

EXCLUSIVE TO NEW ORLEANS MAGAZINE

April 1967

THREE SIDELIGHTS OF THE INVESTIGATION

Since the first news story of District Attorney James Garrison's investigation into the assassination of John F. Kennedy, there have been thousands of words written and spoken by every communications medium the world over. Most of these words have been devoted to straight news reports, speculation, or conjecture.

At NEW ORLEANS MAGAZINE, we felt that in all these words, significant aspects of the story went without coverage. For instance, no matter what the outcome of the investigation, which at this writing cannot even be predicted—three stories stand out: One concerns the very beginning of the investigation. On page 8, you will read an exclusive article prepared from interviews with Senator Russell Long and Mr. Joseph Rault, Jr., prominent businessman and long-time friend of Garrison. Both men participated in the conversation which first inspired Garrison to dig deeper into circumstances surrounding the assassination.

Another story is that of Mrs. Garrison, trying to maintain a normal home life for herself and five children while her husband stood in the center of international controversy. Page 10.

The third concerns the press itself. Daily, we watched forty or more representatives of the world press lounge in the hall outside Garrison's office, waiting for something—anything—to happen. Because the press exerts so much influence on public opinion, it automatically becomes a part of any story it pursues—particularly one in which the answers are not simple or clear. This, then, led to our article on page 12. Now turn the page for three investigation stories you have

Editor's Note: This article was prepared from exclusive interviews with U.S. Senator Russell B. Long of Louisiana, Senate Majority Whip; and Mr. Joseph M. Rault, Jr., president of Rault Petroleum Corporation of New Orleans. Both Senator Long and Mr. Rault are close friends of District Attorney Jim Garrison, and participated in conversations which ultimately led to Mr. Garrison's investigation into the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. This article is copyrighted ©1967 by Flambeaux Publishing Company, and may not be reproduced in whole or in part without the express written permission of Flambeaux Publishing Company.

The Garrison Investigation: How and why it began

In November, 1966, three friends sat squeezed into tourist class seats of an Eastern Airlines jet six miles above the earth. The three—a U. S. senator, a district attorney, and a prominent businessman—managed some degree of comfort in the cramped area next to the galley, as they tried to talk above the whistling engines and the occasional rattling of trays. The district attorney was more uncomfortable than the others, but he didn't mind—because 6-foot, 6-inch Big Jim Garrison was absorbed in the conversation. He could not know it then, but this conversation was to put him on the front pages of the world and was to result in perhaps the decade's most historically significant criminal investigation.

His companions were Senator Russell B. Long of Louisiana and Joseph M. Rault, Jr., president of Rault Petroleum Corporation in New Orleans. The three were bound for an American Petroleum Institute convention in New York, where Mr. Rault and Henry Zac Carter, Sr., president of Avondale Shipyard, Inc., of New Orleans, were to host a luncheon in the senator's honor.

But the conversation had nothing to do with oil or conventions or luncheons. The subject was the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, and more specifically, *The Warren Commission Report*.

It was only a week or so earlier that Senator Long was in New Orleans with Governor McKeithen and was interviewed by a television newsman. At this time, Senator Long said he doubted the findings of the Warren Commission.

It was about these doubts that Garrison questioned the senator on the flight to New York. When Garrison broached the subject, the mood became very serious. As ideas were exchanged among the three, considerable doubts were thrown on *The Warren Commission Report*, and several other theories were advanced.

Perhaps Senator Long's theory was the most dramatic of those put forward. He said there were areas which *The Warren Commission Report* did not adequately cover or did not cover at all. He added that there was a doubt in his mind that the theory set forth in the *Report* was correct, and that he doubted only one gunman participated.

"It just doesn't make sense," he said. "The first shot should be a rifleman's best shot. In this case it wasn't. I believe three shots were fired. The first was mediocre, the second was no good at all, and the third was perfect.

"The third shot would do credit to an expert rifleman, and Oswald was not that good a rifleman. Furthermore, there was hardly enough time for a man to get off two shots from a bolt-action rifle, much less three."

"What's a possible answer then?" asked Garrison.

"If more than one man were to be involved," Senator Long continued, "then the assassins would need a fall guy. They knew that when Oswald fired a shot or shots from the school book depository window, everyone—secret service men, the crowds, the police—would look in that direction. I think the assassins knew people would look at Oswald's gun while another man fired the fatal shot. In other words, Oswald was a decoy."

"Did Oswald hit anyone?"

"Remember that Oswald said over and over he did not kill John Kennedy? Despite many hours of rigorous interrogation, more than most criminals could withstand, he insisted to the end that he killed no one. I think he knew someone else did."

