

WALTON 2/19/76 interview by Newsday with John



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INTERVIEW OF WILLIAM GEORGE GAUDET
May 13, 1975 in Waveland, Mississippi
by Bernard Fensterwald and Allan Stone

GAUDET: Yes, Miller...

FENSTERWALD: Miller...

STONE: That's the man, we understand, that interviewed you. The date is right and the FBI agent's name is right and your name is right, as far as I can tell...

GAUDET: Yeah...

STONE: But, I've already asked them, because I didn't ask you, but I assumed that if you were in any way involved with the Central Intelligence Agency, I couldn't understand why you would call the FBI and volunteer... especially volunteer information like that...

(Long Pause)

Did you contact the FBI at all? About this case?

GAUDET: I do recall that when the FBI first came, I phoned my contact with the CIA...

STONE: But, they first came to you?

GAUDET: That's right, and the CIA said they'd have someone come to my office immediately, and for me to say nothing until they arrived. When this CIA agent arrived, he asked the FBI man for his complete and total credentials and he then wanted to ask me the question 'Was I identified with the CIA?' and he warned me anything that I would say could later be used for Grand Jury use in case I didn't tell them the truth. I said that might be true, but I said I've also got to find out what does the CIA... How does the CIA feel about this? And so my CIA contact at that time, he first called the FBI to find out whether this man was, in fact, an FBI agent and then he phoned his office in Washington and the office in Washington advised that I could say that I had had a connection with the CIA but that I was under no obligation to reveal anything that I had ever done for the CIA... that I could refuse to give out that information on the basis of the protection of National Security, and this is exactly what I did... but, they keep... they kept coming back and back and back again to... er... what was the purpose of my trip to Dallas... I mean to Mexico...

STONE: Well, Mr. GAUDET, before getting into that, I want to just establish this one thing for sure... Now you are seeing this -- this is all -- and I'm sorry... and I don't have the books with me... there are very few copies of the Warren Report... This is it... This paragraph right here is all that you are mentioned anywhere in the 26 volumes... Now, let me go back to the... You did not call... Did you call the FBI on the 27th?

GAUDET: No...

STONE: Did you relate any information about JACK RUBY buying paintings from LORENZO BORENSTEIN?

GAUDET: No...

STONE: Why... Why would they have printed that...? Do you have any idea? Was it...?

GAUDET: I have no idea...

STONE: Did you know LORENZO BORENSTEIN?

GAUDET: No, I did not.

STONE: Did you know JACK RUBY?

GAUDET: No, I did not.

STONE: O.K.

FENSTERWALD: Well, it doesn't really make any sense then, does it?

STONE: What I'm trying to say is... You know... that there is no reason to put you in there at all if they are going to just put some... some... falsehoods...

FENSTERWALD: Well, isn't that what we are talking about?

STONE: That's exactly what we're talking about...

GAUDET: You know they... er... you see... this was the building CLAY SHAW, the New Orleans business man charged by D A GARRISON _____

STONE: _____
somebody else as a point of reference...

GAUDET: Yeah...

STONE: I've already told you that, but I thought that some people would think that the International Trade Mart was part of the CIA people...

GAUDET: Well... This is an outright lie...

FENSTERWALD: Which one?

GAUDET: The thing about this reference in the Warren Report to my being with... er... phoning the FBI about JACK RUBY...

FENSTERWALD: They just made that up?

GAUDET: They would have to make it up...

FENSTERWALD: I wonder if, in fact, he did buy any paintings... that doesn't sound like...

GAUDET: Now, the only possible way that he could possibly find out anything about LORENZO BORENSTEIN deal is I had an employee at that time by the name of MRS. LILA PINSON who was active in art circles... Her husband was a painter and, as a matter of fact, they had an art gallery in the French Quarter, and it is quite possible that she knew LORENZO BORENSTEIN, but, to my knowledge, she didn't even know JACK RUBY... as a matter of fact, I thought so little of the thing I didn't even ask her, because there was no reason to ask her about who JACK RUBY was... I didn't know... I thought he was somebody in Dallas... and, er... er... I saw... the first time I saw RUBY was in the actual shooting the first time... on TV...

FENSTERWALD: On television...

GAUDET: Right...

FENSTERWALD: Where were you when you heard the news that JOHN KENNEDY was killed? The reason I ask that is that most people have a very vivid memory of...

GAUDET: I recall I was in my office and...

(A telephone rings)

STONE: You were in your office?

GAUDET: Yes... I know I was in my office because, at that time, we had a television set in the Press Club which was located, at that time, in the International Trade Mart,

GAUDET:(cont.) and I went on down there then to listen to the news, and I remember it very well because there was a man by the name of McQUEEN, I think, who also despised KENNEDY quite a bit, and he's the guy who came and told me about the news that KENNEDY had been shot, and he says there's a question of whether he's living or dead... We don't know and... er... so with that news, why I went with him down to the Press Club and listened to the news broadcasts at the time, and er... that I remember very well... this fellow McQUEEN is now dead... but...

STONE: What did you first think when you heard they'd arrested LEE HARVEY OSWALD?

GAUDET: It struck me as strange that a man like that was capable of the job... er... the LEE HARVEY OSWALD that I recall, and I'm being very honest about it, was a, at best, a miserable creature... er... highly nervous, er... and ... er... he certainly wasn't a well dressed person by any manner of means. He would have been the last person in the world that I would have suspected ever could have been involved in this shooting... and... er... even today, it seems to me inconceivable. I... I question whether he could have fired that rifle one time, let alone kill the President...

STONE: Why?

GAUDET: Because he was that make-up... that's all... He was too nervous and... er... he was a very unstable person... and I don't even think he knew exactly what he was distributing when he was distributing these pamphlets for the Fair Play for Cuba deal, which was nothing but a front. Er... I don't know who else belonged to the organization...

FENSTERWALD: Nobody... He was it... It was a front...

GAUDET: It was? One man...

FENSTERWALD: One man.

GAUDET: Well, somebody had to give him money somewhere. Now, who gave him money, I don't know. Er... because I'm sure he never earned any money. Because I don't know how he could have earned any money. Now there was this character... I'm trying to recall him... I'm sure his name was SERGIO SMITH...

FENSTERWALD: That's SERGIO ARCACHA SMITH...

GAUDET: Yeah...

FENSTERWALD: Cuban...

GAUDET: Yeah... that...

STONE: Was this guy Cuban that you're thinking of?

GAUDET: Yeah... the way we... I came in contact with him was I was doing a documentary with MEL LEVITT of WDSU Television in New Orleans... a 60-minute documentary... and he offered to cooperate with us on information that he had and he gave us a strip of film about Cuba that we thought we could use, and so we used it...

STONE: Was this before or after the assassination?

GAUDET: This was after the assassination, and so we used it, and, er... now you sit me down to that... assassination was '63... CASTRO went in in '59... It could have been before, but I think it was after...

STONE: Well, I think you told me...

GAUDET: I know this, that we were stopped from showing it a second time...

STONE: Well, I thought the documentary was on the assassination.

GAUDET: No... no... It was on the betrayal of Cuba...

STONE: O.K.

FENSTERWALD: Who stopped you from showing it the second time?

GAUDET: I understand that the order came from... I understand... MEL LEVITT probably could give you a definite answer... But, we had sold it to Pan American Life, and they had paid for it, and we were also planning to sell it to many others, but we were not allowed to, and... er... ED REID was the Vice President of the station at that time, and he is still in New Orleans... and, er... MEL LEVITT was the man who Master of Ceremonies the whole thing and I'm the man who wrote the documentary itself, and, er... this SMITH guy... ACOSTA SMITH, he suddenly disappeared and we couldn't find him...

FENSTERWALD: Did he know OSWALD?

GAUDET: I would say offhand, Yes...

FENSTERWALD: Could you tell us how you reached that conclusion?

GAUDET: He knew so many people, frankly. He had such a weird background. I know he went from New Orleans to Dallas.

FENSTERWALD: He was a former diplomat for BATISTA, at one time.

GAUDET: He was?

FENSTERWALD: Yes.

GAUDET: That, I did not know.

FENSTERWALD: Back in the '50s... early '50s... I think that I've got a biography somewhere...

GAUDET: Where is he now?

FENSTERWALD: He's either in Mexico or he's dead. This is a biography of him.

GAUDET: That... er... the film he gave me was his... Now, if I recall, either the FBI or someone else claimed that it did not belong to him, and we had no right to use it...

FENSTERWALD: Um hum...

GAUDET: ... and, we, therefore, had to do it over completely and leave all reference to this out, or never to use the film again... and I think the station decided they would scuttle the whole thing because it was... it was a center of much controversy when we produced it. It had more favorable listeners than unfavorable, but it was a source of much controversy, and so... er... but, this ARCHIO was a shadowy figure and it was hard to pin him down exactly on just what he was up to... Why was he willing to help us... er... where was he from... where was he going... and, I do know the last knowledge that I had of him was that he had gone to Dallas, Texas...

FENSTERWALD: Would you think it possible that he might have absconded with some money that was collected for an organization called the Free Cuba Committee?

GAUDET: I wouldn't doubt it at all. He's the type who would abscond with it...

FENSTERWALD: There's a man named BILL DALZELL and RONNIE CAIRE and some others that...

GAUDET: RONNIE... I know RONNIE CAIRE... he's still over here.

FENSTERWALD: That's right... and he and...er... Oh, I guess it was GUY BANNISTER...

GAUDET: Yes...

FENSTERWALD: ...and RONNIE CAIRE and BILL DALZELL and some others organized it and the word we've got is that ARCACHA SMITH just defected with most of the money that was collected and the organization was just left holding the bag...

GAUDET: Well... as you know... GUY BANNISTER was an old FBI agent... er... whether he was a retired agent or whether he was a discharged agent, I don't know... er... but, he was at one time with the FBI, and... er... RONNIE CAIRE now is back to his public relations work living over in Pass Christian, which is right across the bridge from here. And, er... now RONNIE knew BANNISTER much better than I did... I knew BANNISTER, but I didn't know him that well...

FENSTERWALD: Do you know how he died?

GAUDET: No...

STONE: Let me go back a little bit... I've got so many questions that I want to ask...

FENSTERWALD: All right...

STONE: We had you... On the day of the assassination, you said it didn't make any conceivable sense to you that... when you found out they'd picked up a man named LEE HARVEY OSWALD up in Dallas and were holding him on this case... but, you said you contacted somebody in Washington... somebody in the military...

GAUDET: Yes... er... I called a man by the
(Tape ends)

STONE: O.K.

GAUDET: It was such utter disbelief... to me, that LEE HARVEY OSWALD... the LEE HARVEY OSWALD whom I'd seen in action... possibly could have done this thing... It just didn't seem that the man had it in him... er... let alone pulling it off... and, I was frightened as to what was going on... and, er... so I wanted to get a side bar (?)

GAUDET: (cont.) of what steps the military was taking -- that was all -- that's the only reason I called... and... er... he told me they were on full station alert for anything... because they didn't know themselves... so I would say that when the shooting and death of KENNEDY occurred, the entire military establishment in the United States was on a full-scale alert, ready for anything, because they didn't know what was coming up and I think that is borne out by previous... later statements that this was one of the reasons why LYNDON JOHNSON wanted to take the oath of office as fast as he did... I know... I know he's been criticized for taking it so fast... I think he did it because... I think the military's the one who advised him to take it so that we wouldn't be without a government. That's my opinion...

FENSTERWALD: What did the Colonel tell you as to the possibility of this being a broader plot than just what was going on in Dallas?

GAUDET: He said they didn't know, but their information was that they should go on a full alert for everything... any emergency... and they were ready for it, and... er... that the MP units all over the United States were instructed out of Washington to go on full... full alert... and, er... because they didn't know where it would crop out next...

FENSTERWALD: You knew that almost all the Cabinet was in a single airplane on its way to Hawaii when this happened...

GAUDET: I'd forgotten it...

