

Garrison Is Vindicated: Clay Shaw, David Ferrie Were Working for the CIA

The mysterious death last year of Clay Shaw perhaps put the final seal on former New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison's chapter in the John Kennedy conspiracy epic.

Already dead were the three other key people Garrison contended were part of a conspiracy to kill President Kennedy on the streets of Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963.

Garrison figured they were all part of a plot involving government intelligence.

And Shaw's death came only a few months after a former veteran of the Central Intelligence Agency revealed that Shaw was indeed a CIA operative.

MYSTERIOUS circumstances surround Shaw's death, not unlike the many questions that have surrounded the life and death of the other key figures involved in the abortive Garrison probe.

David Ferrie, gun-runner, probable CIA operative and right-hand man to Mafia boss Carlos Marcello, was found dead under strange circumstances a month after Garrison's probe became public. He had told reporters, "I'm a dead man."

Jack Ruby, the slayer of accused Kennedy assassin Lee Harvey Oswald, died of cancer in early 1966 soon after begging Chief Justice Earl Warren to take him to

Washington to testify before the Warren Commission probing Kennedy's death. Otherwise, Ruby made it clear, he would not live to tell his story. Commission critics believe Ruby was injected with cancer cells to hasten his death.

Oswald, the Russian defector and probable government intelligence agent, was murdered while surrounded by policemen — not long after he declared he was a "patsy" and "didn't shoot anybody, no, sir."

GARRISON TRIED SHAW for conspiracy to kill the President in 1969 and Shaw was acquitted. Already smothered by a wave of criticism in the nation's conventional press, Garrison's political career was in shambles.

Strangely enough, some of the nation's top reporters proclaimed that Garrison had proved a conspiracy, but had not proved that Shaw was involved.

Even then Attorney General Ramsey Clark denounced Garrison publicly as destroying a "fine man" in prosecuting Shaw.

Shaw died last August in New Orleans. He had first been hospitalized in February, then released.

The February "seizure" came about a month after Victor Marchetti, who had been a CIA official

for 14 years before resigning in 1969, revealed that Shaw had indeed been a CIA contract employe.

A year before Marchetti left the CIA, he has confirmed for TATTLER, he learned of Shaw's connections with the CIA. At that time, in 1968, Garrison's probe was being publicized worldwide.

MARCHETTI ATTENDED morning briefing sessions with top CIA officials. The officials voiced their worry that Garrison might be able to prove Shaw's CIA contacts and make them public.

Then CIA director Richard Helms personally was among the officials who determined that Shaw's CIA involvement should be kept secret, said Marchetti.

Ferrie was also a CIA operative, Marchetti confirmed, but there had never been much doubt about that.

Ferrie, a former airlines pilot, had participated in numerous CIA-related activities, including the abortive effort to overthrow Fidel Castro's government at the Bay of Pigs.

Marchetti said Shaw and Ferrie had participated with Watergate figures E. Howard Hunt, Frank Sturgis and Bernard Barker in the planning of the Bay of Pigs operation.

Hunt was political coordinator of the entire Bay of Pigs operation. He recently went to prison to finish out more of his time on his conviction in the Nixon Administration scandals. Sturgis and Barker are also former CIA men.



GUARDED AFTER HIS arrest, Clay Shaw (right) denied he was involved with the CIA. Since then a former CIA man revealed that Shaw was a contract employe.



DAVID FERRIE died mysteriously, as he said he would. He also worked for the CIA.



FORMER DISTRICT ATTY. Jim Garrison and his attorney, Lou Merhige (left) are elated when Garrison was found innocent of charges of public bribery. He told a reporter from this paper that he was tried on those charges as an attempt to get back at him for his JFK investigation.

MARCHETTI CLAIMS that top CIA officials, at the time Shaw was being prosecuted by Garrison, talked about the need to "give help" to Shaw's defense on the conspiracy charges.

Last August 15, the 60-year-old Shaw was found dead in his New Orleans home, five and a half years after he was charged with conspiracy by Garrison.

Shaw's personal physician ruled that Shaw, who was suffering from cancer, died of natural causes.

Though Parish Coroner Frank Minyard requested a police investigation - customary procedure - none was held.

Declaring, "we're in charge of everyone's death in this city," Minyard at first said his office or the police department should have been called when the body was found. Later Minyard let the matter drop.

"I would be worried about somebody helping him along," the coroner at first said. "This mercy killing bit is a very real reality in terminal cancer patients. It happens all the time..."

But Shaw's lawyer and friend, Edward F. Wegmann, took issue with Minyard and other critics and said:

"To suggest that Clay Shaw committed suicide, was murdered or was given a mercy killing shot borders on the ridiculous."

BUT SKEPTICS refused to take Clay Shaw's natural causes death at face value.

A woman, saying she was a neighbor of Shaw's, telephoned a broadcast reporter and said she had seen an ambulance pull up in front of

Shaw's home about 1 a.m., a few hours before the body was found.

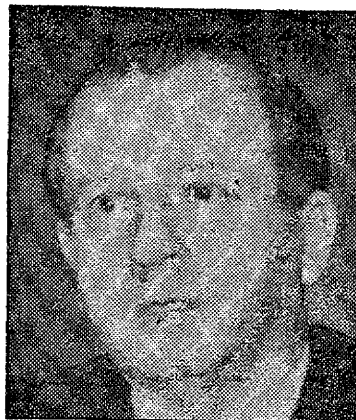
She said she saw attendants carry a stretcher into the house. A white sheet was covering what was apparently a body on the stretcher.

The official time of Shaw's death was listed as about 12:40 a.m.

Warren Commission critic Penn Jones Jr., who has made it his specialty to chronicle the deaths from various causes of people connected with the assassination, told TATTLER:

"Considering the bizarre circumstances surrounding Shaw's death, we must list it as another in the long line of deaths which surround the Kennedy assassination."

JOHN MOULDER



JACK RUBY took to his grave information he wanted the Warren Commission to have. The commission wouldn't bring Ruby to Washington, even though he said he would be a dead man unless they did.