

Mr. LIEBELER. And you didn't see anybody standing on the overpass with a fire-arm of any kind?

Mr. ALTGENS. No, sir.

Mr. LIEBELER. I don't think I have any more questions, Mr. Altgens, unless you can think of something else that you think would be significant that I haven't thought to ask you about, I think we can terminate the deposition.

Mr. ALTGENS. No, sir; I can't think of anything—it seems like we have covered it pretty well.

Mr. LIEBELER. Thank you very much for coming in.

Mr. ALTGENS. You are welcome, sir—I was glad to do it and I hope that whatever I've had to say will be of some help.

Mr. LIEBELER. I think it will.

Mr. ALTGENS. Let me tell you this off the record, because it doesn't matter, but you notice Mr. Switzer, the FBI agent that came out—he and his partner—and talked with me, he brought up this Bonafede to me—the name and then he asked me if I knew somebody else, a woman columnist in a Chicago newspaper.

Mr. LIEBELER. Yes?

Mr. ALTGENS. And then showed me a clipping where she too had referred to me in the taking of a picture and I also received a telephone call from a John Gold who is, I guess, a correspondent connected with the London Daily News. I got a call from him on the Thursday night about 11 or 11:30 at night, asking me what that story was all about because—

Mr. LIEBELER. The Magy Daley story or the Bonafede story?

Mr. ALTGENS. No; this was the Bonafede story, because they had put it on television—as a teaser to sell publications and the public on the upcoming Sunday—the Sunday publication.

Mr. LIEBELER. Yes; the New York Tribune.

Mr. ALTGENS. And gee, I didn't know what to tell the guy because I didn't know Bonafede had written, but Bonafede talked with me. I asked him and I said, "Are you going to quote me on anything I say?" And, he says, "Well, if I do quote you, I'll call you back and ask you for your permission," and I said, "Swell."

Mr. LIEBELER. Of course, he did quote you and he didn't call you back?

Mr. ALTGENS. Well, I got a copy of the thing—I didn't gather from the article he was quoting me on anything in particular other than to say that I was a witness and I hadn't been called to testify before the Commission or questioned by the FBI or the Secret Service, but I don't think that he really tied any information to me in the course of writing the story, but it was real strange the way the thing unfolded. I had tried previously to get my bureau chief to give me permission to notify the Warren Commission or someone to let them know I had been in the area, not that my testimony would be of much value, but still if it could be of just a little bit of help I wanted to do what I thought was right, and my boss never got permission for me to do that, and that's why I never did step forward, because I had no authority. Really, I didn't feel that I could act on my own. I wanted to wait until someone gave me authority to do it.

Mr. LIEBELER. Well, your testimony has been helpful to the extent that it helps to establish the timing of the shots and I'm glad you gave it to us.

Mr. ALTGENS. Well, I wish I had been able to give this information to you the next day when it was fresh on my mind because 6 months or so later, sometimes the facts might be just a little bit off and I hate to see it that way.

Mr. LIEBELER. All right. Thank you very much for coming.

TESTIMONY OF HARRY D. HOLMES

The testimony of Harry D. Holmes was taken at 2 p.m., on July 23, 1964, in the office of the U.S. attorney, 301 Post Office Building, Bryan and Ervay Streets, Dallas, Tex., by Mr. Wesley J. Liebeler, assistant counsel of the President's Commission.

Mr. LIEBELER. Would you rise and raise your right hand? Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. HOLMES. I do.

Mr. LIEBELER. I understand that you have previously been examined by one of the attorneys on the staff, and I assume they advised you of the basis on which we are conducting the examination and the rights that you have in the situation, so I won't bother to go through that again.

Mr. HOLMES. Yes.

Mr. LIEBELER. Would you state your full name for the record?

Mr. HOLMES. Harry D. Holmes.

Mr. LIEBELER. You are the chief postal inspector?

Mr. HOLMES. No; it is just postal inspector.

Mr. LIEBELER. Stationed with the post office here in Dallas; is that correct?

Mr. HOLMES. Yes, sir.

Mr. LIEBELER. I just have a few questions that I wanted to ask you that have come up since we took your testimony the last time. One of the things I would like to know about, if you have any information on it, is how long it ordinarily takes a parcel post shipment to come to Dallas from Chicago.

