

# UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF USTICE

#### FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Mobile, Alabama March 30, 1964

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ASSASSINATION OF JOHN F. KENNEDY 11-22-63 DALLAS, TEXAS

On March 25, 1964, BENJAMIN C. WARD, 828 Summit Street, Montgomery, Alabama, was interviewed at his home.

WARD advised that due to an extremely nervous system, he has a custom of walking to the downtown Montgomery area quite frequently about two or three o'clock in the morning. At approximately this time in either January or February, 1963, he had walked to the Trailways Bus Station in Montgomery to buy a magazine. He observed three or four men sitting at the coffee counter drinking coffee and engaged all of these men in a general conversation for several minutes. He did not obtain any of the names of these men and has no recollection whatever concerning the things discussed, but he does know that it was nothing of any particular import discussed during this time.

After the photograph of LEE HARVEY OSWALD was published in newspapers, magazines and displayed on television, WARD advised he recognized these pictures as being one of the men with whom he talked at the Trailways Bus Station on this occasion. He recalled that he heard one of the men with this person call the man identified by him as OSWALD by the name of ART.

WARD stated that he saw this same man on one other occasion which was the Friday before Labor Day in 1963. WARD stated at approximately 1:15 PM that date, he caught the Greyhound Bus from Montgomery to Mobile, Alabama, for the purpose of going to Pensacola, Florida, later to the dog races. While in the bus station in Montgomery prior to boarding his bus, he met this same man, identified by WARD as LEE HARVEY OSWALD and talked to him for some ten or fifteen minutes in the bus station. This man had apparently been on

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# ASSASSINATION OF JOHN F. KENNEDY

the bus when it came into the Montgomery station as he was permitted to board the bus before the passengers who were getting on for the first time in Montgomery.

After boarding the bus, he again had a lengthy discussion with this man and after telling the man he was going to Pensacola from Mobile to watch the dog races, this man stated that he, too, would get off in Mobile and go to Pensacola with him although he planned to go to New Orleans.

WARD stated that he and the man identified by him as OSWALD arrived in Mobile at approximately 6:00 PM and almost immediately caught a bus to Pensacola where they attended the dog races. Both returned by bus to Mobile, arriving about midnight and he, WARD, obtained a room in a hotel across the street from the bus station; however, the man identified by him as OSWALD stayed at the bus station stating he was going on to New Orleans. WARD stated that he has not seen this individual since that time.

WARD stated that the man identified by him as OSWALD never did tell him what his name was and he never did ask the man for his name. WARD stated that he and this man did not discuss anything in particular concerning where the man had been and where he was going, what he planned to do, and as a result, he knows nothing whatever about this individual as a result of his conversations with him.

WARD was asked if he had loaned this individual some money, and he stated that he had not, that they had both bet on the dog races and this man had won about \$800 in this manner and he himself had won about \$125 on that occasion.

WARD was asked if he had observed this individual in the vicinity of the State Capitol in Montgomery, Alabama, during the time Attorney General ROBERT KENNEDY was visiting in Montgomery. WARD stated he did not go around the capitol during the time Attorney General KENNEDY was in Montgomery and has no idea if this man was in that vicinity. He stated that he does recall that the visit to Montgomery by Attorney General KENNEDY was on the day after he had seen the man identified by him as OSWALD at the Trailways Bus Station in Montgomery in January or February, 1963.

WARD was asked if he were convinced beyond any doubt that the man he had met on the two occasions in Montgomery

3

### ASSASSINATION OF JOHN F. KENNEDY

was identical with LEE HARVEY OSWALD. WARD stated that he could not sweaf that this individual was definitely LEE HARVEY OSWALD; however, based on this man's appearance and OSWALD's appearance as depicted in his pictures, he feels rather certain that this man was identical with OSWALD.

On March 25, 1964, Contact Officer, Veterans Administration Regional Office, Montgomery, made available the claim file of BENJAMIN C. WARD under Number C21637384. A review of this file reflected the following:

A report dated February 9, 1962, by Dr. of the VA Hospital at Tuskegee, Alabama, reflected that the patient, a 24 year old white male, who was admitted to the hospital on September 27, 1961, shortly after his release from the Alabama State Mental Hospital in Tuscaloosa had a history of uncontrollable violent and destructive behavior involving the destruction of two radios at different times and there was a suggestion that he may have been out of touch with his environment at least temporarily.

This report continues that WARD's intelligence, judgment, mental capacity and trend of general knowledge appear well maintained but insight is lacking. This report reflected the diagnosis of

The report of Dr. of the Tuskegee VA Hospital, dated June 28, 1962, reflected WARD was discharged on that date against medical advice for refusal to submit to disciplinary action after committing an infraction of the hospital rules. This report reflected that the patient was adjudged competent.

Another report in this file was that of Dr. dated October 22, 1962, reflecting a Neuro-psychiatric examination at the VA Hospital in Montgomery, Alabama. This report reflected as follows:

The veteran is

He is very limited in his social adaptation and has made no economic adjustment.

It is probable he will soon need to be hospitalized on account of the problem he creates in the parental situation. Patient was diagnosed as

A report dated January 10, 1963, by Dr. of the Tuskegee VA Hospital reflected WARD was admitted

## ASSASSINATION OF JOHN F. KENNEDY

November 21, 1962, and discharged December 20, 1962. The psychiatric diagnosis this time was manifested by history of episodes of impulsive behavior of a destructive nature, and insomnia, chronic and moderate. The report continued that the patient was considered to be competent, although it was doubted that he would make a sustained social adjustment.

advised that it was clear from WARD's file that WARD should be hospitalized for mental treatment and care; however, WARD's mother constantly declined to permit WARD to be hospitalized for a sustained length of time.

Mr. CHAPMAN stated it appears the only way WARD can maintain any semblance of fitting into society is through a constant use of strong tranquilizer drugs.

On March 25, 1964, a check of the records of the Montgomery Police Department and the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office failed to reflect any record of BENJAMIN C. WARD.

On March 25, 1964, Assistant Chief of Police E. P. BROWN, Detective Division, Montgomery Police Department, advised that WARD has not engaged in any activities which have come to his attention.

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