

Oswald Inquiry Now Centered on Cuban Refugees

By GENE ROBERTS

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NEW ORLEANS, Feb. 25—The death this week of a former airline pilot left District Attorney Jim Garrison, who says he has detected a "conspiracy" that culminated in the assassination of President Kennedy, with an investigation centered almost entirely on Cuban refugees.

This was learned here from a source within Mr. Garrison's office and bolstered by what is known publicly about the "witnesses" Mr. Garrison and his staff are seeking.

The District Attorney's investigators are combing Cuban refugee communities in the United States, and especially Miami. They are searching for persons who can shed light on what Mr. Garrison thinks was a plot to kill Premier Fidel Castro of Cuba that turned into a plot to assassinate President Kennedy.

Garrison Is Assailed

Today, Mr. Garrison was attacked sharply by Carlos Bringuier, a leader among anti-Castro Cubans in New Orleans who once engaged in a radio debate with Lee Harvey Oswald, the man the Warren Commission says killed President Kennedy alone and without being a part of any plot.

Mr. Bringuier said the District Attorney had "hurt all of the Cuban community."

Many of Mr. Garrison's "clues" appear to be old ones. They were developed by the Warren Commission and the Federal Bureau of Investigation and later rejected by them on grounds that they were either false clues or were unsupported by evidence.

Clues Are Described

One of the "clues" is the anti-Castro sentiment of David William Ferrie, the former airline pilot who was found dead in bed this week, and what Mr. Garrison believes to have been a link between him, Oswald and anti-Castro Cubans.

Another is testimony taken by the Warren Commission from Dean Andrews, a New Orleans attorney who said, then denied, then said again that Oswald and several Latin American homosexuals had once been sent to his office by a shadowy figure named "Clay Bertrand."

A third is a photograph from Warren Commission files showing Lee Harvey Oswald distributing pro-Castro literature with a man Mr. Garrison's investigators believe to be a

Cuban.

The fact that Oswald was distributing pro-Castro, rather than anti-Castro, literature has not dissuaded Mr. Garrison from his theory that Oswald was part of an anti-Castro plot.

The District Attorney believes, according to one of his investigators, that Oswald might have distributed the literature in an effort to win the confidence of the Cuban Government and gain permission to enter that country.

Once in Cuba, Mr. Garrison's theory goes, Oswald would have become the "trigger man" in the plot to assassinate Premier Castro.

However, when Oswald was denied permission to enter Cuba, the theory continues, the anti-Castro "conspirators" decided next to use him to assassinate President Kennedy as a way of punishing him for his "failure to follow up the Bay of Pigs invasion with a second military effort.

'The Key to the Case'

Although Mr. Garrison has declined to discuss details of his theory publicly, he alluded to it yesterday in a news conference when he paraphrased "Alice in Wonderland" and said "the key to the whole case is through the looking glass."

"Black is white, white is black," he went on. "I don't want to be cryptic, but that's the way it is."

Mr. Garrison also said yesterday that "there were several plots, and change of direction (in them) did occur."

The Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Warren Commission found television film at station WDSU in New Orleans showing Oswald distributing pro-Castro leaflets with two men. One of the men was identified by the bureau as Charles Steele of New Orleans who said that Oswald had hired him at an employment office for \$2.

The other man, the one Mr. Garrison assumes was a Cuban, was never identified by the bureau according to Wesley J. Liebeler, an attorney who helped direct the Warren Commission's investigation in New Orleans. Oswald lived in that city in his teens and again in the spring and summer of 1963.

\$50,000 Bond Asked

Mr. Liebeler said, however, that the Federal agency had circulated the photograph widely enough to convince the Warren Commission staff that if the second man had been a close associate of Oswald's, some trace of the association would have been found. The conclusion of the staff was that Oswald had probably hired the man from the employment office.

