

Oswald's Widow Tells a Jury Of Poor Times in New Orleans

By MARTIN WALDRON
Special to The New York Times

NEW ORLEANS, Feb. 8—Mrs. Marina Oswald Porter, widow of Lee Harvey Oswald, assassin of President Kennedy, testified today before a New Orleans grand jury about the four months during which she lived in near penury with Oswald in New Orleans in the summer of 1963.

District Attorney Jim Garrison contends Oswald spent the four months helping put together a plot that led to the assassination.

Mrs. Porter, a short and trim 26-year-old blonde with frosty blue eyes, declined to comment as she twice ran a vanguard of television cameras to enter the grand jury room in the ornate old Criminal Courts Building.

Her heel-less black shoes made her appear to be shorter than her 5 feet 2 inches. She was wearing a dark blue semi-mini dress, the hem about three inches above her knees, and a light blue rain coat. The dress had red and yellow piping on the collar and sleeves.

An aide to Mr. Garrison said Mrs. Porter's appearance before the grand jury had no major significance. "It really is a matter of routine," the assistant said. "After all, when you are investigating the months that Oswald spent in New Orleans in 1963, you certainly are going to try to talk to his wife."

Accompanied by Husband

Mrs. Porter was accompanied to the grand jury by her husband, Kenneth J. Porter, a Dallas tavern operator, and Sheriff Louis A. Heyd Jr.

"They just wandered in the courthouse, asking where to go, and I am showing them," the sheriff said.

Mrs. Porter was before the grand jury for about 10 minutes in the morning, and then left to return for detailed questioning this afternoon.

Before beginning the afternoon session with Mrs. Porter, the grand jury questioned Kerry W. Thornley of Tampa, Fla., who had known Oswald when both served in the Marine Corps in the late 1950's. Mr. Garrison says one of Mrs. Porter's

neighbors saw Mr. Thornley with Oswald during the summer of 1963. Mr. Thornley denies having seen Oswald since 1959.

Mrs. Porter's trip to New Orleans to appear before the grand jury was in marked contrast to her residence here from May 11 to Sept. 23, 1963. At that time, she and Oswald lived in a slum, and she was several months pregnant.

While working as an oiler on a coffee processing machine, Oswald barely made enough salary to buy food and to pay the rent on their tiny apartment. He spent much of his free time that summer handing out leaflets on New Orleans streets urging "fair play" for the Castro regime in Cuba.

On the current trip, Mrs. Porter and her husband were lodged in a tourist motel near the Criminal Courts building.

Ordered By Judge

Mrs. Porter's trip to New Orleans to testify before Mr. Garrison and the grand jury was ordered by a Texas judge under an agreement between states that requires material witnesses to go to another state if needed. Mr. Garrison said Mrs. Porter was a material witness in his investigation of Mr. Kennedy's murder.

Mr. Garrison has charged that Oswald plotted with Clay L. Shaw, 55, retired New Orleans businessman to assassinate President Kennedy. One of Mr. Garrison's assistants said the District Attorney wanted to find out if Mrs. Porter had known Mr. Shaw.

Mr. Shaw, who was indicted last March on a conspiracy charge in the assassination, was scheduled to go on trial Monday. However, his attorneys asked this week that the trial be moved from New Orleans. A hearing on the motion will be held March 5.

Mr. Garrison has also charged

Edgar Gene Bradley, a 20-year-old California conservative, with conspiracy in the assassination, but had not said what part he believes Mr. Bradley played. The Californian has successfully fought extradition to Louisiana.

Mr. Garrison has said that his theory of the assassination is that President Kennedy was murdered by former employees of the Central Intelligence Agency who had been trained to lead an invasion of Cuba. When the invasion was ordered stopped by President Kennedy in the summer of 1963, the C.I.A. employes, many of them Cuban exiles and one of them Oswald, became connected with extreme anti-Communists who had neo-Nazi views, Mr. Garrison has said.

In a recent news conference, Mr. Garrison sharpened his attack on the C.I.A., the Federal Bureau of Investigation and President Johnson. On the day after Christmas, 1967, the District Attorney all but accused Mr. Johnson of being an accessory after the fact. The President, Mr. Garrison said, "has actively concealed evidence of the murder of his predecessor."

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- Trotter
- Tele. Room
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 - The Washington Daily News
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 - The Sunday Star (Washington)
 - Daily News (New York)
 - Sunday News (New York)
 - New York Post
 - The New York Times **52**
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APPEARS BEFORE GRAND JURY: Marina Oswald Porter, Associated Press widow of Lee Harvey Oswald, with her husband, Kenneth, on the way to testify before a New Orleans grand jury. The grand jury, at the request of Jim Garrison, New Orleans District Attorney, is investigating an alleged conspiracy in the assassination of President Kennedy.