

DATE: 11-14-2017

JFK Assassination System  
Identification Form

Date: 5/4/2015

## Agency Information

AGENCY: FBI  
RECORD NUMBER: 124-90115-10048

RECORD SERIES: HQ

AGENCY FILE NUMBER: 62-108665-NR

## Document Information

ORIGINATOR: FBI  
FROM: LO  
TO: HQ

TITLE:

DATE: 00/00/0000  
PAGES: 22

SUBJECTS:

[Restricted]

DOCUMENT TYPE: PAPER, TEXTUAL DOCUMENT

CLASSIFICATION: Confidential

RESTRICTIONS: 4

CURRENT STATUS: Withhold

DATE OF LAST REVIEW: 08/07/1998

OPENING CRITERIA: INDEFINITE

COMMENTS: RPT; ENCLOSURE

DATE: 11-14-2017

John P. Muldoon, residing at 4305 Kentbury Drive, Bethesda, Maryland, was interviewed on October 16 and 17, 1974.

Mr. Muldoon advised that in late 1973 a former associate of his in a U.S. Government agency involved in intelligence activities had contacted him to see if he was interested and available to handle an investigative assignment for some people Mr. Muldoon's former associate knew in Atlanta. This individual was identified as Mr. Lucian "Luigi" Conien.

Mr. Muldoon stated that prior to this occasion he had been introduced by Mr. Conien to an individual named Mitchell WerBell at the Goal Post Restaurant, Washington, D.C. Apparently Mr. Conien's relationship with Mr. WerBell III dated back to OSS days together. It turned out that Mitchell WerBell IV and Howard Gibson (an ex-Georgia State Trooper) were Vice Presidents and Mr. Bob Bayard (a retired Army Colonel) was President of the Central Investigative Agency located in Atlanta, Georgia. Mr. Muldoon accepted the assignment referred to which he stated basically involved approximately one week's surveillance activity. He was next contacted and instructed to proceed immediately to Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, to assist the Central Investigative Agency in a matter they were handling there; however, he got only as far as Atlanta where he received instructions to come to their office and proceed no further. It was on this occasion that he first met Howard Gibson and Bob Bayard, and Mitchell WerBell's youngest son, Jeffrey. Three or four other investigative assignments were discussed and he spent two or

three days there basically idling. During this period he was introduced to Mitchell WerBell III (who is the individual he met in Washington) who was, of course, the father of Mitchell WerBell IV. Muldoon was invited to Mitchell WerBell III's rather palatial home in the Atlanta area and immediately noted that the walls of the house and other areas were adorned with guns. He learned that Mitchell WerBell III owned a company known as Defense Systems International which was engaged in the legal buying and selling of guns. Mr. WerBell had also apparently developed a modified submachine gun which was supposed to be silent, but was having difficulty obtaining the necessary clearances for its sale.

Later in March, 1974, Gibson and his wife came to Washington and discussed with Mr. Muldoon his availability to open an office in Washington. Mr. Muldoon agreed and subsequently located an apartment to be used as an office in the LaSalle Building. He subsequently set up in this office with one Mike Morrissey of B & R Fox Laboratories, Washington, D.C. Mr. Morrissey was totally involved in electronic equipment including both the sale of such and its use in connection with electronic countermeasures surveys.

Mr. Muldoon did not know Mr. Morrissey before this time but Morrissey had apparently been utilized by the Central Investigative Agency for electronic sweeps and conceivably positive installations. Mr. Muldoon has no first-hand knowledge of the latter and it is only his opinion. The office in Washington was not to be the Washington office.

of the Central Investigative Agency and in fact a corporation was formed and registered in Delaware known as Security Consultants International. Mr. Muldoon stated that Security Consultants International was formed to sell electronic gear to the Government and foreign embassies which was actually Morrissey's line of products. It was planned that Security Consultants International would ultimately assume certain investigative and other type requirements using basically Mr. Muldoon's contacts and experience. He recalled that Morrissey had recently received some mention in the local papers incidental to the Galbraith case which involved the sex slaying of a young girl. Morrissey apparently tape recorded some conversations between the defending attorneys (whom he was associated with) and the prosecution during the trial in Richmond, Virginia. Mr. Morrissey was there as an electronics expert apparently to testify to the imperfections of lie detectors. Mr. Morrissey has an engineering and law degrees, the latter recently received from the American University.

Some prospective clients for sweeps were foreign embassies but they never actually conducted any such sweeps and the office was only in operation April, May and June, 1974. Mr. Muldoon paid the rent and was reimbursed by Atlanta and was strictly on a commission/percentage basis involving the aforementioned planned sale of electronic equipment.

