

body that ever mounted a scope or claimed to have mounted a scope for Oswald?

Mr. VINSON. No. My connection with the whole thing has not amounted to anything. I came to Dallas the day of the assassination because my newspaper sent practically everybody over here. I was at the police station. I am not a photographer. However, I carry a camera, and I was sent to the Dallas Police Station to take pictures, because I was the only one in the vicinity with a camera at that time. And I stayed there until the photographer arrived, with my camera, and just sort of generally ran errands. I didn't do any actual reporting, but that was when it first came to my attention.

Well, let me rephrase that. When I heard the name Lee Oswald, when the reporter said that the best suspect they had in custody was Lee Oswald, immediately it rang a bell, and almost immediately I remembered when I had heard it, and I associated it with my second grade class, and I even mentioned it to some of the reporters over there that day, over here that day.

Mr. LIEBELER. Unless there is anything else that you can remember about your contacts with Oswald or your conversations with others about him that you think would be helpful, I have no other questions at this point, I would like to thank you for coming over from Fort Worth on such short notice.

Mr. VINSON. I am happy to do it.

Mr. LIEBELER. The Commission appreciates your cooperation.

TESTIMONY OF HIRAM CONWAY

The testimony of Hiram Conway was taken at 11:50 a.m., on April 1, 1964, in the office of the U.S. attorney, 301 Post Office Building, Bryan and Ervay Streets, Dallas, Tex., by Mr. Albert E. Jenner, Jr., assistant counsel of the President's Commission. Robert T. Davis, assistant attorney general of Texas, was present.

Mr. JENNER. Would you mind rising and being sworn. Do you in the testimony you are about to give swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

Mr. CONWAY. I do.

Mr. JENNER. I am Albert E. Jenner, Jr. I am a member of the legal staff of the Warren Commission about which you have heard. The Warren Commission was authorized by a Senate joint resolution of the Congress of the United States to be created to investigate the circumstances leading to and surrounding the assassination of our late President John Fitzgerald Kennedy. Pursuant to that legislation President Lyndon B. Johnson by Executive Order 11130, November 1963, appointed the Commission to investigate the assassination of President Kennedy. The Chief Justice of the United States, the Honorable Earl Warren is the Chairman of that Commission and the Commission has come to be known as the Warren Commission.

The Commission is charged with sifting out the facts from fiction and to inquire into many, many details, one of which deals with a man whose name is Lee Harvey Oswald, during his lifetime. We understand you had some contact with a man by that name?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. And we want to ask you a few questions about it.

Mr. CONWAY. I will be glad to answer them.

Mr. JENNER. All right. Mr. Conway, you are Hiram Conway and you are a native Texan, are you?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. What is your age?

Mr. CONWAY. I'm 57, will be 58 next month.

Mr. JENNER. I will be 57 next June. You reside in Fort Worth, Tex.?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. And your business, occupation, or profession is what?

Mr. CONWAY. Tool inspector for General Dynamics.

Mr. JENNER. The General Dynamics Corp.?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Off the record.

(Discussion between Counsel Jenner and the witness Conway off the record.)

Mr. JENNER. Back on the record. How long have you held that position as tool inspector for GD?

Mr. CONWAY. I am sorry—will take me a moment to think.

Mr. JENNER. All right.

Mr. CONWAY. It was in 1945, August 25, when I went to work there—in 1945—August 23, 1945, and sometime in November, I believe the 16th, is when I went into tool inspection. That's approximate.

Mr. JENNER. Do you have any connection with Leslie Welding Co., at any time?

Mr. CONWAY. With what?

Mr. JENNER. With Leslie Welding Co.? [Spelling] L-e-s-l-i-e.

Mr. CONWAY. No, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Do you know a man by the name of Tommy Bargas?

Mr. CONWAY. I can't recall—I don't recall that name Tom Bargas—I don't recall the name.

Mr. JENNER. Did you ever become acquainted with or have any contact with a man known as Lee Harvey Oswald?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. Would you tell us the circumstances and what occurred?

Mr. CONWAY. Well, he was a child when he moved into our neighborhood.

Mr. JENNER. In Fort Worth?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes; where I live at the present time, and he moved in two doors from me, 7408, I believe it was two houses.

Mr. JENNER. Ewing?

Mr. CONWAY. Ewing; yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. And that is a single-family frame dwelling?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes, sir; two bedrooms and a single bath, kitchen and dining room together.

