

## DRAFT MEMORANDUM

February 7, 1996

To: David Marwell  
Jeremy Gunn

From: Laura Denk

Subject: New Orleans Project Mission Statement

The New Orleans Project will work to identify and obtain for the John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection those Federal Government, state and local government, and privately owned assassination records that originated in New Orleans, that are currently in New Orleans, or that involve events relevant to the assassination that occurred in New Orleans.

The parish of New Orleans is central to the assassination story for a number of reasons. Lee Harvey Oswald was born in New Orleans in 1939 and lived there in his late teens and then again in the spring, summer, and early fall of 1963. Many people who were in New Orleans during those periods claim that they either knew Oswald or that they saw Oswald with other people.

In addition to Oswald's presence in New Orleans, the parish was the jurisdiction for District Attorney Jim Garrison's investigation and trial of Clay Shaw for the murder of President Kennedy. New Orleans was also the base for the powerful organized crime boss, Carlos Marcello, and is still home to the Metropolitan Crime Commission, headed by former FBI Special Agent Warren DeBueys. New Orleans seems to have been a center of political activity for right-wing groups during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Both Guy Banister and David Ferrie lived in New Orleans. Finally, outside New Orleans, at Lake Ponchartrain, anti-Castro Cuban exiles trained to prepare themselves for an invasion of Cuba.

The New Orleans Project will be divided into several subprojects, including but not limited to identifying, seeking, and, if possible, obtaining for the Collection the following records:

- records on organized crime from the Metropolitan Crime Commission in New Orleans, now chaired by former FBI Special Agent Warren DeBueys;
- audiotapes from the 1981 trial United States v. Carlos Marcello, commonly known as the "BriLab" trial, at which the Government convicted Carlos Marcello using as evidence audiotapes from two years of FBI surveillance of the Town and Country Motel, where

Marcello often conducted business;

- records relating to investigation, prosecution, and adjudication of Clay Shaw by District Attorney Jim Garrison in the late 1960s;
- any assassination records that “Oswald witnesses” in New Orleans may have.

In addition, I anticipate that the New Orleans Project will work closely with the following projects:

- (1) Organized Crime Project on issues involving Carlos Marcello and the New Orleans Mafia;
- (2) Cuba Project on issues involving anti-Castro Cuban activities in New Orleans in the early 1960s;
- (3) Oswald Project on issues involving Oswald’s school records, employment records, and medical records; and
- (4) Right-Wing and Left-Wing Groups Project on issues involving right-wing activities in New Orleans, including activities of Guy Bannister and David Ferrie.