

244

# Garrison Given Private Cash for Kennedy Probe

New Orleans Businessmen  
Support District Attorney  
in Controversial Inquiry

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NEW ORLEANS—A group of 50 wealthy businessmen belonging to a group called "Truth or Consequences" Friday staked a large sum of money on Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison and his controversial investigation into the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The group, whose motto is "let the chips fall where they may," said they each pledged \$100 a month for at least three months to finance Garrison's probe.

"We have faith in his integrity," they emphasized.

Garrison, whose investigation of the assassination has resulted in the storm of controversy and confusion, said Friday he could arrest persons connected with the plot now if he chose, "and make 'em stick." But later he hedged, as he has on several other points, and said arrests may not come for several months.

Garrison also claimed that he has "solved" the assassination "beyond a shadow of a doubt."

#### Details of Evidence

"We solved it weeks ago," he said. "There remains only the details of evidence, and there is no question about it. We have the names of everyone. We have all the details."

The district attorney's startling pronouncements came in two impromptu news conferences held when he entered and left a closed meeting of the businessmen who have offered him financial contributions to aid his three-month-old investigation.

The businessmen said they offered the money because Garrison had said previously he was low on funds and wanted private funds to avoid letting newsmen check public re-

cords which would be available if he spent public money.

Garrison also said he had "borrowed" \$2,500 some 70 hours after his investigation was disclosed in local newspapers last week.

Three businessmen, Cecil Shilstone, Willard E. Robertson and Joseph M. Rault Jr., said the group was placing the cash at Garrison's disposal.

#### Faith in Garrison

"We have faith in Mr. Garrison's integrity," Shilstone said. "We're giving him moral support and financial assistance for a limited period of time so he may continue his investigation, and let the chips fall where they may." Shilstone said he would administer the fund.

Shilstone, operator of a testing laboratory, has said that some businessmen are trying to get him to run for mayor, but that it is too early to say whether he will. Robertson is an auto dealer and Rault is an attorney and president of a petroleum company.

All three—regarded as moderates—have been very active in Democratic politics and are understood to be interested in Garrison from a standpoint of political influence.

In the five appearances he has made before newsmen since Monday, Garrison has stated each appearance would be the last, but each succeeding day he has either issued another statement or held an impromptu or announced news conference.

The district attorney has left in his wake a number of discrepancies, and controversy and confusion.

While he said Friday that he could make arrests now, if he chose, he also said it probably would be

Please Turn to Page 10, Col. 1

## Garrison Gets Private Cash for Investigation

Continued from First Page  
months before they were made.

Garrison also continued to insist that David William Ferrie, a principal figure in his investigation who was found dead Wednesday, had committed suicide.

This conflicted directly with statements made by Orleans Parish (County) Coroner Nicholas Chetta, who has said several times that indications thus far were that Ferrie died a natural death. Dr. Chetta said Friday chemical tests concluded so far indicate Ferrie died a natural death, and that no foreign substances or poisons were in the body. New Orleans Police Lt. Cornelius Drumm said his investigation of Ferrie's death had not found any signs of foul play.

Chetta said also that Ferrie's body had been claimed by an unnamed attorney acting on behalf of a brother "somewhere in the East."

After Ferrie's death became known Wednesday, Garrison called him "one of history's most important individuals."

Garrison said Friday "there is no doubt that the entire thing (the alleged plot to kill Mr. Kennedy) was planned in New Orleans."

"I'm not in the business of making wild guesses," Garrison said in one of the two news conferences in the lobby of a downtown office building. His statements drew a large number of bystanders, many of whom applauded him and came up to shake his hand.

Garrison said one reason he cannot make arrests now is that he must prove in court "beyond a reasonable doubt" the guilt of the alleged conspirators.

"All that remains is working out the details," he said, adding, "we will arrest these people — at least all of them who are alive ~~when we~~ get to them." **END**