Murky, Improbable World of Ferrie

Washington Post Staff Writer NEW ORLEANS, Feb. 25 Some six years ago, on Aug. 30, 1961, two young men in a Plymouth convertible were braced by police in a residential neighborhood near the New Orleans lake front. In the car, officers reported, were found a fully loaded .38 caliber Smith and Wesson and a makeup kits with human hair, sealing gum and scis-sors. Both belonged to one David W. Ferrie. One of the young men in the car, said they were waiting for him.

The police were, apparently, skeptical. The neighborhood had been plagued with bur glarles. The two young men led the officers to a neighborhood home occupied by Sergio Arcacha Smith, local head of a Cubari Interation group. Arcacha's wife said Ferrie had: been there earlier.

The connection between ban exile group appears to be ban exile group, appears to be tion, and an investigation by investigation District Attorney Jim Garrison is conducting into the assassination of Press ident Kennedy. Nothing has surfaced connecting Ferrie or anyone else on Garrison's list to the assas-sination. Garrison has yet to disclose a shred of evidence. But he flamboyantly claims to have "solved" the assassination and, an investigation by Newsweek and The Washing on Post found, he is looking or Sergio Arcacha Smith for uestioning.

It is a strange, murky, improbable world that the district attorney's office is reconstructing. The prosecutor has even stated that he does not believe Lee Harvey Os-wald killed anyone in Dallas Nov. 22, 1963. Instead he is concentrating on Cubans.

So far the only signs of where all this may be leading Jim Garrison lie in the tan-gled life of David William Ferrie—who died last week of what the police and the what the police and the coro-ner have said were natural causes. Characteristically, Garrison disâgrees, insisting it was a suicide.

With his bizarre red wig and painted eyebrows, Ferrie who once studied to become a Catholic priest but was considered too unstable and arbitrary, played many rolespilot, philosopher, private

detective,

medical expert. building inspector, high school teacher, and confidante and molder of young men. An-other was Cuban freedom. fighter.

Born in Cleveland 49 years ago, Ferrie insisted he had never been to Cuba, but that, didn't keep him from talking didn't keep him from talking about it. In July, 1961, for example, he spoke to the New Orleans chapter of the Muli-tary Order of the World Wars on "Cuba-April, 1961, Pres-ent and Future" but he was

cut off by a chapter official who found the remarks offen-

Just what Ferrie said is unclear, but one man present is reported to have said Ferrie complained sharply about "the President of the United States and the Commander in Chief of our Armed Forces," apparently for the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion. Ferrie, it was also recalled, had brought with him, a 17-year: old Latin American boy as a show of part of the work he had, been doing for "Cuban liberation"

At one point, Ferrie was At one point, Ferrie was liso alleged to have been working out of the New Or-eans office of the Frante Revolucinario Democratico readed locany by Arcacha who, Newsweek news report or Philip D. Carter found, noved from News Orleans well, pefore the assassination and wound up in Dallas. In the police investigation of the Aug. 30 incident revolving around Sergio Arcacha Smith's home here, the New Orleans intelligence division reported, several months later, that "apparently this group that "apparently this group (the Cuban Revolutionary Democratic Front) was legiti-mate in nature and presum-ably had the unofficial same tion of the CIA although this could not be determined lo-cally. Sergio Arcacha Smith, it

was also reported, had been removed as New Orleans lead of the group. Farrie's continued interest

in the group, if any, remains unknown. Several hours after President Kennedy's assassination, Ferrie and two youths Alvin Roland Beaubuoes and Patrick L. Martens left for a weekend drive to Texas that, brought them first to Houston on Nov. 23 at 4:30 a.m. (One, "Lavton Martens" had been at Arcacha's apartment when police rapped on the door back in 1961; he had furnished them then with identification saying he was second in command here of the Cuban group headed by

Arcacha.) Ferrie and the two youths subsequently drove to Galves. ton and made their way back to New Orleans by way of

Alexandria, La., on Nov. 24. Ferrie found his rooms had been searched—a mounmental job if they were as cluttered then as they were at his death -and found the district attor-ney's office was looking for him.

They had been alerted by Jack S. Martin, now 53, one time private detective, news-man, deputy sheriff "and what have you," according to Mrs. Martin. Martin was also a bishop of an obscure and dissident Catholic sect who once ordained Ferrie into the order. Martin gave authorities a batch of rumors about Ferrie,

including allegations that

Ferrie may have once taught Oswald how to shoot, that he may have hypnotized Oswald, Kennedy." and that he may have been the pilot of a rumored "getaway

plane." "You would have to meet Jack Martin repetitively, to appreciate him," Ferrie said wryly in an interview shortly before he died. He said Mar-tin — now, "sondewhere in Mexico," according to his wife-delighted in stirring up trouble. Mrs. Martin said her husband has "a violent temper" and often "drinks heavily."

Of Ferrie, an FBI agent told Newsweek's <u>High Avnesworth</u> n Dallas several months ago, We picked him clean. You won't find anything there."

Nonetheless when District Attorney Garrison launched his investigation last Novemhis investigation last Novem-berillis men salled in David Ferrie once more. "They used the names Martin gave them," Ferrie, charged in the inter-view." e also asserted that he had been trying to see Gar-rison directly for months for a face-to-face talk about what the District Attorney wanted

the District Attorney wanted. That Garrison's theories revolve around Cubans was clear from an interview with pri-vate detective William Gur-wich, one of Garrison's chief aldes in the investigating. He referred several times to thes-timony before the Warren Commission about a "powerful" Cuban which conflicted with the preponderance of testimony pointing to Oswald.

After acknowledging momentary doubts, and worries that there might have been "a second assassin," Ferrie said he was convinced there was not plot. He suggested Garrison try a new theory on for size. "I've got a real plot for him," he said in his last interview, opening his eyes wide in mock horror. "The astrol-ogy magazines—they all said in 1960 that whoever was elected—and they couldn't tell whether it would be Kennedy Str. i



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