

Los Angeles Field Office  
22 January 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: Headquarters

SUBJECT : OPERATIONAL SUPPORT - GENERAL  
#75 149 - 2007 I SD/1  
(SAHL, Morton Lyon, AKA: SAHL Mort)

1. Please refer to the Los Angeles Field Office memorandum dated 2 August 1968 and subsequent correspondence.

2. The January 1969 issue of Evergreen Review, forwarded to Headquarters, Project Resistance #533 989 I SAD/1, on this date, contains an article relating to the assassination of President Kennedy.

3. This office will not obtain another copy of Evergreen Review unless requested by Headquarters.

*William P. Curtin*  
William P. Curtin  
Special Agent in Charge

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Article attached  
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CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM  
RELEASE IN FULL 1998

# Why President Kennedy Was Killed

by Paris Flammonde

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM  
RELEASE IN FULL 1998

Has Jim Garrison really found the answer to the murder mystery of the century? Here is his charge — a conspiracy involving the CIA, renegade neo-Nazi Minutemen and anti-Castro Cuban exiles.

"THERE WAS A new threat of international peace in the air this week, the kind of threat that leaves the sophisticates smirking and the rest of us dumbfounded," wrote the astute geopolitical climatologist Max Frankel in *The New York Times* on June 16, 1963. He might even have added "prevailing storm clouds appear to be dissipating, fairer conditions anticipated."

The cause of this warm breeze across the frozen countenance of the cold war was John F. Kennedy. Or, more specifically, his stirring address to a deeply moved audience at the American University, in Washington, D.C. on June 10, when he said:

Both the United States and its allies, and the Soviet Union and its allies, have a mutually deep interest in a just and genuine peace and in halting the arms race. Agreements to this end are in the interests of the Soviet Union as well as ours—and even the most hostile nations can be relied on to accept and keep those treaty obligations and only those treaty obligations which are in their own interest.

So let us not be blind to our differences, but let us also direct attention to our common interests and the means by which these differences can be re-

solved. And if we cannot end our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity. For, in the final analysis, our most basic common link is that we all inhabit this small planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future. And we are all mortal.

John Kennedy concluded his vivid oration on the new American foreign policy—no, his elucidation of a fresh political philosophy—saying:

We are not helpless before that task or hopeless of its success. Confident and unafraid we labor on—not toward a strategy of annihilation, but toward a strategy of peace.

The statement was hailed in Britain and other countries. Russia seemed hesitantly receptive for the first forty-eight hours and, in *The New York Times* of June 13, Seymour Topping reported from the Soviet capital: "Izvestia published tonight the text of President Kennedy's speech . . . the decision to make the speech available to the Soviet people . . . was interpreted here as an indication that the speech made a favorable impression on the Kremlin."

On the day Topping's dispatch was printed in New York, another

highly indicative story appeared. It told of "ten Cuban exiles returning from a raid on their homeland" who were picked up by United States authorities.

And the response in the U.S.S.R. grew even more positive.

"For the first time in the 20 years of the cold war," said a Russian journal, "a President of the United States publicly has come out for the need of a basic reevaluation of Soviet-American relations and recognized to a certain extent the need for peaceful coexistence."

"We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future. And we are all mortal," had said John Kennedy.

One hundred and sixty-five days later the young President's mortality was burned across the brilliant air of Dallas. His skull was sharded by a fusillade of fury, and fragments fell to stain the very nature of the land he loved.

New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison believes that Kennedy's American University address, which, along with the Nu-

<sup>1</sup> *The New York Times*, June 13, 1963.

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clear Test Ban Treaty, heralded this country's drive for peaceful coexistence, may well have catalyzed his own death. Garrison holds that there were two targets caught in the circle of the sights on the assassins' rifles on that November 22: John Kennedy and peace.

The ultimate victim, however, may have been civilization.

Asserts Garrison:

President Kennedy was killed for one reason: because he was working for a reconciliation with the U.S.S.R. and Castro's Cuba. His assassins were a group of fanatic anti-Communists with a fusion of interests in preventing Kennedy from achieving peaceful relations with the Communist world. On the operative level of the conspiracy, you find anti-Castro Cuban exiles who never forgave Kennedy for failing to send in U.S. air cover at the Bay of Pigs and who feared that the thaw following the missile crisis in October, 1962, augured the total frustration of their plans to liberate Cuba. They believed sincerely that Kennedy had sold them out to the Communists. On a higher, control level, you find a number of people of ultra-right-wing persuasion—not simply conservatives, mind you, but people who could be described as neo-Nazi, including a small clique that had defected from the Minutemen because it considered the group "too liberal." These elements had their canteens ready and their guns loaded; they lacked only a target. After Kennedy's domestic moves toward racial integration and his attempts to forge a peaceful foreign policy, as exemplified by his signing of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, they found that target. So both of these groups had a vital stake in changing U.S. foreign policy—ideological on the part of the paramilitary rightists and both ideological and personal with the anti-Castro exiles, many of whom felt they would never see their homes again if Kennedy's policy of *détente* was allowed to succeed.<sup>2</sup>

The New Orleans district attorney contends that lower echelon elements of American intelligence agencies were implicated:

The CIA was involved with both of these groups in the New Orleans area, where the conspiracy was hatched; the CIA was training a mixed bag of Minutemen, Cuban exiles and other anti-Castro adventurers north of Lake Pontchartrain for a foray into Cuba and an assassination attempt on Fidel Castro. David Ferrie, who operated on the "Command" level of the ultra-rightists, was deeply involved in this effort. The CIA itself apparently did not take the *détente* too seriously until the late summer of 1963, because it

maintained its financing and training of anti-Castro adventurers. There was, in fact, a triangulation of CIA-supported anti-Castro activity between Dallas, where Jack Ruby was involved in collecting guns and ammunition for the underground and Miami and New Orleans, where most of the training was going on. But then, Kennedy, who had signed a secret agreement with Khrushchev after the missile crisis, pledging not to invade Cuba if Russia would soft-pedal Castro's subversive activities in the Americas, began to crack down on CIA operations against Cuba. As a result, on July 31, 1963, the FBI raided the headquarters of the group of Cuban exiles and Minutemen training north of Lake Pontchartrain and confiscated all their guns and ammunition—despite the fact that the operation had the sanction of the CIA.<sup>3</sup>

Garrison is correct in pointing out that in the spring and summer of 1963, Washington cracked down on the anti-Castro activities of the militant Cuban exiles, hitherto financed and encouraged by the Central Intelligence Agency. Shortly after the Lake Pontchartrain incident, Latin-American affairs authority Dan Kurzman wrote in the *Washington Post* of August 14:

The United States is apparently trying to prevent independent exile organizations from engaging in parallel activities that might jeopardize its own. . . .

United States policy is to centralize the underground's control under the CIA. This agency is reportedly recruiting particularly trusted and competent members of the individual exile groups into its service.

However, it is believed to be financing and cooperating with at least some independent organizations because of their relatively efficient underground networks in Cuba.

The lack of hit-and-run raids on Cuban shore installations or ships trading with Cuba in recent weeks reflects general agreement among the exile groups that sensational and well-publicized incidents are ineffectual, detrimental to CIA activities, and likely to meet with a swift crackdown by U.S. authorities.

Kennedy was not, however, merely consolidating the exile groups under the CIA's control: he was pressuring the CIA, which offered considerable behind-the-scenes resistance, to abort all exile paramilitary activity against the Castro regime. When the exile groups became aware that Kennedy intended to phase out their hit-and-run raids on Cuba as part of his proposed

*détente* with Russia, their reaction was bitter.

Dr. José Miró Cardona, president of the CIA-created and subsidized Cuban Revolutionary Council, a coalition of the disparate exile groups, resigned in April, 1963, with a resounding denunciation of President Kennedy, whom he accused of granting Castro "absolute immunity in the execution of Khrushchev's sinister designs."<sup>4</sup> Miró Cardona charged that in a White House meeting with Kennedy on April 10, 1962, the President had pledged "that the problem of Cuba was a military one and that the Council should contribute the major contingent of soldiers" in the eventual invasion that would topple Castro. The anti-Castroite stated in his resignation announcement that "I left the White House with the assurance that the liberation of Cuba would follow soon with Cubans at the vanguard in battle." Miró Cardona intimated that the Cuban exile community had been promised that the blockade of Cuba during the October, 1962, missile crisis would be followed by a full-scale land invasion of Cuba and the destruction of the Communist regime. Instead, he complained that in the aftermath of the missile crisis, which was solved by mutual concessions on the part of Kennedy and Khrushchev, Washington's Cuban policy "shifted suddenly, violently, and unexpectedly" and "the struggle for Cuba was in the process of being liquidated by the government." New Orleans *States-Item* reporters Jack Wardlaw and Rosemary James report that Miró Cardona believed that "during the negotiations that followed the blockade . . . Khrushchev maintained his attack and subversion base in the Caribbean, strengthened Castro's military capacity to the point where he could smash an uprising of the Cuban people and 'immobilized' the United States and the rest of the Western hemisphere."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Rosemary James and Jack Wardlaw, *Plot or Politics?* (New Orleans, Pelican Publishing Co., 1967), p. 126.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 127.

<sup>2</sup> *Playboy*, October, 1967.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

# WHY KENNEDY WAS KILLED

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The Cuban exile community, Miró Cardona charged, had been betrayed by Kennedy. "The repeated assurances, the constantly renewed promises, have been suddenly liquidated," the exile leader complained bitterly.

Miró Cardona's resignation and his blast at Kennedy split the Cuban Revolutionary Council down the middle and precipitated a bitter internecine struggle among factions of the Cuban exile community. Some relatively moderate exiles argued that without United States cooperation there was no hope of ever liberating their homeland, and the exiles must thus cooperate with Washington's new shift in policy and hope by political pressure to reverse it. But the more fanatic exiles pledged to fight to the death against Castro, with or without American support—and, if necessary, to violently resist curtailment of their paramilitary activities by Washington.

Thus Carlos Bringuier of New Orleans, a prominent ultra-right-wing Cuban exile leader and an associate of Lee Harvey Oswald and David Ferrie, announced in the wake of Miró Cardona's resignation that his Cuban Student Directorate (DRE), "would continue efforts to liberate Cuba despite action by the

U.S. to stop raids originating from U.S. soil."

