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Reopen Inquiry In JFK's Death, Schweiker Urges

By George Lardner Jr.

Washington Post Staff Writer

Sen. Richard S. Schweiker (R-Pa.) charged yesterday that recent disclosures of CIA and FBI cover-ups have devastated the credibility of the Warren Commission's investigation of President Kennedy's assassination in 1963.

A member of the Senate Intelligence committee, Schweiker called for reopening the investigation and introduced a formal resolution that would put the committee in charge of the inquiry.

In a joint statement prompted by Schweiker's move, committee chairman Frank Church (D-Idaho) and vice chairman John G. Tower (R-Tex.) said later that they did not feel there was "sufficient evidence at this time" to warrant a re-opening of the case.

They indicated that the committee might make such a recommendation at the conclusion of its work but said they felt any renewed investigation of the President's assassination "should be the work of a separate committee" named by Congress.

The Warren Commission concluded that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in killing President Kennedy on Nov. 22, 1963. Schweiker said he had no theories of his own to advance, but he said he felt the credibility of the Warren Commission's findings had been destroyed.

Emphasizing what he called a false sworn statement by the late FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, Schweiker said, "We now have evidence that the commission's primary investigative arm—the Federal Bureau of Investigation—destroyed and suppressed evidence."

In an affidavit to the Warren Commission in February of 1964, Hoover swore that "The only contacts" FBI agents had with Oswald before the assassination involved three interviews following his return from the Soviet Union and his 1963 arrest in New Orleans while distributing fair

Play for Cuba Committee literature.

In a recent report confirmed by FBI Director Clarence M. Kelley, however, the Dallas Times-Herald disclosed that Oswald delivered a threatening note to the Dallas offices of the FBI shortly before the assassination in protest against contacts with his wife, Marina.

The note was destroyed and the FBI never made a report on the incident, Schweiker said he thought it "devastating ... when the investigator (the FBI) finally admits covering up the truth after 12 years."

Citing other shortcomings of the Warren Commission's work, Schweiker pointed out that the Central Intelligence Agency never informed it of U.S. involvement in unsuccessful attempts to kill Cuban Premier Fidel Castro prior to Kennedy's assassination. The senator said his own misgivings about the Warren Commission's report arose earlier this year when he learned of the CIA's enlistment of Mafia figures for one campaign to kill Castro.

The Senate committee, headed by Church, is currently wrapping up a lengthy investigation, covering more than 8,000 pages of testimony, of the CIA's involvement in foreign assassination plots, but Schweiker told reporters that the committee's interim report will not touch on the withholding of this information from the Warren Commission.

The committee chairman, Church has shown no inclination to embark on a renewed investigation of the JFK assassination itself. In a speech yesterday before the Women's National Democratic Club, he indicated that the committee's first round of public hearings, to begin next week, will deal with "unlawful conduct by the CIA and the FBI" in spying on law-abiding American citizens.

Deploring what he described as an epidemic of lawlessness in this country, from the streets to the corporate board rooms to government agencies, Church said, "If we are

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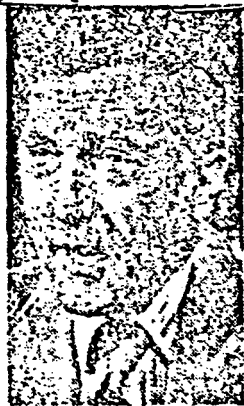
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SEN. RICHARD SCHWEIKER
... cites shortcomings

to restore respect for the law to a position of primacy in our society, we will have to begin at the top."

Church cited last week's attempt on the life of President Ford as the other side of the coin, a reminder that "violence lurks at every corner . . . and haunts every neighborhood in America today." But violence, he said, was simply "the most ubiquitous symptom of a disease spreading through our society, an epidemic of lawlessness which, if unchecked in time, could prove fatal to democracy."

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