Mr. Muldoon advised that the early part of June, 1974, he was apprised of an interest Mitchell WerBell III and others had in the island of Abaco in the Bahamas. There was a meeting the first week of June at Guest Quarters, New Hampshire and Virginia Avenue, N.W., attended by WerBell III, Lord and Lady Bellehaven, Mike Oliver, Andrew St. George, Howard Handleman and a friend of WerBell's from Philadelphia, name unknown, who apparently worked for the Library of Congress. Mr. Muldoon stated that Lord Bellehaven is a member of the House of Lords in England and was interested in assisting Abaco in obtaining independence from the Bahamian Government. Mike Oliver, Carson City, Nevada, was described as an extremely wealthy individual who had written a book entitled "A New Constitution for a New Country" in 1968 and was interested in setting up his concept of government somewhere. Mr. Muldoon pointed out that Oliver was not particularly wedded to Abaco but the Abaco situation appeared to afford an opportunity for Oliver to develop and establish his form of government there.

Howard Handleman is a Diplomatic Editor for U.S. News and World Report and Andrew St. George is an independent writer. Mr. Muldoon described Handleman's interest as being identified with the apparent news value of the proposed Abaco project and that St. George's interest was to write a novel. Mr. Muldoon stated that apparently St. George had written something regarding the Central Intelligence Agency in the past and had been called before some Senate committee. Allegedly, investigation and questioning by this committee resulted in St. George admitting that what he had written had been completely made up by him and had

no basis in truth or fact. Muldoon pointed out that with respect to WerBell and Oliver, WerBell's interest in Abaco was purely the profits he could make should Abaco's independence become a reality. He would have a "lock" on several thousand acres and on it he would build casinos and other profitable type operations. Oliver's interest, on the other hand, was idealistic and Mr. Muldoon believes that Oliver was exploited by WerBell with respect to the Abaco project, accepting and using his funding freely.

At this meeting a history of Abaco was related by WerBell III from its original settlement by political refugees from the American Revolution. Abaco, at the time independence from England was being sought by the Bahamas, wished to remain a crown colony. After independence was gained, Abaco has apparently been seeking independence from the Bahamian Government currently headed by Prime Minister Pindling. It was apparent at this meeting that the Washington office that Mr. Muldoon and Mr. Morrissey were manning was to be the base of operation for the Abaco project.

Apparently there were two organizations identified by WerBell, "Abaco Independence Movement" and "Friends of Abaco", who together with WerBell, et al., were pushing to break away from the Bahamian Government. Oliver, ~~it was learned, became interested between~~ the time the original independence was granted to the Bahamas and ~~knowledge of the current efforts to gain independence from the Government~~ of the Bahamas. According to Muldoon and stated earlier, Oliver did

not care "where", he just wanted to find a country where he could establish his own constitution. Muldoon pointed out that while Oliver might be a little "flakey", he seemed completely legitimate and dedicated to his idealistic principals.

According to Mr. Muldoon, Security Consultants International (which was Mr. Muldoon) was to make certain feasibility studies in the economic and political areas concerning Abaco's potential as an independent country and make other comparative studies, etc., including research at the U.N. and possibly various Government agencies to determine how similar problems had been handled. The client of this study was to be the "Atlas Corporation" of Carson City, Nevada, which allegedly belonged to Mike Oliver. Muldoon stated that he never actually performed any activity connected in any way with the Abaco project.

Mr. Muldoon stated that he understood that the only materials WerBell, et al., had sent to Abaco were medical supplies, books, etc., which the Government of the Bahamas was not furnishing and the lack of it was allegedly causing health and social problems in Abaco. Apparently the question of whether arms were being sent to Abaco came up and WerBell stated that everything they were doing was above board and that "everyone including Pindling knew about it". It should be noted, according to Muldoon, Mr. WerBell's stated interest in Abaco was that he was afraid they were going Communist which he was trying to prevent.

Mr. Muldoon stated that he immediately reported the results of this meeting to the Central Intelligence Agency in writing but did not maintain a copy. He furnished the writer, however, a copy of a report he furnished the Central Intelligence Agency dated June 18, 1974, which is attached.

Mr. Muldoon stated that he withdrew completely from the Abaco plan on June 18, 1974. Mr. Muldoon stated that he was losing money functioning on a "percentage of sales basis" and advised the Atlanta group that he would need at least a salary of \$1,000 a month plus \$1,000 in expenses. He received one payment of \$1,000, closed the office and got rid of the apartment shortly before the end of June, 1974.

Mr. Muldoon was aware of the fact that an individual he knows named Walter Mekham<sup>x</sup> (phonetic) went to Abaco for the Atlanta group; spent approximately 2 weeks there and wrote a report. The interest of Oliver in the project stopped in July or August, 1974, and his activities from June on are unknown to him.