FENSTERWALD: With the exception... except BOBBY KENNEDY and, I think, STEWART UDALL... I think... all the rest of the Cabinet, including the Secretary of State and all the rest of them... the Secretary of the Treasury... were all on their way-out to the Pacific somewhere and they were in a plane over the Pacific Ocean when this happened... and the President and Vice President, of course, were in the parade... so that's not a very far-fetched alert...

STONE: Did you ever hear anything from Washington... maybe this man or somebody in the military, that possibly the fact that LEE HARVEY OSWALD was captured and his identity surfaced so quickly that this might have... that this was important... that this was good for the country...? In terms of possibly heading off something, probably...?

GAUDET: No, I didn't have any further contact with him on it because I didn't have any need...

STONE: I thought you told me something about that last week when I...

GAUDET: No... no... there wasn't any need, and, er... (cough) he was a major at that time and he then later went on to Vietnam and became a full colonel over there, and he... er... now has taken his retirement... he's still a young man... He lives in Augusta, Georgia now... but... er, but, as I told you the first day, I think the man who probably knows as much as anybody alive on all of this... is... I still think is HOWARD HUNT, frankly...

FENSTERWALD: Would you tell us why you think... do you know HOWARD HUNT?

GAUDET: I know of him and his activities... I don't know him personally...

FENSTERWALD: What about his activities that would lead you to connect him with this?

GAUDET: Well, he was the prime organizer of the Bay of Pigs, as you know...

FENSTERWALD: Right...

GAUDET: ... and he was the man that put this whole show together and, er... he was also the man that... I'd say he was trusted more by the Cubans than any Gringo that I know of and... er... I know that these Cubans who went up there, that were solicited by HUNT, did it out of blind loyalty to HUNT... I mean the ones that had to pay the penalty...

FENSTERWALD: The Watergate ones?

GAUDET: Yes... and, er... I think that anything that HUNT would have asked them to do would have done and I... I'm sure the FBI... I mean the CIA must have called on HUNT to ask him to help them see what was... what was going on in connection with a conspiracy among the Cubans... so that's why I say I think he should know more than anybody else alive... even more than McCORD, and... er...

FENSTERWALD: His activities immediately after the shooting... Do you think that the government would ask him to...?

GAUDET: I would have to...

FENSTERWALD: ... information...?

GAUDET: I... I consider the CIA a very smart operating organization and I'm quite sure that Washington called on HUNT to undertake something right away and find out what it was all about... and I'm sure that he must know... and he... I'm sure he knows who was involved...

STONE: Is this just a hunch of yours?

GAUDET: No... I think it's based on cold fact of what he did... his activities in the... he was held in high esteem by the CIA despite what the Watergate says... and, er... all the inferences that he did all of this stuff for money is just a plain lot of bull... er... whoever influenced him to get involved in the Watergate, I don't know... because I don't know the Watergate background at all... I still think that the only possible connection for using CIA men is that they would... they were convinced somewhere along the line that this possibly was a CIA thing, because they were interested in trying to trace the flow of money... I know they were... and... er... At that time, I know the flow of money ran as a chain from Moscow to Havana... Havana to Mexico City, and from Mexico City, by various sources, up to the United States, and... er... this much I know, of my own knowledge, that this is the way it came...

STONE: What money is this? Because, I'm a little...

GAUDET: The hust money that they used to operate in this country... and, I think a lot of this... I'm sure where they wanted to go to GEORGE McGOVERN'S campaign...

STONE: I see...

GAUDET: ... and, er.... you see, GEORGE McGOVERN was definitely the Communist choice to be elected President... I mean there is no question of that... I mean anybody who denies that has got to be an imbecile...

FENSTERWALD: I think that that's pretty obvious...

GAUDET: ... er, I mean here's a man who says we'll make peace with Hanoi and then, after we settle our peace and withdraw our troops, then we'll sit down over a table and see about the peaceful withdrawal of all of our prisoners of war... Well... anybody who knows a Commie knows we would never have gotten one back home... They would all have stayed over there in prison and...er... there's only one force that a Communist respect and that's a question of force... and... er... regardless of what people say about our slaughtering people in Hanoi,

GAUDET: (cont.) if we hadn't dropped those bombs in Hanoi, we'd have never had those POW's home... I know a lot of people don't like NIXON... it's a dirty word... and a dirty name... but, I think that's one decision he took which was right... and... er... I just wonder there and have often wondered why, with all the fire power we had over in Vietnam, it wasn't really used...

FENSTERWALD: Well, the same thing was true in Korea, of course... MacARTHUR'S basic complaint was the same thing...

GAUDET: Why didn't we use it in... Look, we could have... we could have defeated the Viet Cong in less than thirty days with what we had...

STONE: _____ the assassination?

GAUDET: No, I don't... I don't... but, I could have, frankly... but, I don't know...

STONE: What I'm trying to say... I don't doubt you at all. I'm trying to think... if we could think of anything substantive that would put E. HOWARD HUNT in there... Maybe, as you said... you said you thought it was based on cold fact that he was probably snooping this thing out to see what the Hell was going on... but, I remember...

GAUDET: I know a lot of the Cubans that were involved... I mean involved in these big Cuban movements and everything else, and even New Orleans is still involved, and... I know that every last one of them had the very highest respect for E. HOWARD HUNT... I mean it was a mystic name... just mention HUNT and they would follow through on something... and, er... so... but, getting back to the basic issue of the CIA involvement... to me, this was a question in '63 of... which I've always felt... I think the FBI was going way out of its way and always has been wanting to discredit the CIA... It didn't want it... If it had been up to HOOVER, it would have never been created... and, er... the result was that the CIA offices here were... and, we had them at every port of entry... every one of them carried no identification... no listing in the phone book... or the names of the persons who were in charge of the offices, and none of it listed... no records are available, and yet they were here...

FENSTERWALD: Was it at the International Trade Mart here...?

GAUDET: No

FENSTERWALD: It was not...?

GAUDET: No...

FENSTERWALD: Because I've oftended wondered... you know...

GAUDET: Nope, it was not... it was in another unmarked office building...

FENSTERWALD: Here in New Orleans?

GAUDET: Here in New Orleans... Yes... We had another one in Miami... and we had one in Houston... and had one in Los Angeles...

STONE: You know, something you told me... a man... the director of the office in Houston did an interview the other day and talked about recruiting businessmen and salesman and people like yourself...

GAUDET: Didn't he tell you the same thing I told you?

STONE: Oh, yeah... exactly... that's why I brought it up. He said exactly what you told me... You know that that's the way that they carried on intelligence in Central and South America... You know that this was the way that they to patriotic businessmen and people in other businesses...

GAUDET: It wasn't for money that people did this...

STONE: Oh, no... no, I...

GAUDET: There were many that I know of that did it... I mean, I wasn't alone... er... er... and... er... God knows... I mean, like you were telling me on the phone that someone said that my magazine was a front for the CIA... Well, I mentioned that to my wife. She says, "I wish I'd of known that in time, because maybe they could have picked up some of the tabs that we owed when I closed it in '69..."

FENSTERWALD: Did the local CIA office in New Orleans operate under a front of some kind?

GAUDET: None... none...

FENSTERWALD: Must have had something on the door...?

GAUDET: Nothing... nothing... absolutely nothing on the door...

FENSTERWALD: Was it in the Federal Building?

GAUDET: No... It was in a private building...

FENSTERWALD: Private building...

GAUDET: That's right...

FENSTERWALD: Could you tell us if ? your principal ? is still running it?

GAUDET: I'm sure he's either dead or retired, and he was... the man that took it over and was the head of it... when he first came in was a very, very prominent New Orleanian and a very prominent lawyer... one of our probably one of the highest paid lawyers in New Orleans and I'm sure he took it on more for, again, to go back to the same thing... This is the greatness of the CIA... they... they depended on the dedication of the person, and their basic patriotism rather than dangle a few ugly dollars in front of their face... er.. this was why the CIA was able to operate with such... I would say with almost complete secrecy until Washington started opening its mouth. If Washington had kept its mouth shut, nobody would ever have known there was such an animal as the CIA...

FENSTERWALD: That's true...

GAUDET: And... er... I think the CIA had the finest cover of any agency that I know of...

FENSTERWALD: It really was buried. You couldn't find it, in effect...

GAUDET: That's right, and this was meant to be that way...

FENSTERWALD: That's right... How many people, would you guess, like yourself, for patriotic reasons, were connected, just say, to the New Orleans office along...?

GAUDET: New Orleans alone? To my knowledge, I know of about four others... er... I mean I suspect these four others.... I can't... None of us knew what the other one did ...

FENSTERWALD: Well, that's the way it should be...

GAUDET: Er... and so I can't say it was definite, but I sort of suspect it to be because... er...

STONE: Do you think there were more that you didn't know of, or do you think...?

GAUDET: I doubt... I doubt that if they could have found more than that... that were active enough... probably, I was the most active of all, because mine was the most... I probably traveled more than anybody...

FENSTERWALD: Wasn't that expensive for you?

GAUDET: No... not in my line of work... er... because I was originally Editor of this newsletter and we sold it for \$15.00 a week, and... er... I had some pretty fancy clients...

FENSTERWALD: I was going to say... Who did you sell it to at that price?

GAUDET: Oh... First National City Bank, New York, Bank of Boston, Chase Manhattan, er... the United Fruit... er... one of my biggest customers... ha ha... I guess my biggest customer was the CIA... coming second was the Soviet Union... I... I don't recall rightly now whether it was the Soviet Union was first or second, but it was... it was a ... they each bought at least twenty copies of the report...

FENSTERWALD: They bought it at... er... Did they buy it retail that way?

GAUDET: That's right... I didn't give them a penny off...

FENSTERWALD: Hum... and it was \$15.00 a week per subscription?

GAUDET: Right...

FENSTERWALD: That doesn't... Well, I can see that it would be very successful...

GAUDET: We never lost money on the newsletter...

FENSTERWALD: Was it a one-man operation, or did you have people...?

GAUDET: No, I had people working for me...

FENSTERWALD: Did you have them around Latin America?

GAUDET: Oh, I had people in Latin America. Yes...

FENSTERWALD: Yes... Did you have...?

GAUDET: I had stringers...

FENSTERWALD: How about other people here...?

GAUDET: Yeah... I had other workers here...

FENSTERWALD: Oh... When did you close this down?

GAUDET: '69...

FENSTERWALD: Did you sell it? Somebody else take it up, and did you?

GAUDET: Nope... er... the newsletter gradually was being eclipsed by the magazine, and I had to keep dropping the price of the... Other newsletters came into existence... First National City started putting one out... Bank of Boston put one out and HANSON dropped the price of his newsletter... his Latin American letter out of Washington, so I had to keep dropping the price of the newsletter that... er... and it finally was, in effect, absorbed by the magazine itself, but the magazine was a... a costly process which actually cost me a lot of personal money and lost a lot of money for me... and, er... about the only thing I got out of it was a lot of free travel...

FENSTERWALD: When did you close it down?

GAUDET: '69

FENSTERWALD: '69

STONE: You retired?

GAUDET: Just walked away from it, that's all...

FENSTERWALD: Quit publishing?

GAUDET: I just quit publishing. I sold my list of subscriptions to Vision Magazine in exchange for their giving these people Vision Magazine and the newsletter that they published then. Now, since then, I understand that they've had their problems...

STONE: I wanted to... I wanted to get back to this _____ on the assassination... Now, we have... going to the 27th, on this interview with the FBI...

GAUDET: Yeah...

STONE: Do you remember... Were you...? Where were you? Did they call you or come by your office, or what?

GAUDET: They came by my office...

STONE: What did they use to talk to you?

GAUDET: They said it... the FBI said they wanted to talk to me and the man introduced himself to me and he wanted to

GAUDET: (cont.) talk to me about my trip to Mexico... and that was, and he said he was with the FBI and then he asked about the CIA and I said, "Well, now, just a moment," and that was when I excused myself and went out to the other room and I phoned my CIA contact over here...

