Sturgis shot at Kennedy, report says

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NEW YORK — Convicted Watergate burglar Frank Sturgis was held in $25,000 bail Tuesday on a charge that [redacted] testimony of ex-spy Marita Lorenz, who allegedly told federal investigators after his arrest that Sturgis shot at President John Kennedy from the grassy knoll in Dallas.

Sources revealed that Lorenz broke down in an intense cross-examination

Tangled connection between Lorenz and Sturgis interests investigators. Story on Page 4-A

by Robert Blakey, the general counsel to the House Assassination Committee, and tearfully maintained that she had "documentary and photographic" evidence to prove that Sturgis shot at Kennedy.

The sources said her testimony does not alter the fact that Kennedy was

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shot by Lee Harvey Oswald from the Dallas Book Depository, but that it did fit in with conspiracy theories that maintain there was more than one person firing at Kennedy as he rode through Dallas in a motorcade.

Blakey flew into New York Tuesday after Sturgis was arrested Monday near Lorenz' apartement on E. 88th St and charged with harassment and attempted coercion.

Sources said Blakey interviewed the ex-spy in a small room at Manhattan Criminal Court.

(The Associated Press reported that Blakey declined to confirm or deny that committee staffers have been told that Sturgis shot at President Kennedy. Blakey denied the report that he personally had heard that account Tuesday from ex-spy Marita Lorenz. But earlier, when asked if she had made the allegation to committee investigators, Blakey replied: "No comment."

(His only other comment was that if investigators had such a story, they would have to check it out. Blakey said "I've never met her in my life" and said he was not in New York City Tuesday.)

At Sturgis' hearing before Judge Milton Samorodin, defense attorney Ron Golfarb argued that Sturgis should be set free because he has "never missed an appointment" during his many court appearances and meetings with federal probers. He said Sturgis was here on business and that he was a lecturer.

Another defense attorney, Henry Rothblatt, charged that the accusations against Sturgis resulted from "absurd charges by a psychotic woman."

He argued that Lorenz had sent Sturgis the money to come here from Miami and then "set him up" by offering meet him at her apartment.

The incident on Monday also includ the arrest of Lorenz' 15-year-old dau ter, Monica Mercedes Perez Jimen who was picked up with a loaded pis in her pocket. She allegedly bought t pistol to protect her mother from St gis, but she was arrested before he rived.

Lorenz met Sturgis in 1959 while s was living in Havana with Cuban P mier Fidel Castro. Sturgis, then kno as Frank Fiorini, was an officer in C tro's revolutionary army and a cont agent for the CIA.

He recruited Lorenz to spy on Cast Later, when both Lorenz and Stur left Cuba, he allegedly sent her back two CIA missions — the first to st documents and the second to assassin Castro.

Six weeks ago, Lorenz told the N York News that she accompanied St gis, Oswald and four Cubans on a trip from Miami to Dallas a few d before President Kennedy was m dered in Dallas.

She said they were all members o CIA-approved "assassination squa known as Operation 40.

Investigators Gaeton Fonzi and Gonzalez of the House Assassinati Committee interviewed Miss Lorenz Saturday, when she reportedly repea the same story she told the News.

When the investigators left, Lore allegedly received a phone call advis her that Sturgis was coming to N York, and subsequent callers convinc here that Sturgis would try to make h change her story.

It was after this that her daugh bought the gun and told the moth

(ZNS) The FBI is currently in the process of releasing some 80,000 pages of documents relating to the 1963 assassination of President Kennedy.

One of the first of those documents to be made public this week reveals that – just hours after Lee Harvey Oswald was killed – The FBI secretly decided to launch a public relations campaign to convince Americans that Oswald was the lone assassin of the President.

This is spelled out in a memo obtained this week by assassination researcher and writer Tom Miller. The memo in question was written on November 24th of 1963 – just 48 hours after Oswald's arrest – by Assistant FBI Director Alan Belmont.

The Belmont memo, written to other FBI assistant directors says – (quote) "We will set forth the items of evidence to make it clear that Oswald is the man who killed the President."

