

My copy of the home movie exposed on that fateful day by Marie Muchmore is on the 1993 videotape "JFK: The Case for Conspiracy," produced by Robert Groden. As Mrs. Kennedy's pink jacket and hat initially appear on the right of the picture, camera jiggle causes the images to be blurred—nevertheless Jackie's form is unmistakable. As the limo proceeds, the image clears somewhat, the left front wheel becomes hidden behind the Brehms, Jackie obscures from the camera the child holding Gail Newman's left hand, and the dark form of JFK's head, right shoulder and back are clearly visible. The President has slumped to his left against his wife, his torso at about 35 degrees from vertical. Within a frame he simply disappears [3]: where he had been before, the green grass on the north side of Elm Street is visible. In the next frame, the Newman child can be seen beyond where JFK had been (although this image is very blurred), with Jackie's form coinciding with that of Mrs. Newman. JFK's slouched form returns in the next frame.

The President's reappearance occurs in a frame that is striking in clarity. Within a single frame the image has gone from extremely blurred to sharp, and all visual references show that the limo has moved about 2 feet further down Elm Street—for example, Jackie moves from in front of Mrs. Newman to between Mr. and Mrs. Newman. Moreover, within that single frame, the camera has panned significantly to the left so that the Babushka lady is now fully in the picture. By my reckoning, two M-frames are missing. [4]

The Newmans were not called to testify before the Warren Commission. However, in a recent personal communication with Milicent Cranor, they asserted that JFK was directly in front of them when he was hit on the head. Now that we know that the Z-film was edited to conceal information, we must be on our guard not to rule out any possibility without due cause; eye-witness accounts, such as those in "The Magic Skull", take on renewed importance.

The \$64,000 question is: Why was JFK's collapse over Jackie's lap excised from the Z-film? Perhaps the rapid dynamics of his movements left no doubt that he had taken a glancing shot to the head from the right (as proposed by Milicent Cranor) and not from behind. Of course, even if JFK's movements were consistent with a shot from behind, there would remain the problem of accounting for too many shots when only three shells had been found on the sixth floor of the TSBD. The excision from the Muchmore film may have been an attempt at similar concealment, as much as was feasible

without causing a visible jump in the action.

Notes

1. Milicent Cranor, "The Magic Skull," The Fourth Decade 2#5, July, 1995, pp. 32-37. I thank Ms. Cranor for generously sharing data and information, for her encouragement to write this article, and for her thoughtful and constructive criticism of the manuscript.

2. The Z-280 estimate was made from the map of Dealey Plaza in Richard E. Sprague's article "The Assassination of President John F. Kennedy: The Application of Computers to the Photographic Evidence," Computers and Automation, May 1970, pp. 29-60.

3. My video equipment is old and not of superior quality; accurate counting of freeze-frames is not easy. Assuming that my segment of the Muchmore film runs from M-1, I estimate that JFK's disappearance occurs between M-7 and M-8, he continues hidden in M-9 and reappears at M-10.

4. According to Chuck Marler in "Questioning the Limousine's Speed on Elm Street," The Fourth Decade 1#4, May 1994, the limo had an average speed of 10.4 MPH between Z-161 and Z-185. This is 15.2 ft per second; at 16 frames per second a movement of approximately 2 ft would occupy two frames.

OSWALD AND THE FBI: PART TWO

by

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If the statements made by Lee Harvey Oswald in the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City are to be accepted as true, then the FBI was victimizing him unmercifully. In the latter part of September 1963, he twice visited the embassy and spoke to three Soviet officials (all of whom were members of the KGB). He said that he was an American who believed in Communism and belonged to an organization that defended Cuba. A few years before, he had lived in the Soviet Union. He came to the embassy, because he wanted to get a visa and go back to Russia as quickly as possible. Life for him in the United States had become much too unbearable. FBI agents were constantly harassing him. They kept him under continual surveil-

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lance, interrogated his neighbors, and intruded into his personal affairs. He could not hold a job, because they would come to him while he was working, in order to ask him a lot of questions. His Soviet ties would thus be exposed, and consequently he would lose his employment. So hostile was the FBI towards him that he even feared for his life.

