

Agency Information

AGENCY : HSCA
RECORD NUMBER : 180-10088-10087
RECORD SERIES : NUMBERED FILES.
AGENCY FILE NUMBER : 006649 (PT 1.)

Document Information

ORIGINATOR : HSCA
FROM : STURGIS, FRANK A.
TO :

TITLE : "HEARINGS BEFORE THE SELECT COMM. ON ASSASSINATIONS: HOUSE OF REP'S...

DATE : 03/20/1978
PAGES : 191

SUBJECTS :

CIA.
CUBA.
STURGIS, FRANK A; TESTIMONY BEFORE THE COMMITTEE.
ANTI-CASTRO ACTIVITIES.
CASTRO, FIDEL.

DOCUMENT TYPE : DEPOSITION.
CLASSIFICATION : Unclassified
RESTRICTIONS : 3
CURRENT STATUS : Redact
DATE OF LAST REVIEW : 01/01/2003

OPENING CRITERIA :

COMMENTS : Duplicate deposition follows in next folder. Box 128.

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INTERROGATORIES

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MONDAY, MARCH 20, 1978

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House of Representatives,
Select Committee on
Assassinations,
Miami, Florida.

The committee met at 10:20 a.m., pursuant to notice, in the Grand Jury Room, U.S. Attorney's Office, Federal Court House, 300 Northeast 1st Avenue, Miami, Florida, William K. Triplett, Esq., Staff Counsel, presiding.

Present: Albert Gonzales and Gaeton Fonzi, Investigators; and Edwin Lopez, Researcher.

Also present: Frank A. Sturgis, the witness; and Ellis Rubin, Esq., Attorney for the witness.

Mr. Triplett. We will come to order.

Mr. Shapiro. Sir, I am Herbert S. Shapiro, United States Magistrate. I'm a Federal Judge. Would you please raise your right hand?

(Thereupon, the witness, Frank A. Sturgis was sworn.)

INTERROGATORIES OF THE WITNESS, FRANK A. STURGIS

Mr. Rubin. Before we begin, Mr. Sturgis has a number of friends out there, members of the press.

1 He has no objections. They've asked if they could
2 be in attendance at this. I thought that I would ask,
3 if it is permissible.


4 The Witness. I would like to correct my Attorney.
5 I'm sorry to do this to you. They're not my friends
6 because the press is not my friends.

7 Mr. Rubin. Personal acquaintances.

8 Mr. Triplett. We full understand that.

9 Mr. Sturgis, it has been the custom and the
10 habit of this committee to conduct closed hearings.
11 And for that reason, I would point out to you that
12 it is not within the purview of this committee to
13 conduct open hearings at this time, and the press
14 would be excluded.

15 The Witness. Well, one reason why I suggested
16 that to my Attorney is to show that -- to give me
17 some credibility that I'm openly and honestly, even
18 in the past, where it pertains to the United States
19 Government, I have nothing to hide naturally. And
20 that's one of the reasons why my Attorney and myself
21 asked that question.



22 Mr. Triplett. We understand that. However, just
23 for the orderly conduct of the hearings we prefer to
24 have the press excluded at this time.

25 Now as you are aware this proceeding is being

1 transcribed and the transcript will be prepared of
2 the proceedings and it's my duty to advise you that
3 my name is William Triplett.

4 Pursuant to House Resolution 222 and Committee
5 Rule 4, I have been designated Counsel on behalf of
6 the committee to take statements under oath and
7 that's what we will be doing today.

8 For the record, you are Frank A. Sturgis. Is
9 that correct?

10 The Witness. Yes, sir. My name is Frank Anthony
11 Sturgis legally. When I was born in Norfolk, Virginia,
12 I was born with the name Frank Angelo Fiorini. My
13 father's name was Angelo Anthony Fiorini. My mother's
14 name was Mary Vona, V-o-n-a. My mother remarried at
15 a later date which in turn, legally through the
16 courts in Norfolk, Virginia, my name was changed to
17 her new husband's name, to Frank Anthony Sturgis.
18 I kept my family name as much as I possibly could.

19 Mr. Triplett. Very good.

20 And for the record, you are here to make a
21 statement of your own volition. This is voluntary
22 and not under any compulsion. Is that right?

