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Serial#

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THE GRAND JURY OF THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES 1 STATE OF CALIFORNIA 3 THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, Plaintiff, No. A-233,421 7 vs. Ř. SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN, Defendant. SEP 7 1971 · 10 11 12 REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF GRAND JURY PROCEEDINGS 13 AUGUST 19, 1971 . AUGUST 23, 1971 14 VOLUME 3 of 3 VOLUMES 15 Pages: 477 - 690, incl. 16 17 APPEARANCES: 18 19 (See Volume 1.) 21 22 23 24 25 26

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LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, THURSDAY, AUGUST 19, 1971 9:30 A. M.

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THE FOREMAN: Let the record show the Grand Jury has reassembled and the court reporter is present.

The Secretary may call the roll.

(Thereupon, the Secretary complies with the Foreman's request.)

THE SECRETARY: There are twenty-one Grand Jurors present.

THE FOREMAN: The record may show the same twenty-one Grand Jurors are present that have been present since the inception of this case.

You may proceed, Mr. Hecht.

MR. HECHT: Mr. John Walker.

(Thereupon, the witness, John M. Walker, was then escorted into the Grand Jury Hearing Room by the Sergeant At Arms.)

JOHN M. WALKER,

called as a witness before the Grand Jury, was duly sworn as follows:

THE FOREMAN: You do solemnly swear that the evidence you shall give in this matter now pending before the Grand Jury of the County of Los Angeles shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help

1	you God?
2	THE WITNESS: I do.
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5	EXAMINATION
6	BY MR. HECHT:
7	Q Good morning, Mr. Walker.
8	Can you tell us what your occupation is?
9	A I am head of the court services in the central
10	district criminal division, County Clerk's Office.
11	Q When you say "head of court services", can you
12	tell us in somewhat greater detail what precisely that
13	position is?
14	A I'm actually supervisor for all of the Superior
15	Court Clerks who are assigned to a criminal court from
16	Department 100 through 120, in the downtown area.
17	Q Prior to the time you were head of the court
18	services, were you employed by the Clerk's Office?
19	A Yes, I was.
20	Q In what capacity?
21	A I was a Superior Court Clerk assigned to the
22	Northwest District in Van Nuys.
23	Q How long have you been in the Clerk's Office?
24	A Since November, 1966.
25 26	Q When were you brought down to the 4th Floor of
27	this building?
28	A I believe that was August of 1969.
20	G From Avguet of 1969 up until the procent time has



you had any business relationship or business duties in connection with either the Exhibit Custodian Clerks down there or in exhibiting exhibits yourself?

A I have.

Q How is it that someone in your position, the head of court services, would be involved in the displaying of criminal exhibits?

A Initially, when I was sent down to the criminal division it was in the capacity of a management trainee and one of my first projects was to look into the operations of the exhibit process.

It was to survey the situation and make some recommendations as to the procedures they had and recommendations for storage, disposition and other matters connected with the exhibits themselves.

Q Can you please tell us what your educational background is?

A I have a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Cal. State in English and a major in English and a minor in speech.

I have taken courses through La Salle in law.

- Q Who is your immediate supervisor?
- A Pete Talmachoff, Chief of the Criminal Division.
- Q When you first came into this building and worked on the 4th Floor of the County Clerk's Office, did you become acquainted with what we have referred to as the exhibit reviewing slip or the exhibit reviewing form?
 - A Yes, I did.
 - Q At that time did you make any changes in the form



of that exhibit viewing slip?

A Not initially, no.

Do you know, as you sit here now, that there was a court order issued by Judge Walker in connection with the exhibits in the case of People versus Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, which prohibited anyone from handling the original exhibits in this case without a court order with the exception of counsel of record?

A I am aware of it now.

Q When did you find that such a court order was in existence?

A In August of 1970.

Q What were the circumstances that led up to your becoming acquainted with that court order in August of 1970?

of the regular division chief, Pete Talmachoff, and there was a request by one of the exhibit custodians to view one of the exhibits and at that time I asked if there were any unusual circumstances connected with the viewing of the exhibits and at that time, that is when the exhibit custodian brought out a copy of the court order to me to read prior to allowing the exhibits to be viewed.

Q Can you tell me if you are certain that it was Judge Walker's court order, or could it have been the earlier order of Judge Alarcon?

A I'm pretty sure it was Judge Walker's court order,

Q You say you were replacing Mr. Talmachoff who was on vacation?

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1	A Yes, sir.
2	Q Prior to Mr. Talmachoff's leaving on his vaca-
3	tion, had he ever alerted you to the existence of
4	Judge Walker's Court Order in the Sirhan case?
5	A I don't recall that he had.
6	Q All right; at that time, that is, at the time
7	the Court Order was first brought to your attention, you
8	said that was August of 1970?
9	A Yes, sir.
10	Q Did you personally read the Court Order?
11	A I did.
12	Q In connection with the Sirhan case, have you ever
13	received any specific instructions from any of your co-
14	supervisors or any of the persons above you, included but not
15	limited to Mr. Talmachoff, with respect to the method of
16	handling the exhibits in the Sirhan case?
17	A I did.
18	Q When was that?
19	A Approximately five or six months after I was
20	assigned to look into the exhibit process.
21	Q What is the approximate date that you received
22	these instructions?
23	A I believe it was early in 1970.
24	Q That would be before this August date that you
25	just made reference to?
26	A That's correct.
27	Q And what instructions did you personally receive
28	at that time?



A Well, to use the term "instructions" is not quite accurate.

We know that certain things had to be done, such as the copying of the exhibits and I recall that Mr. Talmachoff and I had talked to the then present supervisor of the exhibit custodians regarding the security of those specific exhibits and when they were going to complete the copying work on the original exhibits, and we moved the original exhibits out of the vault in Room 448 over to our death penalty locker in the adjacent building next to the Hall of Justice.

Q During that period, which you indicated was early in 1970, did Mr. Talmachoff tell you about the existence of Judge Walker's Court Order?

A He did not.

Q Had you been handling exhibits or any requests to see exhibits in the Sirhan case prior to the August 1970 incident wherein you learned of the existence of the Court Order?

