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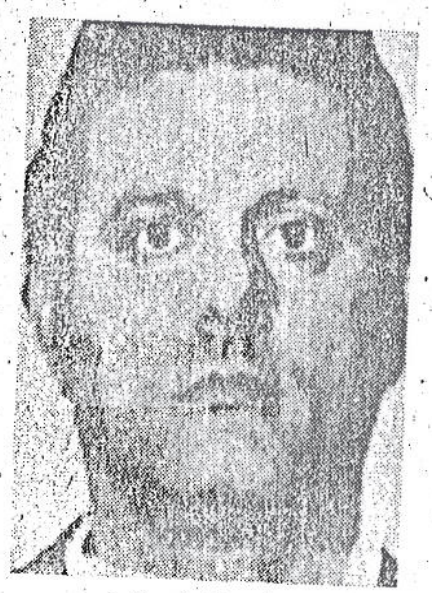
Watergate figure re-arrested



Frank Sturgis
. . . charged with harassment

By Richard Ben Cramer
Inquirer Staff Writer

NEW YORK—Watergate burglar Frank Sturgis was arrested here late Monday night on charges of threatening a woman who has linked him to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The woman, Marita Lorenz, who lives in a luxury tower on Manhattan's East Side, reportedly told investigators for the House Select Committee on Assassinations that she traveled with Sturgis, Lee Harvey Oswald and four Cuban exiles by car to Dallas only three days before Oswald shot Kennedy on Nov. 22, 1963.

Sturgis's lawyer, Henry B. Rothblatt, who represented him during the Watergate prosecutions, called Miss Lorenz' charges nonsense. Her story was reported in September, and Sturgis publicly denied it at the time.

But Rothblatt confirmed in an interview yesterday that Miss Lorenz and Sturgis had been involved in clandestine operations together since 1959, when she was Fidel Castro's mistress in Cuba and Sturgis was Castro's air force commandant.

Both Miss Lorenz and Sturgis later turned against Castro and both worked with the CIA on plots to dislodge the Communist Cuban dictator during the 1960s, according to Rothblatt. Miss Lorenz has said they once worked together in a plot to poison Castro.

Police at Manhattan's 23d precinct on the upper East Side said that Sturgis was arrested in Miss Lorenz' apartment at 11:30 p.m. Monday night and charged with coercion and aggravated harassment.

He was forced to spend a second night in jail when bail was set at $25,000 in a late-evening arraignment that allowed no time for the money to be raised.

Police said unofficially that Sturgis' presence in New York was brought to their attention when Miss Lorenz' 15-year-old daughter was caught with a gun Sunday night.

The daughter, whom police refused to name, said she was carrying the gun to protect her mother from Sturgis. Police said the girl told them that Sturgis had found out that Miss Lorenz had told House investigators about the 1963 trip to Dallas and that he had threatened Miss Lorenz over the telephone.

Criminal Court Judge Milton Samarodin set the bail for Sturgis as a courtroom full of prostitution suspects looked on, chewing gum impassively.

Sturgis, wearing a white, open-necked shirt and a blue jacket and

(See STURGIS on 2-A)

Watergate figure Sturgis arrested

STURGIS, From 1-A

looking slightly drawn after almost 24 hours in custody, stood silently as Rothblatt virtually screamed his protest at the size of the bail.

"Do you mean you'd take the hearsay word of a psychotic woman whose only purpose is to sell a book?" he yelled.

Rothblatt also said that Miss Lorenz was thrown out of his office a month ago for unspecified "psychotic actions." He said that Sturgis' wife, Jan, had a tape recording of Miss Lorenz inviting Sturgis to visit New York at her expense.

The complaint on which Sturgis was imprisoned charges that he threatened Miss Lorenz, claiming that he or "the Company," as the CIA is called by its agents and ex-agents, would get her if she talked to House investigators without first discussing her testimony with him.

An official of the prosecutor's office said that a grand jury would consider an indictment before Friday. A second arraignment, if that indictment is handed down, would be held Friday.

Sturgis pleaded guilty to his part in the Watergate break-in and conspiracy in 1973. He served one year of a 1- to 4-year sentence imposed by U. S. District Judge John J. Sirica.

Rothblatt said that Sturgis was now a "salesman" in Miami, but that the former CIA operative still maintained an active interest in national security and clandestine operations.

Miss Lorenz has said that she became acquainted with Castro in 1959 when she accompanied her German father, a ship's captain, on one of his stops in Havana. She said Castro later invited her back as his personal interpreter and that she became his mistress.

She said that Sturgis, then using the name Fiorini, recruited her to poison Castro by putting capsules of an unspecified substance in his coffee. But the plot failed, she said, when the capsules melted in a jar of cold cream in which she had hidden them.

Associated Press

Miss Lorenz last year, telling of CIA work