Mr. HOLMES. It would depend on the time of day it was mailed, and whether it was mailed just prior to the next most expeditious dispatch. But I would say certainly not over, well, it would be in Dallas the next day. But whether it would get to a box—that's right, it would be available at his box—should be the next day.

Mr. LIEBELER. Of course, this question relates specifically to the shipment of the rifle.

Mr. HOLMES. That's right.

Mr. LIEBELER. Shipped from Chicago and addressed to Mr. Hidell at Post Office Box 2915 here in Dallas, and you say that it generally would have been available at the post office here in Dallas the day following its delivery to the post office in Chicago?

Mr. HOLMES. I have no idea when it was mailed there, but it should have been available here the next day. If it were to be delivered to a street address, it would be the second day, because it would not make morning delivery. But to a post office box, he should have. Of course, he had told me he didn't come to that box too regularly, so there is no assurance of when it was picked up.

Mr. LIEBELER. But as far as the possibility is concerned, it would have been available here at the post office box the following morning from Chicago?

Mr. HOLMES. That's right.

Mr. LIEBELER. After it has been received here in Dallas, as I understand the procedure, a notice would be put in the post office box indicating that a package was being held there in the post office; is that correct?

Mr. HOLMES. There is a regular card, when the package is too large to go in the box, or if it is c.o.d., or insured, or registered. However, this was an ordinary parcel. It was not insured or c.o.d. There would be a card for him put in the box, and he would have to pick it up at a window.

Mr. LIEBELER. What about as far as Los Angeles is concerned, from Los Angeles to Dallas? How long would it take a parcel post to reach Dallas from Los Angeles?

Mr. HOLMES. At least 2 days.

Mr. LIEBELER. Could it possibly be longer than 2 days?

Mr. HOLMES. Yes.

Mr. LIEBELER. How much longer, do you think? How about on the average, do you have any idea?

Mr. HOLMES. No; it depends on the time of mailing. It is 2 days' train run from Los Angeles here, and if it happens to catch an early dispatch, it would be in here the morning of the third day.

Mr. LIEBELER. From Chicago it is only a 1-day train run, is that correct?

Mr. HOLMES. Yes, sir.

Mr. LIEBELER. So it would be here, if it had an early dispatch, on the morning of the following day?

Mr. HOLMES. Yes, sir.

Mr. LIEBELER. My understanding is that an application for a post office box comes in three separate parts. Do you have——

(Mr. Holmes hands paper to attorney.)

Mr. LIEBELER. You have, in fact, handed me a sample of such an application.

Mr. HOLMES. I thought you might want one, so I brought one along.

Mr. LIEBELER. That was very good, and we will mark this as Holmes Exhibit No. 1-A on your deposition of July 23, 1964. I have put my initials on the corner after I have marked it. Would you initial it, too, for the purpose of identification?

(Mr. Holmes initials.)

Mr. LIEBELER. What is the ordinary procedure that is followed when a box is rented and this form is used?

Mr. HOLMES. The form is completed, usually by the applicant, and it must be signed by the applicant, even if an employee does complete it. This portion of the—I don't know how you want to designate it.

Mr. LIEBELER. We will number them portions 1, 2, and 3.

Mr. HOLMES. All right, part 1 of this application is simply the instructions on a combination box, and instructions to the patron is torn off, and he keeps it or they throw it away. Portions 2 and 3 are completed, too. 2 gives the applicant's name, the name of his corporation or firm he represents, if applicable, the kind of business, the business address, the home address, and the place for his signature and the date. On the third portion is a box for him to indicate whether he wants all mail in the box, or just whether he wants some other disposition and so on, and a place for name of person entitled to receive mail through the box other than the applicant himself, and he fills in that. These two portions then remain together in the file of the post office where he made application.

Mr. LIEBELER. That is portions 2 and 3?

Mr. HOLMES. Until he relinquishes the box. They pull this out and endorse it so the box has been closed, and the date and they tear off 3 and throw it away. It has no more purpose. That is what happened on box 2915.

Mr. LIEBELER. They have thrown part 3 away?

