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WASHINGTON POST DATE 29 Sep 71 PAGE 5

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House Approves Assassin Probe's Immunity Power

Associated Press

The House authorized the Assassinations Committee yesterday to immunize witnesses possibly like prisoners and gangsters in investigating the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Chairman Louis Stokes (D-Ohio) told the House his committee may need immunity for more than his witnesses in the Kennedy investigation alone.

Stokes said the only way the committee can obtain testimony from jailed crime figures and soldiers of fortune is to provide court immunity against their testimony being used to prosecute them.

The House approved 200 to 115 the committee's request for authority to ask the courts for immunity powers.

Stokes' reluctance to produce of fortune appeared to confirm a report that an appearance by soldier-of-fortune Loren Hall was postponed this month so that he could be given immunity.

Hall has said in at least four published interviews—in which details varied—that before the Kennedy assassination Nov. 22, 1963, Dallas businessmen offered him $50,000 to kill the President.

The committee chairman refused to make any comment about Hall.

He also told reporters he cannot reveal how more than 100 people, including gangsters and soldiers of fortune, might still need immunity for their stories about the 14-year-old assassination.

"We just cannot answer that question at this time," Stokes said. "We know what we're doing."

Rep. Neal Smith (D-Iowa) opposed the request on grounds that it would give a majority of seven committee members power to grant immunity.

20529

Oswald's Widow Tells of 'Very High Level of Anger' at Him for the Legacy of Shame

By CAREY WINFREY

In a little while Marina Oswald Porter would read a statement to a room full of reporters, reiterating her conviction that Lee Harvey Oswald, her husband at the time, had assassinated President John F. Kennedy and had done so alone.

But now, sitting in the office of the publisher of a new book that she had come to New York to promote, she was worried. As she talked about Lee Oswald in English that was only faintly accented by her native Russian, the diminutive Dallas housewife fidgeted and chain-smoked menthol cigarettes. She was nervous about the news conference, and worried that the reporters would be "disappointed" that she had nothing new to say.

She will receive approximately 60 percent of the royalties earned by "Marina and Lee" for her cooperation with its author, Priscilla Johnson McMillan. But she expressed fears of losing the equilibrium that time, a new life and a measure of anonymity have helped her to achieve.

"I feel like an animal caged in a zoo," she said, "with people pointing their fingers at you."

'Young and Immature'

At 36 years of age, she is still pretty. Her eyes are almost iridescently blue. She is poised but guarded, as if she holds her emotions in tight rein. Beneath the surface, there appears to be sadness.

Her greatest regret, she said, is that when she first came to this country, she was not stronger, more independent, better able to judge her former husband's precarious psyche.

"I was so young and immature," she said. "I didn't realize he had a sick mind. I didn't analyze him or me or our marriage that deeply and seek real help for him. I was too blind."

The residue of guilt she feels about what she refers to simply as "November" comes from her belief that she might have prevented the 1963 assassination either by seeking psychiatric help for her husband, or, after he told her that he had fired a rifle at Gen. Edwin A. Walker, by reporting that incident to the police.

"Lee was the only person I had in this country," she said. "He had gone to so much trouble to bring me here, I feared of losing him if I betrayed him."

As the years have passed and as she has learned more about him and his motives by reading his diaries, her feelings for her former husband have hardened.

"It's a very strong word to use: hate. Perhaps a very high level of anger is closer," she said. Why? "How dare he ruin my name and that of my children forever? And I do not believe in killing other people."

During an hour-and-a-half interview before the news conference, she relaxed only occasionally, mainly when she talked of her family—her daughters, June, who is 16 years old, and Rachel, who is almost 14, and her son, Mark, 11. The girls never knew their father. He was shot and killed by Jack Ruby. Mark's father is Lennath Porter, a sewing-machine salesman and repairman who likes to go fishing. Mrs. Oswald was married to him in 1965, and she lives quietly with him today on 17 acres of Texas prairie outside Dallas. She insists that, newspaper reports to the contrary, they are not "well to do."

Her children are the centerpiece of her new life. "I hope their dreams are strong enough for them to meet the goals they set for themselves," she said. "The main thing I want for them is to be good and compassionate people. I didn't do anything great in my life, but maybe my children will be able to do something for their homeland."