A No. I don't believe so.

Q Are you involved, actually, in the displaying or finding exhibits for people who come to the counter on the 4th Floor?

A I have been involved in the exhibits, as I have indicated, but that is not strictly within my responsibility.

Q Have you had any written instructions setting forth the procedure the Clerk's Office should follow in obeying the mandate of Judge Walker's Court Order?

A Recently, yes, sir.

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ì	Q How recently, sir?
2	A Within the past two or three weeks.
3	Q And what was the nature of the information
4	communicated to you at that time?
5	A These were instructions, I believe they emanated
6	from the chief deputy, Mr. Cabell
7	Q Can you tell us the contents of that statement?
8	A One statement that I know of was with the chief
9	of the division and the head of the court services, which I
10	believe was Mr. Sours and myself would be held personally
11	responsible for special handling of exhibits in special
12	cases.
13	Q Did you take that to mean the Sirhan case?
14	A Yes, I did.
15	Q Did you have in mind, when you received the
16	instructions, that the vast majority of exhibits had been
17	shipped off to the Supreme Court?
18	A Well, I realized that had happened but I didn't
19	have it in mind.
20	Q Does it ever get very busy in the Clerk's Office
21	on the 4th Floor?
22	A I would say so.
23	Q Does it get crowded?
24	A On occasions it gets crowded.
25	Ω Are there many people that come in at or about the
26	same time requesting service in connection with the exhibits?
27	A Occasionally that occurs.

Have you heard any of your supervisors make a

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Q



statement to the effect that it was a mistake to permit one or more persons to see the original exhibits in the Sirhan case?

A No, I haven't.

MR. HECHT: May I have one moment?

THE FOREMAN: Certainly, sir.

BY MR. HECHT:

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Q I would like to invite your attention, excuse me, to Grand Jury Exhibit Number 1, which I believe you will recognize as the photograph of what we have referred to as an exhibit viewing slip.

Do you recognize the form, without concerning yourself with the notations thereon?

À I do.

Q When you first assumed your duties as head of court services and made your inquiry into the exhibit section, did you run across the use of that form?

A No, not specifically.

If I could elaborate on this?

Q Please do, yes.

A The former chief deputy, Emory Hatcher, had specifically instructed me not to get involved with the day-to-day routine and details of the exhibit custodians.

Therefore, I didn't pay too much attention to, let us say, an item like that.

I was supposed to get a pretty big overview of what was happening and find out if there could be some improvement in the procedure.

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Q Let me show you Grand Jury Exhibit Number 2, which appears to be a form used for the same purpose but is somewhat different in heading and contents than Grand Jury Exhibit Number 1.

Are you familiar with this form?

A Yes, I am.

Q Are you acquainted with the fact that both forms have been used in connection with the duties of the exhibit custodian clerks downstairs?

A I am.

Q Did you recently change or revise the exhibit review forms in the Clerk's Office?

A We did.

Q And were you personally responsible for having that worm revised?

A Yes, pursuant to an order of the assistant chief deputy, Ed Kristman, and we were to look into the still existing procedures and close any gaps that we recognized on the procedure and form.

When we did this, we did revise the form.

- Did you revise the form because you found it to be a poor form to record the information that should be recorded in connection with the viewing of the exhibits?
- A Well, I don't know that I would use the term
 "poor", but I did recognize that more information probably
 should be recorded on the form and perhaps another form could
 be more easily interpreted and controlled.
 - Q All right, now, Mr. Walker, you had an interview

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on Tuesday, July 13, 1971, beginning at 2:00 P.M., in the District Attorney's Office, Bureau of Investigation, in Room 113, at 524 North Spring Street; is that correct?

A Yes, sir.

Q And you were aware that conversation was recorded by a reporter?

A Yes, I was.

Q She was there in your presence, was she not?

A Yes, she was.

Q I have what purports to be a transcript of that particular conversation and on page 7 of the transcript, starting from line 6, I have the following appearing in front of me.

(Reading:)

"Now, getting into specifically these requests that your speaking of, made by certain people, that is on a form for viewing the exhibits that you have in your custody?

"ANSWER: That's right.

"QUESTION: If I show you a photostatic copy, would you recognize one of the exhibit viewing forms?

"ANSWER: Yes.

"QUESTION: Showing you a photostatic copy of an exhibit review form, would that be a reasonable example, even though this is a photocopy of the exhibit review form?

"ANSWER: Up until last Wednesday. I immediately

Q



had that form revised because it does not give information and it is a poor form, so I had it revised."

Do you recall that statement?

A Yes.

Q Would it be accurate to say that your opinion of it is that it does constitute a poor record?

A I certainly made that statement and I suppose at that time I felt the term "poor" may not have been too strong, but, in looking at it today, I probably wanted to indicated that maybe the term "poor" was not exactly the term I wanted to use, but I'm sure I used it that day.

Q Let me go on to the questions and answers, if I may.

"QUESTION: Okay, your opinion now is that is not a complete form in your mind at that time?

"ANSWER: That is not a complete form as to what?

"QUESTION: To show the exhibits, or to keep track of the exhibits in some manner.

"ANSWER: That's right."

You were asked those questions and those are your answers?

A Yes.

"QUESTION: And for instance, the request to review exhibits doesn't show which exhibits are requested, although there are some numbers listed



on them?

"ANSWER: It indicates exhibits they want to see. It doesn't describe with specificity the exhibits because I note that some of these numbers were changed in later trial proceedings."

Do you remember making that statement?

- A I do.
- Q Continuing with your answer:

"It doesn't distinguish between the motion to quash and later trial proceedings where the numbers may be somewhat different."

Do you remember making that statement?

