

A POSSIBLE FRENCH CONNECTION

In the long hunt for the assassins of President Kennedy, a Freedom of Information Act suit was brought against the CIA for the production of all of the records which they withheld from the general public. Finally in 1977, they produced some 1500 whole and partial "documents," including the following single excised paragraph from a telegram of several pages:

8. Jean SOUETRE aka Michal ROUX aka Michal MERTZ - On 5 March \_\_\_\_\_ the FBI advised that the French had \_\_\_\_\_ the Legal Attache in Paris and also the \_\_\_\_\_ had queried the Bureau in New York City concerning subject stating that he had been expelled from the U.S. at Fort Worth or Dallas 48 hours after the assassination. He was in Fort Worth on morning of 22 November and in Dallas in the afternoon. The French believe that he was expelled to either Mexico or Canada. In January he received mail from a dentist named Alderson living at 5803 Birmingham, Houston, Texas. Subject is believed to be identical with a Captain who is a deserter from the French Army and an activist in the OAS. The French are concerned because of de Gaulle's planned visit to Mexico. They would like to know the reason for his expulsion from the U.S. and his destination. Bureau files are negative and they are checking in Texas and with INS. They would like a check of our files with indications of what may be passed to the French. The FBI \_\_\_\_\_ was given a copy of CSCI-3/776,742 previously furnished the Bureau and CSD3-3/655,207 1/ together with a photograph of Captain SOUETRE. \_\_\_\_\_

Thus began the hunt for Souetre/Roux/Mertz and a possible French Connection to Dallas.

JEAN RENE SOUETRE

Souetre was born at La Brede in the Gironde Department of

France on October 15, 1930.<sup>2/</sup>

The first we know of his career is that he was connected with the French 4th Air Force with the rank of captain, and in 1953 he was stationed at Petite Mulhoun near Rheims. In his work there he was associated with an American Army Depot and became a friend of Dr. Lawrence Alderson, a U.S. Army captain from Houston, Texas. He and Dr. Alderson corresponded through the years, up until the time of the Kennedy assassination. He also became friendly with Alderson's successor, a U.S. army captain named Letourneau from Texas.

Souetre was sent to Algiers in the period 1955-1959. He served with the air commandos in Algeria, and he was the commanding officer of a company of elite parachutists. He received the Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur and the Croix de la Valeur Militaire.<sup>3/</sup>

During the height of the "Algerian troubles," Souetre went AWOL and deserted in February, 1961. He joined the OAS and served in the terrorist Delta Commandos.<sup>4/</sup> He was rumored to be close to General Salan.

Souetre and eight others were arrested at Bougoulat on February 22, 1961 on a number of charges including "sedition" and the illegal possession of arms. He was taken to Algiers and was tried before a special military tribunal in December of 1961. He was sentenced to three years in a detention camp.

However, in February 1962 Souetre escaped with seventeen other OAS deserters.

Subsequent to his escape, Souetre is believed to have played a leading part in planning the OAS attack on General de Gaulle at Petite Clamart.<sup>5/</sup> Once again de Gaulle escaped unharmed.

In 1963 Souetre sought refuge in Spain, along with a number of other OAS deserters. On several occasions he approached CIA agents and tried to persuade them to have the U.S. give its backing to the OAS as the only "viable alternative to communism" in France. There are several CIA documents relating to these approaches by Souetre. He stated that he had U.S. contacts who provided him with documentation.<sup>6/</sup>

In May, 1963, he was working for the OAS in "foreign affairs." He travelled on several passports, including a U.S. passport. He claimed to be documented as a naturalized citizen from Martinique.

By 1966 he had moved to Lisbon where he joined the infamous terrorist group, Aginter Presse. For a number of years Aginter Presse served as a reservoir of contract mercenaries and hired assassins. Under the auspices of Aginter, Souetre recruited French and Belgium mercenaries for the war in Angola.

During 1967-1968 Souetre was involved in an unsuccessful effort to return Moise Tshombe to the Congo. His attempt was frustrated by the SDECE and SAC who kidnapped Tshombe from under

Souetre's nose and flew him to Algiers where he was jailed. Ultimately Tshombe was murdered in jail.

In 1964, when the SDECE questioned the FBI with respect to Souetre after the Kennedy assassination, the FBI checked with the CIA and discovered that the CIA had both a file and photograph of Souetre as of 1 April 1964.<sup>7/</sup>

If he was in Dallas in November, 1963, the reason is unknown. On March 5, 1964, INS searched its files on Souetre and said they came up with nothing on him or his aliases Roux and Mertz. However, as of that time the CIA had a photograph of him, and, presumably, they had a file on him.

