
New Orleans D.A. Held Secrets Of

Hints Ferrie Assassination

EVENING SUN

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Analysis

Assassination Talk Takes Bizarre Twist

By James Marlow

Washington, Feb. 23 (AP)—Talk without evidence is all there is so far from the efforts of New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison to prove a plot in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

But there are some bizarre twists.

The Warren Commission concluded Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in the killing in Dallas November 22, 1963. There have been doubts about this ever since. Up until now Garrison has simply added to them.

He says he has no reason to believe Oswald killed anybody in Dallas that day. Last Saturday, giving no details, he promised five arrests and convictions, though the arrests were "most certainly months away."

Arrest Plans

Then yesterday, after David Ferrie, a plane pilot of about 45, had been found dead in his bed in New Orleans, Garrison



DAVID W. FERRIE

said he had planned to arrest Ferrie next week.

Apparently we waited too long," Garrison said, although he called Ferrie "one of his story's most important individuals."

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uals." Ferrie's death was one of the bizarre twists. The other, in Florida, was the start of an investigation into the 2-year-old death of another man.

Garrison referred to Ferrie's death as an "apparent suicide." Coroner Nicholas Chetta said Ferrie died of a ruptured blood vessel in the brain but added that further tests were being made.

A note, found in Ferrie's dining room, said: "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."

Timing Of Note

But—and this is written after consultation here in Washington with a physician who is an internist—it would have seemed impossible for Ferrie to write the note at all and then walk

back to his bedroom after the blood vessel burst.

Yet, if Ferrie wrote the note, intending it as a farewell, how could he have possibly known that as soon as he got back to bed the blood vessel in his brain would burst? Blood vessels are not that obliging.

Ferrie, no stranger to the Kennedy case, was questioned by both the FBI and Garrison's office in 1963 shortly after the President's death and was questioned again in Garrison's office last November.

Each time he was released. He said the FBI first became interested in him when a New Orleans man reported he had served with Oswald in a Civil Air Patrol unit under Ferrie. Oswald lived in New Orleans in the summer of 1963. Ferrie had lived there fifteen years.

"Big Joke"

He repeatedly denied he ever knew Oswald and complained that Garrison had him "pegged as the get-away pilot in an elaborate plot to kill Kennedy." He called this a "big joke."

Meanwhile Pensacola authorities yesterday began investigating the 1964 death of Thomas Henry Killam, a sometime house-painter, who died beside a broken store window with a slashed throat. The police at the time called it an accidental death; the coroner called it a suicide.

But now his brother, Earl Killam, asking that the body be exhumed for further examination, says the dead man feared he was being pursued by "agents" connected with the Kennedy assassination and fled Dallas in December, 1963, saying he knew he would be killed by "agents" he didn't name.

Employed By Ruby

The dead man's wife, Wanda Killam, had been employed several years in a nightclub run by Jack Ruby, who killed Oswald and died last January 3. She said her husband had been employed as a painter by a man who once roomed in a Dallas boarding house with Oswald.

more inauspicious

J.F.K. Probe Figure Reported Leaving

New Orleans, Feb. 23 (AP)—David Lewis, who said Monday he feared for his life because of what he knew about a local probe into the death of President John F. Kennedy, was reported today to have left town with his family for an undisclosed location.

The disclosure came after a routine check for Lewis for comment on the death of David W. Ferrie, a key figure in the investigation directed by District Attorney Jim Garrison. Ferrie was found dead in his apartment yesterday.

Lewis, a 26-year-old bus station baggage clerk, formerly was a private detective. In that role he claimed to have met New Orleans-born Lee Harvey Oswald, named by the Warren Commission as the Kennedy assassin.

Lewis, his wife and their four children were away from their home last night. Neighbors said they had no idea of the family's whereabouts.

Employees at the bus station said, "We don't know where he is and don't know when he will be back—and that's official."

EVENING SUN, BALTIMORE

D.A. Hints Pilot Knew Secrets Of JFK Death

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Ferrie's death had to be before 4 A.M. yesterday because of the rigor mortis condition. However, a newsman for the Washington Post, George Lardner, said he had visited with Ferrie in his apartment until that hour.

