

THE FOURTH DECADE

1963

1973

1983

1993

2003

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Odum, along with SA James P. Hosty, interviewed Sylvia Odio, whose testimony suggested that Lee Oswald visited her home with two Cubans, in late September 1963, soliciting funds for JURE, an anti-Castro organization. (11H369)

The "Bard", on December 1, 1963, went to the TSBD and made a replica bag from material found in the shipping room on that date, (WR p. 130) and later showed the replica bag to Buell Wesley Frazier and his sister Linnie Mae Randle. (CE1077, 364; 4H93)

Odum also had, in his possession, the shells and slugs from the Tippit shooting. On June 11-12 1964, Odum showed these to Captain G.M. Doughty of the Dallas Police Department, to Domingo Benavides, a witness to the Tippit shooting, to Officer J.M. Poe (DPD), to Doctor Paul Mollenhoff, Methodist Hospital and to Doctor Earl Rose. His purpose-to have the witnesses verify the validity of the ballistics evidence. (CE2011, 24H415)

On November 23, 1963, Odum went to the Executive Inn, a motel where Marina Oswald was staying. The agent had with him a photograph of an unknown individual that had been furnished to the FBI by the CIA, attempting to identify the individual to determine if he was an associate of Lee Oswald. (Affidavit of Bardwell D. Odum, 11H468) Odum claimed in this affidavit that he showed his picture to Marguerite Oswald and that it was a picture "furnished" to the Bureau by the CIA, cropped to remove the background, presumably the mysterious "Oswald" from CIA surveillance in Mexico City. Mrs. Oswald claimed (1H153) that Odum showed her Jack Ruby's picture, the night before Ruby obtained notoriety by shooting Oswald.

Odum also interviewed Helen P. Cunningham, counselor at the Texas Employment Commission. Oswald had been turned over to Mrs. Cunningham for counseling. (WR pp. 718, 719; 10H120)

Also, from the Employment Commission, Odum questioned Louise Latham and Robert L. Adams. It was Latham who sent Oswald to Jaggars Chiles Stovall, where he was hired. (10H175-179) She was never questioned officially about her connection with Oswald.

In March 1964, she abruptly resigned from her job and she and her husband, who worked for the Post Office, suddenly moved to a small town sixty-five miles from Dallas where he took a job as a Postmaster at a

considerable pay cut.

Henry Hurt, author of *Reasonable Doubt* interviewed Mrs. Latham in June 1977. From Hurt's book:

"In the interview with the author, Mrs. Latham was asked if George de Mohrenschildt had anything to do with Oswald getting the job at JCS. 'Don't believe it; she said, I sent him (Oswald) over there.' Then Mrs. Latham made several curious statements that seemed almost defensive. She said that she interviewed Oswald 'five or six times' and that 'I never sent him on a job he didn't get' There is no record that Louise Latham ever sent Oswald to any job other than the one at Jaggars Chiles Stovall. Mrs. Latham - a well educated woman who had worked successfully in New York and Princeton, New Jersey, before going to Dallas - declined to elaborate. Mrs. Latham said that she had never been interviewed on this subject by anyone." (pp. 221-222)

Robert L. Adams, from the Employment Commission, was interviewed by SA Odum. Adams may be the most interesting of the people at the Commission. His testimony was taken on April 1, 1964 by Albert Jenner Jr. Assistant Counsel of the Warren Commission, and throughout the interview, Adams denied knowing Lee Oswald and at no time remembered dealing with Lee on the phone or in person. From Adams' testimony:

Mr. Jenner. Well, do you recall when you were interviewed by Mr. Odum of the FBI on the 27th of November 1963?

Mr. Adams. Yes, Sir.

Mr. Jenner. At that time you appeared to have a recollection of a telephone call from Oswald on October 8, in response to a message of your own of October 7, 1963. Do you recall that incident?

Mr. Adams. No sir; I couldn't say that I positively do. If the record says I did, I did.

Mr. Jenner. Then I take it, that a record of the transaction was made.

Mr. Adams. Yes.

Mr. Jenner. If it occurred?

Mr. Adams. Yes.

Mr. Jenner. And you have no recollection independent of that record?

Mr. Adams. No, Sir. (10H139)

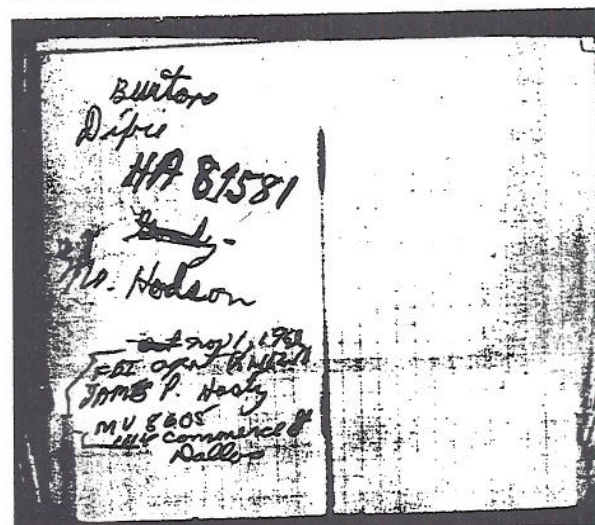
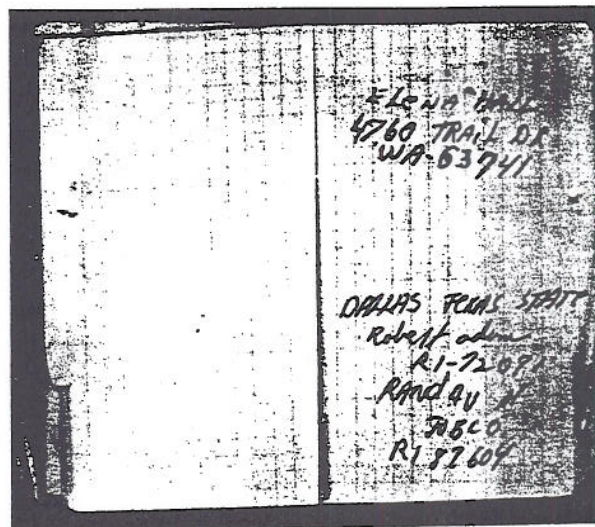
In an affidavit of Adams taken on August 4, 1964 (11H480, 481), Adams was "born again." Now he remembered Oswald. On October 15, he had called Lee at the Paine's home to send him on an interview at Trans Texas Airways. Lee was not there. He called the following day, at 10:30 am and was told by Ruth Paine that Oswald was now working. October 15 was the day that Lee was hired at the TSBD at \$1.25 per hour. The Airways job would have paid a salary of \$310 per month. Ruth never informed Lee about the call. (See Moyer and Gallagher, *The Babysisters*, p.9)

This writer believes that Lee's job at the TSBD was deliberately arranged by forces beyond the fable told by the Warren Commission. It was ordained that he be in that particular building by November 22, 1963. History would have it no other way.

If this be the case - Oswald had to be controlled, away from employment that would place him outside the motorcade route, and, then, there was no better place to be at 12:30, to fire at the President than in Dealey Plaza and the TSBD. No place along the motorcade route would an assassin have such a clear and easy shot. It was the end of the parade, it was an open area isolating the victim from the crowd, and the limousine was in a position where it had to travel at a slow rate of speed after making the difficult turn onto Elm Street from Houston. Oswald's presence in the TSBD was no accident of fate.

At this point, permit a digression to another topic of interest - Oswald's address book and the page familiar to most researchers; the page containing SA James P. Hosty's name, his license number, the address of the FBI office and the telephone number of the Agency. (CE 18) On the same page in the book of Warren Hearings, as shown here, is another name, location, and phone number. The location is the Dallas Texas State and the phone number is RI 7-2071. No doubt Oswald meant Texas Employment Commission, since the Riverside phone number reached the switchboard of the offices of the Employment Service and, if one asked a defender of the Warren Commission whose name is on the page, I'm sure that they would say Robert Adams, who worked at the Commission and was "born again" on August 4, 1964. Remember Robert?

Please, one more digression. If Oliver Stone ever does



JFK II and needs a volunteer to write and direct a scene between Oswald and the Texas Employment Commission, I would appreciate the opportunity to try my hand at creating the scene for the big screen. It would go like this!

The scene opens with Lee cashing his unemployment check at a local liquor store. From there he is observed looking through the male help wanted ads in the Dallas Morning News. Not pleased with the offering, Lee throws the paper into a trash can next to a phone booth. He thinks, "I'll call Robert Odum at the Dallas Texas State and see if he can help." He dials RI 7-2071 and asks the switchboard operator for Robert Odum. He hears a "click" and, "hello, Odum here." After a short

discussion about what is not available, Lee is told, "Sorry, Lee, but keep in touch." With that, Lee is seen leaving the telephone booth eating a peanut butter sandwich grumbling to himself about how good the Russian welfare system was.

When I ask, "How did you like the scene, you say, "It was ok, but Robert Odum was an FBI agent and did not work at the Texas Employment Commission." You are right - I'll reshoot the scene."

This time, when the operator, at the Commission, answers the phone and Lee asks for Robert Odum, the operator is seen connecting Lee with Bardwell Odum at the FBI office on Commerce Street. The "spooks" probably refer to this as a "patch-call." The rest of the scene remains the same, peanut butter sandwich and all.

Far fetched? Not at all. If you were in possession of Oswald's address book and you wanted to get in touch with the person whose name appears above the RI 7-2071 number, you probably would ask the operator for Robert Odum, as Lee did in the make believe scene in JFK II.

Take a look at the page in Oswald's address book, then try to explain to some one, who doesn't know FBI SA Odum from Robert Adams at the Employment Service that they should ask for Robert Adams, based on what they see on the page.

I personally believe that Oswald's employment, or lack of opportunity to be employed, was controlled by individuals responsible for his eventual presence in the TSBD on November 22, 1963. And, if this was the case, it is my opinion that Bardwell D. Odum should not be overlooked as the "handler" and the man for the job.

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FETZER'S FOLLIES CONTINUED: A REPLY

BY

Hal Verb

"It's what you learn after you know it all that counts."
- W.C. Fields

I must say that, when I read Fetzer's 5 page dissent or rebuttal (see "[Fourth Decade](#)". May 1998) which was his "reply" to my article in the January, 1998 issue (wherein I critically reviewed both Fetzer's [Assassination Science](#) and Twyman's [Bloody Treason](#)), I was in no way surprised that he would respond but my immediate reaction after reading Fetzer's treatise was three-fold: (A) first, I now know better what the famous British philosopher, Bertrand Russell, truly felt and meant when he once wrote: "I have suffered a great deal for being misunderstood, but I would have suffered a great deal more if I had really been understood!"; (B) second, Fetzer's reply represents a classic text-book case of distortion, misrepresentation, misinformation, subject matter unawareness, and a very clear avoidance of substantive issues I've raise (whether intentional or not). This will be thoroughly discussed in my refutation herein. To just cite one example very briefly: there is the argument I presented on precisely when the first shot occurred in the JFK assassination, and the absolutely crucial relevance of this to the question of film alteration and photo and x-ray forgery; and (C) my third reaction to Fetzer's commentary was that his "arguments" left about as much impression on me as that by a sore thumb on a prayer or hymn book.

In a very real sense, Fetzer's diatribe upon my competence and credibility was predictable since it continued a pattern he has exhibited and maintained ever since I confronted him (and Dr. Mantik) at the Dallas Lancer JFK Conference in 1996. For readers of this journal who may desire to be reminded of some of the accusations made against me, recall that in Fetzer's May, 1998 article, among the many words or phrases he uses, he describes me variously as "blinded"; "dreadfully unquali-

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fied"; "hopelessly inadequate"; "superficial"; "sailed over (Verb's) head"; "cheap shots" and that my criticisms are "simply false". This short list is by no means all that Fetzer stated about me but it gives, at least for first time readers, a pretty good idea of Fetzer's frame of reference. As I will demonstrate, none of these charges upon inspection will withstand the very rigorous requirements of factual standards.

To return to the Dallas Lancer JFK 1996 Conference: again, for those who may or may not have been present (a video version should be available for proof of what I have to say), during a question and answer period after Fetzer and Mantik spoke, I challenged both and stated that I didn't believe in film alteration theory and that I rejected several of Dr. Mantik's claims. I further added that I would answer both in a paper or abstract that I would publish. Fetzer responded to me by calling me "irrational" and stated this without even knowing precisely what my dissent was based on! (I had to wait a little over a year before my refutation was published in the *Fourth Decade*, but part of my delay in doing this was due primarily in waiting for Fetzer's and Twyman's books to appear so I could properly debate the issues).

In his reply to my article, Fetzer has argued by following a numerical sequence dealing with eleven points in my refutation which he has numbered as beginning with (0) and ending at (10). I've no quarrel with this arrangement and will follow this numbering system throughout my article.

Before doing this, I wish to take vigorous exception to themes he raised against me at the very beginning of his reply. This concerns the paragraphs he addressed about my remarking in the Jan. 1998 article that the two books I reviewed were described as "complementary" to each other. The other theme or comment he discussed concerned my "sincerity" and "seriousness" and its relationship to the JFK case. One other theme is Fetzer's taking me to task for having "concentrated" on the areas of film, photo and x-ray alteration to the exclusion of other issues raised in both books. These issues revolve around "proofs" as to the nature of the conspiracy and what political forces were behind it. This exclusionary method on my part represents an "indulgence" to air my personal views on matters of "special interest", according to Fetzer.

On this issue of "complementarity" and what a reviewer chooses or chooses not to review, Fetzer elsewhere notes that "sometimes the referee takes the measure of the book and sometimes the book takes the measure of the referee." I take this to mean, if I correctly understand what Fetzer is saying here, that this time the referee (Verb) has been given a knock-out punch if not a TKO (technical knock-out) in arguments advanced by Fetzer.

But it is important to explain the many reasons why I did concentrate on the alteration and forgery issue (readers will probably suspect why if they will note my reference to the Lancer Conference above) and this will be explained. Before I do so, I wish to raise an objection to Fetzer's rigid literary laws of reviewing and how books are to be reviewed.

The great literary reviewers of the past when writing on scientific subjects chose those areas found within the contents of the book especially appealing or of interest to them. They had no need and maybe not even a desire to review the entire book. One thinks of such eminent scientific writers of the past such as Havelock Ellis or J.B.S. Haldane and more recently of works by Steven Gould and Carl Sagan.

But I had more compelling reasons for why I chose to dwell on the issues of alteration and forgery than the above. I once had dinner with Twyman at one of these Dallas JFK Conferences and we discussed the issue of film alteration (actually it was only the Zapruder film since the other films weren't mentioned.) While not going into any great detail on my differences with Twyman, I told him I was in total opposition to the Zapruder film being altered. At no point in our discussion did we mention the nature of the conspiracy or who were the principles behind it. No discussion on this point whatsoever! Twyman told me then that he was working on a book and that I should wait until I saw his evidence before I concluded further. I replied that, of course, I'd await publication and that when this occurred I'd critically examine it and if I had any objections he would hear from me.

One can see from this brief history above that my "concentration" was on Z-film alteration and forgery and when you combine this with my vow at the 1996 Lancer Conference that I'd write a critique of what Fetzer and

Mantik had to say (where neither of the two raised the issue of the nature and members of the conspiracy.) Is it any wonder that in my review I would "concentrate" on an aspect which Fetzer, Mantik and Twyman have all raised?

So far, if Fetzer is keeping score, there are no "false" statements presented herein and the video tapes and a private conversation can readily be consulted to confirm this.

