

⑤ Kassab et al

The following report is a condensed summary of the Kassab investigation as outlined in the chart accompanying this report.

During the early months of 1962, Los Angeles Police Officers M.A. McGowan, D. G. Rickards and three other officers entered into a sham real estate purchasing venture with Officer Latham whereby they received from \$75.00 to \$250.00 for each transaction that they entered into with him. Latham was the go-between the officers and David Kassab, a non-licensed real estate salesman. Kassab applied for purchase of approximately 100 homes in the San Fernando Valley for a sum of \$18,200.00 each. Individual escrows were immediately opened on each house. The officers acting as "dummy" buyers applied for new loans based on an inflated price. In some cases, second trust deeds were sold to unsuspecting buyers before title was cleared through escrow. When the "non-sufficient funds" checks, submitted by the officers earlier as down payment on the property bounced, Kassab would buy back the second trust deed at a 50 per cent discount on the pretext that a foreclosure was imminent.

David Kassab was born in Bagdad, Iraq. He is the third of seven children who was forced, with his parents, to flee their homeland because of anti-Jewish feelings in that country. He and his family lived in Bagdad from 1940 to 1948. During the years of 1948 and 1949 his family lived in Urban Teheran, Iran. He came to the United States in 1949 and has been living in Los Angeles ever since. He has been in the real estate business since 1955.

Kassab's arrest record dates back to August 28, 1959 when he was arrested for grand theft. This case involved a

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a travel agency sham with a co-defendant, George Dimitrovich. Both were doing business under the name of Europa Travel. They advertised air transportation at greatly reduced rates. The prospectus was that a plane would be leased from a Mexican Airline and flights would operate to Europe from Mexico. The round trip flight was advertised at \$545.00. Both David Kassab and Dimitrovich collected over \$30,000.00 from 80 UCLA students. They pocketed the money and did not fulfill their contract. Intelligence reports indicated that both David Kassab and Dimitrovich were probably in partnership with Joe Sica, in this travel agency. Although there were strong indications of the Sica connection, positive proof could not be established.

Working with David Kassab, while involved in the home buying sham, was Dr. Stanley Dubrin. Dubrin listed himself as the Vice-president of the American Nile Corporation, a real estate office. David Kassab listed himself as a co-owner of that Corporation. Other Kassab family members affiliated themselves with that organization as did several relatives of the Kassab Clan.

Dr. Stanley Dubrin's arrest record dates back to February 28, 1963 when he was charged with grand theft. In this case, a first trust deed was inadvertently reconveyed to him. Although he had knowledge of this error, he sold the property as "free and clear," then dissipated the funds. On October 14, 1966, Dubrin was arrested for the crime of abortion but was released due to insufficient evidence. On June 14, 1963, the Los

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Angeles Police Department was advised that Dr. Dubrin had propositioned an ex-convict to murder his ex-wife, Kathy Dubrin, aka, Ink. Dubrin was not brought to trial or arrested for this solicitation of murder due to the informants lack of cooperation with the investigators. Without that persons testimony, a case could not be established.

In 1966, Dubrin rented office space from Joe M. Arnoff the owner of the "Big A" stores at 8341 Conoga Blvd., Conoga Park, in connection with his medical practice. Dubrin and Arnoff have been close friends since 1962. He was also the Arnoff family physician.

Arnoff eventually went bankrupt at the "Big A" stores and severed his business relationship with Dr. Dubrin. Both, however, remained on friendly terms and still meet socially on occasion.

Arnoff was introduced to David Kassab by Dr. Dubrin but did not become acquainted any further.

Arnoff was involved in the bribery case concerning Councilman Tom Shepard to the extent that he, Arnoff, was one of the owners of a seven acre parcel of land in Conoga Park which was rezoned in 1964 for the purpose of constructing multiple dwelling units. Councilman Shepard was later indicted on bribery charges in connection with this rezoning. Arnoff owned 45 per cent of the building corporation stock.

