaubouef said he did not know. It was obvious that he was trying to conceal the facts. He was placed under arrest and the officers went up to the second story apartment where they found Layton Martens seated in a chair. This subject was questioned and he stated that he was presently living with Ferrie. However, he did not know the present whereabouts of Ferrie. Martens too was placed under arrest and the officers instituted a search.

"Martens and Beaubouef were conveyed to the district police station and a continuous stakeout was placed on Louisiana Avenue Parkway. Numerous locations in the city were checked in an attempt to locate Ferrie. All were negative. At about 4:30 P.M. on this date of 11/25/63, David Ferrie appeared in the office of the District attorney with his attorney, Mr. G. Wray Gill. He was allowed to see a photograph of Lee Harvey Oswald and he denied ever seeing this man before. He related a story of having left New Orleans at about 9 P.M., Friday, November 22, 1963, going to Houston, Texas

and the following day going on to Galveston, Texas, and returning to New Orleans at about 1 A.M. on 11/25/63.

"Ferrie was placed under arrest after his interview and booked in the First District Police Station as stated above.

"Col. Garrison of the Department of Public Safety, Texas Rangers, was contacted by telephone by Mr. Klein and the details surrounding the arrest of Ferrie were given to him. His office conducted a preliminary investigation; however, they were unable to implicate this subject in the assassination of President Kennedy. On 11/26/63 Captain Priest of the Houston Police Department Detective Bureau was contacted by telephone and asked to verify the movements which Ferrie described relative to him being in the State of Texas. After several hours Captain Priest notified this office the results of his investigation which corroborated the story related by Ferrie in that Ferrie arrived in Houston on 11/23/63 and made a visit to a skating rink owned by an individual named Roland. Captain Priest was also able to corroborate Ferrie's story as to him being in Galveston, Texas, the following day.

"The officers have been unable to uncover any evidence which would link Ferrie to the assassination of President Kennedy.

"District Attorney to be consulted in this matter."

Of course, what this report does not make clear is what the information was which resulted in Ferrie being suspected in the first place. Shortly after I had finished reading the report the phone rang in Ivon's office. "Speaking, hi Dave, ~~xxx~~ what's happening, then?" Ivon asked. He whispered over to me that this was Ferrie. Ivon listened for a while, made a few non-committal replies and ended the conversation on a friendly note, asking Ferrie to keep in touch. Ivon did not say what he had called about. (I later learned that Ferrie had been interviewed at 10:00 am that day in the DA's office, by John Volz. The interview was recorded, and a transcript was preserved in the DA's files through the investigation. It began:

Volz: Were you acquainted with Oswald?
 Ferrie: To my knowledge, no. I was told and I believe but I am not sure, 3 years ago, I believe it was a Mr Wall from the FBI who told me, I think, I met Oswald. Something is telling me at the moment, roughly at the age of 15.
 Volz: Oswald was 15?
 Ferrie: Right.)

(On this same day, December 15, 1966, a lengthy statement was taken from Alvin Beaubouef--in the form of tape recorded questions and answers--and also preserved in the files. Beaubouef, who travelled with Ferrie to Houston, essentially corroborates Ferrie's story. However, I did not meet Ferrie or Beaubouef when I was in the office that day, and in fact never did see David Ferrie.)

Before I left that evening Ivon gave me a phone number to call at the office, and told me to keep in touch with him. I told him I would start making preparations to leave for Dallas. He told me that there was a meeting of Cuban exiles to be held at City Hall on Sunday, and that it might feature some of the people Garrison was interested in, and that it might be worth my while attending. Before leaving I was given my first pay-check, drawn on the Fines and Fees account. It was made out to Louis Ivon, who endorsed it on the back. (Thus, when the States-Item finally broke the story in the papers, and published the list of names to whom checks had been made out, my name did not appear on the list.)

Friday, December 16, 1966

Called Ivon but he told me it was not necessary to come in. Got a couple

of new tires for my car in preparation for my trip to Dallas. This evening I was introduced to a girl, Judy Anderson, who started working as a dancer at the Mardi Gras club on Bourbon Street in February, 1963. Some time in the spring of that year, she says, she was introduced to Jack Ruby on two separate occasions. Ruby was having some business dealings with her boss, Sid Davilla. It is to be noted that this is not the club where Jada was working, and this therefore represents a different visit, presumably, from Ruby's admitted trip to New Orleans in June, 1963 to get Jada as a stripper for his Carousel Club in Dallas. Judy Anderson is 100% positive that the man she met was Jack Ruby. His visits were two weeks apart. (Sid Davilla was later interviewed about this, but he said he never met Ruby.)

Saturday, Dec 17, 1966

I went into Robert's Coffee house today at about 1 pm. The first person I saw when I went in was Morris Brownlee, Ferrie's godson, whom Garrison had been unable to find. He was seated at a table with three or four other people--Brownlee doing most of the talking. I went out to a pay phone down the street in Comeaux's bar and called Louis Ivon immediately at the DA's office. Luckily he was there. I told him where Brownlee was, etc., and he told me he would be right there. I went back to Robert's and awaited developments. Brownlee and co. were still engaged in earnest conversation, but I couldn't make any of it out. In a short time Ivon and Volz came striding in, both wearing raincoats. (Seems like a two man office!) Ivon pulled identification from his pocket as he approached the table, went straight up to Brownlee and said, "We're police officers. We'd like to speak to you outside." Brownlee promptly stood up and the three walked out together. The sudden event occasioned remarkably little comment among Brownlee's friends. After a while they began to drift away, one by one.