FENSTERWALD: In New Orleans?

GAUDET: In New Orleans... the head of it... and he says say nothing at all... tell them you are waiting for somebody to come over, and don't identify who I am...

STONE: Well, who were you calling? Where were you?

GAUDET: I went outside to another phone...

FENSTERWALD: Yes...

STONE: Was he in Waveland?

GAUDET: No... New Orleans...

STONE: Oh... oh... O.K. I see... All right... I'm sorry...

GAUDET: No... This didn't occur here...

FENSTERWALD: And then, you just went back and waited 'til he got there?

GAUDET: That's right... and I told him I was waiting for a friend to come before I could talk...

FENSTERWALD: And did he identify himself when he got there?

GAUDET: This man?

FENSTERWALD: Yeah...

GAUDET: No... He did not...

FENSTERWALD: What did the FBI say to him?

GAUDET: Er... I told them he was an attorney friend of mine and... er... so that was when he demanded of this man his credentials and so forth and so on... and wanted to see them and... er... his first call was to the local FBI to find out whether the man really was with the FBI and, when he did find that out, why then he excused himself... he went out to the other phone... outside, and he phoned the CIA in Washington to get advice as to what to do, and

GAUDET: (cont.) this is when the advice came for me to admit that I had done work for the CIA in the past, and... but that under no circumstances could I reveal any of my actual activities, because if they ask you "Why not?" tell that it was a question of national security...

FENSTERWALD: Well, then did they ask you about the trip to Mexico?

GAUDET: They asked me specifically about that, and I told them that that was purely coincidental and had nothing to do with it and they asked was I on a CIA assignment. I said I don't think I can answer that question and I'd rather not answer that question, and as to the best of my knowledge, I was not on a CIA assignment, but that doesn't mean that further down the line that I wasn't going to be doing something for CIA that I could have been caught for perjury had I put it that way...

FENSTERWALD: Did you go to Mexico City or to Merida?

GAUDET: No... I went to Mexico City...

FENSTERWALD: Mexico City...

GAUDET: ... and then, from Mexico City I changed planes... I was there a day, as I recall, or two days at the most... and then, I picked up Taca? and flew from Taca(?) down South and... er... because I had exchange on Taca(?)...

STONE: Are you sure... Are you sure now you went to Mexico City?

GAUDET: Yes...

FENSTERWALD: Did you have...? What kind of passport did you travel on in those days?

GAUDET: I had a regular passport...

FENSTERWALD: Regular passport... The number on it seems strange to me... It had more digits than the normal passport. I thought maybe you had a diplomatic passport, or what they call... not diplomatic, but a special...

GAUDET: No... er...

FENSTERWALD: There is a difference between them... I've forgotten what...

GAUDET: As a matter of fact, I had a diplomatic passport only for a very, very brief period in my life, and that was

GAUDET: (cont.) when... when we... when it became obvious that we were going to win the war, the State Department, which is a very jealous organization, to say the very least, finally says... they got ahold of Mr. ROOSEVELT and they says that it's about time that we bring this Coordination Committee out from under the cover that it's under and we'll call a spade a spade, and we think Mr. GAUDET, instead of posing as a private citizen with lots of money, that he come out and he be named press attache to the Embassy, so there was nothing for Mr. ROCKEFELLER to do but to get in touch with me and tell me, "Bill, old boy, you're going to have to close down the Committee and let all your employees go and you are now on the State Department's payroll, subject to the Ambassador..."

FENSTERWALD: What city was this in?

GAUDET: San Jose, Costa Rica...

FENSTERWALD: I see...

GAUDET: See, I selected San Jose as my Central American headquarters. See, I was asked to see which place I wanted, and San Jose was... was and is the most attractive city in Central America in which to live...

FENSTERWALD: Was this ROCKEFELLER money or U. S. money you were using?

GAUDET: It was FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT'S private fund...

FENSTERWALD: It wasn't ROCKEFELLER'S money...

GAUDET: No... Although ROCKEFELLER used a tremendous amount of his own money on his own travels...

FENSTERWALD: Yeah...

GAUDET: Er... I don't think Mr. ROCKEFELLER ever used any of Mr. ROOSEVELT'S money...

FENSTERWALD: He didn't need to...

GAUDET: Er... I think he got \$1.00 a year as the Coordinator of Inter-American affairs and... er... as a matter of fact, I'm saying that here is where your pattern is set... ROCKEFELLER got people who were willing to do a nasty job... er... with little reward for little money. On my last salary paycheck, with King Features, which was in '41, was over \$17,000.00, and I went to work with Mr. ROCKEFELLER for \$6,500.00... That's the difference... and I know of one man who was in Rio, who was with an

GAUDET: (cont.) advertising agency in California, who was making in excess of \$100,000.00, who went to Rio for \$6,500.00 a year... Now...

FENSTERWALD: That's sure a sacrifice...

GAUDET: Er... now, you can't say these people were interested in money...

FENSTERWALD: That's right... When you took this trip... this one day trip to Mexico, you were going through...

GAUDET: Yes...

FENSTERWALD: You put on the application that you were a tourist rather than a business man... It looks as though...

GAUDET: I always did that...

FENSTERWALD: Always did that...

GAUDET: Um hum...

FENSTERWALD: In other words, that was just a...

GAUDET: That was not unusual for me... er... Go ahead...

STONE: I've got the FBI interview, I want you to look at it before... This is what... the man who talked to you... I believe... His name was Special Agent MILLER... the name that's on here... Well, when he got back, he typed all this up and he sent it on to Washington...

GAUDET: All right...

STONE: It says here that you got off in Merida...

GAUDET: No...

STONE: Your flight landed in Merida... Your Pan American flight... that they grilled you so hard about...

GAUDET: No... I went to Mexico City. I'm sorry they got it wrong because that's Pan American flight, and I didn't take that. I took Eastern to Mexico City...

FENSTERWALD: I see. So, you didn't take that Pan Am flight after all...

GAUDET: No, because there was no connection there outside... out of Taca (?) for me there... It had to be out of Mexico City...

FENSTERWALD: Do you have records of all this?

(Tape ends)

FENSTERWALD: Apparently...

GAUDET: Yes, but he was not...

FENSTERWALD: Er... that's _____

GAUDET: To the best of my knowledge, he was not...

FENSTERWALD: Yeah...

STONE: I'm looking out for you, and that's what... You know, if that's why I'm asking you... because, according to this report, you... You told the FBI that you left on the 19th by Pan American, at 12:00 noon, but that you could not recall the flight number, but that you were positive OSWALD wasn't on the First Class section, and further stated that you did not observe OSWALD in Tourist section... He, talking about you, stated that this Pan American flight landed in Merida and then continued on to other Central and South American countries. GAUDET stated that he did not actually enter Mexico, as he was continuing on to South and Central American countries. Now, I am just telling you this because this is what they reported you said...

GAUDET: Well, my recollection was it was Mexico City, but, if I took that flight, I went to Guatemala and got off... if I took that flight, I'd have gotten off in Guatemala...

FENSTERWALD: Um hum...

GAUDET: ... because Taca (?) does not connect in Guatemala... Now, I could be mistaken on the question of Mexico City versus Merida, because I went frequently by Merida to Guatemala... That wasn't unusual...

FENSTERWALD: Would you need a Mexican tourist...?

GAUDET: No...

FENSTERWALD: ... entrance visa...

GAUDET: No...

FENSTERWALD: ... entry permit to do that...?

GAUDET: No... so this...

FENSTERWALD: Chances are, you did go by Mexico City...

GAUDET: That's what I say...

FENSTERWALD: Otherwise, there's no reason to get the thing in the first place...

GAUDET: There would have been none at all...

FENSTERWALD: Yeah... and you... there was another man that got one the same day... I wonder if you would happen to know him... a man named DAVID BRUCE MAGYAR... DAVID PEARCE MAGYAR... M-A-G-Y-A-R...

GAUDET: Do you know what he does?

FENSTERWALD: Er... off hand, I don't... I do know that he was friend of DAVID FERRIE'S, which just struck me as odd...

GAUDET: He was a friend of DAVID FERRIE'S?

FENSTERWALD: Yeah... said he was... what he told the FBI... er... you know, they interviewed all the people like you that got those...

GAUDET: Well, you know who DAVID FERRIE was, don't you?

FENSTERWALD: Well, he was an Eastern Airlines pilot, but, after that, I'm not sure what he did... Do you...?

GAUDET: Well, he became a private pilot... I mean, he used to give flying lessons and... er... he was a friend of a lot of the queers, including CLAY SHAW...

FENSTERWALD: He was a friend of SHAW'S?

GAUDET: Right...

FENSTERWALD: Do you know if he knew OSWALD?

GAUDET: Yes, I think he did know OSWALD... er... I think this is the link that GARRISON was basing everything on...

FENSTERWALD: You think that was a valid link, but the link between OSWALD and SHAW was...

GAUDET: ... was non-existent...

FENSTERWALD: Yeah... but between OSWALD and FERRIE you think was a valid link...

GAUDET: That's right, but I don't think either one of them was capable of planning a conspiracy like this...

FENSTERWALD: What... ? After DAVID FERRIE left Eastern Airlines, you say he became a pilot...

GAUDET: Well, I know he set up a flying school out here at the New Orleans airport...

FENSTERWALD: Well, wasn't he also a private investigator?

GAUDET: He may have called himself one, but I didn't know it...

FENSTERWALD: Well, there are records that he worked both for GUY BANNISTER and for CARLOS MARCELLO. He was actually in the courtroom with MARCELLO when KENNEDY was murdered. You know he was working for...

GAUDET: Yeah...

FENSTERWALD: ...a lawyer...

GAUDET: Yeah... he could have been. Is that where CARLOS MARCELLO was...? in the courtroom when KENNEDY...? Well, they can't blame him with that...

FENSTERWALD: They can't blame him and they can't blame FERRIE, because they were both sitting in the Federal Courthouse...

GAUDET: Ha... He's been blamed for everything else, so I was wondering why they didn't blame him for that...

FENSTERWALD: Did you ever meet him?

GAUDET: MARCELLO? Yes, I've met him, but I don't know him... He's a... well, he's the number one whipping boy of the Federal Government in New Orleans...

FENSTERWALD: Right...

GAUDET: ... and they've never been able to really do anything to him...

FENSTERWALD: Well, they kidnapped him and took him to Guatemala once and dumped him off...

GAUDET: Yeah, and they claimed he did that...

FENSTERWALD: ... and guess who flew him back...

GAUDET: No...

FENSTERWALD: DAVID FERRIE...

GAUDET: No kidding!

FENSTERWALD: Yep...

GAUDET: Ha...

FENSTERWALD: DAVID FERRIE worked for him and for GUY BANNISTER. GUY BANNISTER was an interesting person. I have heard and you may be able to enlighten me on this, that he headed up the FBI's Latin American operations out of New Orleans in a sort of covert way, because they weren't supposed to be operating all over Latin America and they did it in competition, illegally, with the CIA... Does that ring a bell anywhere?

GAUDET: No... No, but that don't surprise me either...

FENSTERWALD: This would be something that your CIA principal would know, but that you probably would not...

GAUDET: Would not

FENSTERWALD: ...because you would not have to be privy to that...

GAUDET: My superior would know... er... the CIA was not inclined to give you information even though you would give them information...

FENSTERWALD: A one-way street...

GAUDET: It was a one-way street... er... now they would ask you seemingly completely unrelated questions about things to do on subjects they wanted you to look into. They were absolutely meaningless to you. You couldn't understand why they wanted it done... but, when pieced together, it probably formed a complete pattern for them...

FENSTERWALD: Um hum...

GAUDET: ...and this was the way they operated... and... er... so I don't know who finally pulled the rung under... on the CIA... er... I think the man most responsible was J. EDGAR HOOVER. I think he had enough friends in Congress that really hammered away and hammered away at the CIA long enough that they finally broke it out... and...er...