In May, 1963, the CIA apparently attempted to work out a compromise between the disillusioned Cuban exiles and Washington. In Miami the Cuban Committee of Liberation, a new organization viewed as a successor to the moribund Cuban Revolutionary Council, was established in an effort to unite all exile groups. Shortly before this group was formed, an Associated Press dispatch from Miami on May 10 reported:

A new all-out drive to unify Cuban refugees into a single, powerful organization to topple the Fidel Castro regime was disclosed today by exile sources. The plan calls for formation of a junta in exile to mount a three-pronged thrust consisting of sabotage, infiltration, and ultimate invasion. The exile sources said the plan had been discussed with Cuban leaders by U.S. Central Intelligence agents. Seeking to put together the junta was Enrique Ruiz Williams, a Bay of Pigs invasion veteran and friend of U.S. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy. Cuban leaders said intensive sabotage and guerrilla activities inside Cuba might start in a month to spark a possible uprising.

Hundreds of exiles, reported itching for action and resentful of U.S.-imposed curbs against the anti-Castro raids will be recruited to infiltrate Cuba, the sources added.

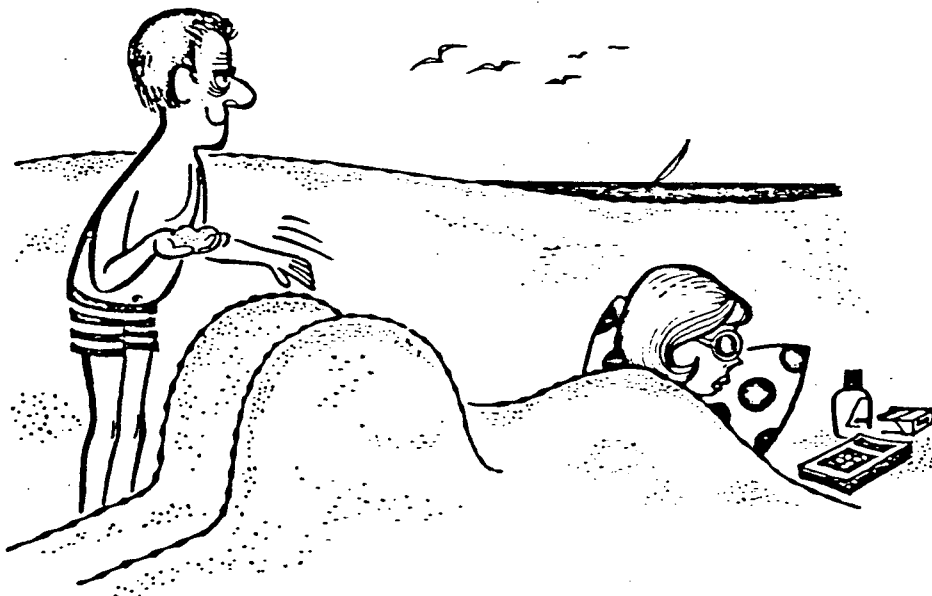
The Associated Press revealed on June 3 that the Cuban Committee of Liberation had "the approval of

\* Associated Press dispatch, May 10, 1963.

the U.S. Government."

The organization did appear to have the wholehearted approval of the CIA, which would not be reconciled to the prospect of peaceful Cuban-American relations, but it did not have anything other than *pro forma* backing from the Kennedy administration. There appears, in fact, to have been a sharp dichotomy between the CIA's evaluation of the group and the administration's. The CIA obviously intended it as a spearhead of a new, militant anti-Castro offensive; the Kennedy administration appears to have considered the group a sop thrown to the exiles to assure them that the United States still cared. If anything, Washington appeared hopeful that the group would provide a means for channeling the restless energies of the Cuban exiles into avenues of political propaganda and anti-Castro agitation. If the CIA envisaged the Cuban Committee of Liberation as unleashing a torrent of paramilitary, espionage, and intelligence activities against Castro, the Kennedy administration viewed it as a device to divert the unleashed anger of the exiles, and maintain the Caribbean as a placid pool reflecting the rapidly improving Soviet-American relations. The two views were, of course, mutually exclusive and antithetical, and after a series of Washington power plays, Robert Kennedy, in his position as overseer of CIA activities, appears to have won out. The administration's policy was now clear: Washington would tolerate, and even subsidize, anti-Castro propaganda and political activity—but it would not finance, arm, or in any way support exile efforts to use the United States as the power source of military raids on Cuba, much less all-out invasion. The result on the morale of the militant Cuban exiles was devastating. Explains Garrison:

You have to understand the mentality of these people. Take the Cuban exiles involved; here are men, some of whom survived the Bay of Pigs, who for years had been whipped up by the CIA into a frenzy of anti-Castro hatred and who had been solemnly assured by American intelligence agencies that they were going to lib-



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erate their homeland with American support. They had one disappointment after another—the Bay of Pigs debacle, the failure to invade Cuba during the Missile Crisis, the effective crushing of their underground in Cuba by Castro's secret police. But they kept on hoping, and the CIA kept fanning their hopes. Then they listened to Kennedy's famous speech at American University on June 10, 1963, where he really kicked off the new drive for a détente, and they heard the President of the country in which they'd placed all their hope saying we must make peace with the Communists since we both "breathe the same air." Well, this worries them, but the CIA continues financing and training their underground cadres, so there is still hope. And then suddenly, in the late summer of 1963, the CIA is forced by Presidential pressure to withdraw all funds and assistance from the Cuban exiles. Think of the impact of this, particularly on the group here in New Orleans, which had been trained for months to make an assassination attempt on Castro and then found itself coolly jettisoned by its benefactors in Washington. These adventurers were worked up to a fever pitch; and when the CIA withdrew its support and they couldn't fight Castro, they picked their next victim—John F. Kennedy.

Veterans of the Bay of Pigs, probably the most fanatic, right-wing and violence-prone element of the exile community, were particularly bitter and disoriented to find that they were not going to get another crack at Castro—this time, hopefully, under an umbrella of U.S. air and ground support. Haynes Johnson, who chronicled the Bay of Pigs invasion story in cooperation with the expatriate Cuban leaders of "Brigade 2506," reports that the exiles left Castro's prisons and "returned to the cheers of the United States and the Western world and for a long time they basked in that glow. Then the inevitable reaction set in and they found that their dreams of returning to Cuba in glory were not to be fulfilled so soon. Now they are scattered about the United States. There have been personal tragedies and increasingly difficult problems of adjustment. Several men have had nervous breakdowns and at least two are in mental hospitals."

Jim Garrison suspects that Bay of Pigs veterans were involved in the conspiracy to kill John F. Ken-

nedy, which may have served as useful therapy for their frenetic frustration.

The militant Cuban outcasts had been willing, with the support of the CIA, to defy President Kennedy once before. Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter Haynes Johnson reveals that shortly before the invasion, when "Doves" and "Hawks" within Kennedy's cabinet were debating its wisdom, the exile leaders at the CIA's Guatemala training camp were assembled by "Frank," the CIA director of invasion preparations, and counseled to defy Kennedy if he canceled the invasion. Johnson reports:

It was now early in April and [Manuel] Artime was in the camp as the civilian representative of the Revolutionary Council. Frank called Pepe [San Roman] and [Erneido] Oliva again. This time he had startling information. There were forces in the administration trying to block the invasion, and Frank might be ordered to stop it. If he received such an order, he said he would secretly inform Pepe and Oliva. Pepe remembers Frank's next words this way:

"If this happens you come here and make some kind of show, as if you were putting us, the advisors, in prison, and you go ahead with the program as we have talked about it, and we will give you the whole plan, even if we are your prisoners."

Frank was quite specific: they were to place an armed Brigade soldier at each American's door, cut communica-

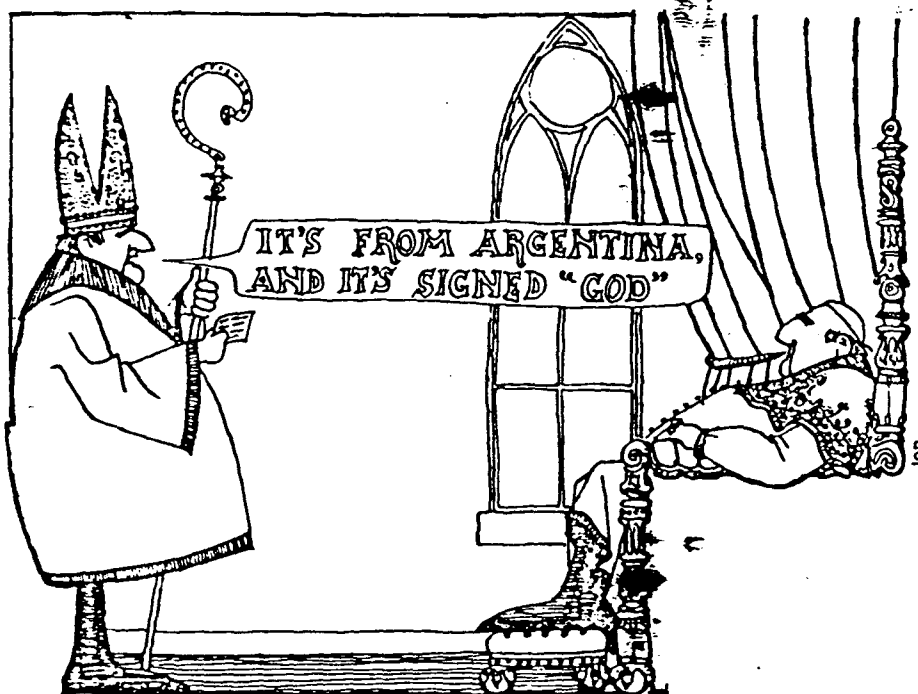
tions with the outside, and continue the training until he told them when, and how, to leave for Trampoline base. Frank then laughed and said: "In the end we will win."

Pepe and Oliva were disturbed by this plan, but they had such faith in the Americans that they agreed to follow it if necessary. They knew that they would have difficulty with the Brigade, because as Pepe said: "Most of the Cubans were there because they knew the whole operation was going to be conducted by the Americans, not by me or anyone else. They did not trust me or anyone else. They just trusted the Americans. So they were going to fight because the United States was backing them."

Frank then called in Artime and privately told him the same thing. Artime was as stunned as the others. Frank never said who opposed the invasion—it was just "forces in the administration," or "politicians," or "chiefs above." He did say that if he received the order to stop the invasion, "I have also orders from my bosses, my commanders, to continue anyway." It cannot be determined what bosses, if any, gave Frank such instructions. But Artime, San Roman and Oliva never doubted that he was speaking for his superiors. It seemed obvious to them that the Brigade could not be transported to another unknown base, and then placed aboard ships to go to Cuba without the knowledge and assistance of a great organization.<sup>9</sup>

Johnson quotes Cuban exile leader Erneido Oliva as having received as one of his "dominant impres-

<sup>9</sup> Haynes Johnson, *The Bay of Pigs* (New York, W. W. Norton, 1964), pp. 75-76.



<sup>1</sup> *Playboy*, October, 1967.