With respect to Fetzer's point about my "sincerity" and "seriousness" which he acknowledges but then states that these characteristics by themselves wouldn't solve the case: this commentary is gratuitous on the part of Fetzer and, indeed, is totally unnecessary and does not help his cause, they are irrelevant to our discussion and the substantive issues I'm raising. During the 35 years I've studied this case I have interviewed sincere persons, liars, misinformed people, the serious and the insincere and I always look for what the evidence is that can be backed up. If they are insincere or non-serious, that is their affair. My sole concern is what can be documented and proven. Or, as the great English writer, Samuel Butler, once put it: "I don't mind lying but I hate inaccuracy!"

Let us now address the eleven points raised by Fetzer against me, starting with point (0) which concerns his contention that I "misquoted" him when I referred to the Cabell brothers as being "two rich and powerful right-wing politicians against two powerful left-wing politicians." (See page 13 of *Fourth Decade*, Jan., 1998) But turn to page 371 of Fetzer's book and you'll see that Fetzer is wrong once again. While I didn't describe the left-wing politicians as both rich and powerful in the above sentence and left out the "rich", I did do this two sentences later wherein I stated that they were "rich left-wing and powerful politicians". My meaning of this statement is very clear: it was a case of two rich and powerful right-wing politicians against two rich and powerful left-wing politicians.

Fetzer then faults me for having been mistaken as to who the two rich left-wing politicians were. Had Fetzer stated that the two were brothers without naming them I would not have mis-identified them as being President Kennedy and LBJ. Fetzer himself admits to having caused all this confusion since he didn't spell out who these

men were. That Fetzer meant the Kennedy brothers but didn't put it in his text will explain the confusion but this by no means settles the matter as we shall see.

Nowhere in Fetzer's entire book does he describe Robert Kennedy as a "left-wing" politician. Of the 5 references to RFK, none deal with his political ideology or thinking. None! The reader can easily confirm this. However, in my Jan., 1998 *Fourth Decade* review, readers will recall that, in Fetzer's description of this supposed right versus left adversarial relationship, I said his designation of who the leftists were was a real "howler". With Fetzer's substitution of the leftists as being the Kennedy brothers it now becomes more than a "howler"—it assumes the quality of political misrepresentation and a misreading of history. Indeed, if Fetzer was skating on very thin ice before, he now has plunged into a political quick-sand of his own making. Fetzer may teach "assassination science" in his science courses, but how would he fare in a political science course describing "left-wing" politics?

John Kennedy as a left-winger? Is this the same President who allowed the invasion of Cuba to occur (he could have stopped it); a President who pushed a "missile gap" crisis; a President who continued a military build-up of the US military (whose legacy is continued to this day); and a President who allowed the CIA to roam all over the world conducting its nefarious deeds; all while promoting such bally-hooed and propagandistic efforts as the "Alliance for Progress" which provided Latin American countries with military aid together with "economic assistance?"

As a dreadful example (one of many) of Kennedy's "left-wing" legacy, let us consider what JFK considered as "constructive" advice to a military mission to Colombia. One document that has surfaced reads that "as necessary (there should be) executive paramilitary, sabotage and/or terrorist activities against known communist proponents." (Here read "known communist proponents" as being peasants, union organizers, human rights activists, etc.). With "left-wing" politicians like these, who needs such right-wing ones as the Cabell brothers?!

In so far as Bobby Kennedy is concerned, he approved this Colombian plan along with his brother. And if this "constructive" advice Bobby approved of is true, then

any argument positing him, too, as a "leftist" is a cruel joke and tragedy regardless of his behavior after his brother was killed since the relevant time period we're concerned with here is prior to the JFK assassination.

A recent book on RFK, incidentally, portrays him as being essentially conservative and not even liberal. A review of this book appeared in the NY Times Book Review and it was done by George Will, who agreed that RFK was conservative; and Will is one of the leading conservatives in the U.S.; who would know better than he does?

Or read, for that matter, a book on Martin Luther King, Pillar of Fire by Taylor Branch, a Pulitzer Prize winner in which he describes the relationship between RFK and King. Branch has commented that, contained within his book, is "one of the most poignant moments in Bobby's life, when in RFK's own secret oral history that would not be released until his death, he said he never had a conversation with Martin Luther King on any topic other than communists and what to do about them."

You can describe LBJ as being right-wing, but it is to be noted that historically it was LBJ who pushed through and passed a civil right act early in his administration and that kind of political behavior, most historians agree, would not have been possible during the so-called "left-wing" reign of the Kennedy brothers.

To continue with Fetzer's numerical order and my reply: (1) Fetzer faults me for contesting the validity of the Evelyn Lincoln letter published in both Fetzer's and Twyman's books in which she stated her belief as to who the conspirators were. Although I didn't raise the issue of why this letter-as opposed to so many others-appeared when it clearly has nothing to do with scientific evidence, my central point was its validity. I didn't state the letter was an outright forgery-I simply questioned what I considered were "problematic and disturbing" elements I found. That is all! Of the six objections I raised on this (0) point, there is not a single false statement. Although I noted that the letter to "Dear Richard" appeared without the usual full address, I had only asked "why?" Fetzer's reply on this is that it didn't appear because Fetzer wanted "to preserve the anonymity of the recipient." This is a perfectly reasonable thing to do, of course, but Fetzer's explanation here is given in reply to me and is not in his book. That reason should

have been given and so stated in his text and was not, thus, showing a bit of unnecessary sloppiness by Fetzer for not including this exclusionary reason. Again, here, as in point (0), there is not a single false statement made in the six objections I raised.

One final note on this point and its relevance will have to be determined by the reader of this article. In the very last sentence of the third paragraph dealing with Fetzer's defense of the Lincoln letter, he states "her opinions are especially noteworthy in view of her past position among JFK's most trusted aids." This "most trusted" theme may have to be seen in a different light when one considers a recent article (S.F.Chronicle, 3/17/98) in which Evelyn Lincoln received "harsh criticism" from Kennedy's children for her handling of "treasured mementos" belonging to JFK. A statement released by the children condemns her for having "breached both the public trust and that of our family."

(2) Fetzer notes my objection to Twyman's handling of the first shot evidence wherein I found an obvious contradiction. I pointed out that on page 98 (and here Fetzer finally caught me in an error, since I should have listed this as page 99) Twyman states regarding the Willis #5 photo: "this photo was taken an instant before (my emphasis) Kennedy was first hit." Since we now know that Willis #5 is equivalent to Zapruder frame #202, it is very clear that it is Twyman who says this (read it for yourself). The photo on page 99 is marked exhibit 10-1 which is not the Warren Commission's numbering system. It is Twyman's numbering system before we proceed any further. As I will note in my other points soon to be addressed, it is my contention that JFK was struck first (and, indeed, the very first shot) was at the equivalent of Z-189. For the sake of argument, clearly if one accepts this photo taken by Willis at Z-202, it necessarily follows that it had to be a photo taken after the first shot. One can draw a line graph showing what Twyman is saying here and there should be no confusion, one would hope, so far.

I then cited Twyman's reference to Zapruder frame 188 (see Twyman, pages between 144 and 145) wherein Twyman states that "the sound of the first shot was indicated to be at approximately this point (between frames 186 and 202) by the Betzner photo and Willis photo, one taken before (my emphasis) and one after (my em-

phasis again) the first shot."

Again draw a line graph and one can line up with Twyman's having Betzner (at Z-186) whose photo is "one taken before" the first shot (which I agree with) and then Willis (at Z-202) who is lined up (by Twyman) as "one after the first shot." If Fetzer still insists and asserts that this is not a contradiction, he must be using a different dictionary than the one I use and one like no other on the face of this earth!

As if Twyman hasn't already muddled the waters by now, just think of what Fetzer has to say about all this as he rises in defense of Twyman; he reports that I missed Twyman's "meaning" because (Twyman) "regards these photos as more or less bracketing the first shot." If by "bracketing" Fetzer is referring to Twyman's parenthesis where he writes "(between frames 186 and 202)" this "bracketing" still leaves Twyman as stating the Z-202 Willis photo is after the first shot. A contradiction is a contradiction. How can anything be clearer than this where in one place Twyman says "before" and in another place Twyman says "after"? I don't wish to leave the readers of this section with any further paradoxes but in that same discussion of Z-188 Twyman asserts the following: "Gerald Posner says the first shot was fired before frame 166. He may be right on this point. Michael West, D.D.S., says the first shot was probably fired at Frame 152. He may also be right."

To top all of this off, Twyman states that "virtually all researchers agree that the first shot or explosive sound occurred well before Kennedy passed behind the freeway sign, and that if it was a gunshot, it missed." But a few sentences later on the very same page Twyman states that "for (his) purposes" he'll go along with the Warren Commission conclusion which is that JFK was "first hit somewhere between frames 206 and 210." This first shot performing such acrobatics as striking and missing, hitting early and hitting later, is doing more gyrations than the famous and so-called "magic bullet" dreamed up by Arlen Specter!

On this latter point about frames 206 and 210: most assuredly the Warren Commission did not say what Twyman says; and if Fetzer and Twyman want to hold to this position so much for their "reconstruction" of the crime of the century.

So there you have it, dear readers, if contradiction

doesn't apply then confusion reigns!!

It can be seen from the above that Twyman has provided us with several different scenarios on a first shot. And Fetzer castigates me for "concentrating" on this aspect. The Twyman scenarios of which one, all or none Fetzer must come to some semblance of agreement on or just throw up his hands as being an utterly futile endeavor to engage in. At this point I can honestly say that I do not know where he stands. In so far as the timing with respect to the first shot as Twyman indicates we have Zapruder frames 152 (possibly); 162 (possibly); before 202; after 202 and then last, but by no means least, a consideration of frames "somewhere between frames 206 and 210." Apart from this mish-mash of evidentiary material there is the added burden of trying to figure out whether the first shot hit or missed at any one of those frames!

Believe me it is not my intent to confuse the reader in following all of this and it does sound bewildering, especially to the novice; but there are even more points to consider as we travel along this strange super-highway leading to the truth.

By the way, on Twyman's comment that "virtually all researchers agree that the first shot or explosive sound" was a "missed" shot, do not count me in with these researchers! I will have more to say on this later, but I will point out here that, at a Washington, D.C. JFK Conference in 1994, I presented a talk and a paper providing compelling evidence demonstrating why the first shot was not a missed shot. I offered time for anyone who could've challenged this and no one did. It may be that both Fetzer and Twyman were not at that conference but if they were, they presented no challenge. (A video version of what I've stated here is available and it will, again, clearly show that there is not one false statement that can be attributed to me!)

Fetzer also belabors me for what he considers my "sarcastic" comment about Twyman's use of Posner to fixate on the timing sequence of the first shot fired (Posner said this occurred before frame Z-166). Yes-sarcasm was a definite intention on my part directed not only at Twyman but also at Posner where Posner cites no source for his claim (one critic has dubbed Posner as "no source Posner"). Fetzer's complaint against me here is that—just because Posner is being used on this point alone

doesn't mean we have to rely on him always or on other points—misses the point. I don't agree with Posner on this point alone but Twyman mistakenly does and then cites him as corroborating Twyman. Twyman had the obligation to know why Posner took the position he did before accepting him. Fetzer may still wish to defend Twyman on this point but it cannot be because Posner has proven his point. He hasn't!

Regarding Fetzer's final comment on columnist Liz Smith and my comment on understanding how she could be "totally confused again" by the Twyman book: if she'll read my criticisms above and what is yet to come and she can reasonably "explain" to me where no contradictions or confusion resides after having "praised" his (Twyman's) book, I'll be only too eager to listen. And in so far as Fetzer noting that Smith's column appears to be "the first national forum" to praise Twyman, would Fetzer have applauded Smith had she praised Posner's work in her column because it was a "national forum?" Perhaps we have a new cultural phenomenon for the 1990's: a gossip column as a national forum! Wouldn't Fetzer have been more pleased if Assassination Science and Twyman's work had been reviewed in the scientific literature?

(3) This point deals with some comments I had made about newsman Walter Cronkite where I disputed Twyman's description of that eminent newsperson as one who "studied the JFK assassination perhaps harder and longer than any other network person" and I pointed to a 1967 CBS four part series of the JFK case which made Cronkite look like a veritable fountain of knowledge on the critical and controversial issues. I noted that an aide (a highly respected reporter) said Cronkite didn't see the script until moments before the program

Fetzer claims I took "matters out of context" because I didn't refer to Twyman's belief stated in his text wherein he says that he believes Cronkite was "manipulated" and that the reference by Twyman concerned a 1988 Nova documentary filled with errors and distortions. According to Fetzer, all this "appears to have sailed over Verb's head." But this didn't "sail" over my head. I knew of this Nova special and had read Twyman's remarks. My reference to Cronkite dealt solely with Twyman's saying of Cronkite that he "studied" and worked "harder and longer" than other newspersons. It is Fetzer who is taking things out of context now. I chose the 1967 se-

ries deliberately because it was just a few years after the JFK event and an image of Cronkite had already grown up about him and this image still persists up to the present time. By 1988 (the Nova show), he is revered by many as a treasured icon and his reports during the JFK controversy played no small role in helping to build it regardless of the Nova documentary.

(4) We now come to the evidence provided by Ron Hepler as to his reasons for the conclusion that John Connally was hit by two shots after the fatal head shot (or shots) occurring at Zapruder frame 313. In Hepler's analysis these are pinpointed at Z-315 and Z-338. (I note that, in Fetzer's paragraph of his rebuttal to me, he apparently may have had his own misgivings on Hepler since of all my points he cites this very one where I "might be correct" while faulting me for not providing supportive evidence). Moreover, this seeming reluctance on Fetzer's part to wholly identify with the Hepler thesis may be indicated by Fetzer's drawing attention to Dr. Mantik as having proposed a different scenario altogether for the wounding of Connally. On page 308 of Fetzer's book Mantik states that a shot at Zapruder frame 276 "most likely ... was the shot that hit Connally." And earlier, on pages 286-287, Mantik indicates that a shot may have hit Connally at Z-276 or earlier. (Naturally, all these differing versions will have to be resolved between Hepler, Twyman and Fetzer; and I'll be looking forward to that resolution and to see Mantik's contribution).

In my January, 1998 article I faulted Hepler for using Groden's reconstruction of the crime wherein I stated that his (Groden's) methodology was "utterly flawed" and therefore can't be used. True enough, I provided no details about rejecting Groden, but I didn't want to engage in a lengthy analysis of Groden's work since it was Hepler's I was concerned with. Without, again, going into any great detail, let it be noted that Groden's scenario establishes up to as many as ten shots being fired. And his placement of the first shot is one that is a missed shot and a first shot long before frame Z-189. For me to have successfully argued against both Helper and Groden would've exhausted the space considerations for my article and I decided not to do so.

To cite two extremely important inadequacies about the Helper thesis of two shots striking Connally after the fatal head shot (or shots), consider these: (A) what about

Governor Connally's own recollection of events wherein he points out the Zapruder frame and selects the frame (or approximate frames) at which he was struck occurring in the late Z-230's and before 240? Can we dismiss this so easily, especially when we learn that in April, 1964 at a Warren Commission meeting Connally had the opportunity to view the Zapruder film and examine individual slides? Uncannily (and why not, he was there), he pinpointed the exact frame JFK was hit and pointed to Z-190! And this was before there was any HSCA study and certainly before the Strosio study as published in Fetzer's book. Indeed, Strosio's study provides support for the hit on Connally in the late 230 frames (for those unfamiliar with the Strosio study), his graph shows movement by Zapruder, around Z-239 to Z-242-all compelling evidence for a shot striking Connally just prior to these frames. See page 343); and (B) on page 243 in Fetzer's book, Hepler recalls for his readers Connally's wife's testimony before the Warren Commission and her efforts to protect her husband. He notes that "Nellie's left hand can be seen grasping the Governor's left arm into her lap at frame 273 (my emphasis)." But two sentences before Nellie has said: "...and I thought if I could get him down, maybe they wouldn't hurt him anymore (my emphasis). So I pulled him down in my lap."