In 1953, while in the U.S. Air Force, a Houston dentist, Lawrence M. Alderson, became friendly with Souetre. During the next ten years, they swapped Christmas cards, etc., but apparently had no occasion or reason to meet. The SDECE appears to have informed the FBI in March, 1964, of the friendship, and, in connection with the projected de Gaulle visit to Mexico, the FBI interviewed Alderson, but did not learn anything very interesting. However, if Dr. Alderson is to be believed, the FBI came and talked to him "shortly" after the assassination (certainly before March, 1964) and told him they believed Souetre killed JFK or knew who did; they asked Alderson if he knew who in Washington had had Souetre flown out of the country on a "government airplane."<sup>8/</sup> [If the FBI is to be believed, there does not appear to be anything terribly significant about

the Alderson matter; but, if Alderson is to be believed, it is very significant.]

In 1961 or 1962, Souetre married Mlle. Marcaillou d'Armerie of a wealthy family from Bordeaux. He lives in Divonne-les-Bains, near Geneva, and works in the casino there.

According to the CIA, Souetre has used at least eleven aliases, including those of Michael Victor Mertz and Michael Roux.

#### MICHAEL VICTOR MERTZ

Mertz was born in the Moselle area of France circa 1920. As with many French citizens in the Rhine area, he was inducted into the German Army in 1941. He deserted from the German Army in 1943 and became one of the outstanding leaders of the Resistance. His nom de guerre was "Commandante Baptiste" and he operated in the Limoges area. His exploits have been recorded in a number of books and magazine articles, and his commendation for the Legion of Honor is said to have been prepared by General de Gaulle himself.

In 1946 he was taken into the French Army as a captain. He was sent to Tilberg, Germany, and put into counter-espionage work. Shortly thereafter he was transferred to SDECE, France's equivalent to the CIA. Mertz served SDECE on missions in Germany, Turkey, and Morocco, using the cover of an army captain.

Mertz married Paule Scheller Martel, the adopted daughter of Charles Martel, operator of the famous bordello in Paris by the name of the Sphinx. This was Mertz' introduction into the underworld of France and Canada.

In his SDECE work Mertz became a close confidant of Alexander Sanguinetti, a Corsican born in Cairo, whose immediate superior was Jacque Foccart, the head of SDECE. By 1960 Mertz was actively engaged in both espionage and the smuggling of narcotics on a large scale from France to both the U.S. and Canada. Mertz was one of a great number of Frenchmen who had both SDECE and narcotics connections.

In April 1961 the SDECE ordered him back to France to infiltrate the Algerian secret army (OAS). The OAS consisted of ex-French army officers and men who defied de Gaulle on his decision to grant independence to Algeria. Virtually all of the OAS were deserters from the French military forces and their primary tactic was terrorism. An enormous amount of literature has been written with respect to the long and bitter fight between the Gaullists and the OAS.

Mertz was sent to Algiers as an army captain. He quickly "deserted" and his OAS number was 5762. In January of 1961 he was arrested as an OAS sympathizer and on July 11, 1961 he was sent to a detention camp for OAS deserters. The name of the camp was Beaujon, and it is believed that it was there that he may have met Jean Rene Souetre.

Mertz acted as an agent provocateur in an attempt on the life of General de Gaulle at Pont-Sur-Seine. Needless to say, during all of this time, he was working for the SDECE and the Gaullists.

As a result of his work, the SDECE allowed General de Gaulle to be attacked at Pont-Sur-Seine but assured that he would not be hurt. All of the plotters were either executed or jailed, except for Mertz, who did not go on trial but was given free plane tickets for Canada on the very day that the trial began, September, 1961. Mertz once again was back in the narcotics business.

On October 11, 1961 Mertz was back in France and from that time until 1969 he and his colleagues were alleged to have moved two tons of heroin across the North Atlantic. He was closely associated with the following well-known French gangsters: Achille Ceccini, Jean Nebbia, and Joe Attia, as well as his father-in-law Charles Martel. Mertz was also closely connected with the Trafficante organization in Florida.

Several times during the 1960's, the U.S. asked France to take action against Mertz but the French refused because of his SDECE and de Gaullist connections. He was literally known as one of the "untouchables."

However, after a great deal of pressure and after some weakening of the Gaullists, Mertz was arrested on November

24, 1969 as the leader of the so-called Bousquet ring. On July 5, 1971 he was convicted and sentenced to five years. However, he served only a small portion of the term and his present whereabouts are unknown.