<sup>2</sup> *Washington Post*, February 25, 1967.

sions" from the CIA official that "the invasion was going to take place even if Washington tried to stop it." In other words, the CIA, in league with its Cuban satraps, was prepared at the highest levels to defy the orders of John Kennedy, an act of blatant insubordination, if not treason. It turned out that the necessity to countermand the commander in chief's directives never confronted the CIA, but Jim Garrison believes that it established a precedent. The next instance of CIA insubordination, he contends, was resolved when John Kennedy's skull was blown off in Dealey Plaza on November 22, 1963.

The Kennedy administration's crackdown on Cuban exile activity against Castro in mid-1963 was accomplished—and perhaps precipitated by—overtures for a *détente* by U.S. and Cuban officials. These secret peace bids between Castro and Kennedy, Jim Garrison believes, were leaked to elements of the Cuban exile community by the CIA and hardened the resolve of a small fanatic clique that Kennedy must be liquidated as a traitor and pro-Communist. Garrison analyzes:

By the early fall of 1963, Kennedy's plan for a *détente* with Cuba was in high gear. Ambassador William Attwood, a close personal friend of the late President, recounts that a thaw in U.S.-Cuban relations was definitely in the works at this time and "the President more than the State Department was interested in exploring the [Cuban] overture." One of the intermediaries between Castro and Kennedy was the late television commentator Lisa Howard, who met secretly with Ernesto Ché Guevara to prepare peace terms between the U.S. and Castro. Miss Howard was arranging a conference between Bobby Kennedy and Guevara when the President was shot in Dallas. In a United Nations speech on October 7, 1963, Adlai Stevenson set forth the possibility of a termination of hostilities between the two countries, and on November 19, Presidential aide McGeorge Bundy, who was acting as an intermediary in the secret discussions, told Ambassador Attwood that the President wanted to discuss his plans for a Cuban-American *détente* in depth with him right after "a brief trip to Dallas." The rest is history.<sup>10</sup>

James Wechsler, former editor of the *New York Post*, discusses

<sup>10</sup> *Pittsburg*, October, 1967.

the Attwood peace mission at some length in a column entitled "JFK and Castro: Lost History?" According to Wechsler, who as a journalistic ally of the Kennedys is in a position to receive inside information:

In his final days on earth John F. Kennedy was actively and inquisitively responding to overtures from Fidel Castro for a *détente* with the United States. That is the dramatic story unfolded by William Attwood, a key intermediary in the negotiations. . . . Senator Robert Kennedy, reached in Washington yesterday, confirmed the essence of Attwood's report.

(The saga of the secret Castro initiatives and the Kennedy administration's cautious but affirmative, persistent probing belongs in any compilation of the inscrutable "ifs" of history.) The unfinished episode began in September, 1963, when Attwood, now editor of the Cowles publications, was serving as special advisor for African affairs at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations. He had initially been enlisted as a New Frontiersman in the role of ambassador to Guinea (and much of his book is a lively, unconventional retrospect on his African assignment). It was the Guinean ambassador to Havana who first broached to Attwood the possibility of a Cuban-U.S. rapprochement.

Attwood says he had received hints from other sources that Castro was growing restive under Communist pressures and was prepared to make "substantial concessions" to achieve an accommodation with the U.S. There were indications of a deepening rift between Castro and Ché Guevara, the hard-line Commissar who was said to regard Castro as "dangerously unreliable." The reports seemed plausible to Attwood; a long session with Castro in 1959 "convinced me that he was too emotional to be a disciplined Communist, though naïve enough to be swayed by Communist advisors." Attwood suggested to UN Ambassador Adlai Stevenson and Averell Harriman that quiet contact be made with the Cuban delegation at the UN to find out "if in fact Castro did want to talk on our terms."

Harriman favored the idea but advised Attwood to explore it with Robert Kennedy "because of its political implications." Meanwhile Stevenson discussed the matter with President Kennedy who approved the notion of Attwood conferring with Dr. Carlos Lechunga, the chief Cuban delegate, "so long as I made it clear we were not soliciting discussions."

At a party a few days later Lechunga told Attwood there was a strong chance that Castro would invite him to Cuba. Robert Kennedy said he thought it would be preferable if such a private session were held outside Cuba, possibly in Mexico. The late Lisa Howard, the spirited TV correspondent who knew Castro well and

tenaciously pursued for many long months a dream of U.S.-Cuban reconciliation, learned of Attwood's talks with Lechunga and was in telephone communication with Major Rene Vallejo, Castro's personal aide. On Oct. 31 Vallejo told Miss Howard that Castro would welcome an unpublicized visit from a U.S. official.

On Nov. 5 Attwood met with McGeorge Bundy at the White House; Bundy, he reports, said that "the President more than the State Department was interested in exploring this overture but thought we should now find out just what Castro wanted to discuss before going into a meeting." Vallejo called Miss Howard again to emphasize that the Cubans would accept any secrecy arrangements we proposed. He also said that Castro alone would be present—and specifically stated that Guevara would not be.

Bundy told Attwood that President Kennedy still favored preliminary private talks at the UN to ascertain whether Castro was "seriously interested" in discussing the points Stevenson had raised in a UN speech on Oct. 7. In that address Stevenson had said the U.S.-Cuban cold war could be ended if Castro stopped taking orders from Moscow and infiltrating other Latin-American states, and returned to the democratic promises of his revolution.

Attwood telephoned Vallejo at a private Havana number and confirmed our readiness to listen to Castro. Vallejo said Castro would tell Lechunga to discuss an agenda for the conversation.

On Nov. 19 Bundy told Attwood that the President wanted to see him immediately after he met with Lechunga. The President, Bundy added, would be available except for "a brief trip to Dallas."

Soon after the assassination Attwood encountered Lechunga, who said he had been instructed by Castro on Nov. 23 to begin "formal discussions" with him. ". . . I informed Bundy and later was told that the Cuban exercise would be put on ice for a while—which it was and where it has been ever since," Attwood writes.

If . . . ?<sup>11</sup>

It was too late. Kennedy's ambitious dream of peace was relegated to the history books as Lyndon Johnson heralded the rude awakening. The old, cold undead policy was raised again as the new President proclaimed: "We don't propose to sit here in our rocking chair with our hands folded and let the communists set up any government in the Western Hemisphere."<sup>12</sup>

*The New York Times*<sup>13</sup> confirmed

<sup>10</sup> *New York Post*, March 9, 1967.

<sup>11</sup> Ronald Steel, *For Americans* (New York, Viking Press, 1967), p. 232.

<sup>12</sup> *The New York Times*, March 10, 1967.

that Robert Kennedy agreed with Ambassador Attwood's account of the secret peace overtures: "An aide of Senator Robert Kennedy said last night that Mr. Kennedy was acquainted with [Attwood's] book and considered it to be 'essentially accurate.'"

Jim Garrison's comment on the aborted negotiations: "The assassins had achieved their aim."<sup>14</sup>

The role of ABC-TV news reporter Lisa Howard as intermediary in these discussions is interesting, especially since her friends indicate that at the time of the assassination Miss Howard was arranging a clandestine meeting between Robert Kennedy and a top Cuban official. Craig Karpel, a writer and newsman who was a colleague of Miss Howard on numerous assignments, recalled<sup>15</sup> that several months before the peace overtures were initiated she had been able to obtain a visa to Cuba through Alex Quaison-Sackey, the Ghanaian ambassador to Cuba and the UN. She stayed in Cuba for about a month during which she was able to establish contact with Castro. They got along well—she was quite a lovely blonde, a former actress—and conversed on five occasions. She taped a forty-minute interview with him that was aired on ABC in the middle of May, creating a considerable stir. It was Lisa Howard who actually set up the arrangements for Attwood to go to Cuba and conduct preliminary talks preparatory to a Kennedy-Castro meeting.

In the fall of 1964, Lisa Howard, once a fervent admirer of President Kennedy, turned against his brother Bobby, who was then running for the U.S. Senate in New York, against the incumbent, Kenneth Keating. According to Karpel:

Lisa Howard got together with Gore Vidal and formed an organization called Democrats for Keating. Now this woman, you have to realize, was a kingpin of the Lexington Democratic Club. At the first meeting Bobby was characterized as "the very antithesis of his brother, the late President. He is ruthless, reactionary, and danger-

ously authoritarian. We feel he must be stopped now." Miss Howard said the group was organized because "if you feel strongly about something like this you can't remain silent—you have to show courage and stand up and be counted." Two weeks later ABC canned her because she had "chosen to participate publicly in partisan political activity contrary to long-established ABC news policy." Two weeks after that she debated two pro-Kennedy lawyers at a panel show in a nightclub in New York. "Brothers are not necessarily the same," she said. "There was Cain and Abel."

She sued ABC for reinstatement. She was a top reporter who had cornered people like the Shah of Iran and Nikita Khrushchev that other less capable and less attractive reporters couldn't even get near. She had her own network news show—the only woman in the country who had her own show. She also sued them for two million dollars in damages. After the election, ABC still wouldn't take her back. On November 8, an ABC executive said, "She's being canned. She doesn't fit. She's a mystery girl. We just don't want her on the staff."

On the Fourth of July, 1965, the mystery girl was found wandering around the parking lot of a pharmacy in East Hampton, Long Island "acting strangely," dazed and glassy-eyed and almost incoherent. Two friends took her to the East Hampton Medical Center. They gave her a tracheotomy and put her on a respirator but she failed to regain consciousness. They didn't bother to pump her stomach or anything. Two weeks later Dr. Sidney Weinberg, the Suffolk County Medical Examiner, said that she had taken enough barbiturates to kill five persons.

Karpel is extremely suspicious of the circumstances of Lisa Howard's alleged suicide. "She just wasn't the type to kill herself," he told Eric Norden. "She was too dynamic, too dedicated, too sure of herself ever to admit defeat in that ultimate way." Karpel also does not buy the official police explanation of her death.

They claimed she had just bought 100 barbiturate pills. According to the police she had obtained a prescription for 10 pills the day before from an East Hampton physician and altered it to read 100. Now doctors don't generally write a prescription for barbiturates in arabic numerals—they write it in Roman numerals—X for ten and C for 100 or they write it out in words. Try to change an "X" to a "C" sometime, or "ten" to "one hundred." And if you believe the police's version of how she died, try to stand in a suburban parking lot at high noon and eat 100 phenobarbitals without a glass of water.