Recalling the plane trip several months later, Rault said. "We all expressed our own opinions, which I believe are also shared by millions of other Americans, that it would be almost preposterous to believe that one man, an individual such as Oswald, could have been the only one involved in this thing."

The question then, as now, was "who else was involved and why?" Garrison asked it somewhat that way, and somewhat rhetorically.

The senator speculated, "I think if I were investigating I'd find the hundred best riflemen in the world and find the ones who were in Dallas that day. Then I think I'd be on the right track."

"But what about a motive?"

"Forget the motive. Find the man!"

Garrison then related to Senator Long that in 1963, his district attorney's office had arrested and subsequently released "a very / continued on page 50

By James A. Autry



unusual type of person who made a very curious trip at a very curious time about the date of the assassination." Garrison became more serious and mused that he might want to now go back into some of those events.

(Editor's note: This appears to be a reference to Ferrie, the airplane pilot who died under suspicious circumstances at a crucial point after Garrison's probe was made public just a few weeks ago.)

As the conversation paused, a stewardess offered cocktails, and Garrison and Rault accepted. The senator preferred wine, but it wasn't available, so he settled for a glass of water. They sat quietly. Both Garrison and Rault felt that the senator's theories were quite parallel, if not exactly the same, as their own.

"We had discussed the subject soberly, fully, intelligently, and at length, and I think we all felt then that if three capable people—in this case a U. S. senator, a district attorney, and a businessman — could have this much doubt about the conclusions of The Warren Report, then the Report itself must be inadequate," Rault said later.

Throughout the convention in New York, the assassination and *The Warren Report* were the principal topics of conversation among the three. It was at this time that several national magazines carried feature stories on the assassination, and several newspapers and syndicates printed their own versions.

In fact, during that convention week, *The New York Times* printed a confusing photograph supposedly taken at the time President Kennedy was shot. To some people, it looked like a man with a rifle on top of a station wagon. The experts, though, according to Senator Long's recollection of the accompanying news story, said what appeared to be a "man with a rifle" could just as well have been a white-faced steer in the background behind the station wagon.

After the picture appeared, Garrison brought up the question of simple probabilities: "It is more likely that, at the time the President was shot, there was an armed man lying on top of a station wagon—or that there was a white-faced steer in downtown Dallas?"

"During our New York convention stay, the topic of the day was the assassination and *The Warren Commission Report*," said Rault. "Consistent with the other things we were doing, this was the subject of our discussions throughout the better part of a week—over a highball or a meal, whenever we had the chance to get together."

It was during this week that Garrison indicated to Senator Long and Rault that he intended to open an investigation on his own. But he did not specify any information beyond that.

At the end of the conversation, Senator Long and Rault left for other business in Atlantic City and Miami. Garrison returned to New Orleans.

"Shortly after that trip, Jim was hard to find," said Rault. "We couldn't find him even for lunch. Jim claimed he was deeply involved in office administrative problems connected with his work that would not free him. Of course we now know what he was doing."

Garrison was still using his "office administrative problems" as an excuse even in late January when he could not show up for the Washington Mardi Gras Ball at which he was to be especially selected and honored from among the more than 2,500 celebrities. He and Mrs. Garrison were supposed to go as guests of Senator and Mrs. Long and Mr. and Mrs. Rault. But Mr. Garrison pleaded that he couldn't make it; he was too busy with his office.

In retrospect, many New Orleanians and several newsmen felt that Rault was involved in the investigation all the way.

"I was not," he said. "I am not a criminal lawyer and am not a member of Garrison's staff. It would have been improper for me to be involved. Jim did not even discuss the investigation probe with me."

Rault says that it was only after the local press broke the investigation story in mid-February that he had any direct knowledge of the probe.

Three days after that, Rault went to the financial aid of Garrison. He explained why:

"After the press released information about Mr. Garrison's then incomplete investigation and made such a point of scrutinizing the expenditure of the public funds that had been used, it became very obvious to me and a number of other businessmen that it would be very difficult, if not impossible, for him to continue his investigation in a goldfish bowl.

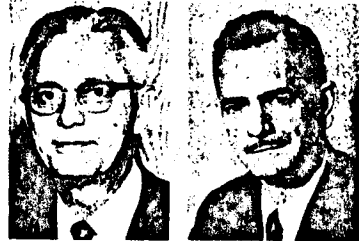
"I read in the newspapers over the weekend that he might have to resort to his own private funds, or even a bank loan, so I called him and offered help."

The offer was accepted, and Rault, along with Willard Robertson and Cecil Shilstone, organized their now-famous "Truth and Consequences" group. They invited over fifty of the top businessmen in the community to a private luncheon and explained the problem. They then suggested that these businessmen con-

tribute \$100 a month for a minimum of three months.

