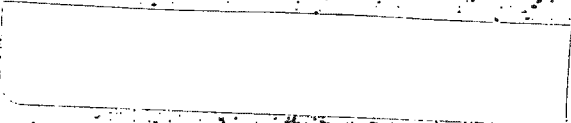


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31 MAY 1967



MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: GARRISON and the Kennedy Assassination;
Gordon Dwane NOVEL

1. Summary of contents.

Gordon Dwane NOVEL, has both claimed and denied affiliation with CIA. A thorough records check has shown no such affiliation. It seems plausible that the NBC is supporting and financing NOVEL in order to win a large audience for a later expose of GARRISON. In support of this plan NBC or NOVEL may have exaggerated his presumed relationship with Sergio ARACHA Smith (who was also not CIA-employed) into an Agency affiliation and may have staged a dramatic ambush in Nashville. The NBC program, however, is reportedly still weeks away, and meanwhile GARRISON is attacking CIA vehemently.

2. Gordon Dwane NOVEL and his lawyers reportedly have claimed that he was associated with CIA, but have then denied such an association. One lawyer later reiterated the claim.

3. The files of the following Agency components have been checked for any record of Gordon Dwane NOVEL, including alternative spellings. All checks were negative (CIA held no information about NOVEL before the GARRISON probe started.)

- a. RID,
- b. CI/OA,
- c. Office of Security,
- d. WH/Cuban Operations Group,
- e. Domestic Contact Service,
- f. Interagency Source Register,
- g. Domestic Operations Division,
- h. Archives,

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Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

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4. NOVEL remains mysterious. Although the press has devoted much space to him, few facts have emerged. He has been described as a 29 year old former owner of a bar in the French quarter of New Orleans and as an expert in electronics. (New Orleans States - Item, 25 April 1967.) An [FBI] report [DDB-79248] 27 April 1967) terms him a former electronics salesman.

5. Nothing has been printed about the source or sources of his money since he left New Orleans for Columbus, Ohio, in mid-March 1967. It is known, however, that he is at liberty on a \$10,000 bond. The New Orleans States - Item said on 25 April 1967 that NOVEL lives in a rent-free apartment in Columbus and drives a used car with dealer's tags.

6. The Washington Daily News of 27 March 1967 stated that during the weekend of 25-26 March NOVEL was in the Washington area (actually it was McLean, Virginia, a site which might have been chosen to lend an air of plausibility to his claims of working for CIA). There he was given a polygraph examination by a private detective named Lloyd FURR. (Comment: As the Office of Security reported on 1 May 1967, the Washington firm REDEX is operated by FURR and Richard L. BAST, who is described as "unscrupulous and untrustworthy". BAST produces and sells, among other things, audio and counter-audio devices. The fact that NOVEL was a salesman of electronics gear suggests the otherwise unsupported hypothesis that he may have had an earlier relationship with REDEX, BAST, or FURR.)

7. [On 29 March 1967 the New Orleans FBI office reported (file 89-59) that NOVEL had made a long distance call to that office from an unknown place. Among his remarks was the comment that he had "not furnished GARRISON with any information about 'double check' of Miami, which he inferred was a fringe Cuban operation in the Miami area but did not further identify." (Comment: Operation Double Chek appears on pp. 95, 76, 82, 84, 88, 89, 90, 146, and 246 of The Invisible Government, by David Wise and Thomas B. Ross. The book erroneously

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describes Double Chek as a cover and funding mechanism for recruiting and paying American flyers who participated at the Bay of Pigs. The General Counsel has informed CI/R&A that in fact Double Chek was created after the deaths of the flyers for the sole purpose of making payments to their widows.)

8. FBI memorandum DBB 76600, 29 March 1967, reported another long distance call by NOVEL to the New Orleans office. NOVEL said that Walter SHERIDAN, who is a Washington NBC news reporter, see P 5, had the number of the telephone at which NOVEL could be reached. He also said that when he was given the polygraph test in Virginia, SHERIDAN was present. He added that he had given SHERIDAN information about polygraph tests run by GARRISON's staff.

9. An 8 May 1967 memorandum from the Associate General Counsel states that he was given information about the GARRISON investigation by a Washington lawyer named Jack Miller, that Walter SHERIDAN was the source of Miller's information, that NBC has done a thirty minute show on GARRISON, and that it plans an hour-long show "for a few weeks from now". The show is expected to "bury" GARRISON.

