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Transcript of interview. Box 243.

Interview of: Leander D'Avy

Interviewed by: Belford Lawson, Jack Moriarty

Date: June 23, 1977

Location: Rm. 3311, House Annex #2

B: Aaah, I'm Staff Counsel Belford Lawson, with the Kennedy Task Force, this is Jack Moriarty. Do you want to identify yourself for the tape, Jack?

M: I'm Jack Moriarty, an investigator on the Kennedy Task Force. We're here room #3311 of the #2 Annex Bldg. for the U.S. House of Representatives, interviewing a Mr. Leander D'Avy, whose has responded here from DeRidder, La. in response to what appears to be an anonymous phone call from a lady inviting him to report to Mr. Stokes' office. He reported last night and he's still here this morning.

B: Why don't you identify yourself for the tape, Mr. D'Avy.

D: My name is Leander D'Avy, I'm from Louisiana, and I have some information on the Kennedy assassination.

B: Ok. Do you consent to tell us everything that you're going to tell us on this tape?

D: Yes sir, and I'll even take a polygraph test if you want me to.

B: Ok, so, no one has forced you to do this against your will, you're doing it very much of your own will? (double voice)

D: Very much of my own, my own.

B: OK, very good. So go ahead, you can tell us anything you like.

D: Well, in 1960, I retired out of the Air Force, after 20 years, 3 months and 13 days. And I went to work at the Court of Two Sisters in New Orleans, on Burger St. as a doorman. And in 1962, this young man walks up to me and he asks me if there was a Clay Burtrand working there. I told him I don't know any Clay Burtrand working here, and at the same time, the night manager, Gene Davis was in the tavern and I, ah, said - Gene, do we have a Clay Bertrand working here? And Gene said - send the young man in here, I'll talk to him. Just like that. So I sent him

on in, about an hour later the young man walks out, Gene Davis comes up to the door where I'm standing, talks to one of the waitresses in there, and he says, - see that young man? He's just come from behind the Iron Curtain. Well, I didn't put no assassination n'that together - it hadn't happened yet, and I didn't pay no attention to it. So, well, went on, and also about two years, I mean about 2 weeks before the assassination, I was called one Saturday morning to go pick up my check. I walked into the, ah, Court - Court is the Patio Restaurant - the Court of Two Sisters.

B: What's the name of the restaurant?

D: The Court of Two Sisters.

B: OK

D: It's a patio restaurant. I walked into the patio, and there's a little veranda up there, I walked up there about, I'd say about 25' off the ground.

B: Now you're talking about two weeks before the assassination?

D: Right. And, ah, I went up there to pick up my check, so then I asked where Gene Davis was, they said - he's up there in the store room. So, I went up there, and it wasn't no store room, they had a stove, had a little apartment up there, had a bed in it, had five men in it. One of them was Lee Harvey Oswald, I recognized him after the assassination, you know. He was laying across the bed, and one of them was David Ferrie, the pilot of the plane that committed suicide. I'd seen David come into the Court of Two Sisters with a Cuban friend, quite often, and there was a bunch of Cubans working at the Court of Two Sisters at the time, and, well, and there's some guys like Harold Sandors, he owns a restaurant over in ah, Grand Isle (?), La. Now he used to be a bum on Bourbon St. But he was with this Cuban Pepe, they would go, every night they'd go around, walk around, go to these Cuban places, and then all of a sudden, I think Pepe and Harold was looking for somebody, at the time. Anyhow, about two weeks before the assassination, I went on to get my check, to get back on my story again, and ah, I'm rambling now because I've been up all night.

B: It's all right, go ahead.

D: So, ah, I went down to get my check and show me (indistinguish and there was a guy, young guy that showed me a picture, and I recognized the guy, too. He had on, had on, had on, a, a, a, seaman outfit, khaki pants, seaman's cap, and whiskers on his face. And he, I told him, I says, I've seen that guy before,

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I didn't te-, I didn't know it at the time, ah, I clean forgot, I wasn't thinking about the meeting, you know, this was in '68, this part. Anyhow, this guy made some kind of remark to me, and I can't remember what it was, and it's an important remark. But I can't remember what it was.

B: When, now, are you saying this guy was at the meeting?

D: Yeah.

B: Were you saying that the Cuban Pepe and the guy Sandos were at the meeting, also?

D: No, they weren't there.

B: I see.

D: But Gene Davis was up there with him, so in 1968, when I went home to Appaloosa to visit my mother, see, I, I, I, did-, I forgot about everything, you know, and, ah, didn't think about it, you know, but I didn't think people there was involved in anything like that, at first. So, I got to thinking, and I read in my home town paper, The Appaloosus Daily World, which is a local paper, that - it had a picture of Gene Davis on the back - he was in the paper, wanting to call his attorney. But Jim Garrison had him in his office, asking him about, if he knew a man named Clay Bertrand, and asking him questions, you know. And Gene Davis denied, according to the news, denied knowing or ever hearing of Clay Bertrand, or hearing of Lee, ever seeing Lee Harvey Oswald. So, me, I go back to Jackson, Miss., where I was living, I called Andy DeShambra, a friend of mine that was working at the time as an Assistant to Jim Garrison. I told Andy what I knew. Andy paid my bus fare from Jackson, Miss., to New Orleans, put my up for two nights in the Fountainbleu Motor Hotel, and, and, and I, you know, and I ate there and everything. And they paid it. Because they wanted it all on tape. And he ah,

B: Let's stretch it back now, you said there were five people at this meeting?

