

W-F COOPER FILE

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28 February 1968

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Garrison Investigation of Kennedy Assassination: Allegations of Involvement, CIA and Cuban

1. Mr. Calvin Thomas of the SB Division wrote a memorandum entitled "Possible DRE Animus Toward President Kennedy" and dated 8 March 1967. At that time Mr. Thomas had recently returned from a tour of duty in Yugoslavia. While there he had read about the Warren Commission's investigation and had noted the pre-assassination encounter in New Orleans between Carlos Bringuier of the Student Revolutionary Directorate (DRE) and Lee Harvey Oswald. He recalled his own dealings in Miami with the DRE, a CIA-subsidized group. He considered the DRE members whom he knew to be unpredictable and untrustworthy. He speculated as to whether DRE elements could have been involved in the Kennedy assassination. He recommended that CIA investigate this possibility if it had not already done so. Thomas was assigned to Miami from July 1962 to August 1963. Neither CI/R&A nor SB has a retention copy of the memorandum, but Mr. Thomas is still at Headquarters.

2. Mr. Arthur Dooley of CI/R&A discussed this matter with the following members of WH/COG:

a. Miss Margaret Forsythe. She stated that CIA's interest in the DRE had been made known to the office of the Attorney General by letters of 9 January and 18 April 1963 addressed to J. Walter Yeagley. The earlier letter said, in part, "The DRE is of interest to this Agency which sponsors and supports its propaganda and intelligence collection activity in the Western Hemisphere . . . as the DRE is not a group under complete Agency control, the above does not insure that they will not undertake isolated paramilitary operations without prior notification."

b. Messrs. Howard Brubaker then recently returned from a tour of the Miami Station, and Carl Trettin, DC of the CI Branch, WH/COG, who knew Bringuier and was stationed

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in New Orleans at the time of the Oswald-Bringuier confrontations in August 1963. It was concluded that Oswald was never a member of the DRE, which in fact rejected him, and that the DRE was not involved in the assassination.

3. In April 1967 the undersigned showed a copy of the Thomas memorandum to Mr. Tom Flores, then C/WH/COG, who considered that it reflected inadequate information and bias. It was agreed, nevertheless, that the charges which District Attorney James Garrison was then beginning to level against anti-Castro Cubans and this Agency necessitated careful checking.

4. The first report in the CI/R&A series on Garrison, 26 April 1967, listed seven Cuban refugees then linked to the case (Sergio ARCACHA Smith, Carlos BRINGUIER, Julio BUZNEDO, Manuel GARCIA Gonzalez, Pascual GONGORA, Miguel Silva TORRES, and Carlos QUIROGA.) It requested any additional WH/COG information about them and about the following groups: the Cuban Democratic Revolutionary Front, the DRE, the Information Council of the Americas, and any other anti-Castro groups active in the New Orleans area. The request added, "Information about CIA relationships with the above-named groups should not be restricted to New Orleans but should also include Miami and other areas to which Garrison's investigations may lead." Information was also requested on Edward S. BUTLER, Alberto FOWLER, Emilio SANTANA, and a paramilitary training site at Lake Pontchartrain. By a memorandum forwarded on 8 May 1967 the then AC/WH/COG, Mr. Earl J. Williamson, provided the requested information and added, "WH/COG will continue to review all material that may contain information pertinent to this subject and will forward such information to CI/R&A on a priority basis."

5. Since that date CI/R&A has prepared a series of reports on the Garrison case. All of these have been forwarded to WH/COG. In turn, WH/COG has provided additional information from its own files and those of the Miami Station, to which it has addressed several inquiries.

6. CI/R&A is currently compiling a separate list of all Cubans (as well as other Latin Americans) whose names have been linked to the Garrison investigation. This list will be forwarded to WH/COG with a request for checks if it contains any identities not previously traced against their files (including those of JMWAVE).

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7. The problem arising from Garrison's charges of Agency involvement in the assassination is compounded by the nature of some of our former Cuban operations, which resulted in a form of indirect association. For example, Garrison has sought without success to extradite Sergio ARCACHA Smith from Dallas. FBI reporting of 28 March 1967 stated that according to Layton Patrick Martens, Garrison will try to prove that Arcacha was the "second trigger man" in the assassination. The checks run by WH/COG and CI/R&A have not shown any link between Arcacha and CIA. However, WH/COG has reported that Arcacha was the delegate of the Frente Revolucionario Democratico (FRD) in New Orleans before the Bay of Pigs, that he maintained regular postal contact with FRD headquarters in Miami, that the FRD and the Cuban Revolutionary Council were supported by CIA, and that funds were supplied to the head of these groups, Dr. Jose MIRO Cardona. Consequently Arcacha may have believed that his activities in New Orleans were CIA-supported. This phenomenon of indirect association appears in other cases as well and may well underlie some of Garrison's accusations.'

8. It is suggested that C/WH or his representative might profitably query Mr. Thomas about the allegations summarized in paragraph 1, above. Although the date for the trial of Clay Shaw has not been set, it is plainly drawing closer. Once it starts, the newspapers will carry a flood of accusations, old and new; and it would be judicious to be prepared in advance.

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