Belmont goes on to say that the FBI should convince Americans that Oswald was solely responsible for the shooting; that he was a Marxist; that he had been a defector to Russia; and that he was a member of the (quote)"Castro-supported" fair play for Cuba committee.

Belmont also instructs in his memo that two special agents of the FBI in Washington be immediately sent to Dallas to coordinate the effort to convict Oswald in the minds of the American public.

Lorenz-Sturgis connection

By ERNEST VOLKMAN
1977, Newsday

NEW YORK — On the surface it appeared to be a routine police complaint from a woman who claimed that she had been receiving telephone threats from a man.

But the two people involved were hardly ordinary citizens. The man, Frank Sturgis of Miami, Fla., had been convicted in the Watergate burglary. The woman, Marita Lorenz of Manhattan, had been mixed up in CIA plots to murder Cuban Premier Fidel Castro, according to intelligence sources.

The tangled connection between the pair, which stretches back for more than a decade, has aroused a great deal of interest among investigators. But one government law enforcement official said, "Frankly, it's a mess. We can't get it straightened out, and maybe we never will."

Sturgis was arrested Tuesday on Lorenz' sworn complaint, arraigned on a felony charge of harassment in State Supreme Court and held on $25,000 bail. Henry Rothblatt, Sturgis' attorney, denied the charge and said Sturgis had been summoned to New York by Lorenz.

Here, pieced together from intelligence sources, are some elements of the mystery surrounding the case:

The Sturgis-Lorenz Connection: Lorenz was Castro's lover in Cuba during the 1950s, and was recruited by Sturgis, then a high-ranking Castro aide, to spy for the CIA. According to intelligence sources, in 1959, when she was a secretary to Castro, she and Sturgis fled the island and went to Miami.

In 1961 she allegedly agreed to help out in a CIA-inspired plot to kill Castro. Armed with a jar of cold cream laced with poison, she returned to Cuba and became his lover again. Somehow, she was supposed to put the stuff on Castro. But the cream melted, and the plot was aborted. Lorenz fled back to Miami.

The Lorenz-Jiminez Connection: In 1962 Sturgis became part of a super-secret group within the Cuban exile community called "Operation 40." Trained by the CIA in assassination and other dirty tricks for use against Castro,

A tangled story

the unit was run by CIA agent E. Howard Hunt.

Intelligence sources say Hunt ordered Sturgis to get Lorenz to become intimate with Marcos Perez Jiminez, exiled dictator of Venezuela, whom the CIA wanted to watch. Lorenz agreed and later had a daughter by Jiminez.

The Sturgis Mystery: Meanwhile, Sturgis became a powerful figure in the Cuban exile community and later joined Hunt's White House "plumbers" operation, which carried out the Watergate break-in in Washington in 1972. He pleaded guilty to Watergate-related charges in 1973, was sentenced to a one-to-four-year term and was released in 1974 following a reduction in his sentence. He returned to Miami and remained active in exile affairs.

The Lorenz Mystery: No one knows for sure if Sturgis kept up his connection with Lorenz, but about a month ago she approached the House committee investigating the assassination of John F. Kennedy and told them an incredible story, claiming that she, Sturgis, Lee Harvey Oswald and two Cuban exiles went to Dallas together shortly before Kennedy's assassination. Her testimony, in executive session, was supposed to be secret, but it leaked out.

For his part, Sturgis says that he had nothing to do with the Kennedy assassination and to the best of his knowledge never met Oswald.

Why Lorenz waited so long to tell h story is unclear. But the mystery e tends further. Last July, when Se Richard Schweiker, R-Pa., was headi a special Senate investigation into t Kennedy assassination, one of his inv tigators talked to Lorenz. Shortly ther after, she told Schweiker, an uniden fied assailant broke into her Manhatt apartment and beat her up.

There are other unanswered que tions. For one thing, Lorenz divides h time between a one-bedroom apartme and a more luxurious two-bedroo apartment, both in Manhattan.

City officials said that Lorenz is welfare and receives biweekly checks the address of the smaller apartment.