

Agency Information

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INVESTIGATION INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Identifying Information:

Name Abraham Bolden Date 1/19/78
 Address 7632 S. Sangamon ST. Place Mid City Holiday Inn
 City/State Chicago, Ill. ← Telephone 488-4822
 Date of Birth 1-19-35 M or S M
 Social Security _____ Spouse BARBARA
 Children YES

2. Physical Description:

Height _____ Color Eyes BROWN Hair BLACK
 Weight _____ Special Characteristics _____
 Ethnic Group NEGRO BEARD

3. Personal History:

a. Present Employment: NATIONAL LEAD CO.
 Address 1800 S. PEORIA, CHGO. ILL.
 Telephone _____
 b. Criminal Record
 1. Arrests 1
 2. Convictions 1

4. Additional Personal Information:

a. Relative(s): Name _____
 Address _____
 b. Area frequented: Chicago south side
 c. Remarks: Wears turban. d's member of Islamic religion

Investigator

James P. Kelly

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS

NAME Abraham Wendell Bolden Date 1-19-78 Time _____
 Address 7632 S. Sangamon St. Place Mid City Holiday Inn
Chicaco, Illinois S. Holstead & Madison Sts.
Chicago, Ill.

Interview:

On 1/19/78 the writers interviewed Mr. Bolden at the Mid City Holiday Inn, Chicago, Illinois. Bolden had been a Secret Service Agent in 1963, stationed in Chicago and it was believed that he could furnish information relative to a conspiracy to assassinate President John F. Kennedy in Chicago on 2 November 1963.

A brief background on Abraham Bolden is necessary to understanding our need to talk to him at this time. He was out of East St. Louis, Illinois and joined the Secret Service in 1959 (Eisenhower was President). He worked counterfeit cases in Chicago and in the summer of 1961 he was assigned to the White House Detail. He was the first negro agent assigned to this detail. Bolden spent only three months in this detail and was evidently shocked at what he saw. He complained to his supervisor, Harvey Henderson, and to James Rowley, then head of Secret Service about the general laxity and the heavy drinking among the agents who were assigned to protect the President. He also resented the slurs against blacks which were called to his attention from time

Interviewer

Harold Rose
 (Signature)

James P. Kelly and Harold Rose
 (Typed)

Date Transcribed 1-24-78

to time, eg., the separate housing facilities for black agents on southern trips. He was transferred back to Chicago.

While attending a refresher course in Washington in mid-May, 1964, Bolden was returned to Chicago on a subterfuge and subsequently arrested and charged with soliciting a bribe, obstruction of justice and conspiracy in an alleged attempt to sell SS file information to a Chicago counterfeiter. His first trial, in July 1964, resulted in a mistrial; his second trial, a month later, in a conviction. He was sentenced to serve six years. He appealed and in June, 1966, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear the case.

The writers found Bolden not at all bitter about the 1964 case although we did not dwell on it. We questioned him about the events which allegedly took place in Chicago just prior to and on 2 November 1963.

Bolden told us that around October 30, 1963, he recalled a long teletype message coming in to the Chicago office from the FBI. It was unusual, he told us, for the FBI to cooperate on any cases with the SS. But Mary Cooney, a clerical person working in the office at the time, and now believed to be deceased, took this message to the ARSAIC, Maurice Martineau. Prior to the telex, there was a phone call from the FBI. Bolden doesn't know if it was local FBI (Chicago) or Washington Hdq. calling.

There were only about 13 agents in the Chicago SS office at the time and the substance of the teletype and the telephone call alleging a threat against the life of the President on an upcoming trip (2 Nov) to Chicago was quickly disseminated.

Surveillance was undertaken by the agents on two of the four subjects identified with the threat. Because Bolden was black, he and another black agent, Conrad Cross, were excluded from the "north side" Chicago surveillance because it was a predominantly white neighborhood. Through a series of blunders, the surveillance was "blown" by Agent Jay ^{Lloyd}~~Lawrence~~ Stocks and the two subjects were apprehended and brought in to the Chicago SS office. Bolden's awareness of the progress of this surveillance came partly from office gossip and partly from his monitoring the SS radio channels in his car. In any event, he said Agent Stocks was subject of some earthy comments from his fellow agents.

