

Garrison Puts It on the Line in Court

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New Orleans, March 13—Etched into the gray stone above the doors of the Orleans Parish Criminal Court House are the words: "The impartial administration of justice is the foundation of justice."

Inside that building tomorrow, District Attorney Jim Garrison will have to start proving that he is not making a mockery of those words, that he has not seized on the tragedy of a President's assassination for personal aggrandizement, that he, an elected official sworn to defend justice, is not undermining the foundation of justice.

The man facing trial at tomorrow's preliminary hearing will be Clay Shaw, a New Orleans businessman accused of conspiring with Lee Harvey Oswald and others to assassinate President Kennedy.

But in a very real sense, the man on trial will be Garrison. If

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the district attorney does not offer solid evidence supporting his contention that a plot against Kennedy was hatched in New Orleans, then he will be indicted by the American people for conduct so dishonorable that he must become a pariah.

If, however, Garrison can show that he has a legitimate case worthy of sober appraisal by a judge, jury and the American people, the implications are enormous—and frightening.

Practically single-handed, using only a handful of investigators, he will have shaken the very

structure of the American government.

The flamboyant district attorney, even if he cannot prove his case so overwhelmingly that convictions result, will have added immeasurably to doubts about the integrity of the Warren Commission report which says there was no conspiracy.

The security apparatus of the United States will become vulnerable to the charge that not only did its investigation fall short of Garrison's but that it deliberately blocked his legitimate inquiries.

Garrison complains that federal authorities have refused him aid. The Washington establishment has sneered at Garrison and

(Continued on page 30, col. 1)

(Continued from page 2)

dismissed him as nothing more than a wild man trying to climb to high political office by means of sensational McCarthyite accusations.

Much of the disbelief springs from the type of witness on whom he seems to be relying. With few exceptions, they are as unsavory a bunch of rascals, kooks and psychos as you would ever expect to find crawling around the underbelly of society. But it could be dangerous to use that fact as a reason for ignoring Garrison's probe. How many people would have paid any attention to Lee Harvey Oswald before the day in Dallas when he became part of history?

4 KEY FIGURES: 2 ALIVE, 2 DEAD

Out of the Niagara of rumors, contradictions and downright lies cascading over the Garrison investigation, four men emerge as key figures in the case, if there is a case. Two are unable to reply to the accusations because they are dead. HOW DID THEY DIE?

• Lee Harvey Oswald, killed by Jack Ruby, grew up in New Orleans and spent the last summer of his life here before going to Dallas.

• David W. Ferrie, a pilot fired from his job with an airline after his arrest on a morals charge in 1961, lived in New Orleans until his death last Feb. 22. Coroner Nicholas Chetta ruled death was from natural causes; Garrison insisted it was suicide. The district attorney called Ferrie "one of history's most important individuals." THE NOTE?

• Clay Shaw, 54, former director of the city's International Trade Mart and a familiar figure in New Orleans social circles, was arrested March 1. Garrison accused him of taking part in the "conspiracy" to kill the President but at that time offered no evidence. His office, however, did not hesitate to declare that whips, chains, black hood, gown and cape were found at Shaw's home. What they were for was left to the public's imagination. Shaw, who bitterly denied the accusation, was released on \$10,000 bond.

• The identity of the fourth man has remained secret but he is pivotal to Garrison's case. He is the informant said to have been present at discussions on the plan to kill Kennedy.

Criminal District Judge Bernard J. Bagert suggested last week that the district attorney's office should disclose this mystery man's

identity at tomorrow's hearing if Garrison wishes to persuade the judge that there is "probably cause" to believe that a crime was committed by Shaw.

If Garrison fails to show that he has a case to be answered, the court will order the discharge of the accused and Garrison will have some explaining to do. The mystery man is believed to be white, aged 27, with no criminal record. He is said to be under guard somewhere outside New Orleans.

Another figure who might be important to Garrison's case is Dean Andrews Jr., an assistant district attorney in neighboring Jefferson Parish, who told the Warren Commission that shortly after the assassination a man named Clay Bertrand called him and asked him to defend Lee Harvey Oswald.

Andrews had handled some minor legal matters for Oswald when Oswald was in New Orleans. Garrison charges that Bertrand and Shaw are the same man.

Sources close to Garrison's office gave details of how the plot is alleged to have evolved. Until Garrison produces convincing evidence, it must be viewed with extreme reserve.

This is what it amounts to: Oswald met Ferrie when Oswald was in high school in New Orleans and Ferrie headed a Civil Air Patrol unit in the city. At this time, Ferrie was a reputable figure, a pilot for Eastern Air Lines, and so noted for a brilliant mind that he sometimes addressed civic groups.

Ferrie was supposed to have had connections with Fidel Castro while the Cuban leader was still a rebel in the Sierra Maestra. Ferrie was reported to have made clandestine flights to the island with Castro men as passengers.