She had read the book, the first half of which is almost pure biography of her, only a few days before. She had always said she wouldn't read it, but "my curiosity got the better of me." It depressed her.

"When your mistakes are printed in black and white," she said, "it forces you to think harder about yourself and try to correct them."

She says she has tried to put Russia behind her, that she even thinks in English now. She does not read Russian books or magazines, has very little contact with the Russian community in Dallas and makes no effort to get in touch with friends and relatives there for fear of putting them in jeopardy. Someday, when the children are grown, she might like to take some courses in agriculture (she's an avid gardener) or interior decorating, but "I live one day at a time now; I don't make any plans."

18669

To Forget Is Not To Forgive

By Lee Lescaze

NEW YORK—Marina Oswald Porter, hesitant and almost expressionless, held a press conference yesterday to boost sales of a book about her life and her first husband, Lee Harvey Oswald. The book, "Marina and Lee," has a photograph of the couple inside a heart-shaped frame on the cover. It is, the jacket copy says, "A fascinating and richly detailed portrait of a man who was driven to kill and a woman who was determined to survive."

"My regret through the years has . . . been immense," Porter told the assembled reporters as photographers took picture after picture of the short, slim woman who is thinner now than she was when her husband assassinated President Kennedy in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963. "I can never forget or forgive what he (Oswald) did, to me and to my children, to the President and his family, to the whole world," she said.

She stood behind a lectern bristling with microphones and answered patiently as reporters probed for a bit of news or new psychosexual theory about the assassination that troubles Americans' memories as perhaps no other event has done.

"It was a sad life," she said when asked to characterize her more than two years of marriage to Oswald. "A quite difficult marriage . . . and problems from a financial point of view that didn't make things easier."

"How do you feel about Oswald?" reporters asked again and again.

"You forget with the years about the bad and troublesome times," she replied. But, when she read "Marina and Lee" for the first time two weeks ago it made her angry at him.

A reporter remarked that she seemed to know more about Oswald from reading the book than from her life with him.

Porter, who spent nearly seven months with the book's author Priscilla Johnson McMillan in 1964, explained again that she had forgotten many of the bad times until she read the book.

Reporters pressed her to say she feels hatred for Oswald. She agreed

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that some of what she feels could be called hate.

A questioner reminded her that at one time during her marriage to Oswald she had felt a sexual aversion to him. Perhaps, he suggested, Oswald had killed Kennedy as a result of sexual frustration.

Porter rejected the suggestion.

Another reporter wondered whether Oswald had been jealous of Kennedy because his wife admired the President. He proposed that it had been a triangle in Oswald's mind with the two men competing for her love. She did not take that theory seriously.

Marina Porter rarely changed expression as she turned her head and stared at each questioner. Employees of Harper & Row, the publisher of "Marina and Lee", groaned at some of the questions.

When McMillan was responding in a circuitous manner to a question about Oswalds mental health, Oswald's widow broke in: "Nobody in his right mind would kill someone."

"Of course," Porter responded when asked whether she ever thought of Kennedy's widow. "I always feel sorry for a woman who loses her husband." She explained that it is difficult for a woman alone to earn money and raise children.

But, she was asked, didn't she feel a special grief for Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis?

"For her and for me, too," Marina Porter replied levelly. "I'm sorry, but sometimes I do feel sorry for myself."

Her two children ask questions about their father, she told the press conference, and only then does she speak of him. "They ask, 'Did he ever play with me? Did he love me?' and things like that," she said.

A reporter said that the children must face a lot of questions from their schoolmates.

"What questions can they ask a child about a father he doesn't remember?" she replied.

In a prepared statement, Porter said that anyone who reads "Marina and Lee" "will see that the events of Nov. 22, 1963, had to happen. It was the final act of a slow, painful tragedy that was our life together."

She was unable to clarify at the press conference why the assassination "had to happen." Her husband had a violent temper and was a loner who acted alone in killing Kennedy, she said. But the 36-year-old woman, who will share in the book's royalties, made it clear that many of the details of her life with Oswald no longer stand out in her memory. A Harper & Row spokesman refused to say what percentage of the royalties she will get.