10. In addition to his reference to Double Chek, NOVEL, and his lawyers have made direct but contradictory statements about CIA.

a. "I think Garrison will expose some CIA operations in New Orleans." (New Orleans Times - Picayune, 19 April 1967.)

b. NOVEL reportedly stated to a representative of a well known news media "that he was employed by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and that the burglary of the munitions bunker at Houma, Louisiana, was not an actual burglary." He contended that CIA had made arrangements with the SCHLUMBERGER Well Drilling Corporation to keep ammunition, bomb casings, and other material in that bunker. He "indicated that he (NOVEL) and /Sergio/ Arcacha Smith are still employed by the CIA." NOVEL and others took bomb casings and other items from the bunker about three months after the Bay of Pigs. (Source: FBI memorandum, New Orleans office, 20 April 1967.) (Comment: Careful checking has shown that CIA did not have a contract with

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SCHLUMBERGER, as NOVEL has alleged, and did not have any munitions or similar materials stored with SCHLUMBERGER or at the Houma Air Base.)

c. The above "war materials pickup" was made by NOVEL and others "at the direction of his CIA contact." Part of NOVEL's job for CIA "was to operate the Evergreen Advertising Agency as a front for CIA communications". NOVEL prepared special radio commercials for use in the United States and Canada... to alert agents to the date of the Bay of Pigs invasion." Among code words used by NOVEL were "Star Christmas Trees" and "Holiday Trees". His agency placed \$72,000 worth of radio time in 1960. (AP, New Orleans, 25 April 1967.) (Comment: As was previously reported, there is no record of the "Evergreen Advertising Agency". WH/COG queried a knowledgeable staff employee, now COS in Santo Domingo, who replied in Santo Domingo 3473, 12 May 1967, that NOVEL's allegations are not true; that he had never heard of NOVEL, his agency, or the code words; and that although "some meaningless code phrases were used on JMHOPE for psych reasons only", they were not sent out over U.S. commercial stations. The cable added that the Cuban Free Committee did contract time for routine exile broadcasts on a New Orleans station. It is clear, however, that NOVEL's allegations do not concern such broadcasts.)

d. Steven PLOTKIN, NOVEL's lawyer in New Orleans, said that he would neither confirm nor deny NOVEL's claims of CIA employment. His lawyer in Columbus, Jerry WEINER, said, "It's utterly ridiculous. NOVEL is not now and never has been a CIA agent." (New Orleans States - Item, 25 April 1967.)

e. On 25 April 1967 NOVEL himself said in Columbus, "The statements that I worked for the CIA are absolutely incorrect...." (AP, 25 April 1967.)

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f. NOVEL's New Orleans attorney, Steve PLOTKIN, said he "served as an intermediary between the CIA and anti-Castro Cubans in New Orleans and Miami before the April, 1961, Bay of Pigs invasion. Plotkin maintained, though, that Novel had "little or nothing to do with the Bay of Pigs invasion and certainly had absolutely nothing to do with the assassination of President Kennedy." (The Washington Post, 26 May 1967.)

11. On 7 May 1967 NOVEL again telephoned the FBI's office in New Orleans. He said that in the near future GARRISON would accuse the FBI of possessing originals of five letters: one from Clay SHAW to David FERRIE, one from Lee Harvey OSWALD to SHAW, one from FERRIE to Jack RUBY, one from RUBY to OSWALD, and one from Senator and former Attorney General Robert Kennedy to FERRIE. He added that GARRISON has a typewriter which FERRIE owned in 1963 and also has two typewriters, personal and business, belonging to SHAW. He said that GARRISON's chief investigator, William GURVICH, has a close relative, living in Russia, who was instrumental in designing the MIG. He remarked that GARRISON plans to subpoena an attorney, inu MARTIN, allegedly associated with CIA. He said that Layton Patrick MARTENS was the "other" marine probably involved in the Houma bunker burglary. (FBI memorandum DBB 80563, 9 May 1967.) (Comment: Mr. Arthur Dooley of CI/R&A knew a Walter SHERIDAN who is believed identical with the Walter SHERIDAN of this report, who was an FBI special agent, and who worked for Senator Robert Kennedy when he was Attorney General.)

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12. On or about 11 May 1967 GARRISON accused two lawyers, one of them, PLOTKIN, of receiving CIA money. "We know that Mr. Plotkin has been receiving money, if only through an intermediary, from the CIA." Both lawyers denied the charge. (New Orleans, AP, 11 May 1967.) GARRISON later broadened this charge to include all defense attorneys. "Every lawyer involved in this case, without exception, involved in the attempts to derail the investigation, has been connected by us with the Central Intelligence Agency, Garrison said." (Washington Post, 29 May 1967.)

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13. On 22 May 1967 NOVEL telephoned an unidentified person in New Orleans and said that at 0200 hours on 21 May he and a friend of eleven years, Gary EDWARDS, were sitting in a radio station truck in Nashville, Tennessee. Bullets were fired at the truck. Neither man was struck by a bullet, but both were cut by flying glass. The Nashville police found the glass in the left door of the truck shattered and four or five indentations made by bullets on the right side of the truck's paneling. They said that the first report to them was made by Charles F. WALKER, president of radio station WKDA, who said that NOVEL had been wounded by a sniper and that he had come to Nashville at the request of WKDA and had agreed to disclose information that "would blow the New Orleans investigation wide open." A Nashville police detective said five shots were fired at the truck and that traces, apparently of blood, were found. However, Nashville authorities noted that Mr. WALKER first telephoned them thirteen hours after the alleged incident. By then NOVEL and EDWARDS were allegedly in Bowling Green, Kentucky. Efforts made in Kentucky to verify NOVEL's claim that his injuries had been treated at a hospital were unsuccessful. WALKER said that just before the shooting NOVEL was on the verge of returning to Columbus. He said that NOVEL and EDWARDS left Nashville immediately after the shooting and that EDWARDS was proceeding to Washington. EDWARDS' real name, according to another but unidentified spokesman for the radio station, is Gerald MUNDY. (New Orleans States-Item, 22 May 1967.)