23 The Witness. Yes, sir, as I have done before
24 in the Senate Watergate Committee -- well, the Grand
25 Jury -- the Rockefeller Committee and any committee

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1 pertaining to anything, I have always went voluntarily.
2 I was not subpoenaed nor was it necessary to subpoena
3 me.

4 Mr. Triplett. That's right. That was my next
5 question.

6 You're not here under subpoena, are you?

7 The Witness. No, sir.

8 Mr. Triplett. And you do have Counsel present.
9 And for the record, would Counsel identify himself?

10 Mr. Rubin. Ellis Rubin, Miami, Florida. A
11 member of the Florida and the Federal Bars.

12 Mr. Triplett. Now at this time I'm going to hand
13 you a copy of the rules of the House Select Committee
14 on Assassinations, House Resolution 222, 433 and 760.

15 Mr. Rubin. Are we allowed to keep these?

16 Mr. Triplett. Yes.

17 At this time I would request you, Mr. Sturgis,
18 and your Counsel, to read Rule Number 4 in the top
19 pamphlet in that package.

20 Mr. Rubin. Rule Number 4 is entitled, "Statements
21 Under Oath by Designated Counsel."

22 Mr. Triplett. That's correct.

23 Mr. Rubin. Fine. We've read Rule 4 and Mr.
24 Sturgis is aware of its contents.

25 Mr. Triplett. Very good.

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1 Now as I mentioned earlier, this entire
2 deposition will be transcribed and you, Mr. Sturgis,
3 and your Attorney, will be sent the original of this
4 deposition, the original transcription, and asked to
5 sign and verify it. And at that time we request you
6 return the signed and verified copy to the House
7 Select Committee on Assassinations.

8 If you have any changes in the transcript or
9 desire to make any changes, you should get in touch
10 with myself and we will make arrangements for you to
11 make the changes and initial those changes that you so
12 desire to make, and that will have to be done before
13 a Federal Magistrate.

14 I would suggest at this time, possibly, Mr. Rubin,
15 that you might inform the press that it is a closed
16 hearing, since they're waiting outside.

17 Mr. Rubin. All right.

18 Mr. Triplett. Now that the press has been
19 advised, one further matter.

20 Mr. Sturgis, I'm going to hand you a Xerox copy
21 of our Committee Document No. 06327. It's a letter
22 to the Chief Counsel and Staff Director of the
23 Select Committee on Assassinations from the Legislative
24 Counsel of the Director of Central Intelligence regarding
25 your testimony.



1 The Witness. Fine. Can we have a copy of this
2 also?

3 Mr. Triplett. We have a copy of this for you.

4 Do you understand that letter? Do you have any
5 problems with it?

6 The Witness. No. I understand it. As far
7 as I'm concerned there is no reason why I shouldn't
8 appear to testify.

9 Mr. Triplett. That's correct.

10 Mr. Sturgis, just a few clarifying questions.

11 What was the date and place of your birth?

12 The Witness. I was born December 9th, 1924 at
13 Norfolk, Virginia.

14 Mr. Triplett. And I believe you've already
15 stated your parents full names on the record.

16 The Witness. Yes.

17 Mr. Rubin. Don't volunteer anything. Just answer
18 his questions. It'll go faster.

19 Mr. Triplett. And again, I don't know if you
20 told us what was the date you changed your name?

21 The Witness. I don't recall, but the Government
22 does have the records of when my name was changed in
23 Norfolk, Virginia.

24 Mr. Triplett. And what was the purpose for
25 changing your name?

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1 The Witness. Well, two. One, because my mother
2 remarried a Sturgis; and secondly, I thought it was
3 convenient at that time because there were so many
4 Frank Firoini's in my family.

5 Mr. Triplett. Just to make it very clear, I
6 believe on the official court records your former
7 name was listed as Frank Firoinio, ending in an "O".
8 Was that a clerical error?

9 The Witness. Well, I've always, since the day
10 I was born, signed my name and knew my name as
11 F-i-r-o-i-n-i.

12 Mr. Triplett. Where did you attend grammar
13 school?

14 The Witness. Holy Rosary Catholic School,
15 Germantown Philadelphia; Roosevelt Junior High,
16 Germantown Philadelphia; Germantown High School,
17 Germantown Philadelphia; later I went to William
18 and Mary College in Norfolk, Virginia, which is the
19 extension of William and Mary College.

