

# The Inquest

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**G**RAND conspiracies need not be grand. There need be only a few central figures in a position to manipulate, wheedle, dupe, blackmail, and buy the bit actors. This is the theory of New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison as applied to the assassination of President Kennedy. "The people who engineered the killing of one of the finest Presidents we ever had are walking around today," he declares. "Not to do anything about it is un-American."

The Louisiana populist can hardly be accused of disloyalty. He has, he claims, discovered who killed Kennedy, who organized the plot, and what forces were involved in planning the various steps that led to the assassination. And he has done all this against formidable odds. He has been denounced and ridiculed by such columnists as Bob Considine, Jim Bishop and Victor Reisel. The press has, for the most part, slanted its coverage of his investigation to imply motives of personal glory and political gain. The government Establishment has given him the cold shoulder, and the FBI, which "cleared" two of his present suspects immediately following the assassination, refused to release its information to him.

The truth, according to Garrison, is certain to rock the republic as it gradually unfolds in court. He is convinced that Lee Harvey Oswald was not a triggerman, and that Jack Ruby was the puppet of a more sophisticated master. He is equally sure that the working level of the conspiracy was composed of rabid anti-Castro Cuban exiles in league with elements of the American paramilitary right. The con-

certed Establishment effort to confine the events of the assassination to Oswald and Ruby suggests the Garrison thesis: a vertically integrated plot rising step by step into high echelons of government and the military-industrial complex. "Honorable men did in Caesar," dryly observes the prosecutor with a fondness for historical metaphor.

Thus far, the dramatis personae of Garrison's terse drama have been wildly disparate. On February 22 of this year, after preliminary, lengthy questioning by the D.A.'s office and shortly before he was to be arrested by Garrison and charged with conspiracy to assassinate Kennedy, David William Ferrie was found dead in his cluttered New Orleans apartment.

The second major figure in Garrison's probe is 54-year-old Clay L. Shaw, retired executive director of the New Orleans International Trade Mart. Charged with conspiracy by Garrison, he is now awaiting trial.

A third individual expected to figure prominently in the Garrison inquiry is Manuel Garcia Gonzales. The New Orleans D.A. has come into possession of a photograph

by William W. Turner

taken at Dealey Plaza just before the assassination which shows several Latin men behind the low picket fence at the top of the famed grassy knoll. Most Warren Report critics believe one or more shots were fired from the grassy knoll area, and Garrison thinks Gonzales is one of the men in the photograph. Gonzales has disappeared and has probably fled the country.

Oswald? In Garrison's book he was nothing more than a "decoy and a fall guy."

[A GUIDE TO THE CIA'S NEW ORLEANS]

**D**AVE FERRIE was gesticulating furiously as he poured out his scheme. "Triangulation . . . the availability of exit . . . one man had to be sacrificed to give the other one or two gunmen time to escape." Leon Oswald listened impassively. So did Clay Bertrand, a tall, courtly, older man with close-cropped white hair. Bertrand, smartly attired in a maroon jacket, looked out of place with his carelessly dressed companions in the disarray of Ferrie's apartment.

This was the scene on or about September 16, 1963, as described recently in a New Orleans courtroom by Perry Raymond Russo, Jim Garrison's star witness to date, who had been present in the Ferrie apartment on that fateful night. An articulate young insurance salesman for Equitable Life and a graduate of the Jesuit Loyola University, Russo had passed, for what it is worth, a series of Sodium Pentothal ("truth serum") tests administered by medical experts. His story was sufficiently impressive to cause the three-judge panel to bind over Clay Shaw, whom Russo identified as Clay Bertrand, for trial in the assassination of the President.

Following Ferrie's rapid-fire dissertation, said Russo, the talk switched to escape. Ferrie declared in favor of a flight to Brazil with a refueling stop in Mexico, or a more risky hop directly to Cuba. (It is a source of puzzlement why Ferrie would want to go to Cuba, given his anti-Castro stance.) Bertrand disagreed, on the grounds that word of the assassination would spread too fast to permit a long flight. "Shut up and leave him alone," interjected Leon Oswald, whom Russo says was Lee Harvey Oswald, "he's the pilot." "A washed-up pilot," huffed Bertrand, alluding to Ferrie's dismissal from Eastern Air Lines for homosexual convictions.

From the conversation, Russo deduced that none of the three intended to participate actively in the assassination. Ferrie suggested they "should be in the public eye" on the day of the attempt; he himself would make a speech at a nearby college. Bertrand said he would go to the west coast on business. Oswald said nothing.

Clay Shaw was indeed on the west coast on business on

November 22. Two weeks previously, his manager at the New Orleans Trade Mart had written the San Francisco Trade Mart that Shaw would be passing through on that date and would like to discuss mutual interests with their executives. At the moment when Kennedy was killed, Shaw was conferring with the San Francisco men.

Ferrie also had an alibi, of sorts. A New Orleans attorney is fairly certain that on that black Friday, the eccentric little man was in his law office around 12:15 p.m. Ferrie contended he was in New Orleans until late in the afternoon, when he and his two young roommates left on an impromptu trip to Texas to "hunt geese." On the surface it was a wild goose chase: the trio drove to Houston on Friday, to Galveston on Saturday, and returned to New Orleans on Sunday—over 1000 miles. But Garrison has witnesses who swear that Ferrie spent several hours at a Houston skating rink waiting by the telephone. It was a curious junket at a curious time, so curious that Garrison, on his own initiative, arrested and held the three for FBI investigation of "subversive activity."