During the period that Mr. Muldoon was associated with the Central Investigative Agency, a drastic disagreement developed between Howard Gibson and Messrs. Bayard, WerBell III and WerBell IV. Mr. Muldoon received a call from Gibson during this period stating that he had been contacted by a Mr. Phillip Manuel<sup>x</sup> who stated he wanted to talk to him. Gibson, according to Muldoon, either wrongfully assumed or



DATE: 11-14-2017

deliberately concluded that Manuel's interest pertained to the Abaco project. As it turned out, Phillip Manuel, Senate Investigation Committee, had WerBell III called before the Jackson Sub-Committee and quizzed him with respect to a trip he had taken to Costa Rico to visit Robert Vesco. According to Mr. Muldoon, WerBell III's trip to Costa Rico was apparently to seek the backing and assistance of Vesco and having WerBell III set up and to produce machine guns which he could then more freely sell by not being inhibited by the U.S. Department of State. Apparently this never materialized. Also, "half-way through the testimony of WerBell III", WerBell IV was indicted on charges developed by the Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms Division of the IRS for a violation involving a machine gun. This indictment caused WerBell III to refuse to testify having not refused to testify by way of the Fifth Amendment privilege up to this point. According to Mr. Muldoon the Jackson Committee is quite upset over what they considered a "quick indictment" causing the aforementioned problem and are trying to learn just what happened.

Mr. Muldoon stated that prior to severing completely the end of June with WerBell, et al., he had received a call from Conien asking him if he had ever done anything regarding the Abaco project. He advised Conien that he had not and Conien told him to "get out immediately" as there was an investigation going on which Muldoon concluded on the basis of Conien's conversation was being conducted by the Department of Justice. Conien indicated to Muldoon on this occasion that an investigator was either there or Conien's office or had just left.

6 In reconstructing this situation, Muldoon is now convinced that Conien's call to him was prompted by a visit from one Steve Van Cleve whose company, Intelligence Services Limited, was situated in Atlanta. Van Cleve is a friend of Conien's. Mr. Muldoon is aware of the fact that Van Cleve visited the Washington office of Security Consultants International and accidentally walked into a meeting of WerBell, et al., (Mr. Muldoon was not present) at which the Abaco project was being discussed. Van Cleve, according to Muldoon's theory, being a friend of Conien's and knowing Conien's relationship to WerBell, immediately went to Conien to see if he was involved. Van Cleve was convinced from what little he knew that there was "going to be trouble" and encouraged Conien "to get out" if he was "in". This is when, according to Muldoon, Conien apparently called him encouraging him to "get out" indicating that an investigation was under way by the Department of Justice.

Mr. Muldoon advised that Gibson, as indicated earlier, was "out to get" WerBell and in fact, telephonically contacted him, Muldoon, and offered money to spy on WerBell, et al., in connection with the Abaco project. He later learned Gibson had made a similar offer to Conien and both of them refused the offer. Muldoon later learned that Gibson had taped both conversations. He also believes that Gibson had also been responsible for indicating to Van Cleve that WerBell, et al., were engaged in illegal activities with respect to the Abaco project and were, in fact, principally engaged in shipping arms there. It should be

noted that Gibson now works for Van Cleve. At the time Gibson made the \$250,000 offer to Muldoon he indicated that the WerBell group were shipping arms to Abaco and either had or would eventually break the law in some way. Muldoon stated that he confronted WerBell with this information and WerBell laughed, said that they were "absolute" not shipping arms and were in no way involved in any illegal activities.

With respect to Gibson, Mr. Muldoon had also heard that Gibson had stated that he, Muldoon, was receiving \$1,000 a month plus \$1,000 expenses in connection with the Abaco project. Muldoon stated, as previously reported, that this was absolutely not true and that this financial arrangement, while agreed to at about the time the Abaco project started, was due to the fact that he was "starving" on the percentage of sales arrangement.

Muldoon also was asked if there were any other individuals involved in the Abaco project that he had met or was aware of that he had not already identified during our two interviews. After thinking for a few moments he stated he could think of no others. He was also asked if during this period he had met or had identified to him any individuals whom he would consider unsavory in that they had criminal records or in other ways been involved in problems. He stated the only one that he could think of was Gibson whom he understood had some difficulty in Georgia during his tenure as a State Trooper. At this point, he also considers WerBell to be what could be considered an unsavory character. He did recall two individuals who were top officers of Holiday Spas who were interested in participating in the Abaco project on the basis of

having read Oliver's book and having a belief in his philosophy.