Karpel's suspicions about his former colleague's death may be

groundless—if ever substantiated, they would make her the second famous female news reporter (after Dorothy Kilgallen) whom assassination critics suspect was silenced because of her knowledge of the assassination. But what inside knowledge could Miss Howard possibly have had about Kennedy's death? Her role as an intermediary between Castro and Kennedy would not place her in a position to know anything about events in Dallas—unless she had received explosive information from Ernesto Ché Guevara, who conferred with her during his visit to the United Nations in late 1964. (The same visit when Cuban exiles fired a bazooka shell at the UN which, had it not fallen short of its mark, could have caused a massacre within the glass-sheathed edifice.) Castro has an extremely efficient secret police, which is known to have penetrated the ranks of the militant Cuban exiles in the United States, and may have unearthed some information about the conspiracy to kill Kennedy that Garrison charges was framed in 1963 by Cuban exiles, American right-wingers, and elements of the CIA. (It is perhaps of interest in this context that two of the fifty-one top-secret CIA files in the National Archives, discovered by one of Garrison's investigators, are titled respectively, "CD 935: Role of Cuban Intelligence Service in processing (Oswald's) visa application. (TS)" and "CD 1551: Conversations between Cuban President and ambassador. (TS)."<sup>16</sup> Most of the other documents are marked (S) for secret; these two files are the only ones designated "Top Secret." What the Cuban Intelligence Service discovered about Lee Oswald, and what the Cuban President told an unnamed ambassador about the assassination we may never know, at least not until September, 2038.

The reasons why the late Lisa Howard turned against Bobby Kennedy remain a mystery, but there is a fascinating speculation in Washington about Kennedy's role in approving an initial CIA plot to

<sup>16</sup> Author's files.

<sup>14</sup> *Playboy*, October, 1967.

<sup>15</sup> Unpublished conversation with Eric Norden.



kill Castro that, when subsequently aborted on his orders, spun off into a second and successful plot to kill his brother. As early as February 24, 1967, Garrison stated: "There were several plots. A change of course did occur." And George Lardner reported in the *Washington Post* the next day: "There have been indications that the conspiracy theory Garrison has built began not with a plot to kill the President but one to assassinate Cuban Premier Fidel Castro."

The Associated Press reported on February 25: "Garrison is known to have considered a theory that a group of anti-Castroites had plotted to kill Premier Castro of Cuba. This group then later changed its target to President Kennedy. . . . The plot supposedly collapsed when Oswald . . . failed to enter Cuba . . . [and] the target was switched."

And Haynes Johnson wrote in the *Washington Sunday Star*<sup>17</sup> that Garrison's case "appears to rest on one theory about the assassination: that Oswald was working with an anti-Castro right-wing organization and actually intended to kill Fidel; that Oswald's publicly pro-Communist activities in New Orleans and his attempt to enter Mexico and secure a Cuban visa were a ruse to enable him to carry out that Castro assassination objective; that when Oswald was denied entrance to Cuba, the plot shifted, and Kennedy, accused of letting down the anti-Castro Cubans at the Bay of Pigs, became the target."

If Garrison is correct in this thesis—and if Robert Kennedy in his role as overseer of CIA activities ever since the Bay of Pigs fiasco did authorize and then countermand an operation in which Oswald would be involved in an attempt on Castro's life—then Robert Kennedy's remarkable reticence on the subject of the assassination and his implacable hostility to Garrison's own efforts to reopen the investigation, would be more understandable. According to Drew Pearson, whose access to inside

sources in Washington is legendary:

President Johnson is sitting on a political H-bomb—an unconfirmed report that Senator Robert Kennedy, D., N.Y., may have approved an assassination plot which then possibly backfired against his late brother.

Top officials, queried by this column, agreed that a plot to assassinate Cuban dictator Fidel Castro was "considered" at the highest levels of the Central Intelligence Agency at the time Bobby was riding herd on the agency. The officials disagreed, however, over whether the plan was approved and implemented.

One version claims that underworld figures actually were recruited to carry out the plot. Another rumor has it that three hired assassins were caught in Havana where a lone survivor is still supposed to be languishing in prison. These stories have been investigated and discounted by the FBI. . . .

Yet the rumor persists, whispered by people in a position to know. . . . This report may have started New Orleans' flamboyant District Attorney Jim Garrison on his investigation of the Kennedy assassination. . . . This much can be verified: (1) President Kennedy was so disillusioned with the CIA after the Bay of Pigs fiasco that he swore to friends he would like "to splinter the CIA in a thousand pieces and scatter it to the winds." He ordered a thorough investigation by a group headed by General Maxwell Taylor. But the President's real watchdog was his brother Bobby, who ended up calling the shots at the CIA. (2) During this period, the CIA hatched a plot to knock off Castro. It would have been impossible for this to reach the high levels it did, say insiders, without being taken up with the younger Kennedy. Indeed, one source insists that Bobby, eager to avenge the Bay of Pigs fiasco, played a key role in the planning. Whether the assassination plot was ever actually

put into effect is disputed. . . .

Some sources consider Robert Kennedy's behavior after the assassination to be significant. He seemed to be tormented, they say, by more than the natural grief over the murder of his brother.

Author William Manchester, who got his information chiefly from Kennedy-controlled sources, portrays Bobby as a character of granite during those tragic days. But others had a different impression. McGeorge Bundy, then a top White House aide, told a colleague that he was "worried about Bobby," that "Bobby was reluctant to face the new reality," that he had "virtually to drag Bobby" into President Johnson's first cabinet meeting.

Four weeks after the tragedy, this column was told, Bobby was morose and refused to see people. Could he have been plagued by the terrible thought that he had helped put into motion forces that indirectly may have brought about his brother's martyrdom? Some insiders think so.

Pearson concludes his column with a footnote to the naïve:

Note: Those who may be shocked that the CIA would consider stooping to a political assassination should be reminded of the ugly nature of what Secretary of State Dean Rusk has called "the back-alley struggle."

He has described it as "a tough struggle going on in the back alleys all over the world . . . a never-ending war . . . no quarter asked and none given. . . . It's unpleasant, and no one likes it, but that is not a field which can be left entirely to the other side."

"The blunt truth is that the subterranean world of espionage is harsh almost beyond belief. There have been times that the CIA has been forced to resort to the most extreme measures to protect the national security."<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> *New Orleans States-Item*, March 3, 1967.



<sup>17</sup> *Washington Sunday Star*, February 26, 1967.

Is this your idea of a new cat food, Simpson, or is this your idea of a joke?



*The most extreme?*

Fidel Castro's reaction to Kennedy's death was one of deep alarm—and suspicion. From the outset he appears to have wondered if the bullets that killed Kennedy were not also intended for him.

In a speech broadcast over Havana Radio on November 25, the Cuban Premier hinted that Kennedy's moderation of his policies toward Cuba was at the root of his assassination, a thesis echoed almost four years later by New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison. According to Castro:

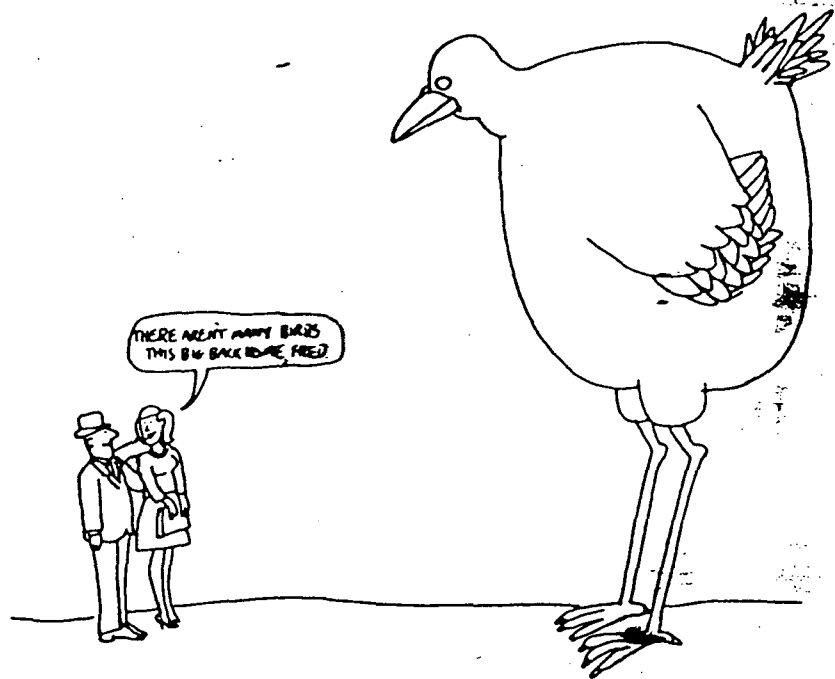
These events occur precisely at a moment when Kennedy was being severely attacked by those who considered his Cuban policy to be weak. It could not be us, but only the enemies of the Revolution and the enemies in general of a more moderate policy, a less warlike policy . . . who might be interested in the death of President Kennedy. [They are] the only ones who perhaps could have received the news of Kennedy's death with satisfaction.

A few days ago an incident drew my attention. This was while the Inter-American Press Association Conference was taking place. It was a scandal. . . . They [anti-Castro exiles] made long tirades . . . against the speech delivered by Kennedy in Florida . . . [which] disappointed a number of persons who favor a more aggressive policy against Cuba. It was a disappointment for the counterrevolutionary elements, and it was a disappointment for the warmongering elements in the United States. . . .

There is something very interesting—really very interesting and curious which drew my attention when I read it. That is why I remembered it and looked for the papers. It says: "The third editor to express his opinion was Sergio Carbo." . . . Carbo . . . is Director of the Executive Council of the Inter-American Press Association . . . an important post in reactionary intellectual circles . . . his statement ends (and this is what drew my attention) . . . by saying: "I believe that a coming serious event will oblige Washington to change its policy of peaceful coexistence." What does this mean? What did this gentleman mean when he said three days before the assassination . . . in a cable . . . from Associated Press, dated November 19, AP number 254, Miami Beach . . . "I believe that a coming serious event will oblige Washington to change its policy of peaceful coexistence"?

What does this mean, three days before the murder of President Kennedy? Because when I read this cable it caught my attention, it intrigued me, it seemed strange to me. Was there perhaps some sort of understanding? Was there perhaps some sort of plot?

Kliban



Was there perhaps in those reactionary circles, where the so-called weak policy of Kennedy toward Cuba was under attack, where the policy of civil rights was under attack—was there perhaps in certain civilian and military ultra-reactionary circles in the United States a plot against President Kennedy's life?<sup>19</sup>

Jim Garrison commented on Castro's speech: "Most Americans at the time, myself included, thought this was just Communist propaganda. But Castro knew what he was talking about."<sup>20</sup>

Only the most politically ignorant can dispute the essential differences of attitude between Kennedy and Johnson. The young President wanted, and believed in the possibility of achieving, a *détente* with our opposite international numbers. The Johnson administration showed little desire, and no conviction regarding the likelihood, of peace and a reestablishment of normality.

"Mr. Johnson has never believed that the fundamental issues which divide Russia and the democratic nations can be settled by negotiation."<sup>21</sup> It need hardly be pointed out that the Texan's choice of weapons has been tragically apparent.

