

Trained in U.S.

Cuban Guerrilla Team Killed JFK, Garrison Thinks

By JIM SQUIRES, Staff Correspondent
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NEW ORLEANS—District Attorney Jim Garrison believes President Kennedy was killed by members of a 14-man band of Cuban guerrilla fighters who were trained secretly in nearby St. Tammany parish in the summer of 1963.

In an exclusive interview granted this reporter yesterday Garrison confirmed reports that he is seeking members of an anti-Castro team of Cubans.

GARRISON TOLD me he believes the late David Ferrie—who he charges was a conspirator along with Clay Shaw in Kennedy's death—either helped train the Cuban group or was connected with the band in some way.

His theory about the plot to kill Kennedy sounds bizarre. Garrison perhaps senses this and is reticent in volunteering anything to a reporter who interrogates him. He answers questions but sometimes almost reluctantly. However, his discussion is calm, almost as if what he says is an accepted fact.

Lee Harvey Oswald, says Garrison, was not the assassin.

"THAT BOY NEVER fired a shot," Garrison told me. "He was nothing but a victim—or a decoy."

The controversial district attorney, who has been accused by the National Broadcasting Company of using testimony against Shaw which would not pass a lie detector test, has been harassed by the press since the NBC program Monday night.

Newsmen from several cities and even from Latin American countries were waiting outside to see him when my own interview was arranged yesterday.

GARRISON AGREED to give me 15 minutes.

But his is a story that can't be told in 15 minutes. We wound up talking together for an hour about the conspiracy he says took place. He would not discuss testimony about Shaw, however, stating that he doesn't think it proper since Shaw is facing trial.

"I just want the truth to be known," Garrison said.

HE CHARGES there is now a Washington conspiracy which he believes involves the Central Intelligence Agency and in some way NBC to keep the story of the Cuban plot a secret.

When I told him there were parts of his theory which were difficult for the public to believe, such as that the Warren Commission intentionally covered up evidence—it seemed to perturb him. But this led him into a deeper discussion of the Cuban guerrilla plot. He put together the pieces of the complex puzzle that seemed to make sense to him and his staff.

He said with apparent total conviction that he will ultimately convict the killers of Kennedy and there is no doubt in his mind that this includes Clay Shaw.

GARRISON'S DETAILED theory revolves primarily around the 14-man band of Cuban freedom fighters of whom he says killed Kennedy.



Jim Garrison
'Want truth known'

Jim Squires
Gets exclusive interview

When he talks about this group and what he contends they did he drops the names of a wide assortment of Cubans and sometimes it is difficult to follow the thread of the conspiracy he says occurred.

But these are some of the key points:

- The man he seeks for killing Kennedy "was defi-

NEW ORLEANS—Jim Squires, reporter for THE NASHVILLE TENNESSEAN, who wrote this story following an exclusive interview with District Attorney Jim Garrison yesterday, will attend a press conference by Garrison in his office at 11 a.m. today.

nitely among the Cuban trainees at St. Tammany Parish."

- Ferrie was associated with them.
- The CIA knew of their activities and was assisting them.
- The group became disillusioned with President Kennedy in the late summer of 1963 after the Kennedy administration made it clear it would not support random raids and isolated assaults on Cuba from U.S. shores.
- The disaffection with President Kennedy came to a head July 31, 1963, when the Federal Bureau of Investigation raided the Cuban guerrilla headquarters in St. Tammany Parish, confiscating weapons and explosives which were to be used in a planned assault on Cuba.
- The decision to kill Kennedy grew out of the dis-

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satisfaction that developed in this group of Cuban guerrilla fighters.

● Their assassination of Kennedy was aided by Shaw, Ferrie, and others.

● Oswald was a decoy or a dupe in his part of the assassination was only as a minor participant.

● There was "a second rifle" found by officers after the assassination — a rifle never mentioned in the Warren report. Garrison says he has viewed a film taken in front of the Texas Book Depository building in Dallas immediately after the assassination showing officers holding this second rifle.

● Kennedy was shot by members of the crack assassination team while they were concealed behind a stone wall on a grassy knoll near Dealy Square — overlooking the assassination scene.

Garrison showed me a copy of a widely publicized picture of the assassination scene.

"LOOK HERE," he said, pointing to an original photograph. "There is a figure behind that wall holding an automatic rifle."

I looked where he pointed. I could not distinguish the figure in the original photograph. But then Garrison pointed to the inset which he said was a blow up" segment of the overall scene. This inset clearly shows a man holding a rifle.

Garrison told me he recently visited New York and viewed a film there taken outside the book depository building which shows officers holding the second rifle.

"NOW WHAT happened to that second rifle?" Garrison said to me. "It took them 15 minutes to find Oswald's gun in that building. This gun was found immediately and it was not Oswald's. It had no telescopic sights.

