

HOME	SITEM	CONTACT	ASSASSINATION LINKS	CATALOG	FORUMS
------	-------	---------	------------------------	---------	--------

Link banner

James Wilcott's Testimony

Intro

Author: Jim Hargrove <hargrove@enteract.com>

Date: 1999/02/12

OSWALD AND THE CIA

On March 22, 1978, former CIA accountant James B. Wilcott swore under oath before the House Select Committee on Assassinations that he believed that Lee Harvey Oswald was a "regular employee" of the Central Intelligence Agency, and that he believed Oswald received "a full-time salary for agent work for doing CIA operational work." He testified that he was told by another CIA employee that money he (Wilcott) had personally disbursed was for "the Oswald project or for Oswald."

The modestly redacted full text of Wilcott's testimony was kept out of the public's eye for two decades. The copy which I scanned, OCR'd and present in full was obtained by John Armstrong in early 1998 and sent to me by Michael Parks. I have previously posted excerpts of Wilcott's testimony to alt.conspiracy.jfk, but this is the first time the testimony appears here in full. Redactions, which are minimal, are indicated with XXX's. No attempt has been made to match the character count of redacted material, but all redactions are short, no more than a word or two.

It should be noted that the HSCA Report, probably written by Robert Blakey, or written under his direct supervision, briefly and somewhat inaccurately summarized Wilcott's testimony and then pointedly tried to discredit it. Here is the full text of that criticism, which appears on pp. 199 and 200 of the HSCA Report:

<QUOTE ON>

In an attempt to investigate Wilcott's allegations, the committee interviewed several present and former CIA employees selected on the basis of the position each had held during the years 1954-64. Among the persons interviewed were individuals whose responsibilities covered a broad spectrum of areas in the post abroad, including the chief and deputy chief of station, as well as officers in finance, registry, the Soviet Branch and counterintelligence.

file://R:\CIA\Wilcott%20Testimony.htm

4/10/01

None of these individuals interviewed had ever seen any documents or heard any information indicating that Oswald was an agent. (18) This allegation was not known by any of them until it was published by critics of the Warren Commission in the late 1960's. (19) Some of the individuals, including a chief of counterintelligence in the Soviet Branch, expressed the belief that it was possible that Oswald had been recruited by the Soviet KGB during his military tour of duty overseas, as the CIA had identified a KGB program aimed at recruiting U.S. military personnel during the period Oswald was stationed there. (20) An intelligence analyst whom Wilcott had specifically named as having been involved in a conversation about the Oswald allegation told the committee that he was not in the post abroad at the time of the assassination. (21) A review of this individual's office of personnel file confirmed that, in fact, he had been transferred from the post abroad to the United States in 1962. (22) The chief of the post abroad from 1961 to 1964 stated that had Oswald been used by the Agency he certainly would have learned about it. (23) Similarly, almost all those persons interviewed who worked in the Soviet Branch of that station indicated they would have known if Oswald had, in fact, been recruited by the CIA when he was overseas. (24) These persons expressed the opinion that, had Oswald been recruited without their knowledge, it would have been a rare exception contrary to the working policy and guidelines of the post abroad. (25)

Based on all the evidence, the committee concluded that Wilcott's allegation was not worthy of belief.

<QUOTE OFF>

It's been my long-held opinion that it is patently obvious from reports of Oswald's travel to and from the Soviet Union that Oswald was some sort of agent for the United States Government. Despite long and vigorous denials ranging from the Warren Commission to recent posters to this newsgroup, this reading still strikes me as self-evident. I therefore believe James Wilcott's sworn testimony and disbelieve the HSCA's denials. To my knowledge, interviews referred to by the HSCA that contradict Wilcott's testimony have never been released.

The full text of Wilcott's testimony is reproduced below.

--Jim Hargrove

EXECUTIVE SESSION

ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22, 1978

House of Representatives,
John F. Kennedy Subcommittee
of the Select Committee on
Assassinations,

Washington, D. C.

The subcommittee met at 10:20 a.m., pursuant to notice, in room 2344 of the Rayburn Office Building, the Honorable Richard Preyer (Chairman of the subcommittee), presiding.

Present: Representatives Preyer (presiding), Dodd and Sawyer.

Also Present: Michael Goldsmith, Counsel, and Gary Cornwell, Counsel.

Also Present: Elizabeth Berning, Chief Clerk, and Charles Berk, Betsy Wolf and James Wolf.

Mr. Preyer. Thank you for being here today, and I will call the subcommittee to order at this time.

I will ask if you will stand and be sworn.

Do you solemnly swear that the evidence you are about to give before this subcommittee will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. Wilcott. I do.

Mr. Preyer. I would like before we begin to read a written statement concerning the subject of the investigation.

We are operating under House Resolution 222, which mandates the Committee to conduct a full and complete investigation and study of the circumstances surrounding the assassination and death of President John F. Kennedy, including

determining whether the existing laws of the United States concerning the protection of the President and the investigatory jurisdiction and capability of agencies and departments are adequate in their provisions and enforcement; and whether there was full disclosure of evidence and information among agencies and department of the United States Government and whether any evidence or information not in the possession of an agency of department would have been of assistance in investigating the assassination and why such information was not provided or collected by that agency or department, and to make recommendations to the House if the Select Committee deems it appropriate for the amendment of existing legislation or the enactment of new legislation.

That is what we are attempting to accomplish, which is quite a big order.

We appreciate your being here today, Mr. Wilcott.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken while the members of the Committee went to the floor of the House for a vote.)

3

Mr. Preyer. We will come to order.

We will resume the session, and I will recognize Counsel to begin his questioning.

TESTIMONY OF JAMES B. WILCOTT, A FORMER EMPLOYEE
OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY:

Mr. Goldsmith. For the record, would you please state your name and address and occupation?

Mr. Wilcott. My name is James B. Wilcott. My address is 2761 Atlantic Street, in Concord, and my occupation is electronic technician.

Mr. Goldsmith. Where is Concord located?

Mr. Wilcott. It is a little bit east of Oakland, California.

Mr. Goldsmith. Have you received a copy of the Committee's rules?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. And a copy of the relevant House Resolutions?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. And, Mr. Wilcott, is it true that you are a former employee with the CIA and that you are here today testifying voluntarily without a subpoena?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. During what years did you work for the CIA?

4

Mr. Wilcott. I worked from the years, May, of 1957 to, April, of 1966.

Mr. Goldsmith. And in what general capacity did you work with the CIA?

Mr. Wilcott. All in the finance -- in accounting all of the time.

Mr. Goldsmith. How did you become employed with the CIA?

Mr. Wilcott. I was recruited from the school in Syracuse New York, where I was taking a course in accounting and business administration.

Mr. Goldsmith. Very generally now, what were your responsibilities as a finance employee with the agency?

Mr. Wilcott. Well, from May of 1957 to January of 1960 -

Mr. Goldsmith -- excuse me, just answer the question very generally, without referring to anything right now, and please describe generally what your responsibilities were as a finance officer.

Mr. Wilcott. My responsibilities were primarily record keeping and disbursing of funds.

Mr. Goldsmith. Mr. Wilcott, are you here with Counsel today?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, I am.

Mr. Goldsmith. Would your Counsel identify himself for the recorder?

