JFK COLLECTION: HSCA

TESTIMONY OF JAMES B. WILCOTT,
A FORMER EMPLOYEE
OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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selected transcript pages attached

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auditing of special accounts, and I was promoted up to GS-6.

From April of 1966 to April of 1968, I was at Miami Station in finance, and I was handling restraints payroll. This was preparing and reconciling payrolls.

In April of 1968, I resigned from the CIA.

Mr. Goldsmith, I take it, from your testimony, that in November of 1963, you were stationed in Tokyo.

Mr. Wilcott: That is right.

Mr. Goldsmith. Drawing your attention to the period immediately after the assassination of President Kennedy, at that time, did you come across any information concerning Lee Harvey Oswald's relationship with the CIA?

Mr. Wilcott: Yes, I did.

Mr. Goldsmith. And will you tell the Committee what that relationship was?

Mr. Wilcott. Well, it was my understanding that Lee Harvey Oswald was an employee of the agency and was an agent

of the agency.

Mr. Goldsmith. What do you mean by the term "agent"?

Mr. Wilcott: That he was a regular employee, receiving a full-time salary for agent work for doing CIA operational work.

Mr. Goldsmith. How did this information concerning Oswald first come to your attention?

Mr. Wilcott: The first time I heard about Oswald being connected in any way with CIA was the day after the Kennedy assassination.

Mr. Goldsmith. And how did that come to your attention?
Mr. Wilcott. Well, I was on duty for the station. It was a guard-type function at the station, which I worked for overtime. There was a lot of excitement going on at the station after the Kennedy assassination.

Towards the end of my tour of duty, I heard certain things about Oswald somehow being connected with the agency, and I didn't really believe this when I heard it, and I thought it was absurd. Then, as time went on, I began to hear more things in that line.

Mr. Goldsmith. I think we had better go over that one more time.

When, exactly, was the very first time that you heard or came across information that Oswald was an agent?

Mr. Wilcott. I heard references to it the day after the assassination.

Mr. Goldsmith. And who made these references to Oswald being an agent of the CIA?

Mr. Wilcott. I can't remember the exact persons. There was talk about it going on at the station, and several months following at the station.

Mr. Goldsmith. How many people made this reference to Oswald being an agent of the CIA?

Mr. Wilcott. At least - there was at least six or seven people, specifically, who said that they either knew or believed Oswald to be an agent of the CIA.

Mr. Goldsmith. Was Jerry Fox one of the people that made this allegation?

Mr. Wilcott. To the best of my recollection, yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. And who is Jerry Fox?

Mr. Wilcott. Jerry Fox was a Case Officer for his branch the Soviet Russia Branch, XXXXXXXX Station, who purchased
Mr. Wilcott. XXXXXXXXXX George Breen, Ed Luck, and

XXXXXXXXXXXX.

Mr. Goldsmith. Who was George Breen?

Mr. Wilcott. George Breen was a person in Registry, who was my closest friend while I was in XXXXXXXXXX.

Mr. Goldsmith. Was he a CIA employee?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, he was.

Mr. Goldsmith. And would he corroborate your observation that Oswald was an agent?

Mr. Wilcott. I don’t know.

Mr. Goldsmith. At the time that this allegation first came to your attention, did you learn the name of Oswald’s Case Officer at the CIA?

Mr. Wilcott. No.

Mr. Goldsmith. Were there any other times during your stay with the CIA at XXXXXXXXX Station that you came across information that Oswald had been a CIA agent?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. When was that?

Mr. Wilcott. The specific incident was soon after the Kennedy assassination, where an agent, a Case Officer — I am sure it was a Case Officer — came up to my window to draw money, and he specifically said in the conversation that ensued, he specifically said, “Well, Jim, the money that I drew the last couple of weeks ago or so was money,” either for the Oswald project or for Oswald.

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Mr. Goldsmith. Do you remember the name of this Case Officer?

Mr. Wilcott. No, I don’t.
body -- let's say in China Branch -- and say "I know you were having problems with this, would you like to look it over before the auditors come?", and they might look it over and retype the accounting for funds for their project and, you know, make changes that they might think were in their interest to do.

Mr. Goldsmith. Did you ever actually Xerox records being destroyed or changed?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, I did.

Mr. Goldsmith. And have you just described one of those instances to us?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. Mr. Wilcott after leaving the XXXXXXXX Station, was there any other time when you came across any information that indicated that Oswald was a CIA agent?

Mr. Wilcott. In conversation.

Mr. Goldsmith. Is the answer to that "yes"?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. When did that occur?

Mr. Wilcott. From the time I left talked at various times, especially at parties and things like that, on social occasions, with people at headquarters and with people at my station, and we would converse about it and I used to say things like, "What do you think about Oswald being connected with the CIA?" -- and things like that.

Mr. Goldsmith. What was their response?

Mr. Wilcott. The response was, among quote a few people "Oh, well, I am sure he was."

Mr. Goldsmith. What were those people's names?

Mr. Wilcott. Well, George Breen, again, after we came
Mr. Wilcott. I believe that Oswald was a double agent, was sent over to the Soviet Union to do intelligence work, that the defection was phony and it was set up and that I believe that Marina Oswald was an agent that had been recruited sometime before and was waiting there in Tokyo for Lee Harvey Oswald.

Mr. Goldsmith. What is the basis for that opinion?

Mr. Wilcott. The basis for that is discussions that I had with people at the Xxxxx Station. Those are discussions with people who gave the indication that there was every certainty that Oswald was an agent of CIA, runout of Xxxxxx Station, and that he was freed from Russia there in the final courses in Russia and was trained by CIA people at Atugi.

