

Interview with W.J.L. 12/ 30/65.

Despite the humorous tone, the above interview is quite confidential.

The interview is preceded by the following phone call. I called Liebeler on Monday: "Hello, Mr. Liebeler?...Yes.... This is Dave Lifton....How are you Mr. Liebeler....Find, I flew to New York for the weekend, so I probably wasn't up here if you tried to see me on ~~Friday~~ Wednesday....Mr. Liebeler, you remember those pictures I mentioned to you?...Yes....well, it seems that quite a few stories based on them are currently appearing in Europe; I'd like to come up there as soon as possible and show you what the fuss is all about; Paris Match, in fact, is running a banner headline across the story: "There is a second gunman behind the wall". The story takes quite a neat jab at Hoover (Liebeler cuts in, exclaiming..) "Good, God!! What do they say?"Oh, there is some discussion as to whether a gun can produce smoke, and its important, and Hoover is pompously quoted as saying the Carcano does indeed produce smoke.

(appt. is then made for 2PM Tuesday)

The next day, I walked up to the second floor of the Law School building, arms carrying packages with photos, and several big 16" by 20" demonstration pieces. Liebeler's office was open, but he wasn't there. On the desk was his big "Be Kind To ME Or I'll Kill You" button. I took out the photos, one by one, and started placing pictures of the various assassins around the office, in order to create the deleterious psychological affect akin to "assassin claustrophobia" when he sits down at his desk. This done, I waited. Soon, I heard voices out in the hall.

I stepped out into the hallway. There, coming down the hallway, was Professor Liebeler with the gorgeous and extremely sexy German blond. She had very high cheekbones, looked like a model; her outstanding feature, however, was her obvious sexiness. No doubt about it.

Realizing how powerful my presentation can be, I was rather embarrassed, and asked WJL if he didn't want me to show him the pictures some other time. "No, go right ahead," he said, introducing me to his friend "Willie", with some poker face remark that I was a critic of the Warren Report (as if what was about to follow was an everyday experience, and he was used to it).

I started by orientating the girl (and WJL) to my nice big blowup of the Newsweek photograph. Then, I took out the JFK "head panel" Ray had made up (showing Z310 -Z321). I carefully explained JFK's head snapped back and to the left. "If the motion of his head is due to an externally applied force", I said, "then physics dictates that this force came from the front and to the right". I briefly discussed the possibility of the head reaction coming from a muscular reaction, and carefully explained why the neurosurgeon I spoke to ruled that out. Liebeler tried to argue that the head snapped back and to the right, but I think I made my point. The girl said: "But Oswald, he was shooting from the back?" Liebeler: "What this man is saying, Willie, is that there must be someone shooting from up front".

Now attention was directed to the Paris Match story; "This is the Mary Moorman photograph", I began, pointing to a 16 by 20 inch version of the snapshot, standing on the filing cabinet. Now, looking up at the corner of the wall, you see this puffy blotch (Liebeler, gazing....

Then, as I took out my enlargements, I said: "Being reasonable people we look to see if anything is going on to the front right, since the head snapped back and to the left". The girl's response

was instantaneous:

"Oh, Wes", she groaned, in her thick German gutturals, "Look, you can see him, shooting at Kennedy....Oh Wes,You can see him!!!....Oswald, Wes? He was not shooting?....."

Liebeler is now lighting his pipe or cigar (I was too preoccupied with the girl to notice which), and, with a magnificent puff and a twinkle in his eye: "Oswald is behind, Willie; this man is saying there must be someone up front".

"Wes, ...this photograph...you have not seen this photograph?"

The girl now started to go through the analytical convulsions of a mind that occur when one ~~XXX~~, having not had any serious doubts previously, but facing some facts (and this girl "saw" the images) tries to reason it all out at once.

"The Warren Commission, Wes, ...they did not see this picture..."

"No, Willie, according to him (me) we didn't admit this into evidence..."

Meanwhile, the girl kept exclaiming, "My God, you can actually see him shooting, Wes..."

We had a little heated conversation, in which I carefully pointed out to the girl not to assume that those involved in a coverup were also involved in the shooting. Finally, she said:

"But who could do such a thing?"

At this point, two people made simultaneous remarks. I being facetious, started to say "Well, its possible the Chinese Communists snuck into Dallas....", and WJL, carefully looking at the girl, said with considerable emphasis:

✶ ✶ "Has anyone considered Lyndon Johnson?" (SIC)

Meanwhile, the girl replied to my remark; "Oh, thats ridiculous, the communists had nothing to do with this"; I wanted to let Liebeler go on, and I simply said, "Well, I'm glad you realize that", and WJL said: "Well thats nice, but I'm not so sure", and proceeded to discuss the possibility of Cubans being involved. He dwelt at great length on a speech Castro had once made, and the fact that that this might have influenced Oswald, when he was in New Orleans. He then heaped extreme abuse on the FBI in New Orleans.

