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AN INTERVIEW WITH "MR. X"

By Gary James of the Syracuse, NY Table Hopper

CONTINUED FROM OUR DECEMBER '94 ISSUE...

FLETCHER PROUTY

DATELINE: NEW YORK

Q In your book, you write about the fact that while you were in New Zealand, the Christchurch Star hits the streets with an extra edition before noon, with all of this detailed information about Lee Harvey Oswald. You ask how that was possible. In Gerald Posner's book, "Case Closed," he may have an explanation for you. He says, "The implication is that some intelligence agency, probably the C.I.A., released an early, prepackaged set of details about the assassin to the media. But, there is nothing mysterious about the extra edition of the Christchurch Star. Because of the 19 hour time difference, it was 7:30 am on November 23 in New Zealand when J.F.K. was assassinated. Oswald was arrested when it was shortly after 9 am. in Christchurch. Calling information from press stories around the time of Oswald's defection, plus information released by the Dallas Police, the Star managed to get a thin 'extra' on the street, within three hours, by noon." Has Mr. Posner answered that question to your satisfaction?

A. Posner plays a game with the Christchurch New Zealand Star newspaper that was shown being read by Donald Sutherland ("X" man) in the film J.F.K. He says Prouty claimed that the local newspaper published an extra. That was no casual claim. It is a positive fact. I bought the paper in New Zealand, and I still possess that same copy. It's a fact not simply a claim as he embellishes his story. All kinds of historical fabricators have played with that bit of the drama. When they term the paper a 'thin extra,' I am able to see through their game. They had somehow managed to get a copy of the movie production of that paper. That paper, which included excerpts from many papers was 'thin.' The true Star of November 22, 1963 is a full 36 page paper. In other words, it was not some quick handout only a few pages in size. They try to make much of the time difference between the U.S.A. and New Zealand., He

fabricates the timing sequence of the press time of the newspaper. To be accurate, he confuses 'press time,' that time when the paper was ready for the press, and the time I gave, around noon time. That [time] difference itself could be one to two hours and the arrest of Oswald. I could and did look at clocks on the wall. I knew the New Zealand time. I was there. A U.S. Congressman and I were just sitting down to breakfast at 7:30 a.m. when we heard the very first news from B.B.C. (see chart on page 16) Posner, the worst of sources, fantasizes, 'the implication that some intelligence agency, probably the C.I.A. released an early, prepackaged set of details about the assassin to the media.' He creates a purposeful lie to obfuscate my main point concerning the content of that paper. It published a section about Oswald and his biographical material before the Dallas court had charged him with the crime. This is the time when the reporters on the scene would first know that Oswald was the actual suspect. You may recall that there had been a report that a suspect had been picked up in Fort Worth. The reporters would not have begun to go after that story until then, and that was after the news was already on the streets in New Zealand. That is important. If you'll take the time to compare what I wrote and what Posner contrives that I wrote, you'll see the root of the problem. So many authors, Posner included, just fabricate things and insert them into their script while attributing them to me. I never said nor inferred that

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probably the C.I.A. released an early, prepackaged set of details,' and I never said it was a 'thin' extra edition. He also gave my work and job title

wrong. He cites my own book where all that appears correctly, then he massaged it to suit his own dirty work. Such action defines him and his world. There was a long gap between the time the police arrested Oswald on the suspicion of murder of Tippett, and his arraignment as the suspected murderer of J.F.K. Yet, the paper in New Zealand received a copy of the conspirators' cover story that had been collated and written before he was charged with the crime. This is important and Posner is attempting to bury it with contrived, misleading data. With this important fact in mind, there could not have

been any substantive attempt to delve into the skimpy records of Oswald. It was only after his arraignment that they began that search in earnest. Therefore, the very fact that the Star carried a complete, well researched account of Oswald's life before he had been arraigned is most significant. It should be noted that the Star also carried a fine, studio photo of Oswald that was rarely seen any where else. How did the Star and other papers around the world get such information by news wire unless it had been collated written and transmitted before Oswald had been charged perhaps even before November 22. My point about the timing of the release of this news in the Star is important. J.F.K was killed at 7:30 a.m. New Zealand time. It may have been 9:00 a.m. New Zealand time when Oswald was arrested in the theater. According to the news the police did not know whether he was Oswald or Hidell. Most importantly, it was after midnight in Dallas, when Oswald was arraigned as the suspect in the murder of J.F.K. That was the official time when reporters were told that news. Before that, they had no firm basis to dig into distant and nebulous files for news of some 24 year old of that name. Once they knew Oswald was arraigned as the killer, they tore into their files and dug up their stories. But, around the world, a story about Oswald had already surfaced.

and checked papers from all over the world to see how the story broke. Posner and his tribe never did that. It wasn't just the Star that had the big, in depth Oswald story so quickly. It was the world. The Star is an interesting and important bit of the evidence for what it tells us about the nature of the conspiracy planning.

