

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 9/16/75

On September 16, 1975, Assistant Director Harold N. Bassett, FBI Headquarters, received in the mail an envelope directed to his attention, postmarked September 14, 1975, PM, U. S. Postal Service, California, #920. Contained in this envelope was a personal letter dated September 12, 1975, addressed to "Harold" from SA Kenneth C. Howe, San Diego Office, FBI, which reads as follows:

"Here is a statement of the events I have to date been able to bring back to mind about the 'Oswald note' matter, some of them only after the interview with you and Phil McNiff in your office on September 8, 1975.

"I have been able to fix these things in my mind, some with a good degree of clarity, some only vaguely, by going all the way back to the assassination itself, sifting through the kaleidoscopic multitude of events which were then occurring in the Dallas Office in rapid fire succession, and picking out the bits and pieces pertinent to the present question.

"Admittedly, there are still blank spots."

Also contained in this envelope from SA Howe was a three page statement dated August 12, 1975, at San Diego, California, signed Kenneth C. Howe, which reads as follows:

"It was after the assassination of President Kennedy and the arrest of Oswald as the probable assassin I first knew of Nan Fenner's contention an individual who had been into the Dallas Office sometime previously and had left a note for Jim Hosty, had been Oswald. I became aware of this information by hearing Nan Fenner herself comment concerning it, either to me directly, or to someone else within my hearing.

"I do not have any distinct recollection of having gone to SAC Shanklin with reference to this matter at that time, but it is inconceivable to me I would not have done so.

Interviewed on 9/16/75 at Washington, D. C. File # _____
by Assistant Director H. N. Bassett Date dictated _____

"The next episode to my best recollection is talking to Hosty about the matter. He recalled he had been given a note which had been left at the office for him. He said there had been nothing in it to indicate from whom it had come, and it said only something about 'Keep away from my wife,' or words to that effect. When asked what he had done with the letter he replied it had been meaningless to him, did not seem important, and he had consequently discarded it.

"I have a vague, but inconclusive recollection this talk with Hosty took place in Shanklin's office, and that he was there, but I cannot be sure. The conclusion reached at this time, as factually as I can remember it, was, since Hosty assertedly had discarded the note, there was no way of resolving the matter. There was only Nan Fenner's belief the one who had left the note had been Oswald. The matter was dropped as of relative unimportance in view of the pressure of the many other things going on in the Dallas Office in those hectic and confusing early days of the assassination case.

"The next event I clearly remember. It is that some time later, I'm not sure how much later, I was searching through Hosty's workbox looking for a serial in a case assigned to him and was startled when I came across a note I associated immediately with the note to which Nan Fenner had been referring. I specifically remember I took this note directly to SAC Shanklin's office. I told him what I had found, and where I had found it. I remember his reaction was immediate and very definitely indicative of the fact he did not want to, and was not going to, discuss the matter with me.

"I cannot clearly bring back to mind exactly what I then did, but, presumably, I did one of three things - either I left the note on Shanklin's desk; returned it to Hosty in some fashion personally; or placed it back in Hosty's workbox. In any event I do recall telling Hosty I had found the note, what I had done about it, and that he should see the SAC. I did not feel it was my perogative to make an issue of the matter. Even if the note was from Oswald, at this stage it was after the fact, the assassination had occurred; the note provided no leads which could be pursued; and was of no investigative importance in the assassination case since it did not give any evidence

"anyone else was possibly implicated in any of Oswald's actions. It thus, to my mind, constituted only an administrative matter for the SAC to resolve.

"I have no recollection of ever having seen the note thereafter, or of knowing the eventual disposition of it until told recently Hosty has said he later discarded it.

"I have been informed it is alleged I, on two different occasions and to two different persons in the Dallas Office after some reference to the note was made by these parties, told them they should forget the note and not discuss it. I cannot recall having done this, but feel it is possible I did on the basis I would have still felt the matter to be an administrative one in the hands of the SAC and should not be discussed by others indiscriminately without having full knowledge of the facts.

"I have found it impossible to bring back to mind a visualization of the note or its content. It is my best recollection it was threatening in nature to some extent, but in what exact manner I cannot say. I have some recollection its tenor was to the effect its author was perturbed because Hosty had been talking to his wife and he wanted him to desist 'or else,' but the whole thing in this respect is not clear.

"I have said in all interviews on this matter that I could not visualize the note. In attempting to explain why, then, I associated it with the Oswald case when I found it, I had surmised it might have, or must have had in it some mention of the name Marina or Oswald. I now clearly know without qualification, when I found the note I associated it, not with the Oswald case as such, but, rather, with the note Nan Fenner had been talking about. With my present more accurate recollection of the events preceding my finding of the note, I find it necessary to say there well might not have been anything in the note itself to identify it with Oswald or any other specific individual."

As a matter of background, as the record will disclose, Howe furnished his fourth affidavit concerning this matter on September 8, 1975. On the morning of September 9, 1975, Howe telephonically contacted Mr. Bassett and advised that

e had been giving this matter considerable thought and had some other observations which he wanted to bring to Mr. Bassett's attention. Upon doing so it was evident that Howe had no exact recollection and the information furnished was really no different than that which he had already furnished. Howe was told to return to San Diego and if he so desired, put these thoughts in a note to me together with any other recollection that he might have concerning the situation.