

WATCHMAN WAKETH BUT IN VAIN

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GOVERNMENT REACTION TO OSWALD AS ASSASSIN—REFLEXIVELY QUICK

Juxtaposed to the failure to provide any explanation for the extreme reluctance of the author-

ities to follow conspiratorial leads, there is also no satisfactory explanation of why there was such FAST ACTION in wanting Oswald. There was no general roll call in the Depository, and other employees than Oswald left the building. Thus, his behavior as a Depository employee did not seem to distinguish him in any way. The alleged eyewitness to the President's assassination, Howard L. Brennan, who was supposed to have seen Oswald do the shooting, is hardly a reliable witness. He failed to pick out Oswald in the police line up that day. (III H 148) Further, if we assume Brennan to have been a credible observer, the question remains concerning why after he informed the police, the assassin was in the Book Depository, police continued to concentrate on the knoll area, and why there was not immediate ACTION to seal off the Depository.

Further, if there was such prompt action in responding to Brennan's description of Oswald as being on the sixth floor of the School Book Depository, the question arises concerning why there was such INACTION until 1:22 p.m. so that the rifle and shells were not found on the sixth floor until that time.

Similar problems with eyewitness testimony related to the killing of Officer Tippit fail to inspire

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confidence in official honesty. Helen L. Markham, an eyewitness to the Tippit murder, gave a description of the assassin which didn't fit Oswald. In addition to Mrs. Markham, the only other witness who actually saw the shooting of Tippit were Domingo Benavides and Acquilla Clemons, and neither of them identified Oswald.

After his arrest, Oswald was taken to police headquarters for interrogation. When Chief of Homicide, Fritz, arrived at HQ's shortly after 2:00 p.m. and put out a pick-up order on Oswald, he was told that Oswald was already in custody. (W-9) The reason for the pick-up order was ostensibly that after the assassination Oswald had been noticed as "missing" from the Depository by Roy Truly, manager of the building. (W-9) Although Oswald was not the only man missing from the Depository, Chief of Homicide, Fritz, immediately felt "it was important to hold him." (IV H 206) Again for some unknown reason, Oswald seemed to be in the spotlight. Oswald was interrogated extensively for the remainder of the day by the Dallas police, Secret Service agents, and FBI agents. No transcripts exist for these or any other sessions during which Oswald was questioned. According to the testimony and notes made by those who questioned Oswald, he was never once asked about either the Tippit murder or Kennedy assassination. At a midnight press conference on Friday night Oswald made the following remarks:

Nobody had told me anything except that I am accused of murdering a policeman. I know nothing more than that and I do request someone to come forward to give me legal assistance." (W 200,201)

When asked if he had killed the President, Oswald replied:

"No, I have not been charged with that. In fact nobody has said that to me yet. The first thing I heard about it was when the newspaper reporters in the hall asked me that question." (W 201)

Later he told John Hart of CBS: "I'm just a patsy." (7) Is it not incredible that Oswald was interrogated for about eight hours and apparently never asked about whether he killed the President?

Oswald was not the only suspect arrested that day. Richard Sprague, an independent investigator, has found photographic evidence of eight or nine persons under arrest following the assassination. Three were tramps arrested near the railroad tracks; two were Negroes, one was a Cuban, and

one was arrested in Fort Worth. Only one, Larry Florer, has been identified, and he was not questioned by the Warren Commission. (R. Sprague, "The Kennedy Assassination," Oct. 15, 1967. Edition No. 4)

7. Jones, Penn, FORGIVE MY GRIEF II, p. 11. The Midlothian Mirror, Inc., Texas, 1967.