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An Antidote to official Mendacity and Newsfaking in the Press

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Editorial: The lure of Indochina's offshore oil keeps fuelling the war of aggression.

Dr. Nichols' Suit Is Dismissed by the U.S. District Court

The lawsuit brought by Dr. John M. Nichols of the University of Kansas Medical Center against various government agencies with a view to obtaining temporary possession of the JFK assassination materials for the purposes of a "neutron activation analysis" (cf. TRUTH LETTER, Vol. III, No. 4 and following issues) was dismissed by the U.S. District Court in Topeka, Kansas, on Feb. 24, 1971. Dr. Nichols advises that he is planning an appeal to the Tenth U.S. Circuit Court in Denver.

While showing a good deal of sympathy for the plaintiff and his viewpoint, and dressing down uncooperative "bureaucrats," Judge George Templar, in his summary judgment, ruled on technical grounds that the materials sought by Dr. Nichols were not public records within the purport of the U.S. Information Act. That ruling is certainly subject to question.

The Judge admits that there is a good deal of "confusion" concerning the question as to what constitutes a "record" and what not. In the absence of a clear-cut legal definition, he turns to a dictionary, writing:

"This Court must assume that since no better definition of the term 'record' is provided by legislative enactment, executive order or controlling judicial determination, reliance may be placed on a dictionary of respected ancestry for a reasonably accurate meaning of the word. In Webster's New International Dictionary, this definition appears: 'That which is written or transcribed to perpetuate knowledge of acts or events; also, that on which such record is made, as a monument; a memorial.' Again, in Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, the word record is defined as, 'That which is written to perpetuate a knowledge of events...that on which such a record is made, a monument.' "

For the enlightenment of Judge Templar and of the appeals court, I would like to point out that the materials sought by Dr. Nichols for scientific study are kept at the National Archives in the "Classified Records Area." This is explicitly stated in a report by Newsweek magazine (March 1, 1971) on the recent declassification of 85 hitherto secret Warren Commission documents (see also below). The Newsweek story specifically says of the remaining materials in the "Classified Records Area:"

"Along with transcripts of four of the commission's eleven meetings, some 300 documents remain classified - kept in a room behind a combination lock that only three archivists are permitted to open... Also on the green metal shelves are such grisly reminders of Dallas as President Kennedy's bullet-pierced jacket, Oswald's rifle, the autopsy pictures, the bullet that fell from John Connally's stretcher..."



If the National Archives, one of the defendants in the case, so unequivocally treats the autopsy pictures, Kennedy's jacket, the bullet from the stretcher etc. as "records" - and these are precisely the materials Dr. Nichols wants to examine - this fact should have been a better guide for the Judge's thinking than Webster's Dictionary. But even the definition given by Webster's defeats Templar's ruling, for if a monument can be a record, then certainly the "grisly reminders of Dallas" - monuments to America's first coup d'etat - are, too.

Dr. Nichols himself writes in a letter to me, dated March 1, 1971: "My position is that a 'Record' is anything from which information can be derived by reading, listening, etc., whether or not simple vision is required or sophisticated electronic-atomic methods are required." That view is sustained not only by the dictionary, but far more forcefully by the action of the National Archives locking up the assassination materials, along with the still classified W.C. documents, in an inaccessible vault designated as the "Classified Records Area," - precisely because too much information could be derived from them by inquisitive and discerning students of history.

#### The "Panel Review"

After the preliminaries cited in the last issue of TL, the report of the four panelists Carnes, Fisher, Morgan and Moritz starts out as follows:

##### " Previous Reports

"The Autopsy Report stated that X-rays had been made of the entire body of the deceased. The Panel's inventory disclosed X-ray films of the entire body except for the lower arms, wrists and hands and the lower legs, ankles and feet."