Mr. Schaap. My name is William Schaap, S - c - h - a -

5

a - p (spelling), and I am an Attorney here in Washington. I will give my card to the Committee.

Mr. Goldsmith. Mr. Wilcott, did I ask you to prepare

a list indicating the dates that you were employed with the CIA and where you were stationed?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, you did.

Mr. Goldsmith. Did you prepare such a list?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, I did.

Mr. Goldsmith. Do you have that list with you?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes. I do.

Mr. Goldsmith. Referring to that list, would you tell the Committee where you were stationed during your period with the CIA?

Mr. Wilcott. Certainly, from May of 1957 to January of 1960, I was in the pre-fab building on the Potomac in finance. During the period, it was unvouchered funds, and my duties were general accounting, and my rate in status was GS-5.

From about January of 1960 to about June of 1960, I was transferred to Finance Field Payroll, also, in this same building, on the Potomac. This was making payments and keeping pay records.

From June of 1960 to June of 1964, I was stationed at XXXXXXXX Station, and my primary duty was finance and cash disbursements. This was all cash payments and record keeping for the station. And during that period, I had been promoted

6

GS-7 and also gained a career status.

From June of 1964 to about December of 1964, I was at Roseland. This was just prior to moving to Langley, in finance, and my duties there were policing accounts, and included auditing of special accounts.

From January of 1965 to about March of 1965, I was at Langley in the same area, in finance, policing accounts and auditing of special accounts, and I was promoted up to GS-9.

From April of 1965 to April of 1966, I was at Miami Station in finance, and I was handling the staff payroll. This was preparing and reconciling payrolls.

In April of 1966, I resigned from the CIA.

Mr. Goldsmith. I take it, from your testimony, that in November of 1963, you were stationed in XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX Station, is that correct?

Mr. Wilcott. That is right.

Mr. Goldsmith. Drawing your attention to the period immediately after the assassination of President Kennedy, at that time, did you come across any information concerning Lee Harvey Oswald's relationship with the CIA?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, I did.

Mr. Goldsmith. And will you tell the Committee what that relationship was?

Mr. Wilcott. Well, it was my understanding that Lee Harvey Oswald was an employee of the agency and was an agent

7

of the agency.

Mr. Goldsmith. What do you mean by the term "agent"?

Mr. Wilcott. That he was a regular employee, receiving a full-time salary for agent work for doing CIA operational work.

Mr. Goldsmith. How did this information concerning Oswald first come to your attention?

Mr. Wilcott. The first time I heard about Oswald being connected in any way with CIA was the day after the Kennedy assassination.

Mr. Goldsmith. And how did that come to your attention:

Mr. Wilcott. Well, I was on day duty for the station. It was a guard-type function at the station, which I worked for overtime. There was a lot of excitement going on at the station after the Kennedy assassination.

Towards the end of my tour of duty, I heard certain things about Oswald somehow being connected with the agency, and I didn't really believe this when I heard it, and I thought it was absurd. Then, as time went on, I began to hear more things in that line.

Mr. Goldsmith. I think we had better go over that one more time.

When, exactly, was the very first time that you heard or came across information that Oswald was an agent?

Mr. Wilcott. I heard references to it the day after

8

the assassination.

Mr. Goldsmith. And who made these references to Oswald being an agent of the CIA?

Mr. Wilcott. I can't remember the exact persons. There was talk about it going on at the station, and several months following at the station.

Mr. Goldsmith. How many people made this reference to Oswald being an agent of the CIA?

Mr. Wilcott. At least -- there was at least six or seven people, specifically, who said that they either knew or believed Oswald to be an agent of the CIA.

Mr. Goldsmith. Was Jerry Fox one of the people that made this allegation?

Mr. Wilcott. To the best of my recollection, yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. And who is Jerry Fox?

Mr. Wilcott. Jerry Fox was a Case Officer for his branch the Soviet Russia Branch, XXXXXXXXXXXX Station, who purchased information from the Soviets.

Mr. Goldsmith. Mr. Wilcott, did I ask you to prepare a list of CIA Case Officers working at XXXXXXXXXXXX Station in 1963?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, you did.

Mr. Goldsmith. Did you prepare such a list?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, I did.

Mr. Goldsmith. Is that list complete and does it have

9

every CIA Case Officer who worked XXXXXXXXXXXX in 1963?

Mr. Wilcott. Oh, no. It doesn't have every one. It has every one that I can remember.

Mr. Goldsmith. Did you bring that list with you today?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, I did.

Mr. Goldsmith. Were any of these people on your list possible subjects who made references to Oswald being a CIA agent?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. Would you read the list to the Committee?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. Only of Case Officers.

Ms. Berning. I think we ought to state that the record shows that Mr. Sawyer is a member of the Kennedy Subcommittee

Preyer. We will.

Mr. Goldsmith. Upon your memory and the list that your brought with you today, will you tell the Committee the names of the CIA Case Officers who you remember working XXXXXXXXXXXX in 1963?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes. There was XXXXXXXXXXXX Branch, who had XXXXXXXXXXXX cover.

Jerry Fox, SR Branch, Soviet Russia Branch --

Mr. Goldsmith. Excuse me, please proceed very slowly.

Mr. Wilcott. Jerry Fox, SR Branch, Reid Dennis, Chief of Soviet Satellite Branch; and XXXXXXXXXXXX, China Branch,

10

and he also had a cover.

John P. Horton, XXXXXXXXXXXX Section; XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX Branch; and Chester Ito, XXXXXXXXXXXX Branch; and Kan Takai, XXXXXX Branch; and Jim Delaney, China Branch; and Bob Rentner, SR Branch -- and there is some question about that, the branch he was with.

Larry Watanabi, XXXXXX Branch, Senior Case Officer; and
XXXXXXXXXXXX, deep commercial cover agent.
There was a person, Dave, who was a Deputy Chief.

Dave -- I can't remember his last name, Deputy Chief of the
China Branch; and then a person whose last name was XXXXXXXXXXXX
in the XXXXXXXXXXXX Branch.

Mr. Goldsmith. Do you remember which of these individuals
if any, made the specific allegation or reference that Oswald
was an agent?

Mr. Wilcott. It has been 15 years, and I can't remember
specifically who said what, but certainly I am sure that Jerry
Fox, for instance, had at least made some mention of it.

Mr. Goldsmith. At the time that this allegation first
came to your attention, did you discuss it with anyone?

Mr. Wilcott. Oh, yes. I discussed it with my friends
and the people that I was associating with socially.

Mr. Goldsmith. Who were your friends that you discussed
this with?

Mr. Wilcott. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX George Breen, Ed Luck, and
11
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

Mr. Goldsmith. Who was George Breen?

Mr. Wilcott. George Breen was a person in Registry,
who was my closest friend while I was in XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

Mr. Goldsmith. Was he a CIA employee?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, he was.

Mr. Goldsmith. And would he corroborate your obser-
vation that Oswald was an agent?

Mr. Wilcott. I don't know.

Mr. Goldsmith. At the time that this allegation first
came to your attention, did you learn the name of Oswald's
Case Officer at the CIA?

Mr. Wilcott. No.