At first the Soviet officials did not know what to make of this extremely agitated young man. Eventually they consented to help him. They told him about the process of getting a visa, which included filling out papers, sending them to Moscow and waiting for an answer. It would take at least four months. This delay was far too long for Oswald, and his mood rapidly changed from agitation to increasing annoyance. When the official had finished speaking, Oswald could not restrain himself. Practically shouting in the Russian's face, he said, "This won't do for me! This is not my case! For me, it's all going to end in tragedy." With that, he left the compound. In looking back on this strange encounter, one Soviet official said, "He linked the FBI with all the adversities and difficulties of his life in America." [1]

The officials in the Soviet Embassy were not the only ones in Mexico City to witness an outpouring of emotional frenzy. In a newly released Warren Commission document, J. Edgar Hoover repeated some remarks made by Fidel Castro concerning a visit to the Cuban Embassy:

According to our source, Castro recently is reported to have said, "Our people in Mexico gave us the details in a full report of how he (Oswald) acted when he came to Mexico to their embassy (uncertain whether he means the Cuban or Russian Embassy)." Castro further related, "First of all, nobody ever goes that way for a visa. Second, it costs money to go that distance. He (Oswald) stormed into the embassy, demanded the visa, and when it was refused to him, headed out saying, "I'm going to kill Kennedy for this." Castro is alleged to have continued and asked, "What is your government doing to catch the other assassins?" and speculated, "It took about three people." [2]

There are several implications which can be elicited from Castro's statements on Oswald and the assassination: 1) that he did not really intend to go to Russia or Cuba; 2) that his threat about killing the President was stated in a deliberately dramatic way that would leave an indelible impression in the minds of his listeners; and 3) that the assassination was not a "lone-nut" phenomenon, but rather it was a conspiracy

involving at least three people.

An additional complication to the aforementioned incidents in Mexico City is the fact that there were more ears listening to Oswald's frantic declamations than the ones whom he was directly addressing. It is known that the CIA had been conducting a major surveillance operation upon the Soviet and Cuban Embassies, including informants, wire taps, listening devices, and photographic stations to take pictures of people coming in and out of the buildings. [3] Given Oswald's intelligence connections, it is possible that he might have known something about the extent of the CIA's surveillance on the embassies prior to making his visits.

In part one of this same essay (published in the July 1995 issue), I discussed in detail another incident, when Oswald deliberately presented himself as a violent personality. In that case, the people who saw him were the employees of the FBI office in Dallas. A comparison of all three incidents—the two in Mexico City and the one in Dallas—indicates that his actions were far too extravagant to be convincing manifestations of his innermost feelings. His emotional outbursts do not seem to spring from any genuine passion, but rather they seem to emerge from a murkier and for more sinister motive. In previous articles, [4] I presented the hypothesis that he was fully aware of the plot to kill the President and that he was willing to cooperate with the conspirators in their plan to set him up as the patsy. The obvious falseness of the material evidence that would be placed at the scene of the crime was the means by which they were able to convince him that he would never be convicted.

A crucial element in this plan is Oswald's own image as a dedicated Marxist who would not hesitate to use violence to further his objectives. This does not mean that he was in fact a Marxist, nor does this mean that he was a man of violence; actually he was a highly competent agent provocateur with considerable training and experience. An examination of the evidence now available indicates that his mission in the fall of 1963 was to forge false links from himself to foreign and domestic Communist organizations. These links could later be used by assassination cover-up planners to steer public thinking into believing that the accused assassin was a key figure in a Communist conspiracy. To accomplish his goal more effectively, he deliberately exaggerated the appearance of antagonism between himself and that relentless foe of Communism in American society—the FBI. Whichever agency, or group of agencies, that was given the task of

engineering the assassination, the FBI was not among them. The piecemeal manner in which the Bureau was gathering information on Oswald and his activities is an indication that it was not getting the full story on him. In order to determine where he was or what he was up to, it was compelled to rely on its own internal resources for investigation and surveillance.