D: Yeah. Gene Davis is in on the conspiracy, all the way.

B: Oswald, Ferrie, and this guy with whiskers?

D: Yeah, an

B: Do you remember who the other two were?

D: No, I don't, but I seen pictures of them.

B: Oh, you have.

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D: Mm, I've seen pictures of 'em in ah, the ah, Inquirer, I believe it was, but it showed, it showed three guys running - the, the little one, the little one in that picture was the guy that had the whiskers.

B: The tramps, you mean?

D: Yes.

M: Those are the only two pictures we have. (In background)

B: Oh, so you could identify

D: I could identify the three tramps.

B:all those three tramps.

D: Yes sir. Sure can.

M: Who were the other two tramps?

D: I don't know their names. All I know is I can identify 'em when I see 'em.

B: All right.

D: Because they were in that meeting, and Gene Davis denied knowing anything about anything like that. So when I went up to Jim Garrison's office, they had me call Gene Davis up at his - he now owns - he didn't even have a shirt on his back. I had to loan him a shirt sometimes, to work as the night manager there. He now owns a bar in New Orleans.

B: Gene Davis is a liar. (double voice)

D: Yeah. Oh, yeah, he's a liar.

B: Do you think Gene Davis knows the names of those other three guys?

D: I think Gene Davis is in on the conspiracy, all the way through.

M: What's the name of Gene Davis' bar, today?

D: I think it's the Ship-Ahoy, I'm not sure.

M: And where is it?

D: It's off of Bourbon St. in the Quarter.

B: Latin Quarter - French Quarter?

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D: French Quarter.

B: OK

D: And, so, ah, We called Gene Davis up, you know

M: Uh, Let me see if I understand one thing, Sir, with regard to these five people that were at the meeting, Lee Harvey Oswald, number one, Ferrie, number two,...

D: Gene Davis.

M: Gene Davis, number three.

D: Might have been six of them over there, but them other three was there, too.

M: And that tramp was number four...

D: Yeah.

M: The one tramp, with the whiskers...

D: Yeah.

M: Who was number five?

D: It was that big tall tramp.

M: The other tramp was number five.

D: Yeah, the tall tramp.

M: And is a third tramp involved?

D: I believe he was there, too, but I didn't see -- there was somebody -- I only seen five people. But there was somebody in the back of the kitchen. Because I heard somebody. I didn't stay in there long. He just handed me my check after the guy said something to me and I walked out.

M: And what was the exact location of this room, where they were?

D: It's, well, there's two doors, the two end doors on the veranda, it ends, you know, up there. And it's on a veranda, there's two end doors, you go in either one of them, you go right into it.

M: And they both lead into the room you're talking about?

D: Yeah.

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M: An how - roughly can you tell us when this was, if you remember.

D: This was about two weeks before - two or three weeks before the assassination, in 1963.

M: Two or three weeks before the assassination. Do you remember the day of the week? Was it like on a week-end, the middle of the week?

D: It was on a Saturday.

M: On a Saturday.

D: Because I went up there to get my check.

M: In the morning, or the afternoon, or

D: In the morning.

M: Saturday morning, two or three weeks

D: About 10 or 11 o'clock.

M: OK

D: 'Cause I can remember it now.

M: And, and, was that, were you supposed to walk in that room to get your check?

D: No

M: What, what, ah, how come you went in there?

D: Well, wa-, wa-, one of the, one of the waiters down there, I don't know if he knew what was going on, but he said Gene's up there in the store room. I thought it was a store room all the time (indistinguishable). And, ah, so I went up there, and there they were.

M: And, what happened

D: I knocked on the door and somebody said - come in. They must have been expecting someone else.

M: So what happened when you went in?

D: Well, when I went in, they all stopped talking and looked at this oth-, the -, and Oswald was just laying across the bed. And Gene, I said, Gene, I come to get my check, and this guy made some kind of crack about, it was something about my check.

D: (cont.)
And I - I wish I could remember what it was.

M: This was the little tramp.

D: Yeah, the little tramp, the one with the beard. He had a beard, at the time.

B: No mustache, just beard.

D: No mustache, just like, without a shave, you know.

M: Oswald was laying across the bed. Was he the only one laying across the bed?

D: Yean, and this Cuban fella that runned around, that ran around with David Ferrie?

M: Uh-huh.

D: He was sitting on the foot of the bed.

M: Did you recall his name? Did you recall?

D: No, I never....

M: Not Pepe?

D: No, not Pepe, no. This was another one.

M: How was Oswald dressed, I mean, he had clothes on, I guess?

D: Yeah, he had a sport shirt on.

M: Do you remember what color?

D: It was all the different colors of flowers.

M: How about his pants - dungarees or dress pants on or -

D: I think he wore white dungarees, white, white levis.

M: Uh-huh

D: And that's a long time ago, I'm trying to remember.

M: Yeah, I realize that. Did he sit up on the bed, when you came in, or did he stay lying down?

D: Uh, you know, uh, he wasn't laying down, he was leaning on his elbow, like this, on the bed, you know? Laying on the bed on his elbow.

M: Uh-huh

D: They were all talking when I walked in there.

M: What were they doing, I mean, could you see, from what you - when you were in the room, what they were doing, like a bunch of cards, or bottles of whiskey, or

D: No, they didn't have no whiskey up there that I saw.