Garrison charges only that the machinations in Ferrie's apartment set in motion events that culminated in the assassination. What direction the substantive plot may have taken from there is hinted at in the further testimony of Russo. He had met Ferrie, he said, some four years earlier through Civil Air Patrol activity, and frequently was invited to his apartment. There had been a party before the meeting on the evening in question, and Russo had lingered after the rest of the guests. Among the last to leave were several Cubans in military fatigues, two of whom he recalls by their first names, Manuel and a name sounding like Julian. Manuel, Garrison suspects, is the missing Manuel Garcia Gonzales.

The bizarre quality of Ferrie's life followed him into death. After being questioned by Garrison, he muttered he did not have long to live. The cause of death, the coroner revealed, had been an embolism at the base of the brain induced by hypertension. But a brain embolism can also be caused by a deftly administered karate chop to the neck, a technique which possibly killed Dallas reporter Jim Koethe, who had participated in an enigmatic meeting at Jack Ruby's apartment the night Oswald was murdered [Ramparts, November 1966].

An inveterate activist, Ferrie solicited funds for Castro in 1958, then bitterly turned against him when he struck his communist colors. According to former Havana journalist Diego Gonzales Tendedera, Ferrie flew firebomb raids and refugee rescue missions to Cuba from Florida in a twin-engine Piper Apache owned by Eladio del Valle, an ex-Batista official who had escaped to Miami with considerable wealth. Ferrie reportedly was paid \$1000 to \$1500 a mission, depending on the risk involved.

The caper ended in 1961, when U.S. government agents confiscated the Apache, and Ferrie headed for New Orleans. On February 22, the day Ferrie died in New Orleans, del Valle's head was split by a powerful blow with a machete or hatchet and he was shot over the heart. Miami police, noting that he had been involved in narcotics smuggling, called it a gangland slaying.

After the Bay of Pigs, Ferrie boasted he had taken part in the invasion, and indeed it has come to light that a CIA-directed diversionary strike had been launched from a hidden base in the New Orleans area. The loquacious pilot was openly hostile to President Kennedy for failing to commit American military might against Castro. On one occasion a speech he was giving before the New Orleans Chapter of Military Order of World Wars turned into a diatribe against Kennedy for a "double-cross" of the invasion force. Several members walked out and the chairman abruptly adjourned the meeting.

During this period the conspicuous Ferrie was frequently noticed by the New Orleans Cuban colony in the company of Sergio Aracha-Smith, local director of the anti-Castro Cuban Democratic Revolutionary Front. (New Orleans police intelligence records reflect, states the Washington Post, that the Front was "legitimate in nature and presumably had the unofficial sanction of the Central Intelligence Agency.") The Lake Pontchartrain waterfront near Aracha's home seems to have become a locus for mysterious meetings. Various Garrison witnesses claim to have seen Ferrie there, as well as an exchange of money between Oswald and Shaw.

By 1963, Aracha apparently had been deposed as Front director, for he had moved to Houston in 1962 and was living there at the time of the assassination. In 1964 he moved to Dallas. When Garrison investigators recently sought to question him, he refused to talk without police and Dallas Assistant D.A. Bill Alexander present. However, Garrison secured a warrant charging him with conspiring with Ferrie and one Gordon Novel to burglarize an explosives depot of the Schlumberger Well Services Co. near New Orleans in August 1961. Aracha is presently free on bond.

The strange behavior of Gordon Novel lends still another piquant ingredient to the case. Shortly after being interrogated by Garrison, he hurriedly sold the French Quarter bar he owned and left town. He turned up in McLean, Virginia (headquarters of Army intelligence and CIA), blasted the assassination probe as a fraud, and noisily submitted to a "private" lie detector test given by a former Army intelligence officer that, he said, supported his veracity. In Columbus, Ohio, where he was arrested on a fugitive warrant obtained by Garrison, he cryptically stated, "I think Garrison will expose some CIA operations

in Louisiana." In what it called "his unpublished account of how the explosives disappeared," the New Orleans States-Item claims that Novel has told several persons that he, Ferrie, Aracha and several Cubans did not steal the munitions but transported them to New Orleans at the instruction of their CIA contact just before the Bay of Pigs invasion in April 1961. Furthermore, the States-Item says Novel operated a CIA front, the Evergreen Advertising Agency, which prepared cryptographical messages contained in radio commercials for Christmas trees that alerted agents to the invasion date. Novel, however, has denied being a CIA agent.

The mysterious explosives theft dovetailed with another angle in Garrison's investigation—an April 1961 FBI raid that uncovered a large cache of arms, ammunition and explosives in a cottage near New Orleans. Garrison's men are seeking a group of Cubans said to have accumulated the cache.

Further CIA aid or comfort for the paramilitary right wing is suggested by the role of private eye W. Guy Banister, who with a partner named Hugh F. Ward ran a private sleuthing agency in New Orleans. Both a former FBI official and a former superintendent of New Orleans police, Banister was noted for his outspoken ultraconservatism. His office, according to a States-Item informant, was one of the drops for the stolen munitions. In 1963, the ever-present David Ferrie worked intermittently for him as an investigator.

While researching an article on The Minutemen [Ramparts, January 1967], I learned from a defector—a Minuteman aide who had access to their headquarters files—about an allied group in New Orleans known as the Anti-Communism League of the Caribbean. The League was said by the aide to have been used by the CIA in its engineering of the 1954 overthrow of the leftist Arbenz government in Guatemala. The Minuteman defector said the names of both Banister and Ward appeared in the secret Minutemen files as members of the Minutemen and as operatives of the Anti-Communism League of the Caribbean. He also divulged that militant anti-Castro Cuban exiles were prominent in the Minutemen ranks.

With these pieces of the puzzle beginning to fit together, Garrison hopes to complete the picture. But he will get no help from Banister and Ward. Potential witnesses to the assassination secrets seem to have a propensity for dying. In 1964, Banister, who drank heavily and was given to wild sprees, suddenly died of a heart attack. On May 23, 1965, Ward, a commercial pilot, was at the controls of a Piper Aztec chartered by former New Orleans Mayor de Lesseps Morrison when the craft, engines sputtering, crashed on a fog-shrouded hill near Ciudad Victoria, Mexico. All aboard were killed.