This, I submit, is an indirect - and well-deserved - slap at the three military physicians who had performed the autopsy. They are caught cheating, no less, for their pretense of having X-rayed the "entire body" is here exposed as false. If there were no films of the lower arms, wrists and hands as well as the lower legs, ankles and feet, that means about one-fourth of the entire body was not examined at all, at least not for the record. This raises - and leaves unanswered - the interesting question whether Kennedy may have suffered additional wounds, besides those mentioned in the autopsy report, which the three command performers chose to disregard completely because they had no bullets to spare, having been told by their superior officers that three snots had been fired, no more, no less. Actually, the evidence gathered and disclosed by District Attorney Jim Garrison of New Orleans, among others, convincingly shows that the presidential limousine was fired upon from several directions and was struck by a veritable hail of bullets some of which may well have caused injuries to the extremities the autopsy doctors so arbitrarily decided to overlook.

The Panel Review then goes on to quote the description of Kennedy's wounds given in the autopsy report and the Warren Commission Report. As these have been published long ago, there is no need to reproduce them here. There follows a long "Inventory of Material Examined," listing and numbering the "black and white and colored prints and transparencies" as well as the X-ray films, bullets and fragments recovered, motion picture films of the shooting, items of clothing and documents. Space does not permit a detailed listing here. The review part proper of the panelists' report thereafter sets out with an "Examination of photographs of head" as follows:

"Photographs 7, 14, 42 and 43 show the back of the head, the contours of which have been grossly distorted by extensive fragmentation of the underlying calvarium. There is an elliptical penetrating wound of the scalp situated near the midline and high above the hairline. The position of this wound corresponds to the hole in the skull seen in the lateral X-ray film No. 2 (See description of X-ray films.) The long axis of this wound corresponds to the long axis of the skull. The wound was judged to be approximately six



millimeters wide and fifteen millimeters long. The margin of this wound shows an ill-defined zone of abrasion.

"Photographs 5, 8, 13, 16, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36 and 37 show the top of the head with multiple gaping irregularly stellate lacerations of the scalp over the right parietal, temporal and frontal regions.

"Photographs 1, 2, 44 and 45 show the frontal region of the skull and a portion of the internal aspect of the back of the skull. Due to lack of contrast of the structures portrayed and lack of clarity of detail in these photographs the only conclusion reached by The Panel from study of this series was that there was no exiting bullet defect in the supra-orbital region of the skull."

Note the guarded tone of this observation. If there was "lack of contrast" and "lack of clarity of detail," the only conclusion the Panel could properly have reached under the circumstances would be that it could reach no conclusions. Instead, they pretend to have found that there was "no exiting bullet defect etc.", in other words, that no bullet had exited from that part of the skull. This is a wholly gratuitous assumption, designed to hide one aspect of the truth and to validate the specious conclusions of the Warren Report.

(to be continued in the next issue)

#### Another official fraud exposed by the Newsmakers themselves

In TL II/16 of May 1, 1970, I had discussed at some length the preposterous and ghoulishly indecent allegation by Francis Gary Powers in his "Operation Overflight" that the shooting down of his U-2 plane on May 1, 1960, had been due to a "betrayal" by Lee Harvey Oswald. The sole basis for that absurdity was the existence, in the National Archives, of a classified Warren Commission Document, No. 931, dated May 13, 1964, and entitled "Oswald's Access to Information about the U-2." The story of course was given a big splash by the newsmakers who, in reprinting from the Powers creation, wallowed in such headlines as "I WAS BETRAYED!"

Powers didn't know any more than anybody else what that mysterious document really was about, but he brashly inferred from its "tantalizing" title that it held the story of how Oswald betrayed America's top secret, years before he killed President Kennedy, and the rotten press followed suit. As far as I know no other paper at the time rallied to TRUTH LETTER'S documented contention that Oswald could not possibly have committed the betrayal he was charged with - any more than the murders attributed to him.