After 30 minutes of questioning, with the reporters' zeal to find fresh news or just to hear Marina Porter continue talking apparently undiminished, Harper & Row editor-in-chief Buz Wyeth cut the press conference off. A couple of the reporters and photographers asked Porter for her autograph before Wyeth could escort her from the room.

18668

NEW YORK [redacted] 10 OCT 77 PAGE 17

Assassination Panel Is Given Right to Bypass House

By WENDELL RAWLS Jr.
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Oct. 10—The House of Representatives has given its Select Committee on Assassinations a strong demonstration of support by granting the committee the right to bypass the full House and apply directly to the courts to compel witnesses to testify about their knowledge of events surrounding the deaths of President Kennedy and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

That decision, taken by the House last month in an overwhelmingly favorable vote, is considered the most significant recent development in the yearlong history of the embattled committee.

After struggling for the better part of its first year to obtain Congressional support and public credibility, the committee hired G. Robert Blakey as staff director and chief counsel last July 1, and since then has enlarged its staff from 38 to 216.

The number of field investigators rose from five to 28 in the same period, and the staff has opened a branch office in St. Louis, according to sources close to the committee.

Researchers are accumulating "immense stacks" of documents and are computerizing the information they contain, the sources said, and investigators are interviewing "hundreds" of [illegible]

At the House [illegible]

the committee is hearing testimony in executive session from Government agents and from people allegedly linked to the events in Dallas, where President Kennedy was shot in 1963, and in Memphis, where Dr. King was killed in 1968.

However, the sources said that House passage of the request by the committee on what is called "use immunity" was especially important because it carried as much symbolic as practical significance. The committee and its subcommittees are now allowed to bypass the normal procedure of going to the floor of the House each time they want to go to court for an order of use immunity for a witness.

Use immunity protects a witness by prohibiting the prosecutorial authorities from using the compelled testimony in any respect against him. Therefore, it insures that the testimony cannot lead to criminal penalties against the witness.

However, under a grant of use immunity, which the Senate Watergate committee gave to John W. Dean and Jeb Stuart MacGrunder, the witness must testify or face charges of civil contempt of Congress or possibly charges of criminal contempt of court.

If a witness refuses to testify, the committee could sentence him to jail in the basement of the Capitol for the life of the committee (until Dec. 31, 1978), or take him to court in the District of Columbia, which could sentence him to three years in the District jail. If the witness testified falsely, he could face possible perjury charges.

The symbolic significance, the sources said, lies in the favorable vote rolled up on the House floor and in the fact that only the House committee investigating the Korean payoff scandal now shares such authority to go to the courts without full House approval in advance.

The 280-to-112 vote favoring the committee's request contrasts with the much narrower 223-to-195 vote last March that extended the life of the committee through the end of the 95th Congress.

"The vote demonstrates that the House members now feel that the committee is conducting its affairs in a proper and dignified manner," a committee source said. "And [illegible] House with the vote has told everybody that it is prepared to support the work of the committee."

In addition, the source said, the action signals to such Government agencies as the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Central Intelligence Agency and to certain segments of organized crime that the committee's future is not tenuous and that it cannot be ignored or outwaited.

Seeking 'Degree of Involvement'

"The proper application of use immunity gives this country the best opportunity ever to discover the degree of involvement, if any, by the F.B.I., the C.I.A., organized crime or other entities with Dr. King and President Kennedy," the source said.

The members of the committee seem to be adhering to a gag rule requested by Mr. Blakey, the chief counsel and staff director, and imposed by its chairman, Representative Louis Stokes, Democrat of Ohio. But Mr. Stokes said in a speech on the House floor that the committee was receiving "excellent cooperation from all the agencies from whom we have sought any type of testimony of evidence of any type."

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TPM-STURGIS ARRESTED;250

NEW YORK (AP) - CONVICTED WATERGATE BURGLAR FRANK STURGIS HAS BEEN ARRESTED; ALLEGEDLY FOR THREATENING A WITNESS WHO GAVE A HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE DETAILS OF STURGIS' RELATIONSHIP WITH LEE HARVEY OSWALD; POLICE REPORT.

OSWALD WAS THE ASSASSIN OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY.