As anyone can plainly see (without looking at the Zapruder film), frame 273 is before frames 315 and 338 (the alleged frames at which Hepler claims Connally was hit). Moreover, Nellie's testimony that she didn't want to see her husband hurt "anymore" means he already has been hit and clearly "hurt" and all this occurred at a frame well before frames after the fatal shot or shots. You cannot have it both ways!

(5) Next we come to a discussion of a chapter by Chuck Marler dealing (partly) with the claim of "alteration" in the Stemmons freeway sign which appears in many frames of the Zapruder film. Fetzer, in an attempt to provide reasons for why the sign could have been "enlarged", claims that I argued that the "first bullet may have been fired" at an earlier time (than frames 207 to 222), "possibly even before Z-189". He then says that this is what Twyman and Posner also appear to believe; which makes it appear as if Fetzer is linking me with both Posner and Twyman. Readers may draw that infer-

ence from what Fetzer says here, but this is not what I believe and he misrepresents my position completely. Either Fetzer has grossly missed the point about my argument or he does recognize what my point is, but refuses to answer the argument.

I noted and Fetzer cannot have failed to notice that, in my Fourth Decade article, I pointed to the fact that JFK "can be seen reacting to something just immediately after (my emphasis here) frame 189." It is this very frame at which Kennedy is hit for the first time and my secondary claim is that it is also the very first shot. For the sake of argument I said that, whether JFK's reaction is to a sound or hit, the timing of the frame is highly significant here if, as Fetzer and others allege, the reason that vertical, horizontal and composite editing are undertaken is to eliminate features in the film pointing to conspiracy, then the crucial frames for this to occur must be at 189 and all frames up to 207. At that particular frame, JFK disappears behind the sign. For Marler and Fetzer to argue about events occurring between 207 to 225 (when JFK is hidden) makes their contentions a moot point because it is too late-the damage has literally all been done and is there for all to see (including the conspirators allegedly examining the film)! Again, and it bears repeating, to ignore this as Fetzer does is either a gross misunderstanding of the evidence or shows that he is aware, but to answer my objections would place his entire argument in severe and total jeopardy.

Some readers may ask why I do dwell on this aspect of Zapruder frames 189 to 207 and where is my basis and evidence for this first shot claim. Very briefly: there is the Z- film, Mr. and Mrs. Connally's testimony, Seth Kantor's notes, the Hartmann-Scott- Alzarez' (HSCA) study and my own interview of witnesses. That's just for starters-there is a lot more!

(6) This section deals with the head shot (or shots). Fetzer notes correctly that both Mantik and I agree that there were two shots to the head and Fetzer also notes that I didn't indicate the time interval between shots whereas Mantik does. I didn't indicate this interval, but for anyone who has spent time studying the Zapruder frames and who doesn't believe in film alteration, it should come as no surprise that the frames of strikes are Z-312 followed by Z-313 or nearly simultaneous. Obviously such a time interval precludes necessarily a lone

assassin firing. In my analysis the first shot comes from the rear of the motorcade (but that does not mean that this originated at a 6th floor window) and strikes JFK in the back of his head and the subsequent second head shot comes from the knoll area (but not necessarily from behind a picket fence). This shot strikes JFK on his right side as a tangential blow blasting that area of his skull outward. Again, to repeat that which seems obvious, if my scenario is correct there is definitely a conspiracy.

As can be seen from the above, our double head shot thesis differs as to the time interval (referring to my time interval hypothesis and Mantik's counter-proposal). Mantik's time frame runs as early as Z-306 and extends to about Z-321 to (possibly) some frames thereafter (but unspecified by Mantik). (Curiously enough, when describing these two head shots on page 287, Mantik has the first shot as (striking) the "right occiput" and, on the second head shot, he has it striking the "right temple/forehead-the right occiput is blown out." You'll note here the usage of the word "right" several times which is precisely the word I chose and used in my original article in the Fourth Decade. Fetzer's "reply" failed even to fully acknowledge my point but I'll have more to say on this. See my point #10)

At one point in his argument about film alteration, there appears this comment by Mantik: "...the FBI made extensive efforts to capture all possibly relevant photographic evidence." As that fine critic, H.L. Mencken, used to say, "es ist zum lachen" (it is to laugh). Just read Harold Weisberg's excellent study of the film evidence in his Photographic Whitewash and it will amply demonstrate how "extensive" the FBI's efforts were. The exact opposite of Mantik's claim is the reality. One only has to cite the Nix and Bronson films for starters.

Fetzer makes references to a "surprising absence of descriptions of a head-snap" by certain viewers of the film. Mantik for his part (page 302) points to the Nix film and describes it (the head shot) as: "a distinct head snap is also visible". He repeats this "head snap" scenario four pages later where he again says that the film "does show a backward head snap". Mantik claims (as does Fetzer) that there were witnesses who never saw this "head snap" and also that certain witnesses ("eight to ten") reported hearing or seeing another shot after the head shot.

Again Fetzer faults me for not having mentioned these "reports" but my emphasis was directed towards saying that the Zapruder film already contained evidence of two head shots (in my analysis, strikes at Z-312 and Z-313). Somehow this was left in by the conspirators who were busy altering other parts of the film! Their hand has been caught in the cookie jar twice and they haven't learned their lesson! And the Nix film (supposedly altered) left in the evidence of a "backward head snap" which suggests strongly that a shot entered frontally and not from the rear. Why would these "alteration experts" so adept at changing films, x-rays and even bodies allow such things to occur? And if they did alter the areas I'm discussing, leave a trail of evidence for conspiracy? Can Fetzer or anyone else avoid answering these questions, or are they "hopelessly inadequate to the task"?

Insofar as the numerous "witnesses" cited by Mantik on the "spread" of the head shots (see pages 289 to 292), the problem posed here is that, without the Zapruder film being shown along side of witness statements, there is no way to corroborate whether that witness would or would not reflect differently on his or her statements. That's why we have cross examination in court trials.

Let me illustrate this point where an example of "leading the witness" applies. Mantik notes Zapruder's Warren Commission testimony (page 289): "Well, as the car came in line almost ..." Immediately thereafter, Mantik puts in brackets: "[i.e., Z-313]". However the Warren Commission Volume (vol.7) does not have this bracketing included; and it is very clear that it is Mantik interpreting this as Z-313 and not Zapruder. That Mantik interpreted this undoubtedly, in my view, is because his thesis is a second head shot well after Z-313 and would be desirous of placing JFK further down Elm Street than he already actually is. Note also (and perhaps more significantly) that Mantik has conveniently left out Zapruder's immediate comment after "the car came in line almost" and this is: "- I believe it was almost in line; "contained further along and within this very same sentence (and also omitted from Mantik's citation) is this: "- I imagine it was around here." Zapruder's "belief" and "imagining" could have been straightened out as to what precise frames Zapruder meant but Wesley Liebeler on behalf of the Warren Commission, who was questioning him didn't do so. And in the case of Mantik's "evi-

dence" we have the same right to question his procedure to advance his arguments.

Towards the end of point (6) Fetzer takes me to task for spending an inordinate amount of space on asking why Mantik didn't list Zapruder frames before Z-250. Defending Mantik, Fetzer says these frames are "of scant relevance to Mantik's work on the film." The relevance of frames prior to Z-250 in case my argument is still sailing over Fetzer's head is being ignored (first by the conspirators and now by Fetzer and his supporters). Since Fetzer has called into question the limitations of my "methodology," what can he say in defense of his clear avoidance of the critical issues?

Most ironic of all is that, when Fetzer does discuss my handling of shots prior to Z-250, he muddies the water considerably. He notes that I corrected Mantik about when the first shot struck JFK (I said Z-189 and Mantik agreed with me). This occurred at the Dallas Lancer 1996 conference and Fetzer was at Mantik's side!

Fetzer then goes on to say that Mantik's talk was "never intended as a disagreement with Verb" making it appear as if Mantik and I were in some kind of debate which, of course, we were not, and the clincher to all this is that Fetzer points out that Mantik "applauds" my analysis but the only "analysis" I offered at Lancer was to correct Mantik's erroneous Z-frame time placement when JFK was hit (repeated twice by Mantik). If Mantik agreed with me then and does so now, since according to Fetzer, Mantik "applauds" my analysis, don't both Mantik and Fetzer realize that this is the very crucial frame I've been referring to all along and that it is this very frame where no alteration occurred, but by Fetzerian logic is required to have taken place?

Although Fetzer makes no comment of his own or Mantik's "agreement" (with my first shot analysis) he seems totally unaware, again, of the severe implications that his unawareness leads to and which is totally destructive of his (Mantik's) case for alteration. Is Mantik (and this necessarily includes Fetzer) now prepared to say there is no agreement and, if so, why?

Fetzer, in a sentence immediately thereafter, contends that I "misinterpreted" Mantik's "meaning". But, if Fetzer is still referring to the 1996 Lancer conference, I understood the "meaning" only too well. Obviously the "meaning" was to advance the argument for editing the

film to conceal any possible conspiratorial features. On the other hand, if Fetzer isn't referring to the Lancer event, it would appear as if Fetzer's "meaning" remark relates to his discussion about the alleged JFK "limo stop". However, I didn't raise this "stop" issue in point (6) in any event, so I could not have missed any "meaning" here either.

As long as this question of a limo stop has arisen, I should note here that when he, Fetzer, discusses it, his choice of words is rather curious; for he describes it as "the limousine stop (or near stop)". So whom do we choose among those witnesses to reach a conclusion-only those who claim the car stopped because their observations neatly fit in with the theme of Z-film alteration since the film does not show the limo stop?

Remember that funny line in the Marx Brothers movie, "Duck Soup", when a woman is confronted with a "fake" Groucho Marx and she can't believe it is him. The fake Groucho says, "so who you gonna believe-me, or your own eyes?!"

This point (6) was prompted by Fetzer's comment about my spending some time on what Dr. Mantik had to say about frames in the Zapruder film prior to Z-250 and one can see from the above my reasons for addressing the issue. But there is another irony (and life is always filled with them) before putting this argument aside. At a recent JFK mini-conference held in San Francisco (May 23rd) hosted by Dr. Aguilar, Dr. Mantik was present and I, again, questioned him as to his thoughts on frames prior to Z-250 with a focus on the first shot hypothesis around Z-189. He replied that he was not familiar enough to make any comment and he also remarked that he didn't know what Fetzer's position on this was either!

(7) This point deals specifically with the "three tramps issue" which, as I've stated before, simply will not die. It reminds me of the "face on Mars" controversy or the various "alien abduction" scenarios. Of all the eleven points I dissent on in my Fourth Decade article, this one elicited more paragraphs from Fetzer than any other and it seems to have exercised his pique at me. I will not repeat here the many reasons for the evidence that the three tramps have been identified as Abrams, Gedney and Doyle as opposed to the gentlemen Fetzer proposes. But I will recall for the readers (and for Fetzer) that the Rockefeller Commission in the 1970's had established

that these "tramps" could not be linked to JFK's murder, and this comment by me seems to have sailed over Fetzer's head since he makes no mention of it. There are details about what the Rockefeller Commission found and subsequent events which I did not cite, but I focused on the evidence that the LaFontaines found. Fetzer's argument in this respect was that "mere pieces of paper can be faked" and therefore can't be relied upon.

But my argument was based on other data than "mere pieces of paper" and, again, for space limitations, I did not include them in my original article. But now that Fetzer is again calling into question what evidence is out there to refute his claims, it will be mentioned. And it is evidence that Fetzer can hardly be unaware of.

In attempting to refute me, Fetzer alludes to the LaFontaines book, *Oswald Talked*, and says that "records to which Verb refers do not appear there." But I never said that they were in their book and their book was not even mentioned by me! What is truly funny here (and another of those delicious ironies) in Fetzer's misuse of that book is that, years ago, I published a very critical review of this very book disagreeing with the book's central theme (among others). This review appeared in a British magazine, so it probably received very little notice in the U.S. I do, however, agree with the LaFontaines as to who the tramps were.

As to Fetzer's reliance on "studies" made by Lois Gibson, described by Fetzer as "perhaps the nation's leading forensic artist" (which she may well be); this led to her identification of one of the tramps as not being that offered by the LaFontaines. Fetzer says he is convinced that Chauncey Holt is one of the tramps because, after long discussions with Holt, Fetzer says he "walks the walk, and talks the talk." This "walking and talking" bit mystified me as I recalled that all the photos of the "three tramps" are stills and I am unfamiliar with any motion picture film version let alone a sound version. If Holt was truly there, can Fetzer provide us with a smidgeon of detail as to what these three discussed while they are "walking" their way in police custody? If you have seen Oliver Stone's film, "JFK," you'll note that one of the tramps there "signals" a passer-by as their paths cross. Did Mr. Holt know of this episode as he was "walking the walk"?

Researcher Marin Shackelford informs me that, in re-

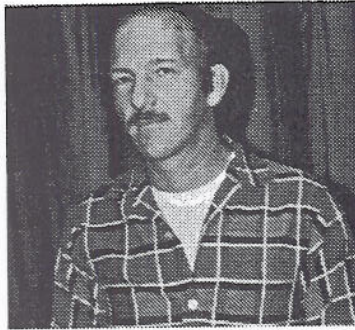
sponse to Fetzer's "rebuttal" of my article, he put on the internet (where, incidentally, Fetzer first replied to me) information which Fetzer has completely ignored. These include the following: televised interviews with Doyle (one of the tramps): that there was a print interview with a still-living member of the trio and, finally, that there was family confirmation of the identification of all three from Dealey Plaza photos. It is curious to note Fetzer's failure to address these points in his "rebuttal" to me or has this evidence gone into another "black hole" within Fetzer's memory where no facts can ever emerge?. Let the reader decide who is dealing with fact or fiction here and draw the necessary conclusions.

(8) This point relates to the argument about whether or not the Stemmons sign was altered in the Zapruder film. There is some confusion on the part of Fetzer wherein he states that (Verb) "assumes that Mantik has proposed that the Stemmons sign was altered after Z-207." I made no such statement; however, what I did say was that a "question arose" about the "possibility" of sign alteration. I was trying to point to the Stemmons sign argument because various proponents of film alteration had aired this view. When I did quote a phrase that the reason for sign alteration was to show it had been elevated in order to obscure JFK, I noted that this point was raised in my point (5) and this was Chuck Marler's contention, not Mantik's.

You'll note, however, that, once again, I raised the specter (no pun intended) of that crucial first shot evidence and its specific relevance to film alteration. The phrase I used was "excessive movement in the (Zapruder frames 190's)", and - true to form - Fetzer again dodges the issue. Now my argument is flying over Fetzer's head at warp speed!

Fetzer then faults me for not having raised the issue of the Nix film and its use or non-use in the recreation of the crime. Mantik says that descriptions assigned to the Nix film in a specific report are not consistent with it and that it may well be the "babushka lady" film instead. While one can argue the merits pro and con as to which film is being utilized, my arguments were based on an analysis of the Z-film not the Nix one, so I had no need to refer to it.

Fetzer again assails me for what he considers my "preoccupation with the shot sequence," as if this "preoc-



left side of page 187 matches several which I have obtained from the Martin film. In any case, I looked at the black-and-white photo and, sure

enough, there does seem to be a pocket flap. There is a possibility, of course, that the plaid fabric has become folded and bunched up to create the illusion of a border on a pocket flap. If so, we add this to the endless string of "coincidences" in the Kennedy assassination. But I think I can even detect a button hole on the flap. And there also appears to be a dark vertical band running down the front of the shirt right through the flap, a pattern which is not accounted for in the clear view of Lovelady's shirt on the right side of the page.