STONE: Do you recall anything else about that interview with the FBI?

GAUDET: Not too much...

STONE: It wasn't... it didn't seem at the time to be rather important to you...

GAUDET: Huh?

STONE: It didn't at the time seem to be that important to you?

GAUDET: It seemed important to me... the fact that I was trying to explain the best way I could... and... er... Well, it was important enough to me that I phoned my superior with ... er... and contact with the CIA that I got them over there to see that I was... my interests were fully protected and they were protected... er... That's how important I regarded it at the time...

STONE: Well, the only reason why I'm trying to nail this down is that I'm just... I'm being very suspicious for a reason... I'm not doubting you at all... but, it's... since you've already told me that the notation in the Warren Report is a complete falsehood...

GAUDET: Yeah...

STONE: I... the account of this interview was in contradiction with...with what it appears to be that you did on that trip or what you said you did, which was that you went to Mexico City and on the interview and on the travel visa... It also said in here that GAUDET stated in his opinion that if OSWALD was a Marxist, that he would not have gone to Merida. This is based on the fact that you went to Merida... as this is in your opinion that this is strictly anti-Communist area...

GAUDET: It is. That's correct...

FENSTERWALD: You know a lawyer in New Orleans by the name of GUY JOHNSON? Does that name ring a bell? Naval intelligence...

GAUDET: I know of it... Yes... er... I had very little contact with Naval Intelligence, even though my son is with Naval Intelligence now...

FENSTERWALD: Is he?

GAUDET: Er... I mean as a reserve officer...

FENSTERWALD: Yes... Well, I spent many, many years with the Navy...

GAUDET: He's a Commander... er... in the legal phase of the Navy...

FENSTERWALD: You know a fellow down here in New Orleans _____

GAUDET: No...

FENSTERWALD: Ever seen him?

GAUDET: No...

STONE: What... What arrangements were made for you? ...You were talking about on the phone and I didn't... wasn't taking notes at the time... you know I said I didn't even know if I could get hold of you... and I was so pleased that I did that I didn't write any of this down... but, you said... you talked to me something about there were arrangements made at that time that you sat down with the FBI agents that you were guaranteed, at least in your own mind, that you would be given top secret protection on all...

GAUDET: Oh, they said that... yes...

STONE: Who's they?

GAUDET: The FBI man said that I could speak with complete freedom because none of this was being released. This was for the files of the FBI and not... no one else...

FENSTERWALD: You didn't think they would turn it over to...

GAUDET: No, I did not...

STONE: There was no... there was no Warren Commission at that time...

GAUDET: No...

STONE: ...that was two days before the Commission was even formed...

GAUDET: Er...

STONE: It was... it was...

FENSTERWALD: Somebody... somebody was going to be investigating it for sure...

GAUDET: Well, I thought that...er...I thought at least the FBI could keep its word...

FENSTERWALD: And they didn't?

GAUDET: Apparently, they didn't, because the story in the New Times came out before this was declassified... so somebody gave it to them... except they have the name of the magazine wrong... they had it called Latin American Traveler... That was the only error that I detected in it...

STONE: Well, didn't you say that you had gotten assurances from the Justice Department and the Attorney General's office on this...?

GAUDET: Yes... through the CIA I got that... that I was... would be fully protected and to go ahead...

STONE: Well, obviously, you didn't think that you had a problem except the fact that it was rather coincidental that you were in the office at the same time or the same day that Mr. OSWALD was...

GAUDET: And...er... but, again, I say that I still don't know why, if the... as much as they hounded me... why, instead of telling a lie about me, they don't put the report in...

STONE: Well, you see Mr. GAUDET, this is what I... this is why I contacted you last week and this is the problem that all of us... that I don't understand either... er... see, the very fact that they suppressed and kept it quiet, I could go on and sit here and talk to you for fifteen minutes about how they have gone to quite some detail to bury the fact that your number, which was FM8... FM8 24084, they went to quite some detail to... to... to try and say that this number was never issued to anyone. They said there was no record... er... that there was never any record of this being given out... they go through this elaborate scheme to...

FENSTERWALD: Well, let me... let me play devil's advocate. Do you suppose this was an attempt by the FBI to carry out their promise to him? They told him that they would try to keep his identity and material he was giving them just within the FBI. Isn't that basically what they were telling you?

GAUDET: That's right...

FENSTERWALD: And don't you suppose maybe that the fact that they said "We can't find this FM number and we don't know who it is, and so forth" was an attempt to carry out that promise? It would seem to be that...

GAUDET: Um hum...

FENSTERWALD: In other words, the fact that he was CIA...er...and that they had promised that they would not make this public and in fact they didn't, from 1964 'til 19... what? 1975... something like that... so maybe they were trying to do what they had promised to do even though they couldn't succeed in doing it... I don't know, but, it looks to me like that's a possibility...

GAUDET: That's right...

STONE: Yeah, and you see... and I think the reason why there have been so few questions raised is that because now it has come out and... and... and now you find out and now we find out that this number, which we didn't think was issued to anybody, was issued to a man who was an employee of the CIA and, of course, this casts some suspicions on OSWALD and in your direction, and that's why I wanted to talk to you, because I've been doing this long enough now to realize that there are coincidences in life and if I had been in New Orleans in 1963, I may have been in contact with LEE HARVEY OSWALD too, and that didn't necessarily mean that I was part of a giant conspiracy to... either kill the President or to cover it up afterwards...

GAUDET: How much time does McCORD have to serve?

FENSTERWALD: He'll be out in less than a month...er...he's taking this all right... This is not... er... he's up at Allenwood, Pennsylvania, which is no country club, but it's not like being sent to Alcatraz or Atlanta, or some place like that, so... I got a letter from him just about a week ago... so... Do you know a man in the Trade Mart by the name of JOHN ALICE?

GAUDET: Yes. He's a Costa Rican...

FENSTERWALD: Costa Rican?

GAUDET: Yes.

FENSTERWALD: Does he help out with the Agency at all?

GAUDET: Of my own knowledge, I don't know, but he certainly would be the type that help them out...

FENSTERWALD: There is no reason... no particular reason that he shouldn't, that you know of...?

GAUDET: No...

FENSTERWALD: How about a Japanese gentleman by the name of Ehara?
E-H-A-R-A ?

GAUDET: Did not know him...

FENSTERWALD: The Trade Mart, at that time, was a relatively small
operation compared to what it is now, wasn't it?

GAUDET: Um hum...

FENSTERWALD: And was your office right in the building?

GAUDET: Um hum...

FENSTERWALD: Do you have any reason why LEE HARVEY OSWALD picked that
site for handing out these crazy leaflets?

GAUDET: If I'm not mistaken, in the building opposite the Trade
Mart, he was supposed to have had an office...

FENSTERWALD: OSWALD?

GAUDET: Yes... er...whether he actually had one or not, I don't
know. But, it was a cheap run-down sort of a place, which
is where OSWALD would probably stay, if he stayed
anywhere, and...er...

FENSTERWALD: Do you know, roughly, the address of that?

GAUDET: It would be the first... It's torn down now...er...

FENSTERWALD: It's not 544 Camp Street?

GAUDET: No... It's in the first block of Camp...

FENSTERWALD: Yeah...

GAUDET: The first block of Camp...

FENSTERWALD: You say there was a rumor that he had an office there?

GAUDET: Yes...

FENSTERWALD: Have you ever heard of that? I've never heard of it...

STONE: Ugh ugh...

FENSTERWALD: Was that in connection with this Cuban business?

GAUDET: Yes...

FENSTERWALD: Well, he was working both sides of the Cuban street, wasn't he?

GAUDET: I think he was...

FENSTERWALD: And you think that... that... he had knowledge that the CIA and the FBI and others wanted?

GAUDET: I don't think that OSWALD actually knew anything... No... I think that he was trying to pretend that he knew to get some money. I think that he was a miserable little creature who wanted to get some money and he would play anything to get some money...

FENSTERWALD: And do you think he was getting any?

GAUDET: No, I don't think so...

FENSTERWALD: What was he living on?

GAUDET: Somebody had to be feeding it to him... I don't know... Er... I tell you a man who certainly should give you some information on LEE HARVEY OSWALD, because he interviewed him on the radio... is JUNIOR BUTLER... ED BUTLER, JR...

FENSTERWALD: How about... er... BILL STUCKEY?

GAUDET: He should know him, too. I don't know where he is now.

FENSTERWALD: Um... I don't, but he could be found...

GAUDET: Er... he was with the New Orleans States, you know...

FENSTERWALD: Yeah... yeah...

GAUDET: And...er... he was trying to get his hand into the Latin American field, at that time, and that's how I became... how I knew him. He used to come to see me all the time to get information about Latin American affairs and...er... to help him on stories and... er... he wanted to... he called himself Latin American Editor at one time... on the States... then he... he got into a drunken deal out at some club somewhere in Jefferson Parish and I understand he took all his clothes off and he started running around the... er... water deal owned by the City, and the Police finally caught him, and...

FENSTERWALD: He really got drunk...

GAUDET: So, when they got him and put him in jail and lodged all these charges against him... why, the States found it inconvenient to keep him on their staff any longer... so that was... that was, to my knowledge, is the last time I've seen or heard of BILL STUCKEY...

STONE: You said that you... you said that you... you, obviously, had some chances to observe OSWALD rather closely... because it was your immediate gut reaction... you know... that he was not emotionally the kind of individual that could have killed KENNEDY... you said, you remember, that CLAY SHAW had met him once... Was the OSWALD that you came in contact with...? I... you see... I don't see anything wrong with that...

GAUDET: I don't say I've met... personally met with LEE HARVEY OSWALD... No... er... because... I don't...

STONE: _____ some conspiracy...

GAUDET: I wouldn't... I wouldn't have any hesitancy about saying I'd met him if I'd met him... I have no reason to say... to say I had met him if I hadn't... knew I'd met him... er... but I could see him out there delivering these circulars and he struck me as a pitiful sort of a little guy, and I'd sit by the mailbox there... and just watch him and... trying to give out all these things... and watch him and his boldness and things and frankly, I put him down as a nut...

FENSTERWALD: Did he do this on more than one occasion?

GAUDET: Oh, yes...

FENSTERWALD: He just happened to be... he got in a fist fight with... er... BRINGUIER, or somebody, and got picked up by the police...

GAUDET: I don't know... I think CARLOS went there on purpose...

FENSTERWALD: I had a feeling that... not only that, but the business about, you know, the broadcast and all that, was something that that was sort of a PR operation...

GAUDET: That was put on, I think, mostly by JUNIOR BUTLER...

FENSTERWALD: That's right...

(Cough)

FENSTERWALD: You know, when he got to jail... the first thing he asked for, though, was an FBI agent, which struck me as odd...

GAUDET: I didn't know that...

FENSTERWALD: When he got to jail, he asked for and had a visit from an FBI agent... I've forgotten which one now...

STONE: Quigley...

FENSTERWALD: Quigley...?

STONE: Yeah... fellow named JOHN... Yeah, he was arrested for a civil offense... You know, disturbing the peace was what he was booked on... Well, he requested an FBI man, which was strange, and the FBI man showed up... He was released very quickly and this, as I told you this the other day, and the record shows that he went over and sought out DEAN ANDREWS as an attorney...

GAUDET: He sure didn't pick a good one...

FENSTERWALD: I talked to DEAN the other day...

GAUDET: Is he...?

FENSTERWALD: He's scared to death...

GAUDET: He is?

FENSTERWALD: Well, he's been sick, for one thing... He's had a heart attack and damn near died... But, er, he's not well at all... He's running for office down in Jefferson Parish now...

GAUDET: He's running what?

FENSTERWALD: Running to be a Judge in Jefferson Parish...

GAUDET: Oh?

FENSTERWALD: They may have had the election by now, I don't know...

GAUDET: Ah!

FENSTERWALD: How well did you know MAURICE GATLIN?

