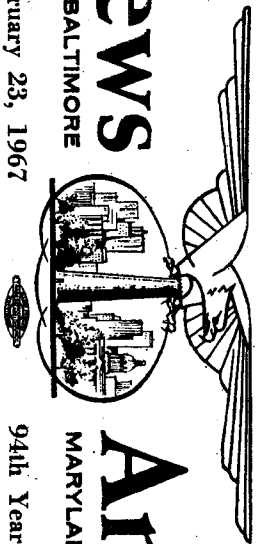


NEW ORLEANS PLOT DEATH INVESTIGATED

The News

BALTIMORE

Thursday Evening, February 23, 1967

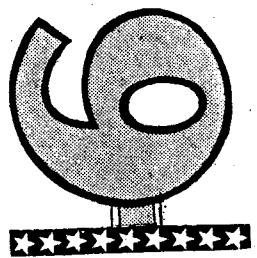


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IN JFK BY FBI



DAVID W. FERRIE
... figure in probe found dead.
—AP Wirephoto.

Mystery Pilot Found Dead

*Not White
D.A. Samp*
By **LESLIE H. WHITTEN**
News American Correspondent
Hearst Headline Service

WASHINGTON, Feb. 23—The FBI is investigating allegations that Lee Harvey Oswald plotted with others in New Orleans to kill President John F. Kennedy.

FBI agents have kept carefully abreast of the investigation of New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison into the alleged plot.

Although the FBI declined comment, it was learned that to date no hard evidence of a genuine plot has been developed either by the federal sleuths or by Garrison's investigators.

The death of David W. Ferrie, who had called the Garrison probe a "big joke"; the comments of a one-time private investigator named David F. Lewis, 26, who has spoken of a "conspiracy," and the activities of a Cuban exile, Bernardo Torres, 36, who contends he has information on the plot all have come under federal scrutiny.

GARRISON has refused a suggestion by Rep. Gerald R. Ford (R., Mich.), a member of the Warren Commission, to give his information directly to the Justice Department. Garrison

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DR. CHETTA

... makes autopsy.
—AP Wirephoto.

Death Adds Mystery to JFK 'Plot'

said he was confident he can prove there was a conspiracy behind the assassination and that his probe will result in arrests and convictions.

Much of the conspiracy talk is old ground, already covered by both the FBI and the Warren Commission in 1963 and 1964.

For example, Ferrie confirmed Saturday that he had been questioned by the FBI at the time of the assassination. And evidence that the Warren group had considerable information on Ferrie is clearly shown by three pages of testimony touching on him in volume eight of the Warren Report.

Ferrie's files when he was a Civil Air Patrol leader in a squadron near one that Oswald joined were studied at the time of the assassination by New

Turn to Page 6A, Column 1.

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."

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

Turn to Page 6A, Column 3.

FBI Probing Story Of 'Plot' on Kennedy

Continued from Page 1A.

Orleans police Detective Fred-eric S. O'Sullivan,

Warren Commission attorney Wesley J. Liebeler asked O'Sullivan, who had known both Oswald and Ferrie, whether "you know of any connection between Oswald and David Ferries?"

"No, I have no personal knowledge of anything," said the detective.

THERE HAS BEEN speculation in New Orleans that Ferrie was to have provided a getaway plane for Oswald in Dallas but this, too, was studied three years ago by the FBI and Warren Commission.

Answering Liebeler's questioning in April, 1964, O'Sullivan said he went to a New Orleans airport to look at Ferrie's plane shortly after the assassination.

"We wanted to check it to see if it was flyable," O'Sullivan testified. "To see possibly whether he had been flying it lately, with the thought that he may have transported Oswald to Dallas . . . but missing, needed a paint job.

"We also checked to see if he had rented an aircraft from any of the companies out there, and one company in particular said they wouldn't rent him an airplane."

FERRIE, in his interview Saturday with the New Orleans States-Item, said he did not know Oswald. Ferrie operated

a flying service in New Orleans and was a private investigator.

David Lewis, an ex-pricate eye, has allegedly told District Attorney Garrison that he knew of five persons implicated in a plot to kill Kennedy. He contends he knew Oswald. Bernardo Torres, the Cuban exile, says he has been helping Garrison to look into the background of some Cubans.

The best long-range guess by Washington observers who have closely followed the assassination developments since Nov. 22, 1963, is that Garrison may come up with a few disgruntled men sitting around talking vaguely about how someone ought to kill the President. At worst, the investigation may be a complete fiasco based on untrustworthy sensation-seekers' testimony.

Garrison Hints Pilot Had Secret

Continued from Page 1A.

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."

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

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

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.

The nude body of Ferrie, who operated a flying service here, was found in the calm posture of sleep, covered to the chest by a bedsheet.

His second-floor apartment was in disarray and disorder. An American flag was in the living room. Although 15 bottles of various pills were on a table, the coroner said no drugs

were found other than those used for vascular disease.

He said Ferrie was born with a weak blood vessel at the base of his brain. It ruptured, producing a massive cerebral hemorrhage, Chetta said. Ferrie also suffered from high blood pressure and recently told a friend he had encephalitis (sleeping sickness).

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

Although Garrison said he considered Ferrie's death a suicide, he added, "I am not ruling out murder. I'm not ruling out anything. We have gone far beyond the point of the Warren Commission. We have made progress in three months with a handful of men than the Warren Commission with 3,000 men made in three years."

Ferrie was described in sympathetic tones by Garrison as a man who had suffered private pain and was tortured by his appearance. He had lost his hair and eyebrows in an explosion several years ago, Garrison said. He did not reveal the details. Ferrie wore a shaggy toupee and mascara eyebrows.

A native of Cleveland, Ohio, Ferrie resided in New Orleans the last 15 years. In 1961, he lost his job as an airline pilot after being arrested on a morals charge in suburban New Orleans. He was never tried on the charge.