The shirt produced by Lovelady has a pattern of large blocks are filled in with either red or kind of a blue-gray-black combination of colors. As can be seen from the clear photos taken by Robert Groden for the HSCA, the gray blocks are arranged in a horizontal row across the front of the shirt and in a vertical column on the sleeve. When they were photographed by Martin with his color 8mm movie camera, these individual blocks in rows or columns blended together to form black bands. The plaid pattern should only show horizontal black bands on the front of the shirt and vertical black bands on the sleeve. A word of caution is necessary here before leaping to conclusions concerning the plaid pattern on the shirts in the Martin film and on the shirt that Lovelady produced. It should be remembered that Martin and Bell were using 8mm movie film, while Jackson and Groden were, presumably, using 35mm press cameras for photographing Lovelady. The effect of blurring the dark blocks on the plaid shirt may be due to the type of camera and film used. Some of the red blocks appear to have very narrow black pin stripes running through them, which may blend some of the shaded red blocks together with the gray ones in the color movie

to produce the vertical dark bands. It seems possible, but not likely.

Both Billy Lovelady and his wife Patricia signed a sworn statement that it is indeed Lovelady in the Martin film. The statement is shown here:

③ *McEntee* 11/2/76

The man standing in the entrance of the doorway, with the plaid shirt on is Billy N. Lovelady.

Billy N. Lovelady

I hereby identify this to be my husband, Billy Nelson Lovelady.

Mrs. Patricia B. Lovelady

Robert Groden
11-13-76

If it really is Billy Lovelady in the Martin film, why did he find it necessary to produce a different shirt to prove it? Why didn't he simply show us the shirt with the pocket flap?

Robert Groden also provides a photograph of this man, presumably Lovelady, at police headquarters as Oswald (with his shirt hanging off his left shoulder) is led past (The Search for Lee Harvey Oswald, p. 159 and The Killing of a President p. 92). Lovelady told the HSCA that the man in this picture is also he.

Researchers who have access to the Martin and Bell films and possess the photographic expertise to analyze the shirt, should determine whether it does have a pocket flap. If so, the consequences would be far reaching indeed.

The pattern of Lovelady's shirt is close to that of the shirt in the Martin film—very, very close. But how does the old expression go? Close, but no cigar. If Lovelady's shirt does not exactly match the one in the Martin (or Bell) film, it would be evidence of an elaborate hoax. It is simply inconceivable that a simple man like Billy Lovelady would concoct such a hoax all by himself.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

To the editor: After seeing my last letter to the editor in the January issue of the *The Fourth Decade*, I felt I should update readers on my "feud" with John Delane Williams. I am pleased to report that John and I have initiated a private correspondence dealing with the issues I raised in that letter. We do not see eye to eye on everything, of course, but I think we now have a better understanding of our opposing views and the reasons for them.

On a related note, the January-February issue of *Probe* reports that Beverly Oliver recently told two detectives following up leads in the Martin Luther King murder that, in addition to Lee Oswald, David Ferrie, Jack Lawrence and company, she also saw the mysterious "Raoul" at the Carousel Club prior to the Kennedy assassination. Quite a feat, considering that Raoul has never been positively identified and nobody can say for sure whether or not he even existed, let alone what he might have looked like back in 1963.

Finally, I would like to make readers aware of another matter that I should have followed up sooner. The Front Line special on Lee Oswald which aired in November of 1993 revealed the first known photograph to show Oswald and Ferrie together. I briefly discussed this with Gus Russo at the ASK Symposium just after the program aired. Gus, one of the Front Line researchers, told me that they had also uncovered a second CAP photo of Oswald and Ferrie, this one showing the two directly engaged in conversation, but that it was found too late to be included in the program. I assumed I would see this additional photo in upcoming books or documentaries, but over four years have passed and it has yet to surface, as far as I know. What's the story, Gus? Is there a second photo or not?

- Sheldon Inkol, 54 Raglan Ave., Apt. 14
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To the editor: I originally looked forward to reading John J. Johnson's article, "Man-in-the-Doorway: An Unbelievable Coincidence," in your May 1998 issue. I was hoping it would shed light on this controversial area of assassination research. However, right from the first sentence. I knew this would be a feeble attempt at raising questions about an issue I hoped had been settled a long time ago.

Johnson's article includes references to Richard Trask's book "Pictures of the Pain," leading me to assume

Johnson used the book as a source. Yet the book is not listed in the Bibliography at the end of the article, a glaring oversight.

The article includes a cropped version of the famous James Altgens photograph showing the "man-in-the-doorway" which Johnson says in his first sentence was "the second photo he took that day." This is not the case. A simple glance at pages 310-312 of Trask's book, with reproductions of all of Altgens' photos up to this point, shows this was the fifth photo and not the second, Altgens took that day. Assuming Johnson is not blind, I have to conclude his research is extremely sloppy. For me, this major error taints the rest of the article.

Without critiquing the rest of the article, I offer three points of consideration not dealt with in the article:

1) During the television "Trial of Lee Harvey Oswald" (the BBC production of 1986, not the ABC mini-series of 1977). Officer Marrion Baker was shown an extreme blowup of the Altgens photo and when asked who was in the doorway, answered, "It looks like Oswald, but I don't know who it is." Baker admitted the man resembled Oswald, as Billy Lovelady certainly did, but could not say it was Oswald, the man he would come face-to-face with about ninety seconds after the Altgens photo was taken.

2) During the same show, Buell Wesley Frazier was shown the same photo and identified the man-in-the-doorway as Lovelady, not Oswald. (Both these scenes were edited out of the A&E 5-part showing in the early 1990's.)

3) The best argument that Oswald was not the man-in-the-doorway comes from Oswald's own words. One can almost hear him shouting back to reporters during the two days after his arrest, "I didn't do it. In fact, I watched it happen from the doorway." And no, I'm not relying on Homicide Capt. Will Fritz's notes for what Oswald said. I'm relying on the recordings of Oswald himself. Asked at the midnight press conference if he had shot the President, Lee answered, "I have not been charged with that. In fact, nobody has said that to me yet. The first thing I heard about it was when the newspapers reporters in the hall asked me that question." While Oswald's truthfulness is doubtful regarding that statement, I would think had he been in the doorway, not only innocent of the shooting, but out in an open, public place watching the assassination, HE WOULD HAVE SAID SO.

I applaud Johnson's efforts to uncover other possible films and photos by offering a \$500 reward. But seri-

ously, why would anyone sell their rights of reproduction and forego ownership to Johnson of any such evidence when, as Johnson tells us, Lovelady's wife tried to sell his long sleeve shirt for \$5,000?

If the JFK case is ever to be solved, issues like the man-in-the-doorway have to stop coming up after they've been settled. For every step forward, it seems we take two steps back rehashing issues already resolved. It leads us further away from the truth than closer to it.

There is an important lesson to learn from this episode. Aspects of this case will never be resolved. But that cannot stop us from learning the truth. Not every witness is going to remember the assassination or surrounding events in the same way. Not every report is going to coincide nicely with another. Human are fallible. And so is John J. Johnson, as his article proves.

- Randy Owen, 13-164 Belmont Ave. W.
Kitchener, Ont., Can. N2M 1L5

To the editor: I am sure everyone researching the life of Lee Harvey Oswald appreciates the hard work of William Weston and the intriguing (yet frustrating) possibility of Oswald "twins" ("Pfisterer Dental Laboratory", Vol. 5, No. 3). As longtime readers will recall, I dealt with some of the many inconsistencies related to Oswald in my Jan. 1991 article "Did Oswald Come Back?" (TTD, Vol. 7, #23), which I later sent to Norman Mailer for his consideration after reading OSWALD'S TALE (which he kindly responded to, although he felt that "...the same man who went over there is the same man who came back - how in hell is a Lithuanian or a Latvian going to fool Marguerite Oswald, of all people!") I don't know if Mr. Mailer has become aware of John Armstrong's thorough and mind boggling analysis of conflicting residences related to both Marguerite and Lee, but I would argue that the young man who left the U.S. Marines in 1959 (who was 5'11" according to numerous documents and a "six-footer" according to Priscilla Johnson McMillan in her original, unrevised report from Moscow to NANA), named Lee Harvey Oswald, was not the same man accused of killing President Kennedy (who was 5' 9" according to various forms he filled out in New Orleans and Dallas, as well as according to the autopsy.)

In the course of doing genealogical research related to my family tree at the local Family History Centre (run by the Mormon Church), it occurred to me that it might be useful to look up Oswald's name in the I.G.I. (which lists millions of births, baptisms, and marriage records

taken from the parish records) and discovered two brief listings for "Lee Harvey Oswald." The first listing simply indicated he was born in 1939, again in New Orleans with parents merely listed as "Mr. Oswald" and "Mrs. Oswald." Consistent with Mormon tradition, LHO was baptized and endowed (and in the case of the second listing was also sealed to parents) in separate ceremonies (implying to me that two different individuals were being posthumously made members of the Mormon Church.) In the case of the first birth listing under LHO, the ceremony took place on Sept. 12 and Nov. 2, 1991, while the second ceremony took place on Feb. 20, May 26, and Nov. 17, 1992. I wrote to Salt Lake City Headquarters for a copy of the "individual records," but the "submitter's name and address are currently not available," according to the printout sent to me.

I also looked up the Oswalds in the Social Security Death Index and discovered a listing for Marguerite Oswald, who died in Ft. Worth in Jan. 1981 (there is also a listing for another Marguerite Oswald, born two years earlier, who died in Metairie, La. in 1984, possibly the other woman identified by John Armstrong.) In the cases of both LHO and his father Robert Lee Oswald, neither one is listed. I later looked up LHO in the same index available on the Internet, with same results. Since I had LHO's SS# (which the Warren Commission published,) I did a search using his number (which the computer treats as a word because of the inclusion of hyphens,) and it would appear that the holder of SS# 433-54-3937 is still alive. (The closest numbers on either side of LHO's who have died are SS# 433-54-3930, who was born in 1910 and died in 1993 and SS# 433-54-3941, born in 1916, who died in 1979.) I wrote to the Social Security Administration last fall in regard to LHO's SS#, but never received a reply.

According to a memo received from ARRB, the FBI was aware of LHO's SS# by Nov. 23, 1963 and was anticipating more information from the Social Security Office in Baltimore. What if they learned that LHO was using someone else's number while employed at William Reily Co.? Would this be revealed to the Warren Commission, and if so, to the American public? Not bloody likely.

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Oswald's widow believed he killed Kennedy, papers show

NEWS 6/6/98 (A-4)

By MIKE FEINSLBER

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Five years after John F. Kennedy's assassination, Lee Harvey Oswald's widow faced a district attorney's insistence that Oswald "might have been set up." But she clung to a belief that her husband was the president's killer and acted alone.

Documents made public Friday show the intensity of New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison's pursuit of his conspiracy theory. He even told Marina Oswald Porter that when her husband, during 12 hours of questioning, consistently asserted his innocence, "he was telling the truth."

But Mrs. Porter wouldn't buy in

to the conspiracy theory.

Near the end of a long day of interrogation before the grand jury, she was asked point-blank, "Marina, do you believe your husband killed the president?"

"As much facts as I know, I do," the Russian-born woman said in broken English.

Later, an unidentified member of the grand jury broke in to ask, "Do you think he was capable of planning, plotting this whole thing by himself?"

"I think so," she replied. "I don't think he would be involved in any conspiracy with anybody, in my opinion."

The secret grand jury records, made public Friday, offer little to support Garrison's belief that people in his own city were part of a

conspiracy to kill Kennedy.

The Garrison investigation, from 1967 through 1969, resulted in the indictment, 34-day trial and hasty acquittal of New Orleans businessman Clay Shaw.

Harry Connick, the current New Orleans district attorney, sought to keep the record of Garrison's proceedings secret, but a court ruled that Connick had to surrender the records to the Assassination Records Review Board and the Supreme Court refused last month to intervene.

Congress created the board after the Garrison investigation was portrayed by the Oliver Stone movie "JFK." The board's purpose is to amass all records concerning Kennedy's killing.

"Copies of these transcripts

have been hidden for years and were available to only a select few people," said board chairman John R. Tunheim. "Now all of the American people will be free to examine a more complete record of the Garrison prosecution of Clay Shaw."

Mrs. Porter — she remarried after Oswald was killed in the Dallas jail two days after the shooting of Kennedy in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963 — was one of 40 witnesses before the grand jury.

Over the years, Mrs. Oswald changed her mind about Oswald's guilt. Embraced by other conspiracy theorists, she came to accept their theories.

More recently though, she told author Gerald Posner, "I think Lee was completely innocent."

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Back cover illustration: The Associated Press Wraps Up the Garrison Case.

Earlier this year, the Supreme Court sustained the claim of the Assassination Records Review Board (ARRB) to receive the records of DA Jim Garrison's investigation and trial in New Orleans. As the ARRB made this material available for public perusal, the AP reporter whose story is reprinted here made a lightning visit to that file and came up with the story of Marina's statement of her belief at that time in Lee's guilt. The reporter saved us researchers a great deal of time in concluding that there is "little" in that material to support Garrison's conspiracy claims. He also leaves readers with the impression that Marina's utterance to Garrison represented her uncoerced and true viewpoint (ignoring her likely fears of deportation or criminal prosecution as an accessory after the President's murder or God-knows-what other bureaucratic nightmares of intimidation that officials may have had in mind for her) and explains that she changed her mind—to believe in Lee's innocence—only after she was "embraced" by conspiracy theorists. Case closed.

THE FOUR FACES OF HARRY D. HOLMES

By
Ian Griggs

Introduction

I think it safe to say that almost everybody who has visited London as a tourist is familiar with one of the major landmarks - Big Ben. This is the name by which the high, four-sided clock tower at the eastern end of the Houses of Parliament is known. Strictly speaking, the *real* "Big Ben" is the bell in the clock tower, it having gained that nickname after Sir Benjamin Hall, the Chief Commissioner of Works, when it was cast in 1856.

In Britain, a person who is untrustworthy or devious is sometimes said "to have as many faces as Big Ben." That expression hardly requires clarification. I consider that Dallas Postal Inspector Harry D. Holmes falls easily into that category and, like the Big Ben clock tower, I feel that he had four separate and distinct faces. In his book *And We Are All Mortal*, George Michael Evica puts it slightly more mildly and describes Holmes as "one of the many all-purpose Commission witnesses to testify in a number of areas." (1)

In strict chronological order, the four faces of Harry D. Holmes were as follows:

1) Holmes had become an **FBI informant** prior to the assassination, one of his functions being to keep the Bureau acquainted with changes in the allocation of post office boxes in the Dallas area. (2)

2) Holmes was an **eyewitness to the assassination**. He watched it through binoculars from a window in his office on the fifth floor of the Post Office Terminal Annex Building on the southern side of Dealey Plaza. (3)

3) Holmes became an **"expert witness"** in his capacity as a Postal Inspector and as such, he testified before the Warren Commission, giving very precise details of the working of the post office box system and tracing the paperwork concerned with the mail order purchase of Lee Harvey Oswald's rifle and revolver. (4)

4) Holmes was **present during the final interrogation**

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of Lee Harvey Oswald at City Hall immediately before the alleged assassin was taken downstairs and shot by Jack Ruby. Holmes was an active participant in the proceedings and he also took copious notes. (5)

Just who was Harry D. Holmes?