POLICE SAID STURGIS; 52;OF MIAMI; WAS SEIZED AT 11:30 P.M. MONDAY IN THE MANHATTAN APARTMENT OF MARITA LORENZ; FORMER UNDERCOVER AGENT FOR THE FBI AND CIA AND ONETIME LOVER OF CUBAN PRESIDENT FIDEL CASTRO.

ON MISS LORENZ' COMPLAINT; POLICE CHARGED STURGIS WITH AGGRAVATED HARASSMENT AND COERCION. THEY SAID HE APPLIED COERCION ''INSTILLING FEAR ON THE COMPLAINANT TO REFRAIN FROM TESTIFYING BEFORE A LEGALLY CONSTITUTED AUTHORITY.

MISS LORENZ WAS INTERVIEWED SATURDAY BY GAETON FONZI AND A. GONZALES; INVESTIGATORS FROM THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS; ABOUT A TRIP SHE SAYS SHE TOOK WITH OSWALD; STURGIS AND FOUR CUBANS IN A CAR FROM MIAMI TO DALLAS A FEW DAYS BEFORE KENNEDY'S DEATH.

SHE TOLD FONZI AND GONZALES THAT HER COMPANIONS WERE MEMBERS OF OPERATION 40; A 30-MEMBER GUERRILLA ORGANIZATION ORIGINALLY FORMED BY THE CIA IN 1960 TO PREPARE FOR THE INVASION OF CUBA.

STURGIS; WHO HAS ADMITTED HE TOOK PART IN OPERATION 40; HAS DENIED HE MADE THE TRIP WITH MISS LORENZ.

POLICE SAID STURGIS SOMEHOW HEARD ABOUT MISS LORENZ' SESSION WITH THE COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES AND FLEW TO NEW YORK. POLICE SAID SOME OF THE THREATS WERE TELEPHONED.

STURGIS WAS TO BE ARRAIGNED TODAY IN MANHATTAN CRIMINAL COURT.

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Date. 1 Nov
Item No. 6
Ref. No.

NEWS SERVICE

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*PM-STURGIS ARRESTED, 1ST LD, A689,60
*EDITORS: THIS LEAD PROVIDES ATTRIBUTION FOR STATEMENT THAT OSWALD WA THE ASSASSIN OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY.

NEW YORK (AP) - CONVICTED WATERGATE BURGLAR FRANK STURGIS HAS BEEN ARRESTED FOR ALLEGEDLY THREATENING A WITNESS WHO GAVE A HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE DETAILS OF STURGIS' RELATIONSHIP WITH LEE HARVEY OSWALD, POLICE REPORT.

OSWALD WAS THE ASSASSIN OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY, ACCORDING TO THE WARREN COMMISSION, WHICH INVESTIGATED THE ASSASSINATION.

*POLICE SAID: 3RD GRAF.

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UP-045

(FRANK STURGIS)

NEW YORK (UPI) - CONVICTED WATERGATE BURGLAR FRANK STURGIS WAS ARRESTED LAST NIGHT ON CHARGES OF THREATENING A WOMAN IN ORDER TO KEEP HER FROM TESTIFYING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS, POLICE REPORTED TODAY.

POLICE SAID STURGIS WAS ARRESTED IN A MANHATTAN APARTMENT AT 11:30 P.M. BY A DETECTIVE FROM THE DEPARTMENT'S INTELLIGENCE DIVISION. POLICE SAID THE APARTMENT WAS RENTED TO STURGIS.

POLICE SAID STURGIS HAD TELEPHONED THREATS TO MARITA LORENZ. MISS LORENZ IS A FORMER CIA AND FBI INFORMANT WHO TESTIFIED BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE THAT SHE ACCOMPANIED LEE HARVEY OSWALD, STURGIS AND OTHERS TO DALLAS ON NOV. 19, 1963, THREE DAYS BEFORE PRESIDENT KENNEDY WAS ASSASSINATED.

STURGIS, 52, WAS TO BE ARRAIGNED LATER TODAY ON CHARGES OF AGGRAVATED HARASSMENT AND COERCION.

