

Ex-officer fears 'setup'

Ruby link attributed to alleged 'harassment'

By EARL GOLZ

Former Dallas police officer Patrick T. Dean fears a "setup" by the House Assassinations Committee to blame him for letting Jack Ruby, a friend of Dean's, into the city hall basement when Ruby shot Lee Harvey Oswald.

Dean, in charge of security in the basement, claims he was so "harassed" by committee investigators before the committee's term expired last December that he lost 20 pounds and was hospitalized with a "nerve condition."

"And I don't think I've heard the last of it," the Tyler resident said. "I think I'll be hearing from another agency of the federal government (the U.S. Department of Justice)."

The committee didn't address itself to the Ruby-Oswald issue in a preliminary report in December but is expected to do so in a final summary of findings at the end of April.

The committee's report stated organized crime figures may have been involved in a conspiracy to assassinate President John F. Kennedy in 1963. Ruby's organized crime ties have been well documented by private researchers in the past six years, and Dean freely admits he was a good friend of Ruby's before and after Oswald's shooting.

Dean also is worried committee investigators may try to incriminate him because he was a friend of Joe Civello, Dallas Mafia figure who died several years ago.

CIVELLO, WHO WAS acquainted with Ruby, invited Dean to dinner in Dallas shortly after Civello was arrested with other Mafia leaders at the famous Apalachin, N.Y., meeting in 1957.

Civello reported back the developments at Apalachin to Carlos Marcello, a Mafia chieftain in New Orleans who is a central figure in the committee's investigation of the assassination.

Committee investigators learned Dean took a polygraph examination in 1964 in connection with his role in the city hall basement and his relationship with Ruby.

They say Dean has acknowledged he "failed" the lie test but they cannot find any of the written results of the examination by police polygraph operator Paul Bentley.

Dean told *The News* he wrote all 16 questions to be asked of him — including the last one, which stated: "Are you deliberately withholding any information regarding the Ruby-Oswald incident?"

"That particular day I was nervous and hypertensive," Dean said, "so I flunked it. Or rather it was inconclusive."

Bentley, who retired from the police force 11 years ago, said "there definitely were written results" of Dean's test on file with the police in 1964, even if they were inconclusive. Committee investigators asked him several months ago about the results, he said, "and I just don't recall exactly how Dean's came out."

DEAN, 46, WAS a police sergeant until 1973, when he retired on a disability pension after incurring injuries in an auto accident. He was in a coma for 21 days and suffered some brain damage but appears to have recovered fully.

Dr. William L. Hall of Dallas recommended further hospitalization Jan. 16, noting Dean has had "a nervous instability and insomnia and inability to

concentrate" and "slipshod" report that day to his Secret Service superiors in Washington.

However, FBI agent C. Ray Hall also missed hearing that Ruby used the ramp when he interviewed the nightclub owner later the same afternoon after Dean and Sorrels had left the cell. Ruby refused to tell him how he entered the basement, Hall said.

Two months later, the night before Dean was to appear before the Warren Commission, he said Sorrels called him on the telephone "pleading with me" for over an hour to tell him what he was going to testify about in Washington.

"I told him, 'I'm not going to blow the whistle on you,'" Dean said.

SORRELS, NOW RETIRED FROM the Secret Service, declined to comment on Dean's statements. He repeated what he has told committee investigators, that "you are wasting your money and my time because I can't tell you anything more than what I told (to) the Warren Commission. And that's all I can say."

Vaughn, now a sergeant in the police internal affairs division, said Dean to this day "has never come to me and asked me anything," about Ruby's reported statement to Dean that he entered the basement through the ramp Vaughn was guarding. Dean was Vaughn's supervisor and probably had daily contact with him, Vaughn said.

"My own contention is, I have always believed and I will go to my grave believing that that man didn't come down that ramp," Vaughn said.

Vaughn never knew until he was told recently that Dean had taken a polygraph examination and failed it.

Dean's lie test was requested by Curry in May 1964 after a clash between Dean and Warren Commission lawyer Burt W. Griffin over Dean's veracity.

Griffin questioned whether Dean was telling the truth when he said Ruby told him he came down the ramp. The attorney later wrote in a memo to J. Lee Rankin, chief counsel for the Warren Commission, that he believed it likely "Ruby came in (the basement) by another entrance to a point where Dean could have stopped him and that Dean, having been directly responsible for all basement security, is trying to conceal his dereliction of duty."

Griffin said Dean may have "told Ruby (during the jail interview shortly after the shooting) that he came down the Main Street ramp and Ruby latched on to it."

GRIFFIN ALSO ASKED WHY Dean kept quiet for three months about Ruby's statement during the same jail interview that he had thought about killing Oswald two days before he shot him.

Dean's statement that Ruby admitted premeditation was first made Feb. 18, 1964, in a letter to Curry. Dean in the preceding three months told no such story in two written reports to Curry and several FBI and press interviews.

After his clash with Griffin on March 25, 1964, Dean refused to continue his deposition and complained to Dist. Atty. Henry Wade that Griffin had called him a "liar." Griffin stormed back to Washington. The next day Wade wrote a letter to Rankin.

Wade told Rankin he was "particularly interested (in the Griffin-Dean incident) since Dean was a key (prosecution) witness in the Ruby trial and apparently Griffin was accusing him of lying in that trial."

The district attorney said he told Dean "to take

...form productive labor of any sort" since the assassination. The physician said Dean has "a chronic anxiety state and tension."

Dean refused to answer interrogatories from the committee last November, saying committee members would have to subpoena him to Washington. He said Melvin Bell, the lead attorney for Ruby during his murder trial, agreed to represent him if he were subpoenaed.

