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Watergate Burglar Reveals Shocking New Facts

GLOBE Exclusive

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From the assassination of President John F.Kennedy, to the Watergate scandal – something has been rotten in America. There are no separate pieces. Everything is connected. Most of all, Watergate and President Kennedy's murder. Here is the story of that connection. The trail of events that led from Dallas to Washington as told by Frank Sturgis, the only man who played a major role in both national tragedies. Frank Sturgis– Watergate Burglar – and Super-Spy– tells it all in MIDNIGHT/GLOBE!

Exclusive Interview

Link Between JFK's Killing And

By MALCOLM ABRAMS
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WATERGATE was a blackmail plot to bring down President Richard Nixon. The CIA set it up and then leaked the story to the Washington Post and other newspapers. The original intent was to control the Presidency. But Nixon fought back viciously and it became necessary to dispose of him altogether.

What developed was a game of double blackmail. On the one side was the CIA and its powerful backers — all of the opinion that Nixon's popularity had gone to his head, making him a dangerous man. On the other side was Richard Nixon and his advisors, frantically gathering "dirt" on the CIA.

What Nixon wanted was documented proof of what he already knew — that the CIA had tried to murder Fidel Castro and that the Cuban dictator, with help from the Russians, had retaliated by killing President John F. Kennedy. He also knew the names of the politicians, government officials and CIA agents who masterminded the assassination cover-up.

But Nixon couldn't get his hands on the documents he needed — and he fell.

This is what was really going on in Washington during those desperate days from June 17, 1972, the night of the Watergate burglary, until August 9, 1974, when Nixon resigned.

And this is what Nixon hinted at in his recent televised interviews with David Frost when he said, "I gave 'em a sword. And they stuck it in, and they twisted it with relish. And I guess if I'd been in their position, I'da done the same."

In truth, Nixon had tried his best to do "the same." But the CIA thwarted him at every move; disobeyed direct orders from its President; and refused to hand over incriminating evidence about its role in the JFK assassination which Nixon could have used against the intelligence agency.

Not that Nixon was so dedicated to getting the truth before the American people. His only real concern was in preserving his power and saving his skin.

This is the long suspected connection between the assassination of President Kennedy and Watergate. MIDNIGHT/GLOBE's source of information is Frank Sturgis — the only man thus far identified as playing a major part in both national political disasters.

As a high ranking intelligence officer, Sturgis served in Castro's government, partook in plots against the dictator's life; and spied for the American government. And as a member of the White House plumbers, he was one of the five burglars apprehended breaking into the Democratic National Headquarters in the Watergate complex.

FRANK STURGIS being interviewed by Malcolm Abrams.

There is a definite trail from the assassination of President John F. Kennedy to Watergate, and one man knows about it. He is Frank Sturgis, the only person thus far identified as playing a major part in both disasters.

As a member of the White House plumbers unit, he and his cohorts were apprehended breaking into the Democratic National Headquarters at the Watergate complex. For that crime, Sturgis spent 14 1/2 months in prison.

Prior to this notoriety, Sturgis was a trusted and valuable source of intelligence information for the CIA.

He had served alongside Fidel Castro in the Cuban Revolution. Later he served as Chief of Security for the Cuban Air Force and as czar of Havana's gambling industry.

When Castro turned Communist and the CIA's stance toward Cuba changed, Sturgis was recruited to spy for American intelligence. Later he took part in several attempted assassination plots against Fidel Castro.

In the end, he fled Cuba just ahead of the firing squad.

Today Sturgis is still active in intelligence. He has maintained excellent contacts in Cuba and the CIA.

Further, it was Sturgis, testifying before the Senate Watergate Committee, who spoke publicly of a connection between Jack Ruby and Lee Harvey Oswald. And it was Sturgis who reported knowledge of a meeting involving Castro and Ruby, at which the assassination of President Kennedy was discussed.

Sturgis claims these facts were well known to both the CIA and to President Nixon in the summer of 1972.

The CIA had the documents to prove it. Nixon had the knowledge, passed on to him by his predecessor, President Lyndon B. Johnson. Until June of 1972, the CIA and the President had been able to live in harmony with this information.

But says Sturgis, a rift between Nixon and the Central Intelligence Agency had long been brewing. Behind them both stood an omnipotent lobby of influential Americans, identified by Sturgis as dealing in foreign relations — "a powerful, influential group which even controlled the CIA and the President."

This group now feared that Nixon, riding an incredible wave of popularity, was feeling too independent and no longer in need of their support.

These powerful men and certain officials within the CIA decided that blackmailing the President was the best way to control him.

And so the Watergate plot was hatched.

The CIA, of course, knew all about Nixon's White House plumbers. In fact, Sturgis revealed for the first time, he had been recruited for the plumber unit by a CIA agent. Now all the CIA needed was for the burglars to get caught.

