

The Acting Attorney General

February 20, 1967

Director, FBI

ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT
JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY
NOVEMBER 22, 1963
DALLAS, TEXAS

1 - Mr. DeLoach
1 - Mr. Wick
1 - Mr. Rosen
1 - Mr. W. C. Sullivan
1 - Mr. J. R. Malley
1 - Mr. W. A. Branigan
1 - Mr. Raupach
1 - Mr. Lonihan

The Sunday editions of two Washington, D. C., newspapers for February 19, 1967, carried articles indicating that District Attorney Jim Garrison in New Orleans, Louisiana, is conducting an investigation of the assassination of the late President John Fitzgerald Kennedy. Allegedly Garrison claims that the Warren Commission Report is inaccurate in stating Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in the assassination of President Kennedy.

Enclosed is a memorandum which sets forth a concise summary of the results of our investigation of Lee Harvey Oswald from April, 1963, when he returned to New Orleans from Dallas, Texas, until September, 1963, when he traveled to Mexico City, Mexico. Also set forth is information in our files concerning District Attorney Garrison and data concerning Miguel Torres and David William Ferrie who are mentioned in these newspaper articles.

Additional pertinent information concerning this matter that comes to our attention will be immediately furnished to you.

This data is also being furnished to the Honorable Marvin Watson, Special Assistant to the President.

62-109060

Enclosure

1 - The Deputy Attorney General (Enclosure)

1 - Mr. Fred M. Vinson, Jr. (Enclosure)
Assistant Attorney General

1 - 105-82555 (Lee Harvey Oswald)
1 - 62-109090 (Warren Commission Report)

REL:KMR:sal (15)

NOTE: See memorandum W. A. Branigan to W. C. Sullivan, dated 2/19/67, captioned as above, prepared by REL:KMR:sal.

62-109090 -
NOT RECORDED
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1 - Mr. DeLoach
1 - Mr. Wick
1 - Mr. Rosen

Mr. W. C. Sullivan

2/19/67

W. A. Branigan

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THE ASSASSINATION OF
PRESIDENT JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY
NOVEMBER 22, 1963
DALLAS, TEXAS

BACKGROUND:

The Sunday editions of the "Washington Post" and the "Washington Evening Star" for February 18, 1967, carried articles indicating that District Attorney Jim Garrison in New Orleans was conducting an investigation of the assassination and was claiming that the Warren Commission Report is inaccurate in stating Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in the assassination of President Kennedy. Garrison did not furnish details of his investigation to the press but stated that arrests will be made, charges will be filed, and convictions will be obtained.

The newspaper articles indicated that Miguel Torres, a 26-year-old Cuban who formerly lived only a block from Oswald's last known New Orleans address "is known to be connected with the District Attorney's investigation." The "Washington Evening Star" article also reported that David William Ferrie, part-time private investigator and operator of a New Orleans flying service, informed the press that the District Attorney's Office informed him it had "positively uncovered a plot in New Orleans to assassinate Kennedy."

DATA REGARDING GARRISON:

Bureau files reveal James C. Garrison was a former Bureau Agent who entered on duty 3/5/51 and resigned 7/24/51 for military purposes. His services were listed as satisfactory. He took office as District Attorney in New Orleans in May, 1962, and immediately became involved in a dispute with the New Orleans Police Department over his professed desire to clean up the so-called "minor vice" in New Orleans. In November, 1962, Garrison accused eight judges of delaying justice in New Orleans which resulted in the judges filing a defamation suit against Garrison. He was found guilty of such charges on 2/6/63 and was fined \$1,000. He appealed his conviction and on 11/24/64 the U.S. Supreme Court reversed the conviction holding that the element of deliberate malice was lacking in the statements attributed to Garrison regarding

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Enclosures

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1 - 105-82343 (Lee Harvey Oswald)

CONTINUED - OVER

Memorandum W. A. Branigan to W. C. Sullivan
RE: THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY
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the judges in New Orleans. [redacted] a reliable source, has informed the New Orleans Office that Garrison is politically ambitious and plans to run for Lieutenant Governor in Louisiana during the Fall of 1967.

