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ASSASSINATION OF JOHN FITZGERALD
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(BY ROBERT ANDREWS)

(THE CIA, THE FBI AND JFK'S ASSASSINATION)
 WASHINGTON (UPI) -- A GROWING WEB OF UNRELATED DISCLOSURES, EVENTS AND ALLEGATIONS COULD CAUSE A REOPENING OF THE INVESTIGATION INTO JOHN F. KENNEDY'S ASSASSINATION.

THERE'S A SPREADING STAIN OF SUSPICION THAT KENNEDY MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE VICTIM OF A PLOT INVOLVING THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY. IT HAS AROUSED PRESIDENT FORD'S CURIOSITY AND STIRRED NEW EXCITEMENT AMONG ADVOCATES OF THE CONSPIRACY THEORY.

"IF I WERE A BETTING MAN," SAYS TRIAL LAWYER BERNARD J. FENSTERMAHL, "I'D BET THE FULL STORY WILL BE KNOWN WITHIN A YEAR."

"A YEAR? I'M SURPRISED AT FENSTERMAHL," SAID DR. RICHARD POPKIN, A PHILOSOPHY PROFESSOR AT WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS. "I'D MAKE IT SIX MONTHS."

BOTH MEN BELIEVE THE NEW FINDINGS WILL PROVOKE THE FIRST SERIOUS RE-EXAMINATION OF THE WARREN COMMISSION'S CONCLUSION THAT LEE HARVEY OSWALD ACTED ALONE AS KENNEDY'S ASSASSIN IN DALLAS.

PRESIDENT FORD, WHO WAS A COMMISSION MEMBER, ALSO APPARENTLY NOTICED THE RESURGENCE OF INTEREST IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF KENNEDY'S DEATH, PARTICULARLY WHEN THE CIA WAS MENTIONED.

SOME TIME IN MARCH, THE WHITE HOUSE SAID, FORD LOOKED UP THE PRECISE LANGUAGE OF THE WARREN COMMISSION'S FINDINGS WHICH HE HAD HELPED WRITE. SO, WHEN HE GOT A SURPRISE QUESTION ABOUT THE MATTER APRIL 3 AT HIS SAN DIEGO, CALIF., NEWS CONFERENCE, FORD WAS PREPARED.

HE DEFENDED THE COMMISSION'S "VERY CAREFULLY EXAMINED" STATEMENT THAT "HE HAD FOUND NO EVIDENCE OF A CONSPIRACY, FOREIGN OR DOMESTIC, BUT HE DID NOT DISMISS THE POSSIBILITY." "SO FAR, I HAVE SEEN NO EVIDENCE THAT WOULD DISPUTE THE CONCLUSIONS TO WHICH WE CAME," HE SAID.

BUT "IF THE FACTS SEEM TO JUSTIFY IT," FORD SAID, THE ROCKEFELLER COMMISSION AND THE SPECIAL HOUSE AND SENATE COMMITTEES INVESTIGATING CIA DOMESTIC ACTIVITIES MIGHT INVESTIGATE.

FENSTERMAHL, A DAPPER LITTLE TENNESSEAN WHOSE CLIENTS HAVE INCLUDED WATERGATE BURGLAR JAMES W. MCCORD JR. AND JAMES EARL RAY, SAID HE BELIEVES SOMETHING BIG IS ABOUT TO BREAK IN THE KENNEDY CASE.

"I HAD THE SAME FEELING I DID ABOUT WATERGATE, THE FEELING THE GAME WAS UP. THERE'S JUST TOO MUCH EVIDENCE AROUND THAT THE WARREN REPORT IS NOT CORRECT, THAT THE CIA AND THE FBI BOTH KNOW A HUGE AMOUNT THEY DIDN'T TELL THE WARREN COMMISSION," FENSTERMAHL SAID.

NEITHER THE ROCKEFELLER COMMISSION NOR CONGRESS SEEMS TO SHARE HIS SENSE OF URGENCY.

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE ROCKEFELLER COMMISSION, DAVID BELLIN, IS A FORMER WARREN COMMISSION COUNSEL AND STaunch DEFENDER OF THE SINGLE-ASSASSIN ARGUMENT. A SPOKESMAN SAID: "NO EVIDENCE HAS BEEN SUBMITTED TO DISPUTE ANY CIA INVOLVEMENT."

THE SENATE STAFF HAS ACKNOWLEDGED IT WILL STUDY THE MATTER AS A PERIPHERAL CIA ISSUE.

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