Mertz speaks almost perfect English and Spanish, as well as French.<sup>9/</sup> His present whereabouts are unknown.

MICHAEL ROUX

In March, 1964, while tracking down Souetre/Mertz/Roux at the behest of SDECE, lo and behold if the FBI did not come up with a real, live, French Michael Roux who was in Ft. Worth, Texas, on November 22, 1963.

The FBI's Michael Roux was born on August 31, 1940 at Soyaux, Charente, France.

After three years in the French Army in Algeria, he deserted; it is not known if he joined the OAS or not. He speaks French, German, and English.

In October of 1963 he was serving as a room clerk in the Paris Proust Hotel, 68 Rue des Martyrs. He became friendly with two American tourists whom he escorted around Paris. What follows is the FBI version of how he came to be in Ft. Worth on November 22, 1963:

\_\_\_\_\_ Ft. Worth,  
Texas, on March ten, states he and \_\_\_\_\_

who is \_\_\_\_\_ made a business trip to Europe during October, sixtythree. While in Paris, France, they stayed at Hotel Proust, six eight Rue des Matyrs. The room clerk who checked them in was Michel Roux. Roux spoke fairly good English and also spoke German and French. Roux served as their guide and took them in his car on tour of Paris. Roux stated he had been in the French army for three years and was a Lieutenant. That he served in Algeria, and had an honorable discharge. Roux also stated he had been to a school that taught him how to operate a hotel or a restaurant and was desirous of coming to the United States and eventually opening his own French restaurant.

\_\_\_\_\_ invited him to look them up if he did come to the United States. They also suggested that Houston would be a good place for him to secure a job in the hotel business.

On night November twenty, last, Roux called from Houston, Texas, in attempt to contact \_\_\_\_\_. The next morning \_\_\_\_\_ returned the call and invited Roux to come to Fort Worth. Roux came by bus arriving in Ft. Worth during early evening November twentyone, last. \_\_\_\_\_ picked him up and Roux spent the evening with \_\_\_\_\_ and his family. Roux explained he had sold his car to defray his trip expenses and hoped to get a job in a hotel and later send for his wife and child who were still in Paris. That night \_\_\_\_\_ took Roux to the Fox Manor Hotel, six one one West Second Street and got him a room. The next morning, November twentytwo, \_\_\_\_\_ picked up Roux and Roux attended classes with \_\_\_\_\_ at Texas Christian University from ten A.M. until twelve noon. Roux and \_\_\_\_\_ were in a cafe eating when they heard of the attack on President Kennedy. \_\_\_\_\_ and Roux went to the home of \_\_\_\_\_ and listened to the radio and TV and later returned to the office of \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ took Roux home for the evening. The \_\_\_\_\_ stated that during Roux-s visit in Ft. Worth he was not involved in any matter with the local police or federal authorities. Was almost constantly in their company.

Roux stated that when he first arrived in Houston, he checked in to the Hotel Montague/phonetic/. Roux left Ft. Worth by bus on November twentythree or twentyfour to return to Houston. \_\_\_\_\_ went to Houston on about November twentyfour, last and met Roux at the St. George Hotel. Six one one and one half San Jacinto.

Through \_\_\_\_\_ Houston, Roux was sent to Mexico City to work in hotel until Roux could secure the proper visa to return and live in the United States. \_\_\_\_\_ received one or two post cards from Roux in Mexico City. However, he was unable to locate the letters and does not remember the name of the hotel.

About February fifteen, last, \_\_\_\_\_ received a post card from Roux in which Roux stated he was back in France and gave his address as Michel Rous, four six Rue de Baubeuge, Paris, nine, thru. Six three, four one. \_\_\_\_\_ both verified above information furnished by \_\_\_\_\_.

Michel Roux was described by the \_\_\_\_\_ as white male, twenty five to twenty seven, five feet, eight inches, one hundred forty to one hundred fifty pounds, medium build, black hair, fair to olive complexion, wearing black suit, well dressed.

\_\_\_\_\_ Ft. Worth has registration card showing Michel Roux, four six Rue de Baugeuge, Paris, Nine, France, registered there in November, sixtythree, but no date shown on card. She states Roux was there two or three nights sometime about latter part of November last. He was alone and left no forwarding address.10/

Roux became a U.S. citizen in 1970, lived in Dallas until 1978, and now lives in New York City. Although he has been interviewed, neither he nor the FBI will reveal the names of his American "sponsors." Thus, his story as to why he was in Texas on November 22, 1963, cannot be verified.