On October 3, 1963, the Dallas office of the FBI received a bulletin from the New Orleans office: Lee and Marina Oswald had completely disappeared. They were last seen moving out of their apartment on Magazine Street. Marina and their two-year-old child had left in a station wagon bearing Texas license plates. The driver was a woman who could speak Russian. Lee did not go with them but remained behind at the apartment. The next day he was gone too. It was the request of the New Orleans office that a search for the family be initiated at once. Agent James P. Hosty of the Dallas internal security squad was given the assignment of covering the areas in and around his home city. [5] (He was chosen for this assignment, because he had been in charge of the case during the previous spring, when the family was still living in Dallas.)

Hosty's task was not going to be easy. The details furnished in the bulletin were not sufficient to conduct a narrowly defined search. He first tried the immigration office, but got no results there. He next went to Fort Worth, where the Oswald's lived for a few months in 1962. Knocking on the doors of former neighbors, he could find no one who could tell him where they had gone. He went to the home of Lee's brother, Robert Oswald, but he too was gone. He and his family had moved to Malvern, Arkansas about seven months earlier. A lead was sent to the FBI office in Little Rock, requesting that Robert Oswald be located and questioned about the whereabouts of his younger brother. Even this lead did not pan out, for Robert had once again pulled up stakes and had moved out of Malvern during the previous month. The search for Lee Oswald had so far been a fruitless one.

On October 25, a new bulletin came from New Orleans. Another agency (the CIA?) had notified the FBI that Oswald had been in contact with the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City sometime during the early part of October. This information spurred Hosty to renew his efforts to find him, for now there was a possibility of Soviet intrigue.

It was not until four days later that he finally received the information he needed to close in on his quarry. A change-of-address card had been left at a New Orleans post office,

setting forth Oswald's new address as 2515 W. Fifth Street in Irving, Texas. Hosty reached for the Dallas criss-cross directory and looked up Fifth Street. Information from this directory would have given him the name of the head of household living at the address. With this name he could do some preliminary background checks. As it turned out the directory did not help him after all, for it did not cover the population of Irving. To get the name, as well as any other information, it was necessary to make a trip out to Fifth Street and find a neighbor who knew something about the occupants of the address he was interested in.

The following day, October 30, he was in Irving looking at the 2515 house on Fifth Street. (Also living on that same street was Bill Simmons, one of Jack Ruby's musicians. His address was 2530 W. Fifth Street. [6]) He began his inquiry by going to the house next door. A woman named Dorothy Roberts was at home. When Hosty greeted her, he did not tell her he was an FBI agent; instead he disguised his identity and purpose.

Mrs. Roberts proved to be a very useful source of information. She said her next door neighbor was Mrs. Ruth Paine, the wife of Michael Paine. They were not living together, for they had recently separated. Michael was an employee of Bell Helicopter Company in Fort Worth and Ruth was a part-time teacher of the Russian language at St. Marks School for Boys in Dallas. There was also a Russian woman living with Mrs. Paine. She had one small child and she had given birth to a second child one week before. Her husband was an American who occasionally visited his wife, but he did not live at that address.

The next day Hosty did a background check on the Paines by calling the sheriff's office, the local police department, the helicopter company, and the credit bureau. He found out that there were no criminal records on the Paines, that Michael was a research engineer with a security clearance at Bell Helicopter, that Ruth was classified as a housewife, that they had lived on Fifth Street for a number of years, and that they were reputed to be good, responsible citizens of their community.

