

3/30/76: MEMO re WC's non-investigation of Oswald agent rumor

In reviewing some testimony recently, I came across a very interesting exchange between Henry Wade and Rankin, during Wade's 6/8/64 testimony (5H213ff).

Rankin asks Wade if "it ever came to your attention" that LHO was a gov't agent. In the ensuing discussion, Wade states "I don't think I ever heard that until Waggoner Carr called me and told me." Carr was present in the room during this testimony, and was subsequently questioned (for a few minutes) but never asked about this (5H258-60)

This itself is interesting in light of the confusion over how Carr first heard of the "rumor" prior to his 1/22/64 call to Rankin.

Carr ~~WAGGONER~~ indicated that Wade was his source of information, "...and he didn't know exactly where Wade had gotten the information..."

But then on p. 2 Rankin says of Carr, "...he hadn't even gotten this from Wade. He got it from another man that the press would bring it before we could know about it..." (probably here a reference to press knowledge of "rumor" and not rumor itself). In Rankin's undated Memo for the Files, he notes that Carr "suggested that his information came ultimately from...Wade, although he stated that he had not discussed this matter directly with Wade." In his opening summary at the 1/27 session, Rankin says (T129): Carr "didn't get the information from...Wade, but he had gotten it ~~xxx~~ from someone else..." Later, of course, Warren speculates that it was Wade's assistant, Alexander, who "blew the whistle. (T181) In his testimony, Wade points to Alexander, noting he is "not a great lover of the FBI (5H242) and speculating that Alexander doesn't know what he's talking about. Wade does seem to give the Commission an invitation never accepted: "I think he would like to talk a little about it..." (243)

The thing that particularly caught my interest in this section of Wade's testimony is that little exchange about Goulden, and that BS of Rankin's that Goulden's story about LHO was "from Hudkins' report that had been picked up." Amazing, indeed, for Goulden's report was in a 12/8/63 paper, Hudkins' in a 1/1/64 paper. This also brings to mind that strange FBI report about Hudkins and Goulden (WWIV, 144-5)

Also note that this testimony is exactly one month after Jaworski wrote Rankin suggesting that there was no need to follow up on Hudkins, mentioning that Hudkins' story was based in part on speculation by Alexander.

As a sidelight, I note that it appears (or perhaps is made to appear) that some of Hudkins' story is taken from Goulden's earlier one, based on the common error re Hosty's name. Goulden quotes Marguerite on Hosty and notes, "An FBI agent named Joseph Hosty handles investigations of subversives for the Dallas field office." Hudkins writes, "Oswald...did know of Joe Hosty, the FBI agent who handles subversive matters in the Dallas FBI office." Of course, Hosty's first name is "James."

Howard Roffman

Mr. RASKIN. You didn't have anything to do with it?
Mr. WADE. I understand from hearsay it disappeared or somewhere down there but we don't have anything to do with writs. But they don't come through our office. You see that is directed by the judge. I heard or at least Decker or somebody told me they never could find the writ but there was some writ for assault to murder originally issued.

And then, of course, after he died and the murder charges was filed, well, that would actually be out of date.
Senator Cooper. Was it a writ of habeas corpus to bring Oswald before a court?

Mr. WADE. No, Jack Ruby.
Senator Cooper. Jack Ruby.

Mr. WADE. It was actually, they have two kinds of writs, one of them is where they set a bond on it and another one is what they have called a dry writ, which says, "You file on him or bring him before me at such and such a time."

Which one it was I don't know. As a matter of fact, I thought there was a bond set on it, but I told the chief, I said, "You can hold him, we don't want to release him until you know whether the person dies or not because then he wouldn't be a bailable case," assault to murder is bailable.

I never saw the writ or anything. I just heard somebody say there is a writ on him.

(At this point, Chairman Warren entered the hearing room.)

Mr. RASKIN. Did you ever help Ruby about any of his troubles of any kind?
Mr. WADE. Not that I know of.

Mr. RASKIN. Prior to this occasion?

Mr. WADE. No; I think we have had him for a liquor violation or something, but if we have—like I say, I never knew him. I think that they have had some charges against him.

As a matter of fact, they had two pistol charges against him but I don't think they ever reached my office.

Mr. RASKIN. Do you know what charges they were about pistols?

Mr. WADE. Carrying a concealed weapon and if I understand the record I think we checked it out and they dismissed them up in the police force.

There was one liquor case that was dismissed in my office by an assistant who is no longer there which I have read the reports on and don't have any recollection of it either way.

Mr. RASKIN. Did you know Eva Grant?

Mr. WADE. No, sir.

Mr. RASKIN. Ruby's sister. Do you know Sam Ruby?