[THE PARAMILITARY OPERATION AT DEALEY PLAZA]

**P**RESIDENT KENNEDY'S MURDER had all the earmarks of a paramilitary operation. The Dealey Plaza site was ideal: tall buildings at one end, at the other a grassy knoll projecting to within a stone's throw of the roadway and covered by foliage. It is the opinion of Garrison's investigators, and of this writer, that the slowly-rolling Presidential limousine was trapped in a classic guerrilla ambush—with simultaneous fire converging from the knoll and from a multi-storied building. This was the "triangulation," Russo said, that David Ferrie had talked about—a sniper in the rear position to divert the public's attention while the sniper in front "could fire the shot that would do the job."

It was, in fact, the frontal fire that did the dreadful job. The explosive head shot that snapped the President's head backward and literally blew his brains into the air could not have been the effect of a high-velocity rifle bullet fired from the rear—such bullets pierce cleanly (a nurse at Parkland Hospital said that when doctors attempted a tracheotomy on the President, the damage was so great the tube pushed out the back of his head). It was the effect of a nasty hollow-nose mercury fulminate bullet, generally known as a "dum dum," which explodes on impact. Although outlawed by the Hague Convention, exploding bullets are favored by guerrilla fighters. An ex-CIA agent who had received paramilitary training from the Agency advises that the CIA supplied this type of bullet to the anti-Castro forces it trained.

The first report of the assassination in the Dallas Times-Herald afternoon edition—before the Warren Commission's three-shot, "magic bullet" theory was proclaimed—read: "Witnesses said six or seven shots were fired." A bullet mark on the curb belatedly analyzed by the FBI did not show traces of copper, as would have been the case had the bullet been the copper-jacketed type allegedly fired by Oswald. "There definitely was a shot fired from behind that fence," insists witness S. M. Holland, referring to the partially concealed picket fence on the grassy knoll. Holland, a crusty old railroader who was standing on the Triple Underpass towards which the President's limousine was heading, is the rare eyewitness who survived both the bamboozling tactics of the Warren Commission and Secret Service insistence that he change his story.

Holland's account is complemented by the testimony of the late Lee Bowers, who overlooked the parking lot at the rear of the grassy knoll from his railroad tower. Bowers said he saw two out-of-state automobiles and a Texas automobile, apparently equipped with a two-way radio, prowling the lot shortly before the assassination. He also noticed two men in the lot near the fence; when

the shots rang out they were partially obscured by the trees, but there was "something out of the ordinary, a sort of milling around."

Jim Garrison agrees that Oswald "was no Captain Marvel." The D.A. says: "The fatal shots came from the front." In this context Oswald's indignant protest while in custody, "I didn't kill anybody . . . I'm just a patsy" may prove, after Garrison finishes, to be true.

There is scientific evidence tending to support it. The Dallas police made paraffin casts of Oswald's hands and right cheek in order to chemically test for nitrates. Although many common substances can deposit nitrates, the blowback from a gun ordinarily deposits an appreciable amount. The test showed positive reactions for both hands; a negative reaction for the cheek.

Ordinarily, a right-handed man who has shot both a pistol and a rifle, as Oswald was accused of doing, would have nitrates on the right hand and cheek. Most likely the source of the nitrates on Oswald's hands was fingerprint ink—he had been finger and palm printed before the paraffin was applied.

Moreover, the FBI subjected the casts to Nuclear Activation Analysis, a relatively new technique, so sensitive it can detect a thimbleful of acid in a tankcar of water. Deposits on the casts, the FBI reported, "could not be specifically associated with the rifle cartridges," but ballistics expert Cortlandt Cunningham did not view the result as exculpating Oswald. "A rifle chamber is tightly sealed," he testified, "and so by its very nature, I would not expect to find residue on the right cheek of a shooter."

This explanation seemed so implausible I contacted Dr. Vincent Guinn of General Atomics in San Diego, who pioneered the development of the NAA process. He said that he and Raymond Pinker of the Los Angeles police crime lab were also curious about the test, and ordered an Italian Carcano rifle such as Oswald supposedly fired. They fired the obsolete weapon, which some authorities think is liable to blow up, and tested their cheeks. Nitrates from the blowback were present in abundance.

[LEE HARVEY OSWALD]

**A**NOTHER COMPONENT of the Garrison theory is that Oswald was not a dedicated communist at all, but an agent of the CIA who may have been trained at the Agency's facility at Atsugi Air Force Base in Japan in 1959. He was a revolutionary looking for a revolution—any revolution—and he found a cause with the CIA-sponsored paramilitary right wing planning the overthrow of Castro.

The paramilitary right wing is composed of numerous factions over which the Minutemen exert a loose hegemony. It is cross-pollinized with Birchers, Klanners, States

*(text continued on p. 24)*

## [Dramatis Personae]

Six and a half feet tall, Orleans Parish District Attorney JIM GARRISON bids to become the most towering figure in American law enforcement by proving an assassination conspiracy. The Jolly Green Giant, as he is called, has defied political logic before by clamping down on Bourbon Street B-girls and tackling laxity among local judges.



CLAY L. SHAW, *alias* CLAY BERTRAND: A Harvard-educated Boston Brahmin, the courtly, craggy-faced retired businessman compiled a distinguished record in World War II, later became executive director of the New Orleans International Trade Mart, and board member of a foreign firm alleged to be a CIA front.

Garrison's men found an array of whips and black hoods when they searched his meticulously tended French Quarter home. Garrison alleges he participated in a meeting with Oswald and Ferrie in which Kennedy's assassination was discussed.