Sturgis believes that James McCord, one of the burglars, was secretly working for the CIA. McCord was the man who "carelessly" left the tape on the door at the Watergate complex. The tape that night watchman Frank Wills found and which led to the arrest of the five plumbers.

"McCord was in contact with the CIA," Sturgis told MIDNIGHT/GLOBE. "It is in the records where he had

How Kennedy Brothers Courted

Jack Kennedy's tragic death was a political suicide — brought on by his own mistakes as surely as if Kennedy had pulled the assassin's trigger himself, says a provocative new book.

Long before Watergate, JFK and his brother Bobby set up a secret network of political dirty tricksters that made Nixon's "plumbers" look like Santa's elves. And it was the Kennedys' own ruthless plan to eliminate three foreign leaders that eventually cost JFK his life, argues journalist-author Victor Lasky in "It Didn't Start With Watergate," just published by The Dial Press.

Lasky is a noted conservative journalist, author and syndicated weekly columnist. He has published seven books, works out of Washington and lives in... the Watergate complex.

The bizarre truth behind Kennedy's murder has its roots in the 1960 Presidential campaign, when "dirty tricks were an accepted practice in political life and no one paid too much attention," says Lasky.

From the primaries through the final vote tally, it was one of the dirtiest contests in American political history, he writes. Among other things, the victorious Kennedy machine: bugged Nixon's hotel room before the first TV debate; used reverse psychology by distributing anti-Catholic literature to Catholic voters; and started a convention rumor that Lyndon Johnson — then Jack's chief rival for the nomination — had suffered a heart attack.

After the election, says Lasky, the Kennedys tapped the resources of the federal government to broaden their power. They used the IRS, FBI and CIA in a massive campaign to harass and neutralize their "enemies," who included Nixon journalists Jim Bishop and Walter Winchell, and Martin Luther King.

But the two brothers made a fatal blunder when they began hatching schemes to eliminate foreign leaders, Lasky believes. After the humiliating Bay of Pigs failure, "angered by Fidel Castro's victory over U.S.-backed troops, the Kennedy brothers vowed to 'get even' with the Cuban dictator. With Jack's approval, Bobby organized a cabinet-level secret project called Operation Mongoose which eventually laid the groundwork for a plot to assassinate Castro.

But "the intended target, Castro, was well aware of who was out to get him," says Lasky, and the Cuban dictator warned "the Kennedy administration that it would find itself in danger if it continued," saying " 'United States leaders should think that if they are aiding terrorist plans to eliminate Cuban leaders, they themselves will not be safe.' "

The Kennedys, meanwhile, were busy elsewhere. With their backing, two foreign leaders of supposedly friendly countries — Trujillo of the Dominican Republic and Diem of South Vietnam — were brutally slain.

Just three weeks after Diem's murder, and only two months after Castro's warning, Kennedy was gunned down in Dallas.

"Robert Kennedy was emotionally devastated by the possibility that the efforts he launched may well have led to the death of his beloved brother," says Lasky.

And Lyndon Johnson mirrored Bobby's conclusion:

Far Left: DAVID FROST and Richard Nixon after taping interview for TV.

Above: CONVICTED burglar James McCord Jr.

Left: E. HOWARD HUNT during investigations.

'McCord was in contact with the CIA..he informed the Agency of plumber activities'

Watergate

written letters to the Central Intelligence Agency informing the Agency of plumber activities. They were involved up to their eyeballs.

"While we were in jail, before we got out on bond," Sturgis continued, "there was a CIA official who went over to McCord's house and destroyed all memorandum and documents pertaining to McCord's connection with the CIA. Lee Pennington was the man who did this — it's in the record."

The CIA's next step was to leak the story to the press.

This is where Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward, the Washington Post reporters, became involved. Their secret source of information was a man identified only as "Deep Throat." Piece by piece, the informant put them on the right track — a track which ran from the "third rate" Watergate burglary to the "Number One" man in the White House.

"Deep Throat," says Frank Sturgis, was really Robert Bennett, president of a Washington organization called the Mullins Co. A score of independent Watergate investigators have also fingered Bennett as the anonymous source, "Deep Throat."

"It's on record," says Sturgis, "that the Mullins Co. was used as a CIA front to pay its undercover agents. Bennett was very well acquainted with certain CIA officials and I suspect that Bennett himself was a CIA agent.

"In fact, Bennett appeared before the Senate Watergate Committee and under oath he stated that he did know the Washington Post reporters and had met them secretly to pass on information damaging to the Nixon administration."

But if the CIA's sole intent was to blackmail the President in order to control him, why did the plot proceed to the point where Nixon was forced to resign?

The answer, says Sturgis, is simple. Nixon fought back. He attempted to retaliate with a blackmail scheme of his own.

This involved securing documents to prove that the

'I believe Charles Colson had knowledge of the erasing of the tape'

CIA had planned to assassinate Fidel Castro and that Castro had murdered Kennedy in return.

Where were these documents? Unfortunately for Nixon, they were in the files of the CIA.

And so the President, Sturgis contends, went about trying to secure these documents.