20 Mr. Triplett. And when did you attend William
21 and Mary?

22 The Witness. Oh, again we're going back so many
23 years. It would be on record. The Government would
24 have that on record.

25 Mr. Triplett. Well just roughly the year, if you

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1 can recall?

2 The Witness. I would say in the '40's, the
3 late '40's I would think, yeah, the late '40's.

4 Mr. Triplett. All right.

5 When were you first married?

6 The Witness. I got out of the Marine Corps in
7 1945. I believe I was married in 1946.

8 Mr. Triplett. And what was the maiden name
9 of your first wife?

10 The Witness. I forget off-hand.

11 Mr. Triplett. What was her first name?

12 The Witness. You've got me in a blank moment.

13 Mr. Rubin. It will come to him.

14 The Witness. It'll come to me. I'm sorry.

15 Mr. Triplett. How many times have you been
16 married?

17 The Witness. This is my third time.

18 Mr. Triplett. All right.

19 What was the maiden name of your second wife?

20 The Witness. These experiences have been,
21 because of the particular time, were very unhappy
22 experiences with me. Like I say now, it's a complete
23 blank to me.

24 Mr. Triplett. Do you recall when and where you
25 married your second wife?

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The Witness. At Norfolk, Virginia. My second wife at Norfolk, Virginia and my first wife I think was in Carolina. South Hill, North Carolina, I believe it was.

Mr. Triplett. And your first wife. Did you divorce her?

The Witness. My first wife? She died. My second wife, we divorced. As a matter of fact I was here and she applied for a divorce and I did not contest it.

Mr. Triplett. And do you know where your second wife is presently located?

The Witness. No, I don't. I assume Norfolk, Virginia.

Mr. Triplett. And you remarried a third time?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. And what was the maiden name of your third wife?

The Witness. Hunt, H-u-n-t.

Mr. Triplett. And what is her first name?

The Witness. I call her Janet. She calls herself Jan Hunt.

Mr. Triplett. And when and where did you marry her?

The Witness. Here in Miami, Florida.

1 Mr. Triplett. Approximately when?

2 The Witness. Oh, it's 15 years, I think. These
3 things are very minor things.

4 Mr. Triplett. So that would be approximately
5 1963 you married her?

6 The Witness. '63. Possibly '62. Sixteen, 17
7 years.

8 Mr. Triplett. All right.

9 And you're still married to her?

10 The Witness. Oh, yes, sir, certainly. Very
11 happily married.

12 Mr. Triplett. All right.

13 When did you first enter the military service?

14 The Witness. I joined the United States Marine
15 Corps, volunteered, when I turned 17. Well, I was
16 17 years old, in Germantown Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

17 Mr. Triplett. And going back, approximately what
18 year was that when you were 17?

19 The Witness. It would be 19 what, '42 I believe.
20 Yeah, 1942.

21 Mr. Triplett. And what units were you in? Do
22 you recall?

23 The Witness. I believe so.

24 I took about seven weeks of basic training in
25 the Marine Corps at Paris Island, South Carolina. I

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got on the H. T. Allen, they sent me through the Panama Canal; went to American Samoa. I was in a training outfit there and I volunteered for the First Raider Battalion which was on Guadalcanal. I was sent to Guadalcanal to join the First Battalion, and I stayed with the same Company until the end of the war.

So First Raider Battalion and then we increased. We were losing the war then. Our actions was commando type activities.

The First Marine Battalion, the First Marine Regiment to the First Marine Brigade to the Sixth Marine Division, to the Tenth Army under the command of General Buckner, who was Army Commander of the Tenth Army, which we made the invasion of Okinawa.

Mr. Triplett. What rank did you attain in the Marines?

The Witness. Corporal. I was discharged -- well, my rank fluctuated. And when I was discharged I really forget. I was a Corporal. I think I was a Corporal when I was discharged.

Mr. Triplett. You say your rank fluctuated. Were you higher than a Corporal during times?

The Witness. Well, during the times you had acting Sergeants and so forth. And being out in the jungles and out in the islands there, like one time

1 I went on a bombing raid over Bouganville that I
2 was not supposed to go from Guadalcanal, and when I
3 came back I, you know, lost my rank. But these are
4 the fluctuations.

