

New Facts on Kennedy Death Plot Claimed

Figure in FBI Probe Says His Information Might Boost Conspiracy Theory

BY JERRY COHEN
Times Staff Writer

SACRAMENTO — A figure in the Warren Commission investigation told Gov. Reagan's legal affairs secretary Tuesday he has information which may support the theory that the assassination of President John F. Kennedy resulted from a conspiracy.

Loran E. Hall's appearance before Edwin Meese in the Capitol building constituted a surprising reversal of position.

Hall, who has resisted testifying in a controversial New Orleans investigation into the assassination, had insisted in the past that he had no knowledge of a conspiracy to kill Mr. Kennedy.

But he said his memory recently had been "jogged" by "certain individuals reminding me of persons I was in contact with in 1963 before the assassination."

Certain Names Supplied

He said he had supplied Meese with the names of "these certain persons I met while making speeches in the Los Angeles area... I was raising funds for anti-Castro activities."

On almost every occasion after I finished talking at one of these meetings," Hall said, "I'd overhear the people there discuss the possibility of assassinating Kennedy—how it might be done."

Not just Kennedy. But also (Chief Justice Earl) Warren and other government officials — how they could be gotten rid of."

He is an adventurer who once was a Castro prisoner, claims to have been at more than 50 meetings in Southern California in the early 1960s seeking support for anti-Castro guerrillas, of which he was a member.

Silent on Meeting Sites

He said that, during the speeches, he expressed disappointment at President Kennedy's conduct of the Bay of Pigs incident, but never personally advocated harming him. Hall declined to specify the sites of the meetings, but said he had supplied Meese with those he could remember.

He said he had been giving "serious thought" to New Orleans Dist. Atty. J. P. Garrison's demand that he appear before a grand jury there. "Garrison's office has been in contact with me, and there's a chance I might reconsider about testifying in New Orleans," he said. But Hall said he had asked for the audience with Meese "to protect myself in the event I do decide to go to New Orleans."

He added, "I felt first I should give
Please Turn to Page 28, Col. 1

28 Los Angeles Times
Part I—Wed., May 1, 1968

New Facts on Kennedy Death Plot Claimed

Continued from Third Page
any information that might be of value to a proper authority in California, and I decided the governor's legal affairs secretary was that proper authority.

"I don't actually know if what I had to tell Mr. Meese will be useful to anyone investigating the President's murder, but I felt if there's a chance it might be, I ought to tell him."

Subpoena Issued

Garrison issued a subpoena late last year for Hall, claiming he was in Dallas "until the assassination" and associated with men the New Orleans prosecutor contends plotted the assassination.

But Hall produced a witness who established he was in California Nov. 22, 1963, and a Bakersfield Superior Court judge upheld his argument that he not be required to answer the Garrison subpoena.

Hall also denied knowing any of the alleged conspirators—including a North Hollywood man, Edgar Eugene Bradley—a position he apparently now has retreated from. He said after his memory recently was refreshed about "events in 1963 and faces I encountered," he appeared before another

Bakersfield judge April 15 and was assured his previous testimony would not make him liable to a perjury charge.

It was then, he said, that he decided to go to Meese. After hearing Hall's story, Meese declined comment on it.

Story Studied

The Warren Commission investigation focused on Hall, but only briefly and then inconclusively, in the very late stages of the 1964 inquiry which found Lee Harvey Oswald to be the lone assassin.

He figured in it because investigators wanted to tie up loose ends of a disturbance story told by Mrs. Sylvia Odio, then a 24-year-old refugee from Castro Cuba.

Mrs. Odio told the FBI her Dallas apartment had been visited in late September, 1963, by three men seeking her help in anti-Castro activity. One, she said, was introduced to her as "Leon Oswald," a man described by one of his companions as a "crack marksman" who favored assassinating Mr. Kennedy because of the Bay of Pigs failure.

After the assassination, Mrs. Odio said she saw a picture of Lee Harvey Oswald flashed on television. She said she recognized him as one of her three visitors, then fainted.

Name Submitted

The commission asked the FBI to try to find the three men in an attempt to determine if her story had substance. The FBI came up with Hall's name.

The commission concluded that because of the contradictions in what Hall told the FBI and its own evidence that Oswald was elsewhere on that date—Oswald could not have been one of the three men who visited Mrs. Odio's apartment.

However, the incident still troubles critics of the Warren Commission report, not the least of whom is Dist. Atty. Garrison.

Garrison has charged New Orleans civic leader Clay L. Shaw and Bradley with conspiring to kill Mr. Kennedy. He also has said that Oswald and the late David W. Ferrie, a New Orleans eccentric, were a part of the plot.

An extradition hearing for Bradley is scheduled before Meese in Sacramento June 5, according to his attorney, George Jensen of Beverly Hills.

Shaw, indicted more than a year ago, still is awaiting trial in New Orleans.

He apparently has exhausted his last legal appeal before his case goes before a jury there, possibly late next month or early in June.