

Jewish-Born Klansman Apparent Suicide

By HOMER BIGART
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READING, Pa., Oct. 31 — Daniel Burros, 28-year-old Ku Klux Klan leader of New York, apparently killed himself with a revolver this morning after the secret of his Jewish origin had been disclosed.

Burros, who had hidden the secret for years, was shot twice, in the chest and head, after he had read a report in The New York Times detailing his background. The police found him dead on the floor of the living room in the small apartment of the Grand Dragon of the Pennsylvania Klan. A .32-caliber revolver was six inches from his right heel.

The police said the shooting was witnessed by the Grand Dragon, 25-year-old Roy E.

Frankhouser Jr., the Grand Dragon's girl friend, 21-year-old Regina Kupiszewski, and Frank W. Rotella Jr., King Kleagle of the Ku Klux Klan in New Jersey.

Police listed the death as "apparent suicide" after preliminary investigation showed it was physically possible for Burros first to have shot himself in the chest and then to have raised the revolver to his right temple and fired the second shot, which caused death instantly.

A paraffin test of the hands of Burros and the three witnesses will be made, and an autopsy will be performed tomorrow.

Detective Capt. Joseph Canfora of the Reading police said Burros apparently shot himself

"as an aftermath of an article carried by The New York Times today."

The article reported that Burros, who had been chosen King Kleagle to lead an anti-Jewish, anti-Negro crusade by the United Klans of America in New York, had one secret that he desperately did not want known.

The secret was that his parents were Jewish and that he himself had received a bar mitzvah, or confirmation. When he was confronted with the facts of his Jewish background last week he told the Times reporter:

"I'll have to retaliate, do you understand? If you publish that I'll come and get you and I'll kill you. I don't care what happens. I'll be ruined. This is all

I've got to live for."

Frankhouser said that after reading The Times today, Burros repeated the threat, saying that he had to go to New York to "wipe out" the Times reporter who had disclosed his secret and that he would also "wipe out" the newspaper's staff.

According to the police, Burros, who had been staying at the Frankhouser apartment since Friday, went out about 9:30 A.M. this morning to buy The Times. He had expressed to Frankhouser and to Rotella deep anxiety over an article The Times was about to publish about him. But he did not tell them of his specific fear—the report that he was born of Jewish parents.

When he returned just before

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10:30 A.M. to the little two-story frame house at 133 South Fourth Street he was in a state of extreme agitation, the police said. He was shouting and he slammed the front door with such violence that the building shook.

Rotella, according to the police, came downstairs to see what was wrong. He found Burros, a short, stocky man with a round sallow face, holding a copy of The Times and shouting: "This will destroy me!"

Rotella told the police that Burros brushed past him and ran upstairs to the living quarters over a barbershop. He kicked open the doors of a bureau and demolished a bedstead with murderous kicks that he learned, Frankhouser said, from a karate instructor.

Frankhouser told the police that Burros shouted that he was looking for a gun, that he found one on top of the bureau and that he shot himself before anyone could intervene.

Tonight, sitting in a barber chair of the shop his father operated before he became hospitalized by a recent illness, Frankhouser spoke with apparent frankness of his relations with Burros.

He said he never had any suspicion of Burros's Jewish background. He said Burros had told him Friday of having been interviewed by a Times reporter, McCandlish Phillips.

Burros expressed fear of exposure, but Frankhouser said he never intimated the precise nature of the fear.

A Well-Kept Secret

"If Burros was really Jewish it was the best-kept secret since the atom bomb," Frankhouser said.

On Saturday morning Burros went out to get a copy of The Times and was obviously relieved to see nothing about him in the paper, Frankhouser went on.

Burros seemed quite cheerful, Frankhouser said, and the three Klan leaders discussed plans for a big meeting to be held near Rising Sun, Md., next Sunday.

