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RE: JACK NICHOLAS PAYTON

On November 25, 1963 JACK NICHOLAS PAYTON was contacted at his residence, 4325 Betty Street, Bellaire, Texas, by Special Agents LEVERETTE A. BAKER and EDWIN DALRYMPLE. PAYTON's wife and children were present and were informed in the presence of *Payton* he was not being placed under arrest but it was merely desired that he be interviewed in complete privacy. PAYTON was informed that his cooperation was desired in connection with a matter under investigation and it would be appreciated if he would proceed to the Houston Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation for this purpose. PAYTON stated he would gladly proceed to the Houston FBI Office and he considered it his "Christian duty" to assist the FBI in connection with any official investigation.

This interview began at the Houston FBI Office at 8:00 p.m. and was concluded at 9:03 p.m.

PAYTON stated his true name was JACK NICHOLS PAYTON, although he has frequently been known as JACK NICHOLAS PAYTON. He stated he was born August 30, 1918 at Joplin, Missouri and served in the United States Air Force from 1941 to 1945, having Air Force Serial Number 37016015. He resides with his wife and three children at 4325 Betty Street, Bellaire, Texas, and has telephone number MA 3-6217. PAYTON stated he has been self employed as a photographer, specializing in photographs of small children and has been so employed in the Houston, Texas area for over ten years, except for a period of two or three years when he resided in Austin, Texas. He indicated he returned to Houston, Texas from Austin, Texas on approximately September 1, 1963.

PAYTON was informed that his assistance was desired in connection with the investigation of the recent assassination of President KENNEDY, and he was requested to furnish any factual information in his possession which he felt might remotely have a bearing on this matter. He was specifically asked if he had been acquainted with LEE OSWALD or JACK RUBIN or RUBY, and whether he had heard any statements or remarks prior to the assassination that such a thing might take place. PAYTON was questioned as to whether he had any knowledge that any person or group of persons might have been involved in the planning of this assassination and whether he had ever heard of any efforts to raise money or assemble funds for the possible purpose of paying someone to assassinate the President

PAYTON stated in reply that he had absolutely no information which he felt could remotely be related to this matter, that he was not acquainted with OSWALD or JACK RUBY and the only thing he knew about them or about the assassination was what he had learned through the news media. PAYTON stated it was his belief that JACK RUBY was a Communist who had been sent to do away with the evidence which OSWALD might have furnished and that RUBY would undoubtedly be set free on an insanity plea.

PAYTON was asked whether he had discussed the assassination of President KENNEDY with any persons other than his family and personal friends in the Houston area and whether he had discussed this matter with anyone outside the Houston area. PAYTON replied that he had discussed this assassination with only one person outside of Houston and that occurred during a lengthy telephone conversation he had on the evening of November 24, 1963 with one GENE O'DOHERTY in Ohio. PAYTON explained that O'DOHERTY had worked for him in Austin, Texas as a photographer for a short period about one year previously and on approximately November 17, 1963 he had telephoned O'DOHERTY in Ohio and asked his assistance during the Christmas rush in the photography business. O'DOHERTY could not give him an answer at that time but agreed to call PAYTON back within a few days. PAYTON stated he could not even recall the city in Ohio where O'DOHERTY resided but he had O'DOHERTY's address and telephone number at his residence. He stated that O'DOHERTY left Austin shortly after Christmas 1962 and proceeded to Ohio and has written PAYTON occasionally since that time. PAYTON met O'DOHERTY through a mutual acquaintance, BILL FLANAGAN, in Austin, Texas approximately 18 months ago.

PAYTON related that O'DOHERTY initiated the telephone call to him on the evening of November 24, 1963 and declined to accept his employment offer. PAYTON could recall discussing the assassination in general terms with O'DOHERTY but stated he could not recall the exact statements made by either. He recalled that this conversation lasted about ten or fifteen minutes and he noticed when he left the telephone it was approximately 8:45 p.m. PAYTON realized that O'DOHERTY was in bad financial condition and stated in the middle of this telephone call he signaled the operator in Ohio and requested her to reverse the charges to his telephone in Bellaire, Texas.

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PAYTON was informed that he must realize his conversation with O'DOHERTY could have been related by O'DOHERTY to a number of persons in Ohio and he was then questioned concerning the following specific statements.

PAYTON was asked whether he made a statement to O'DOHERTY to the effect that "It's a good thing they got him before we were implicated." PAYTON at first denied making any statement along that line but then admitted he probably made such a statement and if so, he was not referring to President KENNEDY's death but was simply stating it was a good thing that LEE OSWALD was apprehended and charged with this crime because otherwise the "liberal elements" would try to place the blame for the assassination on the John Birch Society.

