—Associated Press

Watergate burglar Frank Sturgis (right) tastes a banana cream pie which Yippie pie thrower Aron Kay tried to throw in Sturgis' face yesterday. The pie is being held by his attorney Henry Rothblatt.

Charges Against Sturgis Dismissed by N.Y. Court

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Coercion and harassment charges against Watergate burglar Frank Sturgis were dismissed in Manhattan Criminal Court yesterday when the prosecutor conceded he had no evidence to support them.

Sturgis had been arrested in the apartment of ex-spy Marita Lorenz. It was said that he had tried to compel her to change her story that he was involved in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

Alan Broomer, assistant district attorney, said his office had reviewed seven tapes of phone conversations between Sturgis and Lorenz and found no evidence that he threatened her, as she charged.

"A lack of any substantiation of her charges impairs her credibility," Broomer said before moving that they be dropped. Sturgis' lawyer, Henry Rothblatt, concurred in the move.

JUDGE EDWIN TORRES then dismissed the charges, ending an episode that began late Monday, cost Sturgis two nights in jail, and made him the target of two unsuccessful pie-throwing attempts.

Afterward, Sturgis was asked what Lorenz's motive might have been in accusing him.

"She tried to get the American people to believe that myself and the Cuban community in exile were involved in a conspiracy to assassinate the President," he replied.

Rothblatt contended that Lorenz accused Sturgis "to cover up the arrest of her 15-year-old daughter for the possession of a gun. There had to be some fall guy, and that was Frank Sturgis."

Rothblatt continued, "The police authorities fell for this stupid story and this is the fiasco that followed. This able DA's office should have known better. It's considered one of the best in the country. They're supposed to be the bright boys."

HE SAID STURGIS "plans to sue everybody involved" and would file a federal suit charging that his civil rights were violated.

Police are already looking into that charge, investigating the circumstances under which Sturgis was arrested by two detectives who did not hear any threat made against Lorenz.

She has contended that he recruited her during the Kennedy administration to try and kill Cuban President Fidel Castro. She claims to have become Castro's mistress for a time.

Sturgis told newsmen Thursday that he came to New York at Lorenz's request on Monday to discuss the assassination involvement charges that she leveled against him to House committee investigators.

When Sturgis arrived at Criminal Court yesterday, he was approached by Yippie pie thrower Aaron Kay who sought to make him the target for one of his banana cream specials. A similar attempt Thursday had fizzled.

Again Kay failed to add Sturgis to his list of victims ranging from Mayor Abraham D. Beame to Watergate figure Anthony Ulasewicz.