"The response was overwhelming. On short notice citizens from all ranks, walks, and quarters . . ." joined Rault, Robertson, and Shilstone. They included the distinguished attorney Col. Eberhard Deutsch, real estate executive Harold E. Cook, aviation board member and attorney John Mmahat, homestead president and attorney Edmond G. Miranne, bank president Lawrence Merrigan, and many others.

"All of us simply believed in Jim's sincerity and ability. We wanted to express our confidence and our belief in his integrity and in the integrity of his office. As members of the community that put him in that office, we wanted to offer our help in a non-political, non-partisan manner so that he could continue and complete his investigation unhampered," Rault stated. "We had no idea what his evidence was. We, of course, did not know who was involved and in fact were quite surprised to learn some of the names and identities that were made public. It was our understanding with Jim that his office was running his investigation and that we had nothing to do with it and shared no special knowledge in it, except to make funds available. It was a civic effort all the way."



Pictured here are Cecil Shilstone (left) and Willard Robertson, two New Orleans businessmen who, with Joseph Rault, formed "Truth and Consequences."

Rault has been supporting Garrison throughout a friendship spanning eighteen years since they were contemporaries at Tulane Law School. Rault, also a graduate of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is a lawyer and engineer.

"No matter what the outcome of this investigation," Rault has said many times, "I have confidence in Jim and I know that he is pursuing this thing in the interest of truth and justice and not as a big publicity move. If anything, the publicity, particularly in anticipation of everything he does, may have hurt his investigation."

Senator Long is also strong in his support of Garrison and the probe. "Jim is

pursuing the theory he and I discussed and he is filling in the gaps. And he is doing it against tremendous odds. Several powerful elements of the press, and even some people in government have tried to discredit him.

"They should stop trying to discredit him. As a matter of fact, the federal government probably does not have jurisdiction in the case, because the assassination of a President was not made a federal offense until after Mr. Kennedy's death."

At this writing, Clay Shaw's preliminary hearing has just ended, and Mr. Shaw is awaiting trial. A very significant act of the three-judge panel—perhaps as historically significant as the hearing itself—was to disallow The Warren Commission Report as evidence! Also as we go to press, Jefferson Parish attorney Dean Andrews has been indicted for perjury by the Orleans Parish Grand Jury, and Mr. Garrison has promised other public developments.

NEW ORLEANS MAGAZINE asked Senator Long to venture an opinion on the outcome of Garrison's full investigation.

He said, "Jim is a great district attorney, but his staff is, of course, limited. I think he has some good evidence. I doubt that he has enough evidence at this time to convict anyone of murder. To do so would require him to prove and establish beyond a reasonable doubt certain facts, whereas his evidence as of this date would appear to be purely circumstantial; and he might not be able to obtain other information that could be in existence somewhere.

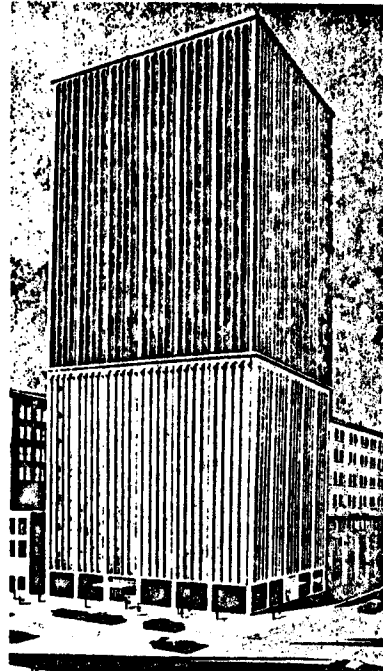
"On the other hand, it is my guess that Jim Garrison will produce enough evidence to overcome *The Warren Report*, and this should encourage the F.B.I., with its thousands of agents, to reenter the case. When they do, I believe that the additional evidence uncovered by the F.B.I. will make it possible to solve the case and perhaps convict guilty people who have escaped up to this point."

The senator then added, parenthetically, "I know one thing: Jim Garrison has caused almost everyone in this country to stop and think. For instance, the other night, I asked the ticket agent at the Baltimore Friendship Airport:

"How many Americans today believe that Oswald acted alone?"

"About one-half as many as thought so a month ago," he quickly replied. †

What's New on Poydras Street?



A \$6 Million, Seven Story Addition to the City's Changing Skyline

In 1883 Poydras Street and the telephone company joined hands and since that date the intersection of Poydras and Baronne Streets has been the nerve center of telephone service in the metropolitan area.

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Early in 1969 this advanced telephone exchange will go into service to provide the latest in telephone facilities to a dynamic expanding metropolitan New Orleans.



