

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

TESTS ARE RUN ON BODY OF FIGURE IN JFK PROBE

Garrison Says Arrest of Ferrie Was Planned

Toxicological tests were run Wednesday and will be resumed Thursday to determine the cause of the death of David William Ferrie, a central figure in District Attorney Jim Garrison's investigation into the death of President John F. Kennedy.

Dr. Nicholas Chetta, Orleans Parish coroner, said anatomical findings showed that Ferrie suffered a rupture of a blood vessel at the base of the brain, which caused a hemorrhage.

Garrison said at a press conference Wednesday afternoon that he had decided Wednesday morning, before he learned of Ferrie's death, to arrest the man next week.

The DA would not elaborate on what charges he would have filed or what evidence he had.

The Times-Picayune learned that on Monday night Ferrie had contacted two persons who had been interrogated in Garrison's probe, seeking information about persons who had been associated with Lee Harvey Oswald. One of the men was Carlos Bringuier, who had a fight with Oswald here in August, 1963.

NOTE IS FOUND

Ferrie was found dead at noon Wednesday in his apartment at 3330 Louisiana ave. pkwy. Dr. Chetta found an unsigned note on Ferrie's dining room table which read in part:

"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."

The coroner said more information was written on the



DAVID W. FERRIE
Found dead in apartment.

note, but declined to say what it was.

Dr. Chetta said although Ferrie had an assortment of drugs in his apartment, he did not know whether Ferrie had consumed any.

He said the time of death was "sometime last (Tuesday) evening."

Garrison said his investigators, who had kept a stake-out at Ferrie's apartment for "some time," saw the signs in Ferrie's apartment go out at 11 p. m.

However, George Lardner, a reporter for the Washington Post and Times-Herald, here to cover Garrison's investigation, said he went to Ferrie's residence about midnight to interview him and remained until about 4 a. m. "Once you get him talking it's hard to shut him off," Lardner said before he learned of Ferrie's death.

NOT DEPRESSED

The reporter said Ferrie appeared to be neither excessively excited nor depressed, and there was no indication that he might be contemplating suicide. (Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

Dr. Chetta, questioned later, said that rigor mortis had set in and that the time of Ferrie's death had to be before 4 a. m. Lardner, meanwhile, insisted that he had visited with Ferrie until that hour.

Garrison told The Times-Picayune late Wednesday that the time of Ferrie's death, according to the coroner, and the time that Lardner says he was with Ferrie represents a major inconsistency in the case, and "is one of the mysteries we don't understand."

Dr. Chetta said he had information that Ferrie talked about ending his life two weeks ago. He would not elaborate, except to say the man who said this has a first name of "Joseph."

Garrison said of the man's death, "The apparent suicide of David Ferrie ends the life of a man who, in my judgment, was one of history's most important individuals."

The DA said that "evidence developed by our office has long since confirmed he was involved in events culminating in the assassination of President Kennedy."

He said investigators who had conducted the stake-out at Ferrie's apartment had information "which had caused us to become increasingly concerned as our investigation progressed about the possibility of his killing himself."

DECIDED TO ARREST
"Because of this," he continued, "in a meeting at my house

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this morning we reached a decision to arrest him early next week—apparently we waited too long."

Garrison said the "primary reason for the planned arrest of Ferrie was because we felt we had reached a point where we had enough information to move."

"Although my office has been investigating Ferrie intensively for months, we have not mentioned his name publicly up to this point," Garrison added. "The unique nature of this case now leaves me no other course of action."

Asked if he had any reason to believe anybody but Lee Harvey Oswald took part in the actual assassination, Garrison replied:

"I have no reason to believe at this point that Lee Harvey Oswald killed anybody in Dallas that day."

When asked whether Ferrie's death will hinder his investigation, he replied "No comment."

'PACING FLOOR'

He said his men had noted "extreme nervousness" in Ferrie for the last 10 days. He had

been seen "pacing his floor endlessly" and that he had indicated to an investigator that he was thinking about taking his life.

Garrison said Ferrie knew he was the subject of an investigation and had cooperated with his assistants.

When asked whether he will now ask for help from the federal government in the probe, Garrison replied by asking "What would be the purpose of seeking federal aid, to delay the investigation three more years? We've done more in three months with a small staff than the government did in three years with 5,000 men."

The district attorney did say, however, that he will ask Gov. John J. McKeithen for a few more men to aid the investigation.

NOT OBLIGATED

Davis Lewis, who had said Monday that he feared for his

life because of what he knew about "the plot," could not be found Thursday for comment on Ferrie's death.

He is a shipping agent at a bus line here.

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."

Neither Lewis, nor his wife and four children were at his residence Wednesday night. Neighbors on both sides of the house said they didn't know where the family was.

At the press conference, Garrison refused to allow photographs to be taken, saying that pictures would "create something of a circus atmosphere" around the circumstances of Ferrie's death.

Asked if he was taking steps to protect other principals in the case, he said his office is under no obligation to protect anyone and that the size of his staff would prohibit such action.