- A Yes.
- Q Going on with your answer:

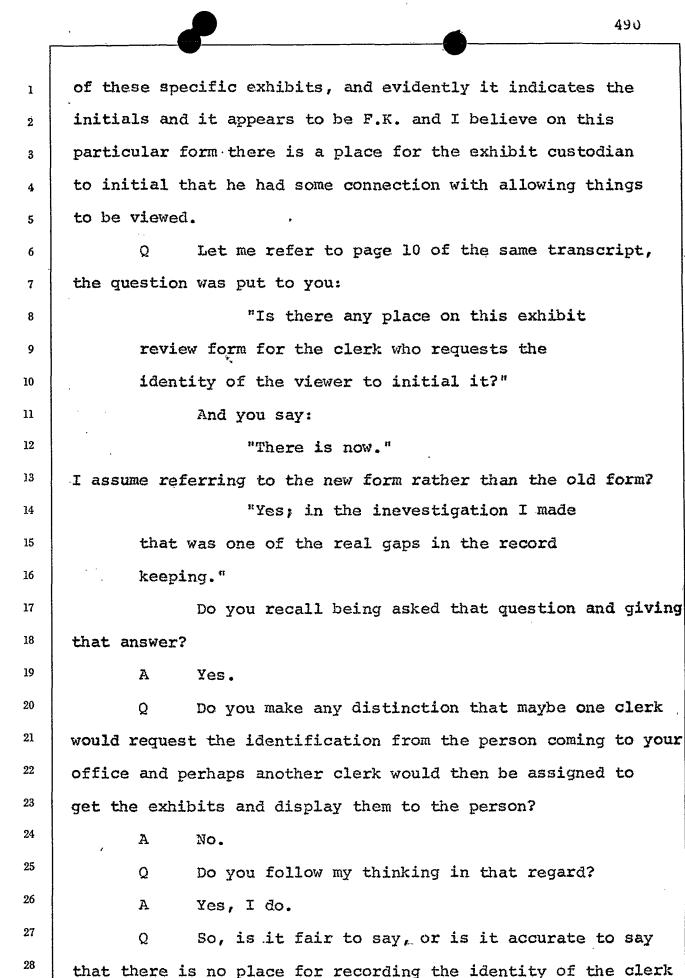
"Therefore, I don't know what that individual saw, which exhibits, and I don't know when he actually made the request and what he did see, if he did see those exhibits.

"Now, also, it doesn't indicate the exhibit custodian clerk, who presented the exhibits, and if the exhibits were returned to its proper place."

Is that your statement?

- A Yes.
- Q Were you at that time candidly indicating what impression you had as to the use of the previous exhibit forms?
 - A Yes.
 - Q Were these statements truthful?

1	A They were.
2	Q I take it, then, you did feel that the previous
3	form was, in fact, one that would not permit the persons later
4	to fully reconstruct the event that the form was supposed to
5	record?
6	A I do feel that way.
7	Q You have, as I understand from your previous
8	testimony, switched into using a newer form?
9	A We have.
10	Q When has that new form been instituted?
11	A Several weeks ago when we made a modification of
12	this form,
13	I understand there has been even another
14	modification because some improvement was made even on
15	the ideas that I had.
16	Q On the previous forms, either one of the two
17	forms in front of you, was there any place on those exhibit
18	review forms where the clerk would check the identity of
19	the customer in the Clerk's Office and would initial it
20	or in some way indicate which clerk it was?
21	A I believe only on this form on my right.
22	Q It has a number on a piece of paper stapled
23	to it?
24	A Yes; that's Grand Jury Exhibit Number 2.
25	Q Grand Jury Exhibit Number 2?
26	A Yes, sir.
27	I believe there is an indication of the individua
28	custodian who had some connection with the form, or the viewing



who initially makes the initial request insofar as the older 1 forms are concerned? 2 You're correct. A 3 0 From the period of May 1969 and thereafter, who was the supervisor or who was in charge of the exhibit custodians? Well, in August of 1969 I think the exhibit A 7 custodian supervisor at that time was Guy Tracy. 8 Is he presently employed by the Clerk's Office? Q Ά No, he isn't. 10 Did he resign under somewhat unusual circum-11 12 stances? 13 Yes, I would say so. 14 Will you tell us very briefly why? Q 15 Well, in the process of my assignment duties A 16 to look into the exhibit operations, there were thefts 17 discovered and we were to cooperate with the District 18 Attorney's Investigative Unit in taking polygraph examinations 19 and making some attempt to find out who stole the money, 20 either to preclude any further thefts or, perhaps, recover 21 some of the stolen money. 22 I recall that Guy Tracy took one polygraph 23 examination and then upon being requested to return to that 24 investigative unit for another, he indicated that rather than 25 return he would resign. 26 Did he, in fact, do so? Q 27 A Yes, he did. 28 And as to the exhibit custodian clerk -- referring Q

back to your initial familiarity with the existence of the 1 Court Order, I believe you said that was in August of 1970? Α Yes. 3 All right; do you know an exhibit custodian clerk 0 by the name of Loyless Williams? 5 Yes, I do. Did Mr. Williams have some connection leading to 7 the event of your becoming aware of the Court Order in the 8 Sirhan case? A Yes. 10 Q Can you tell us the event that involved 11 Mr. Williams and perhaps a letter that was received by your 12 office? I seem to recall there was a letter presented 14 to Loyless Williams connected with the request to see and 15 to review certain Sirhan exhibits. 16 Was that letter addressed to you or to Mr. Sours? Q 17 18 A Mr. Sours. Was he present at the time the letter was brought 19 20 to your attention by Mr. Williams? No, he wasn't. 21 Α 22 0 What happened then? I read the letter and then requested they bring 23 24 the guide envelope. 25 In the guide envelope we keep certain documents 26 connected with the exhibits, to check and to see if there are any special instructions connected with the exhibits. 28

That is the reason I called for the guide

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27 28 envelope in the Sirhan case.

At that time is when I became aware of Judge Walker's Court Order.

I read the Court Order but before I actually allowed, I believe it was Mr. William Harper, who was requesting to review the exhibits, before I allowed him to review the exhibits I made a call to the Assistant Chief Deputy's Office because since the letter was addressed to Bob Sours I wanted to check with Bob to see if he was aware of the letter and I seem to recall that I did talk to him and discussed the letter and the Court Order with Bob.

I then requested if he interpreted the Court Order similarly to the way I interpreted it that this would be an authorized person to see the exhibits.