I wanted to return to Liebeler's previous train of thought to see if cared to elaborate on it. "Well, if any of what you just mentioned before were true, we'd certainly never find out about it... if anyone tried to publish anything like that the Executive Orders would fly so thick and fast, you'd not be able to shake a stick at them...there'd be power plays the likes of which you'd never have seen before....". Liebeler was now smiling broadly and knowingly.

"But what can you do? What can you do?" said the girl. "People all over Europe will laugh, they will laugh at America when they see these pictures", and she seemed to be implying that this should somehow inspire me not to go ahead, and I quickly set the record straight and made it clear that I am not one who believes "My country right or wrong etc." Then, the girl brought up considerations of personal safety; at one point, I bluntly replied that what I was "doing" was bringing these photos right here to Professor Liebeler's office, again probing for some response. At one point he said,

as he carefully studied the images:

#X "Well, these are certainly going to end up in a book some day".

He also remarked: "Why don't you be the person that writes that book?" He has always encouraged critical endeavor. (See note 1)

Another remark stands so clearly in my mind, that I was afraid I looked as though #X I was visibly trying to memorize it verbatim as he said it.

It was directed at the girl and myself, and came after considerable maneuvering on my #X#X#X part trying to get him to say something about these images:

"We always knew we couldn't exclude the possibility of others being involved in the assassination. You'll find that sort of language running throughtout the Report".

Another incident that occurred during the conversation was this: I had explained very briefly the W-5, Z-202 correspondence, and why this meant Oswald couldn't have inflicted the first wound.

"The 313 head shot couldn't have been caused by Oswald because of the head reaction; the first wound couldn't have been caused by Oswald because he couldn't see him; that leaves nothing but the back wound...." I said. At this point, Liebeler cut in very sharply and said: "and three spent shells".

"I think thats planted evidence", I retorted; I immediately took out my folder of "Oswald pictures", and illustrated that each was a phony. The Life Cover because of the shadow conflict (with two control photos Ray had taken, and the government's treatment of this with the "headless wonder") and the other pose because of the elbow mismatch.

Now Liebeler is quite touchy about the chain of evidence linking Oswald with the crime. (I'm sure they like to feel they at least got ONE of the assassins). For the second time (he had said this at a previous quickie meeting) he said: "But you have to remember that these photos were found at the Oswald residence".

"Well if they are indeed phony", I had answered, "what do you think that means?". This time I answered my own question: "Oswald was set up as a patsy, and these photos are key evidence of conspiracy". "But who would know so much about him to do such a thing"? , and I, reaching for Volume 18, page 115, quoted the cablegram: "Lee Harvey Oswald, former marine and pffft!" "That pffft is three quacters#X of a line", I said. "Whatever is in there tells us who knew enough about him to do this".

I'm quite sure Liebeler was merely acting in this incident. Surely he is aware of the possibility of Oswald being set up! What he seemed very interested in, however, was the conclusiveness

Note 1: In my first meeting with Liebeler, he asked me why I don't give talks explaining what I said to him; I remarked that I wouldn't be suprised if I ended up doing so, probably at expense to my career. "Don't give me that _____", he said. "If you believe what you've told me, do something about it!"

of the argument that the Oswald pictures are composites.

Once I had convinced him of this, he desperately tried to change the focus of attention to the gun in the picture, and KKKKK started to defensively argue that it was, after all, the correct gun! At the time, I thought he was merely raising a non-sequiter. Now I wonder whether he was probing for information I might have had on that point.

Remembering some of Maggie's statements to me on the subject, I argued with him that they never had positively identified the crucial writing on the order form, BECAUSE IT WAS PRINT. He said I was wrong. I said he was wrong. I said that we should put off this subject because I KKKK knew someone who had tabulated the quotes on this subject and would bring it to his attention when I had time. He likes this organized approach and quickly agreed.

That is when he made the following remark:

"Well the Report volume says they positively identified the handwriting. Now if that's wrong, then the author of that chapter is not correctly representing the testimony. In fact, he is misquoting. Since Redlich wrote that chapter, this would not surprise me in the least". (practically SIC)

Later on, we returned to this subject, and he had told me that he had read the article on the "gun questioning" in the NYU Law Review. "Then" said I "you are perfectly well aware that no one even SAW Oswald enter the building with a gun, or a package big enough to contain one". Remarking that he thought that was an excellent article, he simply said "No, I just mean that the Commission left some stupid loopholes uncovered there.... the questing was not good".

