

JFK Autopsy Photo Case Is Closed, Rep. Stokes Says

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Chairman Louis Stokes of the House Assassinations Committee says he considers the case of a CIA employee who examined committee photographs of the autopsy on President John Kennedy to be closed.

In a speech on the House floor late last night, the Ohio Democrat said staff members who investigated the former security officer's action are satisfied there was no evidence uncovered that the CIA directed its then-employee to obtain access to the materials. The photos were examined without authorization last July.

But Stokes said staff members of his committee believe mere curiosity is not consistent with the evidence in establishing a motive, even though CIA employees who conducted the agency's investigation "are satisfied that the motive . . . was mere curiosity."

HE ADDED: "In the absence of a full and truthful confession by the agency employee or others, if any, who were in league with him, or substantial new evidence, all recognize that the matter of motive cannot be ultimately resolved.

"I do not know what additional action can be taken in this matter," he said. "I considered it closed in July 1978, I consider it closed now."

Stokes explained that good taste dictates that photographs made of the autopsies on Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. never be made public, and that the committee took extraordinary care that the photographs be safeguarded.

Stokes told the House the photographs were taken from a safe by an authorized person to be used in another room by a medical artist for the panel. The safe door was closed but not locked. Stokes said that when the authorized employee returned later, he found the safe had been opened and one photograph of Kennedy had been ripped out of its cover. The CIA employee's fingerprints were found on the plastic covers of files he was not authorized to see.

STOKES SAID the CIA conducted its own investigation and discharged the

employee. Stokes said there's nothing to indicate anyone profited from the unauthorized examination of the photos.

Access to autopsy materials could only be secured by the personal permission of chief counsel G. Robert Blakey and a log had to be signed each time these materials were examined.