"You cannot find that second weapon anywhere in the 26 volumes of the Warren Commission report. Is it hidden under a bed? Was it buried under a building? was it dropped in a vat of acid?"

"Garrison shrugged. "All I know is that it has disappeared.

When he talks about the Cubans he says participated in the plot, his story becomes complicated.

I HAVE heard from another source here that Garrison is seeking the Cubans who used the name William More. When I asked Garrison about it, he was obviously surprised.

"You're not going to write that, "I hope," he said to me. I told him that the name was being used among reporters here covering the story and that if they knew what Garrison was doing obviously the man used the name William More knew it too.

Without hesitation then, Garrison confirmed that he is looking for this man. He insists that he has seen a CIA photograph of Oswald "and William More" — and he contends More tried to purchase ten trucks in Louisiana in 1961 for use in the disastrous Bay of Pigs invasion.

THE WARREN Commission says Oswald was in New Orleans as a sort of self-appointed representative of the "Fair Play for Cuba Committee"—an organization friendly to Castro. Garrison, however, believes that Oswald was working as a double agent and that he in fact may have been a man who submitted a bid for the 10 trucks in the name of an anti-Castro group "Friends for a Democratic Cuba."

When I asked Garrison how important the man named William More is in his investigation he replied, "If he's

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alive, he's the most important man in the case."

The district attorney told me he is convinced that Marina Oswald didn't tell the Warren Commission everything she knew about her husband's New Orleans connections because she feared she'd be sent back to the Soviet Union.

And he claims that Mrs. Oswald's friend, Mrs. Ruth Payne, with whom she lived and who once drove Mrs. Oswald from Dallas to New Orleans, has ties with the CIA.

WHEN I asked about Mrs. Payne who appeared on the NBC program to dispute some of Garrison's contentions, the district attorney said, "She had connections with the White Russians and certainly with the Central Intelligence Agency."

Garrison says he thinks Mrs. Oswald knows about her husband's connections with the anti-Castro Cubans and that she also was aware of the guerrilla plot to kill the President.

"She is a victim because she is afraid to tell all she knows," he said.

"I think she would be of great value to our investigation if we could get some information from her."

GARRISON knows his case is built on testimony from persons with questionable backgrounds and reputations. He believes, for example, that a Dallas cab driver named Raymond Cummings once drove Oswald and Ferrie to Jack Ruby's Dallas night club. But, says Garrison, Cummings cannot pass a lie detector test.

Garrison says he believes Cummings but will not use him as a witness unless other evidence can be obtained.

"I'm not relying on questionable testimony unless it is corroborated by other unquestionable testimony or some other evidence," he said.

NBC CHARGED that one key witness in the Garrison case, Perry Russo, had given questionable testimony which could not pass a lie detector test. On the NBC show, Walter Sheridan, investigative news reporter for the network, said Russo told him he planned to testify against Shaw — but that if Shaw was convicted he (Russo) might change his testimony and help Shaw.

Other key figures in the Garrison investigation also told NBC that Garrison and his staff had used questionable techniques, promises and threats in getting evidence.

Russo has denied he told NBC that he would change his testimony.

Garrison told me yesterday he has "many tapes" of Walter Sheridan interviewing his witnesses.

THE CUBANS who played so much a part in Garrison's case are names which roll off his tongue with familiarity.

Garrison said he was told by Carlos Quiroga, one of the witnesses subpoenaed in the case, that the guerrilla group was trained by a "famous" member of the Cuban underground identified only as "Peneque."

Quiroga, an aide to Sergio Aracha Smith, who Garrison says was a well-known Cuban exile leader who left New Orleans in 1962, said another Cuban, Ricardo Davis, acted as liaison man between the guerrilla group and unidentified Americans who were financing the training. Davis, another Garrison witness, and Quiroga worked together in the now defunct Cuban Democratic Revolutionary Front which was established by Aracha Smith, Garrison told me.

SMITH, WHO Garrison's staff believes was "Ferrie's link with the Cuban" now lives in Dallas. Garrison sent investigators to Texas, but Smith refused to return and testify before a grand jury.

It is a strange story Garrison tells. It is a story which indeed relies on statements and testimony of unreliable nature, much of it given by persons of questionable reputation.

Rumors about the investigation float through this community almost hourly. Among reporters who cover the courthouse, Garrison has records as a powerful prosecutor and a good news source. Many of the newsmen have come to believe he will make his case stick. Others have serious reservations about his claims and a few including those associated with the NBC local station think he is a fraud.

The New Orleans Crime Commission said after the NBC show Garrison's procedures and ethics would be investigated. Meanwhile, the entire nation which because of Garrison had rekindled memories of Nov. 22, 1963, looked to New Orleans—some with skepticism and some with hope.