M; AAH, any papers of brief cases or

D: I can't remember that far, I'll be honest.

M; You couldn't tell from what you saw, what they were doing?

D: No, but I can remember the faces. It was about nine years

M: And there were no women up there?

D: No women, no women.

M: Ah, everybody was bla-, uh, white, and nobody was black?

D: No black.

M: OK (pause)

M: All right. So anyway, Gene Davis has got a - he's got the Ship-Ahoy now, down in the French Quarter?

D: Yeah, I think that's the name of it.

M: Uh-huh, and it's a pretty big place, or a little place?

D; Uh, Uh, I don't know, I haven't seen - tell you what. when I went up to - when he saw me up there at Jim Garrison's office I knew it was going to get back to Paulus Marcelo or one of them, 'cause I'm talking. And my life won't be worth a plug nickel if they find out.

M: Uh-huh.

D: 'Cause I'd like to get it straight before they get them behind bars or something, or before they get ahold of me.

M; Yeah. B: Yeah. Where is he now?

M: Well, I think

D: 'Cause I - right then and there, I moved out of New Orleans, right the next day,...

M: Uh-huh.

D: I went, no, I, mean ah, Jackson, Miss. 'cause I was living in Jackson.

M: Did you ah, did you use your automobile to move?

D: Yeah

M: What kind of car did you have?

D: I had a old beat-up Chevrolet.

M: What year was that, do you recall?

D: '54 Chevy.

M: A '54 Chevy, and this was in 1963, it was about nine years old.

D: Right.

M: What kind - was it a station wagon, or a convertible?

D: No, no, a coupe.

M: A coupe, that's a two door?

D: Yeah, I just move-, I didn't move out of Jackson, I just moved from one ah, from an apartment I was living in to a house.

M: I see. What color was your two door coupe?

D: It was gray.

M: Gray, uh-huh, all right.

D: I remember that. Yes.

M: You were still married to your ex-wife then.

D: Yeah.

M: And what was her name?

D: Maxine Gill.

M: Maxine Gill. Where is she - where is Maxine now?

D: Living somewhere in Jackson, she's married again.

B: Do you know the name of the guy she married?

D: They tell me his name is Charles Williams. I don't know.

B: Charles Williams.

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M: Do you think, ah, why do you think that - you say that there was a Cuban guy who told you to do up to the room.

D: No, I don't know if he was a Cuban or not. I can't remember who it was.

M: You don't remember who it was?

D: Don't remember

M: Did waiter go up to the room with you? *I'm half blurry*

D: No, just told me, just told me, I said - where is Gene - and he say he's up there in the storeroom.

M: So what you're saying is, you went up there by yourself. Nobody else saw what you saw. *Monday*

D: Nobody else saw what I saw.

B: This was usually pay day, this Saturday was pay day?

M: I guess you had to go get your pay every Saturday. *Wanna*

D: Yeah, just about.

M: Did you ever go up in that room before?

D: No, that's the first time. Usually he was downstairs or something.

M: But it was usual that you would go to him wherever he was? Rather than go to a place, like the cashier, to pick up the check?

D: Yeah, he always carried 'em.

M: Always carried them. (pause) Incidentally, how much money did you make? *I figure now, I didn't figure then, but I figure*

D: Ten dollars a night. *there was somebody coming that they*

M: And did they pay you by check or in cash? *the Lewis' last*

D: They paid me cash.

M: Cash. Once a week.

D: Once a week. That's \$50.00 - I worked five days a week. Two days off, a week.

M: Were you going to get a check from them or were you going to get cash from them.

D: I got cash.

M: you got cash.

B: Did you get cash from him that day?

D: Yeah, yeah.

M: I see.

D: I said check a while ago, I meant cash. I'm half blurry.

M: What were your days off, the same ones all the time, or

D: Sunday and Monday.

M: All, every week, Sunday and Monday.

D: Yeah, right.

B: Who was ah, Gene's assistant?

D: Gene was the assistant. The main manager was Lewis Karno. and I don't know about him.

M: How do you spell Lewis' last name?

D: 'Cause I - I tell you what - in my whole time I worked here - twice I got fired by him, then he called back the next year to come back to work. By

M: By Lewis?

D: Yeah, Lewis Karno.

M: Ah, how do you spell his.....

D: I fig-, I figure now, I didn't figure then, but I figure now, that the reason that there was somebody coming that they didn't want me to see.

M: I see. I'm ah, I'm having a little trouble Lewis' last name.

D: K-a-r-n-o.

M: K-a-r-n-o, OK. Think he's still alive?

D: Oh, yeah.

M: Where is he, what's he doing now?

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D: The last I heard, some girl come from New Orleans to Opalooses (sounds like) that I knew.....

M; Uh-huh.

D: She told me that the whole gang, not the Cubans, but the other people that were working at the Court, at that time, are working at the 500 Club right now, Lewis is also there.

M: How large a gang do you think this is?

D: Oh, my goodness, they got Ms. T., they got Harold Tanenbaum, -

B: Hold it. Harold Tanenbaum? You say you got Mr. Key.

D: Ms. T.

B: Ms. T.

D: That's Mrs. Tanenbaum, she used to be married to Harold, but no more. They call her Ms. T., that's all I know.

B: You think all of them were in on it together, huh?

D: I don't believe the whole - I don't it was a consp-, a real conspiracy, right there.

B: Ah, what's Mrs. T's real name?

D: Ah, I don't know.