14. Several newspapers have carried the story that NOVEL is suing GARRISON for \$50,000,000.

15. JMWAVE was asked to show a Miami Herald photograph of NOVEL to a well placed and well informed asset, AMOT/2, without divulging NOVEL's name or making any statement about him. JMWAVE 7427. 27 May 1967, reported that AMOT/2 did not recognize the photo and could not identify the person whose likeness he saw. The purpose was to test the possibility that NOVEL had been involved in CIA activities under another name.

16. It is requested that the Office of the Assistant to the Director advise CI/R&A whether it has any information about Walter SHERIDAN.

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Gerald MUNDY & Gary EDWARDS, and any association between them, as well as any information about whether Station WKDA in Nashville is affiliated or otherwise associated with NBC.

17. If the surmise that NBC is building up NOVEL as a latter day David who is to slay the jolly green giant is correct, then a CIA exposure of NOVEL's claims of Agency affiliation as false might be damaging to our own interests. On the other hand, the likelihood that an NBC anti-Garrison program is still weeks away from presentation is disturbing. A recent Harris survey (Washington Post, 29 May 1967) shows that 66% of the persons queried now believe that the assassination was not the work of one man but was rather part of a broader plot or conspiracy. The Garrison probe is termed a major contributor to the growing public doubt. GARRISON's venomous attack on CIA during his ABC interview of 28 May 1967 was preceded by a barrage of earlier charges and will predictably be followed by more.

18. There may be a shadow of justification for NOVEL's claim of association with CIA. He has asserted that he knew Sergio ARCACHA Smith and that ARCACHA was one of the participants in the pickup at the Houma bunker. Our records show that CIA never recruited or paid ARCACHA directly. He was, however, the delegate of the Frente Revolucionario Democratico (FRD, or Democratic Revolutionary Front) in New Orleans. He reported to FRD headquarters in Miami by mail. The FRD was created with CIA assistance, guidance, and financial support in May 1960. Its leader was Dr. Jose MIRO Cardona. He or his assistants may have passed funds to ARCACHA, who may have briefed or even employed NOVEL.

19. On 28 May 1967 NOVEL sent the following telegram to the DCI:

"Richard Helms

"Central Intelligence Agency McLean Vir

"Attn UNCLE Hdqrs Good Guys Div. Regarding Garrison conspiracy case; code reference JACKASS. Dear Richard. Today according to the jolly green giant (Mr. Garrison) 'You are paying my legal fees in Louisiana and Ohio.'"

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"Since my attorneys are crying and pressing me because of not being paid for my various legal wrecking moves on his jolly big fraud, I am going to instruct them to send you chaps immediately an itemized bill. If, and I do mean if, Garrison is correct, I am going to instruct the same attorneys to sue the h--- out of your bad guys in the accounting department for welching on your debts, Instead of a no comment S.O.P. reply, how about a public ha-ha,

"P.S. Right now I don't think sending him to Viet Nam is a good idea in view of national interest anymore. Perhaps Rome he could reopen the case on Caesars assassination. He believes Brutus and Cassius were framed. Like in his words, 'beyond a shadow of a doubt, absolutely.'" Truly yours,
Gordon Novel,

UNCLE H---S,O,P, Ha-ha P,S,

The partial sentence reading "...I am going to instruct the same attorneys to sue the h--- out of your bad guys in the accounting department for welching on your debts", quoted out of context, would reinforce NOVEL's false claim to affiliation with CIA. It will be interesting to note whether he releases this telegram to the press.

Addendum

It has been noted that NOVEL probably served as an FBI informant for an unknown period before he left New Orleans in mid-March 1967. FBI report DBB 73269, New Orleans office, 21 February 1967, is ascribed to a "confidential source who in the past furnished insufficient information to determine reliability." This source describes the group that carried out the theft from the Houma bunker as consisting of his own ex-wife (but not himself), his partner (unidentified), Sergio ARCACHA Smith, David FERRIE, two ex-marines, and another man, also unidentified. He also said that one of the cars used for the trip to Houma was his own 1956 Lincoln Supremas. This report contains no mention of CIA. The New Orleans States - Item of 25 April 1967 quotes NOVEL as saying that CIA ordered him to join the group, which he identified as consisting of ARCACHA, FERRIE, several Cubans, and

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"another figure in the case". He is also quoted as saying that he made the trip in his own car, a Lincoln,

Raymond G. Rocca
C/CI/R&A

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