

FRIEND QUIZZED, DOUBTS
OSWALD IN CONSPIRACY

By JACK DEMPSEY

A close friend of Lee Harvey Oswald and his wife said here today she believes Oswald did not decide to shoot President John F. Kennedy until the day before the assassination.

Mrs. Ruth Paine said she does not think there could have been a conspiracy to kill the President "because I honestly believe Oswald did not make up his mind to shoot the President until the day before."

MRS. PAINE, OF IRVING TEX., a Dallas suburb, appeared before the Orleans Parish Grand Jury today as it pressed District Attorney Jim Garrison's assassination probe.

Garrison contends there was a conspiracy—based in New Orleans—to commit the assassination and has expressed doubt that Oswald was the triggerman.

LEE OSWALD'S WIFE MARINA was living with Mrs. Paine at the time of the assassination on Nov. 22, 1963.

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Probe--

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Mrs. Paine went before the jury today in response to a subpoena issued by Garrison's office, though she said she doubted she could add anything to the probe.

Mrs. Paine spent an hour before the jury this morning and was scheduled to return this afternoon.

Mrs. Paine, chicly dressed in a blue suit with white gloves and white shoes, talked freely with newsmen before her grand jury appearance. Most of what she said corresponded closely to her testimony four years ago in Washington, D.C., before the Warren Commission investigating the president's death.

THE COMMISSION report concluded that "Ruth and Michael Paine (her husband) were not involved in any way with the assassination of President John F. Kennedy."

Mrs. Paine said she met the Oswalds at a party in Dallas in February, 1963, and was attracted to them because she was studying the Russian language at the time and Marina is Russian.

In September, 1963, Mrs. Paine transported Marina and the Oswald house hold gear from New Orleans to Irving in her station wagon. In the subpoena for Mrs. Paine, Garrison alleged that the rifle with which the Warren Commission says Oswald shot Kennedy was among the belongings.

MRS. PAINE told newsmen today the gun could have been in the car but "I did not see one." Until the day after the assassination, "I did not even know he had a rifle," she said.

She said police came to her house after the slaying and asked about the rifle. She said Marina told them it was in the garage wrapped in a blanket. They inspected the blanket and found no gun.

Mrs. Paine said she never saw Oswald with any weapon during the period when he would visit Marina at the Paine residence. Asked if she regarded Oswald as "violent," she said she did not or she would not have let him be near her children.

SHE SAID SHE knew nothing of the incident in which Oswald allegedly shot at Gen. Edwin Walker until after the assassination.

On the question of a conspiracy, she said that if Oswald had plotted the slaying in advance "it is my belief he would have come to the house (for the gun) a few days earlier, instead of waiting until the last minute when something could go wrong."

(According to the Warren Commission, Oswald picked up the gun the morning of the slaying and took it to Dallas in a brown paper bag.)

"BUT I COULD be wrong," Mrs. Paine added.

The attractive, 35-year-old blonde said she never heard the names of Clay L. Shaw, Clay Bertrand, Jack Ruby or David William Ferrie mentioned before the assassination.



—States-Item Photo.
MRS. RUTH PAINE

Garrison charges that Shaw—who, the DA claims, used the alias Bertrand—conspired with Lee Oswald and Ferrie to kill Kennedy. Ruby shot Oswald to death two days after the assassination.

Mrs. Paine, now a kindergarten teacher, clutched a book on teaching methods which she carried to pass the time while waiting to testify.