Five days after the passing of

the President and his plans for peace, William S. White juxtaposed a pair of prophecies which fascinate by outright inaccuracy, in the initial instance, and unbelievable understatement, in the second. He wrote:

"President Johnson's conduct of foreign policy will sustain the general line of approach of his predecessor, John F. Kennedy. . . ."

In point of fact, he virtually reversed it.

"It may confidently be expected," White observed later, "that in that southeastern Asia area of crisis the military resistance to communism in which American troops are assisting the new provisional government will be stepped up and that total unity within the American diplomatic-military intelligence team, if it does not now exist [which White must have known was not even distantly approached], will very shortly exist beyond question."<sup>22</sup> This sycophantic sophistry is hardly softened by the fact the week of the murder was not yet past.

Still, this instant puffery was not begun by White alone, the chorus of the paean boasted many, among them John Chamberlain, writing just a few pages away. After regaling his readers with Johnson's

<sup>19</sup> Harold Weisberg, *Oswald in New Orleans* (New York, Canyon Books, 1967), pp. 145-146.

<sup>20</sup> *Playboy*, October, 1967.

<sup>21</sup> *New York Post*, December 1, 1963.

<sup>22</sup> *New York Journal-American*, November 27, 1963.

humanism, as opposed to Kennedy's cold intellectuality—"Lyndon Johnson is a man, not an extension of an IBM machine"—the columnist accurately notes a fact long since forgotten: "But conservatives have less to fear, domestically, from Johnson than from any of the other Democratic candidates."

In the same newspaper, on the same day, Frank Coniff introduced another bass voice to the choir. "The long knives," he warned, "are being honed for those people who thought that what happened to Lincoln and Garfield and McKinley couldn't happen to their tiger."<sup>23</sup>

Kennedy was slain and things began to change rapidly. That is the simple fact of the matter. The whys, of course, are something else. They are, at least in certain ominous instances, directly related to why the President died, as has been indicated by much of the foregoing.

**T**HE HOW OF the assassination is the twin of why, and, like its theoretical sibling, has two aspects—the motivating and the instrumental. The latter, which might be regarded as the mechanical phase, relates to the actual tactics: number of individuals in the murder squad, their specific responsibilities and authority, the weaponry and ammunition, the transportation, the positions of attack, the ballistic geometry which would insure maximum probability of success, the approach and escape routes, secondary "defense" killings if and when necessary, and how and where they would be accomplished, and so on. Many of the pieces, which, when composed, will reveal the true picture of various of these subdivisions of the mechanical phase, have been dealt with in this and other works on the killing of Kennedy. The purely mechanical aspect has been brilliantly reconstructed by Josiah Thompson in *Six Seconds in Dallas*. The logistical and tactical considerations have been exhaustively examined by District Attorney Jim Garrison, one of the most fascinating developments of that investigation being the contention

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

that one—the final and fatal—shot was fired by a .45 caliber automatic from a sewer vent to the front and right of the oncoming motorcade and the President. Garrison and his men have surveyed the scene and the underground approach passages—one fifteen inches in diameter and the other thirty—which lead to the vantage point from which the shot was assertedly fired. Jim Garrison's scenario of the assassination of John Fitzgerald Kennedy:

Our office has developed evidence that the President was assassinated by a precision guerrilla team of at least seven men, including anti-Castro adventurers and members of the paramilitary right.

Of course, the Ministry of Truth concluded—by scrupulously ignoring the most compelling evidence and carefully selecting only those facts that conformed to its preconceived thesis of a lone assassin—that "no credible evidence suggests that the shots were fired from . . . any place other than the Texas School Book Depository Building." But anyone who takes the time to read the Warren Report will find that of the witnesses in Dealey Plaza who were able to assess the origin of the shots, almost two-thirds said they came from the grassy-knoll area in front and to the right of the Presidential limousine and not from the Book Depository, which was to the rear of the President. A number of reliable witnesses testified that they heard shots ring out from behind the picket fence and saw a puff of smoke drift into the air. Additional evidence supporting this can be found in the Zapruder film published in *Life*, which reveals that the President was slammed backward by the impact of a bullet; unless you abrogate Newton's third law of motion, this means the President was shot from the front. Also—though they were contradicted later—several of the doctors at Parkland Hospital who examined the President's neck wound contended it was an entrance wound, which would certainly tend to indicate that Kennedy was shot from the front.

In the course of our investigation, we've uncovered additional evidence establishing absolutely that there were at least two men behind the picket fence, four men on the grassy knoll, and two or more behind a small stone wall to the right of the fence.

As I reconstruct it from the still-incomplete evidence in our possession, one man fired at the President from each location, while the role of his companion was to snatch up the cartridges as they were ejected. Parenthetically, a book on firearms characteristics was found in Ferrie's apartment. It was filled with underlining and marginal notations, and the most heavily annotated section was

one describing the direction and distance a cartridge travels from a rifle after ejection. Scribbled on a book-mark in this section, in Ferrie's handwriting, were the figures, not mentioned in the text, "50" and "11 feet"—which indicates the possibility that Ferrie had test-fired a rifle and plotted the distance from the gunman to where the ejected cartridges would fall.

But to return to the scene of the crime, it seems virtually certain that the cartridges, along with the rifles, were then thrown into the trunk of a car—parked directly behind the picket fence—which was driven from the scene some hours after the assassination. If there had been a thorough search of all vehicles in the vicinity of the grassy knoll immediately after the assassination, this incriminating evidence might have been uncovered—along with the real authors of the President's murder.

In addition to the assassins on the grassy knoll at least two other men fired from behind the President, one from the Book Depository Building—not Oswald—and ~~one~~ in all probability, from the Dal-Tex Building. As it happens, a man was arrested right after the assassination as he left the Dal-Tex Building and was taken away in a patrol car, but like the three other men detained after the assassination—one in the railroad yard behind the grassy knoll, one on the railroad overpass farther down the parade route, and one in front of the Book Depository Building—he then dropped out of sight completely. All of these suspects taken into custody after the assassination remain as anonymous as if they'd been detained for throwing a candy wrapper on the sidewalk.

We have also located another man—in green combat fatigues—who was not involved in the shooting but created a diversionary action in order to distract people's attention from the snipers. This individual screamed, fell to the ground and simulated an epileptic fit, drawing people away from the vicinity of the knoll just before the President's motorcade reached the ambush point.

So you have at least seven people involved, with four firing at the President and catching him in a crossfire—just as the assassins had planned at the meeting in David Ferrie's apartment in September. It was a precision operation and was carried out coolly and with excellent coordination; the assassins even kept in contact by radio. The President, of course, had no chance. It was an overkill operation.<sup>24</sup>

The district attorney was interviewed by Murphy Martin on WFAA-TV in Dallas on December 9, 1967. In part, he said:

"I've . . . gotten a little tired of hearing people like Earl Warren and Ramsey Clark, who ought to

<sup>24</sup> *Playboy*, October, 1967.

know better, saying repeatedly that they've seen nothing new (with regard to the assassination). Well, I'm going to show them something new."

Garrison then became specific:

"Just a little bit in front of where the President was killed there is a sewer opening. Dealey Plaza used to have a bunch of houses and they were taken down to make the plaza. You have a surface drainage system with pipes through which a man can crawl. The small ones are fifteen inches wide, and the large ones are thirty inches wide. One of the assassins went . . . through the subsurface drainage system. The one who went through the subsurface drainage system was the man who killed the President, who fired the .45 from right by the side of the car and tore the President's head off.

"Now, we went into the sewer one morning early . . . and we found a man fits in there very easily, we also found that after shooting from it, it's easy to crawl under the street through the fifteen-inch pipe, then you're in the thirty-inch sewer which leads out of Dealey Plaza to another part of town. Entrance can be gained through two ways to the sewer area . . . entrance can be gained directly above the sewer through a manhole."

"Behind the grassy knoll?" inquired interviewer Murphy Martin.

"No, that's another place, but it can be entered above it by removing the cover of the manhole. You remember about an hour before [the arrival of the motorcade] there was a truck parked over the pavement [which was observed by Julia Mercer].<sup>25</sup> But [entrance can also be achieved] behind the picket fence, through a 3 by 3 grating, by the overpass, which lifts up. You [can] get in and crawl through the fifteen-inch tunnel and you'll end up [at the vantage point]. There's only room for one man in the manhole . . . and he has a clear view of the occupants of a [approaching] convertible, from the chest up," explained Garrison. "We didn't know until we put a man in there, in the dark

hours of the morning, and waited until the sun came up, and took photographs, that you could see so clearly to the occupants inside the car—but you can."

A number of other areas were scrutinized during this broadcast. Garrison spoke of "old" hard evidence, as opposed to his own concrete discoveries, and gave examples. Among various elements he regarded as having been blatantly ignored were aspects of Exhibit 392, which cited an entry by Dr. Robert N. McClelland which read "gunshot wound of the left temple." (The full sentence read, "The cause of death was due to massive head and brain injury from a gunshot wound of the left temple.")<sup>26</sup> Dr. Marion T. Jenkins also remarked on a wound in the "right side of the head (temporal and occipital)." Garrison also called attention to the fact that the Warren Commission "refused to look at the film, because they knew he was shot from the front at least twice . . . as a result, they did not look at any of the film. Not one of them did. And they fooled the American people, consciously, knowingly. . . ."

"By design?"

"By design? Of course, by design. They had to know, just as Lyndon Johnson had to know, that the President was shot, at least twice, from the front, and they pretended that this man shot him from the back. Now this is just an example of old evidence. But every now and then we hear the Chief Justice, Earl Warren, and we hear this mickay mouse Attorney General Ramsey Clark making announcements like 'We have seen nothing new.' Well, there's a great deal of evidence that has never been shown the American people and they know it."

"Could you show us some of it now, or talk about it now?"

"Here's a picture," responded Garrison, producing an 8 by 10 glossy print for the camera, "taken ten minutes after the President of the United States has been assassinated. Here's a Dallas police officer, there's a Dallas deputy sheriff, and here's a federal agent. It's

across from the grassy knoll. This has to be a federal agent because he's about to pick up a bullet. He's about to pick up the bullet that killed John Kennedy. This deputy sheriff and this police officer would not allow this man to do it unless he had [greater] authority. He is not with the Dallas police, and he is not with the Dallas sheriff's office, so he is necessarily a federal agent," explained the district attorney.

"The federal agent's hand is reaching down here," continued the description moments later, "and scattered around here are pieces of the President's head, and the tissue, and so forth. And sitting right in the middle, right in the center, is the bullet, which happened to land on its base."

"Would it be a bullet that would be fired from a rifle or a small arm?" asked Murphy Martin.

