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OSWALD-TIPPIT ASSOCIATES

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Staff Report  
of the  
Select Committee on Assassinations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
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Second Session

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## FOREWORD

(1) Even though the Warren Commission indicated that no credible evidence was found proving that Lee Harvey Oswald and Dallas Police Officer J. D. Tippit knew one another prior to the assassination, speculation has continued over the years about the circumstances of Tippit's murder on the afternoon of November 22, 1963. This speculation has grown because of the circumstances surrounding Tippit's death: Questions have persisted about why Oswald would have been in that neighborhood, including, had Tippit received enough information on the suspected assassin of President Kennedy to have been able to identify Oswald as the possible suspect, and was there anything suspicious about Tippit's location in that part of Dallas after the assassination, when other police officers had been ordered to the Dealey Plaza area or Parkland Hospital immediately after the assassination?

### I. APPROACH

(2) Because there was little direct evidence to answer any of these questions, the committee concluded that the most effective way to learn if Oswald and Tippit knew one another would be to investigate the associates of the two men. Over the years, rumors have persisted that Oswald and Tippit were seen together at various public places. No effective way to investigate or verify those claims exists because of the passage of time and the general unreliability of such identifications.

(3) On the other hand, the committee concluded that if the two men had any associates in common, the fact of that association could be more easily discerned and might shed light on the nature of the relationship, if any, between the two.

(4) The committee undertook to compile the names of the associates and relatives of Lee Harvey Oswald and J. D. Tippit. Each associate interviewed was asked for the names of other persons each man was known to have associated with closely. Special attention was paid to the possibility of "overlaps" on the two lists, that is, persons who appeared to be associates of both men. After the lists were compiled, the committee requested data on each associate from the following Government agencies: Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Secret Service and, where appropriate, Departments of Defense and State.

(5) On the basis of the initial investigation of the associates of each man and the review of the Agency files, further investigation was conducted where warranted either to clarify a relationship or probe a possible association.

(6) No relative or associate of J. D. Tippit had been called to testify before the Warren Commission about Tippit's associations or activities. Despite the fact that confusion existed even at the time of the Warren Commission about the transcriptions of the Dallas Police

Department radio dispatches that contained information about Tippit's location and activities on the afternoon of November 22, 1963, none of the police officers with whom Tippit worked were called to testify about the details of his assignment in Oak Cliff. (1) The committee interviewed nine persons who were reported to have had close personal and working relationships with Tippit.

## II. MARIE TIPPIT THOMAS

(7) Tippit's widow, Marie Tippit Thomas, reported in an interview to the FBI in May 1964 that her husband's only associates were fellow police officers. (2) She stated that her social life with him involved the families and wives of many of those same officers. (3) Mrs. Thomas was interviewed by the committee on October 12, 1977. (4) At that time, she could provide no new information about Tippit's associates. She did mention that Tippit's closest friend had been Bill Anglin, another Dallas police officer who lived a few houses away on Glencairn Street in Dallas. (5) She further stated that his other close friends were Charlie Harrison, Bud Owens, and Richard Stovall. Mrs. Thomas also repeated her earlier information that Tippit had been employed at the time of the assassination part-time at Austin's Barbeque in Dallas. (6) Tippit worked as a security guard at the restaurant on Friday and Saturday nights from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. (7)

## III. MURRAY JAMES JACKSON

(8) The committee interviewed members of the Dallas Police Force who were purported to have been personal associates of J. D. Tippit. The first of these was Murray James Jackson. Jackson was working the dispatch system on the Dallas police radio when Tippit was killed. (8) Jackson reported to the committee that he had worked with and come to know J. D. Tippit very well over a 20-year period. (9) He stated that they "socialized when off duty". (10) Officer Jackson is the officer who was responsible for having sent Tippit into the Oak Cliff area according to the transmissions from the dispatches. (11)