Mr. Goldsmith. However, your testimony is that you spoke to only six people as an estimate who indicated that Oswald was a CIA agent — and when I say six people, I mean six CIA people, is that correct?

There were more people than that that believed it, and six people with any degree of certainty that you know, I left from what they were saying that they either had some who had some knowledge.

Mr. Goldsmith. How many people from the CIA did you speak to who speculated that Oswald was an agent?

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Mr. Wilcott. Dozens, literally dozens.

Mr. Goldsmith. Do you have any explanation for why none of these people have come forward with this story?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.

Mr. Goldsmith. What is that explanation?

Mr. Wilcott. I have been trying to talk about this thing and other things for the last ten years. I found it
very, very difficult to talk about these things that I think ought to be talked about. It was very difficult. I talked to reporters from various papers, and I talked to people in other forms of meetings, and to me it is not surprising at

I think, or I am certain, in my own mind, that, if these people were approached that some of these people —

Mr. Goldsmith. Why has it been difficult?

Mr. Wilcott. Well, it has been difficult because people don't want to get involved, and people were scared. I was scared until the Carter Administration. I was really scared to go to the Government and talk about any of these things.

Mr. Goldsmith. Did you bring your allegation to the attention of the Warren Commission?

Mr. Wilcott. No, I didn't.

Mr. Goldsmith. And what is the reason for that?

Mr. Wilcott. I really didn't think that the Warren

saying that they purposely did anything, because I don't know, and maybe they did or maybe they didn't, but certainly, they didn't impress me as really trying to scrutinize the evidence that there was. And their security that there is in the Government didn't strike me as the kind of security that would keep me from getting attacked in some way, if someone wanted to do it.

Mr. Goldsmith. How did you know, in 1963, what type of security precautions the Warren Commission had for con-

Mr. Wilcott. I don't understand.

Mr. Goldsmith. You have indicated that you were not inclined to go to the Warren Commission because you were concerned about their security?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes.
case officer who was running an agent, and then there were a lot of one-time informers or maybe one- or two- or three-time informers that were paid like maybe $50 or so to attend a meeting of a political party or something of that nature.

Mr. Sawyer. When you refer to Oswald as an agent, you are referring to the extent you have -- as an agent as opposed to a paid informer, in effect?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, it is my belief that he was a regular agent and this was a regular project of the Agency to send Oswald to the Soviet Union.

Mr. Sawyer. Now, did the XXXXXXXX station have any jurisdiction over the Russian operation or within the Soviet Union?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir. That was the SR branch which had all of the projects having anything to do with the Soviet Union.

Mr. Sawyer. It went through the XXXXXXXX station?

Mr. Wilcott. Well, that was just those that were assigned to XXXXXXX and those projects that were assigned to XXXXXXX. Every station was divided up -- at least every class station was divided up into areas, where we would have a China branch, Korea branch and XXXXXXXX branch and SR branch and SR satellite.

Mr. Sawyer. I noticed in some of the information we are provided you say that following your leaving the CIA in 1967 or thereabouts, for a period of some three years or so, you were harassed by the CIA and the FBI and sabotaged, as I recollect it.

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir, I believe that happened.

Mr. Sawyer. Could you tell us what those things consisted of?

Mr. Wilcott. I think the most significant thing that can be actually substantiated is the circumstances surrounding my
Mr. Dodd. I have no further questions.

Mr. Cornwell. In the conversations which you have described occurring within a period of one, two or three months after the assassination with other CIA employees and officers, did they suggest in those conversations to you that their employment, the CIA's employment, of Oswald had any relation to the assassination or only that it related to the events you have already described — namely, the training of him in Atsugi in the Russian language and the sending of him to Russia and using of him as a double agent and that sort of thing?

Mr. Wilcott. I am sorry, sir; I lost the thread of your question.

Mr. Cornwell. In the conversations you had with other CIA employees, the six or seven persons who purported to have good information about the use of Oswald as an agent, did any of those people say anything to you which suggested that the CIA had some role in the assassination of President Kennedy?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cornwell. What did they say along those lines?

Mr. Wilcott. Along those lines they said things like, well, that Oswald couldn't have pulled the trigger, that only CIA could have set up such an elaborate project and there was nobody with the kind of knowledge or information that could have done this, and this was more in the speculative realm.

As far as that they actually said, they said they were having trouble with Oswald and that there was dissatisfaction with Oswald after he came back from the Soviet Union, and the would say things like "Well, you know this was the way to get rid of him — to get him involved in this assassination thing and put the blame on Cuba as a pretext for another invasion or another attack against Cuba."

That was the kind of things that people said. How much exact knowledge they had it is impossible for me to say. I believe it was more in a speculative realm.
Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cornwell. In other words, that is, the first two letters or the last ones would have been the same as this?

Mr. Wilcott. Yes, sir; it was a cryponym that I was familiar with, that it must have been at least two or three occasions that I had remembered it and it did ring a bell, yes.

Mr. Cornwell. Do you remember anything about it?

Mr. Wilcott. Not at this time. I can't remember what it was.

Mr. Cornwell. All you can recall is that, when you heard it, that was not the first occasion on which you had seen it or heard it?

Mr. Wilcott. That is correct, sir.

Mr. Cornwell. Why did you leave the CIA?

Mr. Wilcott. My wife and I both left the CIA because we became convinced that what CIA was doing couldn't be reconciled to basic principles of democracy or basic principles of humanism.

Mr. Cornwell. Is that the only reason?

Mr. Wilcott. The principal reason –

Mr. Cornwell. Let me rephrase it. Was there any dispute between you and the Agency?

Mr. Wilcott. No, sir.

Mr. Cornwell. Did they request that you leave?

Mr. Wilcott. No, sir, they did not.

Mr. Cornwell. Did any event cause any disagreement