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Another figure in the Shepard case was Wallace White who received 45 per cent of the corporation's stock for putting up the initial cash investment. Arthur Toll, the attorney for this corporation, received five per cent of the stock as his fee for legal services rendered. Gerald Chase, a C.P.A., received the remaining five per cent for handling the tax account of the same corporation.

Gerald Chase is a business partner in the accounting firm of Chase, Bierman and Dunn at 280 S. Beverly Drive, Suite 402, Beverly Hills, California. Chase was also the accountant for Arnoff while the latter was doing business at the "Big A" stores. Both parties terminated their business association during March 1965. Their relationship at that time was strictly business. They never became close friends. At present, Chase is suing Arnoff for back pay owed to him during the time he was handling the "Big A" account.

Among the numerous tax accounts that Gerald Chase handles is a person named Jim Braden. He has handled Braden's Empire Oil Corporation account since 1963 or 1964.

Note: See the detailed report of Braden's entire investigation at the end of this report.

Braden has been associated with Victor Pereira for numerous years. Both were sent to federal prison for grand theft. In this case, both had conspired to bilk Pereira's former wife out of a large sum of money. Both Pereira and Braden are acquainted with the Smaldone Brothers who belong to the "Mafia."

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Another mutual acquaintance of Braden and Pereira was a person named Arthur Clark Sr., who is now deceased. Clark was a former member of the Old Detroit Purple Gang. Pereira, when released from prison, was given employment by Earl Scheib of the car painting fame. Intelligence reports indicate that Pereira was also associated with Paul Billings who was closely associated with Mafia members such as the Battaglia Brothers. In 1962, Pereira had an active financial interest in a New York business firm named Growth Industries. He handled new stock issues for Accurate Electronics. He sold Fred and Alfred Sica \$4500.00 worth of this stock and retained the shares in his name. Investigation indicated that this was a hoodlum operated company headed by the Colletti Brothers.

The background investigation of Officers Latham and Rickards indicated that they were active members of the John Birch Society in 1963. The John Birch Chapter in the North Hollywood area, was closely associated with the Minutemen Society of which Edgar Eugene Bradley, Carole Aydelotte, Arthur Aydelotte, Keith Gilbert, Dennis Mower, Phillip Scheib and other right wing extremists were members.

In checking the background of these Minutemen members, Officer C.E. White's names was mentioned as a friend of Keith Duane Gilbert. On February 25, 1965, 1400 pounds of stolen dynamite was located in Gilbert's garage apartment at 419 Western, Glendale, California. The owner of the residence who lived in the front house was Bernice Iverson, the sister of Officer White. During an interview with White, by the investigating officers in the dynamite burglary

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case, he admitted his acquaintance with Gilbert. He also admitted attending a Minutemen rally several months prior where Troy Houghton, the West Coast Director of the Minutemen, spoke. He also admitted knowing Dennis Mower, a militant Minuteman.

An investigation into Gilbert's background indicated that a business card with the inscription "Michael Wayne, Promoter" was found in Gilbert's residence when the dynamite was located.

This Michael Wayne, it was speculated by this investigator, was the same young male Caucasian who was at the Ambassador Hotel June 5, 1968 when Senator Kennedy was shot. Shortly after the shooting, Michael Wayne was seen running from the kitchen area and subsequently stopped and later questioned by Los Angeles Police Detectives. During that interrogation, it was noted that he was in possession of a card bearing the name of Keith Gilbert. Due to the fact that Gilbert was an extremist in the right wing organization and Michael Wayne was seen running from the scene of the shooting, an intensive investigation was conducted to determine their association.

On April 1, 1968, Gilbert was interviewed in San Quentin prison with reference to Wayne's business card and his connection with ultra-extremist groups. Gilbert admitted his own membership in the Minutemen Society, but could not recall the persons who gave him the business card with Wayne's name. Gilbert indicated that he had acquired numerous business cards while in the firearms business in which he and another Minuteman, Robert R. Romero were partners.