M: What'd they call her, everybody just called her Mrs. T.?

D: Ms. T.

M: Ms. T. OK.

D: She was the cashier - in the restaurant part.

M: OK. Ah, they're all working at the 500. What is the whole name of the 500?

D: That's it, the 500 Club.

M; The 500 Club.

D: It's a strip joint.

M; is that, is that

D: It's also owned by Carlos Marcelo.

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M: Is that, is that in the French Quarter, too?

D: Yeah. (pause) It's also on Bourbon St. (pause) And I'll tell you what happened. That night that I saw this Oswald, you know?

M: Uh-huh.

D: He went to the Show Bar and I didn't know it. They have a jam session there, you know, every, every ni-,

M: Show Bar.

D: Yeah. That's also owned by Carlos Marcelo.

M: That's still a third place now.

D: Yeah.

M: Mm-hm.

D: In fact, ever-, ev-, ever-, practically every joint on Bourbon St.

M: He probably owns them all down there.

D: I -, I'll tell you what happened. Every, ever-, every, ever-, every night I have to help carry - Ronnie Metranga (phonic) was the guy that picked all the money from this pin-ball machines, and all that. I'd carry sacks of coins that high into the office, man, and they were heavy.

B: And you carried them around from Club to Club, is that?

D: No, they's pick -, he'd, he'd go out and pick 'em up at all these stores, ah, you know, has these pin-ball machines in 'em.

M: Oh.

D: See, Carlos Marcelo owned, he owns right now, I'd say about 175 bars in the city of New Orleans.

M: How, now how do you know

D: You know, huh?

M: How do you know that?

D: I know because I found it out, I just found it out.

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M: Well, I mean, how? I, I don't - I'm not doubting your word but I just don't know how you - how you get this information.

D: I hear-, I heard Gene Davis and all them talking about all the bars they own.

M: Uh-huh.

D: Heard 'em talking. And ah, what was I gonna' say now?
(long pause)

M: Maybe you were going to tell us who else is in Gene Davis' group. In this gang, this Harold Tanenbaum, and Ms. T., and...

D: Oh, oh, no, but I can tell you, I can tell you - there was a bar - William Livesy, but he was in prison, he went to prison, for murdering a boy. Manslaughter, they called it.

M: William's last name, again?

D: William Livesy, L-i-v-e-s-y. Livesy. -s-a-y.

M: Uh-huh.

D: He, ah, he killed a boy by the name of - he-, here's the funny part about it, he killed a boy by the name of ah, Perry Tanenbaum. No relation to Harold, I don't think.

M: Uh-huh.

D: On this T - E thing. He was from Jacksonville, Fla.

M: Perry was.

D: Yeah. And this boy got into an argument about something in the Club, and killed him; hit him in the head with a chair. Before Perry died, I heard Perry say, myself, - Why did they do this? I'm one of them. I think they killed him because he was saying something he wasn't supposed to say. And, ah,

M: You think these people were working -- go ahead.

D: Well, there was a bunch of other young, young hoodlums that come into the Court of Two Sisters that just, just, the-, th-, they carried guns, too. In their holsters. And they were young boys, like, like, like ex-G.I. age, or something like that.

M: Do you think this conspiracy to kill Kennedy was working for Marcelo?

D: Well, I tell you what, you do - Marcelo - now, before President Kennedy became President, when he was a Senator, if you think back, he also was trying to get Carlos Marcelo deported, there was, you know, a big stink about it. Do you remember? All right, when he become President that's - I think there was three organizations - well, one, one organization is the CIA, but I don't believe they - I mean, the regular CIA was in on it. I believe there was at least two guys that used to belong to the CIA - well, I heard, I heard 'em talk - somebody talking around the Court, there, I don't know who it was, Gene or somebody, but there was two CIA men that was members of the Bay of Pigs invasion, along with a bunch of Cubans. And I think them Cubans were from the Bay of Pigs invasion, 'cause there was a bunch of them there. And they, and they, and they would stick to themselves. One of them, I tried to be friendly with him, he says man, you come messing around me, he says, I'll pull a knife on you and cut your guts out.

B: Do you remember his name?

D: Yeah, they call him Andre. He was a little bitty short Cuban 'bout like that.

M: Hm. Where is Andre now, do you know?

D: No I don't know. When - about two weeks before Kennedy was assassinated, everybody disappeared. O, I was going to tell you - I remember what I wanted to tell you, now - when was Oswald went over to the Show Bar, I ah, I went down there that night, you know, see, 'cause I like that good music there, you know, Dixieland, and I love Dixieland, they have a jam session there, you know, early in the morning.

B: Mm-hm.

D: So, ah, and I sing a little, too. And, ah, we were there, and, ah, and I'm sitting down, and the guy that was the doorman, that got me the job at the Court of Two Sisters.

B: Is that right? (double voice) Who was that?

D: They call him Tiger, that's all I know is Tiger. And he was from Key West, Fla. And he was friendly with all them Cubans. You know? American boy. Ah, and he walked past me from the bar, he was talking to this guy that I seen, you know, one day, Clay Bertrand, and they were talking about the bar. He walks up to him, for no reason at all, and knocks the hell out of me. And he, they said he used to be a professional fighter. So, I, I, I just backed off and started crawling, trying to get on my feet, but I couldn't do it, he kept crowding me. I gave him a shove with my feet, knocked him clean across the room, and I got up and I started to leave the place, run out, you know, that's the best thing to do. My old man always taught me, if you can't lick them, run. - So, I, - so, I got to the door and Pepe, this

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Cuban, grabbed Tiger by the shoulders, and he said - leave him alone, man, leave him alone, what's the matter with you? See, a-, a-, and Tiger said this - Yeah, but he knows about us. He knows about us, he said it twice. And I ran out, I didn't know what he was talking about at the time.