(1969: I am glad to say that this was the only time I had occasion to operate in this undercover fashion for Garrison, resulting in someone being hauled off to the police station. Brownlee and I later became good friends, and it wasn't until May, 1969 that I told him that I had been responsible for his arrest. He had not known it was me. I asked him what had happened to him. He said that he had earlier been picked up by Garrison on a narcotics charge—a phony charge, he said—and on this occasion they slapped another narcotics charge on him—equally phony, according to Brownlee. He was then put into Parish prison, where he stayed for five days. He said they were fairly subtle about it, but he could "figure out what they wanted," because all the questions they asked him were not about narcotics but about David Ferrie. They didn't come right out and say that they wanted him to say that Ferrie and Oswald knew one another, but he figures that is what they wanted to hear. He was reminded that he was in danger of serving a ten year jail sentence on the narcotics charge. However, Brownlee never did come through with the version they wanted to hear. I asked him how he got out, and he said that he had gotten involved with the Federal Grand Jury in New Orleans in some way he didn't specify, and, using that as a lever in some way, he got out. Brownlee said it was a bad experience, and that a lot of pressure was put on him. Nevertheless, in some way Brownlee stayed on fairly good terms with Garrison, and by the Fall of 1967 was working for him as an undercover agent. I once met Brownlee, dressed as a construction worker, sitting talking to Garrison in Garrison's office one Sunday afternoon. Brownlee told me he always liked Garrison personally, and although he disapproved of Garrison's methods, he thought his direction often tended to be good. Brownlee finally became persona non grata in the DA's office in the Summer of 1968 when he started to work for Edward Grady Partin and the Justice Dept. against the

Labor Management Commission set up by Gov. McKeithen purportedly to investigate Racketeering in Louisiana. Brownlee had been doing some investigating for the Labor Management Commission but came to the conclusion that the whole thing was a phony deal, its real intention being to discredit and generally harrass Partin. When he realised this he switched sides and went to work for Partin. Somehow or other, the DA's office ~~is~~ knew all about this—although way outside their jurisdiction in Baton Rouge—and one day Brownlee was warned by a member of Garrison's staff that he was liable to get into trouble again. A few days later he was arrested for vagrancy in Baton Rouge. I never could figure out what the reason was for the DA's office's interest in the whole Hoffa/Partin/Labor Management Commission story. But there was a good deal of pro-Hoffa sentiment in the office, and a lot of anti-RFK sentiment. One would frequently hear comments like, "What's so bad about Hoffa, anyway?"

In June, 1969 I talked to Dean Andrews and he said that one day very early in the investigation Garrison said to him: "You know, I can't figure that man David Ferrie out. I bring him over to Parish prison where he sees his godson behind bars, and he still won't admit he was the getaway pilot."

~~Saturday~~, ~~Dec~~ Sunday, Dec 18, 1966

Went to Cuban exile meeting in front of City Hall today. A crowd of two or three hundred had gathered, some with placards saying Hitler in Havana, etc. Mostly hater types, who arouse in me sympathy for Castro more than anything else. All talking confidently about an invasion of Havana, and they seem to be confident that they will be "home by next Christmas." There were a number of speakers. One was Carlos Bringuier, who had the fight with Oswald on Canal Street in the summer of 1963. He harangued the crowd with a virulent and unattractive message of hate about Communism. Another speaker was the mayor, Vic Schiro. He surprised me by addressing the assembly in terms of warm praise and encouragement, reminded them of his recent trip to Vietnam where he saw Communism at first hand, etc. He said he hoped they would be home for next Christmas. In view of the fact that an almost subversive interpretation could be placed on this meeting, (incitement to invade a foreign power,) I was a little surprised that it should receive this civic endorsement. One would have thought the mayor might more tactfully have been absent from such an assembly held on his own doorstep.

Another speaker was Ed Butler. He debated with Oswald on WDSU radio in the summer of 1963, and at that time "exposed Oswald as a Communist." Butler is a real demagogue. He addressed the meeting with oratorical flair but the same message of hate. Butler is the executive vice president of the Information Council of the Americas, an outfit which beams propoganda at Latin American countries, (via local radio stations,) aimed at couteracting "the Communist menace."

At one point in the meeting I noticed Louis Ivon and another investigator mingling with the crowd. They looked over at me, but gave no sign of recognition.

After the meeting broke up I decided I would like to meet Ed Butler, and so I went up to him, representing myself as an English journalist interested in his cause. He invited me to accompany him to his office on Camp Street. They had a sort of library there, and I noticed the 26 Volumes. He invited me in to his office, which was decked out with numerous plaques bearing his name. I didn't study them in detail but somehow they all seemed to combine the themes of Americanism, capitalism and militarism, in approximately equal parts. Butler explained the business about the "truth tapes" which they play on radio stations, and I was amused to note that he actually

used the word "propaganda" to describe his activities, without a hint of irony, and rather appropriately, I thought.

Of course I said nothing about Garrison, and did not even bring up the subject of the assassination. Therefore I was surprised when Butler reached into a box on the floor and handed me a record which he said he had just produced. It was entitled "Oswald: Self-Portrait in Red". The cover was illustrated with a sneering portrait of the alleged assassin (curling lips) executed by Ed Butler himself. "Here, this might interest you," Butler said. "You can keep it. We've had 25,000 copies pressed." It was probably only coincidence, but I did wonder if Butler knew that that ~~was~~ was what I was really interested in.

(1969: Shortly after I met Butler he left New Orleans, and INCA, to join forces with the "Up With People" movement. Butler started to work under Patrick Frawley in California. Frawley, heir to the Shick and Eversharp fortune is, like Butler, dedicated to the overthrow of Communism at home and abroad. In an article in Esquire, Butler styled himself as a "conflict manager", whose role is to "infiltrate trouble making groups," and thus break them up. He feels that as long as he was in ~~in~~ New Orleans, they never had any trouble. "I exposed Lee Harvey Oswald for what he was; and shortly after he left town," he said. "As soon as I leave, you get the Garrison business—a classical case of Communist propaganda.")

Monday, Dec 19, 1966

I went in to the DA's office ~~for x~~ today, and talked to Louis Ivon for a while. I gave him a copy of yesterday's schedule, with list of speakers, etc. I told him I had spoken to Butler and that he had given me a copy of his record. ~~For~~ Ivon told me that Garrison was working on the theory that anti-Castro Cubans were responsible for the assassination. The idea makes sense—more so than most theories about the assassination. It fits with the Sylvia Odio story. Ivon showed me a picture of Oswald passing out literature in front of the International Trade Mart. Next to Oswald is another man, also passing out leaflets. Ivon pointed to him. "That's the man we're re-eal interested in, Tom," he said. I was impressed by the tone of his voice. They sound as though they are really on to something. Ivon said they had not been able to find him, but they had some leads on him.

I asked Ivon about Clay Bertrand—if they knew about him, and if they were looking for him. Ivon's answer was: "We've got two men on the street looking for him right now."