Mr. Goldsmith. Were there any other times during your

stay with the CIA at XXXXXXXXXXXX Station that you came across information that Oswald had been a CIA agent?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. When was that?

Mr. Wilcott. The specific incident was soon after the Kennedy assassination, where an agent, a Case Officer -- I am sure it was a Case Officer -- came up to my window to draw money, and he specifically said in the conversation that ensued, he specifically said, "Well, Jim, the money that I drew the last couple of weeks ago or so was money," either for the Oswald project or for Oswald.

12

Mr. Goldsmith. Do you remember the name of this Case Officer?

Mr. Wilcott. No, I don't.

Mr. Goldsmith. Do you remember when specifically this conversation took place?

Mr. Wilcott. Not specifically, only generally.

Mr. Goldsmith. How many months after the assassination was this?

Mr. Wilcott. I think it must have been two or three omths (sic) after the assassination.

Mr. Goldsmith. Do you remember where this conversation took place?

Mr. Wilcott. It was right at my window, my disbursing cage window.

Mr. Goldsmith. Did you discuss this information with anyone?

Mr. Wilcott. Oh, yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. With whom?

Mr. Wilcott. Certainly with George Breen, XXXXXXXXXXXX the circle of social friends that we had.

Mr. Goldsmith. How do you spell XXXXXXXXXXXX last name?

Mr. Wilcott. XXXXXXXXXXXX (spelling).

Mr. Schaap. For the record, I have made a list of all of these spellings of the names which have been mentioned, which I will give to the stenographer so that he will have
13

them correctly.

Mr. Goldsmith. Did this Case Officer tell you what Oswald's cryptonym was?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, he mentioned the cryptonym specifically under which the money was drawn.

Mr. Goldsmith. And what did he tell you the cryptonym was?

Mr. Wilcott. I cannot remember.

Mr. Goldsmith. What was your response to this revelation as to what Oswald's cryptonym was? Did you write it down or do anything?

Mr. Wilcott. No; I think that I looked through my advance book -- and I had a book where the advances on projects were run, and I leafed through them, and I must have at least leafed through them to see if what he said was true.

Mr. Goldsmith. And are you saying then that you attempted to investigate this allegation?

Mr. Wilcott. No, I am not saying that. It was more of a casual kind of thing, to my way of thinking.

Mr. Goldsmith. Did you check your cash disbursement files?

Mr. Wilcott. Not the files, no.

Mr. Goldsmith. I am not sure I am following, then, what specifically you did check.

Mr. Wilcott. It was a book that I had. At the end of

14

the day we would list all of the advances that were made in an advance book. It was just a three-ring binder, and we would list down the advances by cryptonym and the amounts and then reconcile that with the daily disbursements.

Mr. Goldsmith. How long were these records maintained?

Mr. Wilcott. They were maintained on a thirty-day basis, and then they were closed off at the end of the month.

Mr. Goldsmith. So, does that mean you were able to check back only thirty days from the time that you were given this information?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. I realize this is testimony 15 years after the fact. However, if you received this information two or three months after the assassination, at a time that Oswald was already dead and had been dead for two or three months, what purpose would have been served by checking records that were only 30 days old?

Do you follow the question?

Mr. Wilcott. No.

Mr. Goldsmith. Well, in other words, if you got the information three months after the assassination, Oswald had already been dead for three months, is that right?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. Answer "yes" or "no" for the recorder.

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

15

Mr. Goldsmith. You testified that your records were only kept for thirty days, is that correct?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. Then, by checking your records, which only went back thirty days, isn't it true that you wouldn't have gotten any information concerning Oswald anyway because Oswald had already been dead for one or two months?

Mr. Wilcott. That is true.

Mr. Goldsmith. So, then, really, no purpose would have been served by checking those records?

Mr. Wilcott. That is right.

Mr. Goldsmith. And did you check any other records?

Mr. Wilcott. No.

Mr. Preyer. I understand this might be a good place for us to break and go and vote, so that we will take another recess for about ten minutes. I am sorry.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken while the members of the Committee went to the floor of the House for a vote.)

Mr. Preyer. The Committee will resume.

Mr. Goldsmith. Mr. Wilcott, you indicated that after receiving this information concerning Oswald's cryptonym, you went back to check some files, is that correct?

Mr. Wilcott. Not really files; it was my book.

Mr. Goldsmith. Your book.

Mr. Wilcott. I flipped through it.
16

Mr. Goldsmith. What is the name of the book?

Mr. Wilcott. It was my Request for Advance Book.

Mr. Goldsmith. And for purposes of clarification, now, if Oswald was already dead at the time that you went to this book, why did you go back to examine the book?

Mr. Wilcott. Well, I am sorry -- if Oswald was what?

Mr. Goldsmith. At the time you went to look at the book, Oswald was already dead is that correct?

Mr. Wilcott. That is right.

Mr. Goldsmith. Why did you go back to look at the book?

Mr. Wilcott. Well, the payments that were made especially to substations like Oswald's was operated -- it was a sub-station of the XXXXXXXXX station, and they had one in XXXXXXX and they had one in XXXXXXXXXX-- and it may be six months or even a year after the initial allocation that the final accounting for those funds were submitted, and they would operate out of revolving funds or out of their own personal funds in many cases.

Mr. Goldsmith. So, is your testimony then that even though Oswald was already dead at that time, the book might have contained a reference to either Oswald or the Oswald

project and that that reference would have been to a period six months or even a year earlier, is that correct?

Mr. Wilcott. That is correct.

17

Mr. Goldsmith. Mr. Wilcott, how long were these advance books retained?

Mr. Wilcott. They were retained for approximately one year by the finance office, approximately one to two years, and were destroyed at the time of audit.

Mr. Goldsmith. So that they would be routinely destroyed at the time of auditing?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. Did you check any of the earlier books?

Mr. Wilcott. No, I didn't, as far as the Oswald cryptonym was concerned; no, I didn't.

Mr. Goldsmith. So basically, you checked only one of the advance books, is that correct?

Mr. Wilcott. My current one that I had on my counter.

Mr. Goldsmith. And when you testified earlier that you learned Oswald's cryptonym, by that do you mean that you learned both Oswald's personal cryptonym and his project cryptonym, or was it one of the two?

Mr. Wilcott. Well, it was just a cryptonym, and it could refer to a person, or it could refer to something else and I would have no way of knowing what a cryptonym referred to.

Mr. Goldsmith. So, when the officer told you -- strike that.

So, when the Case Officer made reference to a cryptonym

18

you didn't know whether the cryptonym referred to Oswald specifically or to a project in which Oswald had been involved is that correct?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir.

Mr. Goldsmith. Mr. Wilcott, assuming that Oswald had

been employed as an agent by the CIA, would there have been a reference to that fact in the CIA's cash disbursement file?

Mr. Wilcott. No.

Mr. Goldsmith. Why not?

Mr. Wilcott. Anything they had there would have -- sometimes they used as many as two or three different cryptonyms and they would have -- it all depended on how far they wanted to isolate it from the original source, from the original source as to where the project was run.

Mr. Goldsmith. But as a matter of routine, would the CIA cash disbursement files refer to the cryptonym of either

the person or the project that is receiving funds?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, I am sure somewhere.