We seemed to agree and I told Loyless it's okay for him to view certain exhibits.

Did you ever consider, and you understand I'm not attempting to challenge the validity or the integrity of the decision you made at that time, but did you ever consider calling, because of the importance of the case, calling the District Attorney's Office or the County Counsel's Office or the Superior Court for an opinion in connection with the language used by Judge Walker in that Court Order?

> A No, I did not.

Did Mr. Sours indicate to you during that telephone conversation that he had made either one of those contacts or any one of those contacts?

> A No.

Q I take it that at the time you gave Mr. Loyless Williams permission to show Mr. Harper the original exhibits in the Sirhan case or at least those that he was interested in looking at?

A Well, those that he was interested in looking at.

Q Would it be fair to say that insofar as those exhibits were concerned, Judge Walker's Order relating to the display of the exhibits was a unique Court Order, based on your own experience in the Clerk's Office?

A To be very truthful, I don't recall prior to that time I had ever seen any Court Order which either restricted access to the exhibits or had any other connection with the exhibits.

I don't recall that I had other than a Superior Court Judge making a specific order that a certain gun is to be destroyed.

Q Forgetting about such routine court orders, and focusing in particular on Judge Walker's Court Order, what methods were used to alert the personnel, the exhibit custodian clerks in the clerk's office to the fact that there is an existing court order in connection with a particular criminal case that must and should be adhered to?

A Well, simply we would have adequate copies of the court order made for dissemination among everyone involved.

Q Do you know in connection with Judge Walker's

Court Order that there was any dissemination of Judge Walker's

Court Order?

A I would not because I'm sure that order must have

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1	Q I take it that was because there was no one
2	showed you a court order up until the time Mr. Williams
3	presented it to you; is that correct?
4	A That's correct.
5	Q You have made reference to what I gather is a
6	death penalty locker.
7	Can you tell us what that is?
8	A It is a special area assigned to store extra
9	exhibits connected with death penalty cases.
10	They are steel lockers with one key, and it's
11	located next to the Hall of Justice, I think it's called the
12	Hall of Justice Annex.
13	Q Do you know in what room?
14	A It is Room 102.
15	We utilize that area to store death penalty
16	exhibits so there isn't the possibility of inadvertent
17	destruction of exhibits connected with that kind of case.
18	Q Is there a log of any kind which shows the
19	transfers that may be made between the 4th Floor of this
20	building, the Clerk's Office on the 4th Floor and the material
21	coming from or going to the death penalty locker?
22	A You mean existing now?
23	Q Yes.
24	A I believe there is now.
25	Q I notice you emphasize "now".
26	How recently is "now"?
27	A Within the last month I believe we instituted a
28	system to show this kind of traffic.



Q Was that one of the suggestions made by one of my investigators when they were interviewing you?

A Well, I don't know whether he put it in the form of a suggestion.

I think I hit upon it as a method that probably we should institute.

Q Did you, in fact, institute that method?

A I recall talking to Bob Sours who was really the supervisor of the exhibit custodian clerks and made that idea known to him and he thought that was a pretty good idea and that we should do that, also.

Q Mr. Walker, I want to direct your attention to this Grand Jury Exhibit Number 2 form.

We'll start here on the left-hand portion; I'm referring to this line where it says, "OUT/TIME" then a space and then "INT" and then "IN/TIME" and then again "INT".

What is the significance of that language?

A Well, the "OUT/TIME" is the time certain exhibits were checked out and the "INT" is the name of the person who handed the exhibits out.

Then the "IN/TIME" means the time the exhibits were returned and the "INT" is the person who received the exhibits back.

In other words, if you just have a "OUT/TIME" and there is no "IN/TIME" there is a big gap because there is no record when these exhibits were returned or if, in fact, they did get back into the vault.

If you have something like that, we have to start

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1	searching and looking into the situation.
2	Q So these notations down here are just to advise
3	the time the exhibits were sent out and the time they were
4	received back?
5	A Yes.
6	Q And the "INT" has to do with the person either
7	putting them out or the person taking them back?
8	A Yes.
9	Q . And they would be the initials of the person who
10	was actually showing or receiving back the exhibits?
11	A Yes.
12	Q Would it be fair to say that as recently as
13	the date of your interview on Tuesday, June 13, 1971, that
14	you were not even sure what the notation "INT" stood for?
15	A Yes, that is pretty accurate.
16	Q Now, insofar as the physical premises of the
17	4th Floor of the County Clerk's Office are concerned, you
18	have a public area, do you not and by that I mean you have a
19	public counter?
20	A Yes, we do.
21	Q In fact, you can take a look at the exhibit
22	behind you?
23	Do you recognize that diagram as being generally
24	and fairly representing the premises in the Clerk's Office,
25	and I'm specifically concerned right now with the public
26	area?
27	
28	A Yes.
	O And you notice the notation "Table" as we are

1	looking at Room 448, there is a table to the left of that
2	counter?
3	A Yes.
4	Q Were you acquainted with the older method of
5	examining the exhibits by members of the public, where they
6	took the exhibits given them by the exhibit clerk and
7	examined them on the table in the public area?
8	A Yes.
9	Q . There has been a change?
10	A That's correct.
11	Q Do you recall the date or the approximate date
12	of that change?
13	A Yes; it was in the latter part of 1970, during
14	Mr. Talmachoff's vacation.
15	We changed it during his absence.
16	Q Had he suggested to you that it be changed before
17	he left on vacation?
18	A I believe there was some talk as to changing that
19	area but we hadn't taken the specific steps to do it.
20	At that time there had, I believe, been some talk
21	about it.
22	Q Did you institute the change yourself during his
23	absence?
24	A I was involved in it.
25	Q I would refer you now to page 55 of your interview
26	on July 13th by my investigators and the question was asked
27	you:
28	"QUESTION: Is there any method of maintaining

contraction or we see that the second of the

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control and insuring the same exhibits are returned or were returned?"