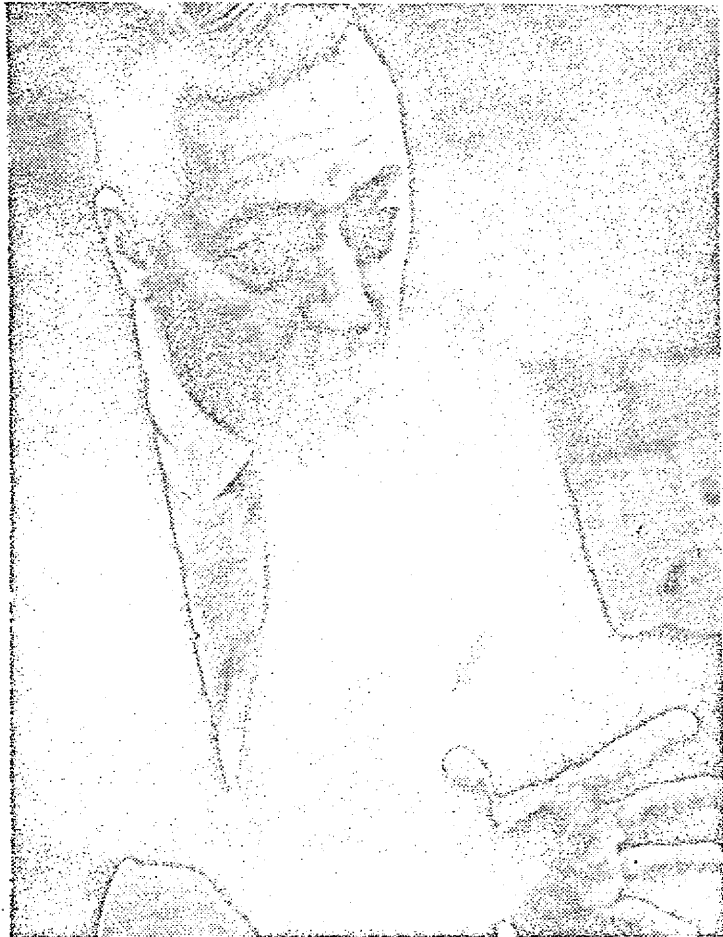
Oswald, after his spell in the Marines and a sojourn in Russia, returned to New Orleans in May, 1962. By this time, Ferrie had lost his job because of his arrest for the morals offense.

But Oswald renewed his association with the pilot. Ferrie, as a result of the morals arrest, had been dismissed from the Civil Air Patrol and had formed an unofficial flying group similar to a CAP unit. Oswald joined this group.

A bizarre personality, Ferrie had lost all the hair on his head and face in a fire. He would pencil in mascaraed eyebrows and wear a red wig. He ruled his flying group like a martinet, wearing a general's hat, taking his men on marches and bivouacking them in the wilds.

How did these 2 writers get away with speaking the unspeakable, especially in this paper?

Garrison Finish! The DA Puts His Career on Line



District Attorney Jim Garrison: The implications are frightening.

CUBANS AROUND IN THE STORY

Throughout this story, one be-
develing factor has been the
Cuban aspect. New Orleans is a
center for Cuban refugees. Some
of them were trained in Loui-
siana by the Central Intelligence
Agency for the Bay of Pigs in-
vasion. In almost every angle of
inquiry, you find the names of
Cubans. The trick is to decide
whether they are pro- or anti-
Castro.

Why did Oswald, known as a supporter of Fidel Castro, associate with Ferrie, who became actively aligned with anti-Castro exile groups? An obvious-looking solution is that one of them was playing a double game, but nothing is obvious in this case.

During this period, according to Garrison, the conspiracy was set in motion. With a small number of Cubans of uncertain loyalties, Ferrie, Oswald and Shaw began to meet and discuss the assassination of Kennedy.

A satisfactory motive has yet to emerge. Garrison's mystery witness is said to have attended some of these meetings and to have become privy to the plot.

The story continues that Oswald, after moving to Dallas with Marina, his Russian wife, in July, 1963, made several trips back to New Orleans. On at least one occasion he attended a meeting of the plotters with the mail-order rifle that was to be found Nov. 22 in the Texas Book Depository.

Some fuzziness surrounds Oswald's movements in September, according to Garrison's story, but it is known that he went to Mexico in an attempt to find a way to enter Cuba. In the Garrison version, Oswald lived for part of September with Ferrie in New Orleans while his wife remained in Dallas.

He is said to have returned to Texas in the next month. When it was learned that the President planned to visit Texas in November, Oswald was chosen to strike.

The plot went awry after the assassination. Oswald was to go to a movie house, contact a conspirator who would drive him to a small airport where Ferrie would be waiting to fly him out. Instead, Patrolman J. D. Tippit was shot to death and Oswald was seized inside the movie house.

This is the case said to have been vouched for by the mystery witness on oath and while under the influence of truth drugs.

One thing is certain. In picking on Clay Shaw, Garrison has chosen somebody more formidable than the sleazy oddballs who have been parading their contradictions, wackiness and lies before investigators.

Suspicious about the eccentricity of Shaw's private life will not help him, even in a New Orleans which prides itself on its tolerance. And Shaw has the money and status to smash a weak prosecution case.

One intriguing question stands out of the morass of uncertainties. The FBI, in peck-pecking Garrison's investigation, said that Shaw had been interviewed about the assassination in 1963. Attorney General Ramsey Clark said Shaw had been cleared of any involvement.

SHAW REPORT IS KEPT SECRET

But why was Shaw questioned at all back in 1963?

The feds reply that the portion of the Warren Commission report referring to Shaw is sealed and cannot be made public. Why not? If Garrison has a case, then it seems inevitable that Washington will have to come up with a more satisfactory reply than silence.

Will Garrison pull it off? Public officials in Louisiana are waiting to see which way the cat jumps. Whenever questioned about Garrison's probe, they have a cliché reply: "Mr. Garrison is a very capable district attorney and I'm sure he will do his duty."

Connoisseurs of Louisiana politics are inclined to shrug off the 6-foot-6-inch district attorney as just another figure in the tradition of Huey and Earl Long. But they admit that in spite of his gaudy performances, in the past he has always delivered what he has promised.

But even if he delivers this time, Garrison cannot escape the blame for the pungent smell hanging over New Orleans, the smell of ambition and headline-hunting. Such a burlesque as Garrison has been conducting here may be standard procedure to Louisiana. But when it touches on the death of a President, then it is unacceptable.