(voice in background - undistinguishable)

D: Now, on this Jim Meyers, personally I don't think Oswald had the ability to shoot that distance and kill President Kennedy. This is my opinion, now.

B: Did you ever hear about him doing any rifle shooting, or any practicing?

D: No, no.

B: Did you ever hear any comment about him shooting in the early -

D: No, but I know Jim Myers, now. He, he come down there from Phoenix, Arizona, No, from Scottsville, Arizona. He come down in a brand new '62, '61 or '62 Cadillac. Brand new, convertible. And him and Harold Sandors got to be friends, too. And, ah, Harold picked up the trunk, they were going fishing, or something, and I seen rifles, and pistols, and everything in the trunk of that man's car.

B: And when was this?

D: That was in - that was about 1962.

B: Well, how close can you say, Spring - Summer, Fall?

D: About Spring, about Spring. That's when the crabs are coming out.

M: And where was this?

D: At the Court of Two Sisters. Right by the door. And another thing

B: Well, wait a minute, was this when Oswald was in town?

D: Yeah.

B: So it was, I mean, when you went to - when you

D: No, no, oh, oh, that, no, I don't know if Oswald was in town then, I didn't see Oswald then.

B: Oh, OK.

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D: I didn't see Oswald then.

B: OK, one other thing

D: Yeah, so, ah, another thing, ah, Jim Meyers, I understand from this girl I told you was a friend of mine from New Orleans, that I keep in touch with, she says - Jim Meyers now go by the name of Jimmie Craft. And, and they said Jim Meyers could shoot a rifle pretty good.

B: Did you ever see Jim and Gene?

D: Oh, Yeah,

B: Together.

D: Oh, yeah, they're always together in the place. All of them hung around together, and I worked my door. They let me in the crowd, I wouldn't want to get in.

B: Did you ever see ah, Jim Myers with Karno?

D: Yeah, in fact Carlos Marcelo, it was just, just before the assassination, Carlos Marcelos set Jim Meyers up in a bar. A Club across the river, in Algiers.

B: You don't remember the name of the Club?

D: No, I don't. It's still there, though, 'cause I went down there a while back, in Algiers.

B: About how long before the assassination was this?

D: I can't - not, not, not, very long - it was in '63.

B: About how tall was Oswald?

D: I don't know - he was, well, he wasn't as tall as I am, he reached me about right up in here.

B: How tall are you?

D: 5'10"

B: 5'10", so you're saying - what would you guess to be his height, then, if you're 5'10", how many inches shorter.....

D: Oh, I'd say about 5'8" or 5'9".

B: 5'8" pr 5'9". About how heavy would you say he looked?

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D: About 140 - 150, something like that.

B: Do you remember the color of his eyes?

D: No, I didn't notice them that much.

B: Uh-hm.

D: I only seen him that one time, that twist, rather.

B: Twice.

D: There and in the room, and I didn't notice his eyes. I don't go around looking at men's eyes, now it was a woman, I might look at the eyes.

B: Well, I just

D: Yeah, I know (Laughter)

M: You have a pretty good point there.

B: Did he have a, ah, you don't remember whether he had dimples?

D: No

B: Remember whether he had a cleft chin? When you saw him? The guy you saw.

D: No, No, I, I, I didn't pay that close to him (sic). I know it was Oswald 'cause I seen him on TV just before Ruby shot him, and that's another thing about Ruby; One night I was working my door at the Court of Two Sisters before the assassination, but I didn't work there, I ah, in fact when Kennedy was assassinated, I had already quite. And ah, I was home, when I heard it on TV. And I saw, I'm working my door when seen - they have a, a no parking zone, you know, there, because it's a service zone, they call it.

B: In front of the building.

D: Yeah. All, all the way across. Ah, this car from Texas pulls up, there a bunch of people in it, you know, I politely walked over there, I says, - I'm sorry, Sir, this is a loading zone, I says, would you mind moving your car, please? Or they'll tow it away for you. Like that, nice, you know? The guy says - Aw, shut up, and he slapped me right across the cheek - you know, I was too close to the car, and I caught a glimpse of him and I'll still say it was Jack Ruby, because as they drove away, some woman said - Jack, what'd you do that for?

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M: What kind of a car was this?

D: It was a black car, all I know. Don't know the make of it. Ronnie Metranga didn't know who it was either, you know, he saw it happen. He took off after the car. Later on he come back laughing. He say - it was tourists. He knew who it was.

M: Ah, who was that "some" woman who said - Jack?

D: That was in the car, I don't who she was.

M: Oh, she was in the car?

D: Yeah.

M: And you say that you made tapes for other people before.

D: Yeah.

M: And one was the FBI?

D: Yeah, one was the FBI - I gave them a tape I'd made for ah, Mr. ah, that was a tape I'd already for Mr. Harry Gibbons, of Midnight Magazine.

M: Uh-huh.

D: He wanted a copy of it, and he sent back to me after he read it, heard it, you know. He sent it back to me, like I asked him to. And ah, I give that to ah, ah, Agent Winner, of Alexandria, La. The FBI agent down there.

