

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

- 1 - Mr. Conrad
- 1 - Mr. Jevons
- 1 - Mr. Gallagher
- 1 - Office, Room 7133

*J.P.W.*

Mr. Tolson	_____
Mr. DeLoach	_____
Mr. Mohr	_____
Mr. Bishop	_____
Mr. Casper	_____
Mr. Callahan	_____
Mr. Conrad	_____
Mr. Felt	_____
Mr. Gale	_____
Mr. Rosen	_____
Mr. Sullivan	_____
Mr. Tavel	_____
Mr. Trotter	_____
Tele. Room	_____
Miss Holmes	_____
Miss Gandy	_____

*J.P.W.*

TO : Mr. Conrad

DATE: 9-21-64

FROM : R. H. Jevons

SUBJECT: Dr. Vincent P. Guinn,  
Neutron Activation Analysis

## SYNOPSIS

Dr. Vincent P. Guinn is Technical Director of the Activation Analysis Program of General Atomic Division of General Dynamics Corporation. He and his staff have applied neutron activation analysis to the examination of powder residues. Dr. Guinn is a "high pressure salesman" with a sound scientific background. If he has been correctly quoted recently, he has been associating the work done by the FBI Laboratory and the Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) on the paraffin casts of Oswald with his own endeavors. These examinations were conducted with the Director's approval through liaison with the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC). Press releases attributable to Guinn infer that he is knowledgeable of the results of the examinations conducted on the Oswald casts. Guinn did not participate in these examinations. He has not been advised of the results.

Dr. Spofford G. English, Assistant General Manager for Research and Development, AEC, was contacted on September 18, 1964, by Special Agent John F. Gallagher, of the Laboratory, concerning this matter and expressed the Bureau's concern over the erroneous statements attributed to Dr. Guinn. Dr. English also expressed AEC's concern. Since Dr. Guinn is an AEC contractor, Dr. English advised he would have Mr. E. Eugene Fowler, Acting Director of the Isotopes Division, AEC, contact Dr. Guinn as soon as practical and advise him that both the FBI and the AEC are concerned over the releases attributed to him relating to the assassination of President Kennedy. Guinn will be asked to cease commenting on this sensitive subject. Dr. English will advise the Bureau concerning the contact of Fowler with Dr. Guinn.

ACTION: None. For information only. The Laboratory will follow this carefully with AEC.

Enclosure REC 30

1 - Mr. Belmont ST-100

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(CONTINUED OVER)

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Memorandum to Mr. Conrad  
Dr. Vincent P. Guinn,  
Neutron Activation Analysis

DETAILS

Dr. Vincent P. Guinn is Technical Director of the Activation Analysis Program of General Atomic Division of General Dynamics Corporation at San Diego, California. Through Atomic Energy Commission's contracts, money has been given to Dr. Guinn's group for the purpose of studying the application of neutron activation analysis to items of forensic interests. In particular, Dr. Guinn's group devoted their efforts to the identification of primer residues on the body of a person who had discharged firearms. Dr. Guinn has an international reputation in the field of neutron activation analysis. At the United Nations Conference in Geneva, Switzerland, relating to peaceful applications of atomic energy, he delivered a speech on September 1, 1954. He was also a guest lecturer during August of this year at the NATO International Conference on activation analysis in Glasgow, Scotland. It is believed he is currently touring Europe. Dr. Guinn recently received the American Nuclear Society's 1954 Award for "particularly meritorious contribution" of "a unique and proven tool to assist the law, clear the innocent and convict the guilty."

Dr. Guinn is a typical "high pressure salesman" with a sound scientific background who is actively promoting the sales of his company's nuclear reactors and services.

On April 23, 1952, Dr. Vincent P. Guinn visited the Laboratory and discussed the work of his group relative to scientific crime detection. Since that time, the Laboratory has had several contacts with him at technical conferences and he has revisited the Laboratory on several occasions. On November 23, 1953, subsequent to President Kennedy's assassination, he called the FBI Laboratory and advised he and his staff stood ready to help in the field of neutron activation analysis if necessary. He was thanked for his spirit of cooperation at this time. His services were never employed.

Memorandum to Mr. Conrad  
Dr. Vincent P. Guinn,  
Neutron Activation Analysis

Recently, numerous press releases and periodicals citing the work of Guinn and his staff relating to the examinations of primer residues from firearms have associated his work with the work done on the paraffin casts from Lee Harvey Oswald. He has implied that he has been working on the problem with the FBI and is knowledgeable of the results of such examinations.

The paraffin casts from Lee Harvey Oswald were analyzed by neutron activation by FBI Laboratory personnel at ORNL. The Director's approval was obtained for such an analyses and arrangements were made through Dr. Spofford English, Assistant General Manager for Research and Development, AEC, to have these examinations performed at the ORNL Research Reactor Site. It was agreed that all matters relating to these analyses would be considered highly confidential.

In view of the erroneous statements which were reportedly released to the press by Dr. Guinn, Special Agent John F. Gallagher, of the Laboratory, contacted Dr. Spofford G. English on September 18, 1964. The Bureau's concern over these erroneous releases were explained to Dr. English. It was pointed out that Dr. Guinn was working for AEC on a contract basis. Dr. English advised that AEC was also concerned over this matter and stated that he would see to it that a Mr. E. Eugene Fowler, the Acting Director of the Isotope Division, AEC, would be requested to contact Dr. Guinn as soon as practical and advise him of the AEC's and FBI's concern over the erroneous press releases attributed to him and request that he cease commenting on these matters. Dr. English advised that Fowler is in charge of the division responsible for the contract work of Dr. Guinn. Dr. English will advise the Bureau concerning the meeting of Mr. Fowler with Dr. Guinn.

Memorandum to Mr. Conrad  
Dr. Vincent P. Guinn  
Neutron Activation Analysis

Examples of the erroneous press releases attributed to Guinn and copies of pertinent portions of these releases are attached hereto:

- 1 - Reader's Digest, September, 1964, Page 125:  
"Eventually, federal authorities obtained chunks of the paraffin used on Oswald, and highly secret NAA tests were run. The results, which included the discovery of antimony traces, were given to the Warren Commission investigating the assassination."
- 2 - The Dallas Morning News, Dallas, Texas, Page 7 August 31, 1964: "Then we took the casts of Oswald's cheek and put them in a nuclear reactor. Remember that they already had been through the chemical tests which would wash particles away. 'I can say for the moment that we found no barium but we found antimony in every case'"
- 3 - United Press International news service release, August 27, 1964:  
UPI - 174

(OSWALD)

GLASGOW, SCOTLAND--THE USE OF RADIOACTIVITY IN CRIMINOLOGY MAY DETERMINE ONCE AND FOR ALL WHETHER LEE HARVEY OSWALD KILLED THE LATE PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY, A SAN DIEGO, CALIF., CHEMIST SAID TODAY.

DR. VINCENT P. GUINN, 46, HEAD OF THE ACTIVATION ANALYSIS (A.A.) PROGRAM OF THE GENERAL ATOMIC DIVISION OF GENERAL DYNAMICS CORPORATION, HAS BEEN WORKING ON THE PROBLEM WITH THE FBI.

"I CANNOT SAY WHAT WE FOUND OUT ABOUT OSWALD BECAUSE IT IS SECRET UNTIL THE PUBLICATION OF THE WARREN COMMISSION REPORT. BUT I CAN TELL YOU ABOUT ACTIVATION ANALYSIS AND CRIME," THE SCIENTIST SAID HERE.

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