**Q. You also have in your possession a newspaper account stating that a getaway car was seized in Fort Worth, Texas. What getaway car? Oswald didn't drive. He didn't have a license. He never even left Dallas on November 22. Where did that report come from?**

A. All I can say is that the first paper printed in Christ church that day includes that statement. When I returned from New Zealand and had access to all the news and reports available to me in the environment of my office in the area of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in the Pentagon, I found that similar news had been flashed around the world, but that U.S. papers had all but ignored it. I wish to make something clear about the Christchurch Star and its role in my accounts of this case, first of all, that is where I was, and it was the first and only paper I could get. So, I quote from it. This leads to an interesting development that has confused a lot of improperly motivated writers. When I worked on the film J.F.K., I let Stone's film experts use my original newspaper that I have carefully preserved during these three decades. They copied only parts of it for use in the airport scene with Sutherland. That was a movie type newspaper. The front page looked like the original. Hundreds were printed and given away. Of course, the people who got those copies believed they had exact copies. They were not. For certain reasons, the paper was cut and pasted much differently than the original. So, when these researchers scan their copies, they do not realize that they do not have the original transcript. This has led them into errors and then they blame me for misquoting the paper. In fact, I have the only complete original. What the paper says in fact is, 'NBC Radio reported that a car believed to be the getaway car of the assassin had been seized in Fort Worth, Texas. A suspect had been taken into custody.' You must not confuse this statement with the Oswald biographical data that was in a totally different section. The main news item at the top of the page is attributed to N.Z.P.A.-A.A.P. News Services. It doesnot even contain the name Oswald. You can see that the newsmen who were working on this case, did not even know about Oswald. They did know about the get away car and a suspect in Fort Worth. Quite obviously, Oswald was not in the car, did not drive it, and did not go to Fort Worth. Therefore, the Oswald part of this story had been provided to the Star separately, and is a separate

9:40am  
Christchurch time  
(2:40 CST, 19hrs  
ahead),  
Associated Press  
identifies LHO by  
name & age.

11:30am  
Christchurch time.  
Christchurch New  
Zealand Star  
newspaper's  
approximate press  
time.

Graphic by Debra Crouch

**1 hour and 50 minutes to press time.**

This was the early story printed by the Star. When I got back to Washington, I went to the Library of Congress

item on the lower left-hand corner of the page. Oddly, this special story adds, 'Reuter said a Secret Service agent had also been shot from the same distance as the President, but no details of this shooting were immediately available' The same story adds, 'Tippet was shot dead as he ran into the cinema, British United Press said.' You can see the world press was being fed information that had been put together as a cover story, and did not agree with the basic news of the day. In the basic news, it was reported in large print, 'Three bursts of gunfire, apparently from automatic weapons were heard. Secret Service men immediately unslung their automatic weapons and pistols.'

We all know from the abundant photos of the time, that not a single Secret Service man there, and there were few enough, 'unslung his automatic weapon or pistol.' Here is a contrived cover story again. The very first CBS nationwide news carried the 'three bursts of automatic gun fire' also. This was on the scene spot news, and was most likely accurate.

**Q. You write in the Preface of your book, "The affairs of man and nature are not determined at random or by mere chance. When a Vietnam War, the assassination of J.F.K. or the destruction of a Korean airliner are necessary, they will be caused to happen. This will not be left to chance or the bad aim of a lone gunman in a sixth floor window in**

**Dallas. I do not believe that chance rules our lives" Yet on the very morning of November 22, President Kennedy remarked, "If somebody wants to shoot me from a window with a rifle, nobody can stop it. So why worry about it?" Wasn't President Kennedy tempting fate? Wasn't he taking a chance by riding in an open car down a public street?**

**A. I do not believe it. I have no way to know what J.F.K. thought. If anyone wants to know what J.F.K. was thinking on that day, he ought to read the speech that he planned to make at the Trade Mart in Dallas on**

November 22, 1963. It's all quoted in my book. One of my close relatives, first cousin, was employed by the Kennedys while Joe was Ambassador to London. Her job was to be their tutoress and general assistant with schooling. She was a Smith College graduate, and her family knew the Kennedys. My long awareness of that unusual family dates back to my youth., I was born a few months before John Kennedy. I have a pretty good idea of him and of his family. He was undoubtedly one of the most highly qualified men ever to be elected to the office of President. If he had not been killed, and if three decades of lies and character assassination had not followed Dealey Plaza, he would have changed the history of the Twentieth Century.

**"If he had not been killed, ...he would have changed the history of the Twentieth Century."**

EVENT	DALLAS/CST	ENGLAND/GMT	NEW ZEALAND
JFK shot	(11-22) 12:30pm		(11-23) 7:30am
JFK Declared dead	1:00pm		8:00am
UPI Quote, "He's dead..." Malcolm Kilduff	1:32pm		8:32am
LHO Arrested at theater	1:50pm		8:50am
LHO Arrives at police station	2:00pm		9:00am
LHO Interrogation begins	2:30pm		9:30am
Assc. Press identify LHO by name & age	2:40pm	8:40pm	9:40am
Agence France Presse identify LHO by name & age	2:45pm	8:45pm	9:45am
Networks broadcast youth arrest	3:15pm		10:15am
Networks identify LHO by name & age	3:23pm		10:23am
Networks tell of LHO Russian defection	3:26pm		10:26am
Christchurch Star newspaper on the streets	5:00pm		12:00pm
LHO arraigned for Tippit murder	7:10pm		2:10pm

Times from DEATH OF A PRESIDENT, by William Manchester & International News Agencies compiled by Ian Griggs. Graphic by D. Crouch