Mr. HOLMES. Yes; as it so happens, even though they closed the box in New Orleans, they still had part 3 and it showed that the mail for Marina Oswald and A. J. Hidell was good in the box. They hadn't complied with regulations. They still had it there.

Mr. LIEBELER. It was a lucky thing.

Mr. HOLMES. We wish they had here.

Mr. LIEBELER. Now is this regulation that says section 3 should be torn off and thrown away, is that a general regulation of the Post Office Department?

Mr. HOLMES. It is in the Post Office Manual Instructions to employees; yes, sir.

Mr. LIEBELER. So there is no way, as I understand it, to tell from the records maintained, as far as you know anyway, who was authorized to receive mail at Post Office Box 2915 that Oswald had while he was here in Dallas before he went to New Orleans in April of 1963; is that correct?

Mr. HOLMES. Other than Oswald himself and his name on the application.

Mr. LIEBELER. Right.

Mr. HOLMES. Now he did tell me in personal interrogation that no one was permitted to get mail in that box but him.

Mr. LIEBELER. He said that same thing about the box in New Orleans, too, didn't he?

Mr. HOLMES. He did at first, and then——

Mr. LIEBELER. Then you showed him portion three of the application and then he changed his story?

Mr. HOLMES. I said how about Marina Oswald, and he said, well, she was my wife. What is wrong with that? And I said how about A. J. Hidell, and he said I don't know anything about that. And I said look here. And he said, well, I don't know.

Mr. LIEBELER. Now supposing that Oswald had not in fact authorized A. J. Hidell to receive mail here in the Dallas box and that a package came addressed to the name of Hidell, which, in fact, one did at Post Office Box 2915, what procedure would be followed when that package came in?

Mr. HOLMES. They would put the notice in the box.

Mr. LIEBELER. Regardless of whose name was associated with the box?

Mr. HOLMES. That is the general practice. The theory being, I have a box. I have a brother come to visit me. My brother would have my same name—well, a cousin. You can get mail in there. They are not too strict. You don't have to file that third portion to get service for other people there. I imagine they might have questioned him a little bit when they handed it out to him, but I don't know. It depends on how good he is at answering questions, and everything would be all right.

Mr. LIEBELER. So that the package would have come in addressed to Hidell at Post Office Box 2915, and a notice would have been put in the post office box without regard to who was authorized to receive mail from it?

Mr. HOLMES. Actually, the window where you get the box is all the way around the corner and a different place from the box, and the people that box the mail, and in theory—I am surmising now, because nobody knows. I have questioned everybody, and they have no recollection. The man would take this card out. There is nothing on this card. There is no name on it, not even a box number on it. He comes around and says, "I got this out of my box." And he says, "What box?" "Box number so and so." They look in a bin where they have this by box numbers, and whatever the name on it, whatever they gave him, he just hands him the package, and that is all there is to it.

Mr. LIEBELER. Ordinarily, they won't even request any identification because they would assume if he got the notice out of the box, he was entitled to it?

Mr. HOLMES. Yes, sir.

Mr. LIEBELER. It is very possible that that in fact is what happened in this case?

Mr. HOLMES. That is in theory. I would assume that is what happened.

Mr. LIEBELER. On the other hand, it is also possible that Oswald had actually authorized Hidell to receive mail through the box?

Mr. HOLMES. Could have been. And on the other hand, he had this identification card of Hidell's in his billfold, which he could have produced and showed the window clerk. Either way, he got it.

Mr. LIEBELER. Right. I believe I am correct in my understanding that when Mr. Belin took your testimony previously, that you did mark as exhibits the various forms that Oswald had filled out here in the Post Office Department in Dallas; isn't that right?

Mr. HOLMES. You mean the box rent application?

Mr. LIEBELER. Yes.

Mr. HOLMES. I have long since given them to the FBI. However, I endorsed them at the time I gave them to the FBI.

Mr. LIEBELER. I can't remember.

Mr. HOLMES. I will show you a photocopy maybe.

Mr. LIEBELER. The basic thrust of my question is that you have given the originals of the documents to the FBI?

Mr. HOLMES. I have the receipts, except for Ruby's box, which nobody ever asked me for, and I still have them. That is Ruby's box at the Terminal Annex.