Southern Bell

The controversial first news break

On February 17, when a front-page headline blared, "DA Here Launches Full JFK 'Plot' Probe," the investigation that was to draw a world-wide press pilgrimage to New Orleans became public.

It was the *States-Item* that broke the story that warm Friday. Reporters Jack Dempsey, Rosemary James and David Snyder compiled the story that had been porpoising along in silence for nearly four months.

Though all local media knew bits and pieces of the rumored investigation, it was not until February 10 that *States-Item* City Editor John Wilds and Rosemary James conferred about the facts and figures that police reporter Jack Dempsey had put together. On Tuesday, the 14th, Rosemary checked out Dempsey's information and fellow-reporter David Snyder scoured the public records. Later that day she called Garrison's office for an appointment. She told Garrison she wanted to talk to him about his "special investigation." When Garrison put her off she asked, "Well, are you conducting an investigation into the assassination of President Kennedy?" "I will neither confirm nor deny it," he replied. He then talked of other matters and ended the conversation with, "Come on out to the office and we'll have a cup of coffee."

Rosemary wrote the story the next day and turned it in to John Wilds. He told her to take it to Garrison Thursday and show it to him. She arrived at Garrison's office at 10 a.m. and asked to see him. According to Rosemary, she went in, handed Garrison the story and greeted Lynn Loisel and Louis Ivon, two of the D.A.'s investigators. Both remained in the office. Garrison, in his shirtsleeves, leaned on his cluttered desk and read the first page of the story. He again repeated, "I will neither confirm nor deny it."

He then shrugged, passed off the story and began talking about other matters. Rosemary departed, after talking with Loisel and Ivon about a successful stake-out operation they had completed. Late Thursday after the story was sent to type, Rosemary worked on follow-up copy for Saturday.

After the story broke Garrison charged the *States-Item* with hurting his investigation and stated "Anyone who says I had an opportunity to see this story is a liar."

The following Monday, Rosemary went to his official press conference at a local motel and was barred. She saw Louis Ivon at the door and he said, "Hello, how are you?"

"Frankly, mad as hell," replied Rosemary, who had yet to receive the promised cup of coffee from Garrison.

—Eugene A. Sheehan



THE PRESS: its actions

Along the windowed wall of the almost block-long second floor marble hall of the New Orleans courthouse, reporters with impressive credentials from all over the world were sitting on the floor, on wooden benches, or hunched behind waiting television cameras and lights. Microphones sat mute, waiting for targets; pencils, sharpened like needles, waited to be manipulated. Conversation had long since dwindled away into bored silence. The "wall watch," as the press corps had come to call it, was now a week old and there wasn't much left to talk about. There was some occasional griping about the lack of action, but that is common among reporters. Most of them are accustomed to waiting for the action to begin—it comes with the territory.

The subject of this daily vigil had become as elusive as a clue in a Perry Mason mystery, an uncommon role for New Orleans' controversial and usually garrulous D. A., Jim Garrison, who is not best known for avoiding a consanguinity with publicity. He has, during his career, blown sparks from many embers, whipping up fires when only smoke seemed visible. He entered the D. A.'s office in 1960 and immediately ripped into the institution. Using cloak and dagger methods, he took on the hookers and shakedown joints along Bourbon Street and cleaned them up. He cracked down on lottery racketeers and unscrupulous bail bondsmen and even locked horns with eight criminal court judges at one point. When they fined him \$1,000 for defamation he had the ruling set aside by the United States Supreme Court. His exploits were merily chronicled in the national press, including the *Saturday Evening Post*, the *National Observer*, and *The New York Times*.

But this time Garrison was after much bigger fish. This time he was after the conspirators who he said plotted with Oswald to murder John F. Kennedy.

In mid-February, the local newspapers revealed that Garrison was deeply involved in investigating a New Or-



and reactions

By William F. Diehl, Jr.

leans-based conspiracy which he believed had ended with the death of the president. Garrison, who had told the papers "no comment," reacted predictably. He called a press conference, barred the local papers, and berated them for thirty minutes. Then, his spleen vented, he announced: "We have solved the case. We will make arrests and obtain convictions. *The Warren Report* was wrong."

Like lemmings, the press streamed into the city from all over the world. Safaris of television crews arrived from New York, loaded down with equipment. Reporters converged from most of the major newspapers and press services. Because of the bizarre nature of the story, many of the questions, too, were loaded. Because the story had not emanated from his office, Garrison could afford to play it cool, and cool it he did. Interest surged and ebbed, and Garrison, well aware of the power of the press, played the story as a conductor directs a symphony, feeding the press corps just enough to keep them on the hook, making rare appearances and entering and leaving his office by a private entrance. To many of the reporters, he was inaccessible; to others, whom he trusted and liked, he was available, meeting them in hotel rooms, restaurants, and other out-of-the-way places. At first, he was hardly encouraging, commenting that arrests might take months or even years. Too much publicity, he said, might scare off witnesses and conspirators. Some might even commit suicide.

