

## British View of JFK 'Plot'

# Garrison's Case Weakens; CIA His Prime Target

Jeremy Campbell, Washington correspondent for the London Express, went to New Orleans to investigate Jim Garrison's investigation. Here are his impressions.

By JEREMY CAMPBELL  
London Express

NEW ORLEANS — "We have found conclusively," said Mr. Jim Garrison, the district attorney of New Orleans, "that individuals connected as employees of the CIA ended up in Dallas shortly before the assassination of President Kennedy and in the company of Lee Harvey Oswald."

"And if the CIA thinks that I cannot and will not prove it, they are going to have the surprise of their life."

The man is astonishing. Amid a grotesque confusion of runaway witnesses, men reeling under the effects of hypnotism and sodium pentothal, suicide notes, sexual unorthodoxy, political calculation and rampant paranoia, the great Garrison search for a plot to murder President Kennedy seems to be on the edge of collapse.

### SMASHING BLOW

Recently on nation-wide television, the National Broadcasting Company delivered a smashing blow to the Garrison case, kicking away one by one the principal props of his argument.

Material witnesses, shabby, cowed and repentant, admitted lying, bribery and perjury. Perry Russo, the insurance salesman, upon whose word much of the case depends, described his own testimony at the Clay Shaw hearing as "a combination of truth, fantasy and lies."

Clay Shaw, the New Orleans businessman awaiting trial for conspiracy to murder the President, is not Clay Bertrand, the mysterious friend of Oswald. Clay Bertrand is the nom de guerre of another man entirely, a homo-

sexual living in New Orleans. He was finally traced by a demon reporter from NBC, who has now passed his real name on to the Department of Justice, Washington.

### FAMOUS PARTY

Oswald was not the room-mate of the red-wigged pilot David Ferrie, nor could he possibly have been at the famous party where the plot is said to have been hatched. On both of the only two possible dates he was at home with his wife, Marina.

Garrison has long been aware that this devastating program was in preparation. He attempted to ward off the

blow in a speech in the Catskill Mountains, indicating that behind the innocent image of NBC lay the corrupt shadow of the CIA.

It is a fact that Garrison is now in rather urgent need of money. Truth and Consequences Incorporated, a "secret" fund bankrolled by a group of wealthy New Orleans businessmen, has had less than a wild success, and may fail to provide the \$3000 needed to sustain the investigation for another six months.

### PUBLIC OPINION

More ominous, the Governor of Louisiana, John McKeithen, has taken pri-

vate soundings of public opinion which show that Garrison's popularity is slipping dangerously.

The governor, nobody's fool, is now flatly refusing to finance the Garrison adventure with any more money from the coffers of the State. It even seems that Garrison may be stumbling as a showman.

Last week he produced a new conspiracy witness, a certain Clyde Johnson, who has suddenly remembered meeting Clay Shaw, Lee Oswald and Jack Ruby, all together, not once, but twice, in the autumn of 1963.

He said that on the first occasion Shaw had offered him \$2000 cash "to campaign against President Kennedy. 'ECCENTRIC'

Two months ago, Clyde Johnson, an itinerate preacher with a police record, would have made headlines all over the world. Today he is simply another eccentric in the surrealist gallery of Garrison witnesses, and the Associated Press refuses to print a word about him.

Now a pertinent question arises. If this is the end of the Garrison case, is it also the end of Jim Garrison? The astonishing answer seems to be: Not in the least.

Alert minds have detected a distinct shift in the Garrison focus in recent weeks. His attack is moving away from the shadowy world of individual, seedy conspirators and towards the Central Intelligence Agency.

### CUBAN PATRIOTS

Garrison now claims the CIA was deeply involved in events leading to the assassination, which he says is the work of Cuban patriots, angry at the Kennedy administration for adopting a policy of co-existence with Communism in the hemisphere.

This is not as wild a theory as its sounds. Two groups of



DISTRICT ATTORNEY JIM GARRISON

He always leaves himself an exit route



Cubans, one overt, one clandestine, were being trained by the CIA near New Orleans up to 1963, possibly for the eventual purpose of assassinating Fidel Castro in Havana.

After the Bay of Pigs fiasco in 1962, which Kennedy partly blamed on the bungling performance of the CIA, a new spy service, the Defense Intelligence Agency, was born and the CIA lost control of Cuban operations in the United States. By the following summer, Kennedy closed the door on all military aid to Cuban patriots.

#### NO ARRESTS

In July, 1963, the FBI raided a small house near one of the Cuban training camps at New Orleans, confiscated a ton of war munitions, but made no arrests. A few days later, full of bitterness at the betrayal of the government, the overt Cuban troop disbanded and went back to Miami. The covert group simply disappeared.

Garrison claims the seeds of conspiracy were sown in this bitter ground in the late summer of 1963, that the plan to eliminate Castro soured into a plot to assassinate Kennedy.

And because the long tentacles of espionage reach deep into so many corners of American life, the CIA is involved to a remarkable extent with a variety of Garrison's principal witnesses.

#### USED TO BOAST

Gordon Novel, now hiding in Ohio, is said by his own

lawyer to have been an agent of the CIA in 1961. David Ferrie, who died before he could be indicted for conspiracy, used to boast of his role with the Agency and may have trained at one of the camps in New Orleans.

Even Clay Shaw, the fastidious Harvard man, is a director of the World Trade Center Corporation, assumed by some to be a CIA front organization.

Almost certainly, Garrison will never have to prove his case against the CIA. He talks, in his magisterial baritone, of summoning members of the Agency to take the stand as witnesses of the State, but everyone knows this is simple poetry.

#### EXIT ROUTE

"Garrison has always left himself an exit route out of trouble," said a New Orleans editor, "and this may be the purpose of bringing in the CIA. If the whole investigation falls apart, he can always blame the CIA for blocking witnesses, fixing evidence and withholding information. How can he lose?"

Perhaps Jim Garrison is smarter than we think. The CIA is hated in the American South because it represents, in a more than usually slippery form, the vast amorphous power of Washington.

"What he is promising the people," said one observer "is the discredit of Federal authority, and all it represents."

From here, he looks rather like a winner.