GAUDET: Off and on, over the years...

FENSTERWALD: What...? Could you describe him to _____

GAUDET: GATLIN was poking his stuff... his nose into a lot of Latin American stuff at that time... er... he had some angle... What it was, I never did know... Er... I was always suspicious of MAURICE GATLIN.... I never fully trusted him in anything, and... er... because I know he made certain promises in a couple of Central American countries which I knew he could not deliver, and...er... I think he tried to get representation up in New Orleans for some of these countries, but never did actually succeed... to my knowledge, he didn't...

FENSTERWALD: Could he have been working with GUY BANNISTER?

GAUDET: I think GUY BANNISTER would have picked somebody better than MAURICE GATLIN...

FENSTERWALD: Well, GATLIN got his come-uppance in Panama. Cause he either committed suicide or somebody helped him jump out of the fourteenth story of a hotel in Panama...

GAUDET: Well, that wouldn't surprise me either...

FENSTERWALD: No...

GAUDET: Er... he... er... he, as I say, he was a man I could never trust and wouldn't trust, and... er... I shied away from him as much as I could... He tried to get me involved... He pretended he was a close personal friend of mine and said this to many people in Latin America, and I quickly told them he wasn't a close personal friend of mine... I mean this happened not only once but on many occasions...and...er... he was trying to use the fact that he was a friend of mine as a means of trying to get some stuff out of those countries... and... er... it just didn't work and... er... but... er... this whole thing... as it gets... like... my paper sent a man over here and spent three hours with me... They are doing a piece about me..... I don't know when... er... but... er... I think more... they are doing it more in my defense than anything else, and to protect their flanks, because, after all, I have represented them over here for... since they started in '73...

FENSTERWALD: Is that the Biloxi paper?

GAUDET: Yes...

FENSTERWALD: Yeah...

GAUDET: And...er... the Executive Editor is a close personal friend of mine and they... I think they regard me very highly and...er... so... er... I have been used on several occasions to help the Governor on things involving Latin America... I helped out on this Honduran relief deal... and...er... another friend of mine was the head of it, is a former FBI agent in Buenos Aires during World War II... He's with Gulf National Bank... he... he was an undercover FBI ... he was not official FBI... You see the FBI had both the official FBI people who were the legal attaches and the FBI also had their unofficial people who were out in the streets, who didn't carry any identification and who were left with their own devices, like I was... and PAUL (WHITE or WRIGHT) was one of these down in Buenos Aires, who was left to his own devices to help the FBI, but, in case of any problem, the FBI wasn't there to protect him...

FENSTERWALD: He was on his own...

GAUDET: That's right...

FENSTERWALD: Did you know CLARK ANDERSON in Mexico City?

GAUDET: I know of him...

FENSTERWALD: He was the legal attache at the time all this happened. I think that trip of OSWALD'S to Mexico...

GAUDET: Wasn't that by bus, actually?

FENSTERWALD: Yeah... yeah... but some strange, strange things happened on that trip... For example, there are no pictures of OSWALD, at least the one we know, going into either the Cuban or Soviet Embassies, although there were cameras taking pictures of people... The CIA did come up... or maybe the FBI came up... with pictures of somebody else who claimed to be LEE HARVEY OSWALD... Got his pictures and sent them back up to Dallas...

GAUDET: But, they were not...

FENSTERWALD: They were not of LEE HARVEY... They were of a completely different person...

STONE: In fact, they were sent to Dallas the afternoon of the assassination...

FENSTERWALD: More or less coincidence...

STONE: And it turns out later that...er... it turned out to be the wrong pictures. Obviously, the man's enormous in the pictures... big, big man... Ever seen those pictures? They're in the Warren Commission...

GAUDET: No... But, HARVEY OSWALD was not a big man...

STONE: No, but this man was a big man... 6' 4, 6' 5...

GAUDET: OSWALD was a little guy...

FENSTERWALD: Yeah...

GAUDET: I mean a little, puny guy, actually... er... so...

STONE: Were you familiar with the International Travel Agency?

GAUDET: Is that the name of the company?

STONE: It was in the International Trade Mart...

GAUDET: I didn't ever use them, so I don't remember them... No... Yes... They were on the first floor... HOPKINS was the head of it... Yeah...

STONE: Did you ever know LEWIS NICHOLS? Was supposed to be the manager...?

GAUDET: This must be another one, then...

STONE: What about LEWIS...? Mr. LEWIS...?

GAUDET: Huh?

STONE: I think it was LEWIS NICHOLS, but it may be Mr. LEWIS...

GAUDET: Well, the head of the travel agency that I knew in the Trade Mart was a fellow by the name of HOPKINS was the head of it...

STONE: Would this have been the one that CLAY SHAW would have used?

GAUDET: Yes...

STONE: Do you remember how big it was... How many people worked there?

GAUDET: It started off in a little cubby-hole at the entrance, and then it expanded and... it has expanded even more... it's operating now in the new Trade Mart... Very large offices...

STONE: In that time period, would... do you remember how big it was... like three people working, or twelve people working...

GAUDET: About four or five, as I recall...

FENSTERWALD: No connection with the agency?

GAUDET: No... not to my knowledge... er... HOPKINS, of course, was taking an awful lot of trips, you know... er... so, it's quite possible he did...

FENSTERWALD: He could have been...

GAUDET: Well, because... the CIA... I'll tell you... any time they found some one they could trust and they could use... would use them... and...er... they made no... I mean it was pretty well understood that if anything happened to you, the CIA never would know you, and er... and er... if, say I got caught on some of the questions that I was asked in questions about that they want to know about that brought on suspicion and I would end up in a booby hatch down in Central America, I certainly couldn't depend on the F...S... CIA to get me out. They would be the last person to get me out...

STONE: Do you remember HOPKINS first name, by any chance? It might be the wrong... it might be a different travel agency...

GAUDET: HOPKINS... I'm sure that's his last name... They were partners... HOPKINS and another guy... a dark complected fellow. HOPKINS was a crew-cut guy was a blond... and the other was a dark haired fellow. Those were the partners. Now what the other partner's name was, I've now forgotten. What did you say, LEWIS?

STONE: I said a man named LEWIS NICHOLS...

GAUDET: That could have been him... the partner... I'm not sure

STONE: Well, the reason why I'm asking is that, we know that when Mr. SHAW traveled that LEWIS NICHOLS, who, as I understood, ran the travel agency, handled his travel plans for him...

GAUDET: Well, it would have to be the partner of HOPKINS, then...

STONE: And this same man personally handled OSWALD'S travel arrangements when he went to Russia in '59...

GAUDET: Hum...

STONE: That's why I was trying to find out... because if, obviously, this was an agency of two or three people, this would be... this would not be irregular or abnormal for the manager to have to do with the public all the time... if it was a larger agency, obviously, the manager would still work with people who were, you know...

GAUDET: Yeah... Where in the world did he get the money to go to the Soviet Union...?

FENSTERWALD: That's a good question...

GAUDET: Huh?

FENSTERWALD: That's a good question.

STONE: That's one of the things that keeps some of us going...

FENSTERWALD: I don't know... He didn't save that sum of money in the Marine Corps... You know good and well...

GAUDET: What was his record in the Marine Corps? It wasn't very outstanding...

FENSTERWALD: He was a PFC... bad record... But, he was in an interesting program, known as the U-2 program...

GAUDET: Oh?

FENSTERWALD: He was a radar operator for the U-2 program...

GAUDET: Oh?

FENSTERWALD: ... with a very high security clearance...

GAUDET: You're damn right, the U-2 was...

FENSTERWALD: At that time, it was the hottest thing going...

GAUDET: That was another one we tried to lie out of...

FENSTERWALD: That's right...

GAUDET: But, I say if we'd stuck to the original lie, we should never have admitted it...

STONE: You see, OSWALD was stationed over at that base... at Atsugi... where the flights were coming in and going out of... where POWERS came in and out of... a lot of... a lot of strange things about our friend LEE HARVEY OSWALD... and that's the only reason, see, the man is so... he doesn't have to... it's obvious he's coming in contact

STONE: (cont.) with all these different things all the time... This is why it's not abnormal for anybody to have met OSWALD, cause this dude shows up in some interesting... obviously, he can't be working for everybody... so, just because somebody met LEE HARVEY OSWALD or had anything to do with him...

GAUDET: I don't think it means anything at all...

FENSTERWALD: I don't either...

GAUDET: ...er... and...er... I still say that McCORD will tell you, and I'm sure that...

STONE: You mean HUNT?

GAUDET: That HUNT is the man who knows more, actually, about who's back of this whole affair than anybody...

STONE: You told me last week...

FENSTERWALD: You know, RICHARD NIXON had that same theory, because right after Watergate, when the President should have been worrying about Watergate, he was worrying about E. HOWARD HUNT and the Bay of Pigs and those other things...

GAUDET: Right...

FENSTERWALD: And, I think "and those other things" is what we're talking about...

GAUDET: Those other things were the groups that were very dissident about the fact that Mr. KENNEDY let them down...

FENSTERWALD: Right...

GAUDET: Er... I mean, after all, you have got to remember what the Bay of Pigs really was... I mean it meant that 1,200 men were marching into their... either imprisonment or plain slaughter...

FENSTERWALD: Um hum...

GAUDET: Simply and solely because one man didn't press the button when he was supposed to... and... er... so, you can't... I can't in my heart find myself hating those Cubans who took that attitude, particularly if it was a brother, or a husband, or a father, or something like that...

FENSTERWALD: Could the Cubans involved in this have been some of CASTRO'S people who were doing this in revenge for various attempts on CASTRO'S life?

GAUDET: I question the story of CASTRO'S... assassinations on CASTRO'S life... I think that's the biggest fabrication that Mr. CASTRO ever produced. I think he likes to let people think that he's the victim of all of these plots... er... but... er... No, I...

FENSTERWALD: You think these were anti-CASTRO people who were mad at KENNEDY over the Bay of Pigs...?

GAUDET: That's right... I think that's what it was, really...

FENSTERWALD: Do you know that the FBI came down and raided some training camps of these Cubans in the summer of '63... in both Lake Pontchartrain and (?) Ibarra or New Barra broke them up...

GAUDET: I know it...

FENSTERWALD: Think that could have had something to do with this?

GAUDET: That's part of it. They felt they were being really let down completely...

STONE: Could we... could I get you to just theorize for a moment because I have no real... you know, I'm coming at this... Like I told you before... I don't understand how this works... how possibly could a group of anti-CASTRO Cubans... How could they have used OSWALD in some way? I don't mean to pull the trigger, but I mean how could they have involved him in this? Where was he vulnerable?

GAUDET: Money... I think with money you could have gotten anything from OSWALD...

STONE: Is it inconceivable to you that he could have been approached and won over by a group of...

GAUDET: It's not inconceivable at all...

STONE: In other words, you don't really buy that he was a card-carrying Communist, necessarily...?

GAUDET: No... I do not... and...er...when a man is a card-carrying Communist, he worries me very little... it's the ones who are not card-carrying Communists that worry me the most... and...er...so... Well, maybe McCORD may blow the lid on all of this when he gets out...

FENSTERWALD: He's making noises in that direction. McCORD has got a very slow burn on...

GAUDET: He's not opposed to the CIA, is he?

FENSTERWALD: Well, he's for protecting the CIA if there's any conceivable way to do it.

STONE: You see, the problem is, Mr. GAUDET, that it is obvious to me... that... It's obvious, I think to BUD, too, to anybody that's in this area at all... you told me that you sort of believed the same thing... that the Warren Commission's report is going to go down the tubes... You know, the official cover story that LEE HARVEY OSWALD didn't know anybody, and JACK RUBY didn't know anybody, and these two people just step out of the darkness and, for selfish reasons, commit all this crap... Well, there's where we've got to have another story, and we've already been shown that we don't necessarily have to have the truth to be put out as the official version... And, you know, it's obvious that there's something going on, and I think that's what BUD and I are really trying to do is just to find out what happened as opposed to letting people get into this... Obviously, people are going to have to be motivated to get into it... and, it seems to us fairly obvious that some of these people are going to be out to try and do in the CIA...

