

Mr. LIEBELER. You are a detective on the vice squad? Is that correct?

Mr. O'SULLIVAN. Yes, sir.

Mr. LIEBELER. Are you assigned to a particular aspect of vice activities here in New Orleans?

Mr. O'SULLIVAN. No, sir; there are only nine of us to cover the whole city. Therefore, we handle any vice, gambling, prostitution, homosexuals, handbooks. Anything that comes under the vice laws, we handle.

Mr. LIEBELER. You have never had any contact with Ferrie in connection with your activities on the vice squad? Is that correct?

Mr. O'SULLIVAN. No; Ferrie lives or he did live in Jefferson Parish. We have no authority in Jefferson Parish. [Deletion.]

Mr. LIEBELER. Now see if you can recall or think back to your experiences in the Beauregard Junior High School, and tell us if you can remember anything else or if there is anything else that you want to add what you have already said about your knowledge of Oswald and his activities at the time he was at Beauregard Junior High School.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN. Well, I have put quite a bit of thought on this ever since it all happened, especially since I have gotten this correspondence relative to what I know about it, and as much as I would like to help you as much as I can, I just can't think of anything else. I don't want to say something I am not sure of. Well, actually, even if I thought of something, I would tell you and tell you I am not sure, but there is nothing else I can think of.

Mr. LIEBELER. All right. I have no other questions at this time, and if there is nothing else that you want to add to the record, on behalf of the Commission, I want to thank you very much for your cooperation.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN. Yes, sir; thank you.

TESTIMONY OF MRS. MILDRED SAWYER

The testimony of Mrs. Mildred Sawyer was taken on April 7-8, 1964, at the Old Civil Courts Building, Royal and Conti Streets, New Orleans, La., by Mr. Wesley J. Liebeler, assistant counsel of the President's Commission.

Mrs. Mildred Sawyer, having been first duly sworn, was examined and testified as follows:

Mr. LIEBELER. My name is Wesley J. Liebeler. I am a member of the legal staff of the President's Commission investigating the assassination of President Kennedy. The Commission staff members have been authorized to take the testimony of witnesses by the Commission pursuant to authority to the Commission by Executive Order No. 11130, dated November 29, 1963, and Joint Resolution of Congress No. 137.

I understand that Mr. Rankin wrote to you last week and told you that we would be in touch with you about the taking of your testimony.

Mrs. SAWYER. Yes.

Mr. LIEBELER. And that he enclosed with that letter a copy of the Executive order and the congressional resolution to which I have just referred, and also a copy of the Commission's rules governing the taking of testimony of witnesses. Is that correct?

Mrs. SAWYER. That is correct. At the time that I spoke to your Mr. Gerrets last night, I hadn't gone through some mail that was in my place and had been picked up by my aunt when she came by and picked up the mail on that Saturday morning, and I hadn't even bothered going through it, because most of the time the mail I have is just bills or some advertisements, and it is very inconsequential, so, as a result, after hearing that I was supposed to have a letter, I became a little curious and looked, and I found that there was one.

Mr. LIEBELER. Good. Technically, witnesses are entitled to 3 days' notice before being required to appear. I don't think you had quite 3 days' notice,

but you can waive that if you want to. As long as you are here, I assume you will want to go ahead.

Mrs. SAWYER. Certainly. I will be very glad to, because I am afraid there is very little I know.

Mr. LIEBELER. I don't think we will take very long, actually, but one of the things the Commission is trying to do is develop as much background knowledge about Lee Harvey Oswald as it possibly can, in the hope that it might give some insight into his possible motive, if in fact he did assassinate the President.

Mrs. SAWYER. I see.

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

Mrs. SAWYER. Mildred Sawyer.

Mr. LIEBELER. Where do you live?

Mrs. SAWYER. I live in Lakeview; 6306 Louisville Street; part of the time with my father, and then I have a little place on Exchange Place where I kept my husband's books and things, where we always worked, more or less a little office, and when the weather was bad or when I felt too pressed with work, or if I am tired and don't feel like going to dad's, I stay there. My husband and I had the place arranged so, whenever we wanted to, we could stay there.

Mr. LIEBELER. Your husband is deceased? Is that correct?

Mrs. SAWYER. Yes.

Mr. LIEBELER. How long have you lived at the Exchange Place apartment?