## IV. WILLIAM ANGLIN

(9) The committee also contacted William Anglin. Anglin indicated that he socialized with J. D. Tippit. (12) He said in the interview that "he and J. D. had coffee or tea at 'The Old Drive-In' " about 11:30-11:45 on the morning of November 22. (13)

## V. MORRIS BRUMLEY

(10) Another of Tippit's associates who was spoken to was Morris Brumley. Brumley had known Tippit since 1934 when they attended school in Fulbright, Tex. (14) Brumley indicated that he had no information concerning the outside interests, associates, or attitudes of J. D. Tippit. (15) Brumley described Tippit as a good family man and conscientious in his work but not very sharp. (16) Brumley stated that Basil Robinson, another Dallas police officer assigned to the Oak Cliff section was also a good friend of Tippit's. (17)

## VI. BASIL ROBINSON

(11) Basil Robinson was another member of the Dallas Police Department who had a rather long association with J. D. Tippit. Tippit's acquaintance with Robinson dated back to the Tippit stay at Bogata, Tex. (18) When interviewed by the FBI, Robinson indicated that he had been a "close personal friend" of Tippit and his family. (19) He said that Tippit had few outside interests because he was working all the time. (20)

## VII. CALVIN OWENS

(12) Sergeant Calvin Owens was Tippit's immediate supervisor at the Dallas Police Department. (21) When questioned by the FBI, Owens indicated that Tippit was strictly a family man. He also said that he knew of no associates of Tippit's except members of the police force. (22)

## VIII. MRS. JOHNNIE MAXIE WITHERSPOON

(13) Committee investigators also interviewed Mrs. Johnnie Maxie Witherspoon. (23) Mrs. Witherspoon stated that she became acquainted with Officer Tippit during his employment at Austin's Barbeque. (24) Mrs. Witherspoon informed the committee that she and Tippit engaged in a relationship and started dating for a couple of years. (25) She said that the relationship ended in the summer of 1963 when her husband returned home. (26) She also indicated that Bill Anglin was an associate of J. D. Tippit's. (27)

## IX. MARY ADA DOWLING

(14) One other person who was interviewed about Tippit was Mary Ada Dowling, a waitress for the Dobbs House Restaurant on North Beckley Street. She indicated to the FBI that Tippit had a habit of coming into the Dobbs House each morning. (28) She also indicated that on one occasion when Tippit was in the restaurant, Lee Harvey Oswald came in to be served. (29) She did not know if they knew each other. (30)

## X. THE WISE ALLEGATION

(15) The committee also learned of an allegation about the assassination involving an associate and friend of J. D. Tippit's which was not reported in the Warren Commission Report. Interviews were conducted by the FBI in December 1963 about that allegation, and were furnished to the Warren Commission, but the substance of those interviews was not included in the report made public by the Commission. (16) In February 1977, the committee received information from Wes Wise, a reporter with KRLD-TV in Dallas at the time of the assassination and later mayor of Dallas, that he had received information about a car near the scene of the Tippit shooting that was traced to Carl Mather, a close friend of Tippit's. According to Wise, on December 4, 1963, he was giving a speech at the El Chico Restaurant in the Oak Cliff section of Dallas. (31) After the subject of the speech had turned to events surrounding the assassination, a man in the audience named Pate approached Wise and said a mechanic who worked

for Pate had observed a car in the parking lot of the El Chico Restaurant on the afternoon of November 22 after radio reports were being broadcast about the shooting in Dealey Plaza. (32)

(17) Wise went to Pate to discuss the story with the mechanic. (33) The mechanic told Wise that after the assassination there were sirens blaring and police cars "all over the area" near the garage. (34) He noticed a man sitting in an irregularly parked car in the restaurant parking lot; the car was slightly hidden by a billboard. (35) The man in the car appeared to be hiding, according to the mechanic. (36) All of the circumstances seemed so suspicious that the mechanic went across the street to get a better look. (37) When he was about 10 or 15 yards from the car, the man turned around. (38) The mechanic was able then to get a good look at his face; he saw also that the man was wearing a white T-shirt. (39) He made a note of the license number of the car. (40)