GAUDET: What is your radio station trying to do about it?

STONE: We are in Dallas, and Dallas has lived with this thing for eleven years and Dallas has been damned from here to Timbuktu... Our station is the only City owned radio station in the United States... We are municipally owned... by the City of Dallas...

GAUDET: You are owned by the City?

STONE: Right... We are doing nothing more nor less than trying to make ourselves available... using myself personally and the station's facilities to... to gather information with, once again, we've got no preconceptions on this, but it appears to us that there was more to be found out than what we now know, and it just happens that the management of my station is in a position to turn me loose on this, to some extent, and, like I said... er... it's a thing that's just purely curious to me... You see, why I got in on it, Mr. GAUDET, is that I was working with the police for a couple of years...

GAUDET: Oh, I see...

STONE: See, I always had heard that if there was a conspiracy... Oh! My God! The Dallas Police were deep in it...

GAUDET: I have heard that, too....

STONE: It turns out to me that the Dallas Police are doing their own investigating... See, they got jumped on by the FBI...

GAUDET: Oh?

STONE: See, when they did this original investigation, you had a bunch of Dallas policemen that came up and

(THE TAPE BREAKS, APPARENTLY)

STONE: Did you ever know LARRY BORENSTEIN?

GAUDET: Huh?

STONE: Did you ever know LARRY BORENSTEIN?

GAUDET: I don't understand that at all... It's such an outright lie...

STONE: Well, as I said, did you ever know him?

GAUDET: No...

STONE: BORENSTEIN?

GAUDET: No... didn't even know him...

STONE: ...and you never even heard of JACK RUBY, I guess...

GAUDET: No... I never had...

STONE: You don't think BORENSTEIN was in any way connected with the CIA?

GAUDET: I don't think so...

FENSTERWALD: Did you ever know an FBI agent by the name of CALL? C-A-L-L ? In New Orleans...

GAUDET: I think so...

FENSTERWALD: You did?

GAUDET: I think he later... I think it's... it was CALL, the man who called on me for information about various Latin American activities...

FENSTERWALD: Sounds right...

GAUDET: ...and...er... he would come to get my opinion, primarily on that...and...er...he was reporting to some one about the... the information I gave him, because toward the end there, the FBI was, while they will not admit it, but the FBI was trying to get into the Latin American field and whether this was a move to offset the power of the CIA or not, I don't know...

FENSTERWALD: Um hum...

GAUDET: But...er... in looking back now, it would have seemed to me that Mr. HOOVER was intensely jealous of the CIA and of what it was doing, and was trying to find some sort of way that he could convince Congress that there was no need for a CIA abroad... that the FBI could do the same work and...er...I think CALL was probably one of the Special Agents set up to do this kind of work out of New Orleans...

FENSTERWALD: Um hum...

GAUDET: This was my opinion...

FENSTERWALD: Um hum...

GAUDET: ...and I'm sure it's the same man you're talking about...

FENSTERWALD: Is ALBERTO (?) FOWLER or FALA still around?

GAUDET: He was the last of my knowledge. He came from a very prominent Cuban family, as you well know...

FENSTERWALD: Right... Yeah...

GAUDET: And...er...He was very close of (?) MERIBA SCIRO who became head of their Latin American Department over at the Trade Mart, and he was a close friend of MARIO BERMUDEZ, who was a Colombian who became some official with the International Trade Mart and with the Mayor's Association of Latin America...

FENSTERWALD: I think ALBERTO used to work pretty closely with the agency...

GAUDET: He did...

FENSTERWALD: Yean...

GAUDET: And ALBERTO didn't make many trips though...

FENSTERWALD: He was in New Orleans most of the time...

GAUDET: His contact would be those Cubans who came here...

FENSTERWALD: Right...

GAUDET: ...and...er... This was the way he would be used and he came from a very prominent family...and...er, you see, this is another one of life's little coincidences--things that happen--because the FBI brought it up... They asked if I knew a Cuban man by the name of GENE DESVERNINE, which was a name out of the blue at the time. Well, I knew GENE fairly intimately when he was in Costa Rica with the Embassy, and he was... he was a born American, but raised in the United States and also of Cuban contacts and so forth, and when the war was over, he went with MARIO LAZO'S law firm in Havana, which was, at that time, probably the largest law firm in Havana...

FENSTERWALD: Um hum...

GAUDET: ...which represented more U.S. companies than anybody else and...er... How MARIO ever got out of Cuba is something I'll never know because... er... he, of all the Cubans, was the most knowledgeable man of all of what was going on in Cuba, and... er... he...er... He blames most of this, the problem of Cuba, right smack where it should be... on BILL WIELAND of the State Department and HERBERT MATTHEWS of the New York Times, and, frankly, I think the guy who stopped JOHN KENNEDY from giving the go-ahead was BILL WIELAND, because I knew BILL WIELAND back in the days when he was in Salvador, and BILL WIELAND, at that time, was very close with the... very closely identified with the pro-Communist element there... and, er... he had many of their leaders at his home, and, er... I called on him in the course of my work, as a matter of fact, he was one of the men that the CIA asked me to check on, which was long before the KENNEDY assassination or anything else, and, er... They have a report somewhere in their files on my evaluation of BILL WIELAND...

FENSTERWALD: On BILL WIELAND?

GAUDET: Right... and, it's not very good...

FENSTERWALD: What was the name of this lawyer you said the FBI asked you about?

GAUDET: EUGENE DESVERNINE, D-E-S-V-E-R-N-I-N-E...

STONE: Why would they ask you about him?

GAUDET: Did I know him... and what contacts did I have with him...

FENSTERWALD: Did they have some suspicions about him?

GAUDET: I think mainly because he was attached to MARIO LAZO, and... er... MARIO LAZO mentions GENE DESVERNINE in his book on a couple of occasions, as being involved with a few things going on in Cuba... and, er... the man was absolutely and completely tri-lingual--French, English, and Spanish--and he...

FENSTERWALD: How many times did the FBI come talk to you after this assassination?

GAUDET: Well, they came over here twice... to my knowledge... I mean when I was living on 406 Beach... er... the first initial contact, as I say, was in the Trade Mart when... now... they now know that I'm a CIA... had CIA connections and certain things would come up and they would then... in trying to follow those things through, would come to see me...

FENSTERWALD: They came first to the Trade Mart?

GAUDET: That's right...

FENSTERWALD: Do you know if that was on the 25th or not?

GAUDET: I don't know what month... day of the year...

FENSTERWALD: It was before they came to Waveland, though?

GAUDET: Yes...

FENSTERWALD: By a day or two... a week or... shortly... longer?

GAUDET: I would say it was in less than two weeks they were over here in Waveland...

FENSTERWALD: And they came over here on two separate occasions...?

GAUDET: Right...

FENSTERWALD: And the same fellow, named Miller?

GAUDET: No... The one that came over here was a different man...

STONE: Do you remember his name?

GAUDET: No... I don't... and, er... I saw his proper identification cards...

FENSTERWALD: Um hum...

(COUGH)

GAUDET: And since he already knew, because he said so, that I had been involved with the CIA... this is why he was coming over to see me... this was his excuse... and, er... but... now... Now just after you've called me, I've had a call from a man who said he was with the FBI and said he wanted to talk with me... and ask me a few questions. That's within the last week...

FENSTERWALD: Did he give his identification?

GAUDET: I told him that I'd be glad to talk with him if he came over and presented his identification and if I could find out and run a check on him...

STONE: Did he say where he was calling from?

GAUDET: No... but he said he'd be over and see me and, er... he would give me wherewithall so he could be checked on...

FENSTERWALD: This was in the last week...

GAUDET: Yes...

FENSTERWALD: Strange...

GAUDET: I don't know whether the FBI is now starting to involve me again or not...

FENSTERWALD: Sounds like it, doesn't it?

GAUDET: It sure smells like it...

FENSTERWALD: After the two visits back in '64... '63...

GAUDET: Yeah...

FENSTERWALD: Did this upset the agency people that you reported to...? Did they find this upsetting or did they just say, "Well, go ahead and answer his questions?"

GAUDET: No, they told me not to...

FENSTERWALD: Not to?

STONE: Do you know... Was this before or after the Warren Commission got into it?

GAUDET: Even after the Warren Commission got into it, the answer was for me not to divulge any of my activities in Latin America, and... er...

FENSTERWALD: And you didn't?

GAUDET: I did not... er, as a matter of fact, the only person I've ever admitted being a CIA agent to was the FBI...

FENSTERWALD: Um hum...

GAUDET: No one else knew... not even my wife...

FENSTERWALD: What does she think now? You said that she wished that you had been on their payroll...

(TAPE STOPS)

GAUDET: Well, that's JUNIOR BUTLER'S outfit...

FENSTERWALD: Right... What relationship did you have with them? You were sort of in the same business...

GAUDET: I was closely related with... with BUTLER, because one of the prime sponsors of this in New Orleans was a very close personal friend of mine... and an investor in my own company... Dr. ALTON OSHNER, SR. ... er, and OSHNER had a very personal interest in this... because he felt that one of the great problems in the United States was lack of knowledge about Latin American affairs and that's what the Information Council of the Americas was supposed to do... to try to get out information to the people... now... they... they always had rough sledding getting money, and... er... JUNIOR BUTLER was primarily the money raiser and he was also the motivating force behind it... He didn't have much time to do much motivation though, because of his efforts trying to get money...

FENSTERWALD: Um hum...

GAUDET: So that... er... Oh, they did make a series of tapes that they sent down below... but, to my knowledge, that is about all they did, but that was... the information about the United States in Latin America...

FENSTERWALD: Yeah... so...

GAUDET: That was not doing any good up here, and... er...

FENSTERWALD: Well, that was being supported by the agency, through a couple of foundations, one of which was in my home town. That's how I happen to know about that...

GAUDET: Well, they had a...

FENSTERWALD: ...funneled through...

GAUDET: They had a big, big banquet down here... a money-raising thing, at which they prevailed upon NELSON ROCKEFELLER to come down and be one of the speakers, and that's the last time I saw... personally saw NELSON ROCKEFELLER, and I went up and I talked to him at the time...

FENSTERWALD: About old times...

GAUDET: Yeah, and... er... I feel quite certain that the NELSON ROCKEFELLER Committee will not call me as a witness...

FENSTERWALD: Why not?

GAUDET: Because Mr. NELSON ROCKEFELLER knows what I know...

FENSTERWALD: You don't think they are going to be very enthusiastic about really going into any of this?

GAUDET: I don't think Mr. ROCKEFELLER is going to be... No...

FENSTERWALD: You can't think that Mr. BELIN is, who is his staff director, because he was one of the Counsel on the Warren Commission...

GAUDET: Ha...ha...ha...ha...

FENSTERWALD: The same people keep showing up. It's a bit strange, isn't it?

GAUDET: Well, why should Mr. ROCKEFELLER be the one to take... I don't understand ROCKEFELLER being given the job of investigating the CIA... I mean...

FENSTERWALD: I don't either...

GAUDET: I mean... My God! Anybody with a ... either GERALD FORD is the stupidest man in the United States or he doesn't know anything about NELSON ROCKEFELLER...

STONE: What would seem very plausible... does it?

FENSTERWALD: Or, he doesn't want it investigated...

GAUDET: I mean, if he doesn't want it investigated, I can't think of a better man to have named...

FENSTERWALD: How about GRADY DURHAM? Did you ever know him?

GAUDET: No...

FENSTERWALD: How about a group called Alpha 66?

GAUDET: Yes, in a vague sort of way. I knew a couple of so-called members of it...

FENSTERWALD: Can you remember who they were?

GAUDET: No... They were Cubans though... This was...

FENSTERWALD: In Miami, by any chance?

GAUDET: They were from Miami...