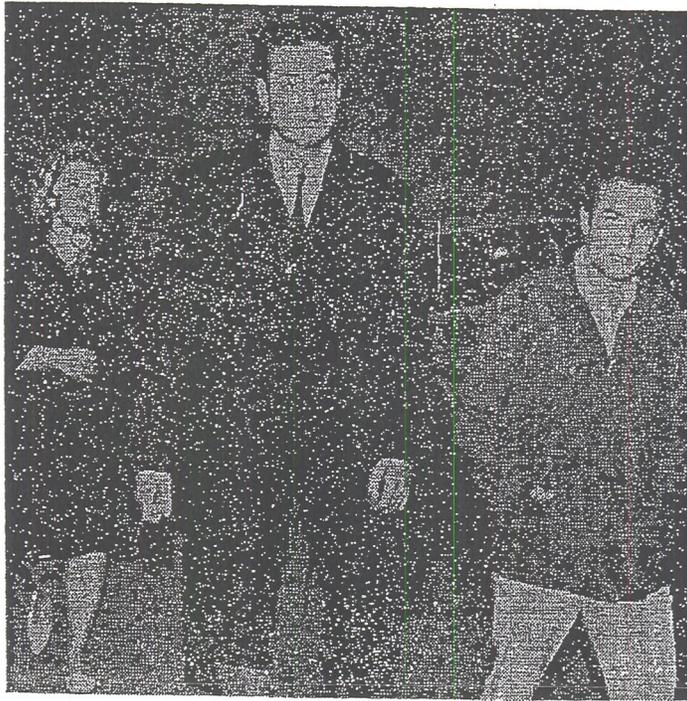
Frankhouser said Burros had asked him for a gun, expressing fear that a "truckload of niggers" might attack the house. Frankhouser said he gave Burros a gun, but took it from him Saturday because he felt Burros had been acting strangely.

"He had been talking about going to New York and wiping out The New York Times," Frankhouser said.

He declared that there was no doubt in his mind that Burros shot himself because of the newspaper article.

"Man, it was the newspaper piece," Frankhouser asserted.

"Man, he came raving up the stairs like a madman," Frankhouser said that the death



Regian Kupiszewski, Roy E. Frankhouser Jr., of Pennsylvania, center, and Frank W. Rotella Jr. of New Jersey, in Reading, Pa., after fatal shooting of Daniel Burros yesterday.

weapon was not his, that it belonged to the house.

There were several guns in the house; Frankhouser said they were needed because of a mysterious shot fired into an upstairs window two weeks ago from a roof across the street.

One Pistol Left Out

But Frankhouser said he had "locked up" all the guns except "one lousy, stinking pistol" because he was concerned about Burros's "wild talk."

He said that pistol was wrapped in oil paper with a hunting knife.

Frankhouser declared that he had heard Burros make several threats to "wipe out" Mr. Phillips, the Times reporter, and the newspaper's staff in general, but "I thought it was all so weird I paid little attention."

Rotella, who himself was exposed in the New York newspapers last week as a Klan leader employed by the New York City Welfare Department as a case worker, said he tried to assure Burros that newspaper notoriety was not necessarily fatal.

Rotella has been suspended without pay by the Welfare Department and will be given a departmental hearing. "I intend to defend my civil rights," he said tonight. "I think a white man has just as many civil rights as a Negro."

Frankhouser said he had

known Burros for five years and considered him "very obviously sincere."

"Funny thing, he was more anti-Semitic than I am," Frankhouser said. "He wrote a very Nazi-istic-type paper. I heard rumors that he was not Christian but an Odinst." The Odinsts are a Nordic supremacy sect.

"I'm a Protestant Christian," Frankhouser said, "and I don't believe the Klan should admit Jews per se. It's okay to allow Catholics to join. But if you let Jews in, then you've lost Christianity. This is a Christian order. It would desecrate the religious aspect of the movement."

According to Frankhouser, Burros had been given a "stand-ard checkout" by the Klan when he became a Klan organizer. Burros took the Klan oath that he was a white gentile American, Frankhouser said.

The Klan was impressed by Burros's role as an activist, particularly the part he had played in the White Tower riots in the Bronx, Frankhouser said. This was a reference to right-wing extremists who tried to break up picketing by civil rights demonstrators of the White Tower restaurant chain in protest against the chain's employment policies.

"We took him at his face value," Frankhouser said.

He conceded that some

Klansmen might have resented Burros's attempt to hide his Jewish background, "but they'll honor him anyway."

"As far as I'm concerned he had a tremendous record," Frankhouser added. He asserted that the suicide of Burros would not hurt the Klan.

