

GAR

JFK Plot Pilot 'Cleared'

Not Involved, Informant Says

By United Press International
and The Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — A former investigator who claimed to know four conspirators in a 1963 plot to assassinate President Kennedy dropped out of sight early today, but later showed up at District Attorney Jim Garrison's office.

David Lewis, 26, met newsmen briefly, to say David W. Ferrie, 49, a former Eastern Airlines pilot found dead in his apartment Wednesday, was not one of the "possible members of the plot."

WARREN REPORT

Lewis said previously he had given Garrison four or five names of persons involved in the conspiracy, and as a result feared for his life.

He dropped out of sight with his wife and four children Wednesday night, but reappeared at the District Attorney's office late Thursday morning.

He refused to say anything other than that Ferrie was not one of the group he knew.

Ferrie was mentioned in the Warren Report and questioned by Garrison in his new investigation of the assassination. Garrison called his death "apparent suicide."

Earlier today Garrison hinted Ferrie carried to his grave some secrets about Kennedy's assassination.

FERRIE'S BELIEF

However, Washington sources also contradicted Garrison, said the Warren investigation of Ferrie showed he had no connection with the Kennedy assassination. Both the Justice Department and the FBI had a firm no

—Turn to Page 13, Col. 1



DAVID LEWIS
Fears for his life
—AP Photo



JIM GARRISON
"I'm still optimistic"



DAVID W. FERRIE
Secrets in grave?

comment when asked about Ferrie's death.

The post-assassination investigation for the Warren Commission showed that Ferrie, who had been fingered as a possible getaway pilot for Lee Harvey Oswald, and his plane were in New Orleans at the time Kennedy was fatally shot, the sources said. Furthermore the inquiry established that the pilot had no associations with Lee Harvey Oswald, they said.

In an allied development, the Washington Post reported that Ferrie had said in an interview that he believed Oswald had acted alone in the assassination.

In a copyrighted story, the Post's George Lardner Jr., wrote that Ferrie had stressed in an interview just before he was found dead that Oswald was a "loner."

STILL 'SECRET'

A spokesman for the National Archives — where the report and papers of the Warren Commission are kept — said there were portions of the Ferrie phase of the investigation that were still classified "secret." This material was said to deal with aspects of Ferrie's life that could have damaged his reputation had they been made public.

District Attorney Garrison

in his comments said:

"We felt that Ferrie was ready to talk candidly, to contribute to this important investigation. 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."

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.

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.

ROOM IN DISORDER

His apartment was in disarray and disorder. An American flag was in the living room. Although 15 bottles of pills were on a table, the coroner said no drugs were found other than those used for vascular disease.

Coroner Nicholas Chetta said Ferrie suffered a massive cerebral hemorrhage when a blood vessel burst at the base of his brain. The coroner called this the cause of death last night, but said

today he was not sure, and indicated that Ferrie could have killed himself.

He said Ferrie was born with a weak blood vessel at the base of his brain. It ruptured, producing a massive cerebral hemorrhage.

An unsigned, undated note was found on the dining room table. The first paragraph 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."

Ferrie was brought into the assassination probe within 72 hours after Kennedy was slain Nov. 22, 1963.

A New Orleans florist, Edward Voebel, had seen Lee Harvey Oswald's picture on television and reported 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.

Ferrie said 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 and Alexandria, La. They did not go to Dallas, he said.