In conclusion Mr. Muldoon stated that it was obvious to him that WerBell III, Lord Bellehaven, Oliver, et al., were convinced, at least in their own minds, that if independence was gained by Waco, they would actually run the country.

On June 11, 1974, a meeting was held between myself, Col. William (Retired), and Mitchell WerBell III in the Washington office of Security Consultants International Inc. (SCI). The office is located in Suite 1100, 1022 Connecticut Ave. Washington D.C. 20036. Both WerBell and Bayard are officers of SCI and I am the SCI Washington representative. It was proposed at this meeting that SCI take on as a client, the "Atlas Corporation" of Carson City, Nevada. This corporation supposedly belongs to one Mike Oliver. Mr. Oliver, as mentioned in my previous report, is one of a group of people interested in assisting those individuals on the island of Abaco in the Bahamas who wish to obtain independence from the Pindling Government. The purported reason that Atlas Corporation wants to hire SCI is to have SCI A). conduct feasibility studies in the economic and political areas concerning the viability potential for Abaco as an independent country, such studies to be compiled from information collected both in Abaco itself and in the United States; B). Do a comparative study on the Abaco and Biafra situations by researching the United Nations' handling of the Biafra problem; C). Research the UN's handling of any and all similar problems; D). prepare a study from information compiled in Abaco as to the actual intent of the people of Abaco regarding independence, i.e. is it only the White minority, the Black majority, or a combined majority of the people of Abaco who desire independence; and E). advise Atlas Corporation as a result of the findings contained in A through D above, as to the desirability of providing financial and moral support to the people of Abaco.

2. On the night and early morning of Wednesday 12 June and Thursday 13 June a meeting was held in the hotel room of Mike Oliver at the Grammercy Inn Hotel in Washington. The meeting had started at about 10:00 P.M. and I joined the meeting about 11:30 P.M. Already present at the meeting were WerBell, Bayard, Oliver and Andrew St. George (mentioned in my previous report). At this meeting Oliver stated that the "Abaco Independence Movement" (AIM) was planning to hold a plebiscite of sorts on 28 June 1974, at which time the approximately 3,000 registered voters on Abaco would be asked to indicate their intent in either remaining under the Pindling Government or seeking independence via an appeal to the UN. AIM was described as the group physically located on Abaco pushing for independence and the name Chuck Hall was mentioned as one of, if not the, leader of AIM. I asked and was told that "yes, Pindling is aware of AIM and also Chuck Hall's connection with AIM". Also mentioned as one of the people physically located in Abaco and involved in the movement was a Captain Sawyer from Green Turtle Key. Areas where AIM had strong support were identified as Marsh Harbor (1,000 members) and Hopetown, Elbow Key, where residents are supposedly very enthusiastic about independence. Another person mentioned was a Scot named Colin Mitchell (aka "Mad Mitch"). I am not sure where he is located at present. Another group mentioned by Oliver was the "Friends of Abaco". This group evidently is based in Miami. It was this group, according to Oliver, that first approached Oliver some one or two years ago and requested his assistance. Since that time he has provided financial support to the Abacoans in the form of writing paper, pencils and pens, books and medical supplies. I assume that Lord and Lady Bellhaven (mentioned in my earlier report) are members of the "Friends of Abaco" as is Oliver now.

3. At about 12:30 or 1:00 A.M. Thursday 13 June, two more men joined the meeting. They were introduced as Frank Bond and Norman Pessin, Chairman of the Board and President respectively, of Holiday Universal, a health club/spa organization. They drove to the meeting in Baltimore where, presumably, their corporate offices are located. They were given a "backgrounder" on Abaco, AIM, etc. and then proceeded to ask questions of those in attendance as to individual reasons for interest in Abaco and its independence. It seems that they both had contacted me as a result xxx of reading Oliver's book "A NEW CONSTITUTION FOR A NEW COUNTRY" (copy attached) published in Nevada in 1968. In talking with Frank Bond I discovered that he considers himself a "LIBERTINE" whatever that is. Evidently Bond and Pessin are interested in Oliver's concept of creating a "true, Free-Enterprise, Republic" somewhere in the world and were contemplating providing financial backing to Oliver for establishing this new country in Abaco if Oliver and friends could swing independence for Abaco. My understanding from WerBell later, was that both men agreed to provide certain amounts (I was not told how much) of money to continue the program being conducted by Oliver et. al.

4. During the briefing of Bond and Pessin, introductions were made of all present. I was introduced as Washington representative of SCI and also a former C.I.A. employee. At that point I made an issue of the fact that although I was a former C.I.A. employee, there was no connection between myself and/or others present at the meeting, and the C.I.A. This was confirmed, emphatically, by WerBell and also Bayard, who also pointed out that he was retired U.S. Army and that neither was the U.S. Army in any way involved. (NOTE: Neither Bond nor Pessin seemed to really care one way or the other.) The meeting broke up at about 3:30 A.M.