(18) When the mechanic saw news accounts of the assassination that night on television, he saw Lee Harvey Oswald and recognized him as being the man he had seen in the car that afternoon. (41) The mechanic had been afraid of reporting the incident. (42) Nevertheless, after Pate brought Wise to meet him, Wise was able to convince the mechanic that he should report the incident to the FBI. (43) The mechanic took with him the notepaper on which he had jotted the license number. (44)

(19) Wise stated also that he later took employees of CBS to meet the owner of the license number. (45) Wise said that during that meeting, which was arranged as a dinner between the owner and his wife and the person from CBS, the man appeared "so upset" and "agitated" that he was unable to eat. (46) At that time, the man explained his nervousness was due to the odd "coincidence" that a car with his license plate number was noticed under the suspicious circumstances and that he was a friend of Tippit, who had been killed at almost the same time very nearby. (47)

(20) Wise told the committee that he jotted down the information he received from Pate and the mechanic on a piece of paper he was carrying in his pocket at the time of his speech at the El Chico Restaurant. (48) He turned that paper over to the committee. Wise also told the committee that he thought he was still in possession of the slip of paper containing the license number that had been written by the mechanic. Wise told the committee that after several attempts he has been unable to locate that slip of paper among his records at his home. (49)

(21) The license number appearing on the paper provided by Wise from his conversation with Pate and the mechanic was Texas license PP 4537. The car was only described on the paper as a 1957 Plymouth 4-door, with no further description. (50)

(22) The FBI interviewed Wes Wise about this allegation on December 4, 1963. At that time, Wise said the mechanic, whom he refused to identify for the FBI, claiming he did not want to reveal the identity of his source, told him the car he saw in the restaurant parking lot was a red 1957 Plymouth with the license PP 4537. (51)

(23) In an FBI report dated December 14, 1963, Milton Love of the Dallas County Tax Office advised that the 1963 Texas license PP 4537

was issued for a 1957 Plymouth automobile in the possession of Carl Amos Mather, 4309 Colgate Street, Garland, Tex. (52) In a report dated December 14, 1963, FBI Special Agent Charles T. Brown reported that he observed a 1957 Plymouth with 1963 Texas license PP 4537 parked in the driveway of the house at 4309 Colgate Street, Garland, Tex. (53) Brown reported that that car was light blue over medium blue in color. (54)

(24) Mrs. Carl A. Mather was interviewed by FBI Agent Charles T. Brown on December 5, 1963, at the Mather home at 4303 Colgate Street in Garland, Tex. She identified the 1957 Plymouth with Texas license PP 4537 as belonging to her and her husband. (55) Mrs. Mather told the FBI that her husband was at work on November 22, 1963, at Collins Radio Co., in Richardson, Tex., until approximately 2 p.m., when he came by their home to take the family to the Tippit home to offer their condolences. (56) Mrs. Mather said the two families were friends. (57) According to Mrs. Mather, Carl Mather was with them at the Tippit home from about 3:30 p.m. until about 5 p.m., when he took the two Mather children home. (58) Mrs. Mather did not state in the interview which car her husband was driving that day at the time of the assassination or the Tippit shooting. No FBI report of an interview or contact with Carl Mather was located.