They were then talking about the giving out of the exhibits and making sure the same exhibits were returned and your answer was, as I have it here:

"ANSWER: Well, in this sense if a person made a request to see this number of exhibits, we limit him to a certain number. We only bring so many at a time so in our process of checking it back in we're fairly sure that they are the same exhibits that are checked out.

"Then, number two, ever since, well, for some time we have not allowed a review of exhibits outside, only inside the ante-room."

Do you remember that answer?

A Yes.

Q Did you then continue and make the following statement:

"We used to have a table outside and there was no surveillance and that was a pretty wide breach of security and that was changed. We moved the table inside."

Do you recall that statement?

A Yes.

Q Was it, in fact, true, "We used to have a table there and there was no surveillance"?

A Yes, I was being truthful.

Q Is there any interpretation of that language you want to make at this time as to the statement you then made so



that we may have a sense of completeness insofar as your current thinking is concerned?

A Yes; I think when I used the term "there was no surveillance" I think that was a little strong.

I think it would have been more accurate to say that when the table was outside there was not as great a surveillance as we would like. Therefore, by moving the table inside we had a much better surveillance of the exhibits.

Q Without quibbling with semantics, would it be fair to say that there was not as much surveillance as you would like?

A Yes, we would have a greater amount of observation and surveillance.

Q That would be based on your particular working conditions and the members of the public or the number of members of the public that may have been in the office at the time, and things of that nature?

A Yes, sir.

As you sit here now, Mr. Walker, are you aware of any irregularities in connection with the handling of exhibits in the Sirhan case, insofar as the clerk's office is concerned on the 4th Floor of this building?

A No, I'm not aware of irregularities, in other words, I presume you mean if there are specific methods to showing the exhibits, if there were violations of those rules and regulations.

Q I would like to make it a little broader than that and include in the use of the word "irregularities" the

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possibility of perhaps handing out original exhibits to unauthorized persons, the taking of documents from the Sirhan documentary evidence and either selling it or distributing it in any other way.

Having in mind that broader use of the term
"irregularity", do you have any personal knowledge that there
was any such irregularity in connection with the Sirhan
case?

A I have not.

As you sit here now and based upon your discussion with my investigators and your own personal experience in connection with this matter, would it be fair to say that there was a tremendous room for improvement in connection with the handling of the Sirhan exhibits?

A I would say, as in any large operation like this, that there was room for improvement which I believe has been an on-going matter, at least since I was reassigned to the criminal division.

MR. HECHT: I have no further questions of this witness.

THE FOREMAN: Are there any further questions to be directed to this witness from any Grand Jury member?

If so, please write them out and they will be directed to the witness through the Deputy District Attorney.

MR. HECHT: I have one further question; I am sorry.

Q Mr. Walker, I believe you have already told us, and please correct me if I am wrong, you were not personally involved in waiting on people in the sense of handling

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customers or requests to see exhibits; is that correct?

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That's correct.

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Did you have occasion to talk to other exhibit 0 custodian clerks in the Clerk's Office to find out whether they had been instructed in any unique procedures in connec-

I have. Α

tion with the Sirhan case?

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Q Did anyone ever tell you that -- strike that. How many persons did you speak to in connection with this inquiry on your part?

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At least three. A

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Who are they?

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Ken Buckley, the supervisor and I believe two or maybe three of the other exhibit custodian clerks were present at the time.

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Who were the other two or three?

16 17

I believe it may have been Ken Douglas and possibly

Did any of these gentlemen, Mr. Williams or

18

Loyless Williams. It is difficult for me to recall.

19 #22

Mr. Douglas, tell you that they had been specifically in-

21

20

structed that when anyone came to the Clerk's Office to look

22

at the Sirhan exhibits, or the copy of the Sirhan exhibits,

23

that they were immediately to notify Mr. Buckley of that

24

25

fact?

here?

I cannot recall that they did.

26

May I ask you not to discuss that particular question with any of the other clerks during the proceedings

27

,	A Yes; I will not discuss it.
2	Ω Do you have copies of this new exhibit review
3	form?
4	A No, not with me.
5	Q When you return to the Clerk's Office, and I
6	believe the next witness we're going to call is going to be
7	Mr. Abdelmalak, would you give one of the others a copy of
8	that form, so we can have it when we call that gentleman in?
9	A Right.
10	Q Are you familiar with the notation that exists
11	on the Sirhan guide file that says, "See Court Order"?
12	A Yes, I'm familiar with that.
13	Q Do you know strike that.
14	Are you aware of any policy in the Clerk's
15	Office that would require an eye-catching notation of that
16	kind to be placed on any guide envelope in major cases, or
17	in any cases where there was a court order that concerned
18	itself with the responsibilities of your department?
19	A Yes, I'm aware of that policy.
20	Q One of the Grand Jurors has asked the following
21	question:
22	Why couldn't "See Court Order" be printed in bold
23	type in another color to attract the attention of the exhibit
24	clerk?
25	Do you have any answer to that?
26	A Yes; as a matter of fact, that idea did come up.
27	We used the red ink on most of our notations,
28	and it is a yeary consitive exhibit if it is thought to be a

1	sensitive exhibit, it must be done in red ink and we do use
2	color coding.
3	Q There is a question from another of the Grand
4	Jurors which I'm going to paraphrase in my own way.
5	You were aware, at least reasonably so, after
6	the investigation by my office commenced, that we were
7	interested in looking into the handling of the exhibits in
8	the Sirhan case, were you not?
9	A Yes.
10	Q Had you had any conversations with any members
11	of your department where it was suggested that you were to
12	minimize the criticism or the inadequacies, if any, of your
13	department in connection with the Sirhan case?
14	A Absolutely not.
15	Q Did you personally see any of the Sirhan note-
16	books in the Sirhan case?
17	A Yes, copies of the Sirhan notebooks.
18	Q Do you recall approximately when it was that
19	any one of those notebooks was brought to your attention?
20	A Yes; that was on the return of Mr. Talmachoff
21	from San Francisco.
22	Q After he had gone up to see the Clerk of the
23	Supreme Court?
24	A Yes, sir.
25	Q And what were the circumstances under which you
26	recall seeing any of the notebooks or copies of the note-
27	books?
28	A I think we were making our second or third

inventory of the exhibits and I believe I saw either copies of pages from a notebook because I believe there were certain photographs and copies being brought back for authentication by Mr. Talmachoff and I believe there may have been copies of those pages.