Hosty then left the office and drove out to the school of St. Marks, where he met with the headmaster. The latter said that he was quite satisfied with Mrs. Paine's performance as a teacher and that he had no doubt about her loyalty to the United States. He added that he had heard from Mrs. Paine that she had taken into her home a Russian woman with two small children, one of whom was a new-born baby. Mrs. Paine felt sorry for the poor woman and her children, because

the husband had deserted them. This charitable deed was not entirely without a personal benefit for Mrs. Paine, for she wanted to take advantage of an opportunity to improve her speaking skills with the Russian language. From what the headmaster told him, Hosty concluded that the Paines were not left-wing malcontents, and that they might even be cooperative in his search for Lee Oswald.

It was a Friday afternoon, November 1, when he came back to Fifth Street. After parking his car, he walked up to the front porch and rang the doorbell. A tall, slender woman opened the door. Hosty introduced himself as an FBI agent, took out his book of identification, and opened it up for her. The woman invited him to come inside. Her name was Ruth Paine. She offered him the couch to sit on, whereas she took the chair that was opposite him. [7]

After an informal chat about the weather, Texas, and other sundry topics, Hosty got down to business. His purpose, he told her, was to find Lee Harvey Oswald. Did she know anything about his current whereabouts? Mrs. Paine candidly stated that his wife and two children were living with her, but Lee was not. He could not stay at her house, because there was not enough room. He was living in a rooming house in Dallas. She was unable to say precisely where the house was, but she thought it was somewhere in the Oak Cliff section of the city. He did however spend the weekends in her home, in order to see his family. Hosty then asked her if she knew where he worked. After some hesitation, she told him that she was not sure if she was free to give him this information. Lee had told her that he might lose his job, if FBI agents came to question him while he was at work.

Hosty gave his assurance that the FBI would never try to question someone on the job. The greatest discretion was used by the FBI whenever they had to approach anyone for an interview. The reason why he wanted to know was to find out whether or not he was employed in an industry that was sensitive to national security. Having thus been persuaded of the FBI's good intentions, she said that he was working in a warehouse in Dallas called the Texas School Book Depository. She did not know the address, but she did know that it was listed in the telephone directory. Looking up the company's name, they saw that it was listed at 411 Elm Street. This information was valuable, of course, but Hosty still needed the rooming house address. Mrs. Paine said that she would ask Oswald, the next time he came to visit. Hosty got a scrap of paper and wrote down his name and office phone number and

handed it to her. He urged her to call him as soon as she found out.

As their conversation was coming to a close, Marina came into the room. Speaking in Russian, Mrs. Paine introduced her to Hosty and said that he was an FBI agent. A look of nervousness and alarm came over Marina's face when she heard about his occupation. Hosty attributed this look of nervousness to a needless fear that people from the Iron Curtain countries have for the FBI; they have been taught to equate the Bureau with the Gestapo of Nazi Germany. To counter this groundless impression, he had Mrs. Paine affirm to Marina that it was not the job of the FBI agents to harm or persecute anyone. Their responsibility was not to harass people, but rather it was to protect them. These words appeared to have an immediate effect, for she began to relax a little. By the time Hosty was ready to leave, her anxiety was gone, and her face had brightened into a smile. He shook hands with both women, opened the door and went out to his car.

Hosty's motive in easing Marina's anxiety was of course commendable, yet had he realized what she had just been up to, he might not have been so solicitous in his reassurances. While he had been inside the house talking with Mrs. Paine, Marina had gone outside to look at his car. [8] (The car could not be seen through the front room window, for it was parked in front of the next house.) She circled around it and studied it carefully. She had already made a mental note of the license plate number, but because of her lack of familiarity with the English language, she was unable to determine the make of the car. She finally settled for just the license plate number and went back inside. She had done this at her husband's request, for he said that if any agent of the FBI came out to the house while he was away, she was to get the license plate number and the make of the car.