MANUEL GARCIA GONZALES: A mysterious "physically powerful Cuban exile" said by Garrison to have been behind a fence on the grassy knoll in Dallas as the Kennedy motorcade was ambushed. A prime suspect in the assassination, he is now a fugitive. (*His exact features are unknown.*)



DAVID WILLIAM FERRIE (deceased): A spare, hawk-featured man who wore grotesque false eyebrows and a reddish wig. In his mid-forties, he had been a candidate for the priesthood, a commercial pilot, a psychiatrist-impostor and a private eye. Brilliant and eccentric, he spoke Latin and Greek, was once dismissed by Eastern Air Lines because of a homosexual arrest record.

Righters and volatile Cuban anti-Castroites.

It is within this context that the blurred activities of Oswald in the months prior to the assassination come into sharper focus. His fawning attempts to insinuate himself into the confidence of the radical left were a subterfuge. He wrote the national offices of the Communist Party of America, the Socialist Workers Party, and the Fair Play for Cuba Committee offering his services locally. And he handed out "Hands Off Cuba" literature on the streets, a sure way of typing himself publicly. But he was not always meticulous. One set of the "Hands Off Cuba" pro-Castro handbills bore the address 544 Camp St., New Orleans, a building occupied at that time by the right wing Cuban Democratic Revolutionary Front and W. Guy Banister.

The testimony of New Orleans attorney Dean A. Andrews Jr. to the Warren Commission forges another link between Oswald and Clay Bertrand, who, Garrison contends, is Clay Shaw. Andrews, a Falstaffian figure with a flair for colorful language, ran a kind of turnstile law practice in which he secured the release of "gay swishers" arrested in police dragnets. Most of these clients were young Latins, he said, and most were steered to him by a "lawyer without a briefcase" whom he identified as Clay Bertrand. Andrews operated in an appallingly casual style. He hardly ever recorded the names of his clients, and although he had seen Bertrand once, he knew him mostly as "a voice on the phone."

In the summer of 1963, Bertrand referred Lee Harvey Oswald, who consulted Andrews about getting his "yellow paper discharge" rectified and his Russian wife's citizenship status straightened out. A stocky Mexican with a menacing air accompanied Oswald to the lawyer's office.

The day after the assassination Andrews received a phone call from Clay Bertrand asking if he would go to Dallas to defend Oswald. Andrews was in the hospital recuperating from an illness and could not leave immediately. The next morning Oswald was dead.

The FBI went right to work on Andrews. "You can tell when the steam is on," he recounted to Wesley Liebeler of the Commission. "They never leave. They are like cancer. Eternal." After several unpleasant sessions, he let the G-men put words in his mouth. "You finally came to the conclusion that Clay Bertrand was a figment of your imagination?" asked Liebeler. "That's what the Feebees [FBI] put on," allowed Andrews.

But a few months later Andrews encountered Bertrand, "a swinging cat," in a "little freaky joint"—Cosimo's bar in the French Quarter. "I was trying to get past him so I could get a nickel in the phone and call the Feebees," Andrews told Liebeler. "But he saw me and spooked and ran. I haven't seen him since."

Mark Lane, the energetic destroyer of Warren Report myths, was impressed with Andrews' candid testimony. Two years ago he called the voluble attorney and arranged to see him. But by the time Lane got to New Orleans, Andrews had clammed up. "I'll take you to dinner," he apologized, "but I can't talk about the case. I called Washington and they told me if I said anything I might get a bullet in the head . . ."

Andrews has been no more helpful to Garrison. Hailed before the grand jury hearing Garrison's case, the once cocksure attorney exuded equivocation. "I cannot say positively that he [Clay Shaw] is Clay Bertrand or he is not . . . the voice I recall is somewhat similar to this cat's voice, but his voice has overtones . . . Clay Bertrand's is a deep, cultured, well-educated voice—he don't talk like me, he used the King's English . . ." The jury felt Andrews might have done better, and indicted him for perjury.

The courageous testimony of Mrs. Sylvia Odio further documents Oswald's involvement with the paramilitary right wing. Mrs. Odio, an aristocratic Cuban refugee whose parents are still imprisoned on the Isle of Pines for contributing to Manolo Ray's anti-Castro JURE organization, immediately after the assassination volunteered the fact that in late September 1963, she was paid an unannounced visit by two Latins and a man she identified as Oswald. The Latins, who claimed to represent a nascent anti-Castro group, introduced themselves by their "war names": Leopoldo and "something like Angelo." They called Oswald by the name Leon Oswald, an interesting point in view of Perry Russo's assertion that he knew Oswald as Leon. Leopoldo, the spokesman, said they were soliciting aid "to buy arms for Cuba and to help overthrow the dictator Castro." He confided they had just arrived from New Orleans and were leaving shortly "on a trip."

Mrs. Odio was noncommittal. The next day, in an obvious attempt to win her over, Leopoldo telephoned and spoke in raptures of Leon, the American, Mrs. Odio testified to the Commission. Leon was an ex-Marine, he enthused, "He is great, he is kind of nuts. He told us we don't have any guts, you Cubans, because President Kennedy should have been assassinated after the Bay of Pigs . . . It is so easy to do. He has told us."

When Mrs. Odio became upset at the assassination talk, Leopoldo switched tactics. He touted Leon as an expert shot but "kind of loco," he would be the kind of man who "could do anything like getting underground in Cuba, like killing Castro."

Within hours of his visit to Mrs. Odio, Oswald was headed for Mexico City, and Garrison has not overlooked the possibility he tried to obtain a visa at the Cuban embassy there in order to get into Cuba to assassinate



Castro. Such a ploy would have had reasonable expectation of success. Indeed, under "remarks" on his visa application, Oswald carefully noted he was a member of the American Communist Party, secretary of the New Orleans Fair Play for Cuba chapter, and a former resident of the Soviet Union. Only the last was true, and the embassy, possibly leery of his pretensions, refused to waive the normal waiting period. Oswald left in a huff.