#### DOMINIQUE ROUX

While checking on a possible Michael Roux in Texas on November 22nd, the FBI stumbled across another and very interesting Monsieur Roux:

On March 5, 1964, Mr. A. Crixell, Pan American World Airways, Houston, Texas, checked the records of that company for flights to Mexico City during the period November 22 through November 30, 1963, and no information was located regarding Souetre under his name or known aliases. The records of Pan American World Airways, however, did indicate that Dominique P. Roux and Viviane H. Roux departed Houston, Texas, for Mexico City on November 22, 1963. The records also reflect that John P. Mertz, Irma Rio de Mertz and Sara Mertz departed Houston, Texas, for Mexico City on November 23, 1963. These records contained no further identifying data regarding these individuals. 11/

Although it is not known at this time whether Pan Am's Dominique Roux of November 22nd is the same individual, there is a famous and infamous French author and soldier-of-fortune by the same name.

Dominique Roux was born in Algeria, date unknown. His father was governor of the Bank of France in Algeria. Roux, who became a well-known politician and writer, was married to the daughter of a former mayor of the Town of Royan.

Roux became an OAS terrorist and served in Commandos Delta.

Later, Roux was not only a member of the infamous Aginter Presse, but was probably one of its founders and heads.

Dominique de Roux and Jean Rene Souetre are connected through Aginter Presse. It is also interesting to note Roux's close ties to Aginter's fascist-partners in Italy (Centro Commerciale Mondial, Permindex), especially Stefano Della Chaie and former intelligence-officer Giannettini. 12/ Giannettini

is a notorious fascist involved in several terror-actions. In 1962 he went to the U.S. on invitation from General Delvalle, commander of the Marine-Center in Annapolis, Maryland. Here Giannettini taught several courses in "the techniques and possibilities of a coup d'etat in Europe." There is no date for his return to Europe, only that in 1964 he founded a European fascist action group, probably what later became Aginter. In 1964 it was called AMSAR and was financed by Spanish and Portuguese intelligence and groups in South Africa and Latin America.<sup>13/</sup>

During the war in Angola in 1976, Dominique de Roux, was the chief adviser to UNITA and his fellow adviser was Stefano della Chiaie, close friend of Giannettini and head of Italian terror group Avanguardia Nazionale, probably the most murderous group of all.

Roux is believed also to have fought in Mozambique, Guinee-Bissau, and Cabinda. According to several sources, he died in a strange automobile accident in the Spring of 1978.<sup>14/</sup>

#### OAS, AGINTER, AND PALADIN

There are a number of reports that the OAS was encouraged by several elements of the U.S. "intelligence community," which, naturally, enraged de Gaulle. For example, two U.S. colonels were said to have been at General Challe's side on April 22, 1961.<sup>15/</sup>

The Chicago Tribune reported that discussions took place at unspecified levels between the CIA and OAS to arrange to poison de Gaulle.<sup>16/</sup> President Kennedy tried to reassure de Gaulle personally that no element of the U.S. government was supporting the revolt.<sup>17/</sup>

Soustelle and the OAS were financed in part by Ferenc Nagy via Centro Mondial Commercial in Rome.<sup>18/</sup>

The OAS and its successor organizations were closely tied to the world anti-communist movement, especially WACL after it was founded circa 1966.

Many ex-OAS types fought in the Congo and other African wars.

In 1968, the French granted amnesty to members of the OAS. Today many of them live in and around Divonne-les-Bains.<sup>19/</sup>

Aginter Presse was set up in Lisbon in 1966. It contained many OAS members. It was founded by Dominique Roux who was described by Burchette as a "French agent of the Gestapo trained PIDE."<sup>20/</sup> Aginter was headed by Yves Guerin-Serac, another OAS member.

Paladin, a group similar to Aginter, was a terrorist organization founded by Otto Skorzeny, an ex-Nazi.

The MNC, an extremist Cuban exile group operating out of Miami and New Orleans, had close relations with the OAS.<sup>21/</sup>

The same is true of the Anti-Communism League of the Caribbean, which operated out of New Orleans. In fact, Maurice Brooks Gatlin, Sr., legal counsel to the League, is alleged to have delivered in 1962 the sum of \$100,000 to a group in Paris for the assassination of de Gaulle.<sup>22/</sup> Also, Ed Butler's Information Council of the Americas, in New Orleans, had two right-wing French directors on its Board.