Harry D. Holmes was born the son of a goatherd in Indian Territory, Oklahoma on 2nd July 1905. Since Oklahoma was not admitted to the United States (as the 46th state) until 16th November 1907, I am not certain whether Holmes could be classified as a true American. He died after a struggle against heart disease and cancer on 14th October 1989 in Dallas, Texas and was survived by his widow, Helen Grace Holmes, daughter Helen Joyce and twin sons Richard and Robert. His connection with the case was deemed to be of sufficient importance to be mentioned in detail in his obituary in both Dallas newspapers. (6)

Holmes' early background gave no indication of his future connections with the Kennedy assassination. When asked about his education he told Warren Commission Assistant Counsel David Belin: "I graduated from high school in Kansas City, and went through 2 years to William Jewel College at Liberty, Mo., and went almost through my third year in Kansas City. Went to dental college in Kansas City." (7)

(At this stage it should be pointed out that the reported details of Holmes' early life and education-even his name-are the subject of extensive ongoing examination by my friends and fellow researchers Glenn T. Cressy and Harry Hancock.)

It is obvious that Holmes never took up that alleged dental vocation since he joined the Postal Service in Kansas City as a mailhandler at the age of 18. He was working as a post office clerk when the United States entered the Second World War. In April 1942, he went into the Postal Inspection Service as a postal inspector. He remained continuously in that branch, transferring to Dallas on 1st July 1948, and still holding his position on 22nd November 1963. (8) I am tempted to wonder whether that initial transfer into the Postal Inspection Service served as his introduction to military postal censorship and could have provided his first steps into other fields of postal surveillance.

When he retired from the Postal Service at the age of 61, Holmes had been assigned to the Obscenity Sec-

tion and he claimed that he had made over 500 arrests (9).

During the initial groundwork for the British TV "live" presentation of "The Trial of Lee Harvey Oswald" (shown on both sides of the Atlantic in November 1986), Holmes was invited to participate. He declined the offer. I understand from another witness who did appear that the offer included an all-expenses paid visit to London for two weeks (10). Perhaps Holmes turned it down due to his advancing years. He was then in his early-eighties.

The FBI informant

The claim that Harry D. Holmes was an informant for the FBI has been published in several books, notably Sylvia Meagher's *Accessories After The Fact* and George Michael Evica's *And We Are All Mortal*. (11) In each case, the author mentions that Holmes was allocated a Dallas informant number, T-7. Although the late Mrs. Meagher has a footnote directing the reader to Commission Exhibit 1152, no official document is known or quoted in which Holmes is positively identified as T-7. Close perusal of CE 1152 reveals a plethora of information and other clues which suggest that "Confidential Informant, Dallas T-7" was Postal Inspector Harry D. Holmes. (12) I have since learnt, however, that he was just one of several postal officials operating under T-numbers in Dallas at the time and that T-7 could, in fact, have been one of his colleagues with access to similar information and thus in possession of similar knowledge. (13) If that is the case, then I feel that the T-7 number could well have been assigned to one of Holmes' colleagues, possibly Postal Inspector Armstrong, at this time. (14)

In his Warren Commission testimony, Holmes inadvertently began to reveal some of his informant activities, with the Secret Service as well as the FBI, until Assistant Counsel David Belin cut him short in the usual way. Consider the following:

MR. BELIN: "All right, what was the next thing you did in connection with the investigation of the assassination?"

MR. HOLMES: "Well, throughout the entire period I was feeding change of addresses as bits of information to the FBI and the Secret Service, and sort of a coordinating deal on it, but then about Sunday Morning about 9:20....."

MR. BELIN: "Pardon me a second. (Discussion off the record.) Anything else now, Mr. Holmes?"

MR. HOLMES: "I might cover the record of his rental of the post office box in New Orleans. Do you want me to go into that?" (15)

Once again, a Warren Commission investigation chose to play the "Discussion off the record" card at just the right time in order to avoid the introduction of something which could prove embarrassing or awkward. I cannot resist being fascinated by what Holmes was beginning to say concerning "about Sunday morning about 9:20....." As I shall detail later in this paper, it was only ten minutes after that time that the final Oswald interrogation session began with Harry D. Holmes taking an active part!

Eyewitness to the assassination

Harry D. Holmes was probably unique amongst the hundreds of people who saw the assassination as he was the only one who stated that he watched it through a pair of binoculars. For no apparent reason, David Belin asked him: "Were you looking with the aid of any optical instrument?" to which Holmes replied: "I had a pair of 7 1/2 x 50 binoculars." (16)

Holmes had earlier set the scene when he said that he was in his office "on the fifth floor of the terminal annex building, located at the corner of Houston and Commerce Streets...." (17)

Gerald Posner has provided the following excellent description of the layout of the Post Office Terminal Annex Building: "The first and second floors were parcel post, the third mail processing, the fourth letter mail, and the fifth was both the cafeteria and the postal inspectors' offices. The building's view across Dealey Plaza is unobstructed." (18)

Unfortunately, nothing appears to have been published to indicate the exact window from which Holmes witnessed the assassination. I believe, however, that through a lapse in concentration during his testimony, Holmes inadvertently provided that information although for some unknown reason it was never requested. David Belin questioned Holmes closely concerning the exact location of the Terminal Annex building in Dealey Plaza and Holmes answered him plainly and fully. When Belin continued: "On what corner is your building?" Holmes, either mishearing or misunderstanding the question, re-

plied: "It is on the northeast corner". (19)

It is plain that the building concerned is *not* on the northeast corner of the plaza-it is on the *southeast* corner. I believe that Holmes' answer accidentally gave the location of his office within the building. If my interpretation is accurate, then something which has eluded researchers for a third of a century has now been resolved. Looking across Dealey Plaza from the grassy knoll to the Terminal Annex building, I believe that Holmes' office (and vantage point) was the large top floor window on the extreme left.

Holmes mentioned that "there was several of us looking out of the window...." (20) but there is no record that any of them was ever identified or interviewed by the investigative agencies. Gerald Posner, however, claims to have interviewed six of these people and states that "three of them watched the assassination with a pair of binoculars." (21) Since Holmes states that "I had my binoculars on this car, on the Presidential car all the time" (22), it seems likely that there was at least one more pair of binoculars up on that fifth floor. Posner states that one employee, Francine Burrows, had watched the motorcade from ground level and he names three other eyewitnesses as Tom Weaver, John Crawson and Bernie Schram. He claims to have interviewed all four in March 1992 but, apart from saying that they each claimed to have heard three shots, nothing of particular significance is revealed. (23)

During Holmes' testimony, of course, he produced one of the most mysterious and oft-quoted phrases in this investigation. When asked by Assistant Counsel Belin if he had seen anyone run across the railroad track, Holmes replied "No. I saw nothing suspicious and I am a trained suspitioner." (24)

The "Expert Witness"

Quite apart from being an informant for both the FBI and the Secret Service, and also, by his own admission, "a trained suspitioner" (!), Harry D. Holmes' position within the US Postal Service brought him to the fore of the investigation right from the start. Even before being contacted officially, he appears to have got himself involved. In his testimony he told Mr. Belin: "I never quit. I didn't get to bed for two days" and "I was doing all I could to help other agencies." (25)

According to his testimony, Holmes' involvement was

under way very rapidly. He told Mr. Belin: "One of the box clerks downstairs came up after an hour or so when the radio reports came in about the apprehension of Lee Oswald following the shooting of Officer Tippit, and said, 'I think you ought to know, Mr. Holmes, that we rented a box downstairs to a Lee Oswald recently, and it is box so-and-so.' That was my first tip that he had a box downstairs in the terminal annex. That box is No. 6225." (26)

Holmes' Warren Commission testimony went on to describe in detail Lee Harvey Oswald's application for a box at the Terminal Annex Building just 22 days prior to the assassination. He also stated that the clerk responsible for the application form "could not recall what the man (the applicant) looked like" and "he could not identify him (Oswald) as actually being the man that rented the box, because I have talked to him about it." (27)

He then went on to explain that, after learning that Box 6225 was rented in the name of Oswald, "we kept a 24-hour, round-the-clock surveillance from about well into Sunday, I think, 3 days." (28) From the way he describes it, this action appears to have been on Holmes' own initiative.

On the morning of the day following the assassination, Holmes learned from one of his fellow Postal Inspectors (unfortunately unnamed) that an FBI agent had enquired "how they could obtain an original post office money order." Holmes testified: "I went on up to my office, but somewhere I got the information that the FBI had knowledge that a gun of this particular Italian make and caliber had been purchased from Klein's Sporting Goods in Chicago, that it had been purchased, and the FBI furnished me with the information that a money order of some description in the amount of \$21.95 had been used as reimbursement for the gun and that the purchase date was March 20, 1963." (29)

Unfortunately, no times are given for either Holmes' brief conversation with his colleague or for his contact with the FBI but he does mention that he "had some men begin to search the Dallas money order records." He continued: "I didn't have any luck, so along about 11 o'clock in the morning, Saturday, I had my boys call the postal inspector."

Now aware that the rifle had been purchased by mail

order, Holmes sent his secretary out to purchase what he described as "outdoor-type magazines such as Field & Stream, with the thought that I might locate this gun to identify it." (30)

As we now know, the magazine which Holmes obtained was both a different title and a different date to that allegedly used by Oswald to order his rifle. Holmes actually obtained the November 1963 issue of Field and Stream whereas the Oswald rifle had been ordered from the February 1963 issue of The American Rifleman.

The Final Interrogation of Lee Harvey Oswald

There are many strange aspects to Harry D. Holmes' various parts in this case but perhaps the strangest is his attendance and participation in Oswald's final interview. In his testimony he referred to it thus: "I presume my next part in connection with this was when I joined the interrogation period of Oswald on Sunday morning of November 24 at about 9:30 a.m." (31)

He went on to say that he had driven to church with his wife but that, after dropping her there, he suddenly decided to return to the police station (City Hall) where he simply walked in and saw Captain Fritz. He claimed that Fritz said: "We are getting ready to have a last interrogation with Oswald before we transfer him to the county jail. Would you like to join us?" Holmes replied: "I would." (32)

Now what exactly is that all about? Why did the Chief of Homicide invite an off-duty Dallas Postal Inspector to attend such an important session? Remember, they had been grilling Oswald relentlessly since his arrest over 40 hours earlier and had just about managed to establish his identity! What did Fritz think that Holmes could achieve that his highly-trained officers had failed to do? This, more than anything else discussed in this paper, convinces me that there was a great deal more to Harry D. Holmes than we can even imagine.

The other people present were Local Agent in Charge Forrest V. Sorrells and Inspector Thomas J. Kelley, both of the Secret Service and, depending on whose testimony you believe, either three or four Homicide Detectives whose job was solely to guard Oswald. The interview took place in Captain Fritz' office, room 317, at City Hall.

In subsequent years it seems to have been readily accepted that no record was kept of this interview or of

any of the previous Oswald interviews. Indeed, when Captain Fritz was questioned on this point by the Warren Commission's Mr. Ball, he claimed that several unsuccessful attempts had been made to obtain a tape recorder. (33) With the 1997 disclosure that Captain Fritz had personally taken very sketchy but nonetheless contemporaneous notes of these interviews, we now know that a record was made of at least some of Oswald's questioning. Perusal of Fritz' notes reveals that, at the final session, he merely noted the date, time and details of those present. (34) I think he felt it unnecessary to do more than that because he had seen that Harry D. Holmes was himself taking notes.

The notes taken by Holmes were undoubtedly very detailed and comprehensive. Now why he took it upon himself to do this is as much a mystery as why he was present in the first place. It is not known whether he was acting of his own volition or had been asked to take notes during what was to prove Oswald's final interview. I personally believe it was the former, but the reason is still unclear.

You will find Holmes' notes of the interview not once, but twice in the 26 Volumes. They appear in the form of a report. (35) As if that is not enough, Holmes' notes are also reproduced under the title "Report of U.S. Postal Inspector H. D. Holmes" as part of one of the appendices to the Warren Report. (36)

Holmes did not just sit there quietly recording notes. He also took an active part in the interview, asking many questions of Oswald, particularly regarding his use of post office boxes. The interrogation seemed to go on longer than Fritz had anticipated it would. In his testimony he stated that he had intended closing it at 10:00. (37) As we know, it went on for a further hour.

Holmes later stated in the 29th June 1989 interview with Postal Inspectors Herrera and McDermott that Chief Curry "was beating on the door." (38) Obviously, had the session ended at 10 o'clock or shortly afterwards, and Oswald's transfer had then been put into motion, we would not have had the ubiquitous Mr. Ruby waiting downstairs in the basement garage clutching his little gun.

Conclusion

Needless to say, there is a great deal more to Dallas Postal Inspector Harry D. Holmes than I have the time

and space to outline here. As I mentioned earlier, my fellow researchers Glenn T. Cressy and Larry Hancock continue to examine his back ground and particularly his early life. Glenn, Larry and I share an uneasy feeling that there is far more to Harry D. Holmes than is obvious on the surface and he could yet prove to be of far greater significance in this case than anybody can imagine.

I will leave you with one tiny example of the amount of clout that this man had. How many witnesses who testified before the Warren Commission were officially permitted to keep any of their exhibits? Harry D. Holmes was allowed to do just that!

He introduced one of those well-known "Wanted for Treason" posters which he stated had been found in a Dallas postal collection box on the morning of the assassination. When Mr. Belin stated that he intended to mark it as an exhibit, Holmes said: "I want to save that." (39) It was then agreed that he could keep the original and that the Court Registrar would make copies. Holmes Exhibit No. 5, therefore, is no more than a xerox copy of the original.

Thanks

I cannot close without expressing my thanks to a number of people who have assisted in so many ways with my research into this man. I am particularly grateful to friends and fellow researchers Malcolm Blunt and Melanie Swift (UK) and John Armstrong, Pat Cady, Glenn Cressy, George Michael Evica, Mary Ferrell, Larry Hancock and Connie Kritzer (USA).

Notes

1. George Michael Evica, And We Are All Mortal, published by the University of Hartford, Connecticut, USA, 1978, page 7.
2. Warren Commission Hearing & Exhibits, Vol. 7, Page 296 (Testimony of Harry D. Holmes). References to this source cited hereafter in format: 7H 296.
3. 7H 290/291 (Testimony of Harry D. Holmes, 2nd April 1964).
4. 7H 292-295, 526-530 (Testimony of Harry D. Holmes, 2nd April 1964 and 23rd July 1964 respectively).
5. 7H 296-298 (Testimony of Harry D. Holmes, 2nd April 1964). See also Warren Commission Hearings & Exhibits, Commission Exhibit 2064 (FBI report concerning memorandum furnished by Postal Inspector H. D. Holmes, Dallas, Tex, of an interview he took part in with Lee Harvey Oswald on November 24, 1963). References to this source cited hereafter in format: CE 2064.
6. Dallas Morning News and Dallas Times Herald, both of 16th October 1989.
7. 7H 290 (Testimony of Harry D. Holmes, 2nd April 1964).
8. Ibid.
9. Interview of Harry D. Holmes at his home (Garland, Texas) by Dallas Postal Inspectors H. Herrera and D. P. McDermott on 29th June 1989, three and a half months before his death. Details of interview published in an official Inspection Services Bulletin in 1991.
10. Author's tape-recorded interview of Johnny Calvin Brewer at Austin, Texas, 25th November 1996.
11. Sylvia Meagher: Accessories After The Fact, published by Vintage Books, New York, 1976, page 228 and Evica (note 1 above); page 51.
12. CE 1152 (FBI report dated January 7, 1964, concerning Lee Harvey Oswald's rental of Post Office Box 6225, Dallas, Tex).
13. Information from researcher John Armstrong at JFK-Lancer Conference, Dallas, November 1997.
14. Postal Inspectors Holmes and Armstrong apparently shared the same fifth floor office in the Terminal Annex Building. Armstrong greeted Holmes with the words: "They got Oswald" when Holmes entered the office on his return from City Hall about five minutes after the end of the final Oswald interview.
15. 7H 296 (Testimony of Harry D. Holmes, 2nd April 1964).
16. 7H 291 *ibid*.
17. 7H 290 *ibid*.
18. Gerald Posner: Case Closed, Random House, New York, 1993; page 262.
19. 7H 290 (Testimony of Harry D. Holmes, 2nd April 1964).
20. 7H 291 *ibid*.
21. Posner (see note 18 above): page 262.
22. 7H 291 (Testimony of Harry D. Holmes, 2nd April 1964).

