

NOTES ON ED BUTLER'S CONTACTS WITH OSWALD

SYNOPSIS: Although he was personally known to Warren Commission member Hale Boggs, Butler was not a witness before the Warren Commission. He has made several public statements concerning Oswald, but his testimony before the Senate Internal Security Committee, taken two days after the assassination, is not available.

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For Butler's opinions on Oswald, see the two INCA records, "Oswald Self-Portrait in Red" and "Oswald Speaks," and the December 11, 1963 (Vol. 1, # 1) edition of "Victory," the official INCA publication.

Remarks by Rep. Boggs, on "Oswald Speaks":

"Just a few hours after President Kennedy's death, I sat with Ed Butler in my office in the Capitol and listened to this recording. What I heard was one of the things which prompted me to suggest and support the formation of a bipartisan Presidential Commission to investigate the assassination. I later served on that Commission. I believe this recording is a most significant historical document."

Remarks by Sen. Dodd, on "Oswald Speaks":

"I asked Ed Butler to come to Washington to testify before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee a few hours after President Kennedy's assassination, at a time when Oswald was still alive. Ed Butler brought this recording with him. What we heard convinced us that Oswald's commitment to Communism, and the pathological hatred of his own country fostered by this commitment, had played an important part in making him into an assassin. This important and historical record completely demolishes the widespread notion that Oswald was a simple crackpot who acted without any understandable motivation."

On Feb. 20, 1967, Sen. Dodd introduced the transcript of "Oswald Self-Portrait in Red" into the record. (Cong. Rec. pp. S2262-2266) He also made the following remarks:

"... Mr. Butler, who was known to me prior to the assassination, called my office immediately after it to inform me of his debate with Oswald. At my request he came to Washington to testify before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, and he did so on Sunday, November 24, 1963.... I intend to speak at some length on this general subject soon, and I hope to make public the testimony of Mr. Butler before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee on November 24, 1963."

In response to a letter which cited part of these remarks by Sen. Dodd, J.G. Sourwine, Chief Counsel of SISS, advised in a letter dated October 10, 1967 as follows:

"No testimony of the nature described in your inquiry of October 5, 1967 has been released by the Internal Security Subcommittee."

Partial Transcript of the INCA record, "Lee Harvey Oswald Speaks."

"We support the idea of an independent revolution in the Western hemisphere, free from American intervention."

That is the voice of Lee Harvey Oswald, recorded on August 17, 1963. Before Oswald shot President Kennedy, three months later on November the twenty-second, only a few men had heard this recording. One was Oswald. Another was the interviewer, reporter Bill Stuckey. The third was Ed Butler, an officer of INCA, the Information Council of the Americas, a private, non-profit educational organization. Butler is a specialist in combating Communist agit-prop techniques, and debated Oswald a few days after the interview. Mr. Butler:

