



Editor.....Penn Jones Jr.
 Publisher.....The Midlothian Mirror, Inc.
 "The Only 'History of Midlothian' Being Written"
PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY

Second-class postage paid at Midlothian, Texas. 76065. Office of publication is 214 West Avenue F Midlothian, Texas 76065. Any erroneous reflection upon the character, standing or reputation of any person, firm or corporation, appearing in the columns of The Mirror will fully and gladly be corrected upon being brought to the attention of the editor of this paper.

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For One (1) Year in Ellis, Tarrant, Dallas, Kaufman, Henderson, Navarro, Hill and Johnson Counties.. \$5.00 Six Months \$3.00
 For One Year Elsewhere \$6.00 Six Months \$3.50
 Single Copies 15c

Winner of the 1963 Elijah Parish Lovejoy Award for Courage in Journalism.



WATCHMAN WAKETH BUT IN VAIN

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FAILURE TO INVESTIGATE

OSWALD'S ASSOCIATES

We have already pointed out that despite the arrest of a number of suspects at the scene of the crime, the investigation following the assassination focused on Oswald. But forgetting for the moment the failure to interrogate the enemies of J. F. K. in Dallas and failure to seal off the city, there is another glaringly apparent failure. Given their assumption that Oswald was the assassin, persons who might have conspired with Oswald were not properly investigated.

For instance, as has already been pointed out, Oswald was seen driving away from the Depository by another man. He is reported to have admitted the incident and then apparently went on to affirm that the car used belonged to Mrs. Ruth Paine. (XIX H 542) It is worthy of note that the car has an identical description to one owned by Mrs. Paine. But when the police arrived at the Paine

house at almost 3:00 p.m., all they wanted to do was to search Oswald's things. (W-15) They did not seem alarmed when Mrs. Paine greeted them at the door saying that she was expecting them. Interestingly enough, Marina Oswald testified that Ruth Paine had told her shots had been fired at the President from the building where Lee worked (I H 74; XXIV H 640) But Mrs. Paine testified before the Commission that she thought Lee Oswald worked in the Book Depository Warehouse two blocks from the assassination scene. (III H 34-36) If Marina's testimony is accurate, Ruth Paine has some explaining to do. Ironically, Mary Suratt, who owned the tavern where John Wilkes Booth plotted Lincoln's assassination, became a suspect as an accomplice after having made a similar statement and run some errands for Booth. (Eisenchimal, Otto, LINCOLN'S ASSASSINATION, Illinois State Historical Journal; Vol. 43, 1950, pp. 204-220)

But Ruth Paine ran more than errands for Oswald. Ruth Paine drove Marina Oswald to the Dallas area. Oswald's wife stayed in the Paine house in Irving, Texas, and he went there on weekends. His rifle was allegedly stored in their garage. (W-15) Ruth Paine drove Marina Oswald the 500 miles to New Orleans in May, 1963, and then trans-

ported Marina and all the Oswald's belongings back to Irving, Texas in September of the same year. (W-14) If we seem suspicious of Paine's generosity, it is because after the assassination she failed to get Lee Harvey Oswald legal assistance which he had requested of her. Mrs. Paine not only failed to get a lawyer, but compounded this failure by neglecting to advise Oswald of her failure to obtain a lawyer, thus placing him in great peril and leaving him ignorant of this peril. (3 H 89)

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Most interesting of all is the fact that Ruth Paine got Oswald his job at the Depository Building. It seems an incredible coincidence that she placed only one phone call to get Oswald a job and that phone call was to the Book Depository. (W-14) Further, Mrs. Paine spoke Russian and had corresponded with persons living in the Soviet Union for a number of years. (W-285) This correspondence did not interfere with her husband's security clearance which is further discussed later. It is astonishing that Ruth Paine was never treated with suspicion by either the Dallas police or the federal intelligence agencies.

