

JEREMY  
CAMPBELL  
IN NEW  
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Reporting the  
case of Mr. Jim

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astounding  
Garrison





NEW ORLEANS, Wednesday.

**“W**E have found *conclusively*,” said Mr. Jim Garrison, the District Attorney of New Orleans, his voice breaking ponderously into italics, “that individuals connected as employees of the CIA ended up in Dallas shortly before the assassination of President Kennedy and in the company of Lee Harvey Oswald.

“And if the CIA thinks that I cannot and will not prove it, they are going to have the surprise of their life.”

The man is astonishing. Amid a grotesque confusion of run-away witnesses, men reeling under the effects of hypnotism and sodium pentothal, suicide notes, sexual unorthodoxy, political *circulation* and rampant paranoia, the great Garrison search for a plot to murder President Kennedy seems to be on the edge of collapse.

## Smashing

This week, on nation-wide television, the National Broadcasting Company of America delivered a smashing blow to the Garrison case, kicking away one by one the principal props of his argument.

Material witnesses, shabby, cowed and repentant, admitted lying, bribery and perjury. Perry Russo, the insurance salesman, upon whose word much of the case depends, described his own testimony at the Clay Shaw hearing as “a combination of truth, fantasy and lies.”

Clay Shaw, the New Orleans businessman awaiting trial for conspiracy to murder the President, is not Clay Bertrand, the mysterious friend of Oswald. Clay Bertrand is the *nom de guerre* of another man entirely, a homosexual living in New Orleans. He was *spotted* by a demon reporter from NBC who has now passed his real name on to the Department of Justice, Washington.

Oswald was not the room-mate of the red-wigged pilot David Ferrie, nor could he possibly have been at the famous party where the plot is said to have been hatched. On both of the only two possible dates he was

**His ‘plot’  
has collapsed  
but he  
may still  
be on to  
a winner!**

at home with his wife, Marina. Garrison has long been aware that this devastating programme was in preparation. He attempted to ward off the blow in a week-end speech in the Catskill Mountains, indicating that behind the innocent image of NBC lay the corrupt shadow of the CIA. But the timing is unfortunate, to say the least. It is a fact that Garrison is

now in rather urgent need of money. Truth and Consequences Incorporated, a “secret” fund bankrolled by a group of wealthy New Orleans businessmen, has had less than a wild success, and may fail to provide the 3000 dollars needed to sustain the investigation for another six months.

More ominous, the Governor of Louisiana, Mr. John McKeithen, has taken private soundings of public opinion which show that Garrison’s popularity is slipping dangerously.

The governor, nobody’s fool, is now flatly refusing to finance the Garrison adventure with any more money from the coffers of the State. It even seems that Garrison may be stumbling as a showman. Last week he produced a new conspiracy witness, a certain Clyde Johnson, who has suddenly remembered meeting Clay Shaw, Lee Oswald and Jack Ruby, all together, not once, but twice, in the autumn of 1963.

## Eccentric

He said that on the first occasion Shaw had offered him 2000 dollars cash “to campaign against President Kennedy.”

Two months ago, Clyde Johnson, an itinerant preacher with a police record, would have made headlines all over the world. Today he is simply another eccentric in the surrealist



**RUSSO (far left)**  
Lies and truth.  
**RUBY (left)**  
Two meetings.  
**SHAW (right)**  
Not the friend.



gallery of Garrison witnesses, and the Associated Press refuses to print a word about him.

Now a pertinent question arises. If this is the end of the Garrison case, is it also the end of Jim Garrison? The astonishing answer seems to be: Not in the least.

Alert minds have detected a distinct shift in the Garrison focus in recent weeks. His attack is moving away from the shadowy world of individual, seedy conspirators and towards that all-purpose enemy of the people, the Central Intelligence Agency.

Garrison now claims that the CIA was deeply involved in events leading to the assassination, which he says is the work of Cuban patriots, angry at the Kennedy administration for adopting a policy of co-existence with Communism in the hemisphere.

This is not as wild a theory as it sounds. Two groups of Cubans, one overt, one clandestine, were being trained by the CIA near New Orleans up to 1963, possibly for the eventual purpose of assassinating Fidel Castro in Havana.

After the Bay of Pigs fiasco in 1962, which Kennedy partly blamed on the bungling performance of the CIA, a new spy service, the Defence Intelligence Agency, was born and the CIA lost control of Cuban operations in the United States. By the following summer, Kennedy

closed the door on all military aid to Cuban patriots.

In July 1963, the FBI raided a small house near one of the Cuban training camps at New Orleans, confiscated a ton of war munitions, but made no arrests. A few days later, full of bitterness at the betrayal of the government, the overt Cuban troop disbanded and went back to Miami. The covert group simply disappeared.

Garrison claims that the seeds of conspiracy were sown in this bitter ground in the late summer of 1963, that the plan to eliminate Castro soured into a plot to assassinate Kennedy.

## Hiding

And because the long tentacles of espionage reach deep into so many corners of American life, the CIA is involved to a remarkable extent with a variety of Garrison's principal witnesses.

Gordon Novel, now hiding in Ohio, is said by his own lawyer to have been an agent of the CIA in 1961. David Ferrie, who died before he could be indicted for conspiracy, used to boast of his role with the Agency and may have trained at one of the camps in New Orleans.

Even Clay Shaw, the fastidious

Harvard man, is a director of the World Trade Centre Corporation, widely assumed to be a CIA front organisation.

Almost certainly, Garrison will never have to prove his case against the CIA. He talks in his magisterial baritone, of summoning members of the Agency to take the stand as witnesses of the State, but everyone knows this is simple poetry.

## Power

"Garrison has always left himself an exit route out of trouble," said a New Orleans editor, "and this may be the purpose of bringing in the CIA. If the whole investigation falls apart, he can always blame the CIA for blocking witnesses, fixing evidence and withholding information. How can he lose?"

Perhaps Jim Garrison is smarter than we think. The CIA is hated in the American South because it represents, in a more than usually slippery form, the vast amorphous power of Washington.

"What he is promising the people," said one observer, "is the discredit of Federal authority, and all it represents."

From here, he looks rather like a winner.