STURGIS, OF MIAMI, FLA., WAS CHARGED WITH THREATENING MISS LORENZ TO "REFRAIN FROM TESTIFYING BEFORE LEGALLY CONSTITUTED AUTHORITIES," POLICE SAID.

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Dos, Don'ts Of House JFK Probe

By George Lardner Jr.
Washington Post Staff Writer

Country music singer Tommy Beckham, alias Eggleston Zimmerman, was feeling chipper as he returned to his Alabama jail cell last July.

A man of many credentials, from self-described Central Intelligence Agency operative to "bishop" of a variety of obscure sects, Beckham had just been acquitted of federal fraud charges stemming from his promotion of a country music concert that was never held.

Undeterred by all this, investigators from the House Assassinations Committee [illegible] the next day in a sweltering [illegible] in the Alabama Ala., city jail about the murder of President Kennedy. Beckham, as [illegible] reported, poured forth claims of having known Lee Harvey Oswald in New Orleans and assertions that Kennedy was the victim of a conspiracy and that he, Thomas E. Beckham, knew who had taken part in it.

"To tell you the truth, most people don't believe him," Beckham's own lawyer, Jeff Stein of Mobile, said succinctly. A [illegible]-time fugitive from New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison's abortive investigation into the Kennedy murder, Beckham finally returned to tell an Orleans Parish grand jury in 1968 that he really knew nothing about the President's assassination in 1963.

The House investigators, however, apparently took Beckham quite seriously. "They wanted names, dates, places," Stein said, recalling his telephone interview. "It was a sketch, but illustrative of the approximately 71.2 million [illegible]

JFK Death Probed Under Tight Rules

INQUIRY, From A1

House investigation has thus far cost. Operating in nearly total secrecy since the accession of G. Robert Blakey as chief counsel last June, the House Assassinations Committee has built up a sprawling staff of 100 individuals and hired more than 30 consultants whose names the committee refuses to disclose.

Under the terms of a perhaps unprecedented "Non-Disclosure Agreement" obtained by The Washington Post, the consultants cannot, without written permission, even "indicate, divulge or acknowledge" that they work for the committee until it goes out of business. At least one member of a group of 14 pathologists who attended a secret committee seminar in September to review JFK autopsy records says he interpreted the intimidating strictures as a warning that they could go to jail if they even discussed the meeting. Yet by all available accounts, the seminar produced nothing startling.

"Doesn't this give you a sense of déja vu?" demands assassination expert Harold Weisberg who has been highly critical of the House investigation. "They're doing the same thing the Warren Commission did. It's worse than that now because they have the experience of the Warren Commission behind them. You've got to have this stuff subject to another point of view. The press has to be able to air it."

Committee members plainly disagree. Chairman Louis Stokes (D-Ohio) says he feels the panel's "gag rule" against any discussion of the investigation has served it well. Rep. Richardson Preyer (D-N.C.), chairman of the subcommittee investigating the JFK murder, said "the fact that it [the investigation] has been out of the headlines in the last few months has helped change the mood of the House."

"We were embarrassing the House every day a few months ago," Preyer said, recalling the controversy between the first chief counsel, former Philadelphia prosecutor Richard A. Sprague, and former committee Chairman Henry B. Gonzalez (D-Tex.). "Now that's over."

Appointed June 19 as Sprague's successor, Blakey, a former Rutgers and Cornell University law professor, has taken [illegible] charge of the committee staff. Committee [illegible] such as [illegible] David S. Lowry [illegible] Rich, [illegible] approved [illegible] the inquiry on a thoroughly professional track.

But some former staffers and others privy to various aspects of the committee's work disagree. They describe Blakey as a professorial martinet who insists on strict discipline from his investigators while letting the investigation itself run off in a dozen different directions at once.

The behavioral discipline is indisputably strict. In the view of some, it is also childish and demeaning. They point, for example, to an Aug. 1 memo to the committee staff from Blakey, listing "some 'Dos' and 'Don'ts' that should be followed in the conduct of our investigation, especially when on trips."