5. During the meeting of 12-13 June and another held in the SCI office on 13 June during most of the day, the question was asked by myself and others as to xxx whether or not anything involved in this project might be, or be considered, illegal. I was assured by WerBell, Bayard and Oliver that A) everything was completely open and above-board; 2) there was no intent of a military-type revolution; no guns had been or were going to be introduced into Abaco; 3) those involved did not care who knew what they were doing, including Pindling; and 4) they would even welcome my telling the C.I.A. everything I knew about it. (NOTE: This latter comment, regarding C.I.A. was made to me Thursday evening by WerBell and Bayard with nobody else present.

6. On Friday 14 June I became aware that some Federal

6. On Friday I became aware that some Federal Agency was conducting an investigation on some of the people involved in this ABACO deal. The main area of investigation seems to center around alledged gun smuggling to ABACO and the smuggling of some 25,000 cases of whiskey to ABACO. Supposedly some people involved with AIM or the "Friends of ABACO" have also been trying to imply that the C.I.A. is backing this independence movement. In this regard they "reportedly" have been throwing my name around as well as that of Lou Conein and other former and even present C.I.A. employees. This has supposedly taken place in Washington, Atlanta, Georgia and Miami. Evidently they are at least implying that the C.I.A. is or must be backing this thing and they have very important contacts in Washington closely connected with C.I.A. One thing that is not clear to me is who "They" are. "They" might be WerBell and company or "They" might be enemies of WerBell and company.
7. The cast of characters as I now know them are as follows:
  - A. Mike Oliver: As described in my previous report and who is evidently looking to ABACO as a testing ground for his "New Constitution for a New Country".
  - B. Mitchell WerBell: As described in my previous report and obviously in this thing for as much money as he can make. This especially so if ABACO becomes independent and he gets a voice in the new government. He was in OSS in China in 1945.
  - C. Colonel Robert Bayard, U.S. Army (Retired): A partner of WerBell and also in it strictly for the money. He was the former Chief of Staff to the Commanding General, MACG Indo-China from 1952-1953.
  - D. Andrew St. GEorge: A writer, as described in my previous report, who works on a retainer basis for WerBell and is used to generate publicity and is paid for these servings.
  - E. Lord and Lady BellHaven: As described in my previous report. Evidently Lord BellHaven made his ABACO comment to the House of Lords on 11, 12, or 13 June. A copy of their equivalent to our "Congressional Record" should provide what was debated on the issue.
  - F. Chuck Hall: No info other than reported in paragraph two above.
  - G. Captain Sawyer: No info other than reported in paragraph two above.
  - H. Colin Mitchell: No info other than reported in paragraph two above.
  - I. Frank Bond: No info other than reported in paragraph three above.
  - J. Norman Pessin: No info other than reported in paragraph three above.
8. At the present time I have informed WerBell and Bayard that I will have nothing to do with this deal unless or until they can show me something in writing from either or both the U.S. Justice Department and U.S. State Department to the effect that what they are asking me to do is legal and not considered to be "Not in the best interests of the U.S. G.". They are now preparing to obtain such documentation and as



DATE: 11-14-2017

first step Ryard has checked with the Adjutant General (Army) office in Atlanta who have told him he is "clean" and has no legal problems engaging in this particular activity.



THE ATLANTA CONSTITUTION, Friday, Nov. 3, 1971

## WerBell Says Arrest Made To Stop Senate Testimony

Mitchell WerBell IV, the son of a Cobb County munitions dealer, has asked the U. S. District Court here to dismiss charges filed by the Justice department.

In a motion filed with the court, the younger WerBell alleges that the Central Intelligence Agency, the U. S. Department of State and the U. S. Department of the Treasury conspired with the U. S. Justice department to keep him from testifying before a U. S. Senate Committee.

He said he can prove that the agencies were concerned he would reveal embarrassing information if he appeared before Sen. Henry Jackson's government investigations committee and therefore had him arrested so he could not testify.

WerBell has been charged with trying to sell 2,000 machine guns without State department approval.

DATE: 11-14-2017

WETA

WETA-TV, Monday, Oct. 14, 1974

# 'WE'RE VERY LOYAL AMERICANS'—WER

By KEN WILLIS

Mitchell L. WerBell III is a Cobb County munitions dealer who is certain his family is unjustly being harmed in an attempt to catch fugitive financier Robert Vesco.

He is a family man, proud to note that his father, grandfather and great-grandfather all were Russian soldiers—and that he followed in the noble tradition of soldiering by serving in the U. S. Army in World War II.