23. Posner (see note 18 above): page 262.
- 24 - 32. 7H 292-297 (Testimony of Harry H. Holmes, 2nd April 1964).
33. 4H 232 (Testimony of Captain J. W. Fritz, 22nd April 1964).
34. ARRB Press Release, 20th November 1997, together with copies of Fritz' notes.
35. CE 2064 (24H 488-492); also Holmes Exhibit No. 4 (20H 177-181).
36. Warren Commission Report, Appendix XI (pages 633-637).
37. 6H 233 (Testimony of Captain J. W. Fritz, 22nd April 1964).
38. See note 9 above.
39. 7H 307-308 (Testimony of Harry D. Holmes).

28

GEORGE DE MOHRENSCHILDT, WHO ARE YOU?

By
Nancy Wertz

George de Mohrenschildt. Once this name was heard by assassination researchers, it quickly became difficult to forget, while it remained steadfastly difficult to spell. Peeling back the onion layer by layer to decipher George's life reveals both clarity and ambiguity. As in so many of our searches, we detect overlapping names, events, transactions and relationships which can lead one to distraction. Yet, if we look more closely, we also discover the uniqueness of the man, the individual measured against the canvas of an extraordinary time.

There are many urban legends about George de Mohrenschildt which have gingerly entered the realm of fact over the years, some merely the result of repetition or having been included in a published work without source notations. Our information about George comes from various governmental agency interviews and documents, his Warren Commission testimony, government informants, the contents of archival depositories,

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oral and written histories of his friends, acquaintances, relatives and business associates, personal research efforts and a study of the political, economic and social structure of the past century.

We know, too, the pitfalls of oral histories sometimes blemished by the erosion of time. Even so, personal recollections are another element of the reconstruction of a full characterization of the individual. In the absence of a complete picture provided in the written record in this case, we have had to resort to this element of research as a major tool to discover both facts and hypotheses regarding this man. Yet if I could ask him one question, it might be, "Who are you?"

To understand and piece together the actions of George de Mohrenschildt, we must know his motivations. To do that, we must begin to explore his character. And what is character but the sum of our own experiences? By reviewing George's life, a pattern of behavior emerges which helps us begin to comprehend the role he played in 1962-3.

On one side, there's the personal George. His early upbringing ingrained in him as assumption of entitlement and privilege, meriting a certain ranking in the world. He was one who expected to effortlessly receive the niceties of life even if it was at the expense of someone else, and it usually was. More often than not, that someone else turned out to be a woman. Few of the people who have gone on the record, or whose identity is still shrouded in excisement 30+ plus years later, could accurately describe his source of income. Largely suspected of relying on the income of wealthy young girls, widows or divorcees who were too easily impressed with the aristocratic legend he routinely updated for each new occasion and opportunity, George was a man's man, a dog's best friend and a woman's worst nightmare.

On the other side, there's the business George. I think it can be fairly stated that George never met a business deal he didn't like. You will find he dipped his hand in any number of professions during his life before setting his target on petroleum geology. He had an interesting concept of wealth. He wanted just enough money to be comfortable, yet woefully mismanaged any number of deals, sometimes to the exasperation of and sometimes to the delight of his various business partners. (1)

George Sergius Von Mohrenschildt was born in Mozyr,

Russia in April of 1911. (2) Following the version he afforded us in his Warren Commission testimony, he was the second son of Sergius and Alexandra, and of noble birth. The family escaped from Leningrad and settled into Minsk in 1919 during the German occupation of that city. Both his father and his brother, Dimitri, served some period of imprisonment for radical political thought and actions. The family eventually left Russia and landed in Wilno at a time when it was considered Polish territory. Unfortunately, Alexandra died of typhoid soon after their arrival. Through artful negotiations, his father was able to secure a living for the family by regaining some of their former land holdings. George graduated from the local high school in Wilno and entered the Polish Army in 1929. Upon his separation from service in the army in 1930, he began to realize the limitations of his current environment and came to accept that the czar would not be returned to the Russian throne anytime soon. George moved to Belgium and within a year had his first serious brush with the law. He was sentenced to 8 days in prison on charges of resisting a police officer, drunkenness and the use of a false name. The sentence was suspended pending completion of a three year probationary period. (3)

Combining education with practical experience, George attended the institute at Antwerp Belgium while acting as a business manager at a local import/export company. (4) His primary areas of study were financial in nature and he received a Doctorate in Commercial Science in 1936. Spurred on by his brother Dimitri's success in America, George applied for an immigration visa and arrived in NYC aboard the S. S. Manhattan in mid May, 1938. (5)

The environment on the east coast at this time in America was a tempting place for George to land. Any number of dethroned and spuriously titled adventurers were already in New York, toasting with the social elite by night and returning to their required humdrum jobs during the day. Many of the social register families had married off at least one daughter to a European title. One of a debutante's main goals was to catch herself a title. The larger the country of origin, the higher the prestige. No matter that along with this often came no real source of income, alcoholic addictions, wife beatings, infidelities and child abuse-all quaint yet secret

European customs dating back centuries.

So it was that George de Mohrenschildt found himself temptingly close to the lap of luxury and yet still apart. He was in a new world-a displaced member of the aristocracy who was not particularly self-funded for the social circles he hoped to claim as his own. It was in this atmosphere that George was able to join the social circle of the Bouvier family. Author John Davis has shared his experiences and recollections of George de Mohrenschildt's association with his family.

George did try to secure a living for himself. He hooked up with Pierre Freyss in the information and economic department of French Intelligence and made trips to various United States ports to provide information on German oil procurement plans in 1939. In his Warren Commission testimony, George referred to Freyss as one of his closest friends. (6)

This type of activity became common for George, to merge his own business interests with an additional money making opportunity-providing appropriate feedback to governments in the need to know. He later was to get caught in this spying subterfuge on a number of occasions, perhaps indicating his lack of official training in such maneuvers. Researcher Bruce Adamson is involved in a FOIA legal action to secure IRS records related to George which might be able to shed some light on potential government payments to him.

Having completed that assignment, George traveled to New Orleans under the support and guidance of Mrs. Mary (Margaret) Williams, a wealthy southerner. She encouraged a friend of hers at Humble Oil to give him a job in the fields at Terrenone in New Orleans Parish. He was only able to hold the job for just under two months-May to July 1939. After he cut his arm, and developed dysentery, he returned to New York in December 1939. (7) When his former employer at Humble was interviewed by the FBI in 1941, Mr. Suman said he never could figure out where George got all his money.

During the next few years, George was a dismal failure at several other employment opportunities. He tried for a year to sell insurance on a commission basis, and was not even able to sell one policy, nor was he able to pass the required licensing exam. He did experience some success as a freelance writer at the Polish Press and when he handled some wine sales. He eventually

had his best luck when he fell back on his old tried and true import/export business expertise. But he did not find fulfillment there, either financially or psychologically. This was always an important aspect of George. He did not stay at any endeavor very long if he did not find enjoyment in it.

In early 1941, the FBI suspected that he was associated with the production of two films for the Polish Information Center in NYC. In George's version of the relationship, he was in NYC on a lazy evening that spring, and had viewed a showing of *Spain In Arms* at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel by Konstantin Maydell. (8) The film was very pro-Franco and enjoyed a wide distribution to numerous Catholic organizations in the United States. George was singularly impressed with the ability of a film to convey such political import and sought out Maydell. What resulted from this partnership was a second film, titled "Poland Forever."

The firm Film Facts, based in NYC, was associated with both of the films in some way, although the connection with George and Film Facts is less clearly defined. The name that was directly associated with Film Facts was Baron Von Maydell, the subject of an on-going investigation by the FBI. Nobody seemed to want to claim a direct association with Film Facts. While the VP of Cine Laboratory, 33 West 60th Street, NYC claimed that the two films were produced independently under the name of Films Facts, Inc., she was equally adamant that her company and Film Facts were separate companies, even though they shared the same business address. The original organizer of Film Facts created the firm on September 13, 1937. This was the financier Pierpoint Hamilton, who was the grandson of J. Pierpont Morgan. When interviewed by the FBI in 1941, he provided an interestingly ambiguous statement. He had indicated that "Von Mohrenschildt had no connection whatever with Film Facts, Inc. and had not had any such connection for some time." Is it any wonder why we continue to ask questions?

Of course, George didn't help to clear up the situation related to Film Facts either. He was still telling the Local Draft Board in NYC that he was in the motion picture business, as a producer, employed by Film Facts in NYC in the summer of 1941. The NY Police Department investigation had determined that Film Facts was

no longer in business as of August, 1941 and had not been for quite some time. (11)

It is at this point that George met someone in New York who he later described in his Warren Commission testimony as a girl who "...really was the love of my life." Lilia Larin was an actress and the widow of a wealthy Mexican chocolate and candy manufacturer in Mexico City. She purchased a brand new convertible and they decided to drive from New York City to Laredo, enter Mexico and spend a few months touring. Sounds simple, right?

Well, something you quickly find out about George de Mohrenschildt's life is that nothing is ever simple. During the 1940's, the FBI was obsessed with two elements of George's life-his political views and his sex life. Numerous files and information submitted by Customs personnel, US Postal Service mail intercepts under the censorship provisions of the law, law enforcement and cleaning ladies galore all lined up to provide intimate details of how George registered at hotels when he traveled with lady friends. The reports have a thin veneer of voyeurism in them, just as when the FBI unnecessarily investigated Ruth Paine's sexual orientation in 1964.

His relationship with Lilia Larin was no exception to this surveillance. Politically, George had always tripped the light fantastic. Never one to shimmy away from the limelight, he enjoyed leading them on a merry chase and then became indignant when it intruded on his business opportunities. He dabbled at world politics at a time when the least hint of un-American sentiment was taken very seriously. Remember that this was a time when the popular sentiment was "loose lips sink ships," and he was to be found greeting visitors to his apartment on 73rd St. with a "Heil Hitler" salutation, supposedly for comical impact. (12)

On George and Lilia's road trip towards Mexico, they stopped at Corpus Christi, Texas, took photos of fishing boats and sketched the seascapes near the port. Their proximity to the Coast Guard station at Port Aransas was noticed. The local authorities were alerted to these activities and both George and Lilia were questioned. Voluminous FBI reports document the two month road trip but it is not clear which infraction they were more concerned with-George and Lilia's sexual morals or the

potential that they were spying on American military installations. (13)

To INS officials questioning him upon his entrance into Mexico on June 5th of 1941, George responded that he was visiting to produce a Mexican travelogue for Film Facts Motion Picture Co. Even the Mexican government was under the belief that George was coming to Mexico to make a picture of some sort. When searched by the INS and FBI, it was determined that he had in his possession a letter from the Mexican Congressman Rogelio Corral discussing the upcoming proposed production of a film depicting the beauties and customs of Mexico. The lack of film producing equipment made the INS and Customs officials even more suspicious of George and Lilia's intentions. While searching their baggage and vehicle, a letter was discovered under the seat which indicated that two separate locked trunks had been sent ahead to Vera Cruz. There is no indication that the contents of these trunks were ever made known. (14)

When George entered Mexico, he had a cornucopia of financial papers. They consisted of eight (8) \$100 American Express checks and letters of credit from several banks. There was one for \$1,250 from Chase National Bank in NYC and \$4,500 from First National Bank in Houston.. He carried proof of transactions transferring \$1,100 from The National Bank of Commerce in New Orleans to the Chase National Bank in NYC and transferring \$3,636 from the Chase National Bank in NYC to the Banco de Mexico in Mexico City. This was a man with connections! Once in Mexico, George also enjoyed a small stock trading account at the Lieschen Bank in Mexico City. His primary transactions were trades of 1,000 shares of Portrero Sugar Refining Company stock and 20 shares of Humble Oil and Refining Company stock. Nobody ever reported observing George engaged in any professional filming activity during this visit. (15)

At some point, George's business deals in Mexico began to turn sour. Perhaps George was getting too close to realizing some real profit in connection with his business dealings, or perhaps an ugly love triangle was involved. Whatever the cause, General Comacho exercised his considerable influence and the Mexican authorities attempted to expel George within two months

of his arrival. August 1, 1941 found him sending a frantic Western Union telegram to the FBI in Washington DC asking for their urgent assistance. He claimed the Mexican government was attempting to blackmail him by sullyng his reputation and thereby causing him severe financial damage. He requested immediate verification from the FBI that his "dossier was clear." For good measure and added support, he also gave references of William Carmichael, the President of Liggett Myers Tobacco Co. in NYC, his brother Dimitri and the Chase National Bank of New York. (16)

George's outcry must have been enough to deter the Mexican government's demands, for a time. There does not appear to be any documentation to support any action by the FBI to intercede on George's behalf. Even so, the silence of the FBI did not equate with support for him. He continued touring with Lilia and conducting his business while, unknown to him, the FBI placed a stop notice on re-entry to the United States for either George or Lilia in January, 1942. George decided to go ahead to NYC and await Lilia's arrival, at such time they would marry.

Even with the FBI precautions, George did manage to re-enter the United States three months later, on April 6, 1942. The agent simply had overlooked the stop notice. There are conflicting INS, War Department and FBI files stating that he entered via automobile vs. the footbridge in Laredo, Texas. It is most likely that he was driven to the border and simply walked across the footbridge. (17)

George was accompanied by his large Doberman Pinscher dog. Before he boarded the train to NYC, via St. Louis, George was engaged in conversation, unknowingly, by an informant who was able to secure much information about his Mexican adventures from the loquacious businessman. He willingly mentioned contacts with several pro-German, pro-Nazi individuals in Mexico, though when pressed for names was unable to recall them specifically. He also interjected an element of intrigue which would continue to pop-up in his future stories of visits to foreign lands-while innocently sketching, he was fired upon. He bragged about his social contacts-but failed to mention that most of them were secured through his relationship with Lilia Larin. He also mentioned that he was in the "motion picture

business." When pressed for further details, he described his participation in cutting and assembling films. (18)

After George's initial scare of expulsion from Mexico, the next signs of trouble for the couple came on April 19th, when Lilia Larin was stopped at Brownsville, Texas and denied entrance to the United States. Through her attorney and First Secretary to the Mexican Embassy in Washington, D.C., she did finally secure entry one month later. She met George de Mohrenschildt in the capital, where he was attempting to secure employment in some federal government capacity. He was offering his services in foreign languages and his expertise in working in various countries. During the summer of 1942, George traveled to Washington DC and stayed with Paul Joachim at 3822 Benton St. NW. He was often observed hanging out around the house, giving every impression of having no gainful employment. During this time, the FBI still considered him a potential subversive character and in October of 1942, they investigated his activities in the capital. They checked various Federal agencies to determine if George had applied for employment with any of them. This included the US Information Center of War Information, the Civil Service Commission, the War Department, the US Attorney's Office, the US Enemy Alien Files and the Ineligible Applications Division for the Federal Government. All these searches yielded negative results in either an application or subsequent employment. (19)

Finally, at the office of the Coordinator of information, it was discovered that George had completed an application on May 19, 1942. The application form provided some interesting background information on George-with slight variances from earlier biographical sketches he had provided to the government and to friends or associates.