(1969: It is worth noting that Clay Shaw's name was not mentioned during this time. It was in fact at about this time that the hypothesis was forming in Garrison's mind that Clay Shaw was Clay Bertrand. Two days after I left for Texas, on Dec 23. to be precise, Shaw was brought into the DA's office and interviewed by Andrew Sciambra. On Feb 9, 1967, Sciambra wrote a one page memo on his interview. However, there is no indication in the memo that Shaw was asked if he had ever used the name Clay Bertrand. The name "Bertrand" does not occur in the memo. Two relevant sentences from the memo are: "Mr Shaw said that he had never talked to Lee Harvey Oswald and did not know him." And: "He said he does not know a Dean Andrews and asked me what does Mr. Andrews do for a living." David Ferrie's name does not occur in this memo either. The main part of the memo deals with Cuban occupants of the Trade Mart.)

I said goodbye to Ivon that afternoon. He gave me no specific instructions as to what to do in Dallas—just to find out what I could and to call him collect every day. I knew that they were interested in David Ferrie and Cuban exiles, and that was about it. No 26 volumes yet in the DA's office, but they are getting xeroxes of some of the testimony from the public library. I noticed Dean Andrews' and Sylvia Odio's today. There are also some WDSU pics in Ivon's

office, as well as some magazine articles. I noticed the Esquire issue with articles by Meagher and Epstein, ~~xxxxx~~ and one or two other magazines. Not much indication of what else they are working on at this time.

Wednesday, Dec 21, 1966
Left for Dallas.

Little need be said about the four weeks I spent in Dallas. I stayed most of the time with Penn Jones, and I also spent a good deal of time with Buck and Mary Ferrell--friends of a friend of mine in New Orleans. (Buck Ferrell had worked for an automobile company which provided the Lincoln-Continental for the assassination motorcade.) I wrote, and mailed to Garrison, four reports during this period, none of which contain any material relevant to a study of the Garrison investigation. I spent my time working on areas which turned out to be of little or no importance, such as Oswald's alleged visit to the Downtown Lincoln Mercury Showrooms to buy a car. (This nearly turned out to be important, because the investigation produced a suspect who later came close to being charged as a co-conspirator with Edgar Eugene Bradley in December, 1967.)

I phoned Louis Ivon nearly every day, forwarding such information as I had gathered, but was given little or no indication of what was going on in the DA's office. One day (Dec 30, 1966) Mary Ferrell introduced me to an exiled Cuban general (Roberto O. Del Rio) from whom I hoped to glean some information about the Cuban exile community in Dallas. I told Ivon on the phone that I was going to meet this man, and asked for a list of names to mention to him to see if this man knew anything about their being in Dallas. Ivon gave me 11 names, which I reproduce here: Carlos Corega (which should be Quiroga, but Ivon gave me David Lewis's version,) Sergio (Arcacha) Smith, Dave Ferrie, Sylvia Odio, Colonel Castorr, Carlos Bringuier, Evaristo Rodriguez, Clay Bertrand, Morris Brownlee, Dean Andrews, Oreste Pena.

The inclusion of "Clay Bertrand" is of interest. Clay Shaw had by this time been interviewed by the DA's office, (on December 23,) and Ivon's inclusion of Clay Bertrand rather than Clay Shaw suggests that he did not believe Shaw was Bertrand. (There is a much stronger indication of this, which I shall come to in the next chapter.) At any rate, the only name that rang a bell with the General was Sylvia Odio, who, he informed us, had gotten involved in some way in the Kennedy assassination. (Sylvia Odio advised the FBI, shortly after the assassination, that she had ~~xx~~ been visited by a man named Leon Oswald two months before the assassination. Leon Oswald mentioned assassinating the President at that time, according to Odio. There were two men with Leon Oswald, Odio said, but as Garrison never located Odio it proved impossible to check her story or find out who the two men might have been. As far as is known, Sylvia Odio has never been interviewed since Warren Commission counsel spoke to her.)

Of more interest to me was David Ferrie. During Christmas I read Harold Weisberg's book Whitewash II, and there, in the chapter on Marina Oswald, I came across something which struck me as being of possible importance from Garrison's point of view. It will be recalled that the district attorney's office arrested Ferrie on November 25, 1963, as a fugitive from Texas. When Marina Oswald was being questioned by Secret Service agents on November 24, 1963, before Ferrie's arrest, she was asked if Oswald had ever known a "Mr. Farry". It seemed most likely that this was a reference to Ferrie (no-one by the name

of "Ferry" was listed in the Warren Commission's indices,) and therefore the question arose of how the Secret Service knew about David Ferrie, and thought to ask Marina Oswald about him, the day before Ferrie was arrested. I told Louis Ivon about this one day, and he expressed interest in the anomaly. At about this time I began to think that it might be more profitable for me, and for Mr. Garrison, to study the material available for research in the National Archives in Washington rather than attempt to talk to people in Dallas—many of whom did not want to talk to anyone. (Howard Leslie Brennan, the only person who claimed to have seen Oswald in the 6th floor window at the time of the shooting, and Abraham Zapruder, who took ~~some~~ color movies of the assassination, both fell in this category.)

Moreover, it was evident from Weisberg's second book, which was largely based on material he had read in the National Archives, that there was a great deal of relatively unresearched material available for anyone to look at, which most certainly had not been studied from the point of view of considering a conspiracy in New Orleans. (Of course, the lawyers for the Warren Commission, and specifically Wesley Liebeler, had studied the material from this point of view, but since Garrison's investigation was predicated on the assumption that the Warren Commission—to say the least—did not do its job properly, and I had no way of knowing whether Garrison was in possession of information which had not been available to the Warren Commission, it was reasonable to assume that the Archives might turn out to be a fruitful source of information.) At any rate, it might be possible to find out what the Secret Service and the FBI knew about Ferrie. Ivon had told me in New Orleans that after the DA's office had released Ferrie he had been interviewed by the FBI, and that the DA's office had recently requested that the FBI sent them copies of their reports on Ferrie, but the FBI had declined to co-operate.

I spent a good deal of time reading the 26 volumes while I was in Dallas, (Penn Jones had four sets at home), and reading it I became aware of how useless it was to try and interview people who had already been interviewed by the FBI and the Warren Commission, unless one was well-versed in what they had already said, and ready to ask about some specific contradiction. Also, it was becoming apparent to me that everyone I could think of already had been interviewed, either by the FBI, the Secret Service, the Warren Commission, or all three. In addition, it seemed to make better sense to read what they had said three years earlier, when their memories were still fresh, than to try and badger them for new information.