Mr. JENNER. All right.

Mr. CONWAY. I'm not absolutely sure when they moved in there.

Mr. JENNER. You say "they," who is that?

Mr. CONWAY. His mother and his older brother, who is a half brother.

Mr. JENNER. John Pic?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes; his oldest brother, and then Robert Oswald.

Mr. JENNER. So, there were three boys and a mother?

Mr. CONWAY. That's right.

Mr. JENNER. Was there a husband or father?

Mr. CONWAY. No; there was no man about the house. John was the oldest one on the place.

Mr. JENNER. And about how old was he at that time?

Mr. CONWAY. I believe he was around 8 or 9.

Mr. JENNER. Let's see, let's see—what year was that?

Mr. CONWAY. Oh, it must have been—I'm not quite sure, but I moved there in 1948, and I'm not sure—I moved there in September or October.

Mr. JENNER. October of 1948?

Mr. CONWAY. And I'm not sure whether they moved there before the end of the year or not, but it was just shortly after I moved there.

Mr. JENNER. He was born October 18, 1939, so in 1948, at the time you are talking about, he would be approximately 9 years old.

Mr. CONWAY. Approximately—yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. You had children at that time?

Mr. CONWAY. I had one daughter.

Mr. JENNER. Age?

Mr. CONWAY. Well, at that time, I'm almost ashamed—I don't know exactly when my daughter was born—1933, I believe, so that would be 15.

Mr. JENNER. About 15 years old?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. So your daughter would have had little or no contact with Lee who was then 9 years old?

Mr. CONWAY. No; very little. She was associated quite a bit with John. She and John were approximately the same age. I believe John might have been slightly older than her, maybe 1½ or 2 years, I'm not quite sure.

Mr. JENNER. Your daughter is now married?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. What is her married name?

Mr. CONWAY. Mrs. J. C. Bell (Spelling) B-e-l-l.

Mr. JENNER. Where does she live?

Mr. CONWAY. She lives on Santa Fe, I think, it's 2904.

Mr. JENNER. Do you recall her telephone number?

Mr. CONWAY. CI 4-2394, it would be—Circle. I'm almost sure that's right.

Mr. JENNER. Is Mrs. Conway living?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. How long did the family live there?

Mr. CONWAY. How long did they live there?

Mr. JENNER. Yes.

Mr. CONWAY. I think almost 4 years—it was in the vicinity of 4 years. It might have been just a little over or a little under, but it was approximately 4 years.

Mr. JENNER. And did these boys come to your attention?

Mr. CONWAY. Oh, yes; John was a real nice kid and he was a friend of mine, you know, a young friend. I taught him to play chess.

Mr. JENNER. You did?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes; I did, and he made an excellent player, I understand. I think he's runner-up in the championship at Lackland Air Force Base.

Mr. JENNER. Is that so?

Mr. CONWAY. I think so—John is a fine fellow.

Mr. JENNER. And because of your relationship especially with John Pic, you came to know the other boys, too?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes, sir; fairly well.

Mr. JENNER. In and around the neighborhood?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. But having in mind Lee Oswald, at the age of 9, and by the time he left, he was 13, you had less contact with him?

Mr. CONWAY. I had very little contact with him, just to see him in the neighborhood was all.

Mr. JENNER. Did that contact in the neighborhood enable you to form a judgment as to his general disposition?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. Would you describe that and tell us something—some incidents about it?

Mr. CONWAY. Well, he was quick to anger and he was, I would say, a vile nature—he was mean when he was angry, just ornery—he was vicious almost, you might say, is the best word I can describe it.

Mr. JENNER. Did it come to your particular attention as contrasted with his two brothers, Robert and John?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes; John was a very genuine character, a fine boy.

Mr. JENNER. What about Robert?

Mr. CONWAY. Robert was much more spunky than John, but Robert didn't very often get into much trouble.

Mr. JENNER. Nothing like Lee?

Mr. CONWAY. No; he didn't walk up and down the street looking for children to throw stones at, like Lee did. He was a bad kid.

Mr. JENNER. Did he get into kid fights and encounters with children in the neighborhood?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes; he would become angry with them but as far as actually seeing him fight—the children didn't fight with him much, they got out of his way. They would hide or move on and it would be pretty hard to catch him in a fight because it would be pretty hard for him to have caught one of them.