The American press was skeptical, most of them eyeing Garrison as a small town boy trying to make a name for himself with an incredible grandstand play. The international press saw in Garrison a knight on a white charger—a man who might finally "solve the Kennedy murder." The attitudes of the reporters and their approach to the Garrison investigation reflects these opposing views and, in an odd way, the views of opposing attitudes of the people in this country and the rest of the world. In the first months after Ken-

nedy's death, the American public seemed content to accept the "one man, one shot" theory of the assassination. The Europeans have never accepted it.

Evelyn Irons, a reporter for the *Sunday Times* of London said: "In Europe, where political plots and assassinations are fairly common, nobody has ever believed Oswald acted alone. *The Warren Report* is looked on with a great deal of skepticism. When I came here, I was assigned to look for a hookup with the Cuban situation, facts and figures and names involved in 'the' plot to kill Kennedy and possibly get a report from the Warren Commission. Notice I said 'the' plot. My editors have no question about that. As far as we're concerned there was a plot, period.

"The American press, on the other hand, doesn't seem to want a plot to exist. They come armed to the teeth with questions all related to Garrison's political aspirations. For the most part they don't seem to take Garrison at all seriously; they come with smiles on their faces."

As the story progressed, however, the smiles were wiped off more than one face. One fact is irrefutable: As of this writing, Garrison has become "hot copy" because there is a growing wave of doubt concerning *The Warren Report*, not only abroad but in this country too. For the most part, public opinion is based on what people read in the newspapers, see on their television screens, see in their magazines. It is doubtful that many people read the entire twenty-six volumes of *The Warren Report* nor the shortened versions that were printed. Knowledge of *The Warren Report* is based on the interpretive reporting of the press. In this country most of the newspapers assumed a positive attitude toward the report. In Europe, the press was negative toward it. Now, years after the assassination, fresh doubts are creeping into many people's minds in this country. But the United States press seems to have difficulty accepting the theory that a plot existed, particularly when it is revealed by / continued on page 52

the district attorney of New Orleans. After all, if all the resources of the FBI did not uncover a plot, how could Jim Garrison? Some, with tongue in cheek, were having a field day at Garrison's expense. A week after the first story on the investigation appeared, *Time* magazine reported that "Garrison all too clearly writes his own scripts" and summed up its first story thus: "But he (Garrison) was not talking anymore — no more, that is, than it took to keep his name in the papers."

Newsweek, in its second week of coverage, under the tag "History or Headlines?", concluded an article laced with anti-aphorisms ("Garrison's self-perpetuating investigation") by referring to a one-man submarine which the late David Ferrie, one of the alleged conspirators, had constructed to harass Castro's shipping lanes. "The little craft," reported *Newsweek*, "was made from an old B-25 gas tank, had no navigation instruments and no power plant but foot pedals. The sub rested for a time in a backyard and finally ended up in a dump."

"So, says Garrison's own growing gallery of critics, will the D. A.'s case."

Another reporter, representing a northern newspaper, said he came to New Orleans believing Garrison was simply publicity hungry. "He just hasn't been making headlines much lately," he said. "Besides, he must be out of his mind to try and discredit the whole Warren Commission." In the next breath he admitted that his newspaper is interested in the Garrison investigation because of a "growing distrust of the Warren findings by the public."

As the story progressed, the skepticism of some American pressmen began to alter slightly. Ferrie's death, called a suicide by Garrison and a natural death by coroner Nicholas Chetta (a broken blood vessel at the base of the neck), came a few days after Garrison predicted premature news stories might lead to the suicide of some witnesses. Characteristically, Garrison leaped on Ferrie's death, calling him "one of history's most important men," and fingering him as the getaway pilot for Oswald's co-conspirators. Less than a week later, Garrison provided more action and arrested one of New Orleans' more prominent businessmen and real estate speculators, Clay Shaw, a decorated major in World War II, who had helped start the International Trade Mart. If headlines were Garrison's meat,

he got them. Many newspapers, which had underplayed the story until then, finally put it on the front page. The normally conservative *Memphis Press-Scimitar*, which had been playing the story down, headlined Shaw's arrest with a banner, two-deck headline on the front page. *The New York Times* continued to relegate the Garrison investigation to the back pages. Coroner Chetta's announcement that Ferrie died naturally appeared in three paragraphs on page sixty-nine. But by the end of the second week, many reporters were beginning to regard Garrison as an enigma, rather than a publicity hound.