The Commission insisted the matter be further explored. Dallas police files disclosed that about three weeks after the visit to Mrs. Odio, two anti-Castro activists, Loren Eugene Hall and William Seymour, had been briefly detained. Hall had attracted the cops' attention with his full beard, a suspicious sign in All-American Dallas.

It was not until September 1964 that the G-men finally located Hall in Los Angeles. He readily admitted training with would-be Cuban invasion forces in the Florida Keys with Seymour and a third man, Lawrence Howard Jr. And he acknowledged approaching a Mrs. Odio, whose apartment he correctly located on Magellan Circle, "to ask her assistance in the movement." Seymour and Howard accompanied him, he said, but he denied knowing Oswald.

Howard confirmed to the FBI that he was with Hall in Dallas in late September 1963, along with a Cuban refugee from Miami, not Seymour. But he disclaimed not only knowing Oswald, but visiting Mrs. Odio as well.

Seymour frankly admitted training in the Florida Keys and the October arrest by the Dallas police. But he was at work in Miami in late September, he said, and employment records corroborated his alibi. By this time the FBI was baffled. It had conveyed to the Warren Commission the impression that Seymour resembled Oswald and may have been mistakenly identified by Mrs. Odio. And the Commission had inserted this dollop in its Report just before it went to press.

An anti-Castro "freedom fighter" well acquainted with both Hall and Howard contends they trained not only in Florida at No Name Key but at bases in the vicinity of New Orleans. He told me the pair was closely associated with Guy Gabaldon, an ex-Marine who in 1961 attempted to organize a private army in Southern California to invade Cuba but was dissuaded by state authorities. Gabaldon, who single-handedly wiped out a squad of Japanese in World War II and was portrayed in the movie "From Hell to Eternity," subsequently launched a fund-raising "Drive Against Communist Aggression" in which he stumped the right wing banquet circuit fulminating against Castro.

Sylvia Odio, now living in Puerto Rico, still insists the Warren Report was wrong. And the trail she pointed out is being followed by Garrison.

Ramparts' investigation indicates that the trail is not a dead end. When Hall and Seymour were arrested by the Dallas police in October 1963, it was noted that they were "active in the anti-Castro movement . . . Committee to Free Cuba." Such an organization does exist, and at his famous midnight press conference after Kennedy was killed, Dallas D.A. Henry Wade blurted out, "Oswald is a member of the Free Cuba Committee," and was quickly corrected by Jack Ruby, "No, he is a member of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee."

A Freudian slip? Probably, for unnoticed in the Warren Report's mass of miscellany is a "Supplementary Investigation Report" prepared by Buddy Walthers, one of Dallas Sheriff Bill Decker's promising young understudies. Dated the day after the assassination, it states: ". . . I talked to Sorrels the head of the Dallas Secret Service [sic]. I advised that for the past few months at a house at 3128 Harlendale some Cubans had been having meetings on the week ends and were possibly [sic] connected with the 'Freedom For Cuba Party' of which Oswald was a member."

On November 26, Walthers plaintively added: "I don't know what action the secret service has taken but I learned today that sometime between seven days before the president was shot and the day after he was shot these Cubans moved from this house. My informant stated that subject Oswald had been to this house before."

So Oswald was associated with liberation movement Cubans who inexplicably departed Dallas at the crucial time. A glance at a Dallas map reveals the house on Harlendale to be in South Oak Cliff, in the direction Oswald was heading when he left his rooming house after the assassination. Nothing in the record indicates the Secret Service evidenced the least bit of interest in this startling intelligence.

#### [RED OSWALD AND THE WHITE RUSSIANS]

**A** FORMER CIA AGENT with whom I have consulted discloses that at the very least, the Agency would have assigned Oswald a "babysitter"—someone who would befriend him and thus keep an eye on him. When the Oswalds settled in the Dallas-Ft. Worth area—they had indicated this intention to the American embassy in Moscow months before their departure—they were readily assimilated into the White Russian colony. Their Red taint, normally anathema to White Russians, seemed to be inconsequential. A man named George De Mohrenschildt and his wife became their most attentive Samaritans—as Marina Oswald put it, "our best friends in Dallas."

It was an incongruous relationship. George De Mohrenschildt is a haughty Russian emigre who travels in high-

rolling financial circles and a rarefied social stratum. An erstwhile financial partner asserts he "was an excellent conversationalist, played fine tennis and was an expert horseman." By incredible coincidence, he is an old friend of Janet Bouvier Auchincloss, Jacqueline Kennedy's mother, and used to play tennis on the Bouvier estate at East Hampton, Long Island. He came to Dallas shortly before the Oswalds, and opened an office as a petroleum geologist. He joined the swank Dallas Petroleum Club and hobnobbed with Texas' oil elite. Jeanne De Mohrenschildt was born in China of White Russian parents, and is well-known as a ladies' fashion designer. This was the couple that befriended nondescript Lee Harvey Oswald and his dowdy Russian wife.

It was De Mohrenschildt who sought out the Oswalds. How he learned of their presence is one of the more mysterious aspects of the case. "I had to go on business to Fort Worth with my very close friend, Colonel Orlov," he told the Warren Commission. "And I told him let's go and meet those people, and the two of us drove to this slum area in Fort Worth and knocked at the door, and there was Marina and the baby . . ."

On April 13, 1963, shortly after someone had taken a rifle shot at General Edwin Walker in his Dallas home, the De Mohrenschildts dropped in on the Oswalds in their new Dallas flat. Jeanne De Mohrenschildt noticed a rifle in a closet and commented on it. George, she related to the Commission, teasingly asked Oswald, "Did you take a pot shot at Walker by any chance?" Later the Commission, relying largely on Marina's hearsay evidence that Lee had taken the shot, solemnly declared that the act "established his propensity to kill."