Michael Paine, Mrs. Paine's husband, was not treated with suspicion either, despite the fact that he had attended political meetings with Oswald. (II H 408) Michael's father was one of the leading Trotskyists in the U.S., and Michael attended some of their meetings while in high school. (II H 289-290; XXIII H 501) Nevertheless despite his family background, he managed to get security clearance for his work as a research engineer for Bell Helicopter Co. (W-286) One is left to wonder what his quid pro quo for his clearance was.

It might be noticed at this point that once the Dallas police and federal agents had decided Oswald was a leftist, it would have seemed reasonable to round up other leftists for questioning. But no such action was taken. Considering the political atmosphere in Dallas, this is more surprising than the failure to pick up right wingers following the assassination.

Other suspicious associates of the Oswalds were George De Mohrenschildt and his wife Jeanne

George De Mohrenschildt has been described as ". . . strong believer . . . in the U. S. form of government but he holds the belief that some form of undemocratic government might be best for other peoples." (W-283)

George's son-in-law, Gary C. Taylor, said that if Oswald had gotten any assistance in the assassination, he would guess it was from the De Mohrenschildts. The following represents an excerpt from the testimony of Gary C. Taylor: "Well, the only thing that occurred to me was that--uh--and I guess it was from the beginning--that if there was any assistance or plotters in the assassination, that it was, in my opinion, most probably the De Mohrenschildts." (IX H 100) The De Mohrenschildts saw the Oswalds frequently prior to the assassination and according to the Warren Report, "De Mohrenschildt was apparently the only Russian speaking person living in Dallas for whom Oswald had appreciable respect, and this seems to have been true even though De Mohrenschildt helped Marina Oswald leave her husband . . ." (W-282) Even after the Oswalds broke off all relations with the Russian-speaking community in Dallas, they continued to see the De Mohrenschildts. (W-401) De Mohrenschildt has traveled extensively, and in 1960 he and his wife made an eight month hike from the U.S.-Mexico border to Panama. (W-283) According to the Warren Report: "By happenstance they were in Guatemala City at the time of the Bay

of Pigs invasion." (W-283) According to De Mohrenschildt, he prepared a lengthy film and complete written log of the trip, and made a report on it to the U.S. government. (IX H 216) Despite a seemingly thorough investigation of De Mohrenschildt, who had aroused their suspicions, there is no record of the Warren Commission ever having examined any documents relating to the trip. After the Bay of Pigs the DeMohrenschildts went to Haiti and became involved in what the Warren Report refers to as a "government-oriented business venture." (W-283) While the Warren Commission assures us that the De Mohrenschildts were not disloyal or subversive (W-283-284), one must wonder whether they could have truthfully assured us that they

were not in the employ of the Central Intelligence Agency. In any event, one wonders why they were immune from investigation in the days following Oswald's capture.

Within a week of the assassination the F.B.I. was notified of some incredible evidence concerning conspiracy. A young Cuban woman, Sylvia Odio, who was active in the anti-Castro movement, claimed to have been visited by a Leon Oswald and two other men in September of 1963. Both she and her sister independently identified Lee Harvey Oswald as being Leon Oswald upon seeing his picture on T.V. Mrs. Odio testified that she received a call from one of the men with Oswald the next day, and that he told her that Leon Oswald was a former Marine and expert marksman, that he was "loco" and capable of anything, and that he felt that Kennedy should have been assassinated after the Bay of Pigs. (XI H 239, 377-379) Despite its obvious importance the FBI conducted a very slow and superficial investigation into the incident which

was not even concluded when the Warren Report went to press. (W-374) This entire incident is still wide open for explanation leaving in its wake serious questions. The two most obvious questions are whether Oswald conspired with others to kill Kennedy and whether an attempt to frame Oswald for the crime had begun as early as September 1963. Neither precludes the involvement of the federal government, and the entire incident points out the widespread suppression of evidence by federal agencies which took place following the assassination.

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