How did she know that Hosty was an FBI agent and not some salesman? On the previous Tuesday, when she and Ruth came home from shopping, Mrs. Roberts came outside to tell them about a stranger, who came to her door asking a lot of personal questions about them. From her description of the man and of the questions he was asking, Marina and Ruth figured that he was probably an FBI agent. Thus Marina was prepared when he came out again two days later. When Lee returned to the Paine house for the weekend, Marina gave him the license plate number and Ruth gave him Hosty's scrap of paper. With this information, he wrote in his notebook the date November

1, the agent's name, telephone number, office address (which he probably got from the telephone book), and the license plate number of his car. [9]

The following Monday Hosty made a phone call to the Texas School Book Depository, again disguising his identity and purpose. His reason for calling was twofold: one, to confirm Oswald's employment at the company; and two, to find out the address of the rooming house. He succeeded in accomplishing the first purpose but not the second. The address in his employee records was 2515 W. Fifth Street in Irving. Failing to get the rooming house address from the Book Depository, Hosty deemed it necessary to make a second trip out to Mrs. Paine's house in order to ask her what she had found out from Oswald.

On Tuesday, Hosty was accompanied by a new agent named Gary Wilson, whom he was training. After attending to some business in Fort Worth, they detoured into Irving on their way back to Dallas. After parking the car, they walked up to the front door and rang the bell. When they saw Mrs. Paine, Hosty greeted her and said that he had just one question for her: Did she get the address of the rooming house? No, she did not. She tried to ask him, but his response was unexpectedly peculiar. He said "I am a Trotskyite Communist." Surprised by this non sequitor, Hosty asked Mrs. Paine if Oswald had some kind of mental problem. With a tone of amusement in her voice, Mrs. Paine said, "He's so illogical." It was at this point that all three were chagrined by the surprise appearance of Marina into the living room. Giving Marina a quick greeting, the two agents made a hasty departure.

That same evening, after the dinner table had been cleared and as the dishes were being washed and dried, Marina had a serious discussion with Ruth. Speaking with a firmness in her voice that Ruth had never heard before, she said that the subject of her husband's address was a "matter of privacy"—in other words it was confidential information. She further explained that her husband had been upset by the FBI's inquiries, and that he looked upon them as an interference with his family. Apparently she had somehow guessed that Ruth had been speaking about Oswald's address with the two FBI agents. Ruth later wondered how she knew, and after some thought she realized that the Russian word for "address" sounded exactly the same as its English equivalent. [10]

It appears from the study of Hosty's inquiries that the main object of interest is a matter which on the surface seems to be of little importance: the address of the rooming house. Why

were Marina and Lee so careful to keep it a secret? After all, since the FBI already got the location of his work, they could hardly prevent the agency from finding out the location of the rooming house. FBI men could easily follow him there from the Book Depository.

Pointless though their efforts seem to be in keeping the address of the rooming house secret, Hosty's efforts in trying to obtain that same address seem to be equally pointless. Since his original purpose for finding him was to speak to him regarding his visit to the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City, he could have accomplished his purpose by parking his car outside the Book Depository and waiting until the employees were getting out of work. He could then approach Oswald as he was going home. This was exactly the procedure used in August 1962 by FBI Agents John Fain and Arnold Brown, who approached Oswald as he was walking home from the Leslie Welding Company. [11]

Obviously there is more to the rooming house than meets the eye, and we have been given only half the story. To find the other half, we should look into what Oswald himself was doing at this period of time. The first half of November is notable for being a period of increasing correspondence with socialist organizations. [12] On the same day that Hosty went to the Paine house on November 1, Oswald went to the post office at the Terminal Annex, near where he worked, probably during his lunch hour. He paid three dollars to rent a box, listing a fictitious address—3610 N. Beckley—as his home address. On the same application card, he listed the pro-Castro organization Fair Play for Cuba Committee (FPCC) and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) as co-renters of the box. At the same time he sent out three mailings: a change of address card to the Soviet Embassy in Washington, a membership application form to the ACLU headquarters in New York, and a letter to Arnold Johnson of the Communist Party in New York. In the letter he mentions the ACLU:

Through a friend I have been introduced to the American Civil Liberties Union Local chapter...could you advise me as to the general view we have on the American Civil Liberties Union? And to what degree, if any, I should heighten its progressive tendencies. The Dallas branch of the A.C.L.U. is firmly in the hands of "liberal" professional people (a minister and two law professors conducted the Oct. 25th meeting.) However, some of those present showed marked class awareness and insight...[13]

