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Garrison Aim Is Headlines, His Former Assistant Says

Tells Buildup of Fear in City

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(Chicago Tribune Press Service)
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New Orleans, Dec. 29—Behind the scenes of the Kennedy assassination probe of District Atty. James C. Garrison is fear, disagreement, emotional conflict, and the strange behavior of Garrison himself.

In a private interview with THE TRIBUNE, William Gurvich, Garrison's former chief investigator, detailed some of the incidents that finally led to his decision to resign. Gurvich related some of Garrison's working habits and discussed the controversial district attorney's personality.

Borrowed from Report

Gurvich was with Garrison for seven months starting in late 1966. Altho Garrison claims that he has solved the killing as a plot involving an assortment of New Orleans residents past and present, Gurvich said that Garrison frequently copied things right out of the Warren commission report and released them to the press as new evidence he had uncovered.

The Warren commission concluded that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in slaying president Kennedy in Dallas.

"Jim has a philosophy about national headlines," remarked Gurvich. "He believes that everyone reads the headlines concerning arrests and charges, but few people read denials or correcting statements."

Planned to Nab FBI Man

The former chief investigator for the district attorney, whose 6-foot 6-inch build has led to the nickname Jolly Green Giant, gave an example. He

said Garrison once considered arresting Regis Kennedy, a Federal Bureau of Investigation agent who worked on the assassination, because he thought there would be nationwide coverage. He was going to charge the FBI agent with withholding information. And he already had his answer worked out if Kennedy denied it.

"What did you expect him to say?" Garrison was prepared to tell the press, according to Gurvich. "I have him charged criminally, and of course he is going to deny it."

Gurvich described Garrison as a moody person who alternates between hibernating and headline hunting.

He said Garrison seldom puts in a full day's work, often arriving at the office between 11:30 a. m. and 1 p. m. and leaving around 3:30 or 4 p. m. Gurvich said that after leaving his office, Garrison makes a daily visit to a New Orleans doctor.

When a TRIBUNE reporter tried to see Garrison at his office, a secretary informed him that Garrison was not there, that he often works at home.

"He spends most of his time at home," she remarked. "He works there in the quiet of his den where he isn't bothered by telephone calls or visits."

THE TRIBUNE disclosed this morning that Garrison's medical records show that he was discharged from the army in 1951 as totally unfit and later allowed to re-enter the national guard.

Medical Record Bared

The records disclosed that he was under psychiatric care for 4½ years from the fall of 1950 to the spring of 1955. The report said he had a long term psychoneurosis, and a physical evaluation board said that the cause of his disability was "chronic

anxiety reaction manifested by hypochondriasis; chronic exhaustion syndrome . . . and psychogenic allergic manifestations."

Both Gurvich and Aaron Cohn, managing director of the Metropolitan Crime commission in New Orleans, said the residents of New Orleans, especially business men and tavern owners in the famed French quarter, have great fear of Garrison and his office.

Cohn was acting chief counsel of the 1952 Big Nine committee of the Chicago city council that investigated crime and politics in Chicago.

"I have watched his abuses of power grow from small to vast proportions with considerable public approval and support," said Cohn. "I've had a sense of being a spectator to the evolution of a tyrant. . . ."

Calls Probe Out of Hand

Gurvich said flatly that Garrison's assassination probe got cut of hand. He said Garrison in the beginning thought it would be good publicity for higher office, perhaps the governorship of Louisiana. Some New Orleans people have started talking about Garrison as a possible Vice Presidential candidate.

"He invented it," Gurvich said of the assassination probe. "He was carried away with it, and can't control it. . . ."

An indictment against Gordon Novel, a former New Orleans tavern operator, was obtained because he contacted the National Broadcasting company, Gurvich stated. Novel now lives in Ohio. Gurvich said that when Garrison received the information about Novel and NBC he began cursing Novel and exclaimed, "I'll fix him."

Tells Plan to Raid FBI

Gurvich said that Garrison once planned to raid the FBI office in New Orleans. He claimed Garrison had a midnight meeting early last February with Judge Matthew Braniff, a New Orleans Criminal court judge. Garrison told Gur-

vich that the FBI had bugged his home and office and he wanted to get the tapes back. Garrison told Gurvich that every FBI office had a "sound room" in which tape and electronic equipment was kept.

