

10 JFK Case Figures Dead As Conspiracy Idea Lives On

By GEORGE MERLIS

World Journal Tribune Staff

Ten persons connected with or concerned about the assassination of President Kennedy are dead. Another has been shot, but not killed, and one more has been the target of a sniper who missed his mark completely. Several other key witnesses have left Dallas; some cannot be traced, living nomad lives, moving from city to city.

The 10 dead are:

- Reporters Jim Koethe and Bill Hunter, who attended a meeting in the apartment of Jack Ruby the night after Ruby killed Kennedy's assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald. Koethe was murdered Sept. 21, 1964, in his own apartment by a karate chop to the throat, Hunter was shot to death April 23, 1964, in what was officially called a police station accident.

HOUSEKEEPER DIED

- Tom Howard, a lawyer who attended the Ruby apartment meeting and who represented Ruby during the first days after he was arrested for the Oswald slaying. Howard died March 27, 1965, after a heart attack, having been left at a Dallas hospital by an unknown person. No autopsy was performed.

- Earlene Roberts, the housekeeper in the boarding house Oswald lived in. She told the Warren Commission

with a shard of glass. No arrest was made.

- William Whaley, the man who drove the taxi in which Oswald fled from the assassination site. Whaley was killed Dec. 18, 1965, in a head-on collision, the first Dallas cabbie to die in a traffic accident since 1937.

- Edward Benavides, the look-alike brother of Domingo Benavides, a witness to the slaying of Officer J. D. Tippit, a crime Oswald is thought to have committed. Edward Benavides was shot to death in Feb., 1964, in a Dallas beer joint. The case is unsolved.

NEWSWOMAN DIES

- New York newswoman Dorothy Kilgallen, who interviewed Ruby during his trial and who vowed to continue her investigation into the Kennedy assassination for the rest of her life. Associates claim she had statements from at least one person linking Ruby with Oswald. She died Nov. 8, 1965.

- Lee Bowers, a towerman, who witnessed the Kennedy assassination and told the Warren Commission he saw strange activity on a knoll overlooking the spot where Kennedy was shot. Bowers was killed Aug. 9, 1966, in an auto crash.

The two who were shot at but not killed were:

- Warren Reynolds • with

mal testimony he identified Oswald as the man he had seen running from the slaying.

SNIPER MISSED

- J. W. Jackson, father-in-law of Domingo Benavides, who was conducting a personal probe into the slaying of Edward Benavides. He was shot at by a sniper who missed him. No arrest was made in the shooting.

The deaths, wounding and attempted shooting are a matter of record. So are the dead persons' connections with the assassination or with others connected with the assassination.

Using the detective work of Penn Jones Jr., editor of a small Texas weekly, Ramparts Magazine today published a 21-page article about the "Kennedy case curse."

Admitting that some of the deaths—Miss Kilgallen's, for one—are unlikely to be connected with the Kennedy case, the magazine plots the fates of the dead 10 and revives some questions about Tippit. Was it his patrol car, number 10, that Earlene Roberts saw outside the Oswald boarding house and mistook for number 107? What was his connection with Ruby, with whom he was reportedly frequently seen?)

QUESTION CONSPIRACY

Ramparts asks whether there was a conspiracy to kill the President and if such a conspiracy is not still in operation. The magazine's editors add their voices to the growing chorus questioning the conclusions of the Warren Commission—that Oswald acted alone and unaided.