Before recommending to Louis Ivon that I go to Washington, however, I did interview about a dozen people who had in some way become involved in the Warren Commission's investigation. The Ferrell's were extremely helpful in introducing me to several of the salesmen from Downtown Lincoln Mercury. They all told me about a salesman who had briefly worked there at the time of the assassination. Jack Lawrence was his name. One of the salesmen told me that Lawrence had come from New Orleans. They all said that on the day of the assassination Lawrence had left the office in the morning and had requested that he be given use of a car. He returned to the office about half an hour after the assassination, as pale as a sheet. They asked him where the car was, and it turned out he had left it—I was told—in the parking lot behind the grassy knoll. A day or two later, Lawrence left the company and was not heard from again. Garrison later became very interested in Jack Lawrence, on hardly any more evidence than I have recounted, and he was nearly charged with conspiracy as a co-conspirator with Bradley in Dec. 1967. (To cut a long story short, I later interviewed Bradley in January, 1968, in Charleston, West Va.) and it was evident that Lawrence had no connection whatsoever with the assassination.)

It should be borne in mind that at this time news of Garrison's investigation still had not leaked out to the press. I was therefore surprised when Mary Ferrell showed me the Dec 15, 1966 issue of the Shreveport Councilor: "New Death Probe A-Borning", it read: "Additional clues may be obtained by closely checking the career of a homosexual flier (with forged documents) who exercised unusual influence upon young Oswald in New Orleans." This was clearly a reference to David Ferrie, and I was curious to know how the Councilor—a racist weekly sheet—had obtained this information ahead of any other paper. Over a year later I asked Garrison about it and he said he thought they got their information from Judge Leander Perez of Plaquemine Parish, who, Garrison implied, got the information from him.

Tuesday, January 3, 1967

Jack Ruby died today. A press conference was held at Parkland Hospital at 3 pm today. I made the following notes at the press conference, given by Drs. Rose and Frenkel: Unable to say how long Ruby had cancer; microscopic studies will be conducted; wight loss about 20 lbs; blood clot in leg; pulmonary occlusion; 10:30 am death; this type of cancer occurs in non-smokers, (Ruby did not smoke); not possible medically to induce cancer.

I note the following points about Ruby:

1. Entry into basement: He could not have known at what time Oswald would be brought out, and yet he got there a few seconds before Oswald came out. Must have therefore been a coincidence. (Oswald was already coming down in elevator before it was known Ruby was in basement, even before Ruby was in basement.)
2. Ruby was recently interviewed by his brother for Capitol Records, at a time when Ruby must surely have realised that he would have nothing to lose by telling about a conspiracy if there had been one (involving him). But he said there had been no conspiracy.
3. It is, of course, not necessary to any conspiracy theory about the assassination that there have been a conspiracy in the killing of Oswald.

Martin Waldron from the New York Times here. Penn Jones and I had a coffee with him after the press conference. Knowing that Penn is interested in these things, Waldron mentioned that a policeman, Lieutenant Paul Dwyer, had recently died in New Orleans. (He's the one who went out to the airport to check to see if Ferrie's plane was in flyable condition.) Then Waldron said, "That fella—what's his name, Garrison—he shouldn't have any difficulty finding out what he wants to know." I was interested to hear this. Apparently Waldron knows that Garrison is conducting an investigation, and also he could only have found out about Dwyer through a prior interest in Ferrie. I wonder if the NY Times are going to break the story about Garrison looking into the assassination?

About a week later I suggested to Louis Ivon that I go to Washington and look through the research material in the National Archives. (There was supposed to be 300 cubic feet of it—an estimate which turned out to be exaggerated.) I pointed out to Ivon that there was a good chance I could find out something about Ferrie in Washington, but little chance in Dallas. Ivon said he thought the idea was a good one, and he would recommend the plan to "the boss". Ivon kept telling me that Garrison wanted to speak to me on the phone, but I never could get through to him. Then one day, when I called Ivon, he told me to come on back to New Orleans immediately, come in to the office briefly, and then go on to Washington. I flew back to ~~Max~~ New Orleans on Tuesday, January 17, 1967.

On this occasion I did not see Garrison. I went in to the office the next day and saw Louis Ivon, still in his office in the corner of the building. By this time it was much more cluttered, with many reports, articles and photographs in evidence on his desk and on the floor. They had ordered the Warren Report, but it still had not arrived, he told me. Bill Gurvich was by now working for Garrison on the case, but I did not know this at the time, nor did I see him or any other member of the staff.

Ivon's instructions to me were straightforward. Go to the Archives and send back anything that might seem relevant to the New Orleans investigation, with particular reference to David Ferrie. I was giving my second pay check, plus traveling expenses from Dallas to New Orleans and New Orleans to Washington. I (recklessly) agreed to continue with the arrangement whereby I paid all other expenses myself, even though I had no idea of where I was going to stay in Washington.

We discussed the curious fact that the Secret Service evidently had knowledge of Ferrie before he had been arrested in New Orleans after the assassination, and we agreed that this was the type of question I would hopefully be able to resolve at the Archives. I then decided to ask him a question which had been very much on my mind: What was the initial lead which put the DA's office onto Ferrie in the first place? What reason did they have for supposing that Ferrie had known Oswald—other than a possible fleeting encounter when Oswald was in the CAP while still in his teens. Ivon looked at me and thought for a moment.

"Tom," he said finally, "that was based on information we got three years ago." I decided it would be better not to pursue the matter.

On Thursday, January 19, I flew to Baltimore and stayed overnight with a friend there. The next day I met Harold Weisberg in Washington. Weisberg by this time had published (himself) Whitewash and Whitewash II and I had made arrangements to meet him while I was in Dallas. He had agreed to introduce me to the arrangements in the National Archives, which he did that afternoon. I obtained a researchers pass on the second floor of the large, impressive looking building on Pennsylvania Avenue, and then we went into the big, high-ceilinged reading room on the same floor. Weisberg already had some FBI reports checked out in his name, and so I started looking through them with him.

Weisberg explained to me that there were 1555 Commission Documents which constitute the basic source material available for research. These are all listed in an index which tells you the agency which filed the report (eg FBI, CIA) and the office (eg New Orleans, Dallas,) of origin and date. Those documents which had an X by them were classified, and not available for research. There were (and I believe still are,) about 250 such classified documents. There was no indication from the title of the documents, however, as to the contents, nor was the information in the documents indexed in an overall way. (Some of the larger documents contained indices of their own, however.) Thus, it was necessary to read through all the documents to be sure of not missing anything. This amounted to reading through several hundred thousand pages of reports—the vast majority originating from the FBI.

