

1 - Mr. Lenihan

March 22, 1967

DAVID WILLIAM ~~FERRIE~~ *1/2*

The February 23, 1967, issue of the "Washington Post" newspaper contains an article datelined at New Orleans, Louisiana, February 22, 1967, captioned "La. Suspect in JFK 'Plot' Found Dead." This article disclosed David W. Ferrie, a pilot who figured in the investigation by District Attorney James Garrison of President Kennedy's assassination, had been found dead in his bed on February 22, 1967. Death, according to the Orleans Parish Coroner Dr. Nicholas J. Chetta, was due to a ruptured blood vessel at the base of the brain. Garrison, according to the news article, called Ferrie's death an apparent suicide.

The newspaper article quoted Garrison as stating his investigators had intended to arrest Ferrie the following week. Garrison was reported as stating "Evidence developed by our office had long since confirmed that he (Ferrie) was involved in events culminating in the assassination of President Kennedy." Garrison refused to spell out the charges that might have been lodged against Ferrie, according to the newspaper article.

Immediately following the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, this Bureau received allegations Ferrie was acquainted with Lee Harvey Oswald and was involved in the conspiracy to assassinate the President. Investigation disclosed some of these allegations possibly emanated from Jack Martin (true name Edward S. Suggs), a self-described private investigator. Martin, in January, 1957, was a patient in the psychiatric ward at Charity Hospital, New Orleans, Louisiana. Martin's psychiatrist advised Special Agents of this Bureau in 1957 Martin was suffering from a character disorder.

Among the allegations apparently emanating from Martin regarding Ferrie were claims the latter had been in the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) in New Orleans during the same period as Oswald and might have taught him to shoot a rifle with a

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telescopic sight; that when Oswald was arrested he had Ferrie's library card in his possession; that Ferrie reportedly had stated President Kennedy should be killed and Ferrie had outlined a story plot by which he could be killed. It was also rumored Ferrie had flown Oswald to Texas.

Special Agents of this Bureau interviewed Edward Voebel, an employee of the Quality Flower Company, New Orleans, on November 25, 1963, with respect to the CAP affiliations of Ferrie and Oswald.

Voebel advised he knew Oswald around 1954-55 when they were students in the Beauregard Junior High School in New Orleans. Voebel stated he and Oswald were members of the CAP in New Orleans with Captain Dave Ferrie during the time they were in this school. (Oswald was born October 18, 1939, and would have been approximately 16 years of age when his CAP activity occurred.)

Voebel advised that during the 1955 school year he joined the CAP at New Orleans and he persuaded Oswald to join the same CAP unit. He recalled Oswald attended four meetings at the most and lost interest as he disliked authority and discipline. Voebel could not recall if Ferrie was Commander of the CAP unit at the time Oswald attended the meetings or if Oswald attended the meetings prior to the time Ferrie took command of the CAP unit.

On November 26, 1963, Joseph G. Ehrlicker, Commander of the Louisiana Wing, CAP, was interviewed in New Orleans by Special Agents of the FBI. He located a record disclosing Oswald was enrolled as a CAP cadet July 27, 1955, in the squadron at Moisant Field in New Orleans. The record did not indicate Oswald's termination date in the CAP, but Ehrlicker noted the membership would have expired on December 31, 1955, if it had not been renewed.

Ehrlicker was able to determine that David Ferrie's first period as Squadron Commander of a CAP unit was terminated December 31, 1954. Ferrie was working with the CAP at the Moisant Airport at the time. Ehrlicker stated it was later determined Ferrie, subsequent to December 31, 1954, worked with the squadron at Moisant Airport without any official connection with CAP. As of late 1955, according to Ehrlicker, Ferrie was no longer associated with the CAP squadron. In late 1958, Ferrie again became officially connected with CAP and was terminated December 31, 1960. Subsequent to this date, Ferrie set up a "spurious" CAP squadron with no connection with or recognition by the CAP, according to Ehrlicker.

