

Probe Figure Found Dead

DA Says Arrest of Pilot in JFK Death Planned

NEW ORLEANS, La. (AP)—David W. Ferrie, an important and strange figure in Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison's investigation of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, was found dead in bed Wednesday. Garrison said he had planned to arrest Ferrie next week.

"The apparent suicide of David Ferrie ends the life of a man who, in my judgment, was one of history's most important

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individuals," Garrison told a news conference.

Coroner Nicholas Chetta said Ferrie's death was due to a ruptured blood vessel in the brain, but that further tests were being made.

Garrison said Ferrie, a pilot, had been under continual observation and his information "had caused us to become increasingly concerned . . . about the possibility of his killing himself.

"Evidence developed by our office had long since confirmed that he was involved

in events culminating in the assassination of President Kennedy.

"Because of this, at a meeting at my house this morning, we had reached a decision to arrest him early next week. Apparently we waited too long."

Dr. Chetta said a note was found in the dining room of Ferrie's cluttered apartment which said, in part:

"To leave this life is, for me, a sweet prospect. I find nothing in it that is desirable and on the other hand everything that is loathsome."

The coroner said Ferrie, about 45, was born with a weakness of one blood vessel at the base of the brain. When this ruptured, it caused massive hemorrhage, he added.

However, because of the circumstances and the note, a full autopsy was ordered to check the possibility of suicide. The body was found nude, with a sheet pulled up to the chest.

Ferrie had told friends he was suffering

from encephalitis (sleeping sickness). Dr. Chetta said he had hypertensive cardiovascular disease—high blood pressure.

Garrison told reporters the "primary reason for the planned arrest of Ferrie was because we felt we had reached a point where we had enough information to move."

Ferrie became "increasingly more and more nervous as the investigation progressed," said Garrison.

"Although my office has been investigating Ferrie intensively for months, we have not mentioned his name publicly up to this point," Garrison added. "The unique nature of this case now leaves me no other course of action."

Asked if he had any reason to believe anybody but Lee Harvey Oswald took part in the actual assassination, Garrison replied:

"I have no reason to believe at this point that Lee Harvey Oswald killed anybody in Dallas on that day."