Anyone reading this letter would get the idea that Oswald was seeking advice on how to infiltrate the Dallas chapter of the ACLU, in order to turn it into a Communist-front organization. The following day Oswald sent three more change of address cards furnishing his new P.O. box in Dallas. One card went to the FPCC, a second to The Militant, a Trotskyite publication, and a third to the Worker, a U.S. Communist newspaper. This strange mixture of anti-Soviet Trotskyitism and anti-Trotskyite Stalin-Leninist Communism was too incompatible to have any long-lasting stability. Both forms of Marxism were simply too hostile to each other to be reconciled. Yet Oswald was not interested in ideological consistency. As an agent provocateur, he was trying to fabricate a paper trail of incrimination that would—after the assassination—have the potential of causing great damage to both ends of the Communist spectrum. After he was arrested, the police found among his belongings a collection of letters received from these socialist organizations, as well as a number of books and pamphlets.

The following weekend, Oswald used Mrs. Paine's typewriter to type out a letter to Comrade Reznichenko, of the Consular Division of the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D.C. It contains such words and phrases as "comrade", "our business", and "progressive". These verbal expressions give the impression that the writer who penned this letter must have been one of Moscow's most valuable agents. From a reading of the contents alone, it would appear that Oswald would not have been too concerned by the prospect that the Soviet Embassy might initiate a personal contact with him. Whether or not anyone was sent out to check up on this eccentric revolutionary, who keeps sending letters about "our business", remains unknown.

It must be remembered that Oswald was never a Communist nor was he ever an agent of the KGB. He was an agent provocateur whose real associates were such anti-Communist notables as Guy Banister and David Ferrie. His address in New Orleans was a haven for anti-Communist and anti-Castro organizations: 544 Camp Street.

One of the more ominous parts of the letter to the Soviet Embassy is a brief report of a meeting with a "comrade Kostin". This was of course Valery Kostikov, one of the three KGB officers whom Oswald met in Mexico City. It is significant to note that Kostikov was in charge of terrorist operations in the Western Hemisphere. One of his specialties was assassination. In the final paragraphs of the letter, Oswald reports on his

encounters with the FBI:

The Federal Bureau of Investigation is not now interested in my activities in the progressive organization "Fair Play for Cuba Committee", of which I was secretary in New Orleans (state Louisiana) since I no longer reside in that state. However the FBI has visited us here in Dallas, Texas, on November 1st. Agent James P. Hasty warned me that if I engaged in F.P.C.C. activities in Texas the F.B.I. will again take an "interest" in me.

This agent also "suggested" to Marina Nichilayeva that she could remain in the United States under F.B.I. "protection", that is, she could defect from the Soviet Union. Of course I and my wife strongly protested these tactics by the notorious F.B.I. [14]

The statement in the above excerpt concerning Hosty's warning to Oswald not to engage in FPCC activities should not be interpreted as meaning that the two men had a face-to-face meeting or communicated directly with each other, for they did not meet until the afternoon of November 22. The warning most likely came through Marina, who spoke to Hosty on November 1. In Hosty's account of what happened during the first visit to the Paine house, he failed to mention an exchange of remarks he had with Marina concerning the FPCC. According to Ruth Paine:

I can't recall certainly who brought it up, but I think Marina asked of Hosty what did he think of Castro, and he said, Well, he reads what is printed and from the view given in the American newspapers of Castro's activities and intentions, he certainly didn't like those intentions or actions. And Marina expressed an opinion subsequently, but contrary, that perhaps [Castro] was not given much chance by the American press, or that the press was not entirely fair to him. This I translated. [15]

And according to Marina,

He said that he knew that Lee had been engaged in passing out leaflets for the Committee for Cuba, and he asked whether Lee was doing that here...I said that Lee does not engage in such activities here. This was not like an interview. It was simply a conversation. We talked about even trifles that had no relationship to politics. [16]

It would appear from Ruth and Marina's recollections that their conversation with Hosty did not end as amicably as he would have liked the Warren Commission to believe. It can

readily be seen from the above statements how Oswald came to feel that the FBI had warned him not to engage in FPCC activities.