Mr. LIEBELER. Well, that is not a part of the record so far. We should mark it as a part of the record now. Are you required to keep this in your records?

Mr. HOLMES. If you will give me a receipt for it. I have a photocopy.

Mr. LIEBELER. It is quite as legible, the photocopy, so why don't I just mark the photocopy and you keep the original?

Mr. HOLMES. Okay.

Mr. LIEBELER. I have initialed the photocopy, and I would like to have you initial it also for the purpose of identification, and we will mark that as Holmes Exhibit No. 2-A on your deposition of July 23, 1964, a photocopy of a post office box application in the name of Jack Ruby, dated November 1, 1963. Post Office Box No. 5475, and as I understand it, this was an application that was made at the Terminal Annex here in Dallas, is that correct?

Mr. HOLMES. That is right.

Mr. LIEBELER. Is there any way in which we can tell from just looking at it, or that is something you know from having gotten the copy from the Terminal Annex?

Mr. HOLMES. The box number categories are set out for each station that comes within that bracket. The applications don't tell you what post office it is

from. It might be from San Antonio. But I don't know why. What are your initials and name?

Mr. LIEBELER. W. J. L., Wesley J. Liebeler.

Mr. HOLMES. How do you spell your last name?

Mr. LIEBELER (spelling). L-i-e-b-e-l-e-r.

Mr. HOLMES. Thank you [handing another card to Mr. Liebeler]. I will explain it to you, and you might want to ask me for the record what it is.

Mr. LIEBELER. Yes; you have handed me a postcard, Post Office Department Form 3546, Notice to Change Forwarding Order.

Mr. HOLMES. That is different from our 3575 in that this is simply a forwarding order. This is to change a forwarding order. To interpret it, Lee Oswald, on October 11, 1963, in New Orleans, gave his box 2915 in Dallas as the last address. He had given a forwarding order on this box to this box 30061 in New Orleans on May 14, 1963. Now then, he is again forwarding from this box. Not again, but it is a second forwarding.

Mr. LIEBELER. This would indicate that instructions had been given to forward from box 2915 here in Dallas?

Mr. HOLMES. Direct without going through—

Mr. LIEBELER. This would indicate that all together, he had first issued instructions that mail should be forwarded from box 2915 in Dallas to box 30061 in New Orleans, and this would now indicate that mail was to be forwarded to 2515 West Fifth Street in Irving, Tex., and that is dated October 11, 1963. Now, there are several postmarks appearing on this form. There is one Dallas postmark of October 16 on both sides, and there is also a postmark in New Orleans, which is difficult to read, but it is sometime in October. Now you suggested perhaps October 11, 1963. What do you interpret happened with regard to this notice, Post Office Department Form 3546? Can you tell from looking at it where, in the ordinary course of events, he would have first prepared this form?

Mr. HOLMES. That would have been prepared in New Orleans and dropped in the mailbox. He would have prepared that at a station, because they have filled the front in and crossed it out. In fact, they hand these out at the stations. He has gone into the station probably where he had this box. In the normal course of the patron's activities he would have gone into that station where that box is and said, "I want my mail forwarded." All right, fill this out.

It looks like they might have filled it out for him. It doesn't look too much like his writing. But they would have filled this out to show that mail from this box should not be sent to New Orleans, but sent to Irving, so the post office would send that up to Dallas where this box is at the main office, and they would have that on file here.

Mr. LIEBELER. Box 2915, you mean? That address here?

Mr. HOLMES. Here is a photocopy of box 2915 application, and it will show it was closed on May 14, 1963, which is this red figure up here. So when they got that in here in Dallas, they would have put this red mark on there for some reason to show when the box was closed, and then they would keep this in their file as instructions until they got some other instructions.

Mr. LIEBELER. Isn't it possible that this form which, well, do you have a photostatic of this form we have been talking about?

Mr. HOLMES. I don't believe so.

Mr. LIEBELER. Let me mark this original one for the record then, if I may.

Mr. HOLMES. That is all right.

Mr. LIEBELER. I have initialled this Post Office Department Form 3546, which has been marked "Holmes Exhibit No. 3-A on deposition of July 23, 1964," and I would like to have you initial it also for the purpose of identification.