In July, Lilia's temporary visa expired and she was forced to leave the country. In a reversal, she now had to go on ahead and await his arrival in Mexico so that they could marry. The next six months was a series of correspondence between George and Lilia regarding their separation and how they might contrive to have him enter Mexico with a guarantee of re-entry to the United States.

For the remainder of 1942, George ran into considerable difficulty trying to get back to Mexico. He enlisted

Lilia Larin to use her considerable influence to assist him to get there, as there were supposedly some big business opportunities awaiting his arrival. It is not clear if the biggest business opportunity was, in reality, his desire to attach himself to her considerable financial assets acquired from her first marriage to the wealthy Mexico City candy manufacturer Senor Larin. In addition, a recent law had been enacted in Mexico which prohibited Europeans from entering the country. (20)

The First Secretary of the Mexican Embassy in Washington DC, Mr. Duhart, took an exceptional dislike for George de Mohrenschildt. In discussions with Mr. Alexander, the Legal Advisor to the Visa Division of the Department of State, he explained the reason. Duhart had provided embassy services for Lilia Larin both in assisting her efforts to enter the United States and divorce her husband. When he queried George de Mohrenschildt regarding his intentions towards Mrs. Larin, he was advised that George might consider marrying her if she was able to secure a divorce and make "certain financial settlements which he had in mind." (21)

On his re-entry permit application, George indicated that he had been to Mexico once and had been allowed to reenter the US on April 6, having visited Mexico and Central America.

George did have some plans for activity in Mexico. In late June of 1942, Lilia Larin deposited funds in the amount of \$22M in a Mexico City bank with the written stipulation that the money belonged to George de Mohrenschildt and would be surrendered to him upon demand. When the Censors read this information in their mail intercept program, they rushed off a memo to FBI with the title: "Possible Nazi Agent's Funds in Mexico." (22)

Lilia Larin wrote to him describing all sorts of alternative plans. On 7/21, she reminded him that they had mutually agreed there were many reasons not to marry and then mentioned that they could marry secretly in Mexico and no one would know. She further suggested that she would like to help him reorganize his life, settle down and live a "tranquil life." Covering all bases, she even said she would be willing to divorce, if life ended up not suiting him and that this, also, could be done in secret, completely avoiding scandal. (23)

Lilia's anxiety level was clearly rising when she wrote two days later, of her concern about their property being confiscated, so she suggested they lease initially in Mexico when he arrived. They could live on the proceeds of her properties and she further advised that the region of the future Pan American highway would be ideal for their investment as it might provide an opportunity to build tourist cabins. She also reminded him of the safety of the monies she was holding for him in Mexico already-nearly \$22M. It seems likely that Lilia Larin was prepared to make any claim to convince George to continue his efforts to join her in Mexico.

It is interesting to note that Lilia's letters to George go into intricate detail of the cat and mouse game they were playing in order to achieve their goals. Supposedly so sophisticated, didn't they strongly suspect that under such apparent scrutiny their correspondence would, likely, be intercepted and read?

By Christmas of 1942, Lilia Larin was desperate to see her two boys, who attended private school in the United States. For the record, she denounced George de Mohrenschildt and was then allowed to enter California for a few days around the holidays. Don't feel sorry for Lilia Larin. After George's rejection, she went on to marry three more times over the next twenty years. Finally in 1943, the FBI dropped her name from the titles of their on-going investigation into the activities of George de Mohrenschildt.

Meanwhile, George had given up on his pursuit of freedom of travel without a United States passport. I believe he re-doubled his efforts to gain naturalization partly to accommodate his need to move freely across international boundaries and pursue business interests.

At 32, George was eager to also move forward in his life. With a short wooing period, he married barely 18 year old Dorothy Pierson in NYC at a ceremony performed by Rev. V. Kurdinoff on June 16, 1943. Dorothy was the daughter of Cornelia Skinner and A. Romeyn Pierson. Part of the irony was that Dorothy's parents had worried most about her being influenced by the local sailors in southern Florida. They had not anticipated the influence of an European rogue to sweep her off her feet. The marriage was ill-fated from the beginning, having primarily occurred to provide legitimacy to the impending birth of the child Dorothy was carry-

ing. A daughter was born on December 25, 1943 and she was named Alexandra Romeyn (Romyne) after George's mother and Dorothy's father. (24)

Shortly before Alexandra's birth, George conducted an art exhibit "Water Color of Mexico, by George de Mohrenschildt" at the Arthur U. Newton Galleries in NYC from December 7-18, 1943. He received mixed reviews, but actually sold very few of the paintings. These art renderings were the result of his 1941-2 sojourn into Mexico with Lilia Larin. (25)

Nearly one year to the day of their marriage, George and Dorothy divorced. She received custody of Alexandra, while George was given full visitation rights. Lacking the maturity and stability to raise the child, it was agreed that a relative, Nancy Tilton, would take on these duties. Over time, Alexandra became Donna, and became the pawn in a tug of war between aunt, mother and father.

Once again, George found himself in a position where he needed to move on in his life. George decided to throw himself wholeheartedly into the oil industry. To be successful, he realized that he needed the formal education in order to compete in the international oil industry. Tired of the insecure income opportunities for which he was qualified in New York, George secured a scholarship from the Russian Study Fund of NYC. (26) In 1944, George moved to Austin and enrolled in the University of Texas studying geology. He secured employment there as an instructor of languages. It is not clear if George attended the college or it attended him. He dated many of the female students there-often only once because they were turned off by his continental exhibitionism plus his attitudes towards American women. (27)

As usual, his open willingness to eagerly debate radical politics caused some concern among his colleagues and it was not long before the FBI was again opening its investigation on George. An informant at the University provided a steady stream of commentary and innuendo regarding his activities. (28)

In 1944, the FBI were so concerned that they illegally gained access to a copy of George's address book. They conducted an extensive investigation into identifying every name in the book. It seemed that George's chances of securing naturalization were definitely a longshot at

this point. (29)

Once George's graduate classes were completed and he received his MA in Geology, he signed a contract with Pantepec Oil in Venezuela for a six month term as a consulting petroleum geologist. He was granted a re-entry permit based on verification of the legitimacy of the Pantepec deal. He received good reviews of his work with Pantepec and he used those references to expand his consulting clientele and also to support his application for naturalization.

Back in New York in 1946 on a vacation, George met young Phyllis Washington. Her father was a diplomat to Spain but she chose to follow George to the oil boomtown of Rangely, Colorado. George admired her adventuresome spirit and her ability to endure the wilderness and rather meager living and social conditions, considering her background. They eventually married in 1948, with Phyllis just a few days shy of 21. (30)

One year later, in July of 1949, George finally attained naturalized citizenship status. This was a goal he had worked towards since 1943. At the same time, George started to see the wear on his marriage from the hardships of life in the oil fields and he decided to divorce Phyllis by the end of the year. So this was the end of marriage #2. Poor George got so confused during the questioning about any of his four marriages with Jenner during his Warren Commission testimony, you can practically see him throwing up his arms in resignation when he says, "Sorry-too many marriages, too many divorces." (31)

About this time, the business in the Rangely oil fields was, quite literally, drying up. The major investment concerns were pulling out and George decided that his Pantepec and University of Texas associates had been right all along when they had advised him to go into business for himself if he wanted to be a major success in the oil business. Later, during his Warren Commission testimony, George regretfully mentioned that many of the millionaires from the oil industry in 1964 had done exactly that two decades earlier. His sense of having missed the boat was clearly apparent.

With the assistance of a friend, Jimmy Donahue, to share an office and a secretary, George started his own consulting firm. He formed a limited partnership with his nephew Eddie Hooker under the name Hooker and

de Mohrenschildt. George's eventual relocation to Dallas was partially to blame for the failure of this business association.

On a visit to see Eddie Hooker in New York, George was introduced to the woman who would become his third wife. Wynne Sharples, nicknamed Didi, had just graduated from medical school at Columbia University. At the end of another brief courtship, George and Didi were married in Philadelphia in April of 1951. The Sharples family were wealthy and socially prominent Quakers with a small interest in the Rangely fields. George had met Sam Butler, Didi's cousin, and he served as usher at the wedding. (32)

Didi joined her husband in Dallas, and took up her residency at Baylor Hospital. Sadly, they had two children, both diagnosed with cystic fibrosis. George and Didi's uncle, Edward Walz, formed a joint venture called Waldem Oil, operating out of the Republic National Bank Building in downtown Dallas from 1952 through 1960. (33)

During the marriage, George began to expand his consulting jobs in foreign countries. In late 1954, he started work at Sharmex, S.A. in Venezuela. This was likely secured due to P. T. Sharples', his father-in-law's, connections with Sharmex, U.S. By 1955, the marriage had deteriorated to the point that Didi walked out and they divorced. Perhaps as a result of this, George's employment with Sharmex was ended in May of 1956. The cause of his termination was cited as "worthlessness." (34)

Having liquidated his assets in the divorce settlement, George moved into the Maple Terrace apartments, closely connected to the Stoneleigh Hotel. There he met Jeanne Le Gon, a noteworthy fashion designer who had been named "Designer of the Year" by *Mademoiselle* magazine in 1947. During the Christmas holidays of 1956, they traveled to Mexico. Jeanne was in the midst of a messy divorce and her association with George further antagonized the situation, even bringing him, once again, to the attention of the FBI. Finally, in May of 1957, her divorce was final. Over the next two years, they traveled and lived together, marrying in a civil ceremony in 1959.

In early 1957, George was unsuccessful in securing a consulting contract in the Dominican Republic, but was

selected to work for the International Cooperation Administration (ICA) as an oil consultant for a Yugoslavian venture. George told the Warren Commission that his living expenses were paid for by the Yugoslavian government while the ICA paid his salary. He further described his work there as completing reports in triplicate, recalling that one went to the Yugoslavian government, one went to ICA and the other went to the Bureau of Mines. He knew that he had been "checked on" in some manner before he went because he had to wait for an approval before he could leave. Afterwards, when he returned to the United States, he felt someone was still checking on him because friends would tell him so. (35)

While in Yugoslavia, George claimed to have again been shot at by the Communists while he and Jeanne innocently enjoyed his passion for painting the seascapes which happened to be near security areas. This had a familiar ring to the stories he brought back from Mexico.

George told Igor Voshinin, a friend in Dallas, that after he came back from Yugoslavia, he was called to the State Department to give his opinion on the state of affairs in Yugoslavia. George continued, "I gave quite a lecture there to those boys there in the State Department. They all sat down and listened to me." Voshinin chalked it up to another example of George's personality in saying, "But, of course, he is a man who exaggerates a lot. He is that kind of character." (36)

The CIA was also interested in what George had to say about his visit to Yugoslavia. They sent their Dallas representative to meet with him and to gather intelligence information related to his observations while in Europe. George explained in his testimony that he first met J. Walton Moore when he returned from a business trip to Yugoslavia. He admitted that Moore asked him about the political climate George had observed there and laid it out in a deposition. George said they became "quite friendly" after that, meeting for lunch. This eventually led to dinners at the de Mohrenschildt home with Jeanne and Mrs. Walton also attending. George described the mutual areas of interest as China and other foreign travel. He found Moore to be "a very interesting person." (37)

During his Warren Commission testimony, George mistakenly called him G. Walter Moore and said he was

".. A government man—either FBI or Central Intelligence." This man was, in fact, J. Walton Moore. (38)

In 1959, George was a paid geology consultant masquerading as a skilled philatelist for a Swedish oil exploration syndicate. The deception was needed due to their concern about major US oil companies being alerted to their interest in the area. He ventured into Ghana and Togoland to gather intelligence on oil potential in the area. He was able to gain concessions in some prime areas for this syndicate.

Thinking that she might enjoy more freedom living with George and Jeanne, Alexandra moved in. She had not counted on Jeanne's strict rules and curfew. To escape, she eloped to Oklahoma with Gary Taylor in late 1959. While he was still reeling from this, his only son, Sergei, died of complications associated with his cystic fibrosis. Devastated, George found it difficult to conduct daily business in the oil consulting field. Always an energetic and outdoors person, George and Jeanne began an eight month trek through Mexico and Central America in October of 1960. They gave up their apartment, put their possessions in storage or loaned them to friends, and took off.

The trip was rough. Accompanied by a mule and their dog, they dressed as beggars so as not to attract attention and avoid being attacked. During the trip, they frequently encountered local political insurrections and civil disobedience. They passed through Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica to the Panama Canal. From there they flew to Haiti to see a friend, rest a little and start to seriously explore the possibility of a Haitian geological consulting contract. (39)

They returned via ship in October of 1961, docking in New Orleans. They later borrowed a car from a friend and drove back to Dallas. The local papers wrote about their adventure, but George was way ahead of them. He had kept a daily journal recording every scrap of information based on his observations of the areas visited. He had hopes of having the story published, although some who were later shown portions of it found it dull and unimaginative. On the contrary, George thought so highly of the information contained in his manuscript, that he contacted J. Walton Moore in 1962 when he thought someone had been photographing his

papers while he was away on business. The fact that George suspected interest by the intelligence community suggests that the work contained much more than geological survey data. (40) George and Jeanne had also made a film of their adventures and enjoyed showing it to their Dallas friends. Slowly, George began to rebuild his consulting business and his life. Physically strained and financially strapped, it was a slow process.

By 1962, the Russian communities in Dallas and Fort Worth were divided into two primary groups, but not geographically. One represented the old guard, who lived as if the czar's Russia still existed. The other was slightly more modern, having achieved some success in their adopted country, the United States.

Both groups were overly cautious about newcomers and outsiders. They exchanged confidences, knew far more than they needed to about each other, and solicitously gave out advice on family behaviors, acquaintances and business dealings. By the time Lee and Marina Oswald entered the scene in the summer of 1962, George had already managed to ruffle the feathers of nearly every member at one time or another.

Testimony before the Warren Commission and interviews with FBI agents gave many of them an opportunity to finally put George de Mohrenschildt in his proper place. Neither George nor Jeanne de Mohrenschildt had ever really been like them anyway. If they decided to turn left, George was always ready to veer sharply to the right. It seemed to amuse him to upset their conventional beliefs. In the end, when the Federal investigators came to town, just as George "officially" denied his close friendship and association with Lee Oswald, the Russians attempted to distance themselves from the man who had continued to see Lee and Marina long after they had severed their ties with the couple.

Igor Voshinin found "de Mohrenschildt and his wife—they are peculiar people, always doing something which nobody else does." His wife, Natalie, fought so often with George's wife Jeanne over political discussions relating to Communist China, that the couples did not talk to each other for months at a time. (41)

Some of the Russians steered cleared of any association with George de Mohrenschildt. Voshinin told WC Attorney Jenner that when he first came to Dallas, he had been warned off of associating with George by Ba-

sil Zavioco saying, "Don't be too close with de Mohrenschildt because, who knows what he is?" (42)

In the summer of 1962, the Russian community had heard about a young defector who had returned to the United States, bringing along his Russian wife and child. When attorney Max Clark was asked by George and others about the wisdom of meeting and helping the Oswalds, his advice was that Lee was a defector but they should not hold that against Marina and the child. He also assured them that he knew enough about the FBI to know they would be keeping a close eye on someone like Lee Oswald. (43) George also checked with his local intelligence friend, J. Walton Moore, to ask if meeting and helping Lee Oswald was okay.

Perhaps it was his "welcome outcast" status within the community that led George de Mohrenschildt to befriend Lee Harvey Oswald. Perhaps it was the age difference and the thought that Lee could have been his son. Perhaps there are other considerations, yet unknown, undiscovered or undocumented. Whatever the reason, George did encourage many members of the community to associate with Lee and Marina. In trying to get the Voshinins to meet the Oswalds, Natalie remembered George telling her repeatedly that Lee was "...a very interesting person, he's very well read, a very intelligent person." (44)

The exact manner in which George came to meet the Oswalds was never clearly established by the de Mohrenschildts. In his Warren Commission testimony, when asked one of the most important questions of all 118 pages, here was his response:

Jenner: You were curious to find out more about them, were you not?