A subpoena never arrived and the committee went out of business in December. The panel's preliminary report stated a probable conspiracy resulted in the assassination and recommended the investigation be continued by the justice department.

When Dean refused to answer any of the 53 questions in the committee's interrogatories, he said committee investigator Albert Maxwell told him: "I feel we should inform you that we have 200 pages of declassified material, all of which concerns you."

"I took it as a threat," Dean said. "That's the last I heard from them."

G. Robert Blakey, chief counsel for the committee, said last week he regrets that "Mr. Dean feels this way. It is our intention to treat every witness fairly."

THE INTERROGATORIES, Dean believes, are accusatory. They dwell on such issues as the reassignment of policemen from the city hall basement to traffic patrols outside within an hour before Oswald was to be transferred from the city jail to the county jail.

One question was: "Were any men originally assigned to security within the basement reassigned to outside traffic duties?" Another asked: "If so, were you concerned, as an officer involved with the security of the basement, that basement security would be affected?"

Dean said he never was told by his superiors that an unidentified man had called FBI offices early on the morning Oswald was to be transferred to the county jail and said he would be killed.

Dean was the initial source for Ruby's story that he entered the basement down the ramp from Main street.

However, in testimony before the committee last September, Dallas police Capt. Jack Revill said he doubted Ruby used the ramp. He said he learned last June that police officer Don Flusche, who knew Ruby on sight, was parked across the street from the ramp and didn't see him.

Flusche's story supported officer Roy Vaughn's account. Vaughn, assigned by Dean to guard the ramp, said Ruby did not appear in the vicinity. A polygraph examination administered by Bentley indicated Vaughn was telling the truth.

DURING THE 1964 trial of Ruby, Dean said Revill and the other officer "are completely refuting my testimony." He questioned the reliability of Revill and Flusche when neither "was involved in the security of the basement or the trial."

In his committee testimony, Revill revealed he learned last year of "another set of steps" into the basement he did not know existed when he and other officers of a special committee investigated the matter in 1963-64. The steps lead to a door on the first floor of the adjacent municipal building.

Dean stated in a written report to police Chief Jesse Curry, dated two days after the shooting, that Ruby told him about coming down the ramp.

He said Forrest Sorrels, then chief of Secret Service in Dallas, was present during the jail cell interview less than one hour after the shooting. Sorrels, however, said he did not recall Ruby saying to Dean that he came down the ramp. He said he heard Ruby say this later that day under questioning by police Capt. Will Fritz.

Dean claims Sorrels missed the Ruby ramp remark in the jail cell when he submitted an "evi-

the city attorney over there with him since apparently Griffin wanted to interview him again (and) was going to file perjury . . ."

Griffin did not interview Dean again and perjury charges never were filed.

Henry Wade called President Lyndon Johnson at his ranch and told him about this trouble I was having with Griffin," Dean said. "The next day it was on the front page about Griffin loading his butt on the airplane and going back to Washington."

Wade told *The News* recently that "maybe the letter (to Rankin) up there had the effect of getting Griffin off his (Dean's) back . . . I can't say it didn't happen but I don't remember anything about it."

NEITHER GRIFFIN nor Rankin said they could remember hearing of Johnson being involved in calling Griffin off Dean's case. Dean said he later got a "personal vindication" from Chief Justice Earl Warren when he appeared before the commission.

Dean's testimony before the Warren Commission occurred shortly after he took the unreported lie test and failed it.

"Had I known that, I might have been even more aggressive," said Griffin, now a county judge in Cleveland.

Wade recalled the premeditation testimony by Dean "was probably the most harmful" to Ruby's defense during his murder trial in early 1964. As it turned out, the court reversed the Ruby conviction, which carried a death penalty, partly because Dean's testimony should not have been permitted.

The appeals court found Ruby's incriminating statements about premeditation were not made during or immediately after the shooting of Oswald and therefore were not admissible as evidence in his trial.

Dean has made no secret of his friendship with Ruby. He told the FBI he had known Ruby since 1960 as operator of the Carousel Club. He said that he "frequently saw Ruby" at the striptease joint during his routine "checking of places of entertainment" in Downtown Dallas.

Ruby would give certain Dallas police officers bottles of whiskey during the Christmas holidays and Dean included himself as a recipient. Although Ruby was "very friendly towards Dean," the FBI report stated, Dean "kept his contacts with Ruby on an impersonal basis."

THE FRIENDSHIP DID BECOME personal, however, after the FBI report of Dec. 2, 1963.

After Ruby was sentenced to death — largely on the testimony of Dean in March 1964 — Ruby sent word he wanted to see the police officer.

"He hugged me and was glad to see me," Dean said. "I saw he had a pair of broken glasses, so I got the prescription and bought him a new pair."

Eight months later Ruby gave Dean his copy of the Warren Commission report with an inscription signed "Your Buddy, Jack Ruby."

Wade said Dean "is probably wasting his time if he is worried about anything. I don't no more care about that committee than the man in the moon . . . I could care less about them (committee) because I think it's a waste of time and taxpayers' money."

Dean, however, apparently has not told all he knows about the Ruby-Oswald incident. When two private assassination researchers were about to wrap up an interview with him recently, they asked if he had anything else to say.

Dean shifted uneasily and looked at his wife. She said, "Ask him again." Dean refused to talk about it but said he would if he were subpoenaed by the committee.

Later, during the interview with *The News*, he was asked about what he refused to talk about. There was a long silence.

"Oh, it wasn't earthshaking," was his only reply.