ALLEGATIONS OF CONSPIRACY IN NEW ORLEANS:

During the course of our investigation of the assassination, we received a number of allegations indicating Oswald was in contact with Cuban or pro-Castro Cubans in New Orleans. Each allegation was very carefully and thoroughly run out and we found no evidence of any contact between Oswald and pro-Cuban sources in New Orleans. Furthermore, our investigation uncovered no evidence indicating Fidel Castro or officials of the Cuban Government were involved with Lee Harvey Oswald in the assassination of President Kennedy.

RE: Miguel Torres

During the course of our investigation of the assassination, we developed no information indicating acquaintanceship or contact between Oswald and Miguel Torres, mentioned above. On 10/25/62 we received information from a U.S. Customs investigator in New Orleans that Miguel Torres, his father, mother, and two brothers were all in his opinion pro-Castro in their beliefs and reportedly had a short-wave radio in their home for the purpose of receiving Cuban broadcasts. (105-117817) We initiated investigation of Miguel Torres and other members of his family on the basis of such allegations but found no information to corroborate such allegations. Our investigation did disclose that Miguel Torres was an unsavory character who had a criminal record. He was arrested 2/1/59 on an Armed Robbery Charge and was sentenced 10/2/59 for a period of 10 years. On 2/2/61 he was discharged from the Louisiana State Penitentiary. He was arrested again on 9/5/64 by the New Orleans Police Department on burglary charges and was sentenced to nine years in the State Penitentiary at Angola, Louisiana. In September, 1964, he was also arrested for violation of the Federal Narcotics Law and was sentenced on 1/6/65 to three years (sentence to begin after completion of nine years imposed on State charges of burglary).

RE: David William Ferrie

Immediately following the assassination, we received allegations that Ferrie was acquainted with Oswald and was involved in the conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy. According to sources of the allegations, Ferrie, a qualified pilot, was to fly Oswald from Dallas following the assassination. We conducted extensive investigation of such allegations including interviews of Ferrie. No evidence was found to show that Ferrie knew Oswald or was involved in the assassination.

Memorandum W. A. Branigan to W. C. Sullivan
RE: THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY
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Our New Orleans Office advised on 2/19/67 that a New Orleans newspaper carried an article on 2/19/67 quoting Ferrie as saying that the Garrison investigation of the assassination in New Orleans is a "big joke." Ferrie reportedly told the New Orleans newspaper that he had been "pegged as the getaway pilot in an elaborate plot to kill President Kennedy. Our New Orleans Office also reported that Ferrie had contacted the New Orleans Office and indicated he planned to take civil action against those accusing him of being involved in a plot to kill President Kennedy.

OBSERVATIONS:

As early as December, 1966, New Orleans advised Garrison was conducting some type of an investigation regarding the assassination. Upon instructions, New Orleans has been following this through reliable and confidential sources. One source with whom we were in contact advised Garrison did not want this information furnished to the FBI.

We do not know what evidence Garrison possesses, if any, corroborating his claim that other individuals besides Oswald were involved in the assassination of President Kennedy. We recognize Garrison is politically ambitious and this may be an attempt by him to keep his name before the public. It is not known what part Miguel Torres plays in Garrison's investigation. However, he may be furnishing information of some type to Garrison in exchange for a reduction in his prison sentence.

In view of Garrison's background and political ambitions, it is not felt we should lend any credence to Garrison's investigation by interviewing him at this time.

ACTION:

Attached are letters to the White House and the Acting Attorney General with copies to the Deputy Attorney General and the Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division, enclosing a letterhead memorandum setting forth data concerning Garrison's statements to the press and results of our inquiries and file reviews in this matter.