WerBell is also proud of his international contacts his father helped him establish. His father toured the world in the 1930s and 40s seeking support for a Russian royalist overthrow of the Soviets. He took his son along.

But what is more important for WerBell and his family these days is that he believes he is a loyal American who abides by the rules of the U. S. State department in his business.

In the past few days, his son, Mitchell IV, has been in-

dicted on charges he illegally conspired to sell 2,000 machine guns to an unnamed buyer. And a U. S. Senate subcommittee last week was told that financier Vesco attempted to purchase 2,000 machine guns from Mitchell III.

He has said there is a connection between the machine guns cited in the alleged proposed sale to Vesco and the indictment of his son.

The two WerBells are among the principal owners of Defense Systems International Inc., which sells weapons to foreign governments and domestic police officials.

The firm has agents in 22 countries, including some in Central and South America and Southeast Asia. They arrange sales of a variety of weapons, such as M16 machine guns and howitzers.

One of the WerBells' main customers is the U. S. State department, plus some more sophisticated firms. It must approve any sales to for-

eign governments the private firms arrange.

This is where WerBell is confident his son will be cleared of charges, and he will be cleared of implications in the Vesco affair.

"We always have done everything in accordance with the munitions export laws," WerBell said. "We're very loyal Americans."

WerBell's present troubles apparently stem from his efforts to sell some 2,000 submachine guns with silencers he obtained in a settlement with Military Armaments Inc. of Marietta about two years ago.

WerBell, instrumental in developing the company's product line of M19 submachine guns, split with the company and was given the guns instead of money, he said.

In trying to sell the guns, WerBell has told Senate investigators he met with Vesco in Costa Rica in April.

Vesco fled to Costa Rica to avoid arrest under an indictment charging him with contributing to former President Nixon's reelection campaign in an attempt to influence a federal investigation of the financier.

However, no one has said a purchase of any size occurred, and WerBell resents the link. If he or his son have sold guns to Vesco, they might have violated State department regulations by supporting revolutionaries and not obtaining permission.

WerBell conceded that his type of business lends itself to intrigues that raise eyebrows and could easily be misunderstood.

"I guess we've met everybody in all kinds of places, but we haven't met Howard Hughes in the Bahamas yet," WerBell said.

His home on Ga. 280 near Powder Springs adds to the intrigue. Fronted by a large pond and surrounded on the other sides by 60 acres of woods, the place is accessible to vehicles by only one driveway.

The driveway is blocked by an electronic fence, passable only after the visitor has phoned into the house on a special telephone beside the gate.

And the visitor is greeted by a squad of dogs, some big and mean and others small and harmless, upon arriving at the sprawling stone house.

WerBell had the home built for his family—which was to include six children—when he and his wife moved to the Atlanta area shortly after World War II. He became advertising director of Rich's.

Within a few years, he started his own international public relations business, utilizing the contacts he made traveling with his father and as a soldier.

Then, in 1947, he started the full-time business of developing silencers, rocketry and other weapons, mixing his international public relations talents with his knowledge of weapons.

He loves guns and silencers. The walls of his den are decorated with them and with sabers taken from an old German castle his family used to own.

He also loves his travels. As an adviser to foreign governments on weapons, WerBell knows more about the arms race than about his neighbors.

The most recent rev for WerBell was a "They've got a funny way over there," he said, past regime, which is about two months ago. He received a lot of munitions. But they didn't do other things. Now the Greek is almost bereft of all weapons.

Greece, he noted, is really in a tight spot over Cyprus and is now to buy from all the salesmen it can find.

He considers his noble. "The best way to vent was to have a lot of power," he said. He is playing arms dealer again that balance sheet. But this man, who is 40 years in Indonesia and Southeast Asia, during the Vietnam war, admits the old blood gets to him. "I got mixed up in war," he said. "But I don't like for other people."

DATE: 11-14-2017

WERBEL

2-A THE ATLANTA CONSTITUTION, Thurs., Oct. 3, 1974

## 2,000 MACHINE GUNS

2 Face Arms  
Dealing Charges

By PAUL WEST

Two Cobb County munitions dealers were indicted by a federal grand jury Wednesday on charges they illegally conspired to sell 2,000 lightweight machine guns with silencers.

The pair, Mitchell L. WerBell IV, 25, and Howard E. Herndon, 53, were arrested last Saturday by federal agents when they sold seven hand-held machine guns and four silencers for \$1,200 at a DeKalb County motel.

Also named in the indictment was Defense Services Co., the Powder Springs munitions firm operated by WerBell and his father, Mitchell L. WerBell III, an armaments expert once linked to an aborted attempt by mercenaries to invade Haiti and set up an anti-Castro base there.