George: Yes.

Jenner: What did you do?

George: Again, now, my recollections are a little bit vague on that. I tried, both my wife and I, hundreds of times to recall how exactly we met the Oswalds. But they were out our mind completely because so many things happened in the meantime. So please do not take it for sure how I first met them. (45)

Once having met the young couple, George and Jeanne took them under their collective wing and provided the most consistent friendship between the sum-

mer of 1962 and April of 1963, when they left for Haiti. Repeatedly, George and Jeanne would attempt to mend the fences between the Russian community and the Oswalds. Although Jeanne was successful at bullying Katya Ford into allowing the Oswalds to attend her holiday party on December 28, 1962, they were not invited to other parties held that week. The Russian community had tried to assist Marina in June several times but were thwarted by the hold which Lee had over his wife. In addition, George had given Lee a thorough thrashing in mid January over his continual beating of Marina. (46)

By the beginning of February, the rumors were flying that the Oswalds had still not found peace, yet Marina held on. Given that scenario, it could be considered logical that George would look for alternate friendships for the young couple. To this end, Everett Glover hosted a small party in late February, 1963 to which he invited Michael and Ruth Paine.

To be continued ... Part II of this series will delve deeper into the meeting of the Oswald family and explore that relationship, the aftermath of the assassination, and the ultimate deterioration of the life of George de Mohrenschildt.

Notes

- 1) Warren Commission testimony of George de Mohrenschildt on April 22, 1964 in Washington D.C. Volume 9:195-6. (A) Edward Hooker, his nephew by his brother's marriage to Betty Hooker, recalled his business relationship with George de Mohrenschildt. Eddie wanted to "break the bank" while George was content to make a respectable amount from each of their drillings. Eddie preferred George to be out in the fields as a catalyst for action and innovation rather than the sedentary role in the office for financial management and administrative duties. (B) Interestingly, no member of the Warren Commission was present during any of the two day testimony of George or Jeanne de Mohrenschildt.
- 2) Warren Commission testimony of George de Mohrenschildt on April 22, 1964 in Washington D.C. Volume 9:168. There is conflict in various other documents as to the actual date due to the change in the Gregorian Calendar at the time of the Revolution. Per that record, his birth is recorded as April

4, 1911 versus the accepted date of April 17, 1911. This is common among many displaced individuals as the result of the conflicts in Europe and Asia during the first half of this century.

- 3) Warren Commission Document (CD) 777(d). This is an FBI report from Agent Morrissey of the Washington, D.C. office on George de Mohrenschildt and Jeanne de Mohrenschildt-Internal Security-Russia, dated March 27, 1964.
- 4) NARA 124-10130-10184, Agency (FBI) 100-32965-36, page 6. FBI summary at October 22, 1942 regarding George de Mohrenschildt's summer in Washington, D.C. Information is from work resume completed by George on his application for employment with the Office Coordination of Information on May 19, 1942. The import/export company was called Sigurd, founded by George and his girlfriend. When the personal relationship folded, so did the business.
- 5) Dimitri von Mohrenschildt had earned his MA degree from Yale in 1930. See NARA 124-10135-10097, Agency (FBI) 100-32965-289. FBI summary dated February 27, 1964.
- 6) Warren Commission testimony of George de Mohrenschildt on April 22, 1964 in Washington, D.C. Volume 9:182-183. George described Freyss' background with Shumaker Company as well as his employment arrangement. George claimed that he received no salary, only daily living and travel expenses.
- 7) NARA 124-10129-10042, Agency (FBI) 100-32965-77. FBI summary of George de Mohrenschildt's biography to date, at March 6, 1945.
- 8) Ibid. There are actually several versions of the association of George de Mohrenschildt and Konstantin Maydell. A J. Weberman has indicated that they were related and that when the von Mohrenschildts fled Russia, they traveled to Germany to stay with Sergius' sister who was married to Maydell. In George de Mohrenschildt's Warren Commission testimony, he indicated that Maydell was a distant relation but that his brother Dimitri denied it. (I have not been able to find documents to support Weberman's claims.)
- 9) Warren Commission Document (CD) 777(d).

- 10) NARA 124-10130-10205, Agency (FBI) 100-32965-13. FBI memo with the history of Film Facts, dated November 25, 1941.
- 11) Warren Commission Document (CD) 533. This is an FBI report and summary from Agent Freaney of the New York office on George de Mohrenschildt; Jeanne de Mohrenschildt, dated February 28, 1964. It includes a summary of the 1940's investigations into de Mohrenschildt's background. It also contains information regarding the arrest of Konstantin Maydell in NY in September of 1942. He was interred in a camp in No. Dakota for four years. The government considered using George de Mohrenschildt as a witness at the trial, but decided against it.
- 12) Warren Commission Document (CD) 777(d).
- 13) Of approximately 2,200 pages of Department of Justice, FBI documents on the de Mohrenschildts from 1940's through the 1960's nearly 40% are related to the affair between Lilia Larin and George de Mohrenschildt from early 1941 through mid 1943 when George married Dorothy Pierson in Florida. Total evidentiary value of these documents plus the use of FBI resources is truly questionable and indicates a method of investigation which had pervaded the FBI under J. Edgar Hoover for decades.
- 14) NARA 124-10130-10218, Agency (FBI) 100-32965-2. FBI report of Agent Clements, dated June 10, 1941. This is five days after George de Mohrenschildt and Lilia Larin drive over the border into Mexico.
- 15) Warren Commission Document (CD) 777(d).
- 16) NARA 124-10130-10212, Agency (FBI) 100-32965-6, FBI report dated August 2, 1941 regarding telegram from George de Mohrenschildt. Such accusations towards business partners will be a common theme of George de Mohrenschildt throughout his life. While he was considered with the utmost respect in terms of his geological expertise, George may have been viewed as an all too willing victim in financial matters.
- 17) NARA 124-10130-10200, Agency (FBI) 100-32965-20, FBI report dated April 22, 1942 from an informant's report of a conversation with George de Mohrenschildt in Laredo on the date of his re-entry to the United States. It seems that George was his usual garrulous self and talked to the stranger about his activities in Mexico as well as his subsequent travel plans.
- 18) Ibid. In addition, much is always made of the de Mohrenschildts' penchant for traveling with their dogs. Especially at that time, it was a more than commonly accepted practice among first class and well-to-do passengers. In fact, I recently came across a reproduction of a poster from this time period. It displays the message "I'm Ready. Take your dog with you by rail-Return tickets at single rate." It shows a terrier packed and ready to ride the rails. A special notation at the bottom of the poster says, "drinking water for dogs can be obtained from station refreshment rooms or on request to a member of the station staff." Such was the welcome made for passengers' pets. In addition, both Jeanne and George did sometimes treat their pets a little better than they might have treated friends. In Marina and Lee, mention is made of Marina witnessing Jeanne's knitting of a sweater for her dog.
- 19) NARA 124-10130-1084, Agency (FBI) 100-32965-36.
- 20) NARA 124-10130-10191, Agency (FBI) 100-32965-29, FBI information from the Postal Censorship Summary of correspondence during July, 1942.
- 21) NARA 124-10130-10195, Agency (FBI) 100-32965-25, 26, FBI report of VISA section of Department of State information on Duhart, dated May 26, 1942.
- 22) NARA 124-10130-10191, Agency (FBI) 100-32965-29. Throughout this series of documents intercepting mail, their summary conclusion as stated in NARA 124-10130-10194, Agency (FBI) 100-32965-27, dated July 14, 1942, is that there is no proof of violating Federal statutes yet, but they will keep looking.
- 23) NARA 124-10130-10191, Agency (FBI) 100-32965-29.
- 24) NARA 124-10129-10026, Agency (FBI) 100-32965-61, FBI report dated November 8, 1944.
- 25) NARA 124-10129-10025, Agency (FBI) 100-32965-60, FBI report dated November 8, 1944.
- 26) NARA 124-10129-10026, Agency (FBI) 100-32965-77, FBI report dated March 6, 1945.

- 27) NARA 124-10129-10038, Agency (FBI) 100-32965-73, FBI report dated January 24, 1945.
- 28) NARA 124-10136-10002, Agency (FBI) 100-32965-229, FBI report of Agent James Woods, dated March 20, 1964. This is a partial of Warren Commission Document (CD) 730.
- 29) NARA 124-10129-10034, Agency (FBI) 100-32965-69, FBI report dated December 13, 1944.
- 30) Warren Commission testimony- Volume 9:192.
- 31) Warren Commission testimony of George de Mohrenschildt on April 22, 1964 in Washington D.C. Volume 9:200.
- 32) Warren Commission testimony of George de Mohrenschildt on April 22, 1964 in Washington D.C. Volume 9:197-198.
- 33) NARA 124-10135-10103, Agency (FBI) 100-32965-295, FBI report dated February 27, 1964.
- 34) Warren Commission Document (CD) 777 (d).
- 35) Warren Commission Testimony of George de Mohrenschildt on April 22, 1964 in Washington D.C. Volume 9:203.
- 36) 8:460 Voshinin.
- 37) NARA 124-10135-10106, Agency (FBI) 100-32965-298, letter from Richard Helms, CIA to J. Lee Rankin, dated June 3, 1964. The memo mentions that George was considered for employment with the OSS in 1942 but did not because of concerns he might be a Nazi spy.
- 38) Warren Commission testimony of George de Mohrenschildt on April 23, 1964 in Washington D.C. Volume 9:235.
- 39) Warren Commission testimony of George de Mohrenschildt on April 22, 1964 in Washington D. C. Volume 9:213.
- 40) Warren Commission Testimony of George de Mohrenschildt on April 23, 1964 in Washington D.C. Volume 9:235. 333
- 41) Warren Commission testimony of Igor Voshinin, Volume 8:464-465.
- 42) Warren Commission testimony of Igor Voshinin, Volume 8:468.
- 43) Warren Commission testimony of Max Clark, Volume 8:351.
- 44) Warren Commission testimony of Igor Voshinin, Volume 8:437.

- 45) Warren Commission testimony of George de Mohrenschildt on April 23, 1964 in Washington D.C. Volume 9:235. 333
- 46) Warren Commission testimony of Max Clark, Volume 8:352-353.

2a

THE UBIQUITOUS BARD

by
R. F. Gallagher

On page 783, in Volume 15 of the Warren Commission Hearings, we see the name Odum listed twice, once as Bardwell D. Odum and again as Hart Odum. Both listings are the same man. (Apparently Marguerite Oswald-1H148-initially referred to Odum as "Hart" and the WR indexer continued to reference Odum under the first name until his first name of Bardwell was first given at 4H273.)

He was a special agent of the FBI and was stationed in Dallas at the time of the JFK assassination. His name is seldom mentioned by researchers, yet he was probably the most assiduous investigator involved in the 1963-1964 investigation. However, despite his deep involvement, he did not testify before the Warren Commission.

Odum was in the Texas School Depository (TSBD) at the time that the alleged murder rifle was found on the sixth floor and later drove Lt. Day, of the Dallas Police Department to Headquarters with the weapon. (26H830) Odum was seen and photographed leaving the building with Day at sometime close to 1:45 pm. According to Day, the agent also used his car radio to contact his FBI office to describe the rifle. (4H264; Meagher, Accessories After The Fact, fn, p. 100). There does not seem to be any public record of this communication.

In Assignment Oswald, the long awaited book by Special Agent James P. Hosty Jr., Odum is mentioned a number of times and it is Hosty who is witness and reporter to the spirit-like nature of SA Odum.

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It was between 1:45 pm and 2:00 pm that Odum and Day made the rifle delivery to Lt. Day's office at Main and Harwood Streets in downtown Dallas. At the very same time, according to SA Hosty, Bardwell was at the Texas Theater witnessing the arrest of Lee Harvey Oswald. Hosty describes the scene "When the officers escorted Oswald out of the theater, a mob had already formed. Word had spread that a killer had been arrested. ...in addition to Barrett (SA Bob Barrett), Agents Bardwell Odum and Jim Swinford were standing in the back of the theater at the time of the arrest. Odum told me that when Oswald was being escorted out of the theater, he shouted, 'Police Brutality! Police Brutality!', seemingly in an effort to get the mob on his side. Instead, Odum said, the mob was turning violent; one old lady even swatted her umbrella at Oswald." p. 63 (see also Odum's own statement of observing the arrest at the theater in HSCA document #01431, discussed in The Fourth Decade 1#6 Sep 1994, pp. 17,18)

Dallas police radio transcripts reveal that at 1:51 pm, car number 2 radioed to the dispatcher that they were on their way in with the suspect. (WR, p. 179) Talk about double Oswalds, now we have a double Odum, apparently; at least SA Hosty has.

Still, with this comet-like existence, Odum was not considered important enough to testify before the Commissioners or their agents. Also, in searching through the testimonies of the references listed in volume 15, the hunter will find that Odum is called by a variety of first names, depending on who one is talking to. His friends called him Bard or B.D.

In Dallas, the agent was well acquainted with Michael and Ruth Paine (see Martha A. Moyer and R. F. Gallagher, "The Babysitters", The Fourth Decade 3#6 Sep. '96, p. 7.) Mike called the agent "Bob", Ruth called him Mr. Odum and sometimes - Bardwell. From "Mike's" testimony:

Mr. Liebler Do you remember being interviewed by FBI Agents Odum and Peggs on November 24?

Mr. Paine. Well, of course, I have seen Bob Odum frequently, Peggs is an unfamiliar name. It doesn't mean that he couldn't have been there. That night I mostly went into the police station. I was introduced to Odum prior to the 22nd (9H444) (author's

underline)

Ruth, the distaff Paine, felt comfortable enough with "Bob" to visit Marina Oswald's bedroom alone with SA Odum, who was at the Irving home to pick up Lee's wedding ring for Marina. From Ruth's testimony:

Ruth Paine. "I gave it (the ring) to Mr. Odum who was in the room with me—Mr. Odum went with me to the bedroom." (3H111-112)

On another occasion, Ruth and Bardwell examined the content of Marina's drawers. From testimony:

Ruth Paine. ...I think she must have known that Lee had been to Mexico, judging from the materials, I have already described were picked up by Mr. Odum and myself from the dresser drawer. (9H385)

Ruth also had a conversation with the "Bard" about the General Walker shooting before there was reason to believe that Lee was involved. From testimony:

Ruth Paine. I don't know whether your accounts of what the FBI has put down of their conversation with me include one meeting with Bardwell Odum, right after the newspapers had indicated something of a shot at Walker, before there was any corroborative details such as the contents of a note. (9H387).

Ruth Paine. Agent Odum has been out a great deal. (3H106).

Ruth Paine. I would guess that I reported to Mr. Odum other things about—...I talked with him a great deal. (3H107)

Since Ruth mentioned the Walker shooting; whatever happened to the recovered slug from the General's house? From testimony:

Mr. Belin. Do you know whether or not any ballistic identification was made of this slug with regard to any rifle it may have been fired from?

Lt. Day. No, sir, I released it to the FBI Agent B.D. Odum on December 2, 1963, at 4:10 pm.

Mr. Belin. Has that ever been back in your possession since that time?

Lt. Day. Not since that time. (10H273)

Odum also interviewed Mrs. Helen Markham, witness to the Tippit shooting (3H319; Meagher, p. 272) and Bonnie Ray Williams, employee of TSBD, and fifth-floor witness to JFK's murder. (3H171-172)