Among the rules:

- "Do not conduct interviews in your hotel room with a member of the opposite sex."
- "Do be cautious in fraternizing with local residents."
- "Do not have meals in locations that are noted for their drinks and not their cuisine."
- "Do avoid excessive alcoholic drinking when on assignment, whether on or off duty."
- "Do, in dealing with any person you come in contact, be courteous, considerate and patient, even in the face of extreme provocation."
- "Do not discuss or get involved in political or controversial topics with anyone."
- "Do, after working hours, know the general whereabouts of the other members of the team."
- "Do not visit establishments that have or appear to have questionable reputations unless on official business."

Underpinning all this is the four-page Non-Disclosure Agreement, initiated after Blakey took charge and required of all staff members as well as consultants "as conditions precedent for employment or engagement or my continued employment or engagement with the Select Committee, the United States House of Representatives or the United States Congress." In other words, says one lawyer acquainted with the terms of the document, those who sign it are presumably ruling themselves out of a job anywhere else on Capitol Hill if they break part of the agreement.

It bars [illegible] actions, including one that [illegible] reporting to the committee [illegible] outside [illegible] to obtain information, [illegible] addition to acknowledging the [illegible] of criminal prosecution [illegible] information.

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Evidence in JFK Death Pursued in Nearly Total Secrecy

INQUIRY, From A6

The [illegible] also agreed to be liable for $5,000 to [illegible] committee "as a reasonable estimate for damages to the credibility and effectiveness of this investigation."

Information that may not be disclosed "by words, conduct or otherwise," at least during the lifetime of the committee, covers any data received by the select committee, presumably including even matters of public record. Some material, such as "any information pertaining to intelligence sources or methods as designated by the director of central intelligence," may "never" be disclosed without special permission. Committee Chairman Stokes must also "consult" the CIA director before clearing for publication any article written by a staffer or consultant which "may include" proscribed information.

"What kind of an independent investigation can you have with provisions like that?" demanded one former staffer who declined to be identified. "This is a theoretical world they're setting up, not a practical world for investigating murder."

The chief counsel, who likes to be called "Professor Blakey," declines to comment on any phase of the investigation, citing a committee rule declaring that the staff shall not discuss "the substance or procedure of their work" unless authorized by Stokes, Preyer or Del. Walter E. Fauntroy (D-D.C.), chairman of the subcommittee investigating the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968.

Asked, for instance, why the committee would be interviewing someone like Thomas Beckham when it has yet to decide who killed the President in Dallas' Dealey Plaza on Nov. 22, 1963, Blakey said simply "substance and procedure." He made the same response when asked to list in a general way what he regarded as the inquiry's accomplishments thus far.

It seems plain, however, that the two-pronged investigation into the Kennedy and King murders is pursuing an elusive and expensive chain of rumors and allegations of conspiracy before having satisfied itself—from the ballistics, medical, photographic, eyewitness and other evidence—about who the murderers were. The committee appears to be looking for helpers before having settled on the principals, who may or may not have had any helpers.

The panel's travel summaries show that it has been busy pursuing not only Beckham and other aspects of the zany Garrison investigation, but also esoterica such as the "Milteer connection." Now dead, Milteer was a right-wing organizer for the States Rights Party who happened to have been taped—two weeks before Kennedy was killed—about how the President might be shot with a high-powered rifle on a forthcoming trip to Miami.

"Where's the relevance?" demands Weisberg, who uncovered much of the material on Milteer years ago. "That's okay for a writer, but not for a congressional committee investigating a crime. How many people threatened to kill Kennedy? To kill King? They're beyond counting. Could all of them have committed the crime? They've got to establish relevance first. They've got to begin with what really happened."

More recently, investigators for the House committee journeyed to New York to interview Marita Lorenz, a self-proclaimed Mata Hari, who asserted that Watergate burglar Frank Sturgis, an old friend of hers, drove with her and several others, including Lee Harvey Oswald, to Dallas several days before the assassination. Then, last week, Sturgis was arrested on charges by Lorenz that he tried to intimidate her from testifying before the House committee.

The charges were dropped Friday in Manhattan Criminal Court when a review of seven taped telephone conversations between Lorenz and Sturgis showed all were amicable. "A lack of any substantiation of her charges impairs her credibility," the court was told of the putative congressional witness.

As for Beckham, his lawyer said House investigators had hoped to see him again after his client stood trial on still more fraud charges in Arkansas, allegedly for posing as a naturopathic physician. But the charges were dropped.

