

statement about the photo didn't you say earlier that the Commission claimed there were no transcripts of his interrogation at police headquarters?

LANE: This particular remark was reported to the Commission by Dallas policemen and Federal agents who were present at the interrogation and who remembered fragments of Oswald's comments.

PLAYBOY: You said a while ago that several witnesses have reported being threatened by both Dallas policemen and Federal agents for contradicting the Government version of the assassination. Have there been other instances?

LANE: Some extraordinary things have happened in Dallas to people who gave testimony contradicting the version that Oswald was the lone assassin of President Kennedy and Officer Tippitt. Since I wrote my book, much more has come to light. I mentioned earlier the Aquililla Clements episode; her life was threatened by a Dallas police officer—or so she thought—after she said that Tippitt's murderer was not Oswald. Another witness to the Tippitt slaying, Warren Reynolds, was one block away from the shooting when he saw a man run past him carrying a pistol. Reynolds described the man to the police on November 22, and since his description was completely at variance with that of Oswald, he was never taken to the line-up at police headquarters. On January 21, 1964, Reynolds was questioned by agents of the FBI and shown pictures of Oswald, but he said again that Oswald was not the man he had seen fleeing the murder scene. Two days later Reynolds was in the basement of his used-car salesroom and a man behind a filing cabinet shot him through the head. Reynolds was on the critical list, but he survived. He later said that he believed the attack on him was connected with what he saw on November 22. A man was subsequently arrested and charged with the attempted murder of Reynolds. His name was Darrel Wayne Garner, and he admitted he'd phoned his sister-in-law and "advised her he had shot Warren Reynolds." But suddenly a young "exotic dancer" named Betty Mooney McDonald showed up with an alibi for Garner, claiming she had spent the night of the shooting with him. Garner was freed on the basis of her unsupported testimony, but a few days later Miss McDonald was arrested on a disorderly conduct charge after allegedly fighting with her roommate, and was taken to Dallas police headquarters—where her dead body was found one hour after arrival. The Dallas police said she hanged herself. Miss McDonald had been employed as a stripper in Jack Ruby's Carousel Club. Because of incidents like these, many Dallas residents who knew something contrary to the "official version" of the assassination

were afraid to offer their nonconforming information.

Still another witness to the Tippitt slaying—who also, you will recall, said Tippitt's murderer was short and stocky—was Domingo Benavides. When I visited Dallas with a film crew some months ago, Benavides agreed to speak to us, but the night before the projected interview, two Dallas homicide detectives visited De Antonio, our director, in the Tower Motel, and informed him that there would be no interview and that we were being investigated. Benavides never showed up for the appointment. When I was back in Dallas just after the publication of my book, I appeared on a local radio show and asked anyone who had any information about him to contact me. Benavides' father-in-law, a man named Jackson, called. Mr. Jackson told me Benavides was afraid to talk and had previously fled the Dallas area in fear. Jackson further revealed that after Benavides failed to identify Oswald as Tippitt's murderer, Benavides' brother, who resembled him, was shot through the head and killed. Benavides quit his job and was replaced by another Mexican-American bearing a resemblance to him. Within weeks, that man was also shot through the head by an unknown person, but he survived. The assailants of these two men have never been apprehended by the Dallas police. Benavides was convinced he was the intended victim and fled Dallas, but his father-in-law, Mr. Jackson, went to the police and told them he planned to initiate his own investigation of the two assaults, since the police had made no progress. The police told him not to. Some time later, Jackson heard a noise on his front lawn and went to investigate. As he stood silhouetted in the doorway, a man jumped out from behind some bushes and fired one shot, narrowly missing him. Jackson now believes that these episodes are part of an organized effort in Dallas to silence Domingo Benavides.

PLAYBOY: Where is Benavides now? Have you been able to trace him?

LANE: The last I heard he was in Lancaster, Texas. But I can't compel him to speak to me. The Dallas police advised him not to, and he evidently respects their advice.

PLAYBOY: Do you believe witnesses are being systematically threatened—or liquidated?

LANE: I don't know, but things have been happening in Dallas that are more reminiscent of James Bond than of Sherlock Holmes. For example, immediately after Ruby killed Oswald, two newspapermen went to Ruby's apartment with his roommate, George Senator, Senator, by the way, has since indicated that he knew of Ruby's plan to shoot Oswald before the event. What he told these two newsmen

I don't know, I don't know within a few months they were both dead. One of them, James F. Koehn, a respected staff writer for The Dallas Times Herald, was found strangled in his apartment. The Dallas police list it as an unsolved killing. PLAYBOY: And the other newsmen?

LANE: That was Bill Hunter, a prize-winning reporter for the Long Beach, California, Independent Press-Telegram. He was shot by a local police officer while he sat reading in the press room of the Long Beach public safety building. The police said it was an accident.

PLAYBOY: Do you believe these two men were victims of a conspiracy?

LANE: Not necessarily. The murders could be coincidences, but there are too many coincidences in this case. Penn Jones, Jr., editor of a Texas paper, the Midlothian Mirror, has investigated these events. He told me that he believes a total of 14 witnesses have died mysteriously since November 22, 1963. William Whaley, the cabdriver who allegedly drove Oswald from the assassination scene and whose original testimony was very inconvenient to the Commission Report, was killed in a car crash—the first cabdriver to die in an accident in Dallas in 30 years. Lee J. Bowers, who, as I already mentioned, told me in a filmed interview that he had seen smoke or flames coming from behind the wooden fence on the grassy knoll, was killed a few months after I saw him—also in an automobile crash. When I was in Dallas with the film crew, some witnesses said they were afraid to talk to us because of the death of the two reporters and the intimidation of other witnesses. For example, the Commission reveals that a man giving his name as Lee Oswald priced a car shortly before the assassination. This man talked loudly to the salesmen about going back to Russia, as I mentioned earlier, and said he expected to come into a large sum of money soon. The Commission concluded that Oswald couldn't drive and that he wasn't there that day. Anyway, we spoke to two of the auto salesmen and they told us that Bogard, the man who tried to sell Oswald the car, was brutally beaten and hospitalized after testifying. He subsequently fled Dallas. These two salesmen told us, "If you take this and the fact the reporters have been killed, and all the other peculiar things happening in Dallas, we're just afraid to be in your film." Thus, important witnesses seem to have been terrorized into silence or conformity. PLAYBOY: Isn't it possible that some of these people were only reacting fearfully to rumors and to events unconnected with the assassination?

LANE: Yes, it's possible. But what I think emerges is a clear pattern of intimidation of nonconforming witnesses. For example, a Dallas housewife, Wilma Tice,