Note: Although Wayne's card was one of many found in Gilbert's residence, at the time of the dynamite discovery, the name Wayne could not be found among any of Gilbert's other papers.

Gilbert, it was noted, was anxious to be truthful with this investigator as his parole investigating officer was present during this interview. Gilbert stated he did not want to lie and hurt his chances for an early parole.

Gilbert, it was learned earlier, wrote a letter to Senator R.F. Kennedy on March 1, 1967 from San Quentin prison. In that letter, he stated that he was a member of the Minutemen Organization and had vital information connecting Lee Harvey Oswald to the Minutemen. When questioned about this letter, Gilbert stated that he had received this information from Dennis Mower and that he, Gilbert, did not have actual knowledge that Oswald was a Minuteman.

Numerous photographs were shown to Gilbert which included persons he definitely knew. Among these pictures was a photograph of Michael Wayne. Gilbert identified all the photographs that the investigator knew Gilbert was associated with. However, he failed to identify a picture of Michael Wayne. He emphatically denied having ever met Michael Wayne but added that he probably received the business card from one of many people he met at a gun show in Yuma, Arizona.

Additionally, Gilbert related that Dennis Mower had informed him that Edgar Eugene Bradley had been involved in a murder of a person known as Dallas Roquemore, whose death had been listed as suicide.

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A later investigation into this allegation revealed that Roquemore, an acquaintance of Bradley, was shot and accidentally killed by Frank A. Austin in Weaverville, California on January 4, 1964. An investigation by the Weaverville Sheriff's office and a polygraph examination proved beyond a doubt that the shooting was accidental. Edgar Eugene Bradley was in Southern California at the time of that shooting.

Michael Wayne was reinterviewed on April 1, 1969 to determine his knowledge of the "Wayne" card found at Gilbert's residence and also of Gilbert's card found in his possession on the morning of June 5, 1968.

Wayne was administered a polygraph examination by Lt. E. Hernandez in which he was asked about the business cards and about his running from the scene of the shooting at the Ambassador Hotel. Lt. Hernandez stated that in his opinion, Wayne was being truthful when he replied that he did not know Gilbert, nor had he ever given him a business card, nor had he ever had a business card bearing his own name. He could not recall how he obtained Gilbert's card, nor who had given it to him. The polygraph examination also indicated he was truthful in replying that he had never been a member of the Minutemen, nor was he associated with them.

During an investigation into the membership of the Minutemen Society in North Hollywood area, it was learned that Phillip Scheib was also a member. Phillip Scheib is the son of Earl Scheib. Phillip Scheib was also a personal friend of Officer C.E. White.

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Earl Scheib was a close associate of Victor Pereira and of Paul Billings, who had Mafia connections. Earl Scheib's background indicates close ties with numerous other underworld figures such as the Sica Brothers, Jim Braden, Anthony Tuccelli, Harold Metzger, Vincent J. Meallo and numerous others.

Joe Sica, a Mafia member, is known to have associated with Karl Hoogoian who is a member of the Board of Directors of the San Fernando Valley Rubbish Collectors Association. Hoogoian in turn was known to associate with David Kassab.

Russel E. Parsons, the attorney for Sirhan B. Sirhan, is known to have associated with Joe Sica in the past. Besides being the Sica attorney, indications are that Parsons was a personal friend of the Sicas.

In 1966, Parsons defended Michael McCowan in the latter's criminal retrial when he was charged with "theft of U.S. mail." McCowan was convicted and received a probation sentence of three years. Shortly after Parsons was retained as the attorney for Sirhan B. Sirhan, he contacted Michael McCowan and hired him as a chief investigator for the defense in that case.

The following is a detailed report on the background investigation of Jim Braden. Jim Braden's name first came to the attention of this investigative unit from Peter Noyes, a newscaster and writer. Noyes indicated that Braden was probably the person that Jack Garrison, the District Attorney from New Orleans, was looking for instead of Edgar Eugene Bradley in connection with an alleged conspiracy to assassinate President John F. Kennedy.