The same afternoon Weisberg took me with him when he went to call on some of his friends in the Press Building in downtown Washington. I got the impression that he cultivated these journalist acquaintances in order to try and obtain publicity for his Whitewash books. One office he took me to was that of the London Daily Telegraph, where he introduced me to Dominick Harrod, a young correspondent for the paper. Weisberg avoided saying anything about Garrison working ~~hard~~ on the case. Nevertheless, Weisberg unsettled me somewhat that day, as he bombarded me with theories and speculations about the case, not all of them entirely rational. For the first time, doubts about the validity of

the arguments against the Warren Report began to enter my mind.

These doubts were considerably offset when I went to see Sylvia Meagher in New York that weekend. She had a reputation for being the most knowledgeable person in the world about the Warren Report, and I was therefore anxious to talk with her. Taking a devil's advocate position, I tried to reconcile the evidence with a lone assassin thesis, but she persuasively demonstrated that the existing evidence—the evidence pertaining to the shots—is not consistent with such a point of view. I then told her about the new investigation in New Orleans, which interested and encouraged her greatly. I told her that Garrison was working on the hypothesis that Cuban exiles, abetted by David Ferrie, had been behind the assassination. She said that she found this credible and had in fact advanced the same suggestion (excluding Ferrie) in her book Accessories After The Fact, (published later that year.)

Later on, Sylvia Meagher was to take a strong anti-Garrison position, and some Garrison supporters have argued that she did this out of pique because his investigation had put her book out of date. However, I can attest to the fact that this is not true. She continued to support Garrison until the Preliminary Hearing for Clay Shaw in March, 1967. Another Warren Commission critic, Maggie Field, was in Meagher's apartment in February, 1967, when the news came over the radio that Garrison had claimed to have "solved the assassination." This was shortly after David Ferrie died. When she heard the news, Meagher says, she and Maggie Field "danced with joy."

On my way back to Washington I stopped off in Philadelphia to see Vincent Salandria, a lawyer who purportedly had information about an assassination "suspect", one Igor Vaganov who was in Dallas on the day of the assassination. I told Salandria about the new investigation and he too was greatly encouraged. He willingly shared his information about Vaganov with me. (A long story about Vaganov appeared in Esquire later that year which cunningly contrived both to attract the readers attention and point out that the story was a false alarm—there was no basis for believing that Vaganov was involved.)

Salandria also started to outline to me a new theory of his which, he claimed, pointed to the involvement of the CIA in the assassination. This took the form of a hypothetical construction—a "model", as he called it—of the way the CIA might have done it, relating this to the factual situation with a rather threadbare collection of facts, hardly any of which had anything to do with the CIA, or the assassination, for that matter. (This "model" was later published in a lengthy series of articles in the Midlothian (Texas) Mirror.)

Unlike Sylvia Meagher, Salandria continued to support Garrison through thick and thin. Not only did he support him, he became a sort of grey eminence who wielded considerable influence with the district attorney. Salandria was one ~~of~~ of the few Warren Commission critics Garrison took advice from. Later on in the investigation Salandria was to admonish Garrison and his assembled staff that it was time to arrest a few more people, (whom Salandria named.) This action was averted by a concertedly unfavorable response from Garrison's staff.

I returned to Washington that night, and the next day luckily found lodgings ~~at~~ with two English journalists, John Graham of the London Financial Times, and Dominick Harrod, whom Harold Weisberg had coincidentally introduced me to a few days earlier. Both had been at Oxford at the same time as me, although I had not known either of them there. News of the Garrison investigation was still not public at this time, and I was therefore forced to conceal the identity of my employer—a fact which gave rise to some amusing speculation among them. In fact, news of the Garrison investigation came within an inch of first breaking in an English paper. On the very day the story broke in the New Orleans States-Item

(Feb 17, 1967), a third party told Dominick Harrod that I was working for Jim Garrison, the district attorney of Orleans Parish. Just as Harrod was coming home that night to confront me with this, news of the States-Item story came through on the wire services in his office. Thus he just missed getting the scoop. Who was the third party who leaked the story to Harrod? The perceptive reader may be able to guess.

By the time I started working in earnest in the National Archives, on Jan 24, the extent and results of the Federal investigation of David Ferrie were not fully known to the district attorney's office. However, by the time the story broke, nearly four weeks later, I had mailed back to New Orleans several reports from the Archives which filled in many of the gaps.

I started off by reading through all the FBI reports with office of origin as New Orleans. These, however, did not contain much useful information, consisting largely of endless records of Greyhound Bus schedules, examined by the FBI in an attempt to establish the time and manner of Oswald's departure from New Orleans in September, 1963., (a ~~problem~~ question which to this day lacks a precise answer.) I then started to read through all the Secret Service reports, and soon came across one which explained ~~how~~ how the Secret Service were aware of Ferrie before he had been arrested. I reproduce the relevant paragraph:

"Recd. 11-24-63

By Dale Wunderlich

J. Philip Stein received a phone call from a man identifying himself as Jack. Jack asked for Herman Coleman (ie Kohlman,) a former roommate of Stein's. Coleman has since married and no longer lives with Stein. Jack said he wanted to contact Coleman, who is supposed to be an asst. district attorney for Orleans Parish, because he was writing a book about a person called Farry, and that Farry was a hypnotist or something of that nature. Farry is believed to be the person who taught Oswald how to use a rifle with a scope on it. Farry has a large collection of rifles of his own. He further indicated that Farry had been in Dallas two weeks ago. Also that after the classes in the use of the rifle took place in New Orleans and Oswald left, Farry kept in touch with Oswald by mail.

Following information from SA Bennett, PRS. Bennett stated that he and SAIC Bouck had talked with SAIC Rice of New Orleans and that the name Farry had been checked out and it was unfounded. The correct spelling was Ferrie."

The date on this report is the same date Marina ~~saw~~ Oswald was asked about a Mr Farry by Secret Service agents. On the next day Ferrie was arrested in New Orleans.

Very shortly after finding this report and sending it to New Orleans, I found another which was much more revealing and important. It revealed that Ferrie had been arrested on the basis of a tip from Jack S. Martin, a private investigator in New Orleans, and that there had been in fact no basis for this tip. This, at any rate, was the conclusion of the Secret Service, and unless Garrison had unearthed information which the Secret Service did not know about, I was forced to conclude that there was no basis for believing that David Ferrie was involved in the assassination.