Mr. JENNER. Was this a persistent sort of thing over a period of 4 years or were they isolated incidences?

Mr. CONWAY. Naturally, it's hard to say, but I would see those things not too often, but you know that was just the picture it built in my mind. I didn't see him very often—I have seen him try to fight with his half brother and his brother and he would tear into them and they would hold him off to try to keep him out of trouble and he would try to kick their shins, just all sort of things like that—I don't—it's been a long time.

Mr. JENNER. Was he left alone a good deal?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes, sir; quite a lot.

Mr. JENNER. Describe that circumstance, will you please?

Mr. CONWAY. That would be hard for me to describe to you too accurately because no more than I know about it, but I do know he would get home—I would hear the boys, one of them say to the other one, "Where is Lee," and they would say, "He's in the house," or something like that and that's about all I would know. But I would see him in and out. He had a dog that he was very fond of, Lee did, and I would see him play with the dog around the place and I would have reason for accurate knowledge that there was no one there but him, but so far as just being absolutely sure—I'm not.

Mr. JENNER. Do you have a recollection now whether Mrs. Oswald, his mother, worked?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes, sir; she did work and I have heard my wife speak of where she worked, but I don't recall. She worked days and I usually worked nights—I usually worked nights.

Mr. JENNER. So you were around the neighborhood, was that true, of this 4-year period as a rule?

Mr. CONWAY. I believe it was. I'm not absolutely sure but I believe it was.

Mr. JENNER. At least off and on during the 4-year period you did work nights?

Mr. CONWAY. I'm almost sure that I did.

Mr. JENNER. So that you would get to see these boys in the daytime and after school at least?

Mr. CONWAY. It's funny, but I'm not so—not absolutely sure what year I started working nights. I know I worked nights before I moved to Fort Worth and I moved to Fort Worth from Grand Prairie in 1948, and that was the—was before the Oswalds came, and I know I worked nights before they moved into that neighborhood and I took a preference to the second shift, so I did work the second shift at all times when it was possible since that time. It's more than likely that I was on the second shift almost all times they were there.

Mr. JENNER. Did a time come when the family moved?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes; and I don't remember exactly what year it was but it must have been in 1951 or 1952.

Mr. JENNER. If they came in 1948, and they were there 4 years, that would be 1952.

Mr. CONWAY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Now; had either of the older boys already left before the family moved?

Mr. CONWAY. Well—

Mr. JENNER. Take this boy who you took a particular interest in—John Pic.

Mr. CONWAY. John went into the Coast Guard at sometime and it seems to me that he joined the Coast Guard before they moved away, but I'm awful cloudy on that.

Mr. JENNER. Well, have you exhausted your recollection on that?

Mr. CONWAY. Well, I don't know—I remember talking to John—John, when he is in this part of the country, he comes to my house and I remember talking to him about it and he was quite enthusiastic about the Coast Guard. but that's after he had been in the service sometime. I believe he left before his mother did. He left and went into the Coast Guard before his mother moved away.

Mr. JENNER. You—could you refresh your recollection that he did leave before the mother and Lee left?

Mr. CONWAY. I believe I remember that.

Mr. JENNER. And he was in the Coast Guard and stationed in New York?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. New York City, Staten Island, as a matter of fact?

Mr. CONWAY. Well, I didn't know. He married a girl in New York City and I believe—I believe my wife told me that Mrs. Oswald told her that she was going to New York on account of John being there. After John left, I didn't have much contact with them at all, because John was my contact with them.

Mr. JENNER. Do you recall whether Robert was still with the family when Mrs. Oswald picked up and left? Or had he also entered the service?

Mr. CONWAY. That, I don't recall.

Mr. JENNER. You would be very helpful to us, if you would give us the names of some children at or about his age, who are still around this vicinity, whom you think might recall him.

Mr. CONWAY. What year did you say he was born in?

Mr. JENNER. 1939, October 18.

Mr. CONWAY. 1939—

Mr. JENNER. If he were alive, he would be approaching 25 years of age—this would be his 24th year and he would be 25 years old next October.

Mr. CONWAY. Well, I have discussed it with the Masseys, they live across the street.

Mr. JENNER. Give me their full name and address and telephone number, if you will?