Mr. Goldsmith. As a matter of routine, there would be that reference? Do you believe that there was such a reference to Oswald?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, I do, and I believe there was such a reference.

Mr. Goldsmith. Well, if I understand you correctly, then, your answer now was somewhat different from what you testified earlier. And I will ask the question again, okay?

19

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. Assuming that Oswald was an agent for the CIA, would the agency's cash disbursement files have referred to either Oswald or to his cryptonym?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. And you have had access to the cash disbursement files at XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX Station?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, for a limited period.

Mr. Goldsmith. Were you ever able to check those particular files?

Mr. Wilcott. I was able to but I never did.

Mr. Goldsmith. So, you never checked the cash disbursement files to see if any reference was made there to Oswald's cryptonym, is that correct?

Mr. Wilcott. That is right. It was only my personal files -- my internal files, prior to the end of the month.

Mr. Goldsmith. I understand.

How long were the XXXXXXXXXXXX cash disbursement files or records retained?

Mr. Wilcott. The details approximately two years. We had accountings, or we had audits about every two years, and then then files that I kept the requests for advances, the details of the accountings that were done usually on a monthly basis by the XXXXX Station Branches, would be destroyed and then they would be -- and, in fact, I helped destroy them.

20

Mr. Goldsmith. Are you saying, then, that the cash disbursement files as a matter of routine would be periodically destroyed? (sic)

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. Do you know whether CIA Headquarters would have had either copies or originals of the cash disbursement files?

Mr. Wilcott. They would have summaries of some sort.

Mr. Goldsmith. Would those summaries be destroyed as a matter of routine, to your knowledge?

Mr. Wilcott. I really don't know.

Mr. Goldsmith. Were you ever able to find any indication in any of the XXXXXXXX Station's records that Oswald was, in fact, a CIA agent?

Mr. Wilcott. Well, I never really looked.

Mr. Goldsmith. To your knowledge, would any records at CIA Headquarters document that Oswald was a CIA agent?

Mr. Wilcott. I believe they would at one time. Whether they are there now or not is hard to say.

Mr. Goldsmith. Do you have any personal knowledge that any records at CIA Headquarters were ever destroyed?

Mr. Wilcott. No.

Mr. Goldsmith. Do you have any knowledge of any record of the CIA at the XXXXXXXXX Station ever being destroyed out of the ordinary course of business, not as a matter of routine?
21

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. To your personal knowledge, CIA records XXXXXXXXXXXX were destroyed?

Mr. Wilcott. Destroyed or changed.

Mr. Goldsmith. Could you give an example of that?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes. Let us say, for instance, that there was a certain project going on, and the project was one that became known that this project was being carried out -- and we call it "flaps," -- and the Case Officer in charge might get word that somebody from headquarters was coming to review the files to investigate the flap. Well, they would go through the files and take out anything that they thought was, say, indicative of how this flap occurred and change the files.

For instance, in accounting, when we had our audits, for instance, in most of the audits, he would call up somebody -- let's say in China Branch -- and say "I know you were having problems with this, would you like to look it over before the auditors come?", and they might look it over and retype the accounting for funds for their project and, you know, make changes that they might think were in their interest to do.

Mr. Goldsmith. Did you ever actually Xerox records being destroyed or changed?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, I did.
22

Mr. Goldsmith. And have you just described one of those instances to us?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. Mr. Wilcott after leaving the XXXXXXXXX Station, was there any other time when you came across any information that indicated that Oswald was a CIA agent?

Mr. Wilcott. In conversation.

Mr. Goldsmith. Is the answer to that "yes"?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. When did that occur?

Mr. Wilcott. From the time I left I talked at various times, especially at parties and things like that, on social occasions, with people at headquarters and with people at my station, and we would converse about it and I used to say things like, "What do you think about Oswald being connected with the CIA?", and things like that.

Mr. Goldsmith. What was their response?

Mr. Wilcott. The response was, among quote a few people "Oh, well, I am sure he was."

Mr. Goldsmith. What were these people's names?

Mr. Wilcott. Well, George Breen, again, after we came back from XXXXXXXXX, for instance, XXXXXXXXX was a person that I knew before I had gone to XXXXXXXX Station, and I met with him, and I had dinner at his house with his wife and my wife.

23

Mr. Goldsmith. Just give us their names. Anyone else?

Mr. Wilcott. Not that I can recall.

Mr. Goldsmith. So, it is your testimony that, once you left the XXXXXXXXX station, people, both at headquarters, in Langley, and at the Miami Station, made references to Oswald being an agent, is that correct?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, in a speculative manner.

Mr. Goldsmith. How many people have you spoken to that said that Oswald was an agent of the CIA, to the best of your recollection?

Mr. Schaap. Do you mean, how many people who were in the CIA or how many people in the general population?

Mr. Goldsmith. How many people in the CIA?

Mr. Wilcott. With any degree of certainty, other than just speculation, I would say, six or seven with some degree of certainty.

Mr. Goldsmith. Do you have a personal opinion as to how or for what purpose the CIA might have handled any projects that involved Lee Harvey Oswald?

Mr. Wilcott. I am sorry?

Mr. Goldsmith. Do you have an opinion as to how the CIA might handled any projects involving Oswald and for what purpose they might have used Oswald?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, I have opinions.

Mr. Goldsmith. What is that opinion?

24

Mr. Wilcott. I believe that Oswald was a double agent, was sent over to the Soviet Union to do intelligence work, that the defection was phoney and it was set up and that I believe that Marina Oswald was an agent that had been recruited sometime before and was waiting their in Tokyo for Lee Harvey Oswald.

Mr. Goldsmith. What is the basis for that opinion?

Mr. Wilcott. The basis for that is discussions that

I had with people at the XXXXX Station. Those are discussions with people who gave the indication that there was every certainty that Oswald was an agent of CIA, runout of XXXXXXXX Station, and that he was freed from Russia there in the final courses in Russia and was trained by CIA people at Atsugi.

Mr. Goldsmith. However, your testimony is that you spoke to only six people as an estimate who indicated that Oswald was a CIA agent -- and when I say six people, I mean six CIA people, is that correct?

There were more people than that that believed it, and six people with any degree of certainty that, you know, I felt from what they were saying that they either had some kind of substantial knowledge, or they had talked to somebody who had some knowledge.

Mr. Goldsmith. How many people from the CIA did you speak to who speculated that Oswald was an agent?

25

Mr. Wilcott. Dozens, literally dozens.

Mr. Goldsmith. Do you have any explanation for why none of these people have come forward with this story?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. What is that explanation?

Mr. Wilcott. I have been trying to talk about this thing and other things for the last ten years. I found it very, very difficult to talk about these things that I think ought to be talked about, very difficult. I talked to reporters from various papers, and I talked to people in other forms of meetings, and to me it is not surprising at all.

I think, or I am certain, in my own mind, that, if these people were approached that some of these people --

Mr. Goldsmith. Why has it been difficult?

Mr. Wilcott. Well, it has been difficult because people don't want to get involved, and people were scared. I was scared until the Carter Administration. I was really scared to go to the Government and talk about any of these things.

Mr. Goldsmith. Did you bring your allegation to the attention of the Warren Commission?

Mr. Wilcott. No, I didn't.

Mr. Goldsmith. And what is the reason for that?