Liobel called the Fox book a "very interesting book", as if inviting me to ask him more about it. I intend to soon. The last time I saw him, he said that Robert Kennedy was the direct cause of the Commission not having the autopsy photographs. This was corroborated by Epstein. I got the impression that WJL suspected a doublecross by RFK of the WC. This was mainly conveyed by his extremely bitter tone at a previous meeting when I asked how in the world did they every think they could get away with locking up those autopsy photos, and he informed me that he had wanted them included, but that RFK wouldn't permit it; this was soon after I showed him the Sylvan Fox book. He exudes quite an "I told them so" attitude towards his colleagues. One "slip" I made was in saying that the photos had been sent to a staff attorney who had written back and said that he didn't see anything there. Liobel really hounded me for the name of the attorney; I reluctantly said it was Griffen. He said: "To whom did he mail that answer". I said I was very sorry but it simply wouldn't be fair of me to say; he said: "Well, I'll just call Griffin then..." I told him that that would be much better; I keep reminding him that the photos are not photogalytically conclusive, because this puts him much more at ease, and permits him to be more honest in his reaction; I make it quite clear that it is up to photo analysts to decide whether the images are conclusive, not Warren Commission attorneys. On the other hand, I also say that its not necessary to have conclusive images in order for the photos to constitute important circumstantial evidence, especially when used in conjunction with the JFK head reaction, AND the earwitness, eyewitness, and olafactory testimony. He nods he head in assent whenever I say that, and he has never criticized my presentation of them in this manner. However, I did

point out that "Willie's" reaction was not that unusual, and that if enough people reacted that way, photos such as these could have considerable political effect, if given wide distribution.

He replied that ~~XXXXX~~ "There is an Establishment in this country, lets face it....you're never going to see Life, Time, etc publishing photos like those...."

One thing that emerged for the first time, in rather blunt fashion, was the general tone that Liebeler can do nothing about any of this. I brought up the possibility of witnesses who saw the events behind the wall. Taking out my secret service reenactment photos, I declared: "Anyone standing on Dealey Plaza had to see this". I told him about the 20 or 25 people on the Plaza facing the wall who weren't called to testify. He made it clear that he had wanted to see them called to testify, that he had urged that this be done, that he had been overruled.

"Can you tell me this: who was responsible for deciding just who ~~XXXX~~ was and who was not to be called".

"Now that", he replied, "is a question that I definitely refuse to answer".

I rephrased it, and asked it again; "Nope", he said, practically before it was out of my mouth, "I won't answer it".

I then discussed the fact that the Sylvan Fox book and these photos combine to make witnesses really loosen up, not only in person, but even on the phone.

What should one do, I asked, if I find someone telling me exactly what they saw going on behind the wall? "That's the horror of all this. The very governmental agencies which supposedly exist to protect you and right injustices have their functions inverted by this coverup."

(Not denying the coverup), he answered: "Try bringing it to me".

(In fact, after the Moorman conversation, I asked him ---without mentioning who I spoke to, or when---exactly what procedure to use to get foolproof affidavits, should the occasion ever arise. I have always told him I thought people dressed as police participated in the shooting,....."Get that in writing" he once said; "Sure, fat chance", I replied).

Liebeler has repeatedly said to me: "I'm not afraid of admitting we are wrong". I replied once, "That's very unusual; I don't think many of your colleagues feel that way". "I'm sure they don't", he replied. "Either we're lying or we're stupid"----this remark, made in my first interview with him (and, let me hasten to add, carefully preceded by the phrase: "If what you say is true") comes through quite often; he seems to delight in admitting that this or that loophole was caused by simple incompetence in questioning, or lack of thoroughness, or un lawyerlike ~~XX~~ documentation. He gets thoroughly riled when he sees that one of his cronies blundered in writing up this or that point in some other chapter of the Report.

Whats most important about the conversations with Liebeler is the tone. CERTAINLY NOT one of outraged surprise, but one of curiosity expressed by "What have you got there....nothing will shock me....we never said we knew the whole story...there's nothing you or I can do about it...".

He seems to delight in this straight faced reasoning (like a schoolboy reciting math tables) starting from some reasonable premise, and leading to some conclusion opposing the Report, and then ending with some poker faced admission that: "Well, thats obvious; anyone can reason that out; the commission was deficient in notlooking into it".

My personal opinion of Liebeler is that he would not at all have objected to telling the American people, in the Report:

"We think Oswald is probably one of the assassins. Here is a chain of evidence that links him to the crime. We don't rule out the possibility of other assassins. We couldn't find out who they were." Lets be even blunter. I think Liebeler would have liked to see a report which would have turned America on its ear and caused the people to demand further answers.

He has twice, in my presence, brought up LBJ without any soliciting whatsoever. (The first time was after I compared the Report to the Emperor's new clothes story, and he said: "If the Emperor isn't wearing any clothes, you must also remember that that includes our former vice-President).

One virtue of Liebeler is that he doesn't go out of his way to illogically defend the Report. You hit a "no comment" with this fellow way before you hit some assinine illogical argument. His opinions and reactions are so strong that I really don't understand how he rationalized his signature on that Report.

In closing, I want to apologize for the large amount of talking I do during my visits with him. I never give the impression of coming prepared with a list of questions. Rather, I try to verbally paint in some environment, and probe for assent, and statements that reveal his attitude.

This might not be the way to approach the attorney's, but in this particular case, the results speak for themselves.