

Liz Smith

Exner wants to talk publicly or not at all

WHO WATCHES the watchdogs? Will somebody look into what the Select Committee on Assassination for the United States House of Representatives is doing — please?

I've reported on several occasions that chief counsel and director G. Robert Blakey wants Judith Exner, the onetime girl friend of John F. Kennedy, Sam Giancana, and Frank Sinatra, to testify for them. But they want her to testify in private. Exner has said she will appear and tell all she knows about anything concerning the late President, as well as her mobster and show business friends, provided they'll let her speak publicly on the record so this testimony cannot be distorted.

The other day Blakey approached Exner's attorney again, saying the committee has material that "needs to be explained," but stating that they would like to come to California and take a private deposition from Exner. When the attorney protested, the chief counsel said that if Exner refused to testify privately, they simply wouldn't allow her to testify at all and would let what they have go into the record as "unexplained material" offered by "the friend of the President." The Exner attorney said this sounded to him like a threat. The chief counsel said he was well aware of the implication but that the committee does not want exposure or publicity for Exner, and rather than risk it, they would not let her testify for them at all.

When the Exner attorney pointed out that if Exner testified in California, the facts might well find their way into the Los Angeles Times, the chief counsel said, "No one in

Washington reads or cares about the Los Angeles Times."

Now, I'm asking you, does the committee need Exner's testimony or doesn't it? If so, why can't she testify and tell what she knows to the American people publicly? And is the Los Angeles Times going to take the slur of the chief counsel lying down? I hope not. Somebody needs to investigate the Select Committee.

TRIVIA DEPARTMENT: In case you care, Caroline Kennedy has two new passions. One is the movie "Grease," which flipped her out, and the other is the quotations game "Bartlett's," which she ranks right up there next to charades. . . . Mary Tyler Moore and Grant Tinker are building a smaller home in Los Angeles, but it will have two tennis courts.

Elton John put his Tower Grove house in Beverly Hills on the market for \$2 million, which is only \$1 million more than he paid for it.

HOT SHOTS: Rumors that Jack Nicholson was seriously hurt in a showing-off jump over a wall in London, where he is making "The Shining" for Stanley Kubrick, are greatly exaggerated. Jack did hurt his ankles and his back, but he still has been seeing enough girls to cause Anjelica Huston to fly over. . . . Jane Wyman, who doesn't work because she doesn't really care to, will come out of hiding for a three-hour film, "Kate," on CBS opposite Lindsay Wagner. . . . Farrah Fawcett Majors' fall movie has Harrison Ford slotted for the leading man. The "Star Wars" kid has



Judith Exner: "The friend of the President."

two other goodies in the can — "Force Ten From Navarone" and "Hanover Square." Meanwhile, the F-F-M movie changes its title almost daily, being called, variously, "The Bind," and then "Sunburn."

FRIENDLY? After all that screaming and yelling and threats of lawsuits and mayhem, Marisa Berenson and her husband, Jim Randall, are acting friendly.

She is back in Los Angeles and has moved into her new Stone Canyon house before going to Rome to complete closeups for her movie "Naked Sun." Marisa looks fine, though she says she still needs some plastic surgery to repair injuries from the car accident in South Africa.