Mr. Wilcott. I really didn't think that the Warren Commission was out to really get at the facts, and I am not

26

saying that they purposely did anything, because I don't know, and maybe they did or maybe they didn't, but certainly, they didn't impress me as really trying to scrutinize the evidence that there was. And their security that there is in the Government didn't strike me as the kind of security that would keep me from getting attacked in some way, if someone wanted to do it.

Mr. Goldsmith. How did you know, in 1963, what type of security precautions the Warren Commission had for conducting its investigation?

Mr. Wilcott. I don't understand.

Mr. Goldsmith. You have indicated that you were not inclined to go to the Warren Commission because you were concerned about their security?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. Did you have any basis for thinking that their security was poor?

Mr. Wilcott. In 1963, I wasn't think that much about it.

Mr. Goldsmith. So, it never really came forward for you to go to the Warren Commission, did it?

Mr. Wilcott. Not until after I left the agency.

Mr. Goldsmith. When was the first time that you alleged in public that Oswald was a CIA agent.

Mr. Wilcott. In 1968.

Mr. Goldsmith. So, you first came across this

27

information in November of 1963, is that correct?

Mr. Wilcott. That is correct.

Mr. Goldsmith. And the first time you alleged in public this allegation was in 1968?

Mr. Wilcott. That is correct.

Mr. Goldsmith. Why did you wait five years?

Mr. Wilcott. We thought every year, my wife and I and the friends that we had -- we said, "Well, this is one thing that they aren't going to keep a lid on." And we thought every year it was going to be coming out, and especially I didn't think that -- since what I had heard was all hearsay that I would never have seen Oswald or anything like that -- this is not the kind of thing that would be used for even something like the Warren Commission, and they would have to have something more substantial than that to go on, aside from the fact that I never would have done it in the CIA, being a very risky thing to do with the CIA.

Mr. Goldsmith. Is it fair to say that the CIA is an operation that runs itself on a "need-to-know" basis?

Would you tell the Committee what the "need-to-know" principle is?

Mr. Wilcott. It is based on the principle that only those persons who are involved in a project or involved in operation -- and even things that would not seem to be at all in any way secret -- only those people should know about

28

it and nobody else should know about it, and that was a "need-to-know" basis

Mr. Goldsmith. If the agency, in fact, was run on the "need-to-know" basis, how would you account for so many people supposedly knowing that Oswald was an agent?

Mr. Wilcott. The "need-to-know" principle was not all that we followed, and just about every one of the big projects that the agency was involved in, information leaked out, and we especially within the CIA knew about it, and someone would go to a party and have a little bit too much to drink and start saying things that they really shouldn't be saying to keep in mind what the "need-to-know" principle was.

Mr. Goldsmith. Why would anyone have shared this particular information with you?

Mr. Wilcott. Especially after Kennedy's assassination, there was a great deal of very, very serious discontent with CIA, and the morale at the station had dropped considerably, and we heard some very, very bitter denunciations of CIA and the projects that they were undertaking.

Mr. Goldsmith. I am not sure that that is responsive.

Why would anyone share the information that Oswald was an agent with you, Mr. Wilcott?

Mr. Wilcott. I don't know how to answer that.

Mr. Schaap. Excuse me.

(The witness conferred with his Counsel.)

29

Mr. Goldsmith. Do you have anything to add in response to that question?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, I was on security duty, and on security duty, agents were coming in and out of the station, and I pulled a lot of security duty, three and four nights right in a row, and pulled as much as 24 hours on weekends, and an agent would come back from meeting with somebody and he would be waiting for his wife to pick him up or would be waiting for a call from one of the indigenous agents that he was

running and a lot of times conversations would be talked.

And I think that is why I probably heard a lot more things than other people did, for instance, than my wife did, because of that situation.

Mr. Goldsmith. Mr. Wilcott, when did you leave the agency?

Mr. Wilcott. I left the agency in April of 1966 for the Miami Station.

Mr. Goldsmith. I am sorry, I didn't hear.

Mr. Wilcott. -- to the Miami Station.

Mr. Goldsmith. And were you dismissed by the agency or did you resign?

Mr. Wilcott. I resigned.

Mr. Goldsmith. To your knowledge, did the CIA ever conduct an investigation into your allegation that Oswald was an agent?

30

Mr. Wilcott. Not that I know of.

Mr. Goldsmith. Did you ever bring your allegation to the attention of anyone in the CIA?

Mr. Wilcott. No.

Mr. Goldsmith. Can you give the Committee the names of any persons who might corroborate your allegation?

Mr. Wilcott. All of the people that we mentioned in the case.

Mr. Goldsmith. And finally, as I said at the beginning is it fair to say that you are here voluntarily today?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, it is.

Mr. Goldsmith. And you testified without any reservation?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. And your testimony has been truthful and candid?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. I have nothing further, Mr. Chairman.

31

Mr. Preyer. I will ask a few questions. Why this information would come out to a CIA station XXXXXXXX rather than some other part of the world is, I assume, because Oswald was trained in Japan, according to your belief. He was in the military service over there, and so you feel he was a double agent who was trained while he was in the military by the CIA, and you mentioned he was given a Russian course. And do you know for a fact that he was given Russian courses?

Mr. Wilcott. No; I know for a fact, or I know from hearsay, and I believe it to be true from the circumstances how this conversation came up and so on.

Mr. Preyer. Well, that is the other question that I want to be very sure on. I think you are making some important allegations here, and you have been very helpful in giving some witnesses' names through which we might be able to corroborate it, but I think it is very important that we know clearly how much of this was cocktail party talk and how much was shop talk and how much was speculation and rumor and how much was hard fact.

You mentioned the day after the assassination you talked to someone at the station about it. Did he say to you, "I think Oswald was a CIA agent," or did that first person say to you that he was a CIA agent? Can you recall whether the tone of it was rumor or shop talk or was the tone of it that "this is true"?

32

Mr. Wilcott. Well, sir, the day after the assassination I don't think that there was any of that kind of talk. The day after, perhaps, two or three weeks after, the kind of talk was that CIA was somehow connected.

Mr. Preyer. That was shop talk, speculation, I gather; people were saying that the CIA is somehow connected with it.

Mr. Wilcott. Well, I believed it to be a little more than speculation, that the source at least of this kind of talk was, I believe, to be something more serious than speculation.

Mr. Preyer. It was your conclusion from that talk that

some of these people might have knowledge that he was a CIA agent rather than that they were speculating about it?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir.

Mr. Preyer. And you did mention the case officer who came in and told you that the money he had drawn out a few weeks earlier was drawn out for Oswald?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir.

Mr. Preyer. He stated that as a fact and not that he believed it was drawn out for Oswald or it could have been or something like that?

Mr. Wilcott. It was stated as a fact -- Oswald or the Oswald project.

Mr. Preyer. How many people were at the station in ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ approximately?
33

Mr. Wilcott. I believe our full strength was around ~~XXXXXXX~~ and we never actually had that many, I don't think. It was about ~~XXX~~ I think, was our actual roster was.

Mr. Preyer. And Miami, was that comparable in size?

Mr. Wilcott. No, sir; that was a smaller station.