Mr. Garrison also has been unable to locate the man, it was learned, although according to sources close to the Miami Police Department—he thinks he knows his name. Mr. Garrison and his investigators showed department officials a photograph, identifying the man as a "Manuel Garcia Gonzales," a name almost as common in Latin America as John Smith in the United States.

The District Attorney told the Miami Police that "Gonzales" was wanted for a narcotics violation, and to hold him, if they arrested him, under a \$50,000 bond. When the police questioned the size of the bond, the reply was reported to have

been that the man also was wanted for homicide.

Later, police determined that the photograph Mr. Garrison had shown them was an enlargement taken from the WDSU film.

In addition to the photographs, Mr. Garrison and his staff have also been intrigued by the rambling testimony of Mr. Andrews, the New Orleans attorney who now works part time as an Assistant District Attorney in Jefferson Parish, which borders New Orleans.

Mr. Andrews testified that a few months before the assassination of President Kennedy on Nov. 22, 1963, Oswald came to his law office in the company of "gay (a term meaning homosexual) kids—they were Mexicanos" who said they had been sent by a man named "Clay Bertrand."

Oswald, he went on, wanted assistance in getting a "yellow-paper" discharge (slang for a "bad conduct" discharge) changed by the Department of Defense to an honorable discharge.

Then, after President Kennedy was assassinated, the testimony continues, "Clay Bertrand" called at a hospital where Mr. Andrews was "under medication" and asked him to rush to Dallas and represent Oswald.

Under cross-examination from Mr. Liebeler, Mr. Andrews admitted telling the Federal Bureau of Investigation that Clay Bertrand was a "figment of imagination." Then he added that he had said this because the "feebies," his name for the Federal agency, "were on me like the plague."

He also conceded that he had once described Bertrand as being 6 feet 1 or 2 inches tall and again as 5 feet 8 inches tall.

Mr. Liebeler said an intensive search by the Federal Bureau

of Investigation had failed to show any evidence of the existence of a Clay Bertrand.

Today, Mr. Andrews said he had not talked to Mr. Garrison because such talk might be dangerous, but added that he believed he was being "tailed."

He has been "tailed" sporadically, he went on, since the early 1950's when he defended Carlos Marcello, a man accused by the Metropolitan Crime Commission here of having a link with the Mafia.

Mr. Garrison's investigators found it "interesting" that Mr. Andrews had said that Oswald had been accompanied by "gay . . . Mexicanos." They think they might have been Cubans and note that Mr. Ferrie, the former airline pilot, was once charged—but never prosecuted—for alleged homosexual involvement with juveniles.

As part of his investigation, Mr. Garrison had a Cuban named Miguel Torres transferred from Angola State Penitentiary, where he was serving a nine-year sentence for burglary, to the Orleans Parish Jail. An investigator for Mr. Garrison said that Torres lived about a block from Oswald in the summer of 1963 but had not told the District Attorney anything pertinent to the investigation.

Mr. Liebeler says that the Warren Commission produced

no evidence that would point in any way to a plot among anti-Castro Cubans to kill President Kennedy. He also added that a lengthy inquiry by the Federal Bureau of Investigation had convinced the commission staff that Mr. Ferrie was not linked to Oswald or to any plot.

Rumors of a Ferrie-Oswald link developed soon after the assassination when a man named Jack S. Martin called an assistant to Mr. Garrison and hinted that Mr. Ferrie and Oswald had known each other as members of the Civilian Air Patrol during Oswald's high school years.

But reports by the Federal investigating bureau said that Mr. Martin later called the story a "figment of my imagination" and said he often had "telephonitis" when he had been drinking.

Mr. Ferrie, a 48-year-old native of Ohio who had lived in New Orleans for 15 years, died this week soon after protesting Mr. Garrison's investigation.

Mr. Garrison called Mr. Ferrie's death an apparent suicide, and said he had planned to arrest the former pilot "next week."

However, the Orleans Parish Coroner, Nicholas Chetta, said Mr. Ferrie died of a brain hemorrhage, possibly brought on by stress.