"A man commits suicide," he shrugged. "There are casualties in every war."

Frankhouser insisted that Burros was "nothing but a Pfc." (private first class) in the Klan. But police said they found a card on Burros identifying him as King Kleagle of the New York Klan.

Record of Arrests

A native of Reading, Frankhouser has been arrested several times in connection with right-wing and segregationist demonstrations. He has been affiliated with the Klan since 1958. In that year he was arrested in Atlanta on charges of having assaulted an officer during a Klan-sponsored segregationist rally. He told the Atlanta police he was a member of the National States Rights party. He was arrested in Philadelphia in 1962 while he was handing out anti-Semitic, anti-Negro literature to Christmas crowds.

Tonight Frankhouser, who

will be 26 on Thursday, denied he was now a member of the American Nazi party, as was Burros. Frankhouser said he formerly carried a "supporters card" and subsequently broke with Rockwell, commander of the American Nazi party. He said he had found Rockwell "completely ruthless."

Last April, Frankhouser, who is said to be trained in judo, lost his left eye in a local tavern brawl. Three men, including two convicted racketeers, waived preliminary hearing on assault charges two weeks ago. The case is awaiting grand jury action.

Last Saturday, Frankhouser told the police that someone fired at him on the night of Oct. 21 while he was talking to friends in the second-floor apartment. The shot entered an open window and struck a plastic bowl where Frankhouser kept two pet turtles.

City detectives said they had found indications that the bullet was fired from a roof across the street, but no arrests have been made.

Studied the 'isms'

Sensitive to the fact that he is a high-school dropout, Frankhouser insisted tonight that he was well-read. "I've studied communism, socialism, facism, all the isms, and democracy," he said, "and I've come to the conclusion that my country is in danger, that it's necessary to save the country from atheistic, godless tyranny."

He says he is not against all Jews—"only Zionists." He be-

lieves that the April attack on him in the barroom was inspired by Zionists. He said he had served as a spy for the White Citizens Council in Virginia, attending "Communist and Negro meetings."

He declared that soon after the assassination of President Kennedy he offered to give the Federal Bureau of Investigation photostats showing that the Socialist Workers Party had a "training group" with which Lee Harvey Oswald, the alleged assassin, was "connected."

Frankhouser said he served in the Army Infantry but never left the United States. He said he was a salesman, but refused to identify his employer.

Confirmed in Synagogue

Burros was the son of George Burros and the former Esther Sunshine, who were of Russian Jewish extraction. Burros's 71-year-old father, a retired machine operator, has a heart ailment. Burros was born in the Bronx on March 5, 1937. The family now lives in Queens.

Burros was bar mitzvahed, or confirmed, in an Orthodox synagogue in Queens when he reached the age of 13, the traditional coming of age in the Jewish faith. He had an intelligence quotient of 154, at Public School 121 in Richmond Hill, Queens, and at John Adams High School he was an outstanding student.

From about the age of 10, he

said last week, he was interested in the extreme right wing and as a teen-ager he was an apologist for German Nazism.

He had wanted to go to the United States Military Academy, but, failing of appointment, he joined the Army and became a paratrooper in the 101st Airborne Division. He made 17 jumps. As a member of the 101st he was part of the contingent sent to Little Rock, Ark., during the school integration crisis in 1957. Seeing "white American girls" being "pushed by soldiers with bayonets" reinforced his right-wing fervor.

The Army gave him a "general discharge under honorable conditions," which rates below a regular honorable discharge and usually connotes good service but aberrant behavior or character traits. He served two years and seven months in the Army.

Burros became a member of the American Nazi party, headed by George Lincoln Rockwell, and lived at the party headquarters at Arlington, Va. Apparently no one else in the party knew Burros was Jewish.

Burros joined other right-wing or neo-Fascist groups, including the British National party and the National Renaissance party in New York. Before leaving the American Nazi party he had been arrested and convicted four times in 1960 for using profane language, fighting and defacing the B'nai B'rith building in Washington.

In New York in July, 1964, he was convicted, along with

several other members of the National Renaissance party, of rioting, conspiring to circulate inflammatory literature and criminal possession of firearms and a switchblade knife. He was sentenced to two year in jail, but was released a month later on a certificate of reasonable doubt pending appeal.