

Telephone call from John Berendt, Esquire, Monday 6 pm Feb. 13, 1967

He had a visit from Schiller, who said that Givens had been under FBI surveillance before 11/22/63; source, Allan Sweatt and Givens himself; possible reason, Givens' possible connections with leftist movement.

Schiller contacted him after talking to Epstein, at Epstein's suggestion, with respect to the article on "more theories." Schiller said he had more information on George Thompson and the "low-IQ" theory.

Schiller and Lewis are doing a book on the researchers--one chapter each critic--Dell, 300,000 copies to be issued. Says it will be "neutral." He is very defensive about his role as agent for Ruby family in sale of Ruby writing--mentioned that Ruby family got \$32,000 out of \$42,000.

Berendt had just come back from a weekend in Dallas. While there he phoned Penn Jones and learned that there has been another death--number 21, according to Penn--Harold Russell, eyewitness to the escape of the Tippit killer, age 53, killed by a cop in Oklahoma, in a fight in a bar. (Penn said also that Sheriff Decker has "lung trouble," which may be natural.)

Berendt went to Dallas accompanied by "Brown" ("B"), upon payment of \$3,000. B posed for Polaroid photographs at 10th and Patton (the Tippit murder scene). Berendt phoned Seegins and Reynolds, which was a mistake --they elammed up completely. He now wishes he had merely presented himself in person, as he did in the case of Benavides. Benavides stared at the photos of B, said that he knew he had seen the face before, did not wish to see B in person, but finally agreed. B and Benavides recognized each other but could not determine where they had previously met. Benavides rules out the red Ford--it was not a Thunderbird although it did have a white top and red body, like B's car. Benavides was unable to describe the driver.

Benavides' brother was tall and heavy, Benavides himself is slim; they were not similar in appearance. Benavides said he was a little concerned--he had been cut up in a bar (offered to show scar to Berendt), was sick and tired of it all; had left his job; he said he did think at the time that his brother's death was connected with the assassination. Still seems to think it may be.

Markham said she had never seen B before. A clerk at Avid, where he hired a car for the weekend, was certain he had seen B before. It turned out that they had been in the Navy together (B and the clerk).

Berendt talked to Vince about the frauds and phonies who have been showing up; wanted information from SM for possible article; also, is still interested (or pretends to be) in publishing a chapter from SM manuscript. Forthcoming issue(s) of Esquire will have article(s) on Ruby; more theories; and on B. B has an alibi for the Tippit murder--gas station confirms he was having his tires