

MEMORANDUM

June 20, 1995

To: Anne Buttimer

From: Joe Freeman

Subject: Additional Progress Report on Records of Local Law Enforcement
Agencies

My latest trip to Archives II has yielded a few things worth passing on. Listed in no particular order:

- The **Groden documents** you asked for are attached; they're just OCRs which I thought I'd given you before (008555, 011287). My apologies.
- **Harry Connick, N.O. Grand Jury Minutes and the William Walter affair:** I've attached the HSCA subpoena and notice of intent to subpoena. As it turns out, these appear to be only for documents the DA might have had which came from Guy Bannister's office. I also came across three more documents relating to the Grand Jury minutes. One is the interview notes of an HSCA person who met with Connick on the matter of the minutes (006670). The notes reflect Connick's strong opposition to turning them over (based on his reading of Louisiana law). This is not new, but I thought it worth copying for you. The other two Grand Jury minutes-related documents again raise the issue of whether or not pertinent records may have been destroyed (006672 and 006674), though Dianne Poissenot of Connick's staff indicates in the latter document that a book of "Grand Jury Minutes, 1/60 to 12/30/69" survived the document-burning episode. The HSCA staffer told about this book was not permitted to look at it.

On an unrelated **Connick** matter: he was an Assistant U.S. Attorney before becoming DA and, in the former capacity, became involved in the Garrison/Clay

Shaw case. On 2/1/68, Garrison had gone on the Johnny Carson show and told the world that a N.O. FBI clerk, William Walter, would testify that a warning of an assassination attempt in Dallas had come in before the President's trip, and also that he had seen documents in the N.O. FBI office indicating Oswald was an informant. At some point, this same William Walter tried to contact, but never connected with, the U.S. Attorney's office where Connick was then an Assistant. On 5/6/68 Connick ran into Lynn Loisel of Garrison's staff and asked him if he knew why Walter would have contacted the U.S. Attorney's office. Allegedly, Loisel said it was because Walter had government documents in his possession

(presumably related to his JFK assassination charges). Whereupon, Connick wrote a memo to his boss, the U.S. Attorney, who sent a communication to the FBI (since Walter must have stolen these documents, which is a federal offense), which in turn interviewed first Connick and then Walter. Walter had a lawyer present during his interview and refused to sign a written statement, but in his oral responses claimed that he had no federal documents in his possession. There is a paper trail for all of this which I came across as I was looking at

Connick-related documents re: N.O. grand jury. As it turns out, Walter later claimed to have *copied out, in longhand*, the text of the alleged FBI telex warning regarding the Dallas assassination threat. According to Garrison's *On the Trail of the Assassins* (pp.255-257), Walter later provided the text to Senator Schweiker's Subcommittee of the Church Committee. Mark Lane, whom Walter had first approached with his revelation, then secured a copy of the alleged text under FOIA. I bring all this to your attention to provide further background for your dealings with Connick who -- besides running against and losing to Garrison in 1969 before beating him in 1973 -- was at least peripherally involved in the Shaw case and thus may have developed an antipathy for Garrison and his investigation pretty early on. Last note on this wayward subject: Connick's wife received three very threatening phone calls at home during the '69 DA race from a Garrison supporter incensed about Connick joining with the forces of evil to destroy the man who had unmasked the assassination conspiracy.

- **The Gelber Diary** - I've attached three documents on this subject (FBI 62-109060-6591 and 6603, plus HSCA 013458). I can't find the diary itself in the database. As the documents indicate, Garrison apparently never got hold of it, either. There is an HSCA OCR (not attached) which implies that an HSCA staffer by the name of Belford Lawson at least *saw* the diary. An attempt to reach Lawson and/or Gelber may be in order to confirm the diary's status. On a related matter, and referring back to my memo of 6/16, the Sepe report to Florida State Attorney Gerstein *is* in the collection.
- **Texas Attorney General's office** - Attached is a list of documents the Texas AG office forwarded to the Warren Commission (NARA 179-30001-10163). These are presumably in the JFK collection. The only caveat is that many of these items are listed (by NARA) as "missing." Also attached is a related 1965 NARA memo, which strikes me as a little curious, re: the "missing" items (NARA 179-30001-10164).
- **Louisiana Dept. of Public Safety** - Similar to the Texas AG's office, attached is a NARA/Warren Commission memo indicating the department's contribution to the Warren Commission (NARA 179-30001-10177).

- **Texas Employment Commission** - Ditto, NARA/Warren Commission memo attached (NARA 179-30001-10181).
- **Illinois Legislative Investigative Commission** - As you'll recall, HSCA staffers reviewed and took notes on files held by this body. Attached is another document relative to the Commission and its documents (008208). This HSCA OCR seems to confirm that HSCA staffers were *not* allowed to photocopy any of the Commission's documents: *only* review and take notes.
- **New Orleans Police Department** - HSCA files include copies of relevant NOPD arrest reports for Oswald, Bringuier, etc., flowing out of 8/9/63 leaflet altercation. These include photocopies of Oswald's mugshots and fingerprints. HSCA collection also contains NOPD report on Bannister's death, as well as the file on Jack Martin's complaint about the pistol-whipping incident on the day of the assassination. Collection also includes NOPD file on Miguel Cruz, and arrest records for Thomas Beckham and Morris Brownlee. The FBI files in the collection include Dr. Chetta's coroner's report (Parish of New Orleans) on David Ferrie's death. Finally, there is a 2/27/77 HSCA OCR (014910) where HSCA investigator Delsa indicates after a visit to the NOPD that the department has "no records of Guy Bannister's that he kept after leaving the employment of the Police Department." Delsa continues: "The New Orleans Police Department is now furnishing all other records to the S.A.C. [HSCA?] upon request and is cooperating in every way with the S.A.C." I think Delsa meant "Select Assassination Committee (not Special Agent In Charge) by "S.A.C." This last document is attached.
- **Louisiana Unemployment Security Office** - John Russell of the 735 St. Charles Street office indicated to HSCA staffers that his file and notes of his interview with Oswald from August of 1963 were turned over to the FBI and Secret Service and never returned.
- **Texas Dept. of Public Safety** - Attached are two FBI documents (Record #s 180-10007-10077 and 180-100031-10229) which reference that the TDPS's "file" on Oswald consisted of four news clippings. Apparently, a New York *Journal American* article of 11/29/63 stated that the TDPS had a "voluminous" file on Oswald. The FBI followed up and were told that TDPS conducted "no actual investigation whatsoever" on Oswald, before or after the assassination. FYI, just in case you run across the *Journal American* reference somewhere.
- **Dallas Police Department** - Just to confirm what I referenced in my 6/16 memo, I've seen a large Dallas PD/Oswald file (about 2 inches thick) in the collection, as well as a Dallas PD/J.D.Tippit file of about the same size.

File: 4.29.5