

In Memorium *ost Cliff Tribune 1/10/80*

## George Butler: His Word Was Law

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There were only small obituaries in both downtown newspapers when George Butler died.

George knew he had cancer and I knew he had cancer but we never discussed it. Although he was 73 years old, Butler was always my idea of the indestructible man.

His weight probably never varied more than 10 or 15 pounds from the days when he was a student at Texas A & M during the depression. Built like a compact tank George was a marvelous physical specimen.

He had fully developed arm and leg muscles, a hard flat stomach, a big neck and a full shock of wavy hair.

He left Aggieland after two years for lack of funds to continue his education and came to

Dallas to seek his fortune. He applied for a job with the Dallas police department and after a couple of months was accepted.

He then started a career where he was to gain a reputation as one of the nation's greatest crime fighters. In Dallas his name is mentioned in law enforcement circles along with the legendary Sheriff Bill Decker and Detective Chief Will Fritz.

In 26 years with the force Butler spent more time on loan to federal law-enforcement agencies, congressional committees and state authorities than he did at home.

He was chief investigator for the Kefauver Crime Committee when the Tennessee Senator was making national headlines. Bobby Kennedy, still a conservative in those days, was chief counsel of the same group.

See BUTLER on Page 2

(OVER)

# BUTLER WILL BE MISSED . . .

Continued From Page 1

Butler probably knew as much about the Mafia, drug traffic, organized gambling, prostitution and the rackets as any man alive. At the time of his death he was still assembling notes on the Kennedy assassination.

George Butler was certain that Lee Harvey Oswald and his wife Marina were Communist agents, that Fidel Castro ordered the Kennedy killing, that Oswald and Jack Ruby were probably in cahoots.

Only a few days before he died he called and said that he was feeling better and that he and I would resume our frequent meetings through the years to talk about a book he wanted to write. Just a few days earlier he had sent me another couple pages of handwritten notes with some of his latest thoughts on the assassination and Dallas politics.

Butler was a founder of the Dallas Police Association, its first president and was reelected five times. That ended his useful career. As a detective lieutenant he was rewarded with such assignments as juvenile bureau chief and head of the jail after he organized DPA.

Ernest Emerson, his counterpart in the fire department working under more understanding men, eventually became fire marshal after heading the first firefighter's association.

A friend of the late H.L. Hunt, Butler was a

confidante of the famed oil tycoon and handled personal investigative assignments for Hunt Oil. He had told me years ago of Hunt's "third" family and predicted the scandal which broke after the patriarch's death.

I remember standing near the elevator to the city hall driveway when Lee Harvey Oswald was being transferred. Alongside were the anxious Butler and Fritz.

They were distraught over the hordes of strange newsmen clustered there, the apparent lack of security over gadget bags and cases for television lighting equipment and cameras.

"He'll never make it to the street," Butler remarked, as Oswald was led away from the jail elevator. Within seconds the sound of shot reverberated through the concrete tunnel and Oswald fell mortally wounded. History was made and Dallas was blamed.

Fritz and Butler had strenuously objected to the public spectacle when Oswald was being removed to the county jail.

That was the kind of insight which made George Butler a legend.

A great marksman, fearless cop, student of crime, man with great political insight a vowed anti-communist and a loving husband -- George Butler was a credit to his city and his country.

(1870)