

CIA DOCUMENT SUPPRESSION

Tom Bethell is a young English schoolteacher with a passion for jazz. He was in New Orleans working on a university-commissioned book when, according to my information, he heard of the Garrison investigation from Dean Andrews. Bethell volunteered to assist Garrison. It is Bethell who got in touch with me January 1, 1967. He was then with Penn Jones, editor of the Midlothian, Tex., Mirror, expert on the mysterious deaths of people somehow involved in the assassination and its investigation and author of "Forgive My Grief", a book largely on that subject. It is Bethell whom I persuaded to come to Washington to work in the National Archives, as I describe in the text.

Once he was there digging into the New Orleans aspect of the case, I abandoned that to him. Soon I was being asked questions indicating a federal interest in him. My presumption is the curiosity was the FBI's, and entirely improper. For that reason, I thereafter avoided the Archives as much as I could.

From the few brief conversations I had with him after he learned his way around that particular archive and from what Jim Garrison told me when I was in New Orleans, I know Bethell's work was fruitful.

After his return to New Orleans, Ross Yockey, in the States-Item of July 1, 1967, wrote an account of some of his discoveries as embodied in one of his reports. Bethell found, as I had charged in WHITEWASH II, that to the CIA yesterday's unrefrigerated milktoast is still secret. Of a list of 51 such files, classified as "secret" or "top secret", he selected for special mention these 29:

CD 931--Oswald's access to information about the U-2. (S); CD 1054--Information on Jack Ruby and associates. (S); CD 674--Information given to the Secret Service but not yet to the Warren Commission. (S); CD 871--Photos of Oswald in Russia. (S); CD 321--Chronology of Oswald in USSR. (S); CD 680--Appendix to CD 321. (S); CD 691--Appendix A to CD 321; CD 818--Revisions of CD 321. (S); CD 692--Reproduction of official CIA dossier on Oswald; CD 1216--Memo from Helms (CIA Director Richard Helms) entitled "Lee Harvey Oswald." (S); CD 1273--Memo from Helms re. apparent inconsistencies in information provided by CIA. (S); CD 935--Role of Cuban Intelligence Service in processing visa application. (TS); CD 1551--Conversations between Cuban president and ambassador. (TS); CD 347--Activity of Oswald in Mexico City. (S); CD 384--Activity of Oswald in Mexico City; CD 528--Re. allegations Oswald interviewed by CIA in Mexico City; CD 426--Interrogation of Silvia Duran in Mexico City; CD 726--Actions of Duran after first interrogation. (S); CD 1000--Mexican interrogation of Gilberto Alvaredo. (S); CD 1287--Re. Oswald and affidavit concerning cropped picture. (S); CD 698--Reports of travel and activities of Oswald and Marina; CD 631--Re. CIA dissemination of information on Oswald; CD 708--Reply to questions posed by State Department; CD 1012--George and Jeanne DeMohrenschildt. (S); CD 1222--Statements of George DeMohrenschildt re. assassination. (S); CD 943--Allegations of Pfc. Eugene Dinkin re. assassination plot. (S); CD 971--Telephone calls to U.S. Embassy, Canberra (Australia), re. planned assassination. (S); CD 1089--Letter re. assassination sent to Costa Rican embassy. (S); CD 1041--Allegations regarding Intelligence Training School in Minsk (USSR). (S).

These indicate "that the CIA had extensive information on Oswald before the assassination," Yockey reported, and "that Oswald may have had access to secret U-2 aircraft files" (coming from his assignment as a Marine to the Atsugi Air Force Base in Japan), having to do with espionage flights over the USSR.

Bethell also found an unclassified, notarized statement from James D. Crowley, a State Department officer, stating, "The first time I remember learning of Oswald's existence was when I received telegraphic messages dated October 10, 1963, from the Central Intelligence Agency, which contained information pertaining to his current activities."

Bethell concluded that "The contents of this message apparently never reached the Warren Commission because there are no commission documents originating from the CIA dated prior to the assassination ... it would be interesting to know what the CIA knew about Oswald six weeks before the assassination."

Because I concluded and wrote in WHITEWASH more than two and a half years earlier that Oswald in New Orleans was establishing an intelligence cover for his trip to Mexico, I concur in his understatement that "it would be interesting to know what the CIA knew about Oswald six weeks before the assassination", and more particularly, because of the revelation in this book of Oswald's CIA connections.

Two of the men in Bethell's list of suppressed documents, Gilberto Alvaredo and PFC Eugene Dinkin, Yockey reports, are not mentioned in the 26 volumes of printed evidence.

Bethell's study shows that of the 1550 Commission files 300 are still entirely secret and of the remainder about half are in part still secret.

It more than confirms my evidence, that when the murder of President Kennedy was "investigated", the protection of the CIA, FBI and their agents and informants was more important than learning the truth.