

Sturgis shot at Kennedy, report says

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NEW YORK — Convicted Watergate burglar Frank Sturgis was held in \$25,000 bail Tuesday on a charge that ~~he shot at President John Kennedy~~ testimony of ex-spy Marita Lorenz, who allegedly told federal investigators after his arrest that Sturgis shot at President John Kennedy from the grassy knoll in Dallas.

Sources revealed that Lorenz broke down in an intense cross-examination

Tangled connection between Lorenz and Sturgis interests investigators. Story on Page 4-A

by Robert Blakey, the general counsel to the House Assassination Committee, and tearfully maintained that she had "documentary and photographic" evidence to prove that Sturgis shot at Kennedy.

The sources said her testimony does not alter the fact that Kennedy was

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shot by Lee Harvey Oswald from the Dallas Book Depository, but that it did fit in with conspiracy theories that maintain there was more than one person firing at Kennedy as he rode through Dallas in a motorcade.

Blakey flew into New York Tuesday after Sturgis was arrested Monday near Lorenz' apartment on E. 88th St and charged with harassment and attempted coercion.

Sources said Blakey interviewed the ex-spy in a small room at Manhattan Criminal Court.

(The Associated Press reported that Blakey declined to confirm or deny that committee staffers have been told that Sturgis shot at President Kennedy. Blakey denied the report that he personally had heard that account Tuesday from ex-spy Marita Lorenz. But earlier, when asked if she had made the allegation to committee investigators, Blakey replied: "No comment.")

(His only other comment was that if investigators had such a story, they would have to check it out. Blakey said "I've never met her in my life" and said he was not in New York City Tuesday.)

At Sturgis' hearing before Judge Milton Samorodin, defense attorney Ron Golfarb argued that Sturgis should be set free because he has "never missed an appointment" during his many court appearances and meetings with federal probers. He said Sturgis was here on business and that he was a lecturer.

Another defense attorney, Henry Rothblatt, charged that the accusations against Sturgis resulted from "absurd charges by a psychotic woman."

He argued that Lorenz had sent Stur-

and then "set him up" by offering meet him at her apartment.

The incident on Monday also included the arrest of Lorenz' 15-year-old daughter, Monica Mercedes Perez Jimenez, who was picked up with a loaded pistol in her pocket. She allegedly bought the pistol to protect her mother from Sturgis, but she was arrested before he arrived.

Lorenz met Sturgis in 1959 while she was living in Havana with Cuban Premier Fidel Castro. Sturgis, then known as Frank Fiorini, was an officer in Castro's revolutionary army and a contact agent for the CIA.

He recruited Lorenz to spy on Castro. Later, when both Lorenz and Sturgis left Cuba, he allegedly sent her back on two CIA missions — the first to steal documents and the second to assassinate Castro.

Six weeks ago, Lorenz told the New York News that she accompanied Sturgis, Oswald and four Cubans on a trip from Miami to Dallas a few days before President Kennedy was murdered in Dallas.

She said they were all members of CIA-approved "assassination squads" known as Operation 40.

Investigators Gaeton Fonzi and Gonzalez of the House Assassination Committee interviewed Miss Lorenz Saturday, when she reportedly repeated the same story she told the News.

When the investigators left, Lorenz allegedly received a phone call advising her that Sturgis was coming to New York, and subsequent callers convinced her that Sturgis would try to make her change her story.

It was after this that her daughter bought the gun and told the mother

(ZNS) The FBI is currently in the process of releasing some 80,000 pages of documents relating to the 1963 assassination of President Kennedy.

One of the first of those documents to be made public this week reveals that — just hours after Lee Harvey Oswald was killed — The FBI secretly decided to launch a public relations campaign to convince Americans that Oswald was the lone assassin of the President.

This is spelled out in a memo obtained this week by assassination researcher and writer Tom Miller. The memo in question was written on November 24th of 1963 — just 48 hours after Oswald's arrest — by Assistant FBI Director Alan Belmont.

The Belmont memo, written to other FBI assistant directors says — (quote) "We will set forth the items of evidence to make it clear that Oswald is the man who killed the President."