Now that bubble, blown up to zeppelin size by the newsmakers, has burst, too. In its issue of March 1, 1971, Newsweek reported that CD 931 was one of 85 commission documents that had just been declassified and described it as a memo from the CIA chief Richard Helms to J. Edgar Hoover in which Helms "tartly dismissed a letter from the FBI director suggesting that Oswald may have compromised the CIA's spy plane. His rejection of Hoover's inquiry, however, was based almost entirely on his assertion (isn't that enough? -J.J.) that U-2s operated at Atsugi and Cubi Point from hangar areas that were inaccessible to Oswald... Helms maintained 'there is no information to indicate, nor is there reason to believe' that Oswald obtained 'factual knowledge' of the U-2 or its mission.

"Obviously annoyed at his rival intelligence chief, Helms pointed out that his agency's U-2 'did not gain worldwide notoriety' until the ill-fated Powers mission. 'Therefore,' he wrote, 'it is highly unlikely that the term U-2 would have meant anything to Oswald, even if he had heard it and had been able to identify the term with any aircraft at Cubi Point, Atsugi or anywhere else.' "

So that's it. Yet when Powers, who still is on the C.I.A. payroll, put forward his self-serving false allegation, Helms kept silent. The incident is characteristic of the C.I.A.'s ambivalence and duplicity.



The Truth About Chappaquiddick (ctd.)

The two girls in question, the Inquest showed, were the Lyons sisters, Maryellen and Ann (Nance) Lyons, and that short man in front of the group was Raymond S. LaRosa, all members of the party at the Lawrence cottage. All did acknowledge the encounter with Look and LaRosa added a significant detail as these excerpts from his testimony show:

The Witness (La Rosa): "We went towards the ferry the second time and there were three of us that time, Nance Lyons, her sister and myself, and we were walking towards the ferry.

The Court: Had you gone as far as the curve?

The Witness: Where the roads join? No, sir. I recall walking along the lines. I recall there is a line on the road, walking because it was terribly dark.

The Court: Now, tell us about the cars.

The Witness: Well, I believe - I don't know how far we had gone from the house heading towards the ferry, I recall this because the car came along and I held my hands out in this fashion (indicating), you know, for the two girls to kind of protect them.

The Court: In which direction was it going?

The Witness: Heading towards the ferry (emphasis added - J.J.)

The Court: In the same direction you were walking?

The Witness: Yes, and slowed down and didn't stop and just kept on its way and we continued on down the road. I just don't recall how far or how long we walked, but another car came the other way heading towards us coming from the ferry and stopped and a man or somebody said, I think he asked us whether we need help or something, and one of the girls made some kind of a statement, and I think I apologized. I think she said, 'S<sup>o</sup>ve off,' or something of that nature, and I said, 'I'm sorry, we are staying very close,' or something of that nature.

Q. Was this some time around quarter of 1:00?

A. I'm not sure about the time, but I am sure it might have been about that time.

Q. Was it after 12:30?

A. I will say so.

Q. Now, had Mr. Markham and Mr. Gargan already left with Senator Kennedy?

A. Yes, sir. They were gone before we went out for the walks..."

The picture, then, is perfectly clear, even though LaRosa forgot to mention an important detail which is, however, self-evident. A short while after the first car - the one that was going in the direction of the ferry - had passed them, the group must have turned around and started to walk back on the other side of the road. For, Deputy Sheriff Look had stated specifically, in his testimony, that the trio "were going in the same direction that I was ... towards the Lawrence cottage..." Besides, it stands to reason that a driver offers a lift to three persons only if they are walking in the same direction as he is going.

And what is the significance of all this?

It is that the combined evidence of the Look and La Rosa statements shows, beyond a shadow of doubt, that it was Kennedy's Oldsmobile which first passed the trio on the road, coming from behind them, and minutes later had the above-described encounter with Look when it entered, mistakenly, Cemetery Lane for a brief moment. (The distance between Lawrence cottage and the road intersection, it should be added here, is only about 1/2 mile).