"He [Beckham] was supposed to meet one of 'em [the House investigators] in Mississippi, but he never showed up," Stein said. "They've contacted me a couple of times to see if I've heard from him, but I haven't."

Even though no public hearings are in sight, the committee, which expects its current $2.5 million budget to last until about next March, evidently foresees no trouble in getting a new appropriation next year. One committee member said wryly that they will probably be able to get more money by simply pointing out that they haven't embarrassed the House for months.

Asked if that approach would work, an aide to House Speaker Thomas P. (Tip) O'Neill Jr. (D-Mass.) replied lightly: "Why not?"

G. ROBERT BLAKEY
...chief counsel "Professor Blakey"

20698

DETROIT NEWS
11 November 1977

Jack Ruby's secrets still unfolding

Dallas: An unfinished drama

By SETH KANTOR
News Staff Writer

WASHINGTON — No event has spun a thicker web of mystery than the murder of President John F. Kennedy in Dallas 14 years ago this month. And, of the major players in that drama, none was more secretive than Jack Ruby.

RUBY

Ruby, the Dallas night club operator who killed Kennedy's assassin, was questioned by the Warren Commission, which conducted the official U.S. inquiry into the shootings of Kennedy and assassin Lee Harvey Oswald. But the commission did not dig into Ruby's curious personal and business relationships — ties with criminals, Cuba and Central Intelligence double-agents — even when it had information about them.

One of Ruby's hidden relationships was with convicted Detroit bank robber Thomas E. Davis III. At the time Davis was a CIA operative with anti-Castro Cuban connections and involved in international gun-running.

Another curious link was Ruby's acquaintance with Alfred E. McLane, a prominent Dallas attorney and, according to U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission records, general counsel for a New York-based firm headed by Santo Sorge, identified by federal investigators as an international kingpin of the Mafia.

THEN THERE WAS Santo Traficante, a Mafia leader who has been described as having been a double agent — a person engaged in spying for two rival countries — for the CIA and for Castro.

Another was Lewis J. McWillie, identified in FBI files as a veteran in U.S. organized crime circles, with close ties to Miami-based mobster boss Meyer Lansky.

None of Ruby's unexplained connections was more puzzling than his relationship with Tom Davis, a Texan with a background both as criminal and CIA operative.

Davis robbed a branch of the National Bank of Detroit at gunpoint on June 18, 1958, when he was a 21-year-old Army veteran.

In a note shoved at a teller in the bank's Linwood-Clairmount branch, Davis threatened to shoot the woman behind the cage unless she "put money on the counter." He got what the note asked for — $1,000.

After getting the money, Davis, dressed in Army fatigues, changed his mind. He threw the money onto the floor and fled the bank. He ran to an alley, reappeared in civilian clothes and hurried to his car, which contained an arsenal of guns.

BUT A POLICEMAN, summoned by the bank alarm, got the drop on Davis just as he reached the vehicle.

That same month, Davis' wife graduated from the University of Michigan. Davis also had been a student at the U. of M., majoring in business administration, but dropped out owing $200 in tuition fees.

On July 10, 1958, Federal Judge Thomas P. Thornton in Detroit decided to go easy on Davis for two reasons. No. 1, the judge received an outpouring of letters and telegrams from civic leaders and others in Jacksboro, Tex., Davis's home area, attesting to the good, solid stock Davis was from.

No. 2, Davis promised the judge he would return with his wife to Texas and work on a ranch. Davis was tall, handsome and charming enough to "talk the maggots off a dead fish," according to his third wife.

Judge Thornton put the would-be bank robber on five years' probation as a federal prisoner.

But Davis never went near his family's ranch country. Instead he went to Beaumont, about 300 miles away, took up deep-sea diving and helped operate a boat on the Neches River and the Gulf of Mexico, which led him into the gun-running business.

DAVIS THEN GOT involved with CIA-backed anti-Castro units which trained in Florida and Central America. Davis himself described his participation in commando-like raids on Cuba to contacts back in Texas.

In January, 1963, he obtained a U.S. passport — No. D236764 — which he was not supposed to have, since he still was a federal prisoner on probation.