M: Uh-huh.

D: And he said he was going to send it along to y'all.

M: When did you give it to ah, Gibbons?

D: 'Bout - Oh, Gibbons? That was last year.

M: And then when did you give it to

D: I'd already give one to Schweiker, already.

M: Uh-huh.

D: And I don't know if y'all got that one, either, or not.

M: How long was it before you got the tape back from Gibbons that you gave it to Winner, the FBI man?

D: I just gave it to Winner about a month ago.

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M: Oh.

D: And I gave it to him, and I made a statement for him, too, and also for ah, the Military Intelligence Officer that was there - Lattaback (sounds like).

M: What was his name?

D: Mr. Louderback, I don't know his first name. I don't know whether it was Frank, or not.

M: Where did he work from, ah?

D: Fort Polk.

M: Fort Polk. That's down in - whereabouts in La. is that?

D: Leesville.

B: Leesville. OK. I guess that-. Go ahead, go ahead.

M: That's about all I can - I just want to get those tapes in.

B: Yeah, right. (Murmuring) Ah, remember the rank of this Louderback?

D: No, I swear I don't what his ra-, he's always in civilian clothes.

B: Always in civilian clothes.

B: What, ah, this meeting of these five or six men that you went to, you know when you went up to get you check, or your cash, from Gene Davis, ah, what's your best recollection of what month it was in.

M: If I understood you correctly, you said it was Summer of '62. Is that right?

D: Yeah, it was about

M: On a Saturday.

D: 'Bout in June, June or July.

M: Could it have as late as August?

D: Might have been.

B: But you worked through '62?

D: Yeah, I worked through '62.

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M: Well now, just to kind of recap a little ah, one night in the summer of '62 was when somebody walked up to you and asked you.....

D: That was Lee Harvey Oswald.

M: if Clay Bertrand was here, and you later figured out that it was Oswald because you saw him on TV.....

D: Yeah.

M: ...and ah, it was later yet when you went up to get your check.

D: Yeah.

M: It was still in the summer time?

D: Yeah. Still in the summer time.

M: Is it ah, how long did you work for this place all together, this Court?

D: Three years - almost three years.

M: And when you went up to get your check, this wasn't - this was still in '62, or was it getting into '63?

D: Yeah, that was in '63, I believe it was.

M: In other words, where -

D: That turned over, I believe, yeah.

M: Almost a year after.....

D: Yeah.

M:Oswald

D: Yeah.

M: stopped and asked about, ah.....

D: Yeah.

M:Clay Bertrand. So now we're talking maybe in the summertime of '63.

D: Yeah, I believe that's what it was, just like that.

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M: Ah, let me ask you this, ah, about Clay

D: So far back, I'm trying to put it together.

M: Right. About the name Clay Bertrum, you said

D: Bertrand.

M:that's probably a code name.

D: Yeah, and Gene Davis denied he was knowing the name.

M: Are you, did you ever hear any other kind of names that sounded kind of funny? You know, like ah, John Jones, or Morris Bishop, or.....

D: No.

M:you know, any, any,

D: No

M: OK.

D: Clay Bertrand was the only one I ever heard of.

M: All right.

B: Did you ever, did you ever see anybody who you might have suspected was a CIA man? Or there was a rumor that he was a CIA man?

D: Yeah.

B: Who was that?

D: N-, n-, not, not, - you know, you can always tell an intelligence officer, if you look at him closely, I could tell. One - ah, two of the tramps was, I'm pretty sure, CIA - former CIA men, or something.

M: Why, why do you say that?

D: The one, Huh?

M: Why do you say that?

D: Because they look intelligent, and they look like they know what they're doing. One of them was the guy with the beard....

M: Mm-hmm

D: And the tall one. Them two.

M: Have you ever heard anybody else say that - about those tramps?

D: No, no, I never heard no talk about - that I know - no one else saw 'em, I don't guess. I'll take a polygraph test on everything that I've told you, that's just the way it was, the way it is.

B: That Cuban that was sitting on the edge of the bed with Oswald, did you ever see him before or after?

D: Oh, I seen him a lot of times, he, he's a buddy of ah, David Ferrie, the pilot.

B: I see. How, how would you describe him in height and weight?

D: He - oh, he was about 180 - 190, something like that, and about, 'bout 5'10", something like that, about my height.

B: About how old was he back then?

D: He'd be about - he'd be, he'd be about 31 maybe, or 32, something like that. Maybe younger.

B: I see. Remember anything about his face, eye color, scars, anything?

D: No, but but he always, his hair was always unruly.

B: Uh-huh.

M: What color was his hair?

D: Black.

B: Ever hear him called by name?

D: Never heard him called by name.

M: What kind of a car did he drive?

D: I didn't notice it.

M: Didn't notice it?

D: Sure didn't notice it.

B: Do you know if any of these people have ah, girlfriends, I mean, did you see any of these tramps or this Cuban fella' with unruly hair,

D: I only saw these tramps one time, now.

B: Uh-huh.

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D: Only saw them in that meeting one time, then they disappeared 'til I seen them in the newspaper, in the Inquirer.

M: When you saw these tramps, were they dressed like tramps then? Up in that meeting?

D: No, they were, they were dressed in normal clothes, but ah, th- the one, the one, the one with the beard, he had on a seamans' cap and khaki pants.

M: How about the other fellow?

D: He had on a dark shirt, I know that much. He was tall, the tall one.