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Jack Martin was interviewed November 25, 1963, by Special Agents of this Bureau, at which time he stated he had heard over Station WWL in New Orleans interviews of various persons who reportedly were acquainted with Oswald. One of the persons interviewed, whose name Martin could not recall, mentioned Oswald had been active in the CAP with Dave Ferrie. Martin added he "flipped" when he heard this; that he called Station WWL and furnished background information regarding Ferrie, including the latter's CAP experience and his homosexuality. Martin remarked he had visited Ferrie's home and had seen a group of photographs of various CAP cadet groups and was certain he had seen among these photographs a picture of Oswald as a member of one of these groups. Martin also claimed that Ferrie, while in the CAP, had conducted military-type drills with rifles and Ferrie had claimed to have taught the CAP cadets to shoot. Martin claimed to have seen a number of foreign-make firearms in Ferrie's residence and was of the opinion Ferrie could have taught Oswald how to purchase foreign-type firearms. Martin remarked he had also told the television station that Ferrie was an amateur hypnotist and it was his idea Ferrie may have hypnotized Oswald and planted a post-hypnotic suggestion that he kill the President.

Martin also stated Ferrie had discussed with him charges of a "crime against nature," which had resulted in his arrest in Jefferson Parish, Louisiana, (in 1961), and he recalled Ferrie had told him one of the "kids who was a witness against him" had moved to Mississippi from New Orleans and subsequently joined the United States Marine Corps. Martin advised he heard on television that Oswald had been in the Marine Corps and, therefore, he surmised Oswald was that "kid" who was a witness against Ferrie. In connection with the above, FBI Arrest Record Number 88 367 E disclosed David William Ferrie was arrested by the Sheriff's Office, Getna, Louisiana, August 22, 1961, for indecent behavior; "crime nature; cont. juv," (contributing to the delinquency of a juvenile). The disposition of this was shown as "no charge filed."

Martin was reinterviewed November 27, 1963, and he denied at that time ever hearing Ferrie make a statement that the President should be killed or outline a means by which he could be killed. Martin stated he had several conversations with Hardy Davis, a bail bondsman and admitted homosexual in the New Orleans area, regarding a television program which mentioned the possibility Ferrie was associated with Oswald in the CAP. Martin stated he and Davis may have come to the conclusion Oswald had used or carried Ferrie's library card.

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Martin added he considered the possibility Ferrie had taught Oswald to shoot a rifle and to use a telescopic sight in that he knew Ferrie had taught military training to CAP cadets and Oswald was a CAP member. Martin denied ever telling anyone that Ferrie had flown Oswald to Texas.

Martin, on November 27, 1963, advised that Hardy Davis had told him Ferrie possessed Cuban propaganda literature. Davis claimed it was "Fair Play for Cuba Committee" literature, but Martin did not believe it as he knew Ferrie was active with the Cuban Front Group, which group Martin described as anti-Castro. Martin stated he was acquainted with the leaders of this anti-Castro group, who were in New Orleans before the Bay of Pigs invasion and was aware Ferrie was involved with this group.

David William Ferrie was interviewed November 25, 1963, at which time he stated he had been in the CAP in New Orleans from 1952-1955 and again from 1958 to 1960; that in 1953 he became Commandant of the CAP squadron in New Orleans. Ferrie claimed that after becoming Commandant he did not instruct recruits; that he never instructed either recruits or regular squadron members in the use of firearms as he was always able to secure the services of a qualified instructor in this type training. Cadets were instructed in the use of a .22 caliber rifle, but these rifles were not equipped with telescopic sights; that the cadets received instructions in firing .22 caliber rifles about four times each year. Ferrie claimed he never owned a telescopic sight or a rifle equipped with a telescopic sight.

Ferrie denied knowing Lee Harvey Oswald or having any association with this individual during the period when Ferrie was in the CAP. Ferrie added he had learned it was alleged that when Oswald was arrested, Oswald had Ferrie's library card in his possession. Ferrie denied this. During an interview with Ferrie on November 27, 1963, Ferrie exhibited his library card. In this connection, when Oswald was arrested November 22, 1963, he had in his wallet a Dallas Public Library identification card in the name of Lee Harvey Oswald.

Ferrie advised that from approximately November, 1960, until August, 1961, he was associated with the Cuban Revolutionary Front in New Orleans, Louisiana. Ferrie described this organization as an anti-Castro group and claimed that he had actively engaged in collecting food, money and medicine for this organization. The office of this organization, according

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to Ferrie, was located at the Balter Building, and Ferrie recalled Sergio Arcacha Smith as the head of this organization in New Orleans. Ferrie reported he had not had any connection with the Cuban Revolutionary Front or any other anti-Castro organization since August, 1961, although he continued to have social contacts with Sergio Arcacha Smith. Ferrie claimed he had no recollection of any organization in New Orleans named the Fair Play for Cuba Committee and has never had any connection with any individual representing an organization by that name. The Fair Play for Cuba Committee was a pro-Castro group with headquarters in New York City. Lee Harvey Oswald was associated with this organization in New Orleans during 1963.