He couldn't march up to the CIA headquarters and request the incriminating folders. Instead, he demanded the complete, massive CIA files on the Bay of Pigs, the Cuban Missile Crisis and the JFK assassination.

"Nixon knew the CIA was the cause of many of the leaks that were going on. And he knew the situation was very, very bad. So he felt that if he could get the American people more interested in revelations pertaining to the Bay of Pigs, the Missile Crisis and the JFK assassination, he could override what was happening with Watergate.

"What's more," Sturgis says, "he was going to try and trade off with the CIA. Once he began leaking damaging information about the CIA, he felt he could get them to stop leaking information pertaining to the Watergate scandal.

"Double blackmail" — that's what you can call it, Sturgis told MIDNIGHT/GLOBE.

"To get the stuff on the CIA, Nixon had to go to the head man, CIA director Richard Helms. But Helms knew what specific facts Nixon was after and refused to hand over the files.

"After several attempts to get what he wanted, Nixon fired Helms and replaced him with James Schlesinger.

"He thought that Schlesinger was his man, but he found out that even Schlesinger couldn't control the files. Schlesinger couldn't get the files because all of Helms' people were still in control.

"Finally, Nixon removed Schlesinger and put William Colby in as CIA director. But he still couldn't get those files.

"Remember this was a Presidential Order. Here is a President of the United States ordering an intelligence agency to give him certain things, and would you believe, they refused. Always, their first concern is for the CIA."

Nixon's persistent efforts continued to antagonize the CIA — until finally the decision was made to destroy him completely. What started as political blackmail was to end in political murder.

Says Sturgis: "They wanted to control Nixon and when they found out they couldn't, they opened the floodgates that led to Watergate and Nixon's resignation."

Sturgis told MIDNIGHT/GLOBE that he has "some proof, some documentation" that what he is saying is fact. But the best proof, he maintains, was probably on the 18 1/2 minutes of tape recorded in the Oval Office on June 20, 1972, and somehow mysteriously erased.

Most Watergate observers blame Nixon for the "gap" in the recorded conversations. They contend that there were self-incriminating statements made.

'Nixon knew the CIA was the cause of many of the leaks'

Not so, says Sturgis. He believes the missing conversations "would show that the CIA was trying to destroy the power of the President." That, in effect, the tapes would have helped Nixon, not hurt him.

After all, on June 23, 1972, there is an intriguing portion of the tapes on which Nixon states: "If it gets out that this is all involved, the Cuban thing, it would be a fiasco. It would make the CIA look bad, it's going to make Hunt (E. Howard Hunt, White House plumber) look bad, and it is likely to blow the whole Bay of Pigs thing which we would think would be very unfortunate — both for the CIA and for the country, at this time, and for American foreign policy. Just tell him (L. Patrick Gray, FBI director) to lay off."

An obvious reference to Nixon's own "blackmail plot?" Sturgis thinks it is. And he thinks that the 18 1/2 minutes of missing tape would have been even more to the point.

But if Nixon didn't erase the 18 1/2 minutes of tape, who did?

"I believe that Charles Colson (special White House counsel to Nixon) had knowledge and possible involvement in the erasing of the 18 1/2 minutes of tape and I think there's evidence to that effect," Sturgis told MIDNIGHT/GLOBE. "I think that I have knowledge of the person who actually did the erasing, but I can't mention his name.

"I can only tell you that the erasure was not done at the White House, it was done someplace else, by electronic means. It was a professional job."

More intriguing still is Sturgis' belief that a second copy of the tape may exist. He knows how the CIA works. He believes that a duplicate tape would have been made and hidden away.

If the missing conversation on the tape would have benefited Nixon, why didn't he recount what was said for the American people?

"Nixon probably didn't remember what was said," Sturgis answered. "Remember he made millions of feet of tape over the years. And without the physical evidence — the tape — who would have believed him, if he had remembered?"

Watergate, like the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, was not what it seemed.

Frank Sturgis was a "soldier" in both of these secret wars. He believes that Richard Nixon lost and President Kennedy lost, and most of all, that the American people lost.

And he believes that the whole truth is still to be told.

Death

"Speaking off-the-record to reporters at his Texas ranch shortly after he took over the presidency, Lyndon Johnson said that his predecessor's death could be considered 'some kind of terrible retribution' for the deaths of both Diem and Trujillo."

Was Johnson hinting that Fidel Castro had been terrorized into action by the Diem and Trujillo murders, fearing he was next?

Apparently. For Lyndon Johnson later confided to TV newsman Howard K. Smith, "I will tell you something that will rock you. Kennedy was trying to get Castro, but Castro got to him first."

Just how close Kennedy came to getting Castro first, history may never reveal.

But Victor Lasky offers this food for thought: "A long-secret CIA report observed, 'It is likely that at the very moment President Kennedy was shot, a CIA officer was meeting with a Cuban agent and giving him an assassination device for use against Fidel Castro.' "