As for the statement "I and my wife strongly protested these tactics of the notorious F.B.I.," this is no doubt a reference to the threatening note that Oswald left at the FBI office sometime after Hosty's second visit on November 5th but no later than Friday November 8th. This note contained an unambiguous threat to blow up the FBI or the Dallas Police Department, if Hosty did not stop bothering his wife. The main provocation which brought about the composition of the note appears to be Hosty's quest to find the rooming house. However improbable Oswald's method of intimidation would have been to an agency as powerful as the FBI, it apparently worked. Hosty dropped his inquiries concerning the house and did no more on the case until after the assassination. This perplexing sequence of events compels us to look deeper into the mystery of the rooming house in order to find a solution.

If the schemes of the proposed patsy were to be integrated into the complex preparations for the Dealey Plaza ambush, then it was therefore necessary for the conspirators to have unlimited access to him in order to guide and monitor activities. This would have required frequent contacts with him. Where could these meetings have taken place? The location of the Paine house could not have been used very much, for the regular presence of strangers in a quiet, residential neighborhood would have drawn too much attention. Likewise the opportunities for seeing him at the Book Depository were very limited. The best place to see him on a regular basis would be at the rooming house. Here was a place filled with transients, whose comings and goings would not have aroused the least bit of curiosity among outsiders. It would not have been difficult to arrange a meeting in any of several small business establishments in the area—a restaurant perhaps, or a car wash, or a coin laundry mat. The location also had the benefit of a readily accessible bus line, which travelled north and south on Beckley Avenue.

There is however one difficulty with this line of reasoning. Three witnesses who lived at the rooming house—Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Johnson and Mrs. Earlene Roberts [17]—made unequivocal statements about Oswald's routine that indicated that his life in Dallas was entirely reclusive. According to Mrs. Roberts, "He would get home about maybe 5—something around 5 o'clock—He was always home at night—he never went out." [18] The three witnesses remembered him as a

taciturn man, who hardly said a word to anyone else. Except for a few minutes of watching TV every now and then, he spent almost all of his free time within the solitary seclusion of his quiet, little room. No conspiracy can be made out of this kind of isolated lifestyle.

Yet these same witnesses do not shut the door entirely to the possibility of Oswald leaving the house at night. Mrs. Roberts said, "He stayed home every night—I didn't know of him going out. If he did, he left after I went to bed and I never knew it." [19] Mrs. Johnson frankly admitted that they were not always aware of the whereabouts of their roomers: "They could come in and out that door and we never would notice it, because the house is large and we stayed a lot in the back of the house." [20] In addition to these statements, we also know of at least two times when it is certain that he was absent from the house. [21] On Monday evening, October 21, Oswald went to Parkland hospital to visit Marina and their new-born daughter. He stayed in Irving that night and went back to work the following morning. On October 23, he was attending an ultra-right gathering, presided over by General Edwin Walker. If the three witnesses missed these two occasions, how many other times did Oswald go out and they did not know?

The rooming house could thus afford unrestricted possibilities for arranging covert meetings off the premises. It was therefore imperative to guard the secret of its location. Neither Oswald nor his associates would have welcomed the prospect of an FBI stake-out on the house. A discovery of its location by snooping FBI agents could only hinder the conspiracy. Hosty's roundabout efforts to find the rooming house were really his attempts to find out what was going on with regard to Oswald. Although a few FBI agents must have had some knowledge of Oswald's status as an agent provocateur, they never could find out what his ultimate objective was. Just as their surveillance was getting started, they must have somehow received notice that they were encroaching on territory that did not belong to them; they were compelled to break off their investigation. The bomb threat note served as a harmless reminder not to infringe on Oswald's unique prerogatives to have unlimited freedom of action (although it did cause a minor disturbance among the ordinary personnel of the FBI office).

