

Inmate Provides Link to Kennedy Assassination?

Jim Garrison's Probe Moves to Springfield

By MIKE O'BRIEN
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A bizarre web of mystery and conspiracy is being spun by an Ozarks attorney, a nationally-known but controversial author and a member of New Orleans prosecuting attorney Jim Garrison's staff in a bold attempt to link information supplied by an inmate of the U.S. Medical Center here with the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

Figures in the strange tale include Marshfield attorney John Hosmer; author Mark Lane, a New York attorney who admittedly now lives off royalties paid him for his book "Rush to Judgment" which severely criticizes the Warren Commission Report; Richard V. Burnes, an attorney-investigator on the team of Jim Garrison, himself a controversial figure in various inquiries into the shooting of the President; and Abraham W. Bolden, a 32-year-old former member of the U.S. Secret Service who reportedly was assigned to the White House detail until shortly before Kennedy's death and who is said to be the victim of a "frame job" in an attempt to suppress pertinent evidence concerning the assassination.

In a hastily-called news conference at the Colonial Hotel yesterday afternoon, the three attorneys presented the sketchy story they said was gleaned from two interviews with Bolden on Monday and Tuesday at the Medical Center and from private investigations continuing under the direction of Garrison and Lane.

The forceful and articulate Lane, a one-time representative to the New York state legislature, told how Bolden had come to his attention more than two years ago. Bolden, he said, is mentioned in his book as a po-

Bolden, according to Lane, was among Secret Service men informed of a plot to kill the President during a visit to Chicago in the fall of 1963. Bolden, Lane said, was given names of persons involved in the plot and was informed that these men were being watched — at least one by a Secret Service car which shadowed the suspect constantly through the streets of Chicago.

It was this alleged plot which, according to Bolden, was responsible for the cancellation of Kennedy's visit to Illinois, Lane said, although an official cover-up excuse was offered to the public.

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In a nutshell, it was the Secret Service's knowledge of this plot and the names of the men supposedly involved that Bolden wanted to give in testimony to the Warren Commission, after it became apparent that no other agents or superiors were going to offer the information publicly, Lane said.

Although suppressing apparently valid testimony such as this is questionable in itself, Lane contended, the true significance of Bolden's testimony is revealed in the light of names uncovered by the New Orleans investigators.

Lane, who has made his home in New Orleans since October and who claims now to be working in close harmony with prosecutor Garrison, said the key point is that the Louisiana sleuths have uncovered at least one of the same names linked to the Chicago attempt on Kennedy's life.

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And this, said Lane, "is one of the most significant events since the shots were fired in Dealey Plaza.

"The identities of those who planned the assassination (in

sought by District Attorney Jim Garrison for some time."

Lane added that "Bolden's disclosures add importance and entirely independent corroboration to Garrison's conclusions. For months I have known that Garrison has sought a man who was involved in the conspiracy to assassinate the President. Hearing Bolden state that the same man evidently had been sought and followed by the Secret Service in the assassination conspiracy well before Nov. 22 can only add to the validity of Garrison's charges."

Lane left many gaps ("for the protection of Mr. Bolden") in the story of how Bolden, the Secret Service agent, became Bolden, the federal prisoner, and how this man surfaced as such an important witness more than four years since that tragic day in Dallas.

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What is reasonably certain is that Abraham Bolden, born Jan. 19, 1935 in East St. Louis, Ill., is a graduate of Lincoln University at Jefferson City, worked as a Pinkerton man and served four years as an Illinois State Highway Patrolman.

In 1960, Bolden joined the Secret Service and shortly after Kennedy's inauguration, he be-

came the first Negro to serve on the Secret Service White House detail guarding the First Family.

But here it gets hazy, with Bolden suddenly being transferred from the White House detail shortly before the Dallas trip and, according to Lane, the subsequent arrest and conviction of agent Bolden for "soliciting money to commit fraud, and the obstruction of justice and conspiracy."

"They said he tried to sell secrets," Lane explained, "but one of the two witnesses against him has admitted he perjured himself as part of a Secret Service plot to frame Bolden, and the government charges against the other witness for counterfeiting were dropped after his testimony."

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Bolden was sentenced to six years in prison after his conviction about two years ago, served some time at Terre Haute, Ind., and then was transferred to the facility here, Lane said. Lane added that Bolden's move here followed closely on the heels of a letter to Lane requesting assistance which was returned undelivered to Bolden by prison officials.

Dr. P. J. Ciccone, director of the Medical Center, confirmed that Bolden has been confined here since Nov. 9, 1966 as a "camp prisoner," not a hospital patient.

"He was sent to help with the maintenance of the institution," Ciccone said, adding Bolden is not confined strictly to a cell.

Since his transfer to Springfield, Bolden has continued his struggle to gain his freedom through outside help — a search which led him to former magistrate and prosecuting attorney for Webster County, John Hos-

tice William O. Douglas, voted not to accept the case for consideration.

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"That's what happens when you have the same man running the Supreme Court that was in charge of the investigative inquiry into the assassination," said Hosmer, charging Bolden "had been framed . . . with perjured testimony, evidently condoned by the federal prosecuting authorities."

Concerning Bolden's transfer to the Medical Center, Hosmer emphasized, "He's not a nut. They don't keep him in a padded cell."

The third host at the conference, New Orleans attorney Burnes, remained silent during most of the proceedings, explaining he was the attorney of record in several cases now pending against persons Garrison has accused in an assassination plot and couldn't talk freely for fear of prejudicing the cases.

What happens now is up to Jim Garrison, all men agreed, with Lane commenting he "wouldn't be at all surprised if Mr. Garrison decided to come here to visit with Mr. Bolden in person.

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"Of course," he added, "Mr. Garrison undoubtedly would rather have Mr. Bolden appear in a court of record at New Orleans, and it just might be that a subpoena would be forthcoming."

Should "anything happen" to Bolden in the meantime, Lane warned, "the three of us will feel free to make public disclosures."

With that, the three attorneys packed their briefcases and departed. Lane and Burnes were to catch a plane for New Orleans last night to report their findings to Garrison.

Controversial author Mark Lane (center) and two attorneys told Springfield newsmen yesterday afternoon that there is a link between information supplied by an inmate of the U.S. Medical Center here and the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Shown with Lane are Richard V. Burnes (left), a member of the staff of New Orleans prosecuting attorney Jim Garrison, and John Hosmer, Marshfield attorney.

—Daily News Staff Photo