Called Mystery

Garrison said the conflicting statements constituted "one of the mysteries we don't understand."

In a copyrighted story appearing in today's Washington Post, Lardner said Ferrie "seemed in good spirits, not like a man about to kill himself" at the time they talked.

"Ferrie said he never knew Oswald and had no recollection of ever having met him," Lardner reported. He said Ferrie told him that Garrison's inquiry would turn out to be a "witch hunt."

Turned Over To FBI

Ferrie was brought into the scope of the assassination probe within 72 hours after Kennedy was slain November 22, 1963. Garrison said he pulled Ferrie in for questioning at that time and subsequently turned him

over to the FBI, which took a statement and released him.

A New Orleans florist, Edward Voebel, had seen Lee Harvey Oswald's picture on television and reported that he and Oswald had served in a Civil Air Patrol squadron under Ferrie. When authorities sought to question Ferrie, they found he had gone to Texas.

Vacation Trip

Ferrie said recently that he and two friends took a short vacation trip to Texas the day of the assassination "on the spur of the moment." He said they visited Houston, Galveston, Texas, and Alexandria, La., before returning home. They did not go to Dallas, he said.

And Ferrie said he and Voebel were in separate CAP squadrons. Ferrie said he never knew Oswald. A native of New Orleans, Oswald lived in New Orleans the summer of 1963.

Garrison said Ferrie's name figures in 40 pages of Warren Commission material—36 of which he said are classified secret and unavailable. In Washington, it was reported that nineteen of the pages were available for public examination.

Mrs. Oswald Shocked

Mrs. Marguerite Oswald, mother of Lee Harvey Oswald, said she was amazed that Ferrie had not been interviewed by the Warren Commission.

"I'm shocked and dismayed that another life may have been forfeited by lack of a thorough investigation," she said in Fort Worth, Texas, after learning of Ferrie's death.

A New Orleans police detective, Frederick S. O'Sullivan, told the Warren Commission he knew of no evidence that Oswald was acquainted with Ferrie. However, the district attorney hinted that he was close to finding a thread connecting Ferrie and Oswald.

Death Of Flier Called Suicide By Garrison

Conspiracy probe caps stormy career for Garrison. [P. A 4.]

New Orleans, Feb. 23 (AP)—District Attorney Jim Garrison hinted today that free-lance pilot David W. Ferrie carried to his grave some secrets about President Kennedy's assassination.

Ferrie, 48, who described himself as a psychologist and private detective as well as a flier, was found dead in his bed yesterday.

Garrison, the 6-foot-6 gun-toting prosecutor, called the death "apparent suicide."

The coroner, Dr. Nicholas Chetta, said tests were not complete but death seemed due to a massive brain hemorrhage, with no sign of suicide except a curious, unsigned, undated note saying death was a "sweet prospect."

Ready To Talk

Ferrie was on the brink of producing information that could have been important, said

Garrison, whose assassination probe—started long after the Warren Commission finished its work—has created an international sensation.

"We felt that he was really now ready to talk candidly, to contribute to this important investigation," said Garrison. "Now he's gone and it will be much harder to make the connections between certain people. But I'm sure we'll make them anyway."

"I'm just as optimistic today as I was two days ago."

Had Vowed Arrests

Two days ago, Garrison was insisting that his effort to prove a conspiracy in the assassination of President Kennedy will result in arrests and convictions.

The President was shot in Dallas November 22, 1963. Garrison insists that a conspiracy to murder him was conceived in New Orleans.

No "credible evidence" of a conspiracy was found by the Warren Commission, which said Kennedy was killed by Lee Harvey Oswald—a former New Orleans resident—acting alone.

Temporary Hideout

Garrison said his office had planned to take Ferrie into custody early next week. Because Ferrie had expressed fears for his life, Garrison said he provided him a temporary hideout at a motor hotel here.

"Evidence developed by our office had long since confirmed that he was involved in events culminating in the assassination of President Kennedy," Garrison said.

Dr. Chetta said the time of [Continued, Page A 3, Col. 4]