Mr. CONWAY. And they don't remember it. It is H. R. Massey. What I was fixing to say, I was trying to eliminate the neighborhood house by house. The Masseys don't remember—I don't believe Barbara Anne does, Barbara Anne would be their daughter and she is approximately his age, but I heard her say that she didn't remember him at all.

Mr. JENNER. Is Barbara Anne living with her folks?

Mr. CONWAY. No, sir; she's married now. I don't know what her last name is.

Mr. JENNER. Well, maybe I could find out from her mother, Mr. and Mrs. H. R. Massey.

Mr. CONWAY. [Spelling] M-a-s-s-e-y.

Mr. JENNER. And they live across the street from you?

Mr. CONWAY. That's right—they live at 7425 Ewing.

Mr. JENNER. Do I have your permission to talk with Mrs. Conway?

Mr. CONWAY. Oh, yes; I suggested that she come with me and save a trip.

Mr. JENNER. Yes, that would have been nice.

Mr. CONWAY. I don't know why she wouldn't but she knows what she wants to do.

Mr. JENNER. I probably would like to have her come down tomorrow, if she is free, tomorrow afternoon.

Mr. CONWAY. Well, my wife's brother passed away last week, and it has been a considerable shock to her and she is on tranquilizers and her memory isn't as good as it would be if she wasn't in such a strain.

Mr. JENNER. Well, you mention it to her when you get home and I'll call out home sometime tonight?

Mr. CONWAY. All right.

Mr. JENNER. And we will leave it up to her?

Mr. CONWAY. I'm sure she would be glad to do all she could.

Mr. JENNER. Can you think of any others?

Mr. CONWAY. The Turners, they just live—oh, Bill Bridges would be the age of John Pic. He was just another one of the kids in the neighborhood that I taught to play chess at the same time, but he was older and there was no other children in that range, and John is as old as my daughter.

Mr. JENNER. Well, I might talk with him on the telephone.

Mr. CONWAY. I don't know where he lives. He is with Halliburton, I believe, and when he is in town he comes by to see me, too.

Mr. JENNER. Is that Halliburton, Tex.?

Mr. CONWAY. No; that's Halliburton Oil Co. I don't know where the home office is.

Mr. JENNER. Have you seen him around Fort Worth?

Mr. CONWAY. Bill?

Mr. JENNER. Yes.

Mr. CONWAY. The last time I saw him he came to my house and brought his family and it's been quite a little while ago.

Mr. JENNER. His first name is William and his last name is what?

Mr. CONWAY. Bridges (spelling) B-r-i-d-g-e-s.

Mr. JENNER. Well, we will look in the telephone book and maybe we can find him that way.

Mr. CONWAY. He is with Halliburton, I remember the last time I talked to him.

Mr. JENNER. The older boys were attending high school and Lee was attending elementary school, what elementary school is that?

Mr. CONWAY. I'm sorry—I don't know.

Mr. JENNER. And the high school?

Mr. CONWAY. It would be Arlington Heights. These schools are changing so rapidly and increasing so until I just don't know.

Mr. JENNER. During this period of time, did you become acquainted with Marguerite Oswald, the mother of Lee Oswald?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes; I knew Mrs. Oswald. She was in my house a few times.

Mr. JENNER. I wish you would give me, if you can, your impression of Mrs. Oswald, particularly with respect to the—to her care of these boys and Lee Oswald during this 4-year period.

Mr. CONWAY. Well, I think she was—my impression was that she felt burdened with them and I think she showed a selfish attitude towards her children.

Mr. JENNER. Selfish?

Mr. CONWAY. Selfish—yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Would you elaborate on that, what do you mean by that?

Mr. CONWAY. Well, I don't have words for it except that it appeared to me that she didn't dress them as well as she might. She didn't care—they were embarrassed about their dress.

Mr. JENNER. They were?

Mr. CONWAY. Some of them were—John, especially and sometimes Robert, I think, but they were very stoical, they could take it, they were good kids about it, you know.

Mr. JENNER. Did John speak to you on that subject?

Mr. CONWAY. No, sir; John wouldn't ever say anything against his mother. My daughter told me that someone said something about—hearsay, you see, is about all I know about such things, but my daughter told me that she heard some of the kids mention to him that his mother should buy him better clothes or shoes or something and they didn't know why she didn't, or something like that and he shouldn't give her as much of the money he made when he was doing whatever work he did and he said, "She's my mother." He stood up for her and that's all he would say.