Gurvich claims he has a master file on the Garrison assassination probe that he will some day make public.

There is speculation in New Orleans that Garrison's latest arrest of Edgar Eugene Bradley, 49, a California field representative for the Rev. Carl McIntire, pastor of the Bible Presbyterian church in Colingswood, N. J., is a case of mistaken identity on Garrison's part. Bradley denies any connection with the assassination.

A man with the same last name once was a flying associate of Dave Ferrie, now dead, one of the prime characters of the Garrison probe. Ferrie was investigated and dropped by the Warren commission. The Bradley who knew Ferrie once lived and worked in New Orleans.

Garrison Aim...

(Continued from page 7)

Braniff ordered the men to appear before the New Orleans parish grand jury Feb. 1 and 2. The men were guaranteed

The official Warren Report said Kennedy was killed by Lee Harvey Oswald, a lone sniper. An Orleans Parish grand jury, after an investigation by Garrison, indicted Clay L. Shaw, 54, a retired New Orleans business man, and Shaw now is awaiting trial.

Garrison has claimed a conspiracy involving several men brought about the assassination.

immunity from arrest for anything that happened prior to their entry into Louisiana.

In affidavits accompanying the subpoena requests, Garrison said he had information that Hall checked into Dallas Y. M. C. A. in October, 1963, and remained until Kennedy's death Nov. 22. He said Hall was in Dallas with Jack Ruby "and other individuals believed to be involved in the assassination, including Lee Harvey Oswald."

Took Weapon to Dallas

Hall, the affidavit said, brought a weapon to Dallas, shortly before the assassination. It added that he was active in the "Free Cuba" move-

Subpenas 3 Witnesses

New Orleans, Dec. 29 [Reuters]—District Atty. Jim Garrison today issued subpoenas for three "material witnesses" in his investigation of an alleged plot to assassinate President Kennedy.

Announcing the subpoenas, Garrison claimed 10 men were arrested in Dealey plaza in Dallas, minutes after Kennedy was shot, "some of whom we have identified as participants in the assassination."

They were "quietly released" following the murder, on the same day, of Police Patrolman J. D. Tippit in another part of Dallas, Garrison said.

Statement by Garrison

"The American people have never been told the names of 10 men—some of whom we have identified as participants in the assassination—who were arrested in Dealey plaza minutes after the assassination," Garrison said in a press statement.

"They were later quietly released after the murder of Officer Tippit in another part of Dallas provided the necessary diversion to cover their release," he added.

The district attorney has charged two men with taking part in a plot to assassinate President Kennedy. He also has implied that government officials were aware of the plot.

The three witnesses subpoenaed today were identified as Loran Eugene Hall of Kernville, Cal., Lawrence John Howard of Los Angeles, and Thomas Edward Beckham of Omaha, Neb.

Must Appear Feb. 1-2

Garrison's statement said Howard also is known by his "war name" of Alonzo Escudido and that Hall also is known as Lorenzo Pascillo and "Skip" Hall.

Subpenas issued by Criminal District Judge Matthew S.

(Continued on page 8)

ment in Florida, Louisiana, and Texas and "previously engaged in CIA-sponsored guerrilla training for raids on Cuba."

Garrison declined comment on a newspaper report that he was once declared unfit for military service due to mental troubles, but his top assistant, Charles A. Ward, issued a statement denying the report, published today under a copyright by THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE.

Ward said in his statement: "There is nothing new in these statements. All of this was brought up and these charges were made when Mr. Garrison ran for district attorney in the last campaign.

Cites His Promotions

"Since Mr. Garrison's discharge from active duty with the United States army, he has received two promotions as a member of the national guard and the army reserve.

"He recently was promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel in the United States army reserve, and the army would not permit a man who had a psychiatric illness to hold that rank as a reserve officer."

In Washington a defense department spokesman said medical records were regarded as privileged documents and it was long-standing policy not to disclose them.