

Actor Sees Ex-Wife in JFK

BY ROBERT L. ROSE

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Los Angeles — Actor William Campbell, 49, just can't feature his ex-wife, Judy, in the role some have cast her: A slinky, sexy link between John F. Kennedy and the Mafia in a plot to kill Fidel Castro.

"I couldn't imagine her being privy to any kind of secret information. She wouldn't understand it anyway. I mean, let me put it this way. They weren't dealing with some kind of the Pi Beta Kappa," Campbell said. "She is no Mata Hari. That is for sure."

Judy, now Mrs. Dan Exner, wife of a San Diego golf pro, called a press conference to discuss rumors she was the "close friend" of Kennedy involved in 70 telephone contacts reported in a Senate Intelligence committee study of CIA assassination plots during 1961 and 1962.

Mrs. Exner, 41, said her relationship with the late President was of a "close, personal nature." She refused to say if they were lovers. She did admit she knew underworld figures Sam (Momo) Giancana and John Rosselli, but that was "no link."

Judy was just a shy kid who hung around with the young Hollywood crowd, as Campbell recalled it. That was back when they first met.

"I first saw her when she came to my party. I was living with Danny Arnold, now the producer of 'Barney Miller.' We were just young guys in Hollywood trying to have a good time. She came with Robert Wagner. She had known him a long time. She knew all of those kids, a lot of them out of Hollywood High," Campbell said.

"I came from a whole different ballgame. I was a tough kid from northern

New Jersey, an actor suddenly under contract, wide-eyed, and still in shock that I was making 10 times as much as my father. He worked for the water department."

It was 1952 and Judy was 18. Judith Katherine Imoor and Campbell were married that Oct. 25. They were divorced April 2, 1958, after she filed a year earlier.

Judy was 24 when the decree was entered and 26 when she met Kennedy, then a U.S. senator, in Las Vegas on Feb. 7, 1960. He was in town to address the Women's Democratic Club.

Judy refused to tell newsmen who introduced them. But news reports said she testified before the Senate committee that it was Frank Sinatra. The singer's Los Angeles public relations representative told the Chicago Daily News Sinatra was making no comment and there were no signs he planned to.

"I was introduced to Sam Giancana by the same friend at a party in Miami Beach in late March 1960," Exner told the news conference. "I will not at this time reveal the identity of that friend, but will do so when the entire story is told."

"Johnny Rosselli and I were introduced by Sam Giancana some time after March 1960."

"When we were married, she was very shy. Domestically inclined. Neat. She just wanted to be a housewife," Campbell said. "In those days, I went on location a lot and I never took her. We started growing apart very rapidly."

A big part of the problem, he said, was mother-in-law trouble. Mama Imoor was a "Hollywood mother" trying to make a

star out of one sister, whose acting name was Susan Morrow.

"She spent most of her time grooming her for stardom. She was under contract to Paramount. But it didn't work out. Susan married Gary Morton, now married to Lucille Ball, after a big agent named Bill Robinson, and finally a dentist whose name I don't know. She's settled down now, with kids," he said.

"Mama would have done the same star bit with Judy if I hadn't dropped on the scene. But she didn't have any talent anyway. She just couldn't do it. Too introverted."

Campbell said there was no bitterness

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when they split up, no charges that either was running around with somebody else, "but I just couldn't cut that umbilical cord with her parents, both of whom are now dead — and poppa kept borrowing money, and he had a pretty good job. It was okay, but Judy would cry about it."

In those days, as the "young crowd" they didn't know the swinging biggies of the time, "The Jerry Lewises, the Dean Martins, Peter Lawfords, Frank Sinatras . . . those people. I hadn't even met them" even though he was working with, and sometimes co-starring with, actors like Spencer Tracy, Humphrey Bogart,

Kirk Douglas and Richard Widmark."

In 1960, two years after their bustup, Campbell said he heard from a brother-in-law that Judy had met Kennedy and flown to Miami, at his invitation, to help with his campaign.

Mrs. Exner said their relationship lasted just 54 weeks, breaking up about two months after Kennedy entered the White House, which was Jan. 20, 1961.

Campbell said he wasn't surprised they met.

"Movie stars and politicians get together all the time. It's kind of a combination of glamor and power. And girls can navigate that way and they don't even

know who the hell they're sitting with. It happens all the time," he said.

"I think she was just one of many others. You've heard the rumors. But I'll tell you one thing, if Kennedy was as active as they say he was, we'd never have had the Bay of Pigs. He wouldn't have had time to give the order. He would have been much too busy."

Did he think Judy and Kennedy had an affair?

"When he was just a senator, yes. But after he was President I don't see how. He was under a microscope. But, who knows, maybe they did," he said.

Now, 15 years later, Judy, apparently stricken by a form of total recall, says everything she knows has been recorded and will be revealed at the proper time.

"To me it becomes a movie. I think the press conference is just a set up for a book. I mean, who really gives a damn? I feel kind of sorry for her. I think a nice little girl should have her little divorces and flings and all that and then wind up a nice matron lady and let it go at that," Campbell said.

Campbell, a director of the Motion Picture and Television Fund, appeared in more than a dozen movies in the '50s and '60s, including the starring role in "Cell 2455, Death Row," a film about sex criminal Caryl Chessman, who was executed in the gas chamber at San Quentin. Campbell still keeps his acting hand in and had appeared as a guest on TV's "The Streets of San Francisco."