MENTIONED IN REPORT

The district attorney said that Ferrie's name is mentioned throughout 57 pages of a report on the assassination which is stored at the National Archives in Washington. However, 36 of the 40 pages are classified secret and are not available to local investigators, he added. Garrison said the names of persons mentioned along with Ferrie in the report have been recorded and they are being questioned. He did not elaborate on who the other principals are or where they live.

Ferrie, who had lived here since the early 1950s, was "a brilliant man" who possessed knowledge in many areas, stated Garrison. "He was a man of lights and shadows, a man of mountains and valleys." The district attorney said he "felt sorry" for Ferrie.

During his last hours of life, Ferrie sat in a chair facing his opened front door Tuesday. At about 11 p.m., he rose and put out the lights, according to a report from Garrison's investigators on stakeout duty near Ferrie's residence. The investigators remained in a short time after the lights in the apartment

were out, and then left assuming that he had gone to bed. During the night hours Tuesday, no one entered or left the apartment while the investigators watched the residence, they said.

WANTED HELP

Bringuier, and another man, who asked that his identity not be revealed, said that when Ferrie visited them Monday he was interested in obtaining information about people who had been associated with Oswald.

Bringuier said that Ferrie wanted help in the form of "any information about Americans or Cubans in contact with Oswald here." Ferrie also asked him "what day" the "plot" supposedly Bringuier.

Bringuier said that he immediately telephoned the district attorney's office and re-

lated details of the visit, which he said occurred "sometime in the morning."

ASKED SAME DATA

Bringuier, a Cuban exile, said that Ferrie met him in a restaurant near the former's place of business at 111 Decatur.

Garrison's office had contacted him some time after he had heard of the investigation. News of it came to him in early January, he said, but he would not reveal how.

The other source said that Ferrie subsequently visited

him Monday, and also asked him for information about certain people connected with Oswald. Ferrie seemed "very anxious" to contact them, the source said, and added that "Ferrie was in deep trouble." The man said he too called the district attorney's office to report details of the visit.

Neither source would reveal what people Ferrie was interested in.

'VIRAL ENCEPHALITIS'

According to police, Ferrie was discovered dead in bed in his apartment at 11:40 a. m. Ferrie was nude and a bedsheet was pulled over his head.

Police questioned an unidentified youth who, one detective said, found the body. How-

ever, the youth said he didn't find the body, didn't know Ferrie and "just happened to wander in."

Ferrie had said Saturday morning that he was suffering from what he called viral encephalitis. He said he had been inside the house "for about three weeks."

Garrison's office immediately joined in the investigation, though this is not usually the case until a coroner's verdict is rendered. Detectives Douglas Ward and Lester Otilio took names of all who stood outside the two-story stucco building — neighbors, curious passers-by, reporters and photographers.

Dr. Chetta arrived on the scene and took over the investigation.

FRIEND, CLAIM

Also at the scene were Police Capt. Henry Morris; Lt. Cornelius Drumm, chief of homicide, and Sam Moran, chief investigator for the coroner's office.

A police source said the

youth under questioning was a friend of Ferrie and one of his co-workers. He said the youth found the body and notified police. The youth is 24 with sandy blond hair, combed long. He had long sideburns and wore a plaid shirt.

Ferrie lived in an upstairs apartment.

Ferrie's body was taken to the coroner's office about 2 p.m. A police detail was put at the door of the office, and no visitors were allowed inside.

The mystery witness was taken to headquarters by Det. James Alphonse of the homicide division.

Coroner's lab technicians went to work on the case. Bureau of Identification personnel began taking fingerprints and other evidence.

PERSONAL EFFECTS

Moran opened Ferrie's personal effects in the outer coroner's office. He got through the wallet and then picked up everything and went into the privacy of Dr. Chetta's office.

Noted among the effects were number of identification cards. Apparently, no money was in the wallet. There were pieces of paper with names and phone numbers on them.

In the apartment were found at least 15 pill bottles, some with caps on them and some empty. It was not disclosed what kinds of medicine they represented.

Ferrie ran a private flying service from a coffee shop at New Orleans Lakefront Airport.

"He was always very nice and never got out of line," recalled a waitress who declined to give her name. "He was intelligent and real serious about flying, because that's all he ever talked about."

TALKED FREELY

Ferrie talked freely with reporters from both The States-Item and The Times-Picayune last weekend, but he refused to be interviewed on television. One television reporter said this was because he felt he would be "an unsympathetic character."

The former airlines pilot had said Saturday morning that he was told Friday night that he would be indicted by the Orleans Parish Grand Jury in regard to the Garrison investigation of the possibility of a plot to kill President Kennedy. Ferrie didn't say who had told him.

DENIES OSWALD LINK

He denied any link with Lee Harvey Oswald, President Kennedy's accused assassin. "I did not know Oswald," said Ferrie, who had lived in New Orleans for 15 years.

He told of the circumstances surrounding his arrest in 1963 a few days after the assassination of President Kennedy. According to Ferrie, he and two companions decided that afternoon, Nov. 22, 1963, to drive to Texas on a pleasure trip.

"We went that night to Vinton, La., then to Houston, Galveston, Tex., where we did some goose hunting, and finally back to Alexandria, La.," recalled Ferrie. "It was

there I discovered that Garrison and his assistant Frank Klein had broken into my apartment and carted off a lot of things."