5 Mr. Triplett. What types of training did you
6 receive in the Marines? Did you receive any special
7 type of training?

8 The Witness. Well, the Marine Corps was a highly
9 specialized, well, a highly trained organization as
10 a whole. But when I joined the Raider Battalion, we
11 were trained specifically to do behind the lines
12 activities. For instances, assassinations, infiltrating
13 enemy encampments. These are the types that we did
14 because we were such a small outfit. We only had
15 500 and some men in the battalion at a particular time,
16 and most of our activities were done by submarines
17 and destroyers, First World War destroyers. Because
18 we were losing the war, so we had to operate behind
19 the enemy lines.

20 Mr. Triplett. Okay.

21 Where did you receive this raider training?

22 The Witness. On American Samoa. And the
23 training continually, naturally, as we went from
24 operation to operation. It was continuous training
25 out in the Pacific.

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1 Mr. Triplett. What type of discharge did you
2 receive from the Marines?

3 The Witness. Honorable discharge.

4 Mr. Triplett. What did you do after you were
5 discharged from the Marines as far as an occupation?

6 The Witness. I came home and because of the
7 influence of my family, the Fiorini family in
8 Norfolk, Virginia, I got on the Norfolk Police
9 Department. I spent -- not at the beginning -- but
10 I was a plain clothes police officer. I did go
11 through training that we had which they called the
12 Police Academy training.

13 And from then I was working as manager of several
14 bars there in Norfolk, Virginia.

15 Mr. Triplett. Did you subsequently enter the
16 military service, any other military service?

17 The Witness. Yes. I was in the United States
18 Naval Air Reserve, stationed at Norfolk Naval Air
19 Station as a Radio Gunner there. And eventually I
20 did receive an honorable discharge.

21 Mr. Triplett. When did you enter the Naval
22 Reserve?

23 The Witness. Oh, that was, I would say after
24 I got off the Police Department. I would think it
25 might have been in '46 or '47. I'm not too sure of

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1 the date.

2 Mr. Triplett. Did I understand you correctly,
3 you were a radio gunner?

4 The Witness. Yeah, in a PBY Squadron on the
5 Naval Air Station.

6 Mr. Triplett. What was your function as a
7 radio gunner?

8 The Witness. Well, we took our training with
9 the PBY's. We learned radio. And weapons was no
10 problem because I had my basic training with the
11 Marines as far as weapons were concerned.

12 Mr. Triplett. And did you receive any special
13 training in the Naval Reserve?

14 The Witness. No, sir. I was already prior
15 trained.

16 Mr. Triplett. What rank did you attain in the
17 Naval Reserve?

18 The Witness. Seaman, or whatever.

19 Mr. Triplett. Again, approximately when did
20 you enlist in the Naval Reserve and when were you
21 discharged?

22 The Witness. Honest, it's a complete blank.
23 You'd have to check with them, you know, the military
24 records.

25 Mr. Triplett. Okay.

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1 Roughly, how many years were you in the Naval
2 Reserve?

3 The Witness. Oh, I would say I stayed with them
4 a couple of years. Maybe more, maybe less.

5 Mr. Triplett. And what type of discharge did
6 you receive?

7 The Witness. Honorable discharge.

8 Mr. Triplett. Did you subsequently enlist in
9 the Merchant Marine?

10 The Witness. Yes.

11 Mr. Triplett. And when did you enroll, or enlist
12 in the Merchant Marine?

13 The Witness. Again, it's so many years back.

14 Mr. Triplett. Early '50's; late '50's; early
15 '60's?

16 The Witness. It could be, yes. I would say
17 in the '50's. Could be the late '40's maybe, or
18 early '50's.

19 Mr. Triplett. And what kind of training, if
20 any, did you receive in the Merchant Marines?

21 The Witness. Actually no training at all. Because
22 I did join the union. In order to get in the Merchant
23 Marine you had to be cleared. You had to get a U.S.
24 Customs clearance, a security clearance, which I
25 did get that security clearance. And I was part of

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1 the union, the Maritime Union in Norfolk, Virginia.
2 And through them I naturally received certain jobs
3 on Merchant ships.