Mr. Preyer. So that in ~~XXXX~~, you indicated, six or seven people talked to you and were, as I understood it, rather definite about the Oswald connection?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir.

Mr. Preyer. And dozens of others talked to you in a general, speculative manner?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir.

Mr. Preyer. Why did you resign from the CIA?

Mr. Wilcott. My wife and I came to believe that what CIA was doing couldn't be reconciled to basic principles of democracy or basic principles of humanism.

Mr. Preyer. It had no relation to your performance?

Mr. Wilcott. No, sir; I think I had good performance reviews right up to the time that I left.

Mr. Preyer. I believe you have written an article about this, an unpublished article.

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Preyer. And have you made that available to us?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, I have.

Mr. Preyer. Thank you. I have no further questions.
34

Mr. Sawyer. Do you distinguish between an agent and a paid informant or do you use those terms interchangeably?

Mr. Wilcott. Well, sir, I think of an agent as an actual employee of the Agency; we called them indigenous agents XXXXXXXX who were agents that were on a regular salary by the case officer who was running an agent, and then there were a lot of one-time informers or maybe one- or two- or three-time informers that were paid like maybe \$50 or so to attend a meeting of a political party or something of that nature.

Mr. Sawyer. When you refer to Oswald as an agent, you are referring to the extent you have -- as an agent as opposed to a paid informer, in effect?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes; it is my belief that he was a regular agent and this was a regular project of the Agency to send Oswald to the Soviet Union.

Mr. Sawyer. Now, did the XXXXXXXX station have any jurisdiction over the Russian operation or within the Soviet Union?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir. That was the SR branch which had all of the projects having anything to do with the Soviet Union.

Mr. Sawyer. It went through the XXXXXXXX station?

Mr. Wilcott. Well, that was just those that were assigned to XXXXXXXX and those projects that were assigned to XXXXXXXX. Every station was divided up -- at least every class station was divided up into areas, where we would have a China 35 branch, Korea branch and XXXXXXXX branch and SR branch and SR satellite.

Mr. Sawyer. I noticed in some of the information we are provided you say that following your leaving the CIA in 1967

or thereabouts, for a period of some three years or so, you were harassed by the CIA and the FBI and sabotaged, as I recollect it.

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir, I believe that happened.

Mr. Sawyer. Could you tell us what those things consisted of?

Mr. Wilcott. I think the most significant thing that can be actually substantiated is the circumstances surrounding my employment with the community renewal program in Utica, and I was the finance analyst for the community renewal program in Utica. One day Frank O'Connor, the director of the program, called me into his office and he said that he had had a discussion with the public safety commissioner and that the public safety commissioner told him that my phone was bugged, that my house was under surveillance and that a Federal indictment was coming down on me at any time, that he had talked to the mayor and the mayor decided not to fire me but asked me to sign a resignation form which he would date the day previous to the date that the Federal indictment came down.

Mr. Sawyer. Who told this to the community development
36

people?

Mr. Wilcott. My boss, Frank O'Connor said that this was told him by the public safety commissioner and that the FBI had told the public safety commissioner.

Mr. Sawyer. Who is the public safety commissioner?

Mr. Wilcott. I don't remember his name now offhand.

Mr. Sawyer. Was he in Utica?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes. The mayor, Mr. Sawyer, was Dominic Casaro. He was the mayor at that time.

Mr. Sawyer. Were there any other instances of harassment?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, there were several other incidents that I believe could possibly be somehow connected with CIA.

Mr. Sawyer. What were they?

Mr. Wilcott. Well, they were such incidents as the FBI agent that was working with a group -- and this was an established fact that this person was an FBI agent and that he was working with the group that I was working with an antiwar group and, to my mind, there is a very great likelihood that this person was there to neutralize me, as the CIA term went.

Mr. Sawyer. What did he do -- anything?

Mr. Wilcott. Well, I would get calls and they would say "We know all about you," shooting a machine gun into the phone, and hang up, and I would get notes written in snow or my windshield and I had slips of paper left under my
37

windshield and this sort of thing.

Mr. Sawyer. What would they say?

Mr. Wilcott. They were extremely vulgar and I don't think that I should give the full context of them.

Mr. Sawyer. What was the gist of them?

Mr. Wilcott. Well, it was "We all know all about you" and signed "The Minutemen" or some very vulgar remarks and "We know all about you and signed "Minutemen."

Mr. Sawyer. What was the name of the FBI agent who you think infiltrated this antiwar group?

Mr. Wilcott. Gordon Finch.

Mr. Sawyer. He was in Utica also?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Sawyer. What were some other instances?

Mr. Wilcott. Well, my tires were slashed and damage done to my car and I believe sugar poured in the gas tank, and whether this was actually CIA or not I have no way of knowing, and it could also have been just for harassment as a result of antiwar activities but I think there is also a possibility that it could have been attempts to intimidate me into talking about the CIA.

Mr. Sawyer. Are there any others that you can specifi-

ally identify as coming from the CIA or FBI?

Mr. Wilcott. I don't confirm any of them except with the community renewal program as coming from there and I am

38

suspicious that many of the other things that happened may have had as its source the CIA.

Mr. Sawyer. Well, what were your antiwar activities that you refer to?

Mr. Wilcott. We had -- in Utica there was a group called the Vietnam Educational Council, which was informed people, formed to inform people as to what was going on in Vietnam, and we didn't feel that there was coverage enough in the media as to what was going on, and the purpose of the Vietnam Educational Council was to inform people as to what was going on.

I was on the executive committee along with doctors and lawyers and some of the most respected people in the community.

Mr. Sawyer. How long were you associated with that?

Mr. Wilcott. Approximately two years, sir.

Mr. Sawyer. Thank you. That is all I have.

Mr. Dodd. I have just a couple of questions. First of all I apologize for having to run in and out during your testimony and some of this you may have already covered; and, if you have, then I will not proceed with it. But I was intrigued -- and it may have been in the transcription but you were in XXXXX as financial disbursement officer -- is it your testimony that you were told by a case officer that you had disbursed funds for an Oswald project?

39

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir.

Mr. Dodd. Am I to believe by that that you were not aware at the time you made the disbursement that it was, in fact, an Oswald project?

Mr. Wilcott. That is correct, sir.

Mr. Dodd. It would have been a cryptonym and he was

telling you, you had, in fact, made a disbursement?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes sir.

Mr. Dodd. And this would have been, now, shortly after the assassination?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir.

Mr. Dodd. Talking about hours afterwards or a day afterwards?

Mr. Wilcott. It was at least a matter of weeks and perhaps as much as three months after.

Mr. Dodd. After the assassination actually occurred?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Dodd. When you were told all of this?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Dodd. And it includes the information that Oswald Was an agent?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir.

Mr. Dodd. Was he described as an agent to you or was he described as an operative or a paid informant?

Mr. Wilcott. No, sir; he was described to me as an
40

agent and I was led to believe, from the conversations that he was an agent.

Mr. Dodd. As a point of information, are people who work within the Agency fairly careful in their language in describing what the category of certain people are who work for the Agency?

Mr. Wilcott. Generally so, I would say, at that time.

Mr. Dodd. And it is your clear recollection that he was described as an agent?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir.

