

Interrogation of Oswald 22 to 24 November 1963

First Session      Friday 22 November

2:15 to 4:05 pm

Present: Captain Fritz, FBI agents Hosty and Bookhout

Reports

submitted: Captain Fritz---an undated statement covering all the interrogation sessions

Bookhout and

Hosty-----a joint report dictated 23 November covering 3:15 to 4:05 pm

Bookhout-----report dictated 24 November, including much the same information as the joint report with Hosty. It may be assumed the report therefore covers the same period of time 3:15 to 4:05 pm

In addition, there is a report from FBI agent Manning C. Clements, dictated on 23 November and purporting to cover interrogation at an unspecified time on 23 November. Neither Fritz, nor Bookhout and Hosty, record the presence of agent Clements in their reports covering 22 November. Clements, like the others, reports hostile remarks about the FBI by Oswald. <sup>That is the only indication of h:</sup> ~~It is~~ <sup>possibl</sup> it is <sup>present</sup> quite possible that Oswald made such hostile remarks during ~~two or more other~~ <sup>and</sup> interrogation sessions.

~~Hosty~~, Clements reports also that Oswald was asked about the alias "Alek James Hidell" but declined to give information on that name. Clements lists among the contents of Oswald's wallet a photo of a selective service card bearing the name "Hidell."

Of the four reports included in Appendix XV relating to interrogation of Oswald on 22 November, Clements' report is the only one which includes any reference to the name "Hidell." Captain Fritz specifically reports that he questioned Oswald about that name only on the second day (23 November). The Warren Commission states (page 181) that, "On November 22 and 23, Oswald refused to tell Fritz why this card (selective service card in name of "Hidell") was in his possession, or to answer any questions concerning the card."

District Attorney Henry Wade and/or Dallas police officials had informed the press on 22 November that Oswald had used the alias "O.H. Lee" but had not mentioned the alias "A. Hidell" until at least 24 hours (more likely 48 hours) later. Since Wade and/or the police claimed that a card ~~bearing~~<sup>BEARING</sup> the name "Hidell" had been found on Oswald's person when arrested; since there was no indication on his person of the name "O.H. Lee" when arrested; sharp questions were raised about the fact that the alias "Lee" was announced to the press at a time when, ostensibly, the police authorities already knew also about the alias "Hidell," but failed to mention it. Suspicion was voiced openly that both the forged selective service card and the name "Hidell" had been planted on Oswald by persons who had marked him for a fall-guy. This suspicion was heightened by the lame explanation given by Wade, in reply to a question from a reporter who asked why the press had not been informed of the alias "Hidell" until after a considerable delay.

Curiously enough, the Warren Commission has not included among the "Speculations" and "Findings" in Appendix XII the questions and suspicions stemming from the belated revelation by the Dallas authorities of the alias "Hidell". Nevertheless, the Commission has ~~not~~<sup>BY INDIRECTLY</sup> verified the original claim that the card in the name of "Hidell" was found on Oswald when arrested and that he was questioned about it on the first day of his detention.

From the information available in Appendix XI, it would appear that the Commission bases itself on the report by Manning Clements, although neither his presence nor any reference to "Hidell" is reported by Fritz, Hosty or Bookhout. However, the Commission indicates (page 598) that Appendix XI includes only "the most important" of the reports submitted by investigators present at the interrogation sessions. It is possible that there are other reports, not included in this Appendix, which substantiate the Clements report, which otherwise has no confirmation. If forthcoming volumes of the hearings include such other, not yet available, reports in which Clements' recollections are confirmed by others present at the same time as he, the question will become clearer. However, if no such confirmatory information is provided, the timing and authenticity of information on the alias "Hidell" will remain unclear and compromising to those who propound or endorse the claim that Oswald was questioned about "Hidell" on the day of his arrest, in the absence of clear evidence to support that claim.

The following questions were put to Oswald at the first interrogation session on Friday 22 November 1963 from about 2:10 to about 4:05 pm by Captain Fritz, with Bookhout and Hosty of the FBI present from 3:15 to 4:05 pm.

1. Did Oswald work at the TSBD
2. On which floor
3. Where was Oswald when the President was shot
4. Why did he leave the TSBD
5. Did he own a rifle
6. Where did he go when he left work
7. Why did he carry a pistol
8. (FBI agent Hosty) Had he been to Russia
9. (Hosty) Had he written to the Soviet Embassy
- 10.. (Hosty) Had he been to Mexico City
- 11.. What were his political beliefs
- 12.. Why did he rent his room (W.Beckley) in the name of O.H. Lee

Friday 22 November 1964

Second Session of Interrogation            4.20 to 6.20 pm.