FENSTERWALD: Do you know if LEE HARVEY OSWALD was ever in Miami?

GAUDET: To my personal knowledge, no...

FENSTERWALD: What do you think? ... I'm not gonna...

GAUDET: It would not surprise me...

STONE: Did you ever have any business in Miami?

GAUDET: Very little. Miami was not one of my big places... I used to go there occasionally... er... but... er... I used to go there, for example, when I was going to take flights to deep South America, when I was going, say, to Chile or to Peru or to Buenos Aires...

STONE: You would never have gone to Miami in connection with the CIA?

GAUDET: No...

FENSTERWALD: It was just an easy way to get rolling south?

GAUDET: That's right... Well, I did work for CIA on some of these trips... Yes...er, I did some reporting for them on these trips... most of my activities for the CIA in active activities was centered around Central America...

STONE: But, you never reported to anybody in Miami?

GAUDET: Huh?

STONE: Did you ever report to anybody in Miami?

GAUDET: No. I reported to only one source. I never had varied on that...

STONE: I wanted to ask you something that you mentioned the other day... Do you mind if I interrupt?

FENTERWALD: No...

STONE: Your list goes on forever...

FENSTERWALD: Ha, ha, ha... My list is...

STONE: Well, I have one thing to say about Mr. GAUDET... You have an incredible memory... You really do... I'm surprised because we're talking about very obscure people. You said that you had gone out and sat outside and watched OSWALD do his little act in front of the International Trade Mart and you thought he was a pitiful figure...

GAUDET: Yeah...

STONE: You told me last week that you thought that... that the CIA was making contact with OSWALD because he possibly had information that they might have wanted to get hold of... Now, you also said that you never were scared of card-carrying Communists...

GAUDET: Right...

STONE: ...and you don't think he was one... when you were sitting out there watching OSWALD, did you ever get... did you get to feeling that this was kind of a scary... I mean, did you... Well, he always looked like a Communist... he was out there with all this...

GAUDET: Yeah...

STONE: ... pro-CASTRO... What did you think when you saw him?

GAUDET: I frankly thought he was a nut... You know, like these people that come on the street and preach the Bible? You know?

STONE: Did you ever think... Well, I'm trying... I'm leading you, BOB...

GAUDET: Go ahead...

STONE: I'm sorry, but this... Did it ever enter your mind that maybe he wasn't legit?

GAUDET: I thought he was nuts. I never even gave him any... I really never thought that much of the man and his ability at all, and to have him... er... have him come down as a killer, to me, to me it was the most incredible news I've ever heard in my life...

STONE: When he pops up with JUNIOR BUTLER on the radio program...

GAUDET: Oh! JUNIOR BUTLER planted that...

STONE: Why would he want to fool with a nut like OSWALD?

GAUDET: For publicity purposes...

FENSTERWALD: I think that's absolutely correct...

GAUDET: I think JUNIOR saw an out to use him and...er... a lot of people had seen LEE HARVEY OSWALD and...er... everybody in the Trade Mart certainly had seen him and all of these people were people who were involved in international affairs and...er... JUNIOR BUTLER was involved with people who had certainly international connections, and...er... so it was natural, if he could use a man like HARVEY OSWALD on the radio, it would make a nice good impression...

STONE: To show him up as a Communist?

GAUDET: That's right, and...er...

FENSTERWALD: And, sort of as a kook...

GAUDET: That's right... I don't think JUNIOR was any friend of LEE HARVEY OSWALD... Now, don't get me wrong...

STONE: No... no, no, no... What I'm getting at was you seem to not think that he was a card-carrying Communist, but JUNIOR BUTLER apparently did...

GAUDET: Oh! JUNIOR saw Communists under the chair of every place, I mean...

STONE: Well, you can see, Mr. GAUDET, this is only... This has just been in the back of my mind all along and I don't think the CIA... So, please don't... don't get that... but, is it conceivable to you that OSWALD was down there in front of the Trade Mart doing all this to build a Communist record... on behalf of somebody? In other words, if there was any kind of a conspiracy to kill the President and you wanted a fall guy, it sure would be nice to have somebody who had been involved in varied pro-Communist activities immediately before that... like somebody standing out in front of the International Trade Mart handing out pro-Castro pamphlets and getting on radio and television and ranting on on all this Marxist doctrine...

GAUDET: Hum!

STONE: You see... you see, in OSWALD'S life, there is only one very small segment that he does this... You see, we've got him in Dallas before that, and he ain't doing nothing...

- STONE: (cont.) He ain't even going to meetings, much less standing out in the middle of the street yelling all this... this Communist stuff... but, all of a sudden, he shows up in New Orleans and it's just like somebody stuck a fire under him, and I'm trying to... I'm trying to wonder what his possible motivation would have been, as you say, he certainly didn't appear to be just a... a... a real sharp individual, but, there must have been some reason why he was wanting to... to bring all this attention to himself... Possibly he was... was being encouraged from somewhere...
- GAUDET: That's quite possible... I don't think this plot started over night... to kill the President... I think, as a matter of fact, it started within... I would say, within weeks after the Bay of Pigs fiasco, and it just took it that long to finally get to a head... cause it had to narrow itself down to a very few individuals who actually would be willing to, if not participate, put up the money to get... to have the act done...
- FENSTERWALD: There were four Cuban gunmen running around Chicago on November the 1st 1963, when KENNEDY was supposed to come there, with the intent to murder him. They were Cubans. I don't have their identities... but, er... the fact that it happened in Dallas, in my mind, is just purely coincidental... that if they hadn't killed him in Dallas, they would have kept on 'til they did...
- GAUDET: Um hum...
- FENSTERWALD: ...and I think that Dallas had nothing to do... I've thought for eleven years now that Dallas was just being sort of a... has gotten this guilt complex for nothing... it could have happened in Nashville, Tennessee, or in Biloxi, Mississippi, or wherever, and I think it turned out, from the perpetrators viewpoint, that Dallas was a fine place, because Dallas is known as the bigotry capital of the southwest, so, you know, it turned out to be very fortunate... I don't really think it had anything to do with Dallas. Never have thought so...
- GAUDET: Well, they have hurt Dallas quite a bit...
- FENSTERWALD: It did hurt them, but I don't think it had anything to do with it... anymore than I think the CIA had anything to do with it. It just happened there. I'd like to ask you about four different people named GONZALEZ. Er... do you know a VIRGILIO GONZALEZ?
- GAUDET: No...

FENSTERWALD: Well, he was the one that was caught in the Watergate... a locksmith from Miami...

GAUDET: Yeah...

FENSTERWALD: There is a man with a very similar name who operated for the agency for fourteen years, by the name of VIRGINO, V-I-R-G-I-N-O...

GAUDET: No...

FENSTERWALD: GONZALEZ...

GAUDET: Didn't know him...

FENSTERWALD: There was a man by the name of ALONZO GONZALEZ from Havana...

GAUDET: No...

FENSTERWALD: Who was an Episcopal priest and also the best rifle shot in Cuba... Doesn't ring a bell?

GAUDET: Don't know him...

FENSTERWALD: How about MANUEL GARCIA GONZALEZ?

GAUDET: No...

FENSTERWALD: Struck out on all four...

STONE: You didn't make the GONZALEZ connection...

GAUDET: No...

FENSTERWALD: Go ahead...

STONE: Did you ever know an OREST PENA? O-R-E-S-T P-E-N-A :

GAUDET: No... Not to my knowledge... No... What did he do?

STONE: He got his passport the same day OSWALD did in June. He was down here in New Orleans. How about a MARILYN DOROTHEA MURRET? MARILYN MURRET? I guess she went by MARILYN MURRET...

GAUDET: That name rings a bell somewhere...

STONE: She lives in New Orleans...

GAUDET: I don't know what she did, but the name rings a bell somewhere...

FENSTERWALD: She was LEE HARVEY OSWALD'S cousin, but she apparently did work for the agency...

GAUDET: The name rings a bell somewhere...

FENSTERWALD: MURRET... Yeah...

GAUDET: Er...and...er... She may have worked for the agency in New Orleans, I don't know. They had quite a few here. You know, this was not a small office. Don't give me the impression that CIA had a small operation here...

FENSTERWALD: How large would you say it was?

GAUDET: I would say 50 people...

FENSTERWALD: That would include the professionals and the clerks and the typists and...

GAUDET: That's right...

FENSTERWALD: ...and you reported but just to one guy you reported?

GAUDET: That's right...

FENSTERWALD: Was he the head of it?

GAUDET: He was the head of it...

FENSTERWALD: How available was he when you wanted to talk with him?

GAUDET: I simply said, "This is BILL GAUDET"...

FENSTERWALD: And they put you through...

GAUDET: That's right...

FENSTERWALD: And, he's now retired?

GAUDET: I think he is...

FENSTERWALD: Still in New Orleans?

GAUDET: If he's not dead...

FENSTERWALD: He's not the lawyer you were talking about earlier...

GAUDET: Yeah, he's the lawyer...

FENSTERWALD: He is the lawyer...

(COUGH)

FENSTERWALD: You don't know who the head of it is now?

GAUDET: The guy who succeeded him was a fellow by the name of RAY something whose name I don't remember, and then there was another guy who was involved with them and I went to school with... er... ah... I can't remember his name for the life of me... You see, this man was so prominent in New Orleans circles... He was a member of the Boston Club, for example, which is our most exclusive club, which is the club which puts on Komats, as you know...

FENSTERWALD: Um hum...

GAUDET: Ah... and he comes from one of the oldest families in New Orleans and... er, so it was very easy for him to move around and in...

FENSTERWALD: Sure...

GAUDET: circles that the average JOE BLOW couldn't do, so that I was able to have lunch with him at various places that... and in view of my own connections, that no one would think anything of the fact that I was having lunch with him. They would see us together, but that was it...

FENSTERWALD: Did he have to give up his law practice to do this?

GAUDET: Now, that I don't know. I don't think he continued law practice... He didn't have to...

FENSTERWALD: He moved offices...

GAUDET: He had... Yes... He had enough money... he did...

FENSTERWALD: Sure...

GAUDET: ...not have to... Actually, I think the money that he got from the CIA was really without any meaning to him, because... er... er... I think the year that he joined the CIA his daughter was the debutante of the year... It came out, so you don't put a child in as a debutante on the CIA's salary...

FENSTERWALD: No, sir...

GAUDET: ...and, er... so...

FENSTERWALD: Do you suppose he knew OSWALD?

GAUDET: I'm quite sure he knew... either he knew, or the agency knew LEE HARVEY OSWALD. I'm convinced the agency knew LEE HARVEY OSWALD...

FENSTERWALD: Well, wouldn't that... wouldn't the local office here be in touch with him when he moved over here from Dallas?

GAUDET: I'm sure the local office of the CIA, with the local operatives that they had, must have contacted LEE HARVEY OSWALD...

FENSTERWALD: Not the professionals like you, but the local...

GAUDET: No... the locals...

FENSTERWALD: Of these 50 people...

GAUDET: These are the employees that I would call them...

FENSTERWALD: Right...

GAUDET: Not of the specialty group... You see the... you gotta divide your CIA up... You can't just say CIA and let it go for that...

FENSTERWALD: Right, right...

GAUDET: Er... Because, on the one hand, you had your straight employee, who worked either by the hour or by the month, and, er... then you had your higher echelon groups, which is your department heads and then above them, came the men like I worked with...

FENSTERWALD: Um hum...

GAUDET: Er... who was in charge of the overall operations and... er, for example, when I went up to meet with the CIA in Washington, he is the man who made all the arrangements for the CIA to meet me in Washington... and, er... a group of their heads of various divisions met with me in Washington for simply a round-table discussion of the overall picture in Latin America, as I saw it at that time. It was more of a review than a specific report... just to get themselves pretty well brought up to date on everything that they wanted to know... and, er... this is what this meeting was all about and they, er... that's one of the few instances, for example, that they actually paid out any money. They paid all of my expenses up to Washington and back and my stay in Washington. I stayed in a small room at the Willard Hotel, which was at my request, because I was still a member of the National Press Club and so I could walk across the street...