"This is a bullet which would be fired from a small arm. It couldn't possibly fit in any rifle, much less Lee Oswald's. As a matter of fact, the caliber is very large. It's a .45 caliber bullet. This is what was used to kill the President, the final shot. This is why all the witnesses described the final shot as being different in sound. . . ."

"Now, I'll show you what this federal agent did when he realized a camera was on him. He's got the bullet clutched in his hand, the bullet that killed John Kennedy. He had his head turned away from the camera. It's a little late because we have a profile view there. His head is turned away and you can see by the time on the top of the Book Depository. . . ."

"Twelve forty," noted Martin.

"Twelve forty. Ten minutes after John Kennedy was killed. Now this bullet, which killed John Kennedy, which had markings on it that would show the automatic gun from which it came—handgun—has never been heard from since. The Warren Commission did not mention it in twenty-six volumes. It is not mentioned. Yet the federal government knew ten minutes after the murder of John Kennedy that John Kennedy was murdered with this bullet. Lyndon Johnson had to know

<sup>25</sup> Warren Commission Hearing, Vol. 19, pp. 483-484.

<sup>26</sup> Warren Commission Exhibit No. 392.

it. The FBI had to know it. The Secret Service had to know it. And the American people have been fooled."

"Do you know the identity of this man that you say is a federal agent?" Garrison was asked.

"We have been unable to determine the identity of this federal agent because we can't get any information of any kind from the federal government on this case. They're completely obstructive in their approach. But this picture, along with the earlier one, shows that the bullet which killed John Kennedy, which fell in the grass with pieces of the President's head, was in the hands of the federal government ten minutes after the President was dead, one week before the Warren Commission was appointed . . . this means that the federal government knowingly participated in framing Lee Oswald. Lyndon Johnson had to know this, members of the Warren Commission had to know this. The federal investigative agencies had to know it, and some members of the Dallas police had to know it."

"Is this what you were referring to in the foreword that you wrote for Harold Weisberg's book, when you said instead of running down the men who killed Kennedy, the U.S. government simply ratified his execution and moved on to more important matters?"

"Yes," said Garrison. "They ratified the execution and concealed evidence wherever possible . . . they destroyed evidence in every possible way. The President of the United States, the man who had the most to gain, the man who gained more than any other human from the assassination, is the man who issued the executive order concealing vital evidence for seventy-five years, so that we can't look at it, so that you can't look at it, so that no American can see it for seventy-five years. Now this was an executive order by Lyndon Johnson, the man who gained the most from the assassination. This should not be allowed. This man should be asked many questions—why he did such a thing—but nobody asked him any."

"Mr. Garrison, there is a former Secret Service man, who is now in the penitentiary, who says he was framed and put there because he wanted to give information to the Warren Commission about the assassination. This man, Abraham Bolden, has mentioned a certain individual that he talked in Chicago. Do you know the man that he is talking about and is he pertinent to your investigation?"

"There are rather strong indications that Abraham Bolden, a former Secret Service agent, was framed and put away because he wanted to testify before the Warren Commission with regard to facts which the federal government did not want come into. It's already been brought out at one of his hearings that the United States attorney, at that time, in Chicago, framed him and gave instructions to the main witness to frame him. The main witness has testified that he committed perjury, but Mr. Bolden is still being locked up. With regard to the individual named [by Bolden], it's one of the people that

we've been trying to locate. A Latin-American individual who, at an earlier stage, was involved in the plan to kill John Kennedy in Chicago, a plan of operation which apparently later was moved to Dallas."

"You're saying," asked Martin, at another point in the exchange, "that, when President Johnson appointed the Commission, he knew Lee Oswald did not fire a gun?"

"He had to," insisted Garrison, "unless the federal investigative agencies are failing to report everything to him. I'm just giving him credit for being the commander in chief that's in firm control of these agencies and gets all the knowledge coming up the line."

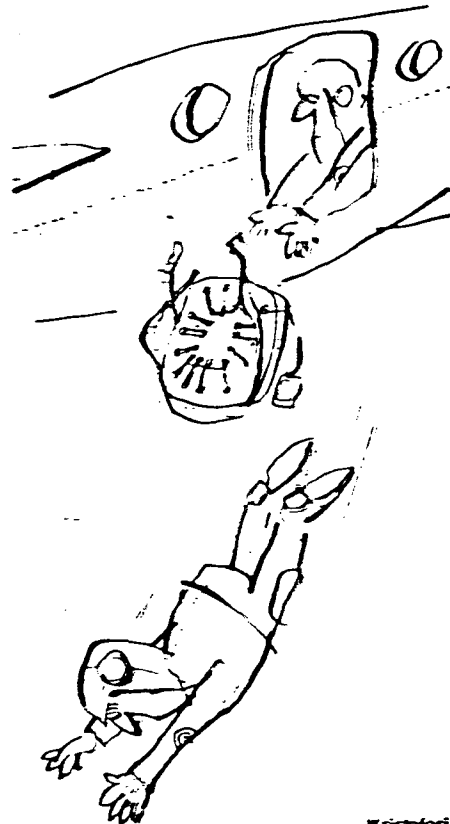
Summing up his convictions in this area, elsewhere, Jim Garrison said:

"I don't believe the Warren Commission had the slightest intention of finding out the truth. I don't think that was their purpose. They had to know, to the last man on the Commission, that Lee Oswald never fired a gun, just as Lyndon Johnson had to know that when he appointed the Commission."

It was in the preceding manner, as 1967 entered its final month, that Jim Garrison began zeroing in on what he had come to believe was the culpability of not only the Warren Commission but the successor to the fallen Kennedy, President Lyndon Johnson. Insensitivity of disinterest had softened into responsibility by negligence, which, in its turn, had melted into the self-interest of omission, according to Garrison's intensifying evaluation. However—at least for the moment—that was a graph of the Jovian contempt of high power, rather than any suggestion more sinister. Or, as the New Orleans district attorney is quoted by ex-FBI man and top *Ramparts* reporter, William W. Turner: "I assume that the President of the United States is not involved." Although he did add: "But wouldn't it be nice to know it?"

On December 26, 1967, the New Orleans *States-Louisiana* commented on the district attorney, "While he

"*Ramparts*, January, 1968.



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does not believe that President Johnson was involved in the assassination, he considers him an active accessory after the fact."

Garrison was quoted as saying that the President was the "most active person in the country in protecting the assassins of President Kennedy."

The independent-thinking Democrat said he had ambivalent sentiments regarding the introduction of the investigation as an element in the 1968 national elections. However, he was apprehensive that, in Orwellian terms, "he who controls the past controls the future." Especially since he regards that as "the Johnson philosophy."

"He can't be allowed to get away with it," Garrison emphasized, speaking of the President of the United States. "If you elect a man who knowingly concealed evidence of the death of his predecessor, you might as well let him hold office indefinitely."

The simplest explanation of Garrison's view of the assassination is that it was executed, on the tactical level, by neo-Nazi, renegade Minutemen, and virulent, anti-Castro Cuban exiles, supervised by paramilitary rightists and/or ex-CIA personnel. The financing he sees coming from both the very wealthy, ultra-conservative interests, plus, possibly, totally self-serving intelligence splinter groups. However, the adhesive is always the octopus operation of McLean, Virginia—the Central Intelligence Agency.

"You cannot have, in a democracy, an organization which really believes that the end justifies the means and which is not responsive, at all, to the representatives of the people in Congress. That's what we have—and, when you have that, you have a totalitarian power in your country, and we have [that] in the CIA today," Garrison charges.<sup>28</sup>

He genuinely fears that there is rising in the United States a proto-Fascist state, "whose emblems are not uniforms and vast programmed rallies but rather subtler suppres-

sion of dissension, control through the communications media, repression by ridicule, intimidation by induction." As the author has noted earlier, the district attorney is ever conscious of Huey Long's warning: "Fascism will come to America in the name of antifascism." Further, Garrison is not encouraged by the florid and reminiscent promises of administration spokesmen who orate: "A new world has come into being. A world of new values, new relations, new aspirations . . . in Vietnam the struggle is essentially a struggle not between two cultures, not at all between East and West, but, rather, a struggle between these old values and these new values."<sup>29</sup>

Garrison's concern regarding the Central Intelligence Agency is not new. On May 21, 1967, he charged that the CIA "through devious ways and through intermediaries is actually paying lawyers to block the completion"<sup>30</sup> of his probe. "What it's doing, it's a criminal act," he protested. "And if the director of the CIA and the top officials of the CIA were in the jurisdiction of Louisiana, I would charge them without hesitation," said Garrison.

"The Central Intelligence Agency began its criminal activities, in my judgment," he said, "immediately after the assassination, when they failed to reveal to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, in its entirety, what its activities were in New Orleans when Lee Oswald was working for it and it's compounded them since by essentially criminal activities by making every possible effort to block our investigation."

"I don't believe they can stop us," Garrison stated shortly thereafter. "They can just delay us." His inquiry had led him to the conclusion that the CIA "has infinitely more power than the Gestapo and the NKVD, of Russia, combined."<sup>31</sup>

"In our incipient superstate it really doesn't matter what happened," Garrison says. "Truth is

<sup>28</sup> *The New York Times*, April 26, 1967.

<sup>29</sup> Associated Press dispatch, May 21, 1967, from Jim Garrison interview with Bob Jones, Station WWL-TV, New Orleans.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

what the government chooses to tell you. Justice is what it wants to happen. It is better for you not to know that at midday on November 22, 1963, there were many men in many places glancing at their watches. But if we do not fight for the truth now, we may never have another chance."

Christmas, 1967, came, and with it new revelations. On December 26, Bob Jones, of WWL-TV, reported from New Orleans:

"The controversial district attorney told a news conference that Lee Harvey Oswald tipped the FBI on September 17, 1963, that an assassination was being plotted." In Garrison's own words:

"On that day the FBI sent out TWX's, the telegrams within the Bureau circuit, to a number of its offices announcing—this is Sunday, the seventeenth of November [1963]—announcing that on the twenty-second of November an attempt would be made to assassinate John F. Kennedy, in Dallas, Texas. This went up to J. Edgar Hoover.

<sup>10</sup> *Ramparts*, January, 1968.