Mrs. SAWYER. Oh, whenever the Monteleone Hotel took over the place where we were living, which belonged to Mr. Saussaye, on Royal Street, and he owned that building there, and the Monteleone Hotel—you remember when they tore it down and remodeled to make a parking garage there? We had to leave at that time, and then we were looking for some little place to store all our books and everything—my husband was an engineer and we had a lot of things that we worked on, and he was in and out of the city, so when he came in it was very convenient to have someplace like that where we could work sometimes, if we felt like it, way past midnight, and that would have disturbed my father, who was quite old—he is 91, in fact—so that is how we started looking around, and we found this little place and took it, and I have been going back and forth ever since.

Mr. LIEBELER. That would have been in the 1950's sometime?

Mrs. SAWYER. I am trying to recall the year, but really I can't without looking at my receipts. It would be hard for me to remember that. My husband died 2 years ago in November, and we were there at least 3 years or 4 years, I think. I am not certain of the time. I mean it is kind of hard for me to reconstruct, to go back. Anyway, whatever it was, when we moved there these people, this Mrs. Oswald and her son, were living there in the apartment below the one that we took, and they remained there a short while, and they moved away after that and I never heard any more or anything until then, and I had forgotten all about the name of the people or anything until finally your men called.

Mr. LIEBELER. You mean you were interviewed by someone from the FBI sometime back in November?

Mrs. SAWYER. Yes. There was an FBI man who called me sometime back, and that is when I realized that they were the same people.

Mr. LIEBELER. Did you become acquainted with Mrs. Oswald to any extent during the time that you lived at this Exchange Place?

Mrs. SAWYER. Not really, because—well, she was old enough to be my mother, I might say, and our working all the time—and so was my husband—and then I was connected with the opera group here and I was out most of the time, and when we met it was usually on the stairway or in and out the door, once in awhile talking on the steps, perhaps. About the most we did was bid each other the time of day, and that is about all, and, of course, the little boy the same thing. And I say "little boy" because to me he was a child when I saw him. I can vaguely remember, or I have a mental picture of, a little boy with blond, curly hair and rather nice looking, and that is about all I can say, and once in a while if he happened to be going out or coming in at the time I was going, he would always open the door and hold the door for me, and he seemed quite polite.

Mr. LIEBELER. He was about 14 years old?

Mrs. SAWYER. I would say he must have been about 14. I say he was a little boy because I am sure he was an early teenager. Of course, as I say, I have lost track of time then. I was wondering how old he actually is or was.

Mr. LIEBELER. Is the address of this place 126 Exchange Place?

Mrs. SAWYER. Yes.

Mr. LIEBELER. It is not in Exchange Alley?

Mrs. SAWYER. It is Exchange Place, and Exchange Place and Exchange Alley are one and the same thing. Years ago they used to be called Exchange Alley.

Mr. LIEBELER. Do you know what Mrs. Oswald did for a living?

Mrs. SAWYER. Yes. That much I do know, because I believe she was working as a clerk in Kreeger's, but I am not positive. I have been trying to think since I had to come here, and she left there, and I believe she either went to Goldring's or Godchaux's—I don't remember which—because she met me on the street one day and asked if I was buying any clothes and would I not come by and buy from her so that she might get the commission or show me something I might be interested in. In fact, I never did go; I never did buy, though. I never did go to her for anything.

Mr. LIEBELER. The only two people that lived in the apartment were Mrs. Oswald and this boy? Is that right?

Mrs. SAWYER. That is all.

Mr. LIEBELER. Do you know how big an apartment it was?

Mrs. SAWYER. Well, I imagine it consisted of about the same size or same things as the one that we have; that is, a large living room, combination dining room or a little dining alcove, and a small bath, a small kitchen, and a rather large bedroom with large closet space, and I am sure—seeing it, well, I would say the stretch of the building going up the stairway, I would say that it was the same thing, or close to it anyway. I am sure it had the same dimensions.

Mr. LIEBELER. Do you remember anything about Lee Oswald, the boy that lived there? I think you told the FBI that he would always get home before his mother and he was very quiet.

Mrs. SAWYER. Well, I say I am not certain that he always got home before his mother. I imagine he came home from school, because, as I say, occasionally I met him going up and down the stairway or at the door or something like that, but he was not a boisterous child and undoubtedly he was not an unruly child, because I am sure if he had been and she had scolded him we would have heard it unless it was very low voiced and—

Mr. LIEBELER. And you never did hear any arguments between them or any scolding?

Mrs. SAWYER. No.

Mr. LIEBELER. Did he seem to be polite?

