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Possible Ruby Link to Gun-running Activity in Dallas 4 Days Prior to the Assassination

The following is a summary of evidence I have compiled suggesting a possible link between Jack Ruby and certain gun-running activity which took place within a few days of the assassination.

On the evening of November 13 or the early morning hours of November 14, 1963, ten military weapons, consisting of automatic rifles and machine guns were stolen from the National Guard Armory in Terrell, Texas. (Miller v. U.S., 356 F.2d 65(1966)) Assigned to the case was FBI Agent Joe B. Abernathy. In the early evening hours of November 18, Abernathy (who later testified he had been tipped off; See Dallas Morning News, 2/12/64) and four Dallas police detectives gathered near the intersection of Main and Trunk Streets in the city of Dallas. Around dusk they witnessed a light blue 1962 Ford Thunderbird pull alongside a late model Dodge sedan. (Miller, pg. 65) In the Thunderbird were two men, who left the automobile and transfered several "large weapons" from the Dodge to their car. Both men returned to the Thunderbird and drove off. Their car was then followed by FBI Agent Abernathy and two of the city detectives "as well as by a Dallas police patrol car which had been instructed via radio to arrest the occupants of the Thunderbird." (Ibid) Abernathy later testified that no effort was made to secure the arrest of the driver of the Dodge, and that he did not know and does not know the driver's identity. (Appelate Brief of Lawrence R. Miller filed in the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in the above cited case, pg. 3) At the intersection of Hall and Elm Streets the Dallas patrol car pulled within 15 feet of the Thunderbird as it waited at a red light. According to the Dallas patrolmen, J.B. Allen and J.R. Sales, the Thunderbird then proceeded into the intersection against the red light. The patrolmen turned on their siren and a high speed chase ensued. Near the intersection of Hall and Gaston the driver of the Thunderbird lost control of the car and it crashed into a telephone pole. The two men in the automobile were arrested after attempting to flee on foot. Recovered from the car were five of the ten weapons stolen from the above mentioned burglary of the Terrell, Texas Armory.

The passenger in the Thunderbird, Lawrence Reginald Miller, 33, suffered deep face cuts when his head hit the windshield in the accident. (Dallas Morning News, 11/19/63) The driver of the car, Donnell Darius Whitter, 43, was employed at Moralli's Service Station at Clarendon and Ewing and served as Jack Ruby's garage mechanic when he came to the station. (Ibid, CD 847a)

In light of several reports linking Ruby with gun-running activity, (Nancy Perrin Rich, Eddie Browder, and most recently the story of James E. Beaird, Phoenix FBI Report dated 6/27/76, #89-42) the fact that Whitter and Ruby were acquainted is interesting. However there is another witness, although of uncertain credibility, who appears to link Ruby directly with the Whitter-Miller incident.

John Franklin Elrod was interviewed on 8/11/64 in Memphis, Tennesee. An admitted alcoholic, Elrod appeared at theShelly County Sheriff's Office because he had thoughts of killing his wife and wanted to talk to the police about it. He added that he had been "somewhat troubled by events which occured immediately following the assassination of President ... Kennedy ." According to the FBI report Elrod then related the following story:

"Shortly after the assassination of the President, Elrod, who had been about two and one half miles from the scene of the assassination at Lemon and Oaklawn Streets in Dallas, was arrested by the Dallas Police Department and placed in the City Jail.... At the City Jail in Dallas, he was placed in Cell 10 on the fifth floor, and at that time his cellmate was a man whose identity he could not recall. An individual,whose face was smashed up, was brought into the hallway of the jail where Elrod and his cellmate could observe him. At that time the unknown cellmate made some mention that he had known this man with the injured face as a result of meeting him at a motel. The cellmate stated that five men had met at a motel, and they had been advanced some money under some type contract. One of these men was reported to have received $5,000. The man with the injured face had received some money, and he was reported to have been driving a Thunderbird automobile with a large quantity of guns contained therein. Elrod advised he was confined in the Dallas City Jail for a period of 72 hours, and he was confused at this time concerning the events which occured. He stated he could not recall whether Jack Ruby's name had been mentioned prior to the time of the killing of Lee Harvey Oswald, but that this cellmate at some time had told him that one of the men who had been at the motel referred to above, name and location unknown, had been Jack Ruby.This was all the information Elrod could recall."

Elrod's story fits remarkably well with certain details of the Whitter-Miller incident. The two were driving a Thunderbird automobile with a"large quantity of guns". Miller's face was badly cut up in the accident, suggesting he may have been the individual

"whose face was smashed up" who was brought into the jail hallway.

The FBI apparently did no further checking on Elrod's story after a check of its own records failed to show that Elrod was incarcerated in the Dallas City Jail on the weekend of the assassination. Yet given the hectic state of events in the Dallas police station on the weekend in question, it seems entirely possible that Elrod could have been in the Dallas jail and his incarceration not properly recorded. Certainly on the day of the assassination there were people picked up and later released without any records being kept as illustrated by the infamous three "tramps". Also, Elrod's story is not of the sensational nature that one would expect a fabrication to be.

Penn Jones, Jr.'s book, Forgive My Grief, III contains a report which might shed light on this subject. Quoting from page 51,

" In a storeroom reserved for Jack Ruby at his apartment house, the police found a case of hand gernades, several M-16 rifles, a Browning automatic rifle and several thousand rounds of ammunition."

The Dallas detectives who searched Ruby's apartment were Guy F. Rose, H.M. Moore, and J.P. Adamcik. Mrs. (Curtis L.) Doris Warner was the apartment manager on the day of the search. (CE 2292)

Questions

1. Who were Whitter and Miller working with? Specifically, who was in the Dodge sedan? What were the guns to be used for? With five law enforcement officers present at the transfer, why didn't anyone obtain the Dodge's license plate number? Why wasn't any effort made to follow it?
2. Were the other five weapons taken at the Terrell burglary ever recovered ? If so, when and under what circumstances ? (Court records note that the Whitter-Miller rifles were returned to a Captain Herbert G. Pirtle of the Texas National Guard.)
3. Is Dallas gunsmith and purported Oswald look-alike John Thomas Masen connected with this activity ? Reportedly Masen was arrested on a firearms charge in mid-November, 1963 and had sold weapons to members of Alpha 66. (Village Voice, 8/23/76) It is interesting to note that Masen's attorney was Pete White, an acquaintance of Jack Ruby who had represented him in the past. (See Crime and Coverup , pages 36-7) White told the FBI that he "ran into" Ruby in the Dallas Courthouse on November 20, 1963. It would be interesting to know if a) White was in the courthouse representing Masen that day

or b) if there were courtroom proceedings in the Whitter-Miller case this day.

4. Do Dallas records reflect the arrest and the incarceration of Elrod ? Would they necessarily so, if he were incarcerated that weekend?

Possible Leads

1. On the day of the assassination Jesse James Wiliiams reported to the police that he and his girlfriend accompanied a man back to his room at the Grande Hotel in Dallas where the man pulled a gun on them. James got the license plate number of the car the man was driving: Texas CD 1583. (24 H 229-30)

2. An FBI chronology of Ruby's activities reports that November 19, 1963 a Sammuel B. Baker, U.S. Army, Terrell, Texas visited the Carousel Club. (CD 360.130)