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Braden has an extensive criminal record dating back to May 15, 1934 when he was convicted for burglary in Kansas. His last arrest was for shoplifting in Los Angeles on February 9, 1964.

In 1951, Braden and Victor Pereira joined together to commit fraud. The victim in this case was Pereira's ex-wife. Braden and Pereira were convicted of interstate fraud and conspiracy and sentenced to 12 years in a federal penitentiary. Braden was in prison from March 1954 until February 1959 at which time he was released on parole in Los Angeles, California.

After leaving prison, he began working for the Morgan Brown Oil Corporation at 9251 Wilshire Boulevard as a clerk and oil consultant. Pereira, who was also on federal parole had an office in the same building where Braden worked.

Braden worked for the Morgan Brown Corporation for several years. He frequently traveled with Mr. Morgan Brown as his consultant on trips to Louisiana and Texas. Morgan Brown knew of Braden's past prison record.

On October 10, 1960, Braden, twice divorced, married a fifty-five year old widow, Mildred A. Bollman, an heiress to the Swift Meat Company estate.

In 1962, Braden and his wife Mildred, formed the Matador Oil Corporation in Matagorda County, Texas and Opelousas, Louisiana. In 1962, Braden showed his parole officer an oil dividend

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check for \$19,000.00 which he stated was from a quarter interest in the Matagorda County Texas Oil Company.

In 1962, Braden told his parole officer that he and his wife had been threatened by Arthur Clark Jr. because Clark believed Braden owed him money for "services rendered" when Braden and Robert Bollman formed a cattle venture in Chicago. In that same year, Braden and Bollman opened a \$25,000.00 bank account at the First Stockyard Bank, Chicago, Illinois in the name of the "B and B Cattle" account. Clark, according to Braden, was described as an oil promoter. Braden and Pereira's association with the Clarks began in 1953.

In 1963, according to parole reports, Braden, through the Matador Oil Corporation became associated with the Bauman Drilling Company of Dallas, Texas who were drilling a well for him in Landry-Parish, Louisiana.

Braden's association with Roger L. Bauman dates back to their association with Arthur Clark Sr. who was a member of the Old Detroit Purple Gang.

During Braden's parole, he made frequent trips to Texas, Louisiana and Florida. In the months of October, November, and December of 1963 he made trips to Dallas and Houston, Texas.

On November 18, 1963, Braden received permission from the Los Angeles parole office to leave for Dallas, Texas on November 20, 1963, and then to proceed to Houston, Texas. Braden

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estimated this trip would take him approximately ten days.

Braden reported to the parole officer in Dallas, Texas on November 21, 1963 at noon stating that he was going to be in Dallas for several days working on oil deals and conferring with Lamar Hunt.

On November 26, 1963, the Houston, Texas parole office reported that Braden had left that date for Los Angeles.

A check of Braden's record indicated that he used the following aliases: Gene Hale Brading, Gene Brady, Eugene Hale Brading, Harry Eugene Bradley, James Bradley Lee and James Lee Cole. His true name is Eugene Hale Brading.

A check with the California Department of Motor Vehicles revealed that Eugene Hale Brading requested a name change on his operator's license to read Jim Braden. This request was made on September 10, 1963.

On March 11, 1963, Jim Braden opened an account with the City National Bank, Beverly Hills, by depositing two cashier's checks for \$11,500.00. One drawn on the City National Bank for \$8,000.00 and another drawn on the Crocker Citizen's National Bank for \$3,500.00.

On March 28, 1963, Braden made a checking withdrawal of \$10,000.00. This was found to be three cashier's checks all made payable to Jim Braden for amounts of \$5,000.00, \$3,000.00 and \$2,000.00.

Cashier's check #217883 for \$5,000.00 was endorsed by Jim Braden

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