

MINYARD-SKOLNICK INTERVIEW

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 7, 1970

MINYARD: -- on and to Chicago, I believe, we have Mr. Sherman Skolnick on the line.

This is Ken Minyard, Mr. Skolnick, at KABC in Los Angeles.

SKOLNICK: Good evening.

MINYARD: I believe I talked with you sometime ago when I was in Minneapolis on --

SKOLNICK: Oh, yes. Right, right. I knew I heard that name some --

MINYARD: -- another investigation then about the judiciary that you were involved in.

SKOLNICK: Right.

MINYARD: I just shared with our audience the information regarding a suit that was filed charging the National Archives in Washington with suppressing documents in what you consider to be a plot to assassinate John Kennedy -- President Kennedy in Dallas and you brought out some information that I frankly was not familiar with. Could you explain to us the background of this suit filed today?

SKOLNICK: Well, first of all, it was filed in the Federal Court in Chicago this morning under the Public Information Law and we attached 11 documents to our Complaint. Among them are three documents recently released by the National Archives which, for the first time, mention the

1 potential assassin in Chicago by the name of Thomas Arthur 2
2 Vallee. Until about a year ago they wouldn't even admit that
3 there was any paper in the Archives with that name on it, let
4 alone to look at it. The other documents that we attached are
5 documents that have never been revealed or seen the light of
6 day until we put them into the court record this morning.

7 What this all shows was that there was a plot in
8 Chicago three weeks prior to the Dallas tragedy. We're talking
9 about November 2nd, 1963. The assassination in Dallas was
10 November 22, 1963. In Chicago there was three or four poten-
11 tial assassins. One of them was Lee Harvey Oswald, another
12 one was a Mr. Bradley, and another one was a Mr. Gonzales, and
13 a fourth person was Thomas Arthur Vallee who, shall we say,
14 looked like Oswald, could have been a double, was driving a
15 car with New York license plates linked or registered in the
16 name of Lee Harvey Oswald. The official document that shows
17 that link is locked up in the Archives but we know it from
18 other information. And the plot was aborted by the activities
19 of a person known as Daniel Groff --

20 MINYARD: I tell you what, I'm --

21 SKOLNICK: -- who was not known as a policeman but as a
22 witness.

23 MINYARD: I have some difficulty here on determining
24 whether we should use those specific names on the --

25 SKOLNICK: Well, they're in the court record now. We're
26 not talking about things that are outside the court record.

1 MINYARD: Yeah, yeah.

2 SKOLNICK: But the interesting thing is that this
3 ^{GROFF} Daniel Groff, it occurs to me, is the same Daniel Groff that
4 led the raid on the Panther apartment in Chicago last December
5 resulting -- well, you know what happened. Fred Hampton and
6 Mark Clark were killed. It's amazing that that name shows up
7 in two different things.

8 MINYARD: Now, is this information that you are sharing
9 with us tonight you feel does, in fact, bring forth if you can
10 get these documents released from the National Archives. Is
11 this information that has been available to these researchers
12 who are critics of the Warren Commission on throughout the
13 years?

14 SKOLNICK: No. For example, we've put into the court
15 record this morning a document hitherto never revealed. It's
16 a document showing that there was a collect phone call from
17 the Dallas jail the day after the assassination -- a collect
18 call by Lee Harvey Oswald to a person in Raleigh, North
19 Carolina which upon investigation turns out to be a special
20 agent in the U.S. Military Counter-Intelligence Corps. A
21 radio station in Chicago followed our investigation as it
22 proceeded and corroborated it point by point and then used it
23 in exclusive story this morning on the air, so it was a com-
24 bined news media and research story.

25 MINYARD: Do you have any other connection with this
26 agent that was called by Oswald, any previous connection

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1 that Oswald had with him?

2 SKOLNICK: Well, sir, we've got an extensive dossier on
3 the matter which is not yet part of the court record and I'd
4 rather not get into that, but what we have done is this:
5 There was a black secret service agent who offered to testify
6 before the Warren Commission. Abraham Bolden. And he was the
7 first black man to be in the secret service assigned to the
8 White House detail. And a few days after he contacted -- in
9 fact, one day after he contacted the General Counsel of the
10 Warren Commission, he was indicted, prosecuted, sentenced, so
11 on, all before the Warren Report came out. He was indicted
12 on the charge that he offered to sell Secret Service documents
13 to an alleged counterfeiter.

14 MINYARD: Is he in jail now?

15 SKOLNICK: Well, now wait a minute, let me explain. The
16 counterfeiter in his own trial -- well, let's put it this way --
17 the counterfeiter was the major witness against Abraham Bolden.
18 The counterfeiter, in his own trial for counterfeiting, con-
19 fessed that he had perjured himself against Bolden. He con-
20 fessed in court. This was brought back to the judge that had
21 sentenced Bolden to six years in prison. And by the greatest
22 amazement, the judge said that that confession of perjury was
23 not relevant. I find that monstrous and shocking. And Bolden
24 went to jail and so he could not testify before the Warren
25 Commission. He went to jail. He recently got out on proba-
26 tion with an implicit agreement that he stay shut. Today,

1 because of the great hullabaloo brought by our suit, because 5
2 he's mentioned in our suit --

3 MINYARD: Mr. Skolnick, can you hold on the line just a
4 moment. We have a break here and I'll be back to you.

5 SKOLNICK: Sure.

6 MINYARD: We're speaking with Sherman Skolnick who has
7 some interesting things to say, filed a suit in Chicago today
8 charging the National Archives in Washington with suppressing
9 documents concerning an alleged plot to assassinate the late
10 President John Kennedy and is revealing some of that story for
11 us here and it's, as far as I can determine, rather a new
12 twist. It may have been knowledge that other people had but
13 those of us who have read the books -- many of them on the
14 assassination -- some of this I haven't heard before..