"Millions of Americans still wonder why Oswald did what he did, or indeed if he did it at all. I don't wonder. The Warren Commission is accurate when it describes Oswald's 'commitment to Marxism and Communism' as a key motive. For example, I have in hand certified copies of six letters handwritten by Lee Harvey Oswald to leaders of the Communist Party U.S.A. spanning the summer and fall of 1963. In these letters Oswald reports on his progress in setting up a "Fair Play for Cuba Committee" front organization in New Orleans. He requests Communist literature for his stockpile. He extends honorary membership in his New Orleans Committee to those so-called 'fighters for peace'; Gus Hall, Benjamin Davis, and Arnold Johnson, 'as a token of esteem.' There are two replies from the Communists, who revealed these letters to forestall further investigation. At the same time Oswald was writing these adoring letters in private, he was boldly denying his allegiance to Communism in public, with statements like those on this record. Copies of these amazing letters, along with an analysis, and other revealing documents from the volumes of the Presidential Assassination Commission are available in a documentary paperback called 'Oswald Speaks' from INCA, Post Office Box 53371, New Orleans, Louisiana. As you listen to this recording, ask yourself: Does Oswald sound insane as he weaves his way through Latin affairs expert Stuckey's difficult questions? Does Oswald sound like a foe or friend of Kennedy's worst enemy, Castro? Does Oswald sound confused, or simply cold-blooded, as he casually condemns the Cuban refugees with two words -- 'good riddance'? Does Oswald seem honest when he omits to mention his three-year defection to Russia? Does Oswald appear clever when he evades answering questions about his Communist beliefs by claiming to represent only the 'Fair Play for Cuba Committee'? The Oswald I knew was far different from the semi-psychotic picture being painted of him by numerous 'experts' who never knew him. I have heard of only one propagandist as proficient and brazen as Oswald: Fidel Castro. Unfortunately, a legion of the lunatic left and radical right has gone marching off arm in arm, in the wrong direction, misleading millions of Americans, who keep obediently chanting the same stock question: Was Oswald ordered to act? or did he act alone? What we should be asking is: Why did Oswald do what he did? Was he incited to act? Are there more assassins in America like him?"

Now, Senator Thomas J. Dodd, Vice Chairman of the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, in charge of investigating subversion for the Senate, former prosecutor of Nazi war criminals at Nuremberg, and former special agent of the FBI. Senator Dodd:

"I asked Ed Butler to come to Washington to testify before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee a few hours after President Kennedy's assassination, at a time when Oswald was still alive. Ed Butler brought this recording with him. What we heard convinced us that Oswald's commitment to Communism, and the pathological hatred of his own country fostered by this commitment, had played an important part in making him into an assassin. This important and historical record completely demolishes the widespread notion that Oswald was a simple crackpot who acted without any understandable motivation."

Now listen as Lee Harvey Oswald speaks to reporter Bill Stuckey, in the complete, uncut, unedited interview:

(Stuckey Exhibit 2 is a fairly good but not verbatim transcript of the body of this record. INCA's concluding remarks follow.)

A prominent New Orleanian speaks from his personal recollections: Dr. Alton Ochsner, famed surgeon, past president of the American Cancer Society, and President of INCA. Dr. Ochsner:

"When I was informed of the contents of this recording, I encouraged Ed Butler to go ahead and debate Oswald, because I firmly believe ~~that~~ Communist lies must be answered with truth. Some have said that if an INCA office had existed in Dallas, President Kennedy could have been saved. No one can be sure of that. But we can be certain that Oswald was exposed, discredited, and hastily departed New Orleans. We also know that by killing President Kennedy, Oswald diverted attention from Cuba and helped to prolong Castro's power."

Another distinguished New Orleanian who was deeply influenced by this tape was the Honorable Hale Boggs, Congressman from Louisiana, House Majority Whip, Warren Commission member, and associate of Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. Boggs remembers:

"Just a few hours after President Kennedy's death, I sat with Ed Butler in my office in the Capitol and listened to this recording. What I heard was one of the things which prompted me to suggest and support the formation of a bipartisan Presidential Commission to investigate the assassination. I later served on that Commission. I believe this recording is a most significant historical document."

(Butler:) Thank you, Congressman Boggs. Every time I remember Oswald, who idolized Castro, and someone asks me why he did what he did, I cannot forget these words, spoken by President Kennedy to the Cuban invasion brigade upon their release from Castro's prisons:

(Actual recording of JFK speech:) "Your conduct and valor are proof that although Castro and his fellow dictators may rule nations, they do not rule people; that they may imprison bodies, but they do not imprison spirits; that they may destroy (applause) -- that they may destroy the exercise of liberty, but they cannot eliminate the determination to be free. (Enthusiastic applause) And by helping to free you, the United States has been given the opportunity to demonstrate once again that all men who fight for freedom are our brothers and shall be, until your country and others are free." (Prolonged, enthusiastic applause.)

Paul Hoch  
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