Mr. Dodd. And the information given you occurred some-
file://R:\CIA\Wilcott%20Testimony.htm

time three months after the actual assassination. That would have put it into 1964?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir, early 1964.

Mr. Dodd. When did you leave to go back?

Mr. Wilcott. June of 1964.

Mr. Wilcott. So it was sometime between February and June of 1964?

Mr. Wilcott. Or perhaps January.

Mr. Dodd. In 1964, of course, the Vietnam war was going on and Lyndon Johnson was now president. And when did you begin to develop attitudes of dissatisfaction with the Agency and its reaction and attitudes toward what you described as undemocratic principles and a lack of humanism?

Mr. Wilcott. Well, actually even prior to the Kennedy

41

assassination, my wife and I both became disturbed about the stories that we kept hearing about things, control of newspapers and so on.

Mr. Dodd. How long had you been married by the way?

Mr. Wilcott. We were married in 1954, sir.

Mr. Dodd. And you and your wife both went to work for the CIA about the same time?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir.

Mr. Dodd. In 1957?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir.

Mr. Dodd. Am I to presume that you told your wife of the conversation you had with this case officer at the time it occurred?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir.

Mr. Dodd. And she was aware of it from 1964 up until 1968 --

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir.

Mr. Dodd. -- when you decided to release that information?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir.

Mr. Dodd. And your dissatisfaction with the Agency and with the course of American government preceded the actual assassination of President Kennedy?

Mr. Wilcott. Well, with the Agency, yes, sir.

Mr. Dodd. And this was a view shared by you and your

42

wife --

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir.

Mr. Dodd. -- at that time?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Dodd. Did anyone else at the Agency know of your views at the Agency and did you communicate with other people about your dissatisfaction?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Dodd. Would you care to tell us any of the names of people whom you communicated with?

Mr. Wilcott. Particularly George Breen and XXXXXXXXXXXX to a lesser extent.

Mr. Dodd. I am a little confused, I suppose, Mr. Wilcott, did you vote for President Kennedy?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir, I did.

Mr. Dodd. You liked him?

Mr. Wilcott. Very much.

Mr. Dodd. I am just a little confused, I guess, over your reaction. Here, by your own testimony, you were supportive of the President, and certainly the most significant tragedy, I think, probably in the last 15 years or 20 years

was the assassination of President Kennedy, and you are told by some who worked for the Agency that Oswald was a CIA agent and you already were dissatisfied with the actions of the Agency and you are told this in 1964 and yet it takes four

43

years, or two years, after you had left the Agency, recognizing the tremendous import and significance of that, and I am terribly confused as to why you decided to keep that information to yourself and to your wife.

Mr. Wilcott. I was afraid quite frankly.

Mr. Dodd. You may have covered this as well, Mr. Chairman, and, if you have, I will drop the question. But you apparently indicated that you feel there was a direct connection between the Bay of Pigs operation and the assassination of the President. Did you cover this ground? Did you want to do this or intend to proceed with that line of questioning?

Mr. Goldsmith. I did not intend to get into that area.

Mr. Dodd. Just one second, then.

Mr. Wilcott, maybe we can expedite this somewhat by asking you this: Do you have any first-hand knowledge or information as to a link between the failed Bay of Pigs operation and the assassination of John Fitzgerald Kennedy?

Mr. Wilcott. No, sir.

Mr. Dodd. I have no further questions.

Mr. Cornwell. In the conversations which you have described occurring within a period of one, two or three months after the assassination with other CIA employees and officers, did they suggest in those conversations to you that their employment, the CIA's employment, of Oswald had any relation to the assassination or only that it related to the

44

events you have already described -- namely, the training of him in Atsugi in the Russian language and the sending of him to Russia and using of him as a double agent and that sort of thing?

Mr. Wilcott. I am sorry, sir; I lost the thread of your question.

Mr. Cornwell. In the conversations you had with other CIA employees, the six or seven persons who purported to have good information about the use of Oswald as an agent, did any of those people say anything to you which suggested that the CIA had some role in the assassination of President Kennedy?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cornwell. What did they say along those lines?

Mr. Wilcott. Along those lines they said things like, well, that Oswald couldn't have pulled the trigger, that only CIA could have set up such an elaborate project and there was nobody with the kind of knowledge or information that could have done this, and this was more in the speculative realm.

As far as that they actually said, they said they were having trouble with Oswald and that there was dissatisfaction with Oswald after he came back from the Soviet Union, and they would say things like "Well, you know this was the way to get rid of him -- to get him involved in this assassination thing and put the blame on Cuba as a pretext for another invasion or another attack against Cuba."

45

That was the kind of things that people said. How much exact knowledge they had it is impossible for me to say. I believe it was more in a speculative realm.

Mr. Cornwell. At several points in your testimony you have stated there were six or seven persons, and on each occasion you raised the extent of their knowledge as "knew" or "believed." Apart from the one officer who said to you that you had paid monies with respect to Oswald's cryptonym, what were the other six or seven persons' purported connection with Oswald and the Agency's relation to him.

Mr. Wilcott. They never revealed that to me, sir, as far as their relations with Oswald.

Mr. Cornwell. Do you have any knowledge, based upon your tenure XXXXXXXX as to who would have trained Oswald in the Russian language if that occurred?

Mr. Wilcott. No, sir.

Mr. Preyer. Let me interrupt. I am afraid we are going to have to leave to make this vote right now. I will be back in about 10 minutes.

(Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

Mr. Preyer. The committee will resume. Did you have further questions?

Mr. Cornwell. The cryptonym -- did you write it down at any point?

Mr. Wilcott. I may have, sir, and I can't remember

46
exactly for sure. It seems to me that I recall jotting it on a little pad. that I had at my gate, and I did that with cryptonyms from time to time for something -- we would want to check back into their accounting for something.

Mr. Cornwell. Is there any chance that that record still exists?

Mr. Wilcott. I doubt it, sir.

Mr. Cornwell. Your best memory is, you wrote it on a note pad, is that correct?

Mr. Wilcott. That is true, sir.

Mr. Cornwell. What routinely was done with such note pads?

Mr. Wilcott. Usually I threw them away at the end of the day or once in a while I would put it in -- I had a little folder where I kept personal things and it is possible I could have out it in there, but certainly it would have been destroyed when I left.

Mr. Cornwell. Do you recall whether or not you used that in the process of looking through the 30-day book you described?

Mr. Wilcott. I can't remember, sir.

Mr. Cornwell. It was not normally part of your duties or the scope of the knowledge that you routinely acquired on your job, as I understand it, for you to know what the cryptonyms meant; is that correct?

47

Mr. Wilcott. That is correct, sir.

Wilcott Testimony

Mr. Cornwell. However, I take it from the fact that, as you describe it, it wasn't always applied, that occasionally you did learn something about the identities of the persons or projects that the cryptonyms referred to; is that correct?

Mr. Wilcott. That is true.

Mr. Cornwell. When this cryptonym was given to you by the officer, did any part of it ring any familiar note with you? Did you recognize any part of it, the first two letters or the last portions of it, as referring to any geographic area or any type of activity or anything like that?

Mr. Wilcott. No, sir, not that I can recall.