Young WerBell and Herndon face possible jail terms of 25 years, fines of \$25,000 or both.

WerBell was released on a recognizance bond and Herndon was freed on a \$5,000 bond following their arrest last Saturday.

Justice department officials here refused to say who was to have been the recipient of the 2,000 guns and silencers.

But the elder WerBell, contacted at his home Wednesday, charged that his son had been "set up" by federal agents.

WerBell said agents of the U.S. Treasury department's Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) division had posed as representatives of an

unnamed foreign government in arranging the illegal gun purchase.

WerBell, who has just returned from a trip to Greece and Cyprus, said the government was guilty of "entrapment" and that his son would fight the criminal charges "all the way."

According to the indictment filed Wednesday in open court before U.S. District Judge Newell Edensfield, Herndon met with a prospective gun buyer Sept. 17 at Cannon's Lounge on Piedmont Avenue. There Herndon allegedly displayed a Defense Services Co. brochure describing the machine gun and discussed the price of a proposed 2,000-gun purchase with the unnamed buyer.

The elder WerBell said Wednesday he did not know who Herndon was but that he was not an employee of Defense Services. Federal authorities refused to give any information about Herndon's identity.

Two days after the first meeting, Herndon again met with the unnamed buyer and said he had arranged to transfer six Ingram Model M-10 5mm fully-automatic guns and three silencers for \$1,400, the indictment alleges.

The actual transfer took place last Saturday at the Travelodge motel at the North Druid Hills interchange of I-25 in DeKalb County.

There, Herndon and WerBell allegedly sold the seven machine guns and four silencers for \$1,200, the indictment charges. Because a \$200 transfer tax required by law in such transactions was allegedly not paid, Herndon and WerBell were placed under arrest.

WerBell and Herndon are now free on bond.

The elder WerBell admitted Wednesday that the meeting had taken place but differed sharply with the government's description of the rendezvous.

WerBell said his son met ATF agent Robert Fink at the motel and agreed to let the agent examine the machine gun. When young WerBell complied with the agent's request to leave the motel room for a moment, he was placed under arrest by agents waiting outside.

Under federal law, U.S. Treasury agents must be notified when sales of such firearms take place and the \$200 transfer tax must be paid. Herndon, WerBell and Defense Services Co. were indicted on one count of failing to pay the tax and another of failing to notify government officials of the arms deal.

WerBell said no gun sale actually took place and therefore his son was not guilty of failing to pay the tax.

Defense Services Co. is a munitions importer, exporter and manufacturer. The elder WerBell invented the rubber-coated silencer used with the Ingram Model M-10 machine gun.

The silencers are so effective, one arms expert said, that "all you hear is the click of the round being chambered."

WerBell said his firm only sells machine guns to police and other law enforcement agencies.

The DeKalb County police are among the law enforcement agencies that use the model machine gun involved in the WerBell-Herndon case, federal officials said Wednesday.

The elder WerBell said such weapons are only used by police in "extreme emergencies" and that the silencers are added to prevent sound when the machine guns are fired.

The machine guns reportedly similar to which the elder WerBell allegedly supplied to exiles attempting to overthrow anti-Castro military forces.

The government charges against WerBell after earlier charges against him with conspiring to launch a federal law suit against a friendly nation.

In 1969, the Air Force two shipments of guns and other weapons shipped to from South Vietnam, said at the time the was intended for a museum at Eglin Air Base in Florida.

WerBell, 53, lives on a 100-acre tract three miles from Powder Springs. The tract includes a gun laboratory, firing range and a grounds.

Mitchell L. WerBell

The Atlanta Journal Thursday, October 3, 1974

## ~~FACT CHARGED~~ Gun Indictment Cites Firm, Men

A Powder Springs weapons import company and two individuals have been indicted by a federal grand jury for allegedly agreeing to sell 2,000 machine guns without paying the federal transfer tax or reporting the sale to the government.

Named in the three-count indictment are Defense Services Co., Mitchell Livingston WerBell IV, a partner in the firm, and Howard Emmett Herndon. Federal authorities said it is not known if Herndon has previous affiliation with the firm.

Herndon met a "transferee" at a Piedmont Avenue tavern and agreed to sell 2,000 Ingram Model M-10 9mm automatic machine guns, the indictment states. The U.S. Attorney's office would not identify the "transferee," however, the case was prepared by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

Later, seven of the guns and four silencers were sold to the "transferee" as a sample of the lot for \$1,200, the indictment states. Herndon and WerBell met the buyer at a DeKalb County motel to make the sale, the charges state.

All three defendants are charged with one count of conspiring to violate federal firearms laws, one count of selling the guns without reporting the sale to the U.S. Department of Treasury as required by law, and a third count of failure to pay the transfer tax.