Mrs. SAWYER. Yes; quite polite. I mean, in fact, that was one of the things that impressed me about him, because most kids these days, especially the teenagers, are usually so abrupt. They don't think very much of manners, but, in fact, if I happened to come in and he was out at the doorway, he held the door and closed it after me, or something like that, and I thought it was rather nice, but I never got into any conversations with him, because I make it a point that, outside of my own circle of friends, I don't really care to become friendly with other people, and I think neighbors especially.

Mr. LIEBELER. Did you know whether he had any friends from school or any place come to visit him, people his own age? Did you see anyone come and go?

Mrs. SAWYER. I never did, but then, like I say, I am out from 8 o'clock in the morning until maybe 5:30, 6, or 7 in the evening, and sometimes I get a snack and go back to work again and work until maybe 9 o'clock or so.

Mr. LIEBELER. What were you doing at that time? Were you working?

Mrs. SAWYER. Secretary.

Mr. LIEBELER. Secretarial work?

Mrs. SAWYER. Yes.

Mr. LIEBELER. Are you employed as a secretary now, too?

Mrs. SAWYER. I do secretarial work or general or anything like that that I am qualified to do. Well, anything along those lines.

Mr. LIEBELER. Are you employed at the present time?

Mrs. SAWYER. Yes.

Mr. LIEBELER. Do you remember the circumstances under which the Oswalds left the Exchange Place apartment? Did they tell you where they were going or anything?

Mrs. SAWYER. No; I didn't—I don't recall her saying anything about where she was going particularly. I know one day my husband told me that she was packing furniture or something and preparing to leave, and shortly after that evidently her things were picked up, because when I came back, well, they were gone.

Mr. LIEBELER. As far as you can recall, there was nothing peculiar or particularly outstanding about this boy that would call notice to him to distinguish him from other boys his age?

Mrs. SAWYER. Really, no; I wouldn't say anything that I can think of, and, as I say, I never came in contact with him long enough or spoke to him, and they were just average people. She just seemed like a very average mother, and I rather imagined in my own mind that she worked and probably did all she could to take care of him as any mother would. About the only thing I remembered about him was the fact that he was rather a nice-looking little boy, and his blond, curly hair.

Mr. LIEBELER. Do you know of any friends that Mrs. Oswald had during that time?

Mrs. SAWYER. No; I don't, and, of course, I could venture to say that she probably had friends at the stores where she worked.

Mr. LIEBELER. But you didn't know any of them?

Mrs. SAWYER. I didn't know any of them, because I made no contacts.

Mr. LIEBELER. I don't think I have any more questions, Mrs. Sawyer. If you can think of anything else that you want to add or anything that you think we ought to know, that we haven't asked you about, or if you can remember anything else about the Oswalds that we haven't covered—

Mrs. SAWYER. No; well, about the only thing I can tell you is that apparently she was a very kindly person, because the day that we moved into the place, when we had so many books and things to take up, and it was rather a struggle and stairs to climb, and I guess we might have been pretty tired—well, she came out of her doorway and brought coffee to both of us right there on the stairway, and that was the first contact we had with her that we had ever seen her, and—

Mr. LIEBELER. She seemed to be friendly?

Mrs. SAWYER. She seemed to be a pleasant person, a friendly person, but I would say very average, I would think. She seemed to be well spoken, I would say average education, possibly not college or anything like that. I was really quite amazed at such a thing happening to this little boy, because, as I said, my picture of him, my mental picture I did remember seemed to be such a pleasant one that something like that came as pretty much of a shock that a child who seemed to be so nice would be involved in anything like that.

Mr. LIEBELER. Did he ever talk about politics with you, or did you ever hear him talking about politics to anybody?

Mrs. SAWYER. No, no; because, as I said, I never met him any more than just saying good morning—and he did say that—or good evening or something like that, but I never engaged in any conversations with him at all. I considered him just a child, and I would hardly think at 14 years old he would have engaged in political talk, or else he would have been quite—

Mr. LIEBELER. Precocious?

Mrs. SAWYER. True.

Mr. LIEBELER. Well, if you don't have anything else that you can think of, I have no more questions. We want to thank you very much for coming over.

Mrs. SAWYER. Well, you are quite welcome.

Mr. LIEBELER. And for waiting until we got to you, both for myself personally, and the Commission through me expresses its thanks for the cooperation that you have given us.

Mrs. SAWYER. Well, you are quite welcome. I am sorry that all I know is so vague and such a little bit.