Q I direct your attention to the exhibits brought to us by Mr. Talmachoff, Grand Jury Exhibit Number 52, and I'll ask you to look at that and be as careful as you possibly can, can you tell me if you ever saw that before?

- A Yes, sir.
- Q When did you first see that, sir?
- A Yesterday.
- Q What were the circumstances leading up to your seeing that document?

A I just happened to walk into Mr. Talmachoff's office and I knew he had a box of documents connected with that investigation and I saw Alice Nishikawa, the clerk who was assigned to this case at the time it was being tried, and I just happened to see it in this box.

- Q Was there any discussion during the time, any discussion about this particular document?
 - A I don't recall any discussion about it at all.
- Q One of the Grand Jurors has asked the following question:

Have you ever seen the recommendations of the 1968 Grand Jury in connection with the operation of the Clerk's Office?

A I did.

Q When did you first see them, sir?

A When I was first reassigned as a management trainee, Mr. Emory Hatcher, the former Chief Deputy, suggested I could get some needed background by reading the 1968 management audit report.

Q Did you then read it?

A I did.

Q You realize at that time there was some concern expressed by the 1968 Grand Jury in connection with certain things in the management and control of the exhibits that were in possession of the Clerk's Office?

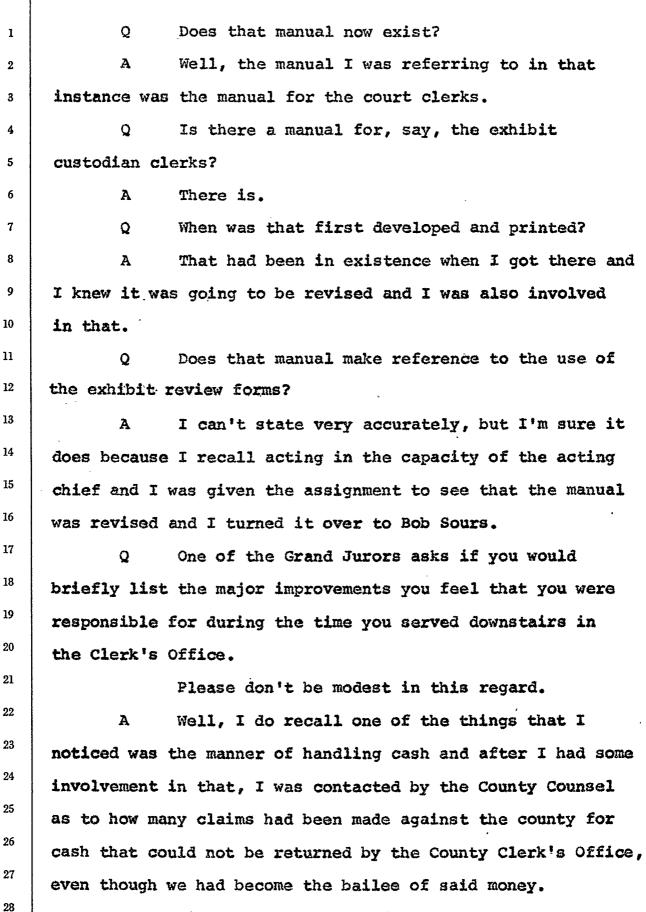
A Yes.

Q One of the Grand Jurors has asked me to inquire whether all of your time on the job is devoted to improving the methods and systems of the department in connection with the handling of exhibits; and, if not, what else, or what other kind of work did you do in the Clerk's Office during this period of time?

èvaluations for the court clerks, and I had to see judges regarding county policy on anything connected with court procedures, and I had to assist the chief of the division in writing a manual for the criminal division, and familiarize myself with Mr. Talmachoff's job, and the employees under him in the Clerk's Office.

Q You mentioned something about preparing a manual for the criminal division?

A Yes.



With the assistance of Mr. Talmachoff we





instituted a checking system with all of the branches, and our trust and revenue officers so that any money that is received from the Grand Jury, the Municipal Court or by any of the Superior Courts, there would be a method of checking and rechecking so that we could close some gaps as to possible theft. So we have instituted a system which runs to about four or five pages of written instructions.

To this date, even though there has been no specific audit, we have not had any claims for return of money because they would have to prove it.

In other words, I'm not aware of any loss of money since July 20, 1970, when the system was instituted.

I think I was also involved in the decision regarding the speed-up or disposing of all exhibits by instituting a procedure whereby rather than being as crowded as we were we would provide more room to handle the exhibits.

I think that as far as the court clerks too that under our instructions they have become more aware of the security of the exhibits by the staff meetings that we have held.

We instituted a system of constant counseling with the court clerks, making them aware of the operations that are going on in the office, not just a little bit in the courtroom whereby they make a judge happy and where they were not concerned about the larger problems being faced by our staff.

We have conducted a number of staff meetings

-	
1	so that these people would not only get to know their jobs
2	but the jobs of others that they might be concerned with.
3	Q Did you conduct those staff meetings?
4	A Yes, I did.
5	Q Does Mr. Talmachoff attend them?
6	A Mr. Talmachoff attends and conducts them, also.
7	Q What is your impression as to the caliber of the
8	exhibit custodian clerks that you now have?
9	Are they adequate insofar as doing the job that
10	has to be done?
11	A I would say they are. I would say they are far
12	above the caliber that we have had in the past.
13	I believe that is directly attributable to the
14	efforts of Mr. Talmachoff.
15	We had made some efforts to upgrade the quality
16	of personnel in that office for quite some time.
17	Q Is it possible for an exhibit custodian clerk to
18	find and take out an exhibit without reference to the guide
19	envelope from that particular case?
20	A Well, yes, the exhibits are in open bins within
21	a vault and also the room downstairs and he could pick up an
22	exhibit just occasionally.
23	. He doesn't necessarily have to have a guide
24	envelope to be able to pick it up.
25	Q How far are the guide envelopes kept from where
26	the bulk of the exhibits are?
27	A It's kind of difficult to answer.
28	We have quide envelopes that are only six feet



from some exhibits, but we have five rooms. We have some rooms in the basement in the Hall of Justice and we have some rooms next door, but all of the guide envelopes are upstairs in Room 448.

