

## NATIONAL AFFAIRS

judiciously side-stepped the thorniest problem of all: what to do about deferments for college students.

In a message released at the LBJ Ranch at the weekend, the President said he will issue an Executive order eliminating deferments for all graduate students except those in dentistry and medicine. He will also, he said, make sure that uniform standards prevail among the local draft boards. As for undergraduates, Mr. Johnson chose to remain silent on his commission's recommendation that men entering college by age 19 be allowed to remain through their sophomore year, with ROTC cadets rating deferment until graduation.

Basically, the President's message asked Congress merely to extend the Selective Service law for another four years with the promise that detailed changes would be brought about by Executive order. In line with the suggestions of his commission, he commended—and presumably will order—a limited form of lottery. As envisioned by the commission, all eligibles (19-year-olds) would be placed in a pool and be picked for service by means of the latest Washington acronym—FAIR—meaning “fair and impartial random” selection process. This new process may indeed be FAIR. But popular—hardly.

### HISTORICAL FOOTNOTES:

#### The Hostage

The longer the war in Vietnam goes on, the greater the prospect that its outcome will determine Lyndon Johnson's place in history. And the longer it goes on, the more it nettles and annoys the Commander in Chief. “He hates this war,” said one of his friends recently. The President, who had hoped to make his mark in domestic affairs, is preoccupied by a distant challenge he never sought. And the seeker of consensus finds himself maneuvering indefinitely between the demands of doves and hawks.

Last week, as the war widened once again, a new, richly detailed book appeared that, while sternly critical of the President in most respects, embellishes this sympathetic view of his Vietnam dilemma.\* The authors—NEWSWEEK's Contributing Editor Edward Weintal and Pulitzer Prize winner Charles Bartlett, a close friend of President Kennedy—portray Mr. Johnson as unhappily trapped by a war he once stoutly opposed, in an area of national leadership—the conduct of foreign affairs—that he heartily wishes he could forget.

Mr. Johnson's deep distaste for foreign affairs is repeatedly demonstrated, as the authors explore the crisis-strewn course of the past two Administrations from

\*“Facing the Brink: An Intimate Study of Crisis Diplomacy.” 248 pages. Scribners. \$5.95.

Yemen to Vietnam. “When a [foreign policy] problem blows up,” President Kennedy is quoted as remarking about his Vice President, “I never think of calling him because he hasn't read the cables.” When Lyndon Johnson became President himself, powerful persuasion was needed to get him even to see foreign ambassadors. “Who are these birds?” he is quoted. “Have Rusk see them; they are his clients, not mine.”

**Awkward:** And the reputed master of domestic politics is recurrently depicted as coarse and awkward in the exercise of international politics. When Britain's Prime Minister Harold Wilson once telephoned to seek a meeting with the President, Mr. Johnson roared into the transatlantic telephone: “I won't have you electioneering on my doorstep. Every time you get in trouble in Parliament you run over here with your shirttail hanging out. I'm not going to allow it this time.”

As for American involvement in Vietnam, Mr. Johnson's home-honed instincts



Associated Press

Sideshow: New Orleans D.A. Jim Garrison (above) last week charged retired businessman Clay Shaw (right) with plotting Kennedy's assassination



Associated Press

told him the U.S. should stay out from the very beginning. As early as 1954, Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson is portrayed pounding on President Eisenhower's desk and adamantly refusing to support any U.S. move to aid besieged French forces in Vietnam. Later, as Vice President, Mr. Johnson appears as the only high-level member of the Kennedy Administration to oppose the coup against South Vietnam President Ngo Dinh Diem. “I've never been happy that Otto Passman [of Louisiana] has complete control of our foreign-aid appropriations,” he is quoted as saying. “But . . . we don't try to overthrow him.”

**Blueprint:** The coup, say the authors, set the U.S. on the course of full-scale military intervention, despite Mr. Johnson's unhappiness at the prospect. A top-level blueprint for U.S. intervention, and for systematic escalation, the book contends, was ready as early as March 1964.

(The first step, later discarded on Presidential orders: a bizarre form of psychological warfare in which unmarked planes would suddenly swoop down and create sonic booms over North Vietnamese targets.) But President Johnson moodily resisted taking the final step in the planned escalation—direct attack on North Vietnam. For long, it was assumed he was only waiting until after the November 1964 elections to act. But first, Mr. Johnson eliminated all plans for limited invasion from the south. And even then he held off on orders to begin bombing until Feb. 7, 1965.

On balance, the authors renew the charge that the U.S. overseas has “muddled from crisis to crisis,” and they severely criticize Mr. Johnson for a lack of steady attention to foreign affairs. But on the key question of Vietnam, he emerges as a hostage of history—unwillingly involved, apprehensive over the struggle, unable to effect an honorable settlement yet responsible for the result.

### ASSASSINATION:

#### History or Headlines?

The sinister summer of 1963 was a time of turbulence for New Orleans, that most Latin of major U.S. cities. Lee Harvey Oswald was on hand, one day posing as a member of an anti-Castro group, the next handing out pro-Castro leaflets. The streets were seething with Cuban exiles of every political stripe, and the city was simmering with their plots and counterplots. Probing that murky period last week, New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison was still seeking a conspiracy in the assassination of John F. Kennedy, still making headlines rather than history.

