

25 May 1967

EB117

NEW ORLEANS (AP)-GORDON NOVEL, SOUGHT AS A WITNESS IN DIST. ATTY. JIM GARRISON'S KENNEDY ASSASSINATION PROBE, WORKED FOR THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY IN EARLY 1961, NOVEL'S ATTORNEY SAID THURSDAY.

STEVE PLOTKIN, NOVEL'S LAWYER, MADE THE STATEMENT AFTER THE NEW ORLEANS STATES-ITEM SAID IT HAD DISCOVERED A LETTER WRITTEN BY NOVEL AND APPARENTLY DIRECTED TO AN OFFICIAL OF THE CIA.

PLOTKIN SAID NOVEL DREW THE PENCILED LETTER DRAFT WHICH WAS FOUND IN THE 29-YEAR-OLD FORMER FRENCH QUARTER LOUNGE OPERATOR'S APARTMENT. IN THE LETTER, NOVEL TELLS A "MR. WEISS" THAT HE WANTS TO BE TAKEN "OUT OF THIS MESS" BY AN UNSPECIFIED DATE IN MARCH OF THIS YEAR.

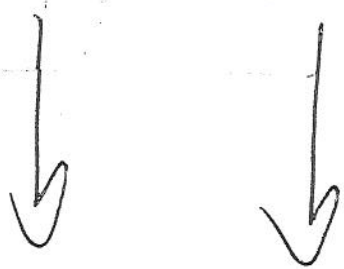
IT WAS IN MARCH THAT GARRISON HAD A SUBPOENA ISSUED FOR NOVEL, WHO HE TERMED AN IMPORTANT WITNESS IN THE INVESTIGATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY'S ASSASSINATION. NOVEL SOLD HIS LOUNGE AND LEFT NEW ORLEANS IN MID-MARCH. HE WAS ARRESTED APRIL 1 AT GHANNA, OHIO, ON A WARRANT ISSUED HERE CHARGING HIM WITH CONSPIRING TO BURGLARIZE A MUNITIONS BUNKER NEAR HOUMA, LA. NOVEL WAS RELEASED AT COLUMBUS OHIO, UNDER \$10,000 FIGHTING EXTRADITION TO LOUISIANA.

PLOTKIN SAID NOVEL SERVED AS AN INTERMEDIARY BETWEEN THE CIA AND ANTI-CASTRO CUBANS IN NEW ORLEANS AND MIAMI PRIOR TO THE APRIL, 1961, BAY OF PIGS INVASION.

GARRISON HAS CHARGED THAT THE CIA FOMENTED A MONSTROUS COVERUP TO DUPE THE WARREN COMMISSION, WHICH INVESTIGATED THE ASSASSINATION.

PLOTKIN SAID NOVEL'S CIA WORK HAD "LITTLE OR NOTHING TO DO WITH THE BAY OF PIGS INVASION AND CERTAINLY HAD ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO DO WITH THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY."

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NEW ORLEANS NOVEL B117 1ST ADD: KENNEDY."

THE LAWYER SAID HIS CLIENT WORKED AT WHAT HE TERMED "CHIEF OF SECURITY" FOR GARRISON BEFORE "HIS FORCED DEPARTURE FROM NEW ORLEANS."

PLOTKIN SAID NOVEL HAS TAPE RECORDINGS, PHOTOGRAPHS AND OTHER DATA WHICH WILL BE RELEASED SOON AND WILL "PROVE BEYOND ANY SHADOW OF A DOUBT THAT MR. GARRISON'S INVESTIGATION IS A FRAUD AND A HOAX."

ALTHOUGH THE DRAFT OF THE LETTER IS UNDATED, THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS IT RELATES PLACES THE WRITING SOMETIME IN LATE JANUARY OR EARLY FEBRUARY. FIRST PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF GARRISON'S INVESTIGATION CAME ON FEB.17.

THE LETTER SPEAKS OF TAKING "APPROPRIATE COUNTERACTION RELATIVE TO GARRISON'S INQUISITION CONCERNING US..." IT SUGGESTS THE MATTER BE CARRIED ON "THROUGH MILITARY CHANELS VIS A VIS THE D.I.A. MAN." D.I.A. IS THE ABBREVIATION FOR DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY, AN ORGANIZATION ESTABLISHED BY PRESIDENT KENNEDY AFTER THE FAILURE OF THE BAY OF PIGS INVASION OF CUBA.

PLOTKIN SAID HE DOES NOT KNOW IF THE LETTER WAS ACTUALLY SENT. BUT THE LAYER SAID "EVERYTHING IN THE LETTER AS FAR AS NOVEL IS CONCERNED IS ACTUALLY THE TRUTH." PURPOSE OF THE LETTER, PLOTKIN SAID, WAS TO INFORM "THE PERSON TO WHOM THE LETTER WAS ADDRESSED... OF ACTIVITIES GOING ON IN LOUISIAN<sup>a</sup>."

THE STATES-ITEM SAID A HANDWRITING EXPERT CONFIRMED THE LETTER DRAFT WAS WRITTEN BY NOVEL.

THE LETTER, ADDRESSED ONLY TO "MR. WEISS," SAID NOVEL AND AN UNNAMED ASSOCIATE HAD BEEN SUBPOENAED BY GARRISON "TO TESTIFY BEFORE HIS HAND JURY ON MATTERS WHICH MAY BE CLASSIFIED TOP SECRET (TOP SECRET ALL CAPS). ACTIONS OF INDIVIDUALS CONNECTED WITH DOUBLE-CHECK CORP4-589, (DOUBLE-CHECK CORPORATION ALL CAPS) IN MIAMI IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1961."

A RECENT BOOK ABOUT CIA OPERATIONS, "THE INVINSIBLE GOVERNMENT," IDENTIFIED DOUBLE-CHECK OF MIAMI AS A CIA FRONT THROUGH WHICH PILOTS AND OTHER PERSONS CONNECTED WITH ANTI-CASTRO CUBAN OPERATIONS WERE RECRUITED.

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