B: You way Gene Davis gave you the money?

D: Yeah.

B: Did he look worried, then he, that you were.....

D: No,

B: in there?

D: No, he thought I was a dummy.

B: Mm-hmmm.

M: Did he say anything to you about walking in that room like that?

D: No, No, he just said - here, go ahead now. Like that. That's all he said.

M: How, ah, how long was it before you decided to tell somebody about it?

D: In 1968, when I put it all together that Gene Davis was lying about knowing Cl-, hearing the name Clay Bertrand and Lee Harvey Oswald. That's when I went to Jim Garrison and told him just what I told you. Well, that wa-, that was five years later, wasn't it?

D: Yeah. I still remember

M: You mean it took you five years to put it together?

D: Yeah. 'Cause I, I, I, I didn't kind of think about them being involved in anything like that, you know.

M: Uh-huh.

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D: Until I - 'til I seen - in fact the pictures of the, the
tramps didn't come out until almost ten years after.

M: Where did you see the pictures of the tramps?

D: In the Inquirer.

M: I thought maybe they came out in the newspapers along about
the time of the assassination.

D: No.

M: You don't - you didn't see them.

D: No, I didn't see them then. I saw it in the Inquirer, later
on.

M: Uh-huh.

B: You didn't see the pictures of the tramps until ten years
later?

D: That's right, in the Inquirer.

M: You'll take a - a polygraph on this?

D: Yes, Sir, I took a polygraph on this.

M: You've already take a polygraph, haven't you?

D: I took one when Jim Garrison

M: Who gave the polygraph test to you, do you remember?

D: The Police Dept. up there.

M: You passed it?

D: Yes, Sir. Gene Davis wouldn't take none.

B: Mm-hmmm. And you read about Gene Davis lying to Garrison
about not knowing Oswald.

D: I sure did.

M: When you took the polygraph test, you didn't say anything
about tramps.

D: No, no, because I didn't know anything about them then.

B: Well.....

D: But I recognized one - I recognized the man with the beard, because Jim Garrison had a picture of him, the one with the seaman's cap - standing on a corner, by a street marker, can't remember what the name of the street was.

B: What year did you see that, that photo?

D: '68, when I went up there.

B: Hm. Street in what town?

D: I don't know if it was New Orleans, or what.

B: Does the street marker show the name?

D: It shows the name of the street, and I don't remember seeing that street, I don't know (mumbles). I thought y'all got all the stuff Jim Garrison - Jim Garrison has some stuff down there. He has some good stuff.

B: Yeah.

M: Did you ever.....

D: There's only one thing wrong.

M: What's that?

D: Jim Garrison would have cleared this thing for you, if only they wouldn't have framed him on that gambling - bribery charge that they framed him on.

M: Who, who was it that framed him?

D: Carlos Marcelo, the Mafia. The gamblers down there. All of them. 'Cause he was hot on 'em. He was hot on the trail of the real dope on it, I know.

M: How do you think they went about framing him, do you know how it worked?

D: Yeah, I think that they accused him of accepting a bribe, or something, they had pictures of some kind. Some money - I don't know how, but he was framed. 'Cause I know Jim too well. He's a good man.

M: What's he doing now - Jim Garrison?

D: He's a lawyer.

M: Is he?

D: Yeah.

M: What's he - you mean he's in private practice?

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D: Private practice.

M: Whereabouts?

D: New Orleans.

M: Have you seen him lately?

D: No, I haven't.

B: Did you ever talk with Garrison about the case? Just informal, off the record type of thing?

D: No, not except the time I went down there to see him, was the only time I talked to him about it.

B: You've only seen him once, then?

D: Yeah. About the case.

B: Did he question you by himself?

D: No, he had Andy DeShambra and another man in the office, too.

M: Do you remember who that other man was?

D: No, I don't, one of his agents, I know.

M: Uh-huh. Did you ever talk to any other witnesses, that's was Jim Garrison's? That happened to be around there at the time?

D: No, No.

M: Well, I can't think of anything else.

B: Did Jim Garrison or De Shambra, or the other man ever give you a comment about the case?

D: They thanked me. And they thanked me very much for the information, and put me on another bus, and sent me back to Jackson.

M: Did you ever see a photo that was supposed to be a photo of Oswald, but didn't really look like the guy you saw?

D: Yeah, he had one of them.

M: So, you - in other words, you saw a photo of a guy who looked like Oswald?

D: Yeah.

M: Were you told anything about that photo?

D: No.

B: Well, I don't have anything else for right now.

M: Is there anything else that ah, now that you've had a little time to kind of think about his, anything else that ah, you've got in the back of your mind there, that maybe would be helpful to us, ahsomething about ah,

D: Well, now, ah, I told you about that rock and roll singer, Joe Barrios, him and I talked about the case.

B: Yeah, do you think he knows something?

D: He knows just what I told you. He don't know about the meetings, or nothing, but he knows, he where I originated that, (?) we talked about it, you know. He lives in Galiana, La. Cut-off rather.

B: Do you think he has some information that you don't have?

D: No, no.

M: Who do you think knows more about this situation than you do?

D: If you can get him cornered, if you can get him cornered and get him excited, he'll talk. Gene Davis.

M: Gene Davis.

B: What's the best way to get him, what's the best way to approach him?

D: Just come right out and say, ah, and say - I'm investigating the assassination of President Kennedy and I'd like to talk to you. And you'll just see him start stuttering, right then and there. And then.....

