

Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Pope, 723 S. Lee St., Alexandria, Va, 3/19/68
(written 6:30 a.m. 3/20/68)

I drove Andrew Sciambra to the Pope home, arriving there approximately a little after 3:15 p.m. Mr. Sciambra had earlier phoned from Frederick, giving our approximate arrival time. In order to park we had to drive past the house on Lee St., then turn right into the next street. As we walked back, a somewhat tall man, in a hat and dark topcoat, circled behind us from the opposite side of Lee Street. After we were clearly visible to him he identified himself and apologized for his precautions, saying they were necessary. He took us into the house by the back door, introduced his wife and two children, a boy and a girl, and sent them away.

Sciambra explained again that Mr. Pope was suspected of nothing, that it was only that he and his wife had been present at a time when they may have observed someone else present. The Popes did recall stopping off at New Orleans returning from Mexico. Mrs. Pope recalled being loaded down with an accumulation of purchases, including "toys" for the children and Elouise and other packages, and the kindness of the Eastern representative, that he had the key to the VIP room, that he took them there, where there were others. Mrs. Pope remembered no others, but Mr. Pope seemed to recall the State Department group and then he recalled another man to himself. He described the part of the room in which he saw him, saying his recollection was unclear. I asked if he recalled the size. He immediately replied six feet or more. I asked, then he volunteered no other information, if he could describe the man as "dignified". His affirmative was quite positive.

Sciambra asked Mr. Pope to examine a group of pictures to see if he could recall any (I did not go over the pictures in advance). As Mr. Pope went through them he took a fairly careful look at each. When he came to one he reacted quite strongly. I was not looking at the pictures, I was looking at him. He brought the picture closer to his eyes and jerked his head down toward the pictures. With ^{out} seeming to, I eased forward to see if I could see the picture. It was a face view

of Clay Shaw. After examining it, Mr. Pope turned the picture over to see if anything was written on the back. I could not make out the writing. He then went through the rest of the pictures, rather rapidly.

When he came to one of Gordon Novel he tossed it aside and said if he were to pick anyone out it would be his. He then went back to the Shaw picture and looked at it again, studying it briefly, again reading what was on the back, and then he asked if this had anything to do with the Kennedy assassination. I did not then know that Shaw's name was not on the back.

Until he came to the Novel picture, Mr. Pope remained vague in his identification. Here he became increasingly positive, stopping short of a firm identification but as he spoke making it seem more and more as though he recognized Novel as the man, yet he stopped just short of stating this. He also alluded several times to three women with him. At the end, he tried to insinuate that the man he recalled was the second Eastern airline man. From his description of the first one, the one who was taken, Whitehead said he identified an accurate description, the first one, of whose name I now have no independent recollection.

It cannot be said of Novel that he is "distinguished looking". That particular picture was of a man of an age of whom this cannot reasonably be said. I got the impression Mr. Pope went through the pictures in the selection he had got or then examined that he stopped at the first one not a mug shot or one that was not of a dishevelled or untidy man. He was in haste to select a picture as soon as he stopped so conspicuously at Shaw. After this, after he returned to the picture, he asked if he could have seen the face in the papers.

He described his employment as one requiring much travel, indicated in connection with the State Department, and as soon as he realized he had come close to picking Shaw out as the man he saw, started talking about a trip to Vienna on which he might have seen the man. To me, it was obvious and not persuasive attempt to cover up anything he might, by his actions, have indicated to us. The longer we stayed, the more he backed up. It was at the end he indicated almost positiveness that the man was not Novel but the second Eastern representative.