15 Now, let's get back to our conversation with
16 Mr. Sherman Skolnick who is a legal researcher involved in
17 filing this lawsuit this morning we've been talking about.

18 Mr. Skolnick, we all, of course, throughout the
19 nation followed the Garrison thing in New Orleans. The trial
20 came about and unsuccessfully for Mr. Garrison. Is there a
21 connection? Do you believe, in other words, that the story
22 that Garrison was putting together alleging that it was a
23 plot basically from some right-wing extremists who resided in
24 the South? Do you believe that this ties in with your premise?

25 SKOLNICK: Well, I wouldn't say it will -- we're only
26 working on the Chicago end. Here's the point. This imprisoned

1 black Secret Serviceman, Service Agent, his problem was wound
 2 up with the Warren Commission in this respect. He had been
 3 one of those that had known about this plot in Chicago. Now
 4 get this. This is three weeks before Dallas, and he was to go
 5 before the Warren Commission and instead he was imprisoned to
 6 silence him. Now, over the last few years he has made certain
 7 statements which we quote in our suit today. We say this. From
 8 time to time Bolden has made the statement: "I have evidence
 9 that a member of the Secret Service had a part in the planning
 10 of the assassination. Someone, an agent, could be indicted on
 11 it." Our group of investigators know a little bit more about
 12 which Secret Service it was -- Secret Service Agent it was that
 13 was that was involved. We have not divulged that today in our
 14 suit. We have divulged only a portion of the plot in Chicago.
 15 But there were three documents recently declassified by the
 16 National Archives which helped us prove that there was a plot
 17 and so we attached it to our suit and we're asking for the
 18 rest of the documents to be released and we itemize which
 19 documents they are. In effect what we were doing is simply
 20 this. We were saying, "Now, look National Archives we know
 21 what you've got locked up there. Just to prove it to you
 22 here's a few samples of the merchandise and we want to have
 23 the rest of the merchandise."

24 MINYARD: Well, now, there have been -- I don't know --
 25 25 or 30 books written on criticizing the Warren Commission
 26 and offering various theories as to what happened that day in

1 Dallas and what led to it. Why do you think that you can be
2 successful in your efforts when all of the others have failed?

3 SKOLNICK: Well, because the others were just literary
4 work. This is research.

5 MINYARD: With the exception of Garrison in New Orleans.

6 SKOLNICK: Right. In other words, here we went to court
7 and asked that the Warren Report be declared void on the basis
8 the Warren Report was clearly to allay public suspicion with
9 a conspiracy. When in fact there was a conspiracy. And over
10 a period of time the documents supposedly will come out. Now,
11 here in the last couple of months three documents were declas-
12 sified, really unknown to the public. I mean, we heard about
13 it and we got it and they show for the first time the name of
14 the assassin in Chicago -- Thomas Arthur Vallee. We know from
15 other documents that we have that we put into the court record
16 that he was driving a car with New York plates linked to
17 Oswald. Now, here you have the link. Now, therefore, the
18 Warren Commission could not have said that there was not a
19 conspiracy. When, in fact, the Archives has been keeping for
20 seven years locked up any document that showed the link.
21 Finally three of the links came out. We want the rest of it.

22 MINYARD: Mr. Skolnick, our time limitations here
23 disallow us going further so I'll have to conclude it at this
24 point, but we would like to call you in the future as we get
25 more information and discuss this further with you.

26 SKOLNICK: Thank you.

1 MINYARD: Thank you for talking with us.

2 SKOLNICK: Thank you and good evening.

3 MINYARD: That's Mr. Sherman Skolnick in Chicago who filed
4 a lawsuit today that we are talking about and he is asking that
5 documents now in the National Archives -- it's not the first
6 time a request similar to this has been made, but it is a
7 different twist to the story. Some of the names that he
8 indicates he has named in the court suit you did not hear but
9 no doubt will be hearing in the future and the ties that he
10 believes they have. Here we are in 1970 still talking about
11 an assassination which occurred November 22nd, 1963 and there
12 are still -- well, what was the Gallop estimate a few years
13 ago -- that, at one point, I think, two-thirds of the American
14 people challenged the conclusions of the Warren Commission. I
15 don't know what they would think today. I gather there has
16 been a kind of a growing apathy over the matter just, you
17 know, by attrition. The time has taken its toll, but
18 Mr. Skolnick perhaps and his researchers might revive some
19 interest there. We'll see.

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