- Q Another question from one of the Grand Jurors.

 You have indicated that you have a great deal
 to do in connection with the operation of the court clerks,
 the Superior Court Clerks; do you feel that you could put
 that knowledge and experience to better use in another location
 or another job in the Clerk's Office?
 - A I'm not quite sure I understand.
 - Q The question goes on to ask:
- You're specifically assigned to Room 448, and that's on the 4th Floor of this building?
 - A Yes.
- Q Is that in the natural process of advancement for someone who has your knowledge and ability?
 - A No. it is not.
 - Q Would you explain your answer?
- Clerk, then there are examinations given to all management trainees and once you're appointed a management trainee you attend certain seminars and then you're assigned to different projects and I just happened to be assigned to the exhibit project based on the 1968 -- well, not specifically based on the 1968 audit, but based on the recognition of the department, and also the chiefs of the division, that something should be done about the exhibit process.

THE FOREMAN: Any further questions?

Do you understand the rule of secrecy as it applies to the Grand Jury, Mr. Walker?

MR. WALKER: Yes, I do.

Apparently not.

THE FOREMAN: Then it is not necessary for me to give you the usual admonition concerning secrecy.

Thank you very much for coming in.

We'll take a short recess.

(Short mid-morning recess.)

THE FOREMAN: Let the record show the Grand Jurors have reassembled and the court reporter is present.

You may proceed, Mr. Hecht.

MR. HECHT: Mr. Abdelmalak, please.

(Thereupon, the witness, Fayek K. Abdelmalak, was then escorted into the Grand Jury Hearing Room by the Sergeant At Arms.)

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FAYEK K. ABDELMALAK,

called as a witness before the Grand Jury, was duly sworn as follows:

THE FOREMAN: You do solemnly swear that the evidence you shall give in this matter now pending before the Grand Jury of the County of Los Angeles shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

THE WITNESS: I do.

1			EXAMINATION
2	BY MR.	HECHT	:
3		Q	Mr. Abdelmalak, what is your business or
4	occupa	tion?	
5		A	I am a clerk.
6		Q	Is that in the County Clerk's Office?
7		A	Yes.
8		Q	I don't mean to embarrass you but I wish to ask
9	you cer	rtain o	questions and if you're not sure what the question
10	means,	don't	hesitate to ask me to repeat it or explain.
11	,	A	Okay.
12		Q	How long have you been with the Clerk's Office?
13	**************************************	A	Almost about seventeen months.
14	1	Q	Are you an exhibit custodian clerk?
15	ı	A	No.
16	7 4	Q	What is your job title?
17		A	Just clerk.
18	-	Q	What are your duties in the Clerk's Office?
19		A	I work and give information in the Clerk's
20	Office.	•	
21	•	Q	Do you come to the counter and wait on the people
22	on the	4th F	loor?
23		A	Yes.
24		Q	Do your duties include the handling of
25	exhibit	ts?	,
26		A	Yes.
27		Q	And what is the name of your immediate supervisor?
28		A	Before.

		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
1	Q	Presently.
2	A	Jack Trans.
3	. Q	You used the term "before". Who was that?
4	A	Ken Buckley.
5	.Q	All right; will you tell us what your vocational
6	background :	is, Mr. Abdelmalak?
7	A	I have a B.A.
8	Q	From what University?
9	A	Ainahams University in Cairo, Egypt.
10	. Q	Are you familiar with the exhibit review forms?
11	A	Yes.
12	Q	Are you familiar with the guide envelopes?
13	A	Yes.
14	Q	When I refer to the Sirhan case, do you know what
15	case I'm ta	lking about?
16	A	Yes.
17	Q	As you sit here now, do you know that Judge Walker
18	issued a cou	ort order in connection with the display of the
19	original ext	nibits in the Sirhan case?
20	A	Yes.
21	Q	When did you first find out that Judge Walker had
22	issued that	court order?
23	, A	There is a Minute Order for sealing some of the
24	exhibits by	the door of the room.
25	. Q	Do you know whether that is Judge Walker's order
26	or Judge Ala	arcon's order?
27	A	I don't remember the name of the judge.
28	Ω	Is it a one-page document or a two-page document?

1	A	I cannot remember.
2	Q	Is it still there?
3	A	I no longer work there.
4	Q	Where are you working now?
5	A	In the office.
6	Q	Where were you working in the office, which
7	desk in the	Clerk's Office before?
8	A	In the exhibit room.
9	Q	How long did you work in the exhibit room?
10	A	About four months.
11	Q	And what were those four months specifically?
12	A	I think the end of April to August.
13	Q	What year?
14	A	I can't remember what year.
15	Q	Was it this year?
16	A	No.
17	Q	Last year?
18 .	A	Yes.
19	Q	1970?
20	A	Yes.
21	Q	Did you ever personally read Judge Walker's
22	court order?	
23	A	Yes.
24	Q	Where did you see it?
25	А	It's by the door of the exhibit room.
26	Q	I think you have already indicated to us you
27	are not cert	ain whether it is Judge Walker's or Judge
28	Alarcon's or	der?
	,	

1	A Well, it is not my concern but I am aware that it
2	sealed the exhibits.
3	Q Do you know where the guide envelope is?
4	A Yes.
5	Q Do you know whether there is a copy of Judge
6	Walker's court order in that guide Envelope?
7	A I can't remember.
8	Q When you first started working the exhibits, did
9	anyone tell you that there is a court order issued by Judge
10	Walker in the Sirhan case?
11	A No.
12	Q Have any written instructions ever been given to
13	you specifically setting forth what procedures were to be
14	used in the handling of the original exhibits in the Sirhan
15	case?
16	A No.
17	Q Did Mr. Talmachoff or any of the supervisors
18	or anybody in the Clerk's Office ever tell you that none of
19	the original exhibits in the Sirhan case could be allowed to
20	be seen without a court order granting that kind of permission?
21	A No one told me about it.
22	Q Have you ever waited on people who came to see any
23	of the exhibits, copies of the exhibits from the Sirhan case?
24	_A Yes.
25	Q Did you ever look at any of the documents in the
26	Sirhan guide envelope when these people came in?
27	A First of all, I started I can remember that
28	there were two kinds of exhibits.