Mr. JENNER. I take it from this remark that you just made that the boys, at least John, certainly John, did some work after school?

Mr. CONWAY. John sold shoes, I think, he worked in a shoe store for a time. It seems to me at that time is when they were inaugurating this distributive education thing and I believe that's how he got his job.

Mr. JENNER. And did Robert work also?

Mr. CONWAY. I don't know.

Mr. JENNER. What about Lee?

Mr. CONWAY. I don't think so. Robert would have if he could have gotten a job.

Mr. JENNER. What was your impression of Lee on that score, was he industrious or not?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes; he was—you mean Robert?

Mr. JENNER. No; I mean Lee.

Was he industrious?

Mr. CONWAY. I don't rightly know, I have lost contact with them and he was too small.

Mr. JENNER. Do you have any impression as to whether this was an emotional child?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes; he would become very angry and his face would flush and he would just storm at other children.

Mr. JENNER. He was quick to anger?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes; quite quick.

Mr. JENNER. And did he seem to be a sensitive, an overly sensitive child?

Mr. CONWAY. I suppose so—I thought he was a very strange type of person and at the time I thought he was considerably above the average in intelligence around that age—being 9 or 10 or 11, I mean, to catch on and to notice and be able to learn to do little things.

Mr. JENNER. What is your middle initial, do you have one?

Mr. CONWAY. P. (Spelling) P-i-e-r-c-e.

Mr. JENNER. You probably wondered why I asked you about Leslie Welding Co. Do you know a man by the name of Hiram L. Conway with Leslie Welding in Fort Worth?

Mr. CONWAY. No, I don't. I knew there was a Hiram—that—there's more than one Hiram Conway, about three or four in Fort Worth, I understand. I never heard of Leslie Welding.

Mr. JENNER. Oswald worked for Leslie Welding at one time.

Mr. CONWAY. He did?

Mr. JENNER. We have an FBI report on an interview with Hiram L. Conway and that's why I started out with you on that.

Mr. CONWAY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. From the time that the Oswalds left Fort Worth in 1952, from that time on, did you ever see Lee Oswald?

Mr. CONWAY. Never saw him again.

Mr. JENNER. Or John?

Mr. CONWAY. Oh, yes; I see John.

Mr. JENNER. He comes to visit you occasionally?

Mr. CONWAY. John never comes to Fort Worth without coming to see me.

Mr. JENNER. And Robert?

Mr. CONWAY. Robert never comes to see me.

Mr. JENNER. Robert lives in Fort Worth.

Mr. CONWAY. Well, I don't ever see him at all.

Mr. JENNER. He never comes back to pay you a visit?

Mr. CONWAY. No.

Mr. JENNER. And Marguerite, have you seen her since they left?

Mr. CONWAY. Since when—

Mr. JENNER. Since 1952?

Mr. CONWAY. My wife has talked with her since then. Just briefly.

Mr. JENNER. Since November 22d?

Mr. CONWAY. No, it was just shortly before that, it wasn't but just a few days before that. I wouldn't think it was over 5 or 6 weeks. She ran into her in a department store. No, I don't believe that I saw Mrs. Oswald at all, but I'm not sure. I've seen her so many times on television and she looks just like she always did except a little heavier and a little older, but I don't recall having seen her, but I remember my wife did and she mentioned it to me.

Mr. JENNER. Does anything occur to you that I haven't been stimulated to ask you that you think might be of assistance to the Commission in its work?

Mr. CONWAY. When you were talking on the phone, I was trying to think of anything, but I don't recall anything, even worth mentioning or even to go with what you have.

When I said that Lee appeared to be a child that learned rapidly, he had picked up chess from Bill Bridges and John—you see, I taught Bill and John to play chess and Robert picked it up from them and then Lee picked it up from them, and I think I remember hearing the boys say Lee would beat them once in a while and he would become angry when he would lose a game.

Mr. JENNER. You heard that, too?

Mr. CONWAY. Yes, I have heard he would become angry.

Mr. JENNER. Mr. Conway, you have the privilege of reading your deposition after Miss Oliver has written it up and to sign it or to waive that privilege.

Mr. CONWAY. Well, I don't care anything about reading it—I know what I have said.

Mr. JENNER. If there is nothing else, this will conclude your deposition. I certainly appreciate your coming in.