Garrison also requested a preliminary hearing, a move which generally surprised the press since it's usually a matter of routine procedure for the defense to ask for the hearing. A hearing is designed to show either that the evidence held by the state is sufficient to bind the accused over for trial, or insufficient, in which case the defendant is discharged. By filing for the state, Garrison was obviously taking a legal opportunity to perpetuate testimony in the form of official notes taken by the court reporter. The move was another show of confidence by Garrison.

The divergent attitudes of the U.S. and foreign press regarding the Garrison story are perhaps best indicated by the editorial approaches of two reporters, Jack Nelson, Pulitzer Prize winning southern correspondent for the *Los Angeles Times*, who is based in Atlanta, and Phillippe LaBro, a columnist for *France-Soir*, the largest daily newspaper in France, who has been vitally interested in the Kennedy assassination since he went to Dallas the day after the death. Both are recognized, competent, and hard-nosed men. LaBro learned journalism in this country.

Nelson was returning to Atlanta from another assignment when the Garrison story first appeared on the national newswires. The *Los Angeles Times* put the story on page one.

"If they had been able to contact me, I would have advised them to play the story down, the same as *The New York Times* played it," Nelson said. "With it on the front page, I came over to New Orleans to try and put it in some context — everybody out there was wondering what the hell was going on. Right now it looks like a hoax to me."

Nelson's story, which appeared in the Sunday editions of both the *Times* and

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, was tough, reflecting Nelson's opinion that Garrison was "exploiting all the doubts about the commission." "You know how those things go," Nelson said. "Everytime somebody dies, this kind of thing feeds on itself. If there is a plot, I think the world should know about it. So far Garrison hasn't got anything."

Nelson's story quoted Aaron Kohn, of the Metropolitan Crime Commission, as saying he was surprised that Garrison would let himself get caught in a "bush league play when he wants to be a big leaguer." The story, however, failed to point out that Kohn only recently had accused Garrison of protecting "organized crime" in New Orleans by pardoning Bourbon Street stripper Linda Brigitte, accused of obscene dancing. Nelson also confided that one of the city officials had told him, off the record, that Garrison was dealing with nothing but psychopaths.

LaBro, wolfing down a sandwich and writing a daily column at the same time in his hotel room, had also heard the report that Garrison was dealing with psychopaths. His reaction was quite different than Nelson's.

"Of course he's dealing with psychopaths," LaBro said. "Who else but psychopaths would conspire to kill the president of the United States?" LaBro had left Paris the day Ferrie died and looked on Garrison's investigation as a "possible breakthrough in the assassination plot after all these years." He has read all twenty-six volumes of *The Warren Report* and was the first reporter in the world to mention Ferrie in a news story (last October).

"I've talked to everyone who has seriously criticized *The Warren Report*, and I've made five trips to Dallas since the assassination, refreshing myself on the details and any new developments. I think this is the most important development to date." LaBro had talked to Garrison twice, once for five hours.

"Our readers want to know everything about this Garrison and about New Orleans. But you must remember, nobody in France believes that Oswald was alone in his plan to kill Kennedy. We are used to complicated political plots. The average Frenchman can't believe it was all that simple. After talking with Garrison, I am sure he has something. I would not bet against him on this. He's not a kook, he's not a nut. He's a very sound guy. And if he is

political, he certainly would not risk it on anything this important unless he was sure he had the cards."

LaBro feels that the press explosion will help, not hinder, Garrison because it will accelerate the evidence. And, like many other reporters both here and abroad, LaBro believes Garrison was "ready for the story to leak. It is a risk, doing it this way, but he was ready for the gamble.

"Sometimes I do not understand American reporters. They pursue a line of questions based on what they think before they arrive on the scene. In Europe we take nothing for granted and we look both ways. I do not say that American reporters are all bad reporters, but I think the press of any country reflects the attitude of its people and in this country I think perhaps the press reflects the naivete of the Americans. It also reflects the great fear in this country of communism. We are always suspicious of communism in France, but we are not petrified of it.

"Perhaps that is why it was so easy to accept the Oswald theory in this country. You point to him. You say he is a Marxist! 'Aha, Great!' everybody says. It is the easy answer. The death of Kennedy was an awesome thing . . . totally horrible. Why discount the idea that the plot which led to his death was awesome and totally horrible?

"This could explain why the FBI; in its investigation for The Warren Commission, might have overlooked—or ignored—a plot involving Oswald. If they started out on the theory that it was one man acting alone, their questions and the development of their case might easily have proceeded on just that line. In which case, they might have tended to give little credence to information that would have shown some thing else."