The conspiracy count is punishable by a maximum penalty of a \$5,000 fine and five years imprisonment and the second and third counts carry penalties of up to \$10,000 and 10 years.

WerBell owns one-third of the gun import business, in which his father is also a partner, according to federal officials.

THE ATLANTIC CONSTITUTION, Wed., June 13, 1963

# Red Takeover Is Feared for Free Bahamas

By The Associated Press

A British member of Parliament and an American arms manufacturer said Tuesday they fear a Communist takeover in the Caribbean after the Bahama Islands become independent on July 10.

Col. Colin "Mad" Mitchell and Mitchell L. WerBell III commented in interviews at WerBell's arms testing grounds 20 miles north of Atlanta, where Mitchell was a temporary house guest.

Mitchell planned to fly Wednesday to the 850-square-mile island off Abaco in the Bahamas Islands, which is opposing the independence that will come on July 10 to the British crown colony of the Bahamas.

Neither Mitchell nor WerBell would talk to newsmen about rumors of a possible revolt by the tiny island from the Bahamian government.

But WerBell commented during a cocktail party that "if they have a revolt, I'll help 'em," and he used a string of expletives to describe Bahamian Prime Minister Lynden O. Pindling.

Mitchell said his mission to the tiny island of 6,500 people about 150 miles east of Florida will be to determine whether the Bahamian government can remain secure.

The one-time commander of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders regiments of the British Army said he is primarily concerned about a power vacuum once the British leave the islands.

"People say that Communist rule comes by default," he said. "If you leave a power vacuum, somebody's got to fill it."

But Mitchell said he would be "very, very surprised" if Abaco's desire to remain loyal to the British crown would result in armed conflict.

"Provided they are given proper political expression," Mitchell said, the Abaco residents probably would not resort to warfare.

"But if there is coercion," he said, "in six to eight months I think we'd see something."

WerBell, who insisted he is not providing arms to the Abacoans or the Irish Republican Army fighting in Ireland, said the possibility that Communism may take over the 700-island chain is "absolutely my prime interest."

He said he has arms for two brigades — about 2,500 persons — and can field an army if he feels it is necessary to fight for one side or another.

"In this world there are people who should be granted the right of self-determination," WerBell said. "I don't care if it's a village in North Georgia and they want to make rugs. I have fought all my life at my own expense — as I see it — for the rights of people."

He said Pendling is "a no-good, cheap crook" catering to American financier Robert Vesco — implicated in the Watergate scandal and who is reported to be hiding in the Bahamas.

He added that Pendling "is a no-good Jamaican," and also called him "a nigger."

WERBE

OCT 25 1971 7-A

BY INVERTED DEALER

# Atlantan Accused in Gun Case

By PAUL WEST

An Atlanta man was free on bond Thursday night after being accused of theft by deception in connection with the indictment last month of Cobb County munitions dealer Mitchell L. WerBell IV.

H. Anthony Emerick was released by DeKalb County authorities Thursday afternoon after being served with a warrant sworn. WerBell charges that Emerick was the third charging Emerick with taking part in a plot to trap our last week by WerBell the arms dealer.

WerBell charges that Emerick was the third man present at a DeKalb motel last month in which an alleged illegal arms transaction involving the sale of 2,000 sub-machine guns with silencers took place.

According to WerBell, Emerick was hired by the Treasury Department's Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms division to pose as a machine-gun buyer for an unnamed foreign government.

WerBell was indicted by a federal grand jury last month on charges he attempted to

sell the 2,000 machine guns to an unnamed buyer in violation of federal laws requiring gun dealers to notify the government when such transactions are made.

Following the arrest of WerBell, 21, his father refused to testify before a Senate subcommittee investigating an alleged attempt by fugitive financier Robert Vesco to set up an arms factory in Costa Rica.

Mitchell L. WerBell III took the 5th Amendment during WerBell's charge that Emerick

acted as an agent of the government in "trapping" young WerBell.

"We never make any comment one way or the other in these cases," said E. D. (Ed) Hughes, assistant director of the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms office in Atlanta.

The warrant served on Emerick Thursday charges that he obtained machine guns from young WerBell "by deceitful means with the intention of depriving (WerBell) of such guns."

Emerick could not be reached for comment.

The Treasury department refused comment Thursday on

hearings before Sen. Henry M. Jackson's investigations committee on the grounds that his testimony could affect the trial of his son.

Senate investigators revealed, after following WerBell's refusal to testify, that Justice department officials had directed an immediate indictment of young WerBell in the arms case, leading to speculation that the action was aimed at preventing the elder WerBell from testifying in the Vesco affair.