The couples never saw each other again after this incident. A week later Oswald left for New Orleans, followed by Marina. Days later the De Mohrenschildts went to New York City and, in early June, to Haiti on a business venture. The story of how they came to go to Haiti—and in fact the whole De Mohrenschildt saga—is almost more bizarre than the fictions of the Warren Commission.

The saga takes form from the FBI background investigation. There emerges a brilliant, eccentric individualist of ambivalent political views. One FBI source described De Mohrenschildt as a brutal man with "a Prussian personality." A 1942 report of a government security agency discloses he was suspected of being a Nazi agent but some of his current friends termed him "definitely socialistic but not communistic." The Bureau found that he was "widely known in White Russian circles in New York City and Dallas," and listed restaurateur Serge Oblensky and Boston Bank head Serge Semenko as intimate acquaintances.

De Mohrenschildt reminisced before the Commission

that he "traveled in Cuba before Castro, during the Batista days," on oil exploration trips. In 1957 and 1958 he traveled to Yugoslavia and Ghana as a geological consultant in the pay of the U.S. State Department. His personal fortunes seem to have alternated: at times he claimed \$300,000 in assets, at times he was nearly broke.

In late 1960, during an ebb period, he and Jeanne embarked on an eight-month walking trip from the Texas-Mexico border to the Panama Canal. In one of those recurrent coincidences that mark the man, they arrived at Guatemala City at the precise time the Bay of Pigs expeditionary force was leaving Guatemalan shores. He submitted a full written report on his hiking trip to the U.S. government.

On the trip, the story goes, De Mohrenschildt met some Haitian officials and promoted a contract to make a geological survey of Haiti for \$260,000. "The Haitian government could not pay him his fee in cash," an informant stated to the FBI, "so they worked out an arrangement whereby George would take over a sisal plantation in Haiti, which would be given to him . . . and take his \$260,000 fee out of the profits."

On the occasion of a recent Dallas visit, De Mohrenschildt told the Dallas Times-Herald that when he heard that an assassination suspect had been captured he asked if the name was Oswald. "It was subconscious, a sort of flash and came probably from knowing that Oswald had a gun," he is quoted as saying.

[JACK RUBY]

**J**OE, YOU SHOULD KNOW this," Jack Ruby scribbled furtively to his attorney, Joe Tonahill. "Tom Howard [his first attorney who died in 1965] told me to say that I shot Oswald so that Caroline and Mrs. Kennedy wouldn't have to come to Dallas to testify. OK?" "I don't think he loved Kennedy that much," opined Jada, one of his exotic dancers. "I believe he disliked Bobby Kennedy." Sherri Lynn, another show-girl who had known Ruby 15 years, thought differently: "A dollar means everything to Jack Ruby and he is the type of person who would do anything for money."

In February 1964, as his provocative background began to surface, two Ruby specialists on the Commission staff wrote to the CIA: "It is possible that Ruby could have been utilized by a politically motivated group either upon the promise of money or because of the influential character of the individual approaching Ruby."

The letter to the CIA outlined intriguing facets of Ruby's activities: "Ruby has very carefully cultivated friendships with police officers and other public officials . . . At the same time, he was, peripherally, if not directly connected with members of the underworld . . . Ruby

also is rumored to have been the tip-off man between the Dallas police and the Dallas underworld . . . Ruby operated his businesses on a cash basis, keeping no record whatsoever—a strong indication that Ruby himself was involved in illicit operations of some sort . . . His primary technique in avoiding prosecution was the maintenance of friendship with police officers, public officials, and other influential persons in the Dallas community.”

Nor did the letter ignore Ruby’s affinity for Cuba. “In about 1959, Ruby became interested in the possibility of selling war materials to Cubans and in the possibility of opening a gambling casino in Havana.” The pushy entrepreneur’s continuing interest in Cuba was discussed. CIA, instructed the Commission staffers, should consider the possibility of “ties between Ruby and others who might have been interested in the assassination of President Kennedy.” They specifically mentioned a number of people thought to know Ruby, including former Havana gambler Lewis J. McWillie, a Birch Society official, and oilmen H. L. and Lamar Hunt.

For months the CIA was silent. When finally dunned by the Commission it simply said that its files contained “no information on Jack Ruby or his activities” or any link with Oswald. The reply came after the Commission had concluded its deliberations.

“There is much more to Ruby than meets the eye,” attests one of Garrison’s chief sleuths, Louis Gurvich. Garrison has produced a former Dallas cab driver, Raymond Cummings, who is prepared to testify he twice drove Oswald to Ruby’s Carousel Club, once in the company of David Ferrie.

There already exists a body of evidence tying Oswald to Ruby. For example, there is Wilbryn Waldon “Bob” Litchfield II, who claimed he saw Oswald waiting to see Ruby at the club a month before the assassination. Litchfield was waiting to see Ruby himself, and accurately described a third man—whose presence has been verified.

There is also Carroll Jarnagin, an attorney reputed to have a photographic memory. In a voluntary statement to the FBI, Jarnagin told of overhearing an ear-pricking colloquy between Oswald and Ruby in the Carousel Club the night of October 4, 1963. The gist of it was that Oswald was to be hired to assassinate Texas Governor John Connally with a rifle from a high building. Bobby Kennedy had clamped down on racket activity in Chicago and Castro had ousted the American gamblers from Cuba. The reasoning was that if the straightlaced Connally could be eliminated, Texas, which is “right next to Mexico,” could be opened up and “there’d be money for everybody.”

Jarnagin’s testimony was discounted by the Warren Commission, largely on the strength of a lie detector test

given by D.A. Henry Wade. The result, claimed Wade, was that Jarnagin was sincere but his story “fanciful”—a determination well beyond the capacity of a polygraph.