Davis used the passport to smuggle weapons into Algeria and was jailed there for running guns to the secret army terrorist movement that was attempting to assassinate French Premier Charles de Gaulle.

A CIA agent who operated extensively in Africa and Europe and was known as QJ/WIN got Davis sprung from an Algiers jail and returned to the United States.

Davis first met Ruby when he walked into Ruby's downtown Dallas club with a plan to film a stag movie, using Ruby's strippers as participants. The movie never materialized, but Ruby and the tall, blond, handsome soldier of fortune struck up a clandestine friendship.

After Ruby was jailed for the murder of Oswald, he confided to his first attorney, Tom Howard, that the one person he didn't want the Warren Commission to find out about was Davis. Ruby told Howard that he planned to go into the gun-running business on a full-time basis with Davis.

BUT RUBY, sentenced to death as a murderer, died of cancer at the start of 1967 while still a prisoner. Davis, whose fortunes seemed to ebb and flow every few months, died while carrying out a burglary in north Texas in 1973. He was electrocuted as he mistakenly cut his way through a 7,000-watt cable he thought was disconnected.

Warren Commission investigators discovered, while the two men still were alive, that Ruby had become involved with Davis in the shipment of arms to Cuba. But the investigators couldn't learn Davis' first name and couldn't locate him. According to a March 19, 1964, memorandum of the investigators:

"Ruby has acknowledged independently that . . . he contacted a man in Beaumont, Tex., whose name he recalled was Davis. The FBI has been unable to identify anyone engaged in the sale of arms to Cuba who might be identical with the person named Davis."

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When Ruby was questioned on June 7, 1964, by two commission members, then-Rep. Gerald R. Ford of Michigan and Chief Justice Earl Warren, he was not asked about any connection with Davis or with gun-running.

The FBI pursued the subject, but interviewed the wrong Davis and got nowhere. Meanwhile, the CIA kept the identity of the real Davis a secret.

ANOTHER REPORT withheld from the Warren Commission by the CIA involved a visit paid by Ruby in the fall of 1959 to U.S. Mafia leader Santo Trafficante, who at the time was housed comfortably in a Havana jail. Trafficante had been jailed by Fidel Castro, who had come to power at the start of that year and was purging U.S. gangsters from lucrative gambling operations in Havana.

(Earlier this year the enigmatic Trafficante refused to answer questions on Capitol Hill put to him by the House Select Committee on Assassinations, when he was asked about first-hand knowledge of plots to assassinate both Castro and Kennedy, and what he knew about Jack Ruby.)

Ruby's visit to Cuba that fall was preceded by a mysterious meeting in Dallas in the summer of 1959 with Dallas attorney Alfred E. McLane and an owner of the Tropicana, the largest casino in Havana.

During that same summer, Ruby sent a coded message to Havana to Lewis J. McWillie, manager of the Tropicana. It was hand-carried to Cuba by Elaine Mynier, an intimate of McWillie's from Dallas.

It was shortly after delivery of this message that Ruby was paid by McWillie to make two trips to Havana, including the one to visit the jailed Trafficante, according to the report withheld from the Warren Commission by the CIA.

Whether the House Select Committee on Assassinations will have any better luck unraveling the mysteries behind the deaths of President Kennedy and Oswald — and the withheld reports on Ruby's involvements — remains to be seen. But there is no doubt that death of Ruby himself has robbed the investigators of their best source.

News staff writer Seth Kantor, then a White House correspondent for Scripps-Howard Newspapers, accompanied President John F. Kennedy to Texas in November, 1963. Kantor was in the motorcade when the President was shot, and then encountered Jack Ruby minutes later inside Parkland Hospital. In earlier days as a newspaper reporter in Dallas Kantor had known Ruby as an occasional story source. The two talked briefly at Parkland. Two days later, Kantor stood a few feet away in the Dallas police station basement as Ruby gunned down Kennedy's accused assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald. Then Ruby denied having been at the hospital. As a result of the conflict, Kantor became the only Washington correspondent summoned to testify before the Warren Commission, which ultimately chose not to doubt Ruby's denial. Troubled by that denial, Kantor began extensive research three years ago into "The Secret World of Jack Ruby," the name of his forthcoming book, to be published by Zebra Books of New York.