

Crime probe boss *Book plus zero* Dallas leader *CDN 2/12-13/72* Navy deserter

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DALLAS — Since 1957, John McKee had been a leading figure in his community. He was head of the Dallas Crime Commission and the second-ranking Mason in the state and in the early 1960s had been awarded the Top Texas Award.

On Friday, the district attorney's office announced McKee had a past that no one knew about.

The office and the police announced that McKee, 66, is actually James Kell Zullinger, who in 1929 jumped ship and deserted the Navy. The Navy listed Zullinger as a deserter until 1951, then issued him a dishonorable discharge when he couldn't be found.

McKee, divorced from his wife only four days ago and in ill health, issued a statement through his personal secretary.

"This is ridiculous," McKee said in the statement. "I deny it in its entirety."

"Well, I think it's stupid," said a neighbor, Mrs. Rodney Ashmore. "But if he did, he did. You don't judge a person by what he does as a young person. You judge him by what he does now. He's very highly thought of, a lovely person."

In joint statement, the police and the district attorney said information received last

November indicated that McKee was using an assumed name.

"McKee steadfastly denied the accusation and produced documents which showed his name as John McKee and his place of birth as Harrisburg, Pa., on Aug. 8, 1907," the statement said. "Birth records were checked by Dallas Police Department intelligence sources and no record of John McKee was found . . ."

THE QUESTION of John McKee's identity has been verified." His real name is James Kell Zullinger.

"Due to Mr. McKee's position with the Dallas Crime Commission, results of the investigation were presented to the Dallas County grand jury Friday for whatever action it may wish to take in the matter."

It was not immediately known if the incident violated any laws. The Navy no longer has any jurisdiction since the discharge.