Ruby’s gangster links are well established, and his connection with one Paul Rolland Jones is a story in itself. Jones averred he had been introduced to Ruby in Chicago in the late 1940’s by several syndicate hoods, and later got to know Jack and his sister Eva, who ran the Singapore Club in Dallas, quite well. He had come to Dallas as an emissary of the mob to negotiate “a piece of the action.”

He approached then-sheriff Steve Guthrie and an obscure lieutenant on the police force, George Butler, to arrange for protection. The two pretended to play along, then sprung a trap on Jones and charged him with bribery. Butler became a hero of sorts, and was tapped to assist the Kefauver Committee in its 1950 rackets hearings. But Jones told the FBI he believes Butler was at first in earnest and wanted a pay-off, desisting only when he learned the Texas Rangers were wise to the negotiations.

Butler is still a lieutenant, working out of the juvenile bureau. The assignment seemingly permits him leeway for his activities as the self-professed leader of extreme right wing elements on the force. In 1961, while in rural Midlothian, Texas, to make an anti-communist speech, he offered Penn Jones Jr., the scrappy editor of the Midlothian Mirror, the opportunity to print a statewide newspaper under the auspices of the Ku Klux Klan. He boasted, Jones says, that one half of the police force belonged to the KKK. He frequently escorts H. L. Hunt to various public engagements.

It was Lt. George Butler who was in overall charge of the transfer of Oswald on November 24 and who gave the “all clear” to bring the prisoner into the basement.

Early in 1959, when Castro came to power, Ruby looked covetously to Cuba. He made overtures to sell surplus jeeps to the Cuban premier, and tried to wangle a letter of introduction from a known Castro partisan in Houston. Late in 1959 he visited gambler Lewis McWillie in Havana on what he later called a “purely social” trip. While there he boasted to at least two U.S. citizens that he was “in with both sides.” Most prominent of the anti-Castroites whose friendship he claimed was Rolando Masferrer, a Batista henchman.

Ruby’s Cuba interests and crime syndicate connections converge in the testimony of Nancy Perrin Rich, a fast-living young lady four times around the marriage cycle and a one-time police informant. In 1962, she arrived in Dallas on the heels of her then husband, Robert Perrin, who at various times had been a bodyguard to top hoodlums, a narcotics smuggler and a gun-runner to Franco

during the Spanish Civil War. Perrin had plenty of police pals, and a detective promptly got her a job hustling drinks in Jack Ruby's club.

The job didn't last long. When Ruby shoved her against the bar, the strong-willed Nancy stormed out and filed assault charges against him, but was "persuaded" by the Dallas cops to drop them. She saw Ruby again—in an apartment where she and Robert Perrin had gone to firm up a deal to run military supplies and Enfield rifles to Cuban insurgents. There was some hitch in the money arriving when, she related, "I had the shock of my life . . . A knock comes on the door and who walks in but my little friend Jack Ruby. And you could have knocked me over with a feather . . . and everybody looks like this, you know, a big smile—like here comes the Saviour."

Ruby evidently was the bag man, because Perrin's cut was upped to \$15,000. But Nancy scotched the deal because "I smelled an element that I did not want to have any part of." The element, she elucidated, was organized crime. A man had showed up whom she took to be a relative of syndicate chieftain Vito Genovese. Running scared, she and Perrin moved from city to city, but he finally headed for New Orleans alone. He died there of arsenic poisoning. The arsenic was "voluntarily consumed," the coroner certified.

In his *Whitewash II*, Harold Weisberg does some expert collating. In the course of his FBI interview, Rev. Walter J. McChann, a priest who ministered to the Cuban exile community in Dallas, remarked that there was a retired Army colonel named Castor whom he felt was "playing the role of an intelligence officer" in his contacts with the Cubans. And an interview with Mrs. C. L. Connell, a volunteer assistant of the Dallas Cuban Relief Committee, contains the opinion that "General Edwin A. Walker and Colonel (FNU) Caster, a close acquaintance of Walker, have been trying to arouse the feelings of the Cuban refugees, in Dallas, against the Kennedy administration."

There is one more loose end to the Nancy Perrin Rich story: the Vito Genovese relative she thought was involved in the deal. Buried in the Warren Report is an FBI account of a tip that Ruby was present at a party in a Dallas apartment two nights before the assassination at which Joe F. Frederici, identified as "a nephew of Vito Genovese," was also present. The tipster said that Frederici and his wife Sandy were to leave the next day "for New Jersey or someplace in the East." Provocative—and, as far as the record is concerned, unresolved.

What the record does show, however, is that organized crime has been implicated in smuggling war material to the Caribbean. A case brought before the McClellan Anti-Racketeering Committee of the Senate by Robert

Kennedy in 1959 involves a plot allegedly masterminded by Michael Genovese, Vito's son, and another man, and financed in part by Teamsters' funds obtained by Louis "Babe" Triscaro, boss of a Miami local. A surplus Air Force Globemaster was to airlift tons of arms and ammunition to Cuba via the Dominican Republic. At the last minute Miami customs agents, who had feigned taking bribes to look the other way, closed in and seized the plane and cargo.

What is known of Jack Ruby's activities in the period encompassing the assassination only heightens the mystery surrounding him. The party he reportedly attended was Wednesday night. As for the next day, a Secret Service report synopsis: "Numerous witnesses identify Jack Leon Rubenstein alias Jack Ruby, as being in Houston, Texas on November 21, for several hours, one block from the President's entrance route and from the Rice Hotel where he stayed." But the Dallas Secret Service, going on the recollections of several persons who vaguely placed Ruby in town that day, just as flatly ruled out a quickie trip to Houston.