1	Q	Two kinds of exhibits?
2	A	Yes.
3	Q	Are you talking about the Sirhan case?
4	A	Yes.
5	Q	Go ahead.
6	A	It's Room 444 on the floor where there were
7	regular exhi	bits and the sealed exhibits are next door.
8		I waited on two men, Mr. Harper and another man
9	that I canno	t remember now.
10	Q	All right; take a look at this, then.
11		I'm going to show you 37 review exhibit slips
12	that have be	en marked Grand Jury Exhibit 1 through 37.
13		Would you take a look at them and pull out those
14	slips that y	ou have some connection with?
15.	•	Just sift them over and put the others away.
16	A	(The witness complied with counsel's request.)
17	Q	You've pulled out two?
18	А	Three.
19	Q	All right; have you checked the rest of them?
20	A	No.
21	Q	Will you take a look through the rest of them
22	and see if y	ou recognize any of them?
23		Just pull them out.
24	A	Here's another one.
25	Q	All right; you've pulled out four.
26	1	I believe number 2, 3, 18, 19 and 25; is that
27	correct?	•
28	- A	Correct.

1	Q	All right; let's put that in front of you.
2		When I say Grand Jury Exhibit Number 2, you
3	see the numb	er up here on the exhibit?
4	A	Yes.
5	Q	Now, please take a look at that first one,
6	please, Gran	d Jury Exhibit Number 2.
7		Do you have that in front of you?
8	A	Yes.
9	Q	How do you know that you were involved in that
10	particular t	ransaction, Mr. Abdelmalak?
11	A.	I've been called by the District Attorney's
12	Office.	
13	Q	Sir, maybe my question is not clear.
14	•	Just from looking at the Grand Jury Exhibit Number
15	2, how can y	ou tell that you had any connection with this
16	particular d	locument?
17	A	I don't understand.
18	Q -	Would you look at this document, Grand Jury
19	Exhibit Numb	er 2?
20	. А	Yes.
21	Q	Do you see your initials or name?
22	A	Yes.
23	Q	Where do you see them?
24	A	It's right here.
25	Q	You're pointing to where it says, "F.K."?
26	A	Yes.
27	Q	What does that mean, the first "F.K." under the
28	"INT"?	• •

}	
1	Does that mean that you have brought out some
2	exhibits?
3	A Yes.
4	Q In the upper left-hand corner where it says
5	"Date" I just see a 7 and a slash; do you follow me?
6	A Yes.
7	Q Do you remember the exact date that you were
8	involved in this transaction?
9	A No.
10	Q Now, beneath the line, where it says identifica-
11	tion, I see where it says "Exhibit 84-6-8-115."
12	Do you see what I'm looking at?
13	A Yes, I do.
14	Q Can you tell me if you brought all of these
15	items out and showed that person those items?
16	A Well, there is one person I would like to draw
17	attention to.
18	Q Let's, please, stick to this particular exhibit.
19	A Okay.
20	Q I want to draw your attention in connection with
21	this exhibit, first look at the whole thing.
22	A Okay.
23	Q Do you recall that particular exhibit and that
24	transaction or that event?
25	A I don't understand.
26	Q Well, the point is, that you have indicated that
27	there are some exhibits that were taken out on this out slip.
28	A -T didn't null the exhibits

1	Q	Who did, if you know?
2	A	I pulled all the exhibits available in Room 444,
3	that is the	unsealed exhibits.
4	Q	Which are the unsealed exhibits; do you know?
5	Which are the	ose exhibits in connection with the numbers that
6	are down here	e?
7	A	Well, there is miscellaneous and there are
8	interviews by	the people in the hotel and he had copies of
9	those exhibit	ts I don't know the name.
10	Q	Please take a look at the numbers.
11		Did you pull number 6?
12	A	I don't know Exhibit Number 6.
13	Q	Well, if it relates to the trial Exhibit 6 was
14	Mr. Sirhan's	gun.
15		Did you pull the gun?
16	A	Yes.
17	Q	Did you show the gun to Mr. Faura?
18	A	Who?
19	Q	I'm showing you this document. You see the
20	name Fernando	Faura?
21	A ·	Oh, now I remember. I didn't see the name here;
22	okay.	
23	Q	That is Mr. Faura's slip?
24	A	Yes.
25	Q	Did he see the gun?
26	A	That man I went to the exhibit first and in the
27	place I didn	t find all those exhibits.
28		This is the unsealed stuff, so he asked to see my

1	boss, which is Kenneth Buckley.
2	Kenneth Buckley was not in at that time. So he
3	went to see Mr. Sours because he was angry.
4	At that very moment Ken Buckley walked in.
5	He showed him the court order and he said he
6	wanted to see Mr. Sharp and he was upset on that.
7	Q How do you know he went to see Mr. Sharp?
8	A He was kind of mad and Mr. Sours called me in and
9	I told him my story.
10	Q What did you tell him?
11	A I told him that he wanted to see some exhibits
12	and I didn't give him the allowance to see those exhibits
13	because they are sealed so he went out angry saying that he
14	will call Mr. Sharp.
15	Q What happened then?
16	A I had been called to Mr. Sours' office and I
17	told him the story.
18	Q What happened then?
19	A I don't know.
20	Q Did you ever show anything to Mr. Faura then?
21	A Only the unsealed exhibits.
22	Q What is the "X" mark that appears below the word
23	"Misc." and then the name "John Fahey"?
24	Do you see the "X"?
25	. A Yes.
26	Q Is that your "X"?
27	Is that your mark?
28	A Well, I might be mistaken in saying yes or no. I