M: How old is Mr. Davis right now?

D: Oh, he's - I don't know, he's about - he's in his fifties, I know.

M: Is he enjoying good health?

D: Did the last time I saw him.

M: And when was that?

D: When I worked down at the Court of Two Sisters. He was in good shape.

M: That's been some time ago, though.

D: Yeah, I know, I don't know how he is now.

M: When was your last day down at the Court of Two Sisters?

D: I don't know the exact date but it was in 1963, it was about, about two months before the assassination.

M: Ah, are you saying that Mr. Davis was about somewhere in his fifties then, or is it

D: No, no, he was about in his thirties then.

M: All right. In other words, he's about the same age you are.

D: Yeah. Just about.

M: Now, as I understand it, you got this phone call from a lady who reports to Mr. Stokes' office and you don't know who the lady is.

D: I don't know who the lady is, or nothing.

M: You would

D: So I come by Air Force jet down here.

M: And, she sounded like a younger woman, as opposed to an older woman, and you couldn't determine whether she was black or white.

D: Sure couldn't.

M: Just a younger woman that probably was a secretary or something.

D: That's right.

M: And she told you to come up here....

D: Yes Sir.

M:yesterday.....and, and

D: Ah, she told me - yeah, she told me to sta-, told me to be here about Wednesday or Thursday.

M: Uh-huh.

D: I said - I'll try and get down there Wednesday night. And I went down to his office, and it was closed, so I said - well, I went down the state capitol, I got about too late, you know, almost nine o'clock.

M: Did she say why you were supposed to come up here?

D: No, she didn't - says something about, something about a statement, or something.

M: Has anybody ever told you to come up here before?

D: No

M: To see anybody else?

D: No

B: Would you have come, if she had not called you?

D: No, I'd have stayed home.

B: Did you ask her to identify herself?

D: No, I fig-, I heard clicking in the background and thought she was a secretary in his office, or something.

B: Did she say she was with the Committee?

D: No, she didn't say nothing. She just asked me to come down and I did.

(end of tape - side #1)

B: This is the second of the tape we're going on. June 22, 1977 with Mr. Leander Davey of DeRitter, La. This is Belford Lawson, Staff Counsel and Jack Moriarty, Staff Investigator present. We'll just continue from the opposite side.

B: Do you consent to this interview?

D: Oh, yeah.

M: Well, this ah, this photo that you're showing us in your wallet of ah,

D: That's my girlfriend.

M:Marice Cole.

D: Right.

M: And ah, That reminds me, did you have children?

D: Yes, I got a picture of one of my sons in there, right there.

M: Oh, oh, right here, I see, un-huh.

D: Yeah, his name is Philip.

M: And where is he?

D: He's with his mother in Mississippi.

M: With his mother in Mississippi.

D: And I got one named Charlie, he's with his mother in Miss. I got one named Leander, Jr. He's in Germany in the Army.

B: I see.

M: Oh, uh-huh. And where about's in Miss. are they right now?

D: Jackson.

M: Jackson, Miss. Do you ah, do you have a family doctor?

D: Yeah, I've got one at Fort Polk.

M: What's his name?

D: Dr. Logan.

M: At Fort Polk?

D: Yeah.

M: What's he treated you for?

D: Huh?

M: I say, what's he treated you for?

D: Oh, high blood pressure and diabetes.

M: Oh, is that right? Are you in pretty good health now?

D: Oh, yeah. I take my pills.

M: Have you ever been treated for anything else?

D: No.

M: Did he ever tell you to go see any other kind of doctor?

D: Like a psychiatrist? I'm not crazy.

M: All right. How about a lawyer, you got a lawyer?

D: No, but I can-get one anytime I need one.

M: No, but I mean, some people have family lawyers, and family doctors, and.....

D: Oh, I got two, three different lawyers I use in my home town.

M: Uh-huh. All right. Have you ever had any kind of psychiatric care?

D: No

M: Ever been in a hospital for any problems along those lines?

D: I ain't crazy.

M: All right, well no, I don't think you are, either. but, ah, how about ah, is there anything else that maybe we should know about you that we don't, you know?

D: No, that's all I know.

M: OK. Well, I appreciate your time, it's about 10:50 and ah, that's about an hour and ten minutes all together now, since 9:40, and we'll make every effort to help you determine who the lady is that invited you up here.

D: I'd appreciate it.

B: Would you be willing to give this testimony to the Committee at the proper time?

D: Yeah, any time.

B: OK, will you stay in touch with us, then?

D: Oh, yeah.

B:if anything happens?

D: Yes, Sir.

B: OK, do we have your telephone number?

D: Yeah, he's got my phone number.

M: I would suggest to you that if we call you, maybe it would be a good idea for you to call us back, like ah, I might call you up, say, next week, and I'd say you know, maybe ah, the Committee would like to see you at such and such a time and, just to verify it, why don't you call me back in the office, and I'll give you our number.....

D: OK

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M:and you can call and just make sure that, you know, you'r talking to the correct people.

D: That's right (laughter) that's right.

M: That would kind of

D: And make arrangements for me to have a place to stay over here, so I don't have to stay up all night.

M: Yeah, well, we ah, we wouldn't want to see anybody, you know, like play a practical joke on you or something like that.

D: This practical joke cost me fifty bucks already.

M: Yeah, well, that's a shame. Well, thank you very much, sir.

B: Thank you, Mr. D'Avy.

D: All right, all right.

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