

Rockefeller Unit Said to Check Report Of C.I.A. Link to Kennedy Assassination

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WASHINGTON, March 7—

The Rockefeller commission on the Central Intelligence Agency, is looking into allegations that the C.I.A. was somehow involved in the assassination of President Kennedy in 1963, according to informed sources close to its investigation.

One focus of the commission's inquiry, the sources said, is the recent assertion of a group headed by Dick Gregory, the comedian, and civil rights activist, that E. Howard Hunt was involved in the assassination near the Kennedy assassination site within minutes of the shooting.

Mr. Hunt, convicted two years ago of conspiring to carry out the Watergate bugging plot, was a clandestine political officer for the C.I.A. at the time President Kennedy was murdered.

The Gregory group's charge is founded on photographs published last year in underground newspapers and elsewhere purporting to show Mr. Hunt and Frank A. Sturgis, one of the convicted Watergate burglars, being led by the police away from a grassy knoll across from the Texas school book depository building.

Mr. Hunt, in testimony before

the Rockefeller commission, reportedly denied that he was in Dallas at the time of the assassination or that he knew Mr. Sturgis then.

Employed by C.I.A.

Mr. Sturgis reportedly was employed by the C.I.A. as an operative in the Miami area around the time of the agency-inspired Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961.

The school book depository was identified in the final report of the Warren Commission, which investigated the Kennedy assassination, as the location from which Lee Harvey Oswald fired the shots that killed President Kennedy and wounded John B. Connally, then Governor of Texas, as they passed by in a motorcade.

Davis W. Belin, the executive director of the panel headed by Vice President Rockefeller, the Presidential commission on C.I.A. activities within the United States, declined today to comment on specific areas of the panel's inquiry or on any tentative conclusions it might have reached.

The commission has decided, Mr. Belin said, to release its findings about the nature and scope of the C.I.A.'s domestic activities only after its investigation has been completed.

As set up by President Ford,

the Rockefeller commission is limited by its charter to investigate the C.I.A.'s activities within the United States and is thus excluded from any inquiry into the agency's covert activities abroad.

Mr. Belin, an Iowa lawyer who served as a counsel to the Warren Commission, said that although it was not his intention to "reopen the entire investigation of the assassination" of President Kennedy, "the allegation has been made that the C.I.A., and particularly Mr. Hunt, was in Dallas on 22 Nov. 1963."

After leaving the Warren Commission, Mr. Belin wrote a book analyzing its work entitled, "You Are the Jury," supporting the conclusion that Oswald was the lone killer of both President Kennedy and J. D. Tippit, a Dallas police officer slain shortly afterward outside a movie theater.

Aide's Assessment

Asked for a personal assessment of any evidence gathered by the Rockefeller commission bearing on a possible C.I.A. role in the Kennedy assassination, Mr. Belin replied:

"Thus far, I have found no hard evidence whatsoever to indicate that there was any person involved in the assassination of John F. Kennedy other than Lee Harvey Oswald."

Mr. Hunt, who is preparing to return to prison following the failure of an appeal seeking to overturn his conviction, reportedly testified in a closed session with Rockefeller commission investigators on Wednesday.

Mr. Gregory met with commission investigators earlier, according to knowledgeable sources, and outlined the assertion that centers on the photographs.

Mr. Hunt reportedly told the commission staff that he was at home in the Washington, D.C., area on the day of the Kennedy Assassination, had dined that evening with his family, and supplied the names of witnesses who could attest his whereabouts.

The sources said that Mr. Hunt also gave the investigators a statement in which he maintained that he had never visited Dallas until 1971 and had never met Mr. Sturgis until the year after that.

Mr. Hunt also reportedly denied a report, which has lately gained some currency among amateur assassination investigators, that he met Oswald in Mexico City in 1963 while serving as chief of the C.I.A. station there.

The Warren Commission inquiry established that Oswald visited Mexico City on Sept. 27, 1963, less than two months before the Kennedy assassination, when he requested permission to visit Cuba from the Castro Government's embassy there.