Ruby has gone out in a blaze of ambiguity, ranting about a pogrom against the Jews and intimating Lyndon Johnson harbors dark secrets. The government, if it ever wanted the truth, lost its chance when Chief Justice Earl Warren declined to have Ruby removed to Washington for questioning. "I want to tell the truth," Ruby had implored, "and I can't tell it here."

[CUI BONO?]

**T**HE DAY AFTER the assassination, Gary Underhill left Washington in a hurry. Late in the evening he showed up at the home of friends in New Jersey. He was very agitated. A small clique within the CIA was responsible for the assassination, he confided, and he was afraid for his life and probably would have to leave the country. Less than six months later Underhill was found shot to death in his Washington apartment. The coroner ruled it suicide.

J. Garrett Underhill had been an intelligence agent during World War II and was a recognized authority on limited warfare and small arms. A researcher and writer on military affairs, he was on a first-name basis with many of the top brass in the Pentagon. He was also on intimate terms with a number of high ranking CIA officials—he was one of the Agency's "un-people" who perform special assignments. At one time he had been a friend of Samuel Cummings of Interarmco, the arms broker that numbers among its customers the CIA and, ironically, Klein's Sporting Goods of Chicago, from whence the mail-order Carcano allegedly was purchased by Oswald.

The friends whom Underhill visited say he was sober but badly shook. They say he attributed the Kennedy murder to a CIA clique which was carrying on a lucrative racket in gun-running, narcotics and other contraband, and manipulating political intrigue to serve its own ends. Kennedy supposedly got wind that something was going on and was killed before he could "blow the whistle on it." Although the friends had always known Underhill to be perfectly rational and objective, they at first didn't take his account seriously. "I think the main reason was," explains the husband, "that we couldn't believe that the CIA could contain a corrupt element every bit as ruthless—and more efficient—as the Mafia."

The verdict of suicide in Underhill's death is by no means convincing. His body was found by a writing collaborator, Asher Brynes of the *New Republic*. He had been shot behind the left ear, and an automatic pistol was under his left side. Odd, says Brynes, because Underhill was right-handed. Brynes thinks the pistol was fitted with a silencer, and occupants of the apartment building could not recall hearing a shot. Underhill obviously had been dead several days.

Gary Underhill's chilling story is hardly implausible. As a spy apparatus the CIA is honeycombed with self-contained cliques operating without any real central control. The hand of the CIA has materialized repeatedly in Jim Garrison's investigation, and he has implicated anti-Castro Cuban factions aligned with the American paramilitary right—both of which have been utilized by the CIA in its machinations to overthrow Castro. The ex-CIA agent with whom I talked declares that even after the Bay of Pigs debacle, the CIA continued to cherish its pipe dream of sponsoring an invasion of Cuba, and continued to secretly train Cuban exiles at its paramilitary base in Virginia. Such bootlegging was directly counter to the Kennedy administration's policy of cracking down on free-lance armies aiming their sights at Cuba.

1963 was a summer of discontent for those inalterably committed to the toppling of Castro. The Cuban premier had made conciliatory remarks about the ameliorating United States attitude. On an ABC television interview with Lisa Howard, for instance, he lauded "the stopping of piratical acts against Cuba" as "steps in the right direction" of improved relations. The United States had responded, and Kennedy was in fact moving towards a *modus vivendi* with Castro. Miss Howard, who had Castro's confidence, was acting as a covert envoy of the administration at the same time that Adlai Stevenson was talking privately with his Cuban opposite number in the United Nations, Dr. Carlos Lechunga.

Apparently a detente was near realization when Kennedy met death. In a UN speech on October 7, Stevenson

raised the possibility of an end to the Cuban-U.S. cold war, in effect abandoning the Cuban government-in-exile. In his new book *Reds and Blacks*, former Kennedy official William Attwood reports that "the President more than the State Department was interested in exploring [the Cuban] overture," and that a clandestine high-level meeting was imminent. On November 19, Presidential Aide McGeorge Bundy told Attwood, who was acting as an intermediary, that Kennedy wanted to see him after "a brief trip to Dallas."

Soon after the assassination, Dr. Lechunga said he had been instructed by Castro to begin "formal discussions." "I informed Bundy," Attwood says, "and later was told that the Cuban exercise would be put on ice for a while—which it was and where it has been ever since."

Since the assassination, the thawing cold war with the Soviet Union has been shoved into the background by the new holy war against communism in Southeast Asia. This little hot war has enabled the military-industrial complex against which President Eisenhower warned to gain ascendancy. The hawks of the Pentagon, whose wings barely fluttered during the Kennedy epoch, are now in full flight, and the CIA, which Kennedy sought to cut down to size, has become an indispensable instrument of U.S. foreign policy in Southeast Asia.

There is no more talk of lowering the oil depletion allowance, or of investigating the controversial TFX contract awarded Convair in Ft. Worth. The Texas oil and contracting industries have profited immensely from fueling the war machine and building its warehouses and docks.

No wonder that Garrison, who attributes the assassination to a "powerful domestic force," sits at the vortex of that force. Its voice is heard in the swirl of scorn and deprecation that has met his efforts.

But the labeling of Garrison as political opportunist and glory-hound is false. He has relayed word to the President, through a Louisiana senator, that he seeks only the truth and will step aside to let the FBI make all the arrests and issue the press releases. There has been no response, and Johnson continues to devour a daily diet of slanted FBI reports, "Progress of the Garrison Investigation," fed him by his old crone J. Edgar Hoover.

Recently the phone rang at Garrison's home. A metallic voice warned his wife, "You have kids—we'll get them on the way to school." Momentarily frightened, she turned to her husband and pleaded, "Jim, don't you think of the kids before you get into these things?" "I do," Big Jim said calmly. "I don't want them growing up in a country that can't stand the truth."