4 Mr. Triplett. Okay.

5 In line with those jobs, did you have occasion
6 to travel?

7 The Witness. Yes, sir.

8 Mr. Triplett. And do you recall, or can you
9 list some of the ports you traveled to during that
10 period?

11 The Witness. Well, I'll give you one in particular.
12 I went to the one up in Greenland, which was one of our
13 biggest air bases that we had, about 200 miles this
14 side of the North Pole. I'm trying to remember the
15 name of it. I forget the name of it, but it's one
16 of our biggest bases we had, military bases we had
17 in Greenland.

18 Mr. Triplett. And did you have occasion to
19 travel back and forth between this country and Europe
20 in the Merchant Marine?

21 The Witness. Yes.

22 Mr. Triplett. Approximately how long were
23 you in the Merchant Marine?

24 The Witness. Not too long. I'd say possibly
25 a year, a year and a half, approximately.

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1 Mr. Triplett. And what was your reason for
2 leaving the Merchant Marine?

3 The Witness. The situation, international
4 situation with the United States Government as far
5 as shipping was concerned, was getting very bad. They
6 were doing it more with foreign carriers than they
7 were with American carriers, and naturally American
8 unions were a little upset with that. So I could
9 not make a living really, by staying with the Merchant
10 Marine.

11 Mr. Triplett. I see.

12 And after you left the Merchant Marine, what
13 did you do as far as an occupation is concerned?

14 The Witness. Well, I had a night club that
15 I was involved with called the Top Hat Night Club
16 on Virginia Beach, Virginia. I also was part owner
17 in that. Mr. Arthur Bass was my patron and also my
18 partner. I had a bar on Main Street in Norfolk called
19 the -- I was part owner in that. It's been so many
20 years ago.

21 Anyway, before I went with him to the night club
22 I was part owner at this bar and then when we sold
23 the bar that's when I started to go to the Merchant
24 Marine thing.

25 And one of the reasons why I quit the Merchant

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1 Marine was because he convinced me to go into the
2 business of the night club. Now it's coming back.

3 Mr. Arthur Bass.

4 So I went into the night club business with him.
5 This was another reason why I discontinued going with
6 the Merchant Marine.

7 Mr. Triplett. And how long were you in the night
8 club business with Mr. Bass?

9 The Witness. I imagine a good couple of years.

10 Mr. Triplett. And following that, did you
11 subsequently enlist in the United States Army?

12 The Witness. Yes, I did.

13 Mr. Triplett. Approximately when, if you recall,
14 did you enlist in the United States Army?

15 The Witness. I imagine it would be in the '50's.
16 This was at the time of the Russian blockade of Berlin.

17 When I joined the Army, I signed up in Norfolk,
18 Virginia. I believe it was Norfolk, Virginia. I
19 went to Fort Dix, New Jersey. I passed my OCS test
20 and they were going to send me to Officer Candidate
21 School, and I asked if they had one in Europe and
22 they said yes, they did. And they lied to me.

23 So when I went to Europe I found out that the
24 Army lied to me and they did not have an Officer
25 Candidate School there. That I would have to stay in,

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1 you know, a year in order to come back to the States
2 and go to the Officer Candidate School back here.

3 So I immediately asked to go overseas and a few
4 weeks later -- I did not have to get training because
5 of my prior training and because of my combat experience,
6 I was sent to, I believe it was Marburg (phonetic),
7 Germany, which was a repo depot there, a replacement
8 outfit there, where they sent me to Berlin, Germany,
9 and I was with the Fourth Regiment there, and I was
10 with General Clay's Honor Guard.

11 Mr. Triplett. What was your purpose in asking
12 to be sent to Europe?

13 The Witness. To go through Officer Candidate
14 School.

15 Mr. Triplett. Well, Officer Candidate School
16 was available here, but you said you wanted to go to
17 OCS in Europe. What was your purpose in wanting to
18 go to Europe?

19 The Witness. Well, I wanted to go back to Europe
20 because I had been to Europe before and I liked
21 Europe. And I felt well, I'd prefer to go to Europe
22 and I was having problems with my first wife at that
23 time and I just wanted to get away from the United
24 States.

25 Mr. Triplett. What rank did you attain in the Army?