FENSTERWALD: It's closed up now...

GAUDET: It is?

FENSTERWALD: Yeah...

GAUDET: Well...

FENSTERWALD: Too bad... It was a great hotel...

GAUDET: Well, I hope the National Press Club hasn't closed up...

FENSTERWALD: No, sir. I was there a week ago... It's... I'd say that...

GAUDET: Do we still have the members' bar?

FENSTERWALD: Yes, sir... You sure do... I would say that, if the CIA had 50 people in its local office here, they had as many as the FBI in their local office. I don't know. That would just be a guess...

GAUDET: I'd say they had a larger office than the FBI...

FENSTERWALD: Larger than the FBI?

GAUDET: Right... But, bear in mind they covered a much larger area than the FBI...

FENSTERWALD: Oh, I understand... I was just thinking of the number of people...

GAUDET: That's right, and they were doing a lot of... You see, every time, for example... I guess right below BILL, he had maybe three persons who were almost up to him in level...

FENSTERWALD: Um hum...

GAUDET: ...who had various contacts...

FENSTERWALD: Um hum...

GAUDET: ...and so, whenever they would have a meeting with these contacts... like BILL would have a meeting with me, he would need a secretary to take all of his notes down...

FENSTERWALD: Right...

GAUDET: To transmit by Telex to...teletype to the Washington office. You see, they had a... a closed circuit from Washington to New Orleans and they would send their reports up and, in turn, Washington would send reports down on things that Washington wanted, and the Washington report was usually quite heavy as to their demands on what they wanted and, er... this would be divided according to whose territory it was. See, when it involved Bill's territory and me, why then Bill would meet with me and go over with me the list

GAUDET: (cont.) of questions and if it required for my going down there, why he'd ask me when was I going and, if I wasn't going in the immediate future, why they would be willing to absorb the additional cost involved of going immediately...

FENSTERWALD: Um hum...

GAUDET: ...Otherwise, they would not absorb any cost because there weren't any...

FENSTERWALD: Um hum...

GAUDET: ...and...

FENSTERWALD: Did you go to his office frequently?

GAUDET: I never went to his office...

FENSTERWALD: Never went to his office...

GAUDET: No, sir...

FENSTERWALD: You would meet him at the club or...

GAUDET: That's right, or he'd meet me at my office, and...er...

FENSTERWALD: Is there any particular reason why not? I'm just curious...

GAUDET: I knew where his office was...

FENSTERWALD: Yeah...

GAUDET: No... er...

FENSTERWALD: It just seems to me to be more secure to meet there than it would be to meet some place else...

GAUDET: I think that... er... they didn't want to have anyone else see me go into his office is... That would be my theory on why they put it up that way. They... They wanted to protect my cover as much as I wanted to be protected because... Bear in mind, in that very, very vulnerable position, if it got out into international circles that I was reporting to the CIA, you can well understand, with all the turmoil going on in Latin America, and my frequent traveling, the chances are I would not be in this front porch talking to you today...

FENSTERWALD: Um hum...

GAUDET: ...and I certainly know that I could have never gotten out of Guatemala... er... and... er, but, and er... I couldn't have gotten out of Salvador, as a matter of fact, on a couple of occasions, but that's all past history... and... er...

STONE: You were telling me that...er... I was interested in about something about when did he... You said that you figured that the agency people were in contact with OSWALD... O.K., now you call them and tell them that the FBI wants to talk to you about this trip and about this OSWALD... Weren't you ever questioned by the people here if you knew OSWALD?

GAUDET: OH! You mean the CIA?

STONE: Yeah...

GAUDET: No, cause they knew I wasn't...

STONE: They knew, even though the FBI was talking to you...

GAUDET: There was no need to question me at all about it...

STONE: Well, I mean just by the chance that you might have...

GAUDET: They would... Look, if they would question me about the OSWALD thing, then they wouldn't want me any longer as an agent...

STONE: Well, I meant that you might just have been in contact with him like they were...

GAUDET: Well, if they asked me anything about OSWALD, they probably asked me off-hand, "Did I see him do anything" or something that might be of interest to them... but, as to whether I had any contact with him or not, obviously, they wouldn't be interested in that because if they felt that I was connected with OSWALD in any shape or form, then they would be questioning my own integrity to work for them...

STONE: No, I didn't mean to imply that, at all...

GAUDET: No, but I'm telling you this is the way they would be taking...er... you know, in other words, you can't have a man in whom you are placing a lot of trust and on whom you are basing a lot of judgments, and then you turn around and question him about something like this...

STONE: What about the Riley Coffee Company? Did you know very many people over there?

GAUDET: I knew the head of it. Yes...

STONE: Did you? Was it your understanding that... Oh, I don't know... some ex-government people worked over there? Agents?

GAUDET: To my knowledge, no... But, er... that, again, would not be surprising, because Brazil was a very important source of coffee for the Riley Coffee Company, and...er... they had lots of contacts in Brazil, and I'm sure they must have used some of their men and...er... like they had a lot of... I think the same would apply to Sam Israel and Company, which had a lot of contacts in Brazil and in Colombia...

STONE: Did the man that you knew at Riley, did he ever do any agency work?

GAUDET: I doubt it... He was the President...

STONE: Wouldn't have any reason to... I thought that's maybe where you knew him...

GAUDET: No... That was the only one I knew... was the President, and I knew him through his father-in-law who was the President...

STONE: Did you ever know a man named GEORGE DeMOHRENSCHILDT?

GAUDET: Who?

STONE: GEORGE DeMOHRENSCHILDT...

GAUDET: Don't know him at all...

STONE: How about KERRY THORNLEY?

GAUDET: Hum?

STONE: KERRY THORNLEY...

GAUDET: No...

STONE: Did you ever know the two men who disappeared over either Central or South America in September of '63...GEOFFREY SULLIVAN and ALEXANDER RORKE?

GAUDET: No...

STONE: Familiar with that?

GAUDET: I remember the story briefly...

STONE: What about the name IGOR VAGINOV?

GAUDET: No...

FENSTERWALD: That's an interesting story...

GAUDET: Hum?

FENSTERWALD: There's an interesting story connected with him, but it would take me thirty minutes to tell it and it's...

GAUDET: Well...

FENSTERWALD: ...it has nothing to do with this...

GAUDET: Are you going to see CAIRE while you are over here?

FENSTERWALD: I thought we would. Where would we find him?

GAUDET: We'll see if he's at home...

(DIALS PHONE)

GAUDET: I'm not that stupid that I would have gotten a Central American... I mean a Mexican tourist card if I had gone to Merida...

STONE: Well...

GAUDET: That's the only thing that...er... makes me think that my memory is better than it... this is stated here. He must have misunderstood me... and...er... I don't think he would purposely make that statement, because there would be no reason to say that... but, by the same token, there would be no reason for me to get a Mexican tourist card if I'm only going to... I'm traveling on, because anyone who travels knows that if you are an ongoing passenger, you don't need anything to land in a country... you just go on... er... now, if, and even in a case of an emergency... if the plane... something happens to the plane, you are allowed to stay there, with the responsibility of the company, until it's repaired and you move on... so...

FENSTERWALD: In an emergency, I guess you can get one when you land anyway...

GAUDET: That's right... you can...

FENSTERWALD: I've come down on occasion...

GAUDET: So that... that's what tends me to believe that I was right in my first evaluation that I went to Mexico City first and...er... the only reason I didn't have a Mexican visa was because Mexico was very ticklish on this tourist visa business, as compared to the other countries, and I always traveled tourist because it... it's the exit that causes you so much trouble...

STONE: Um hum...

GAUDET: You know, if you go on a business visa, in a lot of these places, you've gotta go get your tax business cleared up and everything else before you can leave, so it's... if you are there only for a day or so process just to get...

FENSTERWALD: So, that's why you went as a tourist...

GAUDET: Right, and, in my newspaper classification, they didn't bother...

FENSTERWALD: You weren't taking any money out...

GAUDET: No, I was bringing money in...

FENSTERWALD: That's right...

GAUDET: ...and...er...so...er...Well, I wish McCORD luck in helping the CIA, because I think it's about time that the truth be known that the CIA is not the terrible menace that a lot of people seem to think it is, because, frankly, I don't know what to God we could do without... this country without it...

FENSTERWALD: Well, if, as is possible, the CIA is, in effect, abolished, they are going to have to turn the functions back to the military, and that doesn't cheer me up a great deal...

GAUDET: They can't handle it. I had to work with the military during the war years, which was G-2, and I'm telling you their intelligence was absolutely zero in importance... Now, the Navy had much better intelligence. The Navy's intelligence was, I'd say, was top grade, frankly, every time I bumped into it...and...er... because, like in the war years, for example, I used to make these overseas calls out of Panama to my office in Washington, and despite the fact that I'd given umpteen number of clearances, the Navy insisted I go over it again before they would even allow my call to go through...

FENSTERWALD: Um hum...

GAUDET: No matter what... and...er... before they would even put your call through, and then they'd call you back... and they kept a monitor on you while you were talking...and...er...so...

STONE: I hope you can understand that, from anybody that's concerned about this, how important it is that, you know, that the truth come out...

GAUDET: Well, I'm concerned over what you showed me in the Warren Commission Report...

STONE: Well, you see this is the problem... this is one of many problems...

FENSTERWALD: I would appreciate a call from you, if the FBI does come and if they try to... if they try to put heat on you... You know what I'm talking about...

GAUDET: Well, I tell you... I know exactly what I'm gonna do, in the event the FBI tries to apply heat to me... I still have a few contacts in the CIA... I'm not completely cut off and I certainly will be right in touch with CIA immediately, and the FBI will know about it... and...er... so... er... My paper is doing a story about me simply in self-defense of me, because, ever since this New Times has come out, I have been subject to some personal criticism over here, that I was a part of the murder gang which the CIA is supposed to be... we believe in murdering little children and other things, and so forth, that... I don't know who spread all of this horrible gossip about the CIA, but it's a very ugly word today...

STONE: Have you been getting phone calls from other journalists?

GAUDET: One from the East... er...

STONE: Not a guy named HUDKINS, was it?

GAUDET: No, I think it was New York Post... is it? I think it's New York Post...

STONE: But, that's all...?

GAUDET: That's all... Now...

FENSTERWALD: How could we get a copy of the story, when it's published?

GAUDET: You mean of mine...

FENSTERWALD: Yes... Just write to the paper?

GAUDET: Yeah... er... They are going to write a story, more in defense of me than anything else...

FENSTERWALD: I'd just like to see it, you know, since we are very interested in the subject...

GAUDET: ...and...er... Well, where is your address? Washington?

FENSTERWALD: Mine's in Washington...

GAUDET: Yeah... All right... I'll see that you get a copy of it...and...er...

FENSTERWALD: I'd appreciate it, or we can write, you know, if it's gonna be trouble... We can just write to the paper...

GAUDET: No... no... I can get it without...

(SOMETHING HAPPENED TO TAPE)

FENSTERWALD: Since '47 nobody's ever really found any need to do anything of this type. Don't you think it's a new experience for me?

GAUDET: Yes...

FENSTERWALD: How do you think Mr. COLBY'S holding up under all the...?

GAUDET: I don't know, frankly. He must have a sweat...

FENSTERWALD: Well, Mr. HELMS is just stonewalling it...

GAUDET: Well, he's the kind who wouldn't let it worry him, I don't think...

FENSTERWALD: Only once, and that was the other day... He lost his cool after about a three-hour session with the ROCKEFELLER Commission, he came out cussing and swearing...

STONE: Yes...

FENSTERWALD: Of course, nobody really knows what that's all about... Well, you've been very kind to put up with us for all this length of time, and I think we ought to let you get back to whatever you were doing...

GAUDET: Well, I'm going to get dressed and go into town...