Belmont goes on to say that the FBI should convince Americans that Oswald was solely responsible for the shooting; that he was a Marxist; that he had been a defector to Russia; and that he was a member of the (quote)"Castro-supported" fair play for Cuba committee.

Belmont also instructs in his memo that two special agents of the FBI in Washington be immediately sent to Dallas to coordinate the effort to convict Oswald in the minds of the American public.

Lorenz-Sturgis connection

by ERNEST VOLKMAN

1977 Newsday

NEW YORK — On the surface it appeared to be a routine police complaint from a woman who claimed that she had been receiving telephone threats from a man.

But the two people involved were hardly ordinary citizens. The man, Ralph Sturgis of Miami, Fla., had been convicted in the Watergate burglary. The woman, Marita Lorenz of Manhattan, had been mixed up in CIA plots to murder Cuban Premier Fidel Castro, according to intelligence sources.

The tangled connection between the pair, which stretches back for more than a decade, has aroused a great deal of

interest among investigators. But one government law enforcement official said, "Frankly, it's a mess. We can't get it straightened out, and maybe we never will."

Sturgis was arrested Tuesday on Lorenz' sworn complaint, arraigned on a felony charge of harassment in State Supreme Court and held on \$25,000 bail. Henry Rothblatt, Sturgis' attorney, denied the charge and said Sturgis had been summoned to New York by Lorenz.

Here, pieced together from intelligence sources, are some elements of the mystery surrounding the case:

The Sturgis-Lorenz Connection: Lorenz was Castro's lover in Cuba during the 1950s, and was recruited by Sturgis,

then a high-ranking Castro aide, to spy for the CIA. According to intelligence sources, in 1959, when she was a secretary to Castro, she and Sturgis fled the island and went to Miami.

In 1961 she allegedly agreed to help out in a CIA-inspired plot to kill Castro. Armed with a jar of cold cream laced with poison, she returned to Cuba and became his lover again. Somehow, she was supposed to put the stuff on Castro. But the cream melted, and the plot was aborted. Lorenz fled back to Miami.

The Lorenz-Jiminez Connection: In 1962 Sturgis became part of a super-secret group within the Cuban exile community called "Operation 40." Trained by the CIA in assassination and other dirty tricks for use against Castro,

A tangled story

the unit was run by CIA agent E. Howard Hunt.

Intelligence sources say Hunt ordered Sturgis to get Lorenz to become intimate with Marcos Perez Jimenez, exiled dictator of Venezuela, whom the CIA wanted to watch. Lorenz agreed and later had a daughter by Jimenez.

The Sturgis Mystery: Meanwhile, Sturgis became a powerful figure in the Cuban exile community and later joined Hunt's White House "plumbers" operation, which carried out the Watergate break-in in Washington in 1972. He pleaded guilty to Watergate-related charges in 1973, was sentenced to a one-to-four-year term and was released in 1974 following a reduction in his sentence. He returned to Miami and re-

mained active in exile affairs.

The Lorenz Mystery: No one knows for sure if Sturgis kept up his connection with Lorenz, but about a month ago she approached the House committee investigating the assassination of John F. Kennedy and told them an incredible story, claiming that she, Sturgis, Lee Harvey Oswald and two Cuban exiles went to Dallas together shortly before Kennedy's assassination. Her testimony, in executive session, was supposed to be secret, but it leaked out.

For his part, Sturgis says that he had nothing to do with the Kennedy assassination and to the best of his knowledge never met Oswald.

Why Lorenz waited so long to tell her story is unclear. But the mystery extends further. Last July, when Sen. Richard Schweiker, R-Pa., was heading a special Senate investigation into the Kennedy assassination, one of his investigators talked to Lorenz. Shortly thereafter, she told Schweiker, an unidentified assailant broke into her Manhattan apartment and beat her up.

There are other unanswered questions. For one thing, Lorenz divides her time between a one-bedroom apartment and a more luxurious two-bedroom apartment, both in Manhattan.

City officials said that Lorenz is well-off and receives biweekly checks from the address of the smaller apartment.