

TESTIMONY OF JAMES J. ROWLEY

HSCA VOLUME NO. 3

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4.0.1.3

Secret Service Director James Rowley testified on three major issues: the relationship among the FBI, the CIA, the Dallas Police Department, and the Secret Service; the performance of the agents in Dealey Plaza; and pre-assassination investigations of plots to kill President Kennedy. Director Rowley indicated that the FBI and the CIA had worked with the Secret Service on investigations of specific threats to the President from right-wing groups and Cuban groups in Miami and Chicago. Since he was aware of these investigations before 1963, Rowley's first instinct upon learning of the assassination was to ask INS to close the U.S.-Mexican border. Although the CIA and the FBI assisted the Secret Service in these investigations, which included mail interception by the Secret Service, Rowley did not indicate that he or the Secret Service Protective Research Section had been aware of Oswald before the assassination. None of the major investigating agencies initiated any joint planning session to oversee the entire project. The general confusion among the agencies after the assassination showed, for example, in the various claims made on the assassin's rifle: Rowley recounted a story of being asked by the FBI to pressure Forrest Sorrels, Secret Service agent in Dallas, to request the release of the assassin's rifle from Dallas Police Chief Curry. In the first days after the assassination, the Secret Service received reports from the FBI and the CIA as well as military intelligence, and Rowley testified that Inspector Kelley was authorized to and did supply all of this material to the Warren Commission. Kelley's task was to find out what happened in Dallas, not to investigate the performance of the agents in the motorcade. Rowley insisted that the agents in the motorcade had responded quickly, and he presented acoustic and photographic evidence to demonstrate how promptly they looked for the assassin. While acknowledging that the Secret Service had been shorthanded in Dallas, Chief Rowley defended the performance of his agents in their capacities as investigators and as protectors of the President.

JAMES J. ROWLEY, DIRECTOR OF THE SECRET SERVICE, RECEIVED HIS
MASTER'S DEGREE IN LAW FROM ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY IN BROOKLYN.

356-360 Secret Service report on Cuban groups threatening President Kennedy before the assassination; agents in Dealey Plaza performed adequately; Chief of the Protective Research Section was removed; Rowley initially thought a “person of international character” might have been involved.

361-389 Exhibits: Secret Service reports on Cuban terrorist, white right-wing threat, Secret Service interview with Marina Oswald, pre-Dallas trip procedures, Cubans in Chicago; the Student Revolutionary Directorate at Miami.

390-398 Conspiracy reports in early 1963 were of no interest to the Secret Service since they did not indicate activity directed against the President; Secret Service made no specific effort to coordinate its investigation with other agencies; confusion in the Dallas Police station and perceived lack of jurisdiction kept the Secret Service from taping Oswald interviews and controlling the process; the possibility of Cuban involvement was investigated to Rowley’s satisfaction; acoustic evidence coupled with photographs shows a faster reaction on the part of agents in Dealey Plaza than first suggested; everything the Secret Service had was given to the Warren Commission.

399-455 Exhibits: Terrorist Quintin Pino Machado was a potential threat to the President; Cuban plot to assassinate the President (Nov. 1962); conversation between informant and KKK member Joseph Milteer; excerpt from Secret Service School Principles of Protection; affidavits of Kelley saying Oswald never mentioned Cuba.