

(Interview with N. Y. Times representative in L. A., Bureau Chief Gladwyn HILL on Oswald & Dallas. Hill was in Dallas.)

No police officer designated to work with the press. Over the three days, Dallas police dept. seemed fairly efficient, but confronted with two problems:

1. News Media 2. FBI & Secret Service Agencies. Will Fritz, head of homicide, has a very good reputation.

FBI sat in while Fritz interrogated Oswald, who had to be brought down one floor & along hallway thru crowd for every interview. (from 4th to 3rd floor).

Fritz thought Oswald was the man & wanted to nail down everything. Much investigation was going on: rifle, Oswald family, etc.,

NO centralized center for investigation by three agencies! Police chief Jesse Currey(?) was always behind in information; press knew things before he did via interviews, etc., which press reporters would pool - no competition.

"I happened to be at homicide door & asked Fritz about rifle."

Fritz: "We still don't know what kind of a rifle it was", but Fritz showed bullet to Hill.

Capt. Glen King was in charge of public relations, but he was short-circuited; nobody saw him after the first night. No Liason. Press breathing down necks of police on 3rd floor, but no organization or orderly information. Police seemed sincere about not courting publicity.

SHAYON in Saturday Review said press should have used restraint. (My note - Who is Robert Lewis??). Suppression of information would have raised a cry. Any news media has to be careful, but depends on public official statements.

FACTS vs. Rumors. It is a fact that during Oswald investigation, nothing he or witnesses said could be used against him. Only valid testimony is on witness stand or in writing.

ACLU & Am. Bar claim fair trail would have been impossible. (Interviewer)

Interviewer question: Is not an editor required to use restraint in connection with national defense?

Hill: Physically infeasible with several thousand ad libs. Alternative to trail by press would be a suspension of everything. Individual citizens would talk & spread rumors. Information from trained technicians is preferable.

(My note: Hill apparently does not esteem SHAYON).

HILL: What happened in police basement could have been easily avoided by stretching a rope to heel people back. Too many people clustered too close; this would have detained Ruby. Rest of public exposed to press as much as Ruby.

"Ruby was an isolated nut - emotional - grandstand - spontaneous play."

Public is reluctant to face the fact that there are social ailments & nuts on the loose. There are a hundred Rubys & Oswalds in Dallas now; a thousand in L.A.

Ethical talk is RIDICULOUS here - mentioned Chessman. Our only impulse is the Bedlam one - get them out of the way. I.E: FBI knew all about Oswald, but thought him less dangerous because of his ideology & he was classified as not violent physically. He had little or no history of physical violence. (leftist

INTERVIEWER: mentioned NY Times headlines 11/23: Oswald is suspect & called a / HILL; Oswald was connected with Pro-Castro movements, one of many off beat interests. Why do you ask this question?

INTER: Fear of wave of fear, such as McCarthyism. Was NYT abetting this terror?

HILL: Inadvertent repercussions cannot be avoided. Everybody loves detective stories. Why? The big interest was motivation. Kennedy was a liberal & rightist move was implied. The news & press brought out Pro-Castro background of

Oswald to DISPEL RUMORS OF A RIGHTIST PLOT. (Hill was present when Ruby shot Oswald, but did not see it.) "My reaction was that it was impossible; then, that it was a big plot & conspiracy. My impulse was to get out. I ran out in front

expecting bldg. to be surrounded. The pattern of only one unhinged isolated person seemed impossible. No organizational direction indicated."

INTER: Were all your reports published?

HILL: Monday I filed the report of alleged assassin. The ALLEGED was dropped in editing process. I am sorry my story was not transmitted exactly. I have not had time to check responsibility for this change!!

HILL (cont.): Criticism always a good thing - the only way we can improve.
There is no trend among news media to accuse wrongly.

INTER: Number of stories about FBI report= (News Week has a physical outline .

HILL: Consistent leaks are to grind an axe. I have no idea of source. I was not in Washington, but WHO had information to leak. No hue & cry of protest. FBI seldom leaks, but in deference to Justice Warren investigation, leaks were done via side door. You can't bottle up information. Does public get news properly is important.

INTER: Did public get information in way it should have?

HILL: A fine job was done by the press. Some undesirable features could have been remedied. A matter of technique, not principle. Don't panic in a crisis. Give information in orderly fashion.

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