In connection with the above, PAYTON had been a member of the John Birch Society and also other conservative groups, such as the Austin Anti-Communism League of Austin, Texas. He stated he had attempted unsuccessfully to get O'DOHERTY to join the John Birch Society. PAYTON talked at some length about what he considered the important work done by these organizations in fighting Communism and stated flatly the John Birch Society was the only organization which was attempting to get the truth to the American people, whereas all other organizations, and particularly all the news media had sold out to the communists and were helping bring about the gradual move to communism in the United States.

PAYTON was asked whether he made any references in his talk with O'DOHERTY to some groups having been associated with the assassination. He replied that if he used the word groups he intended to refer to the John Birch Society but that he made no reference to the John Birch Society being connected in any way with the assassination.

PAYTON was asked whether he told O'DOHERTY something to the effect "Our next move will be to get behind them so we can overthrow JOHNSON." PAYTON replied that he possibly made such a statement, although he could not recall it and if he made such a statement, such a remark did not even suggest violence or physical opposition but merely that he hoped the conservative organizations would get together and have President JOHNSON thrown out of office through the election processes. PAYTON stated that the John Birch Society was "fighting with truth - words are bullets". He stated that the immediate goal of all conservative groups is to defeat the Democratic Party at the ballot box.

PAYTON was asked whether any mention had been made in his conversation with O'DOHERTY concerning JACK RUBIN or JACK RUBY. PAYTON at first denied any mention of this person but later stated this name was undoubtedly mentioned. PAYTON denied any acquaintance with RUBY and stated in fact his only personal acquaintance in the Dallas area was General EDWIN A. WALKER, for whom he had campaigned in 1962 at Austin, Texas when General WALKER ran for the office of Governor of Texas. PAYTON stated as well as he could recall he had not talked with General WALKER by telephone during the past two months and the only telephone calls he could remember making to Dallas were a number of calls he made to the Gavert Company of America, which he described as a photo supply company from which he ordered most of his supplies.

PAYTON was asked whether he had told O'DOHERTY something to the effect that it was a good thing people thought of OSWALD as an ultra-leftist and he replied he probably made such a statement which again he would have intended to mean that this would tend to keep people from thinking the John Birch Society was connected with the assassination. PAYTON was asked whether there was any reason why people might reasonably believe the John Birch Society was involved and he replied there was no good reason for such beliefs but that the liberals will undoubtedly try to make people believe that.

PAYTON commented that he strongly opposed the current and past Federal administrations and had been active for years in distributing literature and similar activities but that he emphatically opposed all violence, sincerely regretted the assassination of President KENNEDY and had no information concerning it.

PAYTON was advised that our interests were restricted to any possible information bearing on the criminal act of the President's assassination and that no investigation of the John Birch Society, as such, should be implied from the questions asked him. PAYTON was informed that charges had been made by persons whose identity could not be revealed to him that the John Birch Society may have collected money and attempted to hire someone to assassinate the President. PAYTON was advised that he should not assume that the FBI believed this charge to be true but it was the FBI's duty to exploit every questionable bit of evidence and he was requested to advise whether he had ever received any indication from any source whatever that the John Birch Society, individual members or any other persons, had been engaged in such activities. PAYTON replied that he considered

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this charge ridiculous and that he had never heard anyone associated with the John Birch Society or anyone else discuss any plans for, agreement with, or scheme for financing any assassination or violence against any elected official.

DL 89-43
Dw VM/gm

On November 23, 1963, the Los Angeles Division furnished the following information:

On the evening of November 22, 1963, Mrs. ERNESTINE WHITE, Fullerton, California, telephonically advised that a young German identified as JAOCHIM RUDOLPH ROEHRICHT, an employee of Knotts Berry Farm, Buena Park, California, in a conversation with her on November 16, 1963, commented she would be surprised to know how many young men in Texas wore the Swastika. He allegedly said that if the President came to Texas, he would be assassinated. He went on that in San Antonio there are a number of young men who believe the Negroes should be killed. He allegedly said, "We need a GOERING to get rid of the Negro in the United States like they did the Jews in Germany."

BARBARA WICKWARE, an employee of Knotts Berry Farm, telephonically advised on the evening of November 22, 1963, that a German alien, identified as ROEHRICHT, employee at Knotts, went to Texas on vacation and returned approximately November 13, 1963. Upon his return, he told KEN KNOTT that if President KENNEDY insists on continuing his trip to Texas, he will not come out alive. After hearing of the President's assassination, he laughed and stated that he knew all about it.

JAOCHIM RUDOLPH ROEHRICHT, 7641 Filmore Drive, Apartment C, Anaheim, California, was interviewed by SAs HARVEY D. KUTZ and SAM J. SHOEMAKER on November 23, 1963, and furnished the following information:

He stated he met GEORGE E. STRAUCH of 455 North Drive, San Antonio, Texas, while STRAUCH attended University at Heidelberg, Germany, and while STRAUCH residing at ROEHRICHT's parents' home at Siekerlad Strasse Seventeen, Ahrensburg, Germany. STRAUCH, an American citizen, attended University in Germany. STRAUCH now attends law school of San Antonio and resides with his parents at above address.

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