After three months of quiet investigation and two weeks of wide-ranging accusations, the district attorney narrowed his focus of attention. He indicated that

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he was zeroing in on a group of Cuban exiles and American eccentrics who first plotted the assassination of Cuban dictator Fidel Castro and then, incredibly, shifted their target to John F. Kennedy. Garrison has one key source for leads; the published testimony taken by the Warren commission. But unlike other commission critics who doubt that Oswald alone killed Kennedy, the burly, boisterous district attorney has all the powers of his office—to subpoena witnesses, to make arrests and to procure search warrants. He used those powers last week and made the most serious and precise charge of his self-perpetuating investigation. He arrested New Orleans businessman Clay Shaw. Then, in an application for a warrant to search Shaw's French Quarter home, he sketched the outlines of an alleged plot against Kennedy. The D.A. stated that Shaw, under the alias of "Clay Bertrand," met with Oswald and perhaps others, including an unnamed informant, to plan the assassination. They met, according to Garrison, in the apartment of David Ferrie, whose recent death was followed by Garrison's claim he had been about to arrest him (NEWSWEEK, March 6).

**Extra Man:** The Warren commission testimony briefly mentions a Clay Bertrand who allegedly sought a lawyer for Oswald on the afternoon of the assassination. But Bertrand was never even located, much less linked to Shaw, 54, a well-known figure in New Orleans. A large and stately man, with the bearing of a higher-echelon diplomat, Shaw is a wealthy businessman and real-estate speculator who was a decorated World War II hero and later became managing director of the International Trade Mart. His bachelorhood and old-world charm have made him the perfect "extra man" at dinner parties in the ante-bellum mansions of the city's uptown district. To most New Orleans citizens, he seemed one of the Establishment untouchables.

Not to Jim Garrison. After he was arrested, Shaw was questioned for several hours, and finally emerged from the D.A.'s office in handcuffs to be booked and then released on \$10,000 bond. The search of his apartment, according to the report filed in Criminal District Court, yielded little but apparently unrelated exotica: five whips, several lengths of chain, a black net hat, a black cape and hood. Shaw denied ever knowing Oswald or participating in an assassination conspiracy. "I never heard of any plot," he said. "I never used any alias in my life."

But Garrison continued right on in the cocksure vein that has made his investigation front-page news all over the world. His staff was busy running down leads in exile communities and in the homosexual world of his own city as well as of Houston, Dallas and Miami. When

staffers phoned in last week, they identified themselves with bingo-game code names—B-15, N-37. "It's the only way I can talk to my people without [the FBI] knowing my every step," Garrison told NEWSWEEK's Philip Carter and Hugh Aynesworth.

**'Gay Boy':** The D.A. insisted he already had proof that Shaw, Ferrie and Oswald were conspirators, but was still looking for a "gay boy" who resembled Oswald and actually fired the fatal shots. To all appearances, Garrison exuded confidence. "We've got it wrapped up," he said. "I don't think—I know!"

Skeptics doubted that Garrison knew anything very definite. In Washington, Attorney General Ramsey Clark announced that the FBI had found "no connection" between Shaw and the assassination. (Clark, declared Garrison,



Associated Press

Bombed out truck: Jackson paid the price of getting ahead in Natchez

would not "qualify for my staff.") And in Lima, Peru, touring Chief Justice Earl Warren said he knew of nothing to change his commission's conclusions.

Moreover, D.A. Garrison's decision to concentrate on homosexuals, a relatively vulnerable group, tended to produce a line-up of alleged conspirators that much of the public found difficult to take seriously. Ferrie, for example, remained a solid suspect in the Garrison gallery of calculated evil, but a laughingstock to exile militants. Last week Cuban exile leader Sergio Arcacha told of the time Ferrie took him to see a "two-man submarine" that Ferrie, a onetime airlines pilot, had constructed to harass Castro's shipping lanes. The little craft was made from an old B-25 gas tank, had no navigation instruments and no power plant but foot pedals. The sub rested for a time in a backyard and finally ended up on a garbage dump.

So, say Garrison's own growing gallery of critics, will the D.A.'s case.

## MISSISSIPPI:

### A Gamble in Natchez

To get ahead, Wharlest Jackson was willing to gamble. The chunky, 35-year-old laborer at the Armstrong Tire and Rubber Co. theoretically had a crack at a job opening—with a raise from \$2.90 to \$3.07 an hour—that would help him support five children and pay off his wife's overdue medical bills. But it wasn't that easy: Jackson was a Negro—and the job, by custom, was "white"—and he was in Natchez, Miss., until recently the unofficial headquarters of the state's Ku Klux Klan. Uneasy, he went to NAACP leader Charles Evers. "Charlie, should I bid for the white man's job?" he asked. "Yes," said Evers. Jackson bid and got the job.

Last week, that gamble cost Wharlest

Jackson his life. On a chill, rainy night, he punched out of his new job at 8:01, climbed into his battered 1957 Chevrolet pickup and started home. But before he was halfway there, the pickup exploded—ripping Jackson's body apart and littering the street with his flesh.

**Protest:** The bomb that killed Jackson also shattered a tenuous peace between Negroes and whites in Natchez, recently the site of demonstrations and racial violence. A year and a half ago, George Metcalfe, like Jackson a local NAACP official, was mutilated in a car-bombing incident. This time, a sickened and enraged Charles Evers, whose own brother Medgar had been gunned down at night, rushed to Natchez and massed 2,000 angry Negroes to protest Jackson's murder.

Negroes later marched to the Armstrong plant on the outskirts of town to protest the alleged employment of Klan men and to "watch Jackson's killers" they left work at the afternoon shift change. "When are they ever going