Mr. WADE. I knew none of them, none of the Ruby family, and didn't know Jack Ruby. I think he claims that he had known me or something or other but if he had, it is one of those things where you see somebody and I didn't know his name or anything when I saw him that night or didn't know who he was. I thought he was a member of the press, actually.

Mr. RASKIN. Did it come to your attention that there was some claim that Oswald was an agent of one of the intelligence agencies of Government?

Mr. WADE. I heard that talk down there. It was talk some—

Mr. RASKIN. Do you know who was talking that?

Mr. WADE. I don't know. I have been up here once before, and some of the press were—I don't remember, some of the press mentioned that they had two voucher numbers in his book there that indicated he was working for the FBI or the CIA. I know nothing about them, don't think anybody in my office does. I think maybe Alexander mentioned it some, but Alexander is not a great lover of the FBI. They fuss all the time openly, so I don't know. I know nothing about it myself because I never have seen the book and I don't know whether they have even got any numbers in there but they were supposed to have two numbers in there as a voucher number of \$200 from some Government agency but like I say, supposed to. I never saw it and heard it, talk, but I am sure you all know more about it than I do.

Mr. DUKES. By voucher you mean an entry or something of that kind, what kind of a voucher?

Mr. WADE. I think it was called a voucher number. It was voucher 209, which doesn't make sense. I believe it was a low number. It doesn't make sense for a government to have a voucher number that low.

Mr. RASKIN. What book are you referring to?

Mr. WADE. The little black book that Oswald had in his possession at the time he was arrested.

Mr. RASKIN. That was his memorandum book, in which he had a list of numbers of various people and addresses and so forth, is that what you referring to?

Mr. WADE. Yes; and I never have seen the book myself. As a matter of fact, I am trying to get some photos of it, trying to but I haven't gotten them yet.

Mr. RASKIN. Now, what agency was it rumored he was a member of?

Mr. WADE. It was rumored he worked first for the FBI and then for the CIA.

Mr. RASKIN. Is that all you have heard?

Mr. WADE. As a matter of fact, I don't think I had ever heard that until Wagoner Carr called me and told me—I don't think I ever heard that. I did check into it a little, and they were talking it some, and they have actually written it up in the newspapers by rumors or a story or two—rumors of the thing.

Mr. RASKIN. Is that the report by the reporter Hudkins?

Mr. WADE. I believe it is. On the Houston paper, Hudkins. I believe we got that introduced in the Ruby trial on the charge of remote motion.

Mr. RASKIN. Is there anything more that you know about that matter?

Mr. WADE. I know absolutely nothing about it. I might say, I was under the impression, I think when I talked to you and the Chief Justice before, that, you see I was in the FBI, and I was under the impression and I think maybe I told you all that we didn't list our informant by name. The FBI have been kind enough to send down some of my old vouchers on paying informants back in down in South America, and I see that we did list them by name which I—probably may, if I said otherwise it was just my recollection on the thing but in that case I was listing informants from South America that we were paying when I was there.

Mr. RASKIN. There was one other report by Goulden, reporter of the Philadelphia Inquirer. Did that ever come to your attention in regard to this matter?

Mr. WADE. No; but I know him. He used to be a reporter in Dallas, but I don't know what it was, if you will tell me about it.

Mr. RASKIN. Apparently it was the same thing.

Mr. WADE. Different angle.

Mr. RASKIN. From Hudkins' report that had been picked up.

Mr. WADE. He is more reliable than Hudkins but I know absolutely nothing about that. Like I say, I have heard rumors and conversation and I will even put it further. I don't think Alexander knows anything about it, my assistant, although he doesn't fully admit all that. I think he would like to talk a little about it but I don't think he knows anything of his own knowledge.

Mr. RASKIN. Have you inquired of him?

Mr. WADE. I have asked him about it and he gives me nothing in the way of evidence.

Mr. RASKIN. Did you prepare the complaint in regard to Jack Ruby yourself?

Mr. WADE. I don't believe I did. I don't believe I had anything to do with it. If I did, my name will show on it but I don't think I had anything to do with it.

Mr. RASKIN. Did you give any information to the press about what you had in regard to that prosecution, and the nature of the evidence?

Mr. WADE. No; not that I know of. Of course, they all saw it on television, you know. We have got in—to bring you through the whole story, I said practically nothing about this thing for about 3 weeks or a month, but we had a lawyer on the other side who came into town, and every time he was met at the airport he would make statements.

Mr. RASKIN. Who was that?

Mr. WADE. Mr. Melvin Belli, and he had his psychiatrist on the television, all his witnesses, said what he was going to prove and it got to a situation where