NO REPORTS FROM ANY INVESTIGATORS PRESENT

Third Session                                    6:35 to 7 pm.

NO REPORTS FROM ANY INVESTIGATORS PRESENT

Fourth Session                                7.45 to 8.45 pm

NO REPORTS

Fifth Session                                 9 to 11.25 pm

NO REPORTS

Saturday 23 November 1963

Sixth Session 10.25 to 11.33 a.m.

1. Had he taken a cab after leaving TSBD
2. What conversation with cabdriver
3. Did he tell Frazier going home for curtain rods
4. What did he do with clothes he took off at rooming house 1 pm
5. Why did he live there while his wife lived in Irving
6. Did he belong to the Communist Party
7. Where did he get the pistol
8. Had he ever been questioned before (by authorities)
9. Why did he want Abt for his attorney
10. What did he think of President Kennedy and of his family
11. Was he willing to take a polygraph (lie detector) test

Seventh Session 12.35 to 1.10 p.m.

1. What were his past addresses in Dallas
2. Where were his personal belongings kept

Eighth Session 6 to 7.15 p.m.

What did he have to say about the photograph of himself holding the rifle

Sunday 24 November 1963

Ninth and final Session 9 to 11.15 a.m.

1. How did he explain the map found in his room and the x-mark at the TSBD
2. How had he learned about the vacancy at the TSBD
3. (SS agent Kelly) What are his religious views. Was religion opiate of the people.
4. Would Cuba be better off now that Kennedy was dead
5. Where was the photograph (holding rifle) taken
6. Was he a communist
7. Where had he rented Post Office boxes. Were others authorized to receive mail
8. Was he sent to Dallas to organize a Fair Play for Cuba Committee cell

Final Session (continued)

9. Why did he get a dishonorable discharge from Marines
10. Why did he visit his wife on the night of 21 November
11. Did he carry a paper bag to work
12. Where was he when the President was shot

Questions asked at times not specified or not clear

1. Had he been awarded medals for marksmanship
2. Had he had visitors at the rooming house
3. What was his address in New Orleans that summer
4. What job did he have there
5. Did he bring a paper bag to work on Friday morning

NOTE: No questions asked with the possible exception of (2) above (Had he had visitors at the rooming house) relating to possible conspiracy or complicity of other persons; not a single question about the Tippit murder at the first session, after which he was arraigned for that crime, nor at subsequent sessions; no question as to whether he knew the motorcade route in advance; whether he had been on the sixth floor at any time that morning; how the morning had been occupied; no request to describe the exact circumstances under which he had been arrested at the theatre--had he entered without buying a ticket, had he first discarded his zipper jacket and why, why had he tried to shoot Officer McDonald, had he known Tippit, did he have any affiliations with the John Birch Society or other right-wing organizations, had he ever served as an agent for a US agency, how had he managed to repay the loan from the State Department so quickly and in large sums, was he an agent for a foreign government; etc. Why had he left his blue zipper jacket at the TSBD; had anyone helped him get out of that building; what route had he taken from his rooming house to the Texas Theatre.

It is astonishing that there is no indication in the Warren Commission report of the identity of the investigators present at the second, third, fourth, and fifth interrogation sessions on the day of Oswald's arrest, nor any indication of the questions asked, nor of the replies allegedly given. It is possible, of course, that this enormous and significant gap in information will be closed when the Hearings are published. Yet it is singular that the Warren Commission has not acknowledged in Chapter V (Chronology) that the reports in Appendix XI do not cover those <sup>CRUCIAL</sup> interrogations and has not given any reason for omission of such reports. In a note at the outset of Appendix XI, the report indicates that

Several of the investigators present at one or more of the interrogation sessions...had prepared memoranda setting forth their recollections of the questioning of Oswald and his responses. The following are the most important of these reports.

It seems clear that some reports of investigators present have been withheld, apparently because of their lesser importance, but it is not clear ~~whether~~ <sup>or</sup> ~~not~~ those reports will become available at a later time, or whether ~~at~~ the public will have an opportunity to learn, from any source, the nature of the interrogation and replies at four out of the five sessions on Oswald's first day of custody.

This serious gap in information, combined with the extraordinary and baffling failure to provide a transcript of the interrogation sessions, justifies the most searching questions about the authenticity of the information presented in Appendix XI and the validity of the conclusions drawn from that information by the Warren Commission.