In accordance with instructions from the office, I therefore telephoned Louis Ivon and told him about the Secret Service's findings. I recall that I feared at the same time I might be talking myself out of a job at the same time, as, on receipt of this information, (which I did not know if Garrison knew about,)

Garrison might possibly terminate the investigation. I therefore confess to some relief when Ivon reacted to the news calmly, and did not seem surprised by it. "Uh-huh," he said in his determinedly non-committal way. "Does this make any difference?" I asked. "Well, it may not make any difference, Tom," Ivon said after a pause. He told me to be sure to send a copy of the report to New Orleans. (A copy of this report, which is of considerable importance as it clearly outlines the origins of the Garrison investigation, is included as an appendix to this book.)

Evidently the report didn't make any difference. Two or three days after I sent it to New Orleans, the story of the Garrison investigation broke in the papers. Nevertheless, I was disturbed by the implications of the report. Jack Martin had evidently called Herman Kohlman at the district attorney's office at about the same time as Jerry Philip Stein had called the Secret Service. The Secret Service, the FBI and the DA's office then all started to investigate Ferrie simultaneously. All three interviewed Ferrie, and Ferrie had told the SS and the FBI that the informer had been most probably Jack Martin. The two federal agencies then interviewed Martin who admitted this, and also admitted that there had been no basis for his allegations about Ferrie. He told the Secret Service that the information he had furnished Asst DA Herman Kohlman had been "a figment of his imagination." Thus, I was forced to conclude when the story broke in the papers a few days later that Jack Martin had not made this admission to the DA's office as well.

It was also possible to argue that the Secret Service Report was simply false—that Jack Martin had said no such thing to the investigating agent. Martin himself made this claim to me when I returned to New Orleans in June. But it turned out that the weight of the evidence—or rather lack of evidence—indicated that there had been in fact no basis for Martin's allegations about Ferrie. When I returned to New Orleans I was disconcerted to find that there was no evidence in the files linking Ferrie to Oswald other than from David Lewis, Perry Russo and Martin himself. Martin and Lewis had already been dismissed by the staff as witnesses since they were not considered reliable, and Russo by this time had already testified at the preliminary hearing.

Although Clay Shaw later attracted more attention because he was charged and brought to trial, Ferrie remains in some ways the central character of the investigation. I soon found further reports on Ferrie which throw further light on the investigation. Commission Document 75 is a thick, 700 page collection of FBI reports. Examination of the index revealed that Ferrie's name occurred on 40 pages. 36 of these pages turned out to have been withdrawn by the FBI, that is, they were classified. However, by going through the index for each one of these pages in turn, it was possible to ~~man~~ produce a list of all the ~~in~~ other names mentioned on the Ferrie pages. This I did, producing a list of 64 names. I then sent this list to New Orleans, and anyone the DA's office did not know about could therefore be interviewed. Thus it was possible to reconstruct the contents of the FBI's classified pages. This was done. Ferrie himself had already been interviewed by the office, and almost everyone else in my list was interviewed in time by the DA's staff. None of them provided any information linking Ferrie to the assassination. There was therefore no reason to conclude that there was anything sinister about the fact that the FBI had classified certain reports on Ferrie. Clearly, it also emerged that there was no reason for believing that Ferrie was in any way involved in the assassination—no reason, that is, except for Perry Russo, who would later be the star witness in Garrison's case.

Until Sirr Clay Shaw was arrested by Garrison on March 1, all my attention in the Archives was focussed on David Ferrie. During my daily calls to the office,

I was never asked to find out if there was any information in the Archives about Clay Shaw, that is until after his arrest on March 1. The first person who mentioned Shaw's name to me was Bob Richter, a reporter for CBS who, like me, was doing research in the Archives. We had lunch together frequently, and he told me that he and a group of reporters from CBS had been keeping track of the investigation in New Orleans. They had wine and dined Garrison frequently and he had revealed much of his case to them in return for their agreement not to break the story. (Garrison made a similar arrangement with Life.) Richter admitted that he was extremely confused by Garrison's account of the "network of relationships" which supposedly linked Ferrie and Oswald, but one thing was clear, Richter told me one day, which was that Garrison believed that the elusive Clay Bertrand was in fact a retired business man in New Orleans named Clay Shaw. Richter admitted that he was not quite clear as to what Garrison's evidence for this assertion was. In any event, Richter's report turned out to be accurate when one day I came home from the Archives and heard that Shaw had that day been arrested by Garrison.

The steps leading up to Shaw's arrest have been examined in some detail by journalists and commentators, notably by Edward Jay Epstein in his book Counterplot. Nevertheless, the subject is of such importance to a study of the investigation that it is worth repeating some of this, with the inclusion of some added details. What follows is a chronological survey of these events compiled retrospectively, as opposed to being based on a contemporary record, as elsewhere in this book.

Friday, Feb 17, 1967

Story of Garrison's investigation breaks in the New Orleans States-Item, concentrating on expenditures hitherto incurred in the probe. I reached Louis Ivon at his home that evening, and he told me to stay on in Washington and await developments.

Sat. Feb 18

David Ferrie called up the States-Item and identified himself as Garrison's principal suspect. "Supposedly I have been pegged as the getaway pilot in a plot to kill Kennedy," he said. He told the newspaper of his ~~short~~ trip to Houston on the day of the assassination.

Monday, Feb 20

Garrison lashed out at the newspaper for breaking the story, calling it "one of the most irresponsible things perpetrated by the newspapers in their sensational grab of our investigation. Ferrie meanwhile was secluded, at his own request, at the Fountainbleau Motor Hotel. Garrison said that arrests will be "months" away.

Wednesday, Feb 22

David Ferrie is found dead in bed, an apparent suicide note nearby. His death prompted a huge revival of press interest in the story, and it was run as the lead story on the network news that evening. Dominick Harrod called me at the Archives and told me the news had just come over the wire services. I immediately called the DA's office, but could not reach Ivon. Apparently the office was in pandemonium. Finally I reached John Volz. "Ferie's dead," he said. "You heard the news I guess." There wasn't much else to say. I later learned that Ferrie's death was greeted in the office with secret glee, mingled with sympathy. They all felt that Garrison had gotten himself onto an awkward hook, and now he had been let off it.

Thursday, Feb 23

Garrison refers to Ferrie as "one of histories most important individuals," and to his death as "apparent suicide." He makes it plain that he is not about to terminate the investigation.