Mr. Cornwell. Had you ever run into any similar cryptonym?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cornwell. In other words, that is, the first two letters or the last ones would have been the same as this?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir; it was a cryptonym that I was familiar with, that it must have been at least two or three occasions that I had remembered it and it did ring a bell, yes.

Mr. Cornwell. Do you remember anything about it?

Mr. Wilcott. Not at this time. I can't remember what it was.

Mr. Cornwell. All you can recall is that, when you

48

heard it, that was not the first occasion on which you had seen it or heard it?

Mr. Wilcott. That is correct, sir.

Mr. Cornwell. Why did you leave the CIA?

Mr. Wilcott. My wife and I both left the CIA because we became convinced that what CIA was doing couldn't be reconciled to basic principles of democracy or basic principles of humanism.

Mr. Cornwell. Is that the only reason?

Mr. Wilcott. The principal reason --

Mr. Cornwell. Let me rephrase it. Was there any dispute between you and the Agency?

Mr. Wilcott. No, sir.

Mr. Cornwell. Did they request that you leave?

Mr. Wilcott. No, sir, they did not.

Mr. Cornwell. Did any event cause any disagreement between you and the Agency?

Mr. Wilcott. No, sir.

Mr. Cornwell. Had you done anything or said anything engaged in any activity which became of concern to them?

Mr. Wilcott. No, sir. I had been involved at one point with a group civil rights group, and they had investigated it and said that there was no wrongdoing on my part as far as this association with the civil rights group.

Mr. Cornwell. What group was it?
49

Mr. Wilcott. This was SNIC, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee before they became a black power group

Mr. Cornwell. What, if any, investigation did the Agency do with respect to that?

Mr. Wilcott. They called me up to chief of security, the agent security, and they interviewed me on the association that I had had with the group, and then they gave me a polygraph -- in fact, two polygraphs -- concerning my association with the group of people that I met with the group.

Mr. Cornwell. Did they tell you whether or not you passed the polygraphs?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, they did. They told me that I had passed both of those.

Mr. Cornwell. It is your testimony, as I understand it,

the first time that you spoke about the Oswald agency matter outside of the CIA was after you left the CIA; is that correct?

Mr. Wilcott. That is true, sir.

Mr. Cornwell. On that occasion to whom did you speak?

Mr. Wilcott. When I first started speaking, both my wife and I discussed it and we felt that we should be speaking out about not only Oswald but some other things. The way that we did this was to contact as many people all at once and we figured this would be our best protection, that the more people that knew about it, the more protection it would

be for us.

Mr. Cornwell. What type of people were they?

Mr. Wilcott. Most of the people were involved in the civil rights movement or in the antiwar movement in 1968.

Mr. Cornwell. How many of them were newspaper or magazine reporters or involved in at least the news business ?

Mr. Wilcott. None initially. The first contact I had with any reporter or any newspaper people or any media people was with Glad Day Press.

Mr. Cornwell. What year was that?

Mr. Wilcott. That was late '68 or perhaps early 1969.

Mr. Cornwell. You had signed a secrecy oath while you were employed with the Agency?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cornwell. Did you -- at the time you made the decision to discuss outside of the Agency this matter, did you focus on the secrecy oath problem?

Mr. Schaap. Mr. Chairman, I would like to interpose, I guess, an objection, although I would like to make it more in the nature of a request, that I have some problems in terms of advising my client with respect to possibly self-incrimination, that I would not advise him to go into questions of his specific knowledge of the oath and the

application to what he did other than the fact that he has told you, which is a fact, that he did sign the oath; but to
51

go into his mental processes as to whether he felt what he was then doing related to the oath in a particular way, I would request that those questions not be asked on the grounds that they may violate either his First Amendment rights or his Fifth Amendment rights, if that would be all right. If you have something --

Mr. Cornwell. Perhaps I can rephrase the question and get more pointedly what I need without running into the problem that you see.

Did you contact any CIA officer or employee with respect to the secrecy oath and discuss with them whether or not you should be permitted to discuss these matters outside of the Agency?

Mr. Wilcott. No, sir, I did not.

Mr. Cornwell. To your knowledge, when was the first point in time at which your extra-agency discussions on this subject matter came to the attention of the Agency, if ever?

Mr. Wilcott. I have no idea, sir.

Mr. Cornwell. At what point in time did your discussions outside of the Agency first become a matter of publication in a newspaper or magazine or on television?

Mr. Wilcott. In December of 1975, in the little magazine called The Pelican at the University of California, and an interview was conducted by a reporter from that magazine.

Mr. Cornwell. And would that -- at least in part --

52

would that interview have contained your resume of the Oswald agency matter, your statements about that matter?

Mr. Wilcott. Very briefly it did, yes, in what was finally published.

Mr. Cornwell. That is, that subject matter, your statement on the Oswald agency matter, be printed or otherwise publicized in a news publication, radio or TV or anything like that on any other occasion?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cornwell. When was that?

Mr. Wilcott. On two other occasions, I was on KPOO Radio in San Francisco and I discussed in detail, in quite a bit of detail, the speculations and also the incident of the case officer contacting me at the window.

Mr. Cornwell. What year was that?

Mr. Wilcott. That was November of 1977.

Mr. Cornwell. Last November?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Cornwell. On any other occasion?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes sir; at Oakland Technical High School, at the invitation of -- the social department asked me if I wanted to speak and I said yes, and so I spoke to two classes at Oakland Technical High School. This was about, believe -- about October of 1975.

Mr. Cornwell. On any other occasions?

53

Mr. Wilcott. Not publicly. I spoke to groups in their homes and I spoke to groups in the Peace and Freedom Party and I was with the Peace and Freedom Party for several years.

Mr. Cornwell. But your testimony or your statements on the subject hadn't been made a matter of publicity on any other occasion?

Mr. Wilcott. Not to my knowledge.

Mr. Cornwell. Has any representative of the Agency or anyone who you believed might be a representative of the Agency ever come to you and discussed these matters?

Mr. Wilcott. Not directly, no, sir.

Mr. Cornwell. I have no further questions.

Mr. Preyer. Under our committee rules, Mr. Wilcott, a witness is entitled, at the conclusion of the questioning, to make a five-minute statement if he wishes or to give a fuller explanation of any of his answers; so that at this time we make that five minutes available to you if you care to elaborate or say anything further.

Mr. Wilcott. I don't really have anything and maybe I would just like to say I think it is time we got this thing cleared up; and I think for the good of the country and for good of the people I think it is really time that all of the facts were brought out and the people really get the facts.

Mr. Preyer. Thank you. We appreciate that, and if at

54

any time you think of any further way in which your testimony can be corroborated or the name of any other CIA man or any record or anything of that sort that might be available we hope you will get in touch with us and let us know about it.

Mr. Wilcott. Surely, sir.

Mr. Preyer. Thank you very much and we appreciate you and Mr. Schaap being with us today, and the hearing will stand in recess.

(Whereupon, at 12:55 p.m. the subcommittee recessed.)

-- scanned by Jim Hargrove

questions? comments?

JFK assassination index

Frequently asked questions about JFK Lancer

main index

Copyright 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999. All rights reserved.

Use of this site signifies your agreement to the Terms of Service. JFK Lancer is not responsible for the content of any web pages linked from our site.

Please support:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resource Mail Order
