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U R G E N T

FIRST LEAD OSWALD WITNESS

FORT WORTH, TEX., FEB. 9 (AP)-THE FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM SAID TONIGHT AN INFORMED SOURCE TOLD THE NEWSPAPER A WITNESS BEING HELD IN PROTECTIVE CUSTODY CAN IDENTIFY LEE HARVEY OSWALD AS THE SLAYER OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY.

THE REPORT WAS DENIED BY GOVERNMENT SPOKESMEN.

THE NEWSPAPER SAID THE SOURCE IDENTIFIED THE WITNESS AS A NEGRO PORTER EMPLOYED AT THE TEXAS SCHOOL BOOK DEPOSITORY ON NOV. 22.

THE WITNESS HAS BEEN IN PROTECTIVE CUSTODY SINCE THE DAY OF THE ASSASSINATION, THE SOURCE CONTINUED, AND WILL APPEAR BEFORE THE WARREN COMMISSION INVESTIGATING THE SLAYING.

EDWIN O. GUTHMAN, SPOKESMAN FOR THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT IN WASHINGTON, SAID "THERE IS NO TRUTH TO THE STORY AT ALL AND NO SUCH WITNESS EXISTS."

IN DALLAS, POLICE CHIEF JESSE CURRY SAID HE KNEW OF NO SUCH WITNESS AND ADDED "THE DALLAS POLICE DEPARTMENT KNOWS OF NO EYE WITNESS TO THE ASSASSINATION.

"DALLAS COUNTY SHERIFF BILL DECKER SAID "I KNOW ABSOLUTELY NOTHING ABOUT IT. I DO NOT HAVE SUCH A PERSON IN MY CUSTODY."

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ROY S. TRULY, SUPERINTENDENT OF THE DEPOSITORY, SAID "THE ONLY JANITOR WE HAVE IS STILL WORKING THERE. I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT ALL THIS.

TRULY SAID THAT ONE EMPLOYEE WHO HAD WORKED AT THE DEPOSITORY NOV. 22 LEFT THE JOB BEFORE JAN. 1. HE SAID HE WAS A NEGRO WHO WORKED AS AN ORDER FILLER AND THAT OTHER DEPOSITORY EMPLOYEES HAD REPORTED THEY HAD SEEN HIM IN DALLAS SINCE JAN. 1.

"THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT ANY EMPLOYEE OF THE DEPOSITORY IS UNDER PROTECTIVE CUSTODY," HE ADDED.

THE STAR TELEGRAM SAID THAT IN HIS ORIGINAL VERSION THE SOURCE REFERRED TO THE WITNESS AS AN EYEWITNESS AND SAID HE WAS WORKING ON THE SIXTH FLOOR FROM WHICH THE ASSASSIN FIRED THE BULLETS THAT KILLED KENNEDY AND WOUNDED GOV. JOHN CONNALLY.

THE STAR TELEGRAM SAID THAT AFTER THE PUBLICATION OF THE STORY IN ITS FIRST EDITION FOR MONDAY MORNING, THE SOURCE TELEPHONED TO OFFER SEVERAL REVISIONS IN HIS ORIGINAL STORY.



ONE REVISION, THE NEWSPAPER SAID, WAS THAT THE MAN DESCRIBED AS A WITNESS WAS ACTUALLY ON THE FIFTH FLOOR AT THE TIME OF THE SHOOTING WHICH HE HEARD AND DID NOT SEE.

IN THE REVISED STATEMENT HE SAID THAT AFTER THE SHOTS WERE FIRED HE HEARD FOOTSTEPS COMING DOWN THE STAIRS AND HID BEHIND CRATES.

DETAILS NOT ALTERED IN THIS REVISION, THE NEWSPAPER SAID, INCLUDED STATEMENTS THAT THE NEGRO MAN SURRENDERED TO OFFICERS THE SAME DAY AND TOLD THEM "I WAS SCARED TO DEATH. I THOUGHT HE (OSWALD) WAS GOING TO KILL ME TOO."

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THE SOURCE SAID HE HAD SEEN THE NEGRO MAN ONCE "WHILE HE WAS BEING QUESTIONED BY OFFICERS."

"THEY SLAPPED A VAGRANCY CHARGE ON HIM SO HE COULD BE HELD," THE SOURCE SAID. "HE WAS JAILED IN DALLAS BUT HAS SINCE BEEN MOVED ELSEWHERE. I DO NOT KNOW OF THE NEW LOCATION."

THE MAN WAS DESCRIBED AS BEING IN HIS 30S. HE TOLD OFFICERS, THE SOURCE SAID, THAT "OSWALD ALMOST STEPPED ON ME WHEN HE RAN PAST (CQ) ME DOWN THE STAIRS. I KNOW IT WAS HIM."

(NO PICKUP-UP)

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