Perhaps the only foreign newsmen who did not express opinions one way or the other were the Russians. But even they were on the scene here. Yuri Baisukov of Izvestia, Henry Borovik of Novosti Press Agency, and Harry Freeman of TASS, said they were covering the story entirely objectively and would continue to do so. "It is true," said Borovik, "the most people throughout Europe and even in Russia are suspicious of the circumstances surrounding the death of President Kennedy. But the Soviet press has been objective throughout."

By the end of the second week, some reporters—and newspapers—were taking a second look at Garrison's story of intrigue. *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, which had published Nelson's story, published a second story the following Sunday by Clarence Doucet, assistant city editor of the New Orleans *Times-Picayune*, copyrighted by *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, headlined: "Garrison is just beginning to swing." The story began: "Big Jim Garrison has shaken the confidence of a lot of people who thought his much-publicized probe of the assassination of President Kennedy already would have fallen flat on its face." The story, a favorable one, concludes: "It is apparent that Garrison has something. But what it is, near miss or conspiracy, only time will tell.

"One thing is certain, he won't allow himself to be rushed. And Garrison is now calling the plays."

In the courthouse hall, the wall watchers, bored with the waiting, speculated, talked, conjectured. Garrison was still calling Ferrie's death a suicide. Well, perhaps. Ferrie was a noted hypochondriac and had abnormally high blood pressure. Under the extreme pressure of the investigation he might simply have stopped taking medication, inducing the stroke which killed him; in which case both the coroner and Garrison would have been right: suicide by normal means. Even more bizarre were other theories. A shot of adrenalin, for instance, could have caused the affliction that killed Ferrie. And what about the opposing political viewpoints of some of those allegedly implicated — Castroites and anti-Castroites involved in the same plot? Impossible. Yet there were strong implications of homosexuality; perhaps these ties were strong enough to overcome political differences.

Meanwhile the jokes and the speculation ran rampant. Garrison was the hidden man and the press simply watched the big oak doors at the end of the hall, waiting for his next move.

"He's holed up at the Athletic Club," said one reporter.

"Nah, he's in Miami," said another.

Still another: "I hear he's operating out of an apartment in the Quarter."

"All wrong," said another. "He's in Las Vegas."

"What the hell's he doing in Las Vegas?" they asked.

"I hear he lost the city last night," was the answer.

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Mrs. Garrison talks about home life in the midst of

In almost every home where there are youngsters, alarm-clocks are about as useful as celluloid collars. In one particular home a one-year-old with the imperial name of Eberhard Darrow sounds off each morning at about 6:30. He draws an immediate response from his Gulliver-sized father, who quickly rises and in short order has Eberhard Darrow quiet and contented with a full bottle. Then the father quietly shaves and dresses. At exactly 7 a.m. he nudges his sleepy wife and says with sunny gusto, "O.K. Egg, time to get up. Let's go."

So starts the day for Jim and Liz Garrison and their five children. All during the much-publicized investigation and even at the height of the Clay Shaw hearing, Jim would turn off the Eberhard "clock," wake Liz and then have breakfast and talk with the rest of the Garrison brood before leaving for his office.

"Jim is a typical, doting father at home," says Liz. "Since the investigation came out in the newspapers, we've had to make a lot of changes, and I've had a hard time adjusting to our not having privacy anymore. But I guess we have lived as normally as could be expected under the circumstances."

For Elizabeth Ziegler Garrison, there appear to be few circumstances which she could not handle normally and in stride—whether it be feeding breakfast to twenty unannounced newmen or appearing fresh and elegant at a late dinner party after a one-hour notice from her husband.

Liz, 31, married Jim eight years ago after dating him for about four years. They met at the law offices of Deutsch, Kerrigan, and Stiles where Jim was an attorney and she was a file clerk. The first child, James Robinson, arrived a year later. They nicknamed him Jasper. He was followed by Virginia, who is now 5; Lyon Harrison ("Snapper"), age 3; Elizabeth Ziegler, 2; and Eberhard Darrow.

"Jim says if the next one is a boy," laughs Liz, her hazel eyes sparkling, "we will name him William Shaw or William Shakespeare Garrison. But, Jim is big on names and nicknames. He never calls me Liz. It's usually Egg, because he says I'm an egghead, or Edna,

which he thinks is ludicrous or Roachelda, because I just panic when I see a roach."

A trim (5' 5", 125 lbs.) and attractive woman with a classic face topped by ash blonde hair, Liz looks more like a post-season debutante than a housewife and mother. Her perfect complexion, the barest whisper of lipstick or makeup, the just-right hairdo, and the snug, simple Teal Triana dress all show a calm refinement and cool poise that do not disappear even when her five children are attempting to rearrange the formal living room of their comfortable home on Owens Boulevard in the Bancroft Park section.

