

5/23/73

# Fensterwald Reported In Dallas Frequently

DALLAS  
MORNING  
NEWS

5/23/73

By EARL GOLZ

The attorney for key Watergate figure James W. McCord Jr., accused of once saying "we're going after the President," has come to Dallas frequently in his ongoing investigation into the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, his associates here said Thursday.

Bernard Fensterwald Jr. has made friends and enemies here since he founded the Committee to Investigate Assassinations five years ago. But he usually draws both groups together each time he arrives here to hash over his latest theories.

Fensterwald's last visit here was March 17 and 18, shortly before he emerged publicly as McCord's new lawyer.

He came here from New Orleans after meeting with Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison, the man who unsuccessfully tried to prove the assassination was a conspiracy.

Fensterwald was pushed into the Watergate limelight Wednesday when McCord's previous attorney, Gerald Alch, testified that Fensterwald once told him, "You'll see, that's who we're going after, the President." Fensterwald has denied the Boston lawyer's accusation.

Fensterwald, 52, a Yale law school graduate, lives in Arlington, Va., and has traveled extensively on his own assassination investigations.

He apparently can afford to spend enough money to finance his private probes. Friends here say he comes from "an extremely wealthy family that owns a great deal" of property in downtown Baltimore, Md., and Nashville, Tenn., where he grew up.

One of his closest friends said she "can't believe" he made the statement Alch attributed to him.

"That is just not Bud," she said. "There is not a vindictive bone in his body. I have been talking to him every

few days since he first got McCord out of jail. And I know he would have said something to me that would have sounded the slightest vindictive. And he didn't."

And the \$40,000 bail money that Alch said Fensterwald raised after claiming he had never met McCord?

"Oh well, he had it. He is keeping a

group of indigents like nothing you ever heard of. He really does have just a fantastic number of people that he takes care of, where they have legal problems. He not only does this expensive legal work free but he feeds them, clothes them and so forth."

Fensterwald's law practice has dealt with civil cases, with the exception of McCord and his current counsel

to James Earl Ray, convicted assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King.

He currently is lobbying in Washington for environmentalists.

In an ironic twist to the wiretapping reputation of McCord, Fensterwald took vehement exception to the invasion of an individual's privacy when he served as chief counsel to a subcommittee chaired by the late U.S. Sen. Edward Long of Missouri.

One Dallas woman who doesn't "think too highly" of Fensterwald recalls the incident that set her off.

It, too, smacks of irony because it involved one of the seven men convicted of the Watergate burglary and it occurred in 1969—three years before Watergate.

The woman, who wants to remain unidentified, discovered her name in a Fensterwald notebook on his assassination probe just under the name of "Frank Fiorini" of Miami, Fla.

"The other person mentioned under the heading with my name—Frank Fiorini—is mentioned elsewhere in your notes, as a 'bag man for the Mafia,'" the woman wrote Fensterwald Sept. 10, 1969. "Am I supposed to know him?"

"I do have other credentials. I hope your other research is more correct. If not, I do not predict a very bright future for your work . . ."

Frank Fiorini was one of the aliases of Frank Sturgis, one of the Watergate Seven. Fensterwald told The News he never met Sturgis back in the 1960s and never established any direct link between him and the assassination.

The name Fiorini was given Fensterwald by a former Cuban lawyer, Dr. Fernando Penabaz, who was living in Miami, Fensterwald said. He wrote the Dallas woman back on Sept. 16, 1969:

"At that time, I was acquainted with no researchers in Dallas. Penabaz, who knew you, suggested that I contact you, and, in so doing, he said that I might use his name as reference. There is no connection between you and the other half a dozen items on the page.

"However, if all researchers are going to be as raw nerved as you, we truly do not have a very bright future for our work."