#### CLAY SHAW, PERMINDEX, AND CMC

The name of Clay Shaw, who was the target in 1967-1969 of a sensational prosecution in New Orleans by DA Jim Garrison, very surprisingly also appears in this scenario.

Two inter-connected, right-wing organizations were established in Europe in the late 1950's and early 1960's: La Permanent Industrial Exposition (Permindex) in Switzerland and Centro Mondial Commercial (CMC) in Italy. Both groups were highly secret, dealt in arms, and were alleged to be conduits for the financing of Soustelle and the OAS.

Clay Shaw joined the Board of Directors of Permindex in 1958, the only American on the Board. Permindex was founded by Giorgio Mantello, and Ferenc Nagy was its President; Nagy eventually ended up living in Dallas. Permindex was dissolved by the Swiss government when it was proved to be a conduit for OAS financing.<sup>23/</sup>

Permindex and CMC were alleged to have financed a 1962 attempt on the life of de Gaulle by Colonel Bastien-Thiry, et al.<sup>24/</sup>

Clay Shaw, who was thought to be CIA, not only spoke fluent French but was also the recipient of a number of French decorations.

The only other North American closely connected to Permindex and CMC was L.M. Bloomfield, Montreal banker and former member of OSS during WW II.

MISCELLANY

George de Mohrenschildt. Oswald's "baby sitter," June 1962-April 1963.

Worked for French intelligence in WW II.<sup>25/</sup>

Haiti 1963-1967.

Friend of Gus de la Barre, who, in turn, was very close to General Walker.

Friend of Clemand Joseph Charles who, in turn, was close to Duvalier and Jacqueline Lancelot.

\* \* \*

Colonel George de Lannurian, SDECE, alleged to have met with right-wing Texans soon before the assassination.

He was with James Angleton at the time of the assassination.

Jose Luis Romero. OAS type of Spanish descent, who confessed to being hired by American intelligence to assassinate JFK in Paris in May, 1962.<sup>26/</sup>

Eugene Dinkins. American soldier in Europe in November, 1963, who was involved in deciphering intercepted OAS communications, who warned of JFK assassination before the event.

Nadine Bestougeff. White Russian born in Paris; questioned at length by FBI for possible fore-knowledge of JFK assassination.

Jean de Menil. President of Slumberger Well Service Co. of Houston.

#### A FEW QUESTIONS

1. Was Souetre in Dallas and, if so, why?
2. Was Mertz in Dallas and, if so, why?
3. Is Michael Roux's alibi true or false?
4. Was Pan Am's Dominique Roux the French terrorist and, if so, what was he doing in Texas?
5. Was George de Mohrenschildt or Jean de Menil connected with any of the above?
6. If any OAS terrorist were involved, was it on behalf of OAS or simply as a hired assassin?

FOOTNOTES

- 1/ CIA Document 632-796, dated April 1, 1964.
- 2/ CIA telegram from Algiers, dated February 28, 1961.
- 3/ Ibid.
- 4/ Ibid.
- 5/ CIA telegram of June 25, 1963.
- 6/ Undated CIA document.
- 7/ CIA document 632-796.
- 8/ House Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA).
- 9/ For published accounts of Mertz's exploits, see, for example, The Heroin Trail, Newsday, 1973, pp. 109-129; Target de Gaulle, Pierre Demaret, pp. 98-106; and The Marseilles Mafia, Pierre Galant, 1979, pp. 41-55.
- 10/ FBI (Dallas) telegram of March 11, 1964.
- 11/ FBI (Houston) memorandum of March 6, 1964.
- 12/ L'Orchestre Noir, Frederick Laurent, p. 193n.
- 13/ Laurent, op. cit., p. 193; and Daniele Barbieri: Agenda Nera, Coines Edizioni, 1976.
- 14/ See Soldier of Fortune, May, 1978.
- 15/ Wolves in the City, Paul Henissart, p. 107n.
- 16/ Washington Evening Star, June 16, 1975.
- 17/ Henissart, op. cit.
- 18/ Paesa Sera, March 6, 1967; Paris Flammonde, p. 222.

- 19/ Wilfred Burchette, The Whores of War, p. 154.
- 20/ op. cit., p. 159.
- 21/ Miami Herald, \_\_\_\_\_, 1965. -
- 22/ William Turner in Ramparts.
- 23/ See Paese Sera, 3/4/67; Turner in Ramparts; and Paris Flammond, p. 213.
- 24/ Flammond, ibid.; see also Cabal.
- 25/ Peter Dale Scott; Haagse Post, Sept. 30, 1967.
- 26/ See book by Camille Gille.