Ferrie claimed that on November 22, 1963, the day of the assassination of President Kennedy, he was in New Orleans. He advised he left New Orleans about 6:30 p.m. with two companions, Alvin Beaubouef and Melvin Coffey, and using Ferrie's automobile, drove to Houston, Texas, arriving there between 4:30 a.m. and 5:30 a.m., November 23, 1963; that they proceeded to the Alamotel and registered there. Ferrie claimed he and his companions remained in Houston until about 9 p.m., November 23, 1963. They then drove to Galveston, Texas, arriving there between 10:30 p.m. and 11:30 p.m., at which time they registered at the Driftwood Motel. Ferrie added that on November 24, 1963, he and his two companions left Galveston in the morning and drove to Port Arthur, Texas, then to Orange, Texas, and to Alexandria, Louisiana, arriving there about 4 p.m. While in Alexandria, according to Ferrie, he telephoned his residence in New Orleans and talked to Layton Martens, who was staying there. Martens reportedly informed him two representatives of Station WWL had been making inquiries at his residence and in the neighborhood, and Ferrie learned accusations were being made he was implicated in the assassination of President Kennedy.

Ferrie claimed he then drove into New Orleans, arriving there about 9:30 p.m. After dropping off his friends, Ferrie stated he contacted Attorney G. Wray Gill and thereafter drove to Hammond, Louisiana, where he contacted a friend. Ferrie returned to New Orleans on November 25, 1963, and accompanied by Mr. Gill, Ferrie surrendered to the District Attorney.

Investigation by Special Agents of this Bureau at the Alamotel, Houston, Texas, disclosed that Ferrie, Beaubouef and Coffey registered at that motel at 4:30 a.m., November 23, 1963, and remained until 8 or 9 p.m. that same date.

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The records of the Driftwood Motor Hotel, Galveston, Texas, were examined on November 28, 1963, and disclosed that Ferrie and his two companions registered at that establishment at approximately 11 p.m., November 23, 1963. They checked out of this motor hotel November 24, 1963.

Mr. G. Wray Gill, an attorney at New Orleans, was interviewed November 27, 1963, by Special Agents of this Bureau. Gill recalled Ferrie was in New Orleans the morning of the day President Kennedy was assassinated. Gill contacted his secretary, Mrs. Alice Guidroz, who stated she was positive Ferrie was in the office at 12:15 p.m. on November 23, 1963, at which time he left, stating he would be back about 1:30 p.m. Ferrie failed to return. Gill stated Ferrie had done some investigative work in a case involving Carlos Marcello and Ferrie, as well as others connected with the case, was at the Royal Orleans Hotel on the evening of the day President Kennedy was slain.

During the interview of David William Ferrie on November 25, 1963, Ferrie advised he owned a Stinson 150, single engine, four-passenger monoplane, Registration Number 8293K. Ferrie added he had owned this plane since 1948 and it had not been airworthy since the license expired in April, 1962. Ferrie informed he had never flown this plane to Cuba; that it had been flown only as far south as Miami, Florida. He claimed he had flown this plane to Dallas, Texas, on only one occasion and this occurred during 1949.

James E. Lewallen was interviewed in New Orleans by Special Agents of the FBI on November 27, 1963. During the interview Lewallen stated that David Ferrie owns a Stinson 150 monoplane, which was then at the Lakefront Airport. Lewallen added that to the best of his knowledge, this plane had not been in flying condition for at least the past year.

On November 29, 1963, Lois Weston, Aircraft Registration Branch, Federal Aviation Agency (FAA), Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, reviewed her files under Registration Number 8293K. Miss Weston advised records disclosed David Ferrie was the registered owner of an airplane bearing the above registration number. She further stated an application for an airworthiness certificate dated April 7, 1961, was contained in the files; that this certificate would be valid as long as the aircraft was operated in accordance with regulations. There was no specific expiration date listed on this certificate and no information in the files produced by Miss Weston that Ferrie's plane was not airworthy. Miss Weston advised that in the event Ferrie had not complied with FAA regulations and although his aircraft might not be airworthy, it was not necessary this information be recorded in FAA files.