(Mr. Holmes initials.)

Mr. LIEBELER. I want to ask you some more questions about Holmes Exhibit No. 3, which is postmarked, as we have indicated, October 16, in Dallas, and also bears a postmark in New Orleans which I think is October 11.

Mr. HOLMES. My best educated guess is the 11th.

Mr. LIEBELER. Let me come bluntly to the point. My problem is this. Oswald wasn't in New Orleans on October 11. He was in Dallas.

Mr. HOLMES. Now, he could have filled that out here. It could have been mailed to New Orleans for forwarding the mail up from there. He could have

mailed it from some other post office, and they would have mailed it. But they would have had to enclose it in an envelope.

Mr. LIEBELER. Yes; because it is addressed to the postmaster in Dallas, Tex., and just as sure as anything it has a New Orleans postmark on it.

Mr. HOLMES. Yes; prior to the Dallas one, if we read the New Orleans one correctly.

Mr. LIEBELER. The New Orleans is hard to read, but it certainly is an October postmark.

Mr. HOLMES. That is the reason I wanted you to read the memo, because the hours are down there and are different from that.

Mr. LIEBELER. Now the New Orleans Post Office inspector, or an inspector in the office of New Orleans, has advised you that Oswald filled out a form 3575?

Mr. HOLMES. That is the regular forwarding order.

Mr. LIEBELER. And he did that on September 24; is that correct? Or September 25?

Mr. HOLMES. September 24.

Mr. LIEBELER. September 24, 1963, and his box down there was closed on September 26, presumably pursuant to the order that was mailed to them under postmark of September 24, 1963. Now has the Post Office Department in New Orleans given you any advice at all, as far as you can tell, concerning this Post Office Department Form 3546, which we have marked Holmes Exhibit No. 3-A?

Mr. HOLMES. No; other than their postmark on there. There is no endorsement there. But you see, Lafayette Station is in New Orleans, and it looks like that was completed by the person at Lafayette Station.

Mr. LIEBELER. Inasmuch as that is exactly what it says.

Mr. HOLMES. If that were completed in some other post office, they wouldn't know that box was in Lafayette Station.

Mr. LIEBELER. Let me suggest this. There is not the slightest evidence that Oswald ever filled that form out or ever saw it?

Mr. HOLMES. No; that is right.

Mr. LIEBELER. Because it is perfectly obvious this isn't his handwriting.

Mr. HOLMES. That is my opinion, too.

Mr. LIEBELER. So apparently somebody in the New Orleans Post Office filled this form out?

Mr. HOLMES. They could have done it over a telephone instruction, long-distance telephone call.

Mr. LIEBELER. Well, they could have done that from the records they had in their possession, because he already had filled out a Post Office Department 3575 instructing to forward mail from Post Office Box 30061 to 2515 West Fifth Street in Irving, which they had received, of course, on September 24?

Mr. HOLMES. Yes.

Mr. LIEBELER. Well, in any event, we will add this to the pile.

Mr. HOLMES. It is an original card.

Mr. LIEBELER. Let the record show Mr. Holmes has delivered to us the original card which has been marked as Holmes Exhibit No. 1-A.

I don't think I have any other questions. I have cleared up the basic problems we had. Of course, you managed to raise a few more, and I appreciate that. Thank you very much. As I understand it at this point, Mr. Holmes, you have given to us or to the FBI, all of the papers that you found so far in your files relating to Lee Harvey Oswald, is that correct?

Mr. HOLMES. Yes; you have every original document or item that I have come in contact with in this business.

Mr. LIEBELER. Between us and the FBI?

Mr. HOLMES. Yes, sir.

Mr. LIEBELER. Now it may be as you suggested—

Mr. HOLMES. Except Ruby's.

Mr. LIEBELER. And you have given us a copy?

Mr. HOLMES. I have given you a good clear photocopy.

Mr. LIEBELER. Right. If you do come across any other papers in your files—

Mr. HOLMES. I will get in touch with Martha Jo [Stroud, assistant U.S. attorney in Dallas, Tex.].

Mr. LIEBELER. Yes; let us know. Thank you a lot again.