That car, then, was going up Schoolhouse Road from a point south of the Lawrence cottage. And that means that the assault on Kennedy, during which he was knocked out and then Mary Jo was abducted, took place somewhere in the southernmost and most deserted portion of the island. It also means that when he left the cottage with the girl, he was not heading either for the ferry or for the bridge, but turned left and southward for a quiet spot where to talk.



It is true that Scotland Yard that Saturday afternoon at 5:05 issued an announcement of Sneyd's arrest which was, however, no help to anybody. Not only was the wording ambiguous - and in part untrue - but it made no reference whatsoever to the correct name of the prisoner or to the assassination of Dr. King. The statement ran as follows:

"Raymond George Sneyd, born 8/16/32 Toronto, Canada, no fixed abode and no occupation, was arrested at 11.15 AM at 8/6/68 at London airport and later charged at Cannon Row with possessing a forged passport and possessing a firearm." Note that this press release makes no mention of two passports found in the possession of the accused and that it falsely alleges that Sneyd used a forged passport, whereas in fact he was using a genuine passport obtained under false pretenses - which is not at all the same thing.

After stating further that the arrested man would appear at Bow Street Magistrates Court on Monday, the announcement went on to say: "Superintendent Butler and Inspector Thompson are in charge of the inquiry. The arrest was the result of liaison with the FBI, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and New Scotland Yard. The man was in transit through Immigration on arrival from Lisbon on his way to another country." (Emphasis added - J.J.)

This sentence, "The man was in transit etc." is in stark contradiction with the statement subsequently made in court by Sgt. Birch, as quoted above. For the simple fact of the matter is that in-transit passengers do not have to present their passports to anyone. They go through unchecked from their plane of arrival to the transit lounge and thence to the plane of departure.

These conflicting official statements clearly bespeak the intense embarrassment of Scotland Yard at having to cover up somehow - and vagueness of expression is always the best way out from such a quandary - the inconvenient fact that there had been two arrests, instead of just one.

Fleet Street, left to its own resources, soon found itself enmeshed in such a web of contradictory information that the most grotesque flipflops in reporting occurred. (The prize example is the Newsweek somersault, which I have already discussed at length in Chapter XV of "The James Earl Ray Hoax.")

Deprived of official help, the sleuths of the London press naturally addressed themselves to Airport officials and employees for further information. At Heathrow, the early morning arrest of a man named Sneyd was common knowledge. All the details were available; The suspect had arrived aboard a BSA Trident jet airliner with 96 passengers aboard, on flight 075 from Lisbon, due to arrive in London at 6:10 AM (there was in fact a slight delay of 5-10 minutes, due to heavy overcast); he had in his pocket a ticket to fly on to Brussels on flight BSA 462 which was due to leave at 7:50 AM.

Significantly, all of the Sunday papers in London carried all these details, or at least some of them. All struggled vainly to reconcile these precise details with the official announcements from both Scotland Yard and the FBI, according to which the arrest had taken place at 11:15 AM - five hours later.

Each of the six major Sunday papers dealt with the vexing problem in its own way. While the Sunday Telegraph and the Sunday Express neatly dodged the issue by omitting the time of arrest, the News of the World had the arrest taking place at 11:15, but omitted the time of arrival. The Sunday Mirror avoided the time factor altogether, but had Sneyd flying in from Lisbon, as did the News of the World. The Observer placed the time of arrest in the fourth line of a long article while burying the flight schedules in the last paragraph on another page, evidently in hopes that nobody would notice the contradictions. The neatest performance, however, was accomplished by the Sunday Times: "Although Ray arrived in London at 6:35 AM yesterday he apparently roamed undetected round the airport buildings until 11:15 AM when he came face to face with immigration officials as he tried to leave for Brussels." The paper did not say how an in-transit passenger comes face to face with immigration officials, nor why a man booked to leave for Brussels at 7:50 should still be roaming around the airport at 11:15. But, how to explain the inexplicable?

(to be continued in the next issue)