

Bircher Prof's Warren Testimony

By James S. Lewis
Chicago Daily News

Professor Revilo P. Oliver, who startled the Nation by stating that President Kennedy's "memory will be cherished with distaste" was the next-to-last person to be called by the Warren Commission.

Albert E. Jenner Jr., Chicago attorney and assistant counsel for the Commission, said the University of Illinois professor was "co-operative but didn't support his extremist statements."

Jenner took Oliver's testimony on September 9, almost a year after the assassination. It appears on pages 709 to 744 in Volume 15 of the 26-volume Warren Commission Report, the last volume to deal with testimony.

Oliver had asserted in a John Birch Society magazine that Mr. Kennedy was "executed by the Communist conspiracy because he was planning to turn American."

Sources Checked

The Commission, Jenner said, wanted to find out if any of Oliver's sources could possibly help them get the full story behind the assassination.

Oliver, Jenner said, "had no basis for many of his statements, except clippings he said he had seen or comments on television that he said he thought he had heard."

The classics professor is national councilor for the John Birch Society and stated in testimony that he was present when the society was formed December 9, 1958, in Indianapolis.

One of Oliver's charges was that an Army unit had been rehearsing Mr. Kennedy's funeral for a week be-

fore the assassination, Jenner said.

Questioning

Jenner's questioning of Oliver, as it appears in the official report:

Jenner: Upon what source did you rely in making the statement that the special detachment to which you refer began to rehearse for the funeral a week before the assassination?

Oliver: I relied primarily on the interview given by Captain Cloy to the Jackson (Miss.) Clarion-Ledger.

Jenner: Do you have a copy of that?

Oliver: On the 21st of February, 1964. (Oliver presented a clipping).

Jenner: I have marked as Oliver Exhibit No. 8 a photostatic reprint of an article headlined "A Lot to Remember: McComb Army Officer Big Part in Kennedy's Funeral" by Kenneth Tolliver.

Oliver: This is a reproduction of the clipping.

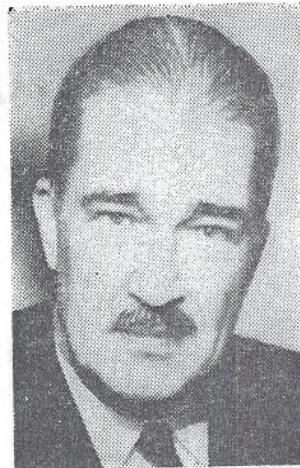
Jenner: Would you show me where in that clipping it says in any respect that Captain Cloy made the statement that he and his unit were rehearsing for the funeral of President Kennedy a week in advance of the assassination?

Oliver: My first knowledge of the rehearsal came from a letter I received from someone in Arlington, or Alexandria, informing me that the Army had rehearsed the funeral more than a week before the funeral.

Jenner: But you had the clipping prior to your speech at the Santa Ana Valley High School?

Oliver: Oh yes, quite some time before that.

Jenner: And before you prepared the speech?



REVILO P. OLIVER
He had little basis

Oliver: That is right. And that confirmed the statement that a funeral had been rehearsed.

Jenner: Yes, but not President Kennedy's?

Oliver: But it turned out to be that.

Jenner: The only point I am making, doctor, is that you will notice in the article that what Captain Cloy says is not what you state in your speech he said, but rather that before the assassination his special unit had been rehearsing for the anticipated possible funeral of President Hoover, who was then ill.

Oliver: That is right. He said, "We were in a state of readiness and had just finished a funeral rehearsal because there was grave concern for President Hoover's health."

No Effort to Check

Oliver said he made no effort to check on the person who wrote him the letter containing information about the funeral, but that he did ascertain there was a Captain Cloy.

Jenner: How did you do that?

Oliver: By trying to reach him by telephone.

Jenner: Where?

Oliver: In McComb, Miss., which is a small town some distance south of Jackson.

Jenner: What did you do make a long distance call down there?

Oliver: Yes.

Jenner: And in making that call you were advised by whom that there was or was not such a person?

Oliver: Well, I certainly was advised—

Jenner: Relate what you did on it.

Oliver: What I did was place a person-to-person call to Captain Cloy, giving his full name.

Jenner: Richard C.?

Oliver: Richard C.

Oliver said a woman told him that Captain Cloy was in Germany and could not be reached by telephone.

Among the major sources listed by Oliver are Frank Capell, publisher of a periodical called the Herald of Freedom, of Staten Island, N. Y. Capell "serves as a research consultant for me," Oliver said.

Another source was right-wing New Orleans publisher Kent Courtney.

Remarks in Series

Most of Oliver's remarks about the assassination appeared in a two-part series entitled "Marxmanship in Dallas" in American Opinion, a publication of the John Birch Society.

The conclusion of the article was that Mr. Kennedy "was executed by the Communist conspiracy because he was planning to turn American." A section of the hearings reads:

Jenner: What was your source for that statement?

Oliver: Well, as I have indicated, what I called there the comforting hypothesis that one heard so frequently since Kennedy's inauguration, and which one still hears, that he had in his mind a secret plan, that his policies and the people with whom he surrounded himself in the opening years of his Administration were intended to provide a demonstration of their fatuity and probably disloyalty—the fatuity of the measures and the probably disloyalty of the many persons involved; that he was planning to execute, as I said here, a volte-face and . . . espouse a policy on national independence instead of interdependence.

Conspiracy Question

Jenner: You then say, "Now it was generally suspected for some time before the assassination that Khrushchev and Kennedy were planning to stage another show to bamboozle the American suckers just before

the election next November."

What is your source, if any, for the statement that Khrushchev and Kennedy were planning, as you put it, another show?

Oliver: The frequent reports of preparations for an invasion of Cuba planned, it would seem, to substitute for Castro a less well-known Communist.

Jenner: Here again this was a statement of deduction on your part.

Oliver: Yes.

Jenner: From newspaper accounts and radio broadcasts and general information that was abroad?

Oliver: General information, rumors you pick up, what you are told by various analysts and so on.

Jenner: On page 26 you state: "One writer has recently suggested that it was the CIA that arranged the assassination of President Kennedy. I know of no evidence to support your opinion. But obviously Mr. Dulles' CIA is open to suspicion."

Who is the writer to which you have reference?

Oliver: I do not recall. I wrote this of course, in December. I wouldn't want to recall who said it. I have the impression it was in some one of the innumerable magazine articles about the assassination but I would not want to say which one.