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Shadows Cloud World of Ronald Kaufman

By LINDA CHARLTON

Federal authorities describe Ronald Kaufman as probably "armed and dangerous," and are looking for him in connection with one of the more flamboyant criminal undertakings of recent years. But friends and associates describe him in quite other terms—quiet, intense, but soft-spoken, more a hanger-on than an activist.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation is looking for Kaufman—he is, they say, absent without leave from the Army under the alias of James Edward Jensen—in connection with the recent planting of bombs in banks in three cities.

He was born almost 34 years ago into a well-to-do family in Milwaukee, got his bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin, went to Mississippi during the 1964 "Freedom Summer" project and got his master's degree and Ph.D. from Stanford University in Palo Alto, Calif. He wrote his 1966 doctoral thesis on color discrimination in pigeons.

Under his own name, he served for two years in the Army, from February, 1956, to February, 1958, discharging his duties at least well enough to earn a good-conduct medal. He served four more years in the Army Reserve.

For the first nine months of 1967, he was one of about a dozen field workers in a research project on stress in the aged, conducted by the psychiatry department of the University of Chicago.

A 'Quiet Sort of Fellow'

On Aug. 10, 1971, he re-enlisted in the Army—under the name of Jensen; he was listed as officially absent without leave last Sunday. He is five feet, 11 inches tall, weighs 168 pounds and has brown hair and eyes.

Those, in brief, are the known facts about Kaufman; as usual, they tell little about who and what he really was. His widowed mother, Mrs. Sonia Kaufman, could not be located, but her brother, Dr. Leo Cogan, a Milwaukee allergist, said his nephew—who he knew was "interested in some movement"—was a "very mild, quiet sort of fellow."

Kaufman was born in Milwaukee on Feb. 5, 1938, an only child. His father, George, who died three years ago, was a Russian immigrant and presi-

dent of the Cream City Glass Company. The family lived in Bayside, a prosperous suburb.

He was an honors student at the University of Wisconsin, from which he graduated in 1961. Then he went on to Stanford, where he was, according to Robert Byers, now head of the university's public relations staff, "very bright, very intense as a student, very much concerned about Vietnam."

No Advocate of Violence

"He did not view it as any accident of American policy, and he saw a relationship of what was happening there and what was happening in this country," he added.

Mr. Byers, who was also involved in the Mississippi summer project, said that Kaufman never advocated violence and was "soft-spoken not strident" in expressing his views, a person who thought for himself. The title of his doctoral dissertation was "Peak Shift and Preference After a Conditional Discrimination of Wavelength."

But by 1966, "he was much more interested in doing political and community work than experimental psychology," said Gordon H. Bower, a psychology professor who was Kaufman's master's-degree adviser who knew him throughout his Stanford career.

His doctoral dissertation, Professor Bower said, "was a very nice piece of work, but he was not the least bit interested in writing it up for publication."

That was two years after his summer in Mississippi, the summer that saw hundreds of students doing volunteer organizing and voter-registration work in Mississippi—and three of them murdered. Kaufman went to Mississippi with Abbie Hoffman, the now well-known radical who was one of the "Chicago Seven" defendants and the "founder" of the Yippie movement.

It was in 1966, according to the F.B.I., that the young man attended the first of several conventions of the Students for a Democratic Society in which he is alleged to have participated.

Lived With Hoffman

But he is not remembered by others who were at the 1966 and 1967 conventions, nor does his name appear on the 1969 Senate subcommittee list that

purported to name all the significant members of S.D.S.

It was in Kaufman's North Side apartment not far from Lincoln Park that Hoffman lived during the Democratic National Convention in 1968. Paul Krassner, the editor and publisher of *The Realist*, recalls Kaufman as a "very gentle guy, a genial host," generally straight-looking but letting his hair grow, serving as chauffeur, errand boy, "almost as if he was a secretary" to Hoffman, dubbed by someone "Abbie's Jewish Momma."

Mr. Krassner recalls that the F.B.I. traced Kaufman as the purchaser of the bullhorn that was a significant Yippie "weapon" during the days of chaos in Chicago.

As for Kaufman's other involvements, Mr. Krassner remembers him "as being involved in factory organizing" and "trying to get us to communicate with the greasers." "Greasers" is a slang term for ordinary working people, a synonym for another New Left term, the "umpen," from lumpen-proletariat.

Hoffman could not be reached yesterday, but an associate who had reached him during the day said that "Abbie hasn't heard from this guy in a long, long time."

Contradictions Noted

In its official announcement about Kaufman, the F.B.I. said that he was believed to have attended two S.D.S. conventions, in 1966 and 1967, and other F.B.I. sources said later that he may have been present at the 1968 convention in Ann Arbor, Mich., at which the

S.D.S. was splintered by the issue of terrorism, and a 1970 S.D.S. meeting in Chicago.

But Alan Adelson, the author of a forthcoming profile of the S.D.S., said that Kaufman's known involvement with the Yippie movement "almost negates any involvement with S.D.S." because of the two groups' contradictory ideologies. He said also that he had never heard the name of Kaufman, nor of Charles E. Owens, which the F.B.I. said was an alias used in connection with the S.D.S.

According to the Pentagon, the man identified as Kaufman enlisted in the Army on Aug. 10, 1971, in St. Louis, giving that city as his home, James E. Jensen as his name, and May 20, 1946 as his birthdate.

He went to Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., for basic training and then to Fort Polk, La., for advanced training. On Dec. 16, 1971, he signed out there, and should have gone to Fort Jackson, S.C., for processing to be sent overseas, probably to Germany.

For some time, and until shortly before his re-enlistment, Kaufman had lived in a white frame house at 1314 Poe Street, Berkeley, Calif., owned by Leonard Coats, who said yesterday:

"He was back here recently. I thought it was about a month ago, but my wife said two weeks. He was in a panel truck."

Mr. Coats described Kaufman as clean and quiet. "What in the world was he trying to prove?" he asked. "I guess he's just one of those fellows who's trying to change the world."