

HARDCOPY 11/16/93 - JOHN ELROD TRANSCRIPT

Legend:

BA = Bill Adams;
BN = Barry Nolan (anchor);
HC = Hardcopy announcer;
JE = John Elrod;
LE = Lindy Elrod;
ML = Mary La Fontaine;
OS = Oliver Stone;

TRAILER:

HC: A Hardcopy exclusive. He's kept the secret for 30 years. He was Lee Harvey Oswald's cell mate. And what Oswald told him scared him so much he has been in hiding ever since. Now Hardcopy tracks him down. And for the first time ever he breaks his silence.

JE: Right now I am saying things that could really get me in trouble.

OS: There's been several startling revelations.

HC: Oswald's cell mate.

SHOW:

BN: Now it is the most explosive new evidence uncovered yet in the 30 year investigation into the John F. Kennedy assassination.

JE: I am saying things that could really get me in trouble.

BN: Lee Harvey Oswald's cell mate breaks his silence - that's next.

BN: The Warren Commission never heard of him, the House Assassinations Committee didn't interview him. And you won't find his name in any of the 2000 books written on the Kennedy assassination. John Elrod may be the most important witness yet in the slaying of John F. Kennedy. Because on the day the President died, Elrod was thrown into a jail cell with Lee Harvey Oswald. The images are still disturbing even after all these years. An open motorcade on a sunny Dallas afternoon. The young President and his glamorous first lady. Then tragedy. For 30 years we have been told the alleged assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, was a deranged solitary figure, working alone when he fired a cheap mail-order rifle at the President. For three decades we have been told that Jack Ruby was also acting alone when he murdered Oswald. But that was before we learned about this man's close encounter with Lee Harvey Oswald in the Dallas City jail.

ML: Did he look nervous...or?

JE: I imagine we were all nervous. When you say the word nervous, I say worried.

BN: It was here on the day the President died that John Elrod learned about an alleged secret meeting between Lee Harvey Oswald and Jack Ruby. A meeting that happened just days before, involving guns, gangsters, and money. But for the last 30 years, John Elrod has kept that secret. He has been in hiding, afraid to admit what he knows. With the help of his family, Hardcopy found him on an obscure island. He talked about Dallas but even after all this time he is still worried.

JE: See right now I am saying things that could get me in trouble.

ML: It's not going to get you in trouble. You're telling the truth.

JE: Yea.

ML: And you know.

JE: The truth can get you killed too. You take Oswald - allot of people think he is innocent. His ass is dead. He is gone. I could be innocent and I could be gone next week if the wrong thing is said.

ML: And this is the Sheriff's letter stating that Elrod came in with information...

BN: The story of John Elrod would still be hidden were it not for Hollywood director Oliver Stone. His movie, "JFK" caused such a public outcry that the Dallas Police decided to release long hidden records.

OS: There is more in the files than I ever thought would be there. There's been several startling revelations that have come out that have not made their way into the main stream media.

BN: And that's how investigative journalists, Ray and Mary La Fontaine discovered Elrod's existence. While working on an upcoming book, they found long lost Dallas Police files for the afternoon the President was shot. It was about 2:45, Oswald was already in custody. Somebody reported seeing a man with a rifle not far from Dealey Plaza. When the police arrived they spotted John Elrod. He didn't have a gun but they took him in anyway. They put him in a cell with Oswald. Oswald had been roughed up by the cops.

JE: I...I can't say for sure, but in my mind I thought he was bruised slightly some wheres around this...this...this area in here.

BN: John Elrod's brother Lindy remembers what happened next.

LE: He told Johnny...said I did not shoot no President. Johnny said I know I didn't shoot no President. I believe that...that Oswald told Johnny something and he just don't wanna come out

with it. I don't know what happened. Really don't know what happened. And probably never will know. But something, to me, put a fright in Johnny.

BN: The most obviously frightening thing that occurred happened in the basement. While millions of TV viewers watched, Lee Harvey Oswald was gunned down by Jack Ruby.

JE: It scared the hell out of me. Because I knew Jack Ruby.

BN: But something else scared John Elrod too. According to newly discovered documents, Elrod was tormented by what he knew. Nine months after the assassination, he showed up at the Sheriff's office in Memphis and said he had information concerning the murder of Lee Oswald. The FBI was called in. He told them that back in the Dallas jail his cell mate had talked about a motel room meeting where money changed hands. It was some sort of gun deal and Jack Ruby was at the meeting too. Now Oswald was never mentioned in the FBI report, but if the story checks out, it is extraordinary. Because it places Ruby and Oswald together just days before the assassination - something the Warren Commission, the 1979 House Committee on Assassinations, and 30 years of independent research have failed to do. And it appears there really was such a gun running plot - because just 3 days before Elrod's jail house encounter in Dallas, there was a high speed police chase. Two ex-cons crashed a car loaded with guns. One of the men worked for Jack Ruby. And at the time Ruby was suspected of gun running.

BA: The basic facts of the gun deal are true facts from an actual case the FBI was involved in.

BN: But in 1964, when the Memphis FBI tried to check out John Elrod's story, the Dallas Field Office said he wasn't even in jail the day JFK died. So the Memphis FBI closed their file. Yet newly discovered police records prove that Elrod was in jail. So the question is, was there a cover-up?

OS: It does indicate that the FBI concealed it and covered it up quickly. They didn't want any loose ends and that only conforms to the larger pattern of what Hoover did and John...J. Edgar Hoover...by closing down any serious investigation.

BN: So what was John Elrod's big secret? Perhaps the biggest secret of all - the knowledge that when Jack Ruby shot Lee Harvey Oswald, he was killing somebody he knew. Somebody he wanted to keep quiet. Today when confronted with the FBI report, John Elrod admits he told the FBI that Oswald was his cell mate, but he says he never told them anything about guns, gangsters, or Ruby.

ML: Well, what did you tell them?

JE: I just told them I...I was arrested for the...for the murder down there and I was in a cell with Oswald and...that was it.

BN: We tried to re-assure him. Tried to tell him the more people who know the truth the safer he will be, but he does not believe us. Whatever else he knows are secrets he may take to his grave.

LE: If he tried to tell it and nobody listened, he will probably never tell it again.

BN: Despite repeated requests for an interview, the FBI declined to comment on our report. And tomorrow those newly discovered documents will be presented to a Congressional Committee. We will keep you posted on what happens.

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