This went up to J. Edgar Hoover [voice emphasis Garrison's]. What came down to John Kennedy and the men who were assigned to guard him, and other law enforcement personnel, you can judge for yourselves by the fact that the President was allowed to ride in the parade without a bubble top [canopy on his limousine], without any real protection, when the specific information had been received that there would be an attempt to assassinate him," Garrison continued. "We are going to be successful in this investigation. We are going to be making other charges, which will result in convictions. We are going to obtain many convictions in this investigation because we have found out what happened. That doesn't mean that we know everything that happened. It is complex; as a result of which every month we know more than we did the month before. But we are going to be successful and we have been successful, as you will find out if we can get defendants to trial, without the federal government interfering

with them, interfering with our prosecution, which is a major problem."<sup>11</sup>

Full details of the tip to the FBI are contained in an affidavit given to Garrison by William S. Walters, a security clerk employed in the Bureau's New Orleans office in 1963. In it he asserts that, on the morning of November 17, there passed through his hands a TWX message stating that "an attempt to assassinate President Kennedy would be made in Dallas on November 22, 1963. As his night schedule left him alone from twelve to eight in the morning, he immediately contacted Mr. Harry Maynard, the Special Agent in Charge of the New Orleans office, who directed him to call several local FBI men who maintained *sub rosa* informants. Walters further states that the message told the New Orleans office to review reports regarding potential assassination attempts on the President, resolve any inconsistencies, destroy the old material, and prepare new files. The possibility that the original tip for the FBI may have come from Lee Harvey Oswald is not discarded by the district attorney.

Garrison also unveiled other fresh information on the day following Christmas. He announced that the final conspiratorial meeting occurred on November 17, 1963.

The new year opened with the lengthy, skillful January *Ramparts* piece by William W. Turner entitled, with acid ink, "The Garrison Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy." The cover of the magazine featured the district attorney's face across the top half, just below the logo. The remaining space was filled with a Garrison quote:

Who appointed Ramsey Clark, who has done his best to torpedo the investigation of the case? Who controls the CIA? Who controls the FBI? Who controls the Archives where this evidence is locked up for so long that it is unlikely that there is anybody in this room who will be alive when it is released? This is really your property and the property of the people of this country. Who has the arrogance and

<sup>11</sup> WWL-TV News, New Orleans; CBS News, New York; Associated Press dispatch; all December 26, 1967.

Rodriguez



"... No question about it, Harry's a pimp's pimp!"

the brass to prevent the people from seeing that evidence? Who indeed?

The one man who has profited most from the assassination—your friendly President, Lyndon Johnson.

The Warren Commission, the Central Intelligence Agency, vast and voracious economic interests, renegade paramilitary Minutemen, powerful aspects of the communications and publishing industry—all had exhibited highly suspect behavior; even the Federal Bureau of Investigation was subject to question. Now, at last, Garrison had not whispered, but cried from the television and radio speakers, and the jacket of a national magazine, the ultimate doubt. What was Lyndon Baines Johnson's presumably ex post facto role in the death of his predecessor?

The New Left asked the question symbolically in *MacBird!*; the politically moderate Jim Garrison asked the question directly in public. Then, from an improbable quarter—Dr. Medford Evans, writing in the June issue of John Birch Society organ *American Opinion*—came an answer. According to the author, Johnson's decision to "not seek" and "not accept the nomination" was motivated by extraordinary pressure from behind the shadowy scenes.

Something stood between the President and reelection . . . as if the way were barred by the very sword of justice . . . neither the shepherd Tamburlaine nor the Corsican Napoleon had risen further than this . . . Ichabod Crane of the Texas hill country . . . now he threw in his hand and a mop-headed juvenile delinquent from Boston took the pot.

Remarking on Johnson's diminishing political drive from the Pueblo incident on, Evans poses the possibility that the entire gesture might have been a shrewd ploy, that the President might actually loom large in the convention arena. However, he then explains:

There is a . . . compelling reason why . . . Lyndon Johnson will not reconsider . . . the people who made him abdicate in the first place won't let him reconsider . . . it behooves Lyndon to do exactly what he is told.

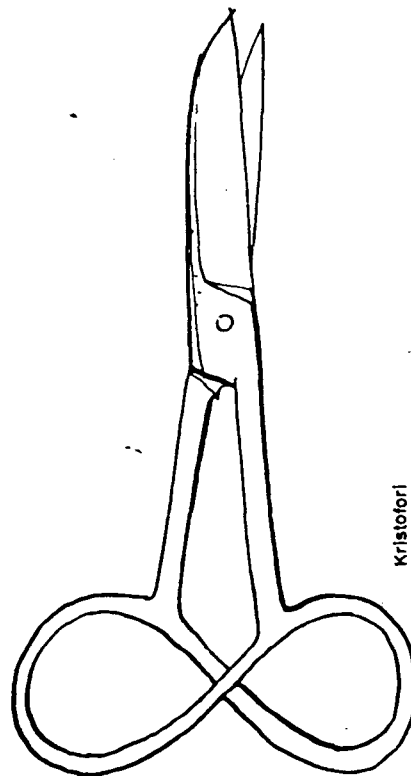
The author, noting Robert Kennedy's sudden surge of confidence, as if he were "a President-elect,"

rather than a candidate for his party's nomination, makes a particular point of the fact that, in response to a reporter's inquiry regarding the senator's request for a conference, Johnson replied: "Whenever it is convenient for him."

"What is the source of [Robert Kennedy's] power over Lyndon Johnson?" asks Evans. In presenting his opinion, he finally arrives at the essence of his essay—the district attorney from New Orleans. "Whatever Jim Garrison's motives, no one has hurt Lyndon Johnson more . . . [or] helped Bobby Kennedy more."

Characterizing Garrison as an "obviously brave man," the article nevertheless points out that his actions "took so much courage" as to suggest that someone was giving him "a certain amount of protection." That someone was, of course, the senator. Still, he inquires of himself, why did Kennedy endorse the Warren Report?

The President of the United States says to you—*Look, we're awfully sorry your brother, the late President, got killed. So-and-so did it, no one else was involved, and—a funny thing—so-and-so is dead. Case closed. What are you going to do, say—I don't buy that. I think you're mixed up in this thing*



*yourself. . . . No, [you] play for time . . . it might well have seemed to Bobby that if he were going to survive he would have to play dead.*

Mr. Evans presents two possibilities. First, that "the evidence incriminates Lyndon personally; second, that "the evidence does not incriminate Lyndon personally, but does incriminate CIA employees—and perhaps other . . . members of the power structure, the Establishment." Dismissing "the first incredible alternative," less because of logic than because he feels Johnson would, "like Macbeth, at worst die with harness on his back [and] at best, . . . use the power of office to beat down Garrison [and] Kennedy [the article was written considerably before the latter's murder]," the author weighs his second possibility, "that Garrison . . . and Bobby Kennedy have evidence incriminating forces close to the Johnson administration."

"The administration in Washington is in this thing up to its—and your and my—neck," writes Evans. Continuing his thesis, he says that "Garrison thinks . . . the murder of John Kennedy was planned and carried out by Right-wingers of some kind . . . [however] it is almost certain . . . that John Kennedy was killed by a Left-wing conspiracy [this is asserted flatly, with no sentence of corroboration] . . . independent of whether the ostensible Communist Lee Harvey Oswald was or was not a member . . ."

"If Bobby Kennedy is loyal to his brother," the author ominously concludes, "the Left will purge Bobby also."

Yet, if the far Right was beginning to perceive the death of John Kennedy through Garrison-ground glasses, notwithstanding a pronounced astigmatism in the Left eye, the original Warren Report critics were still breaking news that went unpublished in the popular press. Concurrent with the Medford Evans article came a startling announcement by Mark Lane, who, late in 1963, had established residence in New Orleans to be closer to the investigation. Appearing on the John Hightower Television



Show, on WFAN in Washington, and subsequently in an article in the New York Free Press, Lane asserted that "over a period of several weeks, two different emissaries had arrived in New Orleans. Each had sought out Jim Garrison; each had stated that he was carrying a message from Robert Kennedy; each was known by Garrison to be associated with Robert Kennedy; each said that Robert Kennedy did not believe the conclusions of the Warren Commission and agreed with Garrison that a conspiracy had taken the life of President Kennedy." 2

Lane further contended that these anonymous agents assured the district attorney that, if elected to the White House, Kennedy would reopen the inquiry into his brother's death and prosecute the persons responsible. According to the critic, Garrison asked why the New York Senator felt constrained to give public credence to the Report and was told, by both, that—

"He [Robert Kennedy] knows that there are guns between him and the White House."

Although the author has exhaustively interviewed and informally conversed with Jim Garrison many times since beginning his analysis of the New Orleans investigation, the stunning tragedy of June 5, 1968, and the subsequent allegations of Mark Lane convinced him that the book would not be complete without the district attorney's comments on these most recent events. In a personal and exclusive exchange, this is what he said.

**Question:** Jim, would you like to comment on the assassination of Robert Kennedy?

**Garrison:** It's a question of how much data is available. Let me take, in order, the assassination of John Kennedy, the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, and the assassination of Senator Kennedy. In the first case, we have a great deal of data available; in the second case, there's quite a bit of data now available; in the third, there is just a little data available. However, there is enough data available in all three cases to state, as a probability, that they were all accomplished by the same force and that they were all . . . intelligence assassinations.

**Question:** U.S. intelligence?

**Garrison:** Yes. That's particularly true with regard to the assassination of President Kennedy and Martin Luther King. I think all other alternatives are now eliminated. These, I think, are clearly assassinations in which the Central Intelligence Agency is deeply involved. This does not necessarily mean that the command came down from the top, but it does mean that at least a major component of the Central Intelligence Agency is now in the business of exterminating any national leaders who are opposed to the perpetuation of the Cold War, as well as to our adventures in Asia. And I think it will continue.

**Question:** You regard our international stance as the motivating factor?

**Garrison:** I don't think there's any question but what the motivating factor is the foreign policy of the United States. What we [had] developed, by the early sixties, by the time John Kennedy came along and became President, was—for the first time—the force, in terms of military power, to become . . . the greatest world empire that's ever been known, [one] capable of taking over most of Asia. And, apparently, a part of the military establishment has this in mind. The Central Intelligence Agency, over the years, has grown to the point where it has come to be the clandestine arm of the military-industrial complex.

**Question:** Of which Eisenhower spoke?

**Garrison:** Of which Eisenhower spoke. That's very relevant. His warning went unheeded and, as a result, we are paying the price. The military-industrial complex, I think, clearly has designs [for] continued adventures in Asia and even if a man became President of the United States and attempted to cut down on the Cold War, or to reduce the operation of the war machine, he would have his head torn off in the middle of an American city. They will not let anything stop them.

**Question:** You flatly feel that there is strong evidence of a connection between the deaths of President Kennedy and Dr. King?

**Garrison:** Strong evidence there and—

**Question:** —a possible connection with Bobby's?

**Garrison:** No, probable connection with Bobby's. I have to say probable. However, I think . . . there is insulation in the form of some kind of front operation. Often individuals are working for the CIA and don't know it. For example, a man can think he's working for, let's say, "Arabs for World Peace," and it's actually financed by the CIA and controlled by the CIA, and he can be motivated—

**Question:** Without ever knowing what the ultimate and real objectives of his actions were?

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Garrison: Yes. We are beginning to see the signs pointing in different directions. [Referring to the Robert Kennedy killing.] Somebody was with him [Sirhan], somebody was not with him. He was in the kitchen for some time; he had a key in his pocket belonging to somebody in the kitchen—their car, but they're not involved. And all of these contradictions are beginning to accumulate. In the case of the Martin-Luther King assassination, they're still accumulating. For instance, the man—although he was probably not the professional gunman, [he was] probably selected as the decoy—but, nevertheless—

Question: You think that, even if Ray is involved, he was probably not the actual shooter?