Bolden recalls that James Rowley called from Washington and suggested that Martineau use a COS file number. Bolden explained that a CO (for Central Office) number was issued only in or from Washington Headquarters and an "S" for Secret or Sensitive was given when they wanted to sequester information contained in the file. He explained that

these files were kept separate from all others and that SS could say they had nothing in their files on a subject when in fact a "COS" file existed. He said as far as he knew, these were never destroyed. (underscoring ours). In addition to the COS file number, Bolden said that all agents who were involved in this surveillance activity were told by ATSAIC Martineau to turn in their notebooks. All memos were typed, he told us, by a Charlotte Klapkowski (sp?) who is now working at Headquarters in Washington and is close to retirement age. "Now don't expect her to tell you anything. She is very loyal to the Service and wouldn't say anything she thought would hurt them in any way," he told us. The memo copies were all sequestered by Charlotte on this surveillance.

Bolden recalls that in addition to Stocks, Agents Strong, Motto and Noonan were involved in the apprehension of the two men. On Saturday morning, November 2, Bolden was in the office early. He recalls that the interrogation rooms were littered with cigarette butts and coffee cups, evidence of a night-long interrogation. He saw only one of the two men they had apprehended. He describes this man as swarthy, stocky, "a truck driver type." is the way he described him. The man was 5'9" or 5'10", wearing a jacket

and shirt with open collar. His hair was dark and he had a crew cut which is described as "Detroit style." The writers showed Bolden our Committee "mug" book containing 1 through 71 and 73-81, and he stated that the facial structure of photo #74 was similar to that of the subject being questioned by agents in the office. Picture #74 is listed as "unidentified - possibly Jim Braden." It is directly underneath Thomas Vallee's picture in the mug book. Vallee, #76, was not recognized by Bolden at all, although he was familiar with the case which was described in the article written by Edwin Black in the Chicago Independent, a now-defunct publication, dated November 1975. On page ten of this article entitled "The Plot to Kill JFK in Chicago, November 2, 1963 - Twenty Days Before Dallas," the writer is checking all arrests in the city of Chicago. He says: "Then we checked every arrest in the entire city on those days. Who arrested them? Why? Any weapons? It took weeks. In the process, we'd develop leads: Look for Cuban names. Look for the name 'Bradley.' Look for the name 'Braden.' Nothing came of it." (underscoring ours).

Bolden recalls that one of the two men had a Spanish-sounding name. He said the SS agents took their pictures with a Polaroid camera. The agents' notes were typed up and the memos were then taken to O'Hare Airport and given to a crew member (pilot?) of a commercial flight to Washington.

where he believes an SS employee met the flight and delivered the material to Headquarters. The two suspects in Chicago were turned over to the Chicago Police who took them away in a patrol wagon. He recalls that at least one of the two had a Spanish-sounding name.

Bolden recalls Tom Mosely's name mentioned in the office around that period (Nov 1963). He said when Agent Tom Kelley arrived in Chicago from Dallas on or about 11/26/63, he mentioned a John Heard or Hurt. They searched the office card files for a similar sounding name. He also recalls that he and Conrad Cross were sent to check out a mixed Black-Spanish neighborhood on Rockwell Street to determine where a certain person who resided there was on 11/22/63. They were unable to locate the person, who had moved, and Bolden could not recall the subject's name. The PRS had a record of the person from a previous threat. Bolden was critical of the activities of PRS, saying they did not do a thorough job. He did not further elaborate.

Bolden, whose 43rd birthday coincided with our interview, was accompanied by his wife, Barbara. He told the writers that he is now working for the National Lead Company, 1800 S. Peoria Street, Chicago, as night supervisor in quality control. He is also a minister in the Islamic Faith and teaches a course in religion in Chicago.

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Bolden told the writers that he made notes of some of the things that he uncovered in connection with the events of October 30 - November 2, 1963, but that when he was arrested in 1964, this notebook was seized by the government (Secret Service). He said that he would have no objection to testifying in Washington under oath relating to the matters which he discussed with us in this interview.

Bolden

Bolden related to the interviewers that he was the informant who supplied the information for Edwin Black's article in the Chicago Independent, Nov. ,1975