

ames Assassins

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Oswald's Raleigh Call

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BY GROVER B. PROCTOR, JR.

After the Spectator's report last week on the controversy surrounding the "Raleigh Call" by Lee Harvey Oswald, subsequent investigation, plus the examination of documents unavailable before the last article, have demonstrated that it is a legitimate aspect of the JFK assassination investigation. It is considered by leading assassination authorities to be a key in the unsolved mystery.

The story concerns a telephone call allegedly attempted by Oswald from the Dallas jail to a John Hurt in Raleigh, N.C., on the evening of November 23, 1963. It was reported to authorities by Mrs. Alveeta Treon, a telephone operator who was working that night on the switchboard connected to the Dallas jail, and who kept a written record of the numbers and name she claims Oswald was trying to reach. The telephone call slip, reproduced in last week's Spectator, shows the telephone numbers 834-7430 and 833-1253. According to Mrs. Treon's statement, her fellow operator, Mrs. Louise Swinney, after consulting with two supposed government agents, told Oswald the numbers did not answer, though she never tried to place the call.

The search for more information about the attempted call began after Anthony Summers (from whose book *Conspiracy* the "Raleigh Call" has gained its most recent public exposure) contacted this writer last week. Summers related an incident that followed a nationally-televised appearance the week before by him and the Chief Counsel of the House Assassinations Committee, G. Robert Blakey. After the program, during a longer, private conversation covering many aspects of the case, author Summers confided to Blakey some doubt he had about the authenticity of the call, especially concerning whether it was an incoming call to Oswald, or outgoing from him, as alleged by Mrs. Treon.

Blakey confessed to being troubled by the call as well, but, to Summers' surprise, for the exact opposite reason. As a subsequent interview with Blakey confirmed: "The call apparently is real and it goes out; it does not come in. That's the sum and substance of it." Blakey continued, "It was an outgoing call, and therefore I consider it very troublesome material. The direction in which it went was deeply disturbing." (It should be noted that another reason for Summers' surprise at confirmation of the importance of the Raleigh call as

reported in his book was that it came from Blakey, an open critic of Summers' conclusions that elements of American Intelligence, anti-Castro Cubans, along with organized crime killed JFK. See accompanying article.)

This kind of confirmation of the importance of the incident, from someone of Blakey's reputation, followed closely by former CIA officer Victor Marchetti's confirmation (see page 8), gives a larger and deeper context to the case. Why was the call made? Whom was Oswald actually trying to reach? If it was John Hurt, who was he? Why was the call not allowed to go through? And most important, what does this say about the larger picture of the assassination itself, and the people involved in it?

The most obvious concern of the incident is that, if Oswald was trying to contact a heretofore unknown accomplice or acquaintance, then the identity of this person and his connection to the case become extremely important. The fact that the first of the numbers is still to this day listed in the name of John David Hurt in Raleigh adds even more speculation to the incident. (Excerpts from a telephone interview with a man identifying himself as John D. Hurt appeared in the July 17, 1980 Spectator.)

The fact that John D. Hurt served in U.S. Army Counterintelligence during World War II, taken in context with allegations that Oswald may have had connections with the Intelligence community, was described by House Assassinations Committee staff lawyer Surell Brady, in charge of investigating the "Raleigh Call," as being "provocative." Though no connection between Hurt and Oswald has ever been demonstrated, that in itself has not quelled speculation concerning why Oswald would wish to call a John Hurt at that number.

Though the House Committee's final report did not mention the Raleigh call, Brady wrote a 28-page internal memorandum outlining the outcome of their investigation of the incident. In an insert after page 15 of the document, it is incorrectly reported that the two numbers listed on the telephone slip "were unpublished in 1963." This information was reported as having been supplied by Carolyn Rabon of Southern Bell Telephone Co. in 1978. Research has shown that the Raleigh Telephone Directory issued December 2, 1962, which would have been current at the time of the assassination, and the Directory issued December 22, 1963, both list a John D. Hurt at 834-7430 and a John W. Hurt at 833-1253. Thus, both of these numbers would have been available to anyone calling "Information" in Raleigh, asking for a listing for a John Hurt.

Taking this piece of information with a scenario provided by former CIA officer Victor Marchetti allows

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John D. Hurt

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speculation on the intent of the call. Marchetti, interviewed from his Northern Virginia home at some length about the Raleigh call and the JFK assassination, seems positive in his own mind that Oswald was following a set intelligence practice, that of contacting his case officer through what is known as a "cut-out," a "clean" intermediary who can act as a conduit between agent and officer without ever getting involved in the intelligence operation itself. All the "cut-out" knows is that if anyone ever calls asking for a certain officer's real name, or pseudonym, he's then to contact a predetermined person or agency. The "cut-out" can legitimately say he never heard of the agent calling, in this case thought to be Lee Harvey Oswald.

Who was Oswald's "cut-out," if the above scenario is correct? Was it either of the John Hurts listed in Raleigh in 1963? According to committee record, Mr. John David Hurt seems to have had an unusual career, but aside from his Countermelligence work in the second World War, there is nothing to confirm or deny his candidacy as Oswald's "cut-out." Chief Counsel Blakey told me, "I think the call occurred. Now whether it occurred to (John D.) Hurt or not, I'm not sure...I was not able to come up with a feeling that there was anything sinister about Hurt." Concerning the

other Mr. Hurt, John William, the committee memorandum says nothing.

If we cannot know who, says Marchetti, we can at least understand why the call and probably why North Carolina. Marchetti once again confirmed the existence of an ONI op-center (operations center) in Nags Head, N.C., for agents sent to the Soviet Union. The plan, according to Marchetti, was to send young men there supposedly as defectors, but who in actuality were hoping to be picked up as agents by the KGB. This process was known as "doubling," as the young men would then in effect be double agents for both American and Soviet intelligence. Once placing an agent in the KGB, American intelligence could then begin funneling in disinformation

According to Marchetti, this was the plan for Oswald. Whether it worked or not, Marchetti did not say.

The logical conclusion to Marchetti's theory based on the facts as uncovered to date, is that Oswald, whether guilty or not of the assassination, once inside the Dallas jail was looking for some way to assure his interrogators, which may well have included agents of the CIA, according to Marchetti, that he was "okay." If this were true, then one must imagine that Oswald remembered either the name John Hurt in Raleigh, or some other location which got confused with Raleigh in his attempt to call, and that either he or someone acting for him obtained the two telephone numbers he attempted to call. That the call was blocked from going

through gives another disturbing, and as yet unsolved aspect to the incident. The importance of the Raleigh call ultimately is that both Marchetti, who is convinced of at least a partial involvement in the assassination by intelligence agents, and Blakey, who (see accompanying story), agree that it is an important, disturbing aspect of the JFK case. Said Blakey, "I consider it unanswered, and I would consider the direction in which it went substantiated and disturbing, but ultimately inconclusive." When asked if he would recommend that the Justice Department look into the incident, if and when it re-opens the assassination case, Blakey said no. His reason? "The bottom line is, it's an unanswerable mystery."

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