Garrison: Oh, I doubt if he was. For something like that they'd use—that was a professional shot. One shot at a couple of hundred yards, and then he just left. Probably from the Naval base in a military plane which the "Company"—CIA—has at its disposal. The interesting thing about Ray, though [is that] right away the hotel [in London] he's staying at is a classic "safe house" . . . a standard intelligence "safe house," the kind the CIA would use.

Question: And you see the second Kennedy killing within the same framework?

Garrison: Had Robert Kennedy lost in California, he'd be alive today; but by winning . . . he was then on the verge of becoming the most important political figure in America . . . [with] an excellent chance . . . of becoming President. As such he would have had control over foreign policy [and] he'd already expressed himself on being opposed to our involvement on the Asian mainland.

Question: Jim, what about the [Mark] Lane broadcast [in which the critic asserted Garrison had been contacted, before Robert Kennedy's death, by the Senator's emissaries]?

Garrison: Oh, I don't like to get involved in the details. The conversations were—

Question: Privileged?

Garrison: Yes. Not that that's a criticism of Mark . . . when I mentioned some of the things, I didn't explain that. But what Mark said was essentially correct. The only qualification I would make [is] this . . . it was not so much emissaries . . . we [Garrison and Kennedy] had several mutual friends . . . one or the other visited down here [New Orleans], now and then . . . it wasn't just somebody coming down in the last few weeks. On the other hand, the phrase that "Bobby is well aware that there are many guns between him and the White House" was definitely their phrase, [although] it was from one of them, as I recall, not both.

It took me a long time to understand why he [Kennedy] wasn't saying anything, but by then it was very clear that he knew what the force was and he regarded it as so powerful that it would be more effective to say nothing until he became President.

Question: You have no doubt that he would have reopened the whole case once in the White House?

Garrison: I don't think there's any question at all. I think the fact that he was killed so quickly indicates that there's no question in the mind of the [cabal element] of the CIA. I think in his case they had no other alternative. I'm sure they were reluctant to have to go through another assassination, but they were not taking the chance of his becoming President.

Question: Do your investigations still point to right-wing elements?

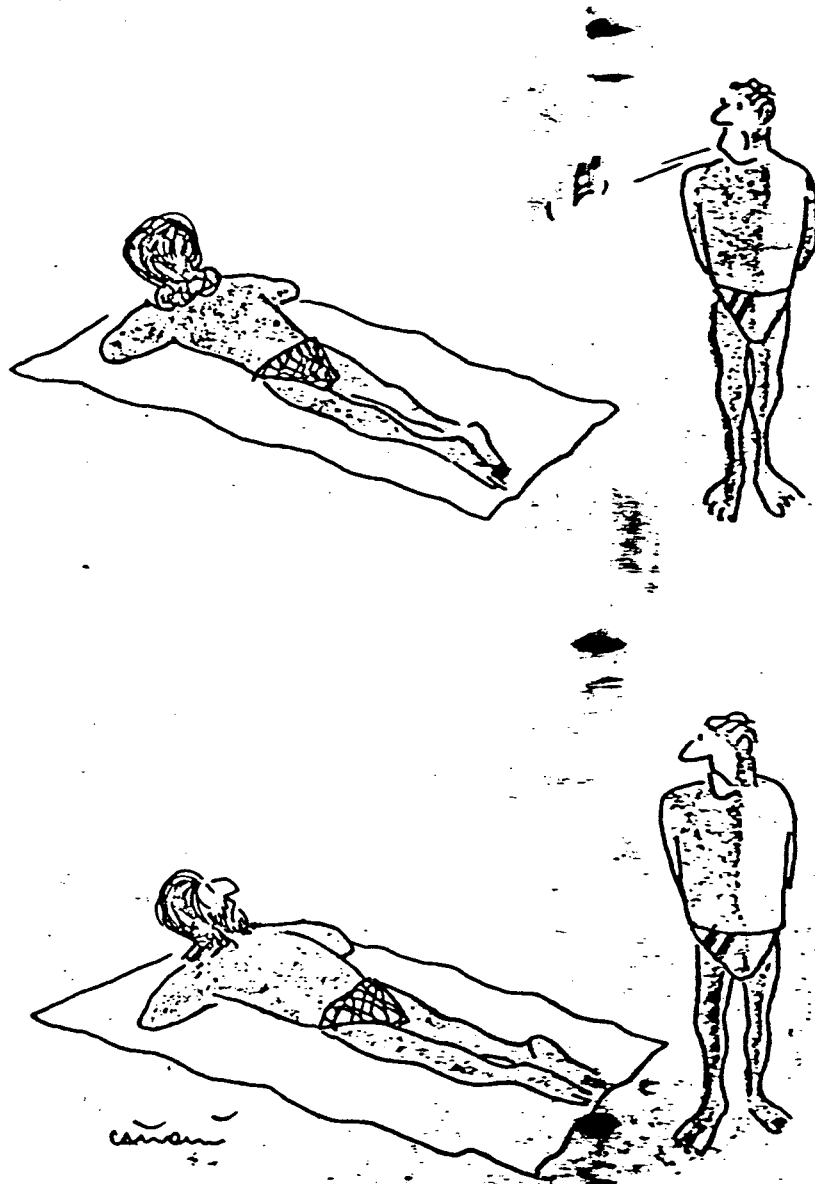
Garrison: It isn't really right-wing . . . technically it's a fascist structure, in that it's diametrically opposed to communism: but, in a way, it's almost a Centrist sort of thing. It is a power which [has] developed within the government like a thunderhead.

The role of the Central Intelligence Agency has now become so clear that even where you see right-wing or-

ganizations used, such as the National States Rights Party, the one they use most, it's an organization which they have penetrated at an earlier date, and manipulated, and the persons acting in the organization are—below the surface, at the bottom—the CIA . . .

The one talent the CIA has developed more than any intelligence agency on earth . . . is deception and cover . . . since survival is involved, down to the last individual they have cover. This guy's a priest in the old Orthodox Church, that guy is active in the NSRP [National States Rights Party], so you never find anybody in the CIA—but what you actually end up with is the Central Intelligence Agency . . .

One of the things that really helped me see that was when I began to notice that we were getting help from individuals who were Minutemen and members of the John Birch Society. When I saw that, I realized that the



right-wing [aspects of the conspiracy] was right-wing more in appearance than in reality. So, we just kept on digging and we end up with nothing but a compartment of the Central Intelligence Agency.

**Question:** What about the Shaw trial and the future of other avenues of investigation you are now following?

**Garrison:** The governmental power involved . . . will do whatever is necessary to block any success on our part. If they can't do it legally, then the killing will begin, again. I think that they have the power to do it legally, but that doesn't mean that there won't be more killing. There's nothing they won't do . . .

I am perfectly confident that the federal government—now that I see so clearly the extent of the involvement of, at least, a component of the CIA—will do whatever is necessary to break it [the investigation and prosecution] up. . . . I don't want to be gloomy [but] my attitude is very simple. I don't expect to survive the thing, but I don't worry about it. I'm going to keep on pushing ahead. At least, they're going to know they were danced with. We're just going to keep on as long as I can walk around. I don't have any plans for the future. That's the way I approach it.

Garrison stated publicly, on July 12, a fragment of an extraordinary story which had been circulating behind the scenes for some time, namely that he had been exchanging information on the assassination with a major foreign power, the intelligence agency of which had "penetrated the forces involved in the assassination" of the late President, and had even procured "an interview with one of the assassins."<sup>34</sup> It was explained that the penetration of the assassination clique by the foreign intelligence service had been for reasons wholly unrelated to an investigation of the President's murder. At the same time Garrison revealed that the pseudonymous "Bill Boxley," associated with the probe as an intelligence expert, was, in fact, forty-eight-year-old William C. Wood, a former employee of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Much of the material the district attorney claims to have received from these extranational sources is found in an incredible manuscript which has been revealed to probably fewer than a half-dozen persons in

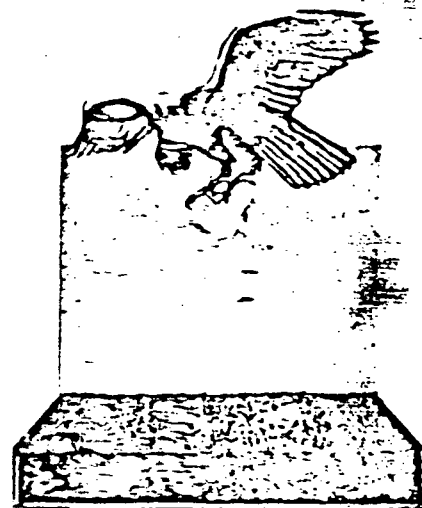
this country, although very brief, highly cauterized segments have been given very limited circulation in Europe. Emanating from Switzerland (one-time site of CIA front operation Permindex); it postulates a highly complex conspiracy the upper ranks of which feature major southwestern oil figures, a well-known lawman, a nationally famous attorney, a number of other prominent individuals, and, in New Orleans, Shaw, Oswald, and Bannister. How closely the intelligence information provided to Garrison personally checks with the manuscript is not wholly known, but knowledgeable persons, not of the district attorney's staff, speculate that the sources may eventually prove to be identical.

Yet, for all the glimpses of darkness and catches of shade revealed as the light of inquiry spears from one corner to another, ultimately, the question seems to be—what is happening to America? How does one deal with the vague wendigo of spirit trampling the land? What answer does one give to such nationally debilitating, psyche-shattering doubts as now arise? How will the fatal forces, whom Garrison holds are actually directing this enormous grand guignol of a tragedy, move to dispose of the looming giant from New Orleans?

Shortly before this book was completed, an unquestionably reliable investigative contact of the author's called from the West Coast, where Mr. Garrison was concluding his preparations for the issuance of the warrant for Edgar Eugene Bradley, whom he also charged with participating in the assassination conspiracy. The informant had discovered, via official sources, that a Mafia contract (assignment to murder) has been offered, out of San Francisco, on Jim Garrison's life.

"Why was Kennedy killed?" asked Garrison.

Now, as the list grows long with the additions of Martin Luther King, Robert F. Kennedy, and many others, Jim Garrison wonders if he will live long enough to convince America that he has found the answer. □



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<sup>34</sup> The New York Times, July 12, 1968.