Such was the case when Liz was being photographed and interviewed one breezy afternoon three weeks ago. "The three oldest children know something is going on," said Liz, "and though they have always been lively, lately they've almost been little brats." She paused, got up, and smacked Virginia on the backside for climbing over the sofa.

"We have a guard posted in front of the house," she continued, "and have changed our phone number so that only a few people have it, but the house looks like a bus depot sometimes." Liz got up quickly and went to a big window where a handsome piano stood. She grabbed Snapper from the piano and brought him to the door. "O.K., young man, out you go."

Apologizing, she sat back down and said, "I haven't finished decorating in here yet and often wonder if I ever will. Jim plays the piano by ear and I think quite well. We plan to start Virginia taking lessons and I hope to learn with her, that is, if the piano lasts." Before she could continue, the phone rang, followed by the doorbell and a whimpering two-year-old Elizabeth. Then there was a knock on the door and a man stuck his head in the living room.

"Oh, hello, Joe," Liz said cheerfully and introduced him as Joe Riorda, who with his wife, Dottie, are neighbors and best friends with the Garrisons. Joe asked about Jim and then went to answer the ringing phone as Liz picked up her daughter and patted her.

"It's Jim, he wants to talk / continued on page 18

it all

By Liz Bennett



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MRS. GARRISON / cont. from page 10

to you, Liz." Riorda called from the other room.

"O.K., coming," Liz answered, reaching for the afternoon newspaper and spreading it on the floor. "Now, Elizabeth, why don't you read the newspaper."

When Liz returned, Elizabeth had torn up the newspaper and appeared headed for one of the half dozen chess sets her father keeps around the house in various stages of play. Liz picked up the child and handed her to Mattie, the maid.

Liz and her husband talk politics a lot, and he has kept her up-to-date on the investigation. She says that sometimes he'll be restless and wake her up at 2 or 3 a.m. to talk about the latest developments.

Because teachers at school were worried about the children, the Garrisons hired a detective to take the two oldest to school and watch them during play periods. In addition, he checks people coming to the house. "I'm a little embarrassed because he ends up most of the time being just a baby sitter." Though the phone rings as much as before the number was changed, Liz has received no crank or threatening calls. One phone call of five weeks ago did shake her up, however.

"A reporter from *Life* was here going through some old photographs we had. The phone rang, I answered it, and it was for her. When she came back in the room, she looked at me quite strangely and said, 'I don't know how to tell you this, but it's rumored your husband has been shot. It was on the radio.' My mother and father were here, and it was he who kept everything calm. My mother just went to pieces. Then, about 20 minutes later Jim walked in and I couldn't believe it. I started hugging him just to convince myself he was alright."

Yet, Liz still finds time to grocery shop; to play bridge; shop for hers and the children's clothes; ride her bicycle to the store or grocery; go to the beauty salon once a week; look for bargain furniture; read *Time* weekly to keep abreast of the news; do embroidery (she loves to cross-stitch) and needle point; meet Jim at any time; and be ready for surprises at a moment's notice.

"It was the Sunday after the investigation story broke," she said, recalling a recent surprise. "Jim forgot to tell me he invited 'a few newsmen' to break-

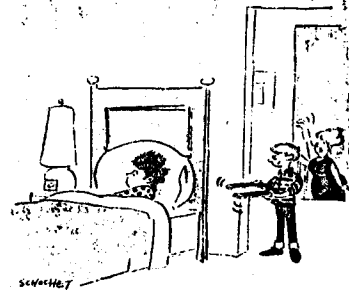
fast. There I was, the kids at various stages of dress, when about twenty people poured in. I scooted to the kitchen, scrambled eggs, made bacon, toast and coffee and served them. The china and silver didn't match, the kids ran wild, and we had a ball."

All her experiences with the press haven't been that pleasant, however. Several weeks ago, two reporters tried to follow her when she went to Manale's for dinner with friends. "It was pretty gruesome."

But, she is philosophical about such things, including critics of her husband ("I have complete faith in what he is doing") and his handling of the investigation. A close friend says of Liz, "She is a person of strong convictions on things that really matter. But, she is also a truly charming woman who could not be nasty or rude to anyone. And Liz never drenches anyone in unwelcomed good will."

The phone calls, the people in the house, the curious stares wherever she goes, the guard and detective, the irregular hours, the unfinished work, all this the unruffled Liz believes will have to end sometime. "And I've let Jim know quite firmly," she says in mock seriousness, "that when this case is all over we are going away and take a trip. Where will we go? I don't know. A cruise would be nice. But, it will probably never happen. I'll be happy if we get as far as the Gulf Coast."

No matter what the outcome of Jim's case, one thing is certain, things are in control at the Garrison household. ♣



"Tommy, don't you dare!"