On the day of the assassination, the rooming house had a pivotal role in the aftermath of the Dealey Plaza shooting. It must have been a rendezvous point for Oswald to meet fellow

^{why?} conspirators one last time. When he had rushed to this place in order to change his clothes and get his revolver, a police car came by with two occupants. They parked briefly out front, gave two taps on the horn, and then drove away. This must have been some kind of pre-arranged signal to Oswald while he was inside. When he left the house, he was last seen standing near a corner bus stop. What his movements were during the next half hour remain a mystery to this day. During that same period of time, Officer J.D. Tippit was shot down by two unknown assailants. Shortly after the shooting and not far from the scene of the crime, Oswald was seen going into a movie theater. He was arrested there and taken into custody. The revolver he had in his possession would later be erroneously linked to the Tippit shooting.

As he was being interrogated by the police, his behavior was curiously arrogant. He was virtually taunting the police in their efforts to get any information of consequence out of him. Nevertheless, there was at least one question that he was quite willing to answer. The address of his rooming house was 1026 N. Beckley. The address which he so zealously guarded from the FBI was the same one which he freely and promptly submitted to the police. There was no need to keep it a secret any more—it had already served its purpose.

Notes

1. Col. Oleg Maximovich Nechiporenko, Passport to Assassination (New York: Carol Publishing Group, 1993), pp. 66–81.
2. Commission Document 1359. For the full text of this document, see John Newman's Oswald and the CIA (New York: Carroll & Graf, 1995), p. 526. It is quite possible that the man who made the threat against Kennedy was an Oswald impersonator.
3. Newman, Oswald and the CIA, pp. 360, 363, 374, 378.
4. "The Furniture Mart" in the January 1994 Issue of The Fourth Decade, and "The Arrogant Suspect" in the January 1995 issue of The Fourth Decade.
5. Warren Commission Hearings and Exhibits, Vol. 4, pp. 446–449 (Hosty). References to this source will be cited hereafter in this format: 4H446–449 (Hosty).
6. Armstrong Exhibit No. 5310–A.
7. 4H449–454 (Hosty); 3H97–104 (Paine).
8. Priscilla MacMillan, Lee and Marina (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), pp. 494, 498. MacMillan places Marina's examination of Hosty's car during the second visit. I do not believe that this is likely, given the brevity of the visit

and the November 1st entry in Oswald's notebook. It is for these reasons that I have chosen to place Marina's visual inspection of the car during the first visit. As for Oswald's reasons for wanting the make of the car and the license plate number, I believe this information would have enabled him to spot Hosty, in case the latter decided to tail him.

9. 16H64–65.
10. 3H100–101 (Paine).
11. Newman, Alfred H., The Assassination of John F. Kennedy: The Reasons Why (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1970), p. 241.
12. Newman, Alfred H., The Assassination, pp. 474–494.
13. 20H271–274.
14. 16H33. The misspellings are per the original letter.
15. 3H103 (Paine).
16. 1H57 (Marina Oswald).
17. 10H306–307 (A.C. Johnson); 10H296–298 (Gladys Johnson); 6H437, 442 (Roberts).
18. 6H442 (Roberts).
19. 6H437 (Roberts).
20. 10H296 (Johnson).
21. Newman, Alfred H., The Assassination, pp. 486–488.

WEBBY N' OZZY: THE SAGA CONTINUES

by
Gary Hill

In response to my recent article on Robert E. Webster, I received many letters and calls from fellow researchers. Several seemed to think that Webster and Oswald might be doubles or at least their photos had been merged in a composite to create the Minsk photos of Oswald which they feel are faked in some way.

I decided to dig a little further into the mystery and see what else could be learned. After conversations with many of Webby's classmates and friends a startling conclusion emerged. None of those who knew him believed that this young man acted on his own. Every one to whom I spoke felt that he had

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