Friday, Feb 24

Perry Russo, an insurance salesman living in Baton Rouge, told newsmen that he had known David Ferrie. He said that Ferrie had discussed the possibility of assassinating the President of the United States—not specifically Kennedy—with him. Russo made it clear that Ferrie was not entirely serious about this. He merely "jokingly posed the question." As for Lee Harvey Oswald, Russo said that he never heard of him until the day of the assassination.

On the same day, Russo almost certainly telephoned the DA's office and told someone there that he had been a friend of Ferrie's. The normal version is that he wrote a letter. However, this letter has never been located. Also, at this time the office was receiving "~~hundreds~~ sacks full" of mail every day. The large majority of these letters were not read ~~xxx~~ until weeks later. More to the point, Russo told friends of his privately that he had in fact called the office and never wrote at all.

Saturday, Feb 25

Garrison publicly stated that he had "solved the assassination. We know the key individuals, the cities involved, and how it was done."

Garrison's assistant, Andrew 'Moo' Sciambra was dispatched to Baton Rouge. He took a ~~gr~~ bunch of photographs with him, to see if any of the faces were familiar to him. One was of Clay Shaw. What Russo said when he was shown this photo is perhaps the most crucial point of the investigation. Two conflicting accounts exist: what Russo later testified to on the witness stand, and what Sciambra wrote in his memorandum. On the witness stand Russo said that he had seen Shaw three times. One of these occasions was in Ferrie's apartment about two months before the assassination, when an assassination attempt was discussed by Ferrie, Shaw and one Leon Oswald. Russo had been introduced to Shaw as Clem Bertrand. Leon Oswald Russo identified as being the same man as was depicted in a picture of Lee Harvey Oswald with a beard drawn in.

(It is worth noting that in his Preliminary Hearing testimony, as a result of which Shaw was bound over for trial, Russo never said that the assassination of President Kennedy was discussed. He simply described it as "an assassination attempt.")

In his memorandum Sciambra omitted all reference to this alleged meeting. He reported that Russo said he had seen Shaw twice—once at the Nashville Street Wharf and once in a car at David Ferrie's gas station. Sciambra made no mention of Shaw being identified as Clay or Clem Bertrand.

The discrepancy between Russo's testimony as Sciambra's memorandum was first pointed out by James Phelan in the Saturday Evening Post. (He was the only reporter whom Garrison had given a copy of the memo.) Sciambra's subsequent explanations of this vital discrepancy were to occupy a great deal of my thought and attention when I later returned to New Orleans, and will be the subject of continued discussion in these pages. The matter is of crucial importance: put briefly, since Russo was the only witness against Shaw when he was arrested, if the Sciambra memorandum is correct and complete, then Clay Shaw is innocent. I subsequently came to the conclusion, to the point of certainty, that the memorandum did indeed accurately reflect what Russo had said, without omission. My reasons for this conclusion are set forth later on in this book.

That evening, when Sciambra returned from Baton Rouge, he joined Jim Garrison for dinner and reported what Russo had said. Dick Billings, an associate editor of Life, was present at that meeting. He reports that what Sciambra said

corresponded to the contents of his memorandum, and thus conflicted with Russo's subsequent testimony. When Dick Billings told me this, over a year later, I was forced to conclude that Clay Shaw was innocent.

Monday, Feb 27,

Sciambra dictated his lengthy (2 3,500 word) memorandum of his interview with Russo. In the afternoon Perry Russo, who had been brought to New Orleans, was administered sodium pentothal ("truth serum") at Mercy Hospital by the Orleans Parish coroner, Dr. Chetta. No transcript was made of the interrogation session which followed, with 'Moo' Sciambra again asking the questions. However, Sciambra prepared a memorandum of this session, and this time Russo mentioned the party at Ferrie's apartment, but only after Sciambra had ~~said~~ "asked him if he could remember any of the details about Clay Bertrand being up in Ferrie's apartment."

Tuesday, Feb 28

Russo went to Clay Shaw's apartment, rang the bell, and then identified himself as an insurance salesman to Shaw. Russo then identified Shaw as the "Bertrand" he had mentioned after prompting while under the influence of sodium pentothal.

Wednesday, March 1,

Clay Shaw was summoned to the district attorney's office where, after lengthy interrogation, during which he denied knowing Ferrie or Oswald, or anything about the assassination, he was placed under arrest.

Thursday, March 2

Perry Russo was put under hypnosis by Dr Emond Fatter. The transcript of this hypnotic session was made, and it ~~is~~ makes depressing reading for anyone who would like to believe that Garrison used this technique as a means of "objectifying" Russo's testimony, as he later claimed. Under hypnosis, Russo obstinately came up with nothing about an assassination ~~and~~ plot, despite prodding, until the hypnotist finally said this:

"Let your mind go completely blank, Perry—see that television screen again, it is very vivid—now notice the picture on the screen. There will be Bertrand, Ferrie and Oswald and they are going to discuss a very important matter and there is another man and girl there and they are talking about assassinating somebody. Look at it and describe it to me."

Finally Russo told his plot story.

Two weeks later the Preliminary Hearing began, after Russo had been hypnotised on two further occasions. Russo stuck to his story under cross examination, and the panel of three judges ruled that the evidence was sufficient to bind Clay Shaw over for trial for conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy.

Little enough of this was clear to me as I continued working in the National Archives. Nor was I able to contribute much to the New Orleans investigation in the 2½ months that I stayed on in Washington after the preliminary hearing. I continued to read commission documents every day, and I occasionally came across something which seemed worth xeroxing and sending back to New Orleans. Most days I called Louis Ivon, and was able to report something. Sometimes he would give me a name and ask me if there was anything in the Archives about the person. Almost invariably there wasn't. The most important person who fell into this category was Clay Shaw himself. The day after he was arrested the newly appointed Attorney General Ramsey Clark said that the FBI had checked Shaw out after the assassination and cleared him. This was of interest to Garrison because it implied there had been some reason to investigate him. However, there were no FBI reports on Shaw in the Archives, and it later turned out that Ramsey Clark had made a mistake; what he meant was that the FBI had investigated the Clay Bertrand question. (And had come to the conclusion that ~~he~~ he did not exist.)

It was unusual work. While I was basically doing academic research, surrounded in the main by middle aged ladies poring over genealogical charts with magnifying glasses, I was conscious of the fact that at any minute I might come across a startling piece of information which could lead to an arrest in New Orleans. This never happened, of course. Most of the material I read was trivial, and of secondary importance compared with the evidence published in the 26 volumes of the Warren Report.