Ferrie said he was arrested by Garrison's office as being a fugitive from Texas. After giving Garrison a minute account of his activities, Ferrie said he was released.

GRAND JURY CALL

But Ferrie said he got a call from the Orleans Parish Grand Jury in January, 1967, to appear. As he got to the Criminal Courts building, he was asked to step into the district attorney's office.

Ferrie said Garrison's investigators talked with him extensively about the November week leading up to the murder in Dallas, Tex., and he asked to be allowed to see a transcript he gave the Federal Bureau of Investigation. According to Ferrie, that was the last he heard from the district attorney's office until his friends started calling him and telling him of recent questioning by the district attorney's office.

Ferrie was cynical about the district attorney's investigation of the supposed plot. Regarding a list of the expenses of the DA's investigators, he said: "Look at this, Miami, that's a good place for the assistant attorneys to go in the winter."

On the probe, itself, he said: "It's a big joke, that's what it is."

'GET A LITTLE WEAK'

The Ferrie apartment was a walkup adjoining a front porch that was piled high with debris, including children's toys. Inside the living room, standing in a corner, was an American flag.

Pill bottles, books and other reading matter were scattered about the living room. Ferrie was barefooted during a recent interview, and as a reporter left him, he said, "You don't mind if I lie down; I get a little weak."

In 1961, Ferrie was booked in Jefferson Parish with committing a crime against nature and indecent behavior with juveniles. Both charges were not pressed in 1962, records

show.

SHOCKED—MOTHER

Mrs. Marguerite Oswald, mother of Lee Harvey Oswald, said of Ferrie, "I've always been amazed that that man was arrested and questioned, but not interviewed by the Warren Commission. He is not listed in the Warren Report as testifying in person before the commission members."

"And," she added, "he is not the only one who should have been questioned by commission members and was not. This just verifies what I've been saying for the past three years, that it was an inadequate investigation."

"I'm shocked and dismayed that another life may have been forfeited for lack of a thorough investigation," she said.

Ferrie had said the FBI first became interested in him after a man identified as Ed Voebel reported he served with Oswald in a Civil Air Patrol unit commanded by Ferrie.

Actually, Ferrie said, Voebel was in the Moisant Squadron and "I was in the Lakefront Squadron." Ferrie said he never knew Oswald.

TESTIMONY CITED

A New Orleans police detective, Frederick S. O'Sullivan, had testified before the Warren Commission that he found "nothing concrete" to link Ferrie and Oswald.

A David Ferrie, O'Sullivan

testified, was in charge of a New Orleans Civil Air Patrol unit, but O'Sullivan was not sure whether he was Oswald's commanding officer.

O'Sullivan was asked by the commission if he knew whether Oswald was associated with or knew Ferrie through the CAP.

"No, I am not sure," O'Sullivan replied.

O'Sullivan said that after the assassination he went through all the old CAP files that were available, trying to get any information he could for the Secret Service.

"We found papers signed by Ferrie, ~~but~~ nothing in relation to Oswald," O'Sullivan testified.

CHECKED PLANE

O'Sullivan went on to tell the commission that he believed Ferrie had been arrested after the assassination in connection with "this Oswald situation."

"I don't know just what he was charged with, I believe just under investigation or whatever it was, I don't know."

During the investigation of Ferrie, O'Sullivan said, he and Lt. Paul Dwyer of the New Orleans police department checked Ferrie's airplane to see "if it was flyable, to see possibly whether he had been flying it lately with the thought that he may have transported Oswald to Dallas."

"... ~~we~~ found his plane, but his plane was not in flyable condition. It had flat tires, instruments missing, needed a paint job," he testified.

The officers also checked if Ferrie had rented an aircraft from anyone at the airport and said one company told them they would not rent to Ferrie but did not explain why.

Voebel had told the commission that he and Oswald had joined the CAP unit, but that Oswald only attended two or three meetings and then "just quit coming, so I figured he had lost interest in the whole thing."

Part of the CAP training involved firing .22 caliber rifles, but O'Sullivan said he did not recall Oswald ever taking part in that phase.

House Where Ferrie's Body Was Found



DAVID WILLIAM FERRIE was found dead Wednesday in the bedroom off the upper front porch of this two-story stucco home at

3330 Louisiana ave. pkwy. The body was discovered in bed by a youth at 11:40 a. m.

—Photo by The Times-Picayune



LEADING AN UNSIGNED NOTE found in the home of David W. Ferrie after his body was discovered Wednesday by Dr. Nicholas Chetta, Orleans Parish coroner. Ferrie, a key figure in the district attorney's investigation into the assassination of President Kennedy, was found dead in his home Wednesday afternoon. District Attorney James G. Thompson said he planned to arrest Ferrie next week in connection with the case.

Ferrie's Body Removed from Residence



POLICE OFFICERS remove the body of David William Ferrie from his second-floor apartment at 3330 Louisiana ave. pkwy.

—Photo by The Times-Picayune
Wednesday. The body was removed through the rear entrance of the building.