(25) On December 9, 1963, Wes Wise told FBI Special Agent Brown that he could at that time reveal the identity of the person who had provided him with the information about the car and license number. (59) He identified the mechanic as T. F. White, who worked at the Mack Pate Garage at 114 West Seventh Street in Dallas. (60) Wise advised it would be permissible for the FBI to interview White to get further details of the allegation. (61)

(26) T. F. White was interviewed by Special Agent Brown on December 13, 1963. In the interview, White said he saw a red car in the parking lot of the El Chico Restaurant at approximately 2 p.m. on November 22, 1963. (62) At the time of the interview, White said he believed the car to be a red 1961 Falcon with 1963 Texas license PP 4537. (63) White said he saw the man in the car from the side, and that when he saw pictures of Lee Harvey Oswald that night on television, he was identical with the man he had seen in the car that afternoon. (64) White said that after he saw the man sit in the car for a short time, the man left in the car at a high rate of speed, going west on Davis Street. (65)

(27) During the interview, Special Agent Brown advised White that the car to which the license number was traced was a 1957 Plymouth that was light and medium blue in color. (66) Brown also told White that Oswald had been apprehended at approximately 2 p.m. on November 22, 1963, in the Texas Theatre. (67)

(28) According to the interview report, when confronted with those facts, White reiterated that he had correctly copied the number of the car and that after seeing the news reports of Oswald, he thought Oswald was possibly identical with the man White had seen in the car. (68)

(29) Carl Mather and his wife were interviewed by the committee on March 28, 1978. Mather stated that his family had been close friends with the Tippits since 1958 when the two families lived on

Glenfield Street in Dallas.(69) The Mather family moved away to Garland, Texas, in 1961.(70) The relationship between the two families consisted of visits together to "family-type" clubs and baby-sitting.(71)

(30) Mather said that on November 22, 1963, he worked all day at the Collins Radio Co. in Richardson.(72) Mather said his boss at the time at Collins was J. A. Pickford.(73) The Mathers said that they were familiar with the allegation about the car with their license tag parked in the restaurant parking area.(74) Barbara Mather said she talked to FBI agents about their car twice, but that Carl Mather was never interviewed.(75) The Mathers said they attached no further particular significance to the incident since the FBI apparently dropped the issue.(76)

(31) During the committee interview, Barbara Mather stated that she and her husband never owned any kind of red car.(77) She stated that at the time of the assassination they owned a Ford station wagon, which was white over blue, in addition to the blue 1957 Plymouth which carried the license number reported by T. F. White.(78)

(32) Mather described his background as including a security clearance for electronics work.(79) He has been employed with Collins Radio Co. for 21 years.(80) One assignment involved work in Brandywine, Md., at Andrews Air Force Base, where he did electronics work on then Vice President Johnson's airplane Air Force Two.(81)

(33) Soon after the assassination, the Mathers met with Wes Wise and Jane Bartell from CBS to discuss the allegation about the mysterious car.(82) They noticed Mrs. Mather's name listed in the credits of a television documentary later done by CBS, but heard nothing more regarding the incident.(83) Eventually, new tags were issued for their car, and the 1963 tags were discarded.(84)

(34) The committee interviewed Wes Wise again on November 2, 1978, in Dallas. At that time, Wise repeated the details of his contacts with the Mathers and the mechanic who originally reported the story to Wise.(85) Wise recalled having dinner with the Mathers and described Carl Mather as "too nervous to eat," but his wife was "cool, very cool."(86)

(35) There was an additional allegation of a red car near the scene of the Tippit shooting. A witness to the Tippit murder, Domingo Benavides, testified before the Warren Commission that he saw a red Ford at the scene of the Tippit murder. He testified that at "about 1 o'clock" on November 22, 1963, he was driving west on Tenth Street between Denver and Patton Streets.(87) He saw a police car stopped four or five feet from the curb on Tenth Street, facing in an easterly direction.(88) A man Benavides described as Oswald was standing on the curb side of the police car.(89) Benavides said he saw the officer step around to the front of the car, and he was then shot.(90) Benavides said that at that point he "looked around to miss a car" and pulled his truck into the curb and ducked down.(91) He then heard two more shots.(92)

(36) After giving further details of the shooting of the officer and the flight of the man, Benavides said in his testimony that a car which he believed to be a red Ford was parked in front of him on Tenth Street.(93) He described the driver of the red car as about 25 or 30