After reading through so many thousands of pages of FBI reports, I began to get some insight into their methods of operation. Some of their investigations reported in the files seemed to me to be model cases. For instance, a man hears a rumour about the assassination in a bar and decides to report it to the FBI. This rumour is then methodically traced back, sometimes through half a dozen people, to its origin. There are literally hundreds of cases like this in the Warren Commission's files, and all of them, the FBI concluded, were unfounded.

Very little information filtered back to me from New Orleans, other than what I read in the newspapers—which was generally not too encouraging. One day after the preliminary hearing, during which Perry Russo had identified one of the conspirators as Leon Oswald, I asked Louis Ivon whether they were working on the hypothesis that this was a second Oswald, or whether they had any evidence of this. I pointed out some of the difficulties, eg that they thereby were in danger of disconnecting the events in New Orleans from the events in Dallas, etc. I asked Ivon what he thought of all this. Long pause...."Well, what do you think Tom?" was the reply. I never could get much more than this out of Ivon. (I later found out in New Orleans that it was simply assumed that Leon Oswald was Lee Harvey Oswald—by default, as it were. The subject was simply never brought up.)

The extremely anti-Garrison coverage which the Washington Post was giving the story did not give me any cause for comfort. After charging Shaw, Garrison then charged Dean Andrews with perjury. Andrews, apparently, was refusing to identify Clay Shaw as Clay Bertrand. (Andrews was brought to trial in August, and I have some comments on this very odd trial later on in the book.) Then Sergio Arcacha Smith and Gordon Novel were charged with burglary, although both were out of the state, and it was not clear what connection either had with the assassination. (None, I later discovered.) Garrison then came out with his "code", whereby he alleged that Clay Shaw and Lee Oswald both had Jack Ruby's phone number in their address books. This was hardly credible, however, to judge by Garrison's explanation. (The "code" incident is covered in some detail in Epstein's book Counterplot.) Then Garrison started to make accusations against the CIA, and subpoenaed the director, Richard Helms. Obviously I would have to

wait until I got back to New Orleans before I got to the bottom of all this.

Meanwhile, as pressure from New Orleans slackened off, (once I couldn't reach Louis Iyon for a whole week,) I kept track of everyone else doing research on the assassination in the Archives. Bob Richter, preparing for the forthcoming CBS documentary, was frequently there, and we regularly exchanged "discoveries". One day I saw two attractive young girls looking at some Zapruder re-enactment sequences, and I asked them where they were from. "Michigan State," they told me. (NBC, in fact.) Edward Epstein came in one day, before the Garrison investigation broke in the papers. I introduced myself, and he said he was working on an article, possibly for the New Yorker. We had a coffee, and I dropped a hint that there was a new investigation going on, but he seemed only mildly interested. I remember I asked him if he thought Bobby Kennedy would ~~be interested~~ take any interest in a new investigation. Definitely not, he said. He wouldn't want to seem like he was trying to capitalise on the assassination. I asked him if he knew that a man called David Ferrie had actually been arrested in connection with the assassination, in November, '63. "I imagine quite a few people could have been arrested," Epstein said. (In fact, several were arrested in Dallas, other than Oswald.)

Mort Sahl came to Washington to do a two week stint at a night-club, and as he had recently made news as a result of playing an interview with Garrison on the radio on the West Coast, I went to see him. As I had only met Garrison once for five minutes at that time, I was curious to see what Sahl's reaction to Garrison was. "Boy, he's great, isn't he?" He said. He went on enthusiastically, and told me of the problems he was having with his program on the West Coast—which he attributed to his support of Garrison. ~~Since~~ The country, as Sahl saw it, was in the grips of an awesome conspiracy permeating into all levels of society, originating with the CIA. The subject seemed to obsess him, but it was interesting to listen to him—he has the gift of the gab, no doubt about that.

One day Nancy Haskell, a reporter from Life, came into the Archives reading room. Evidently she had spent a good deal of time with her boss, Dick Billings, in New Orleans. I asked her how good the case was, having explained that I knew no more than I had read in the papers. I got the impression that she was trying to be tactful in her reply, but did not seem too optimistic about it. When I asked her when she thought the Clay Shaw trial would be, she said, "Knowing Big Jim, he'll probably try to set it for November 22..." and answer with undertones of both familiarity and contempt. Before she left she told me that Garrison was expected to come to New York soon, and might stop off in Washington on the way.

Much of
 In this chapter I have touched only briefly on a series of important events which were simultaneously unfolding in New Orleans—events such as the arrest of Clay Shaw which raise many questions about the nature of the Garrison investigation. When I returned to New Orleans in June, 1967, and continued working in the DA's office itself, I was in time able to resolve many of these questions. The remainder of this book is in the form of a day-to-day journal, in which I record the events surrounding new developments in New Orleans, (such as the indictment of Edgar Eugene Bradley for conspiracy,) and also take the opportunity, whenever it arises, to throw some light on the earlier developments.

Briefly summarising, by the time I met Jim Garrison for the second time, at the New York Hilton Hotel on June 1, 1967, the following developments had taken place: In early December, 1966, Garrison had launched an investigation of the assassination of President Kennedy which was predicated on two principal ~~main~~ hypotheses; that David Ferrie, a onetime pilot and Civil Air Patrol instructor, had known Lee Harvey Oswald in New Orleans in the Summer of 1963 and his trip to Houston on the day of the assassination was in some way connected with the events in Dallas that day. Secondly, Clay Bertrand, the mysterious figure

who had called Dean Andrews at the hospital in New Orleans and suggested that Andrews go and defend Oswald, was also connected in some unspecified but conspiratorial way with the assassination. Garrison then concluded that Clay Bertrand was in fact Clay Shaw,, the retired managing director of the International Trade Mart in New Orleans. Dean Andrews failed to corroborate this, however, and thus Garrison was forced also to conclude that Andrews was for some reason protecting Clay Shaw. Perry Russo then came forward and tied ~~it~~ all this neatly together by placing Shaw (alias Bertrand), Ferrie and Oswald together in the same room discussing the assassination. Shaw was then charged with conspiracy, and Andrews was charged with perjury. This summarises the courtroom aspects of Garrison's case up to this point. Outside the courtroom, Garrison was also, by this time, beginning to level accusations of complicity in the assassination at such organisations as the CIA, on evidence which was undisclosed. I shall also examine some of Garrison's extra-legal pronouncements in the following chapters.