

Gordon Hall:

Interview with Karl Allen, Alexandria, Virginia, Saturday, April 26th, 1969. Mr. Allen, before we get into the meat of the interview, which is the facts and figures surrounding the murder of George Lincoln Rockwell and the aftermath; just for my own information, and for the purposes I hope of history could -- we've just got a couple of salient facts about you. Because I honestly next to nothing about you. For example, your age, and schooling, do you have any objections to --?

Karl Allen:

I have no objection to that, no. I'm 38 years old as of two days ago. Born in Tallahassee, Florida. Went to public schools in Florida. Leon County High School in Tallahassee, [inaudible 0:00:48] Technical School, and Florida State University, which I -- interrupted for three years in the service. I graduated Florida State University in 1956 with a major in political science. Then, I attended Harvard Graduate School with business administration, and graduated in 1958 with a master's degree in business administration. Served three years in the service, and I was released from active duty. From 1962, I believe it was -- I could be wrong on that date. Oh no, I was released from active duty in 1953. And I stayed on as a reserve up until the 1960s. What more would you like to know? I served in a Korean conflict. In a core of an engineers as a first lieutenant.

Gordon Hall:

And your association with the American Nazi Party was over a period of how long?

Karl Allen:

It was around August 1961. And I resigned in December 1963. I was -- just joined up not knowing too much about the organization. I had actually started out as a Bircher, which most people do, I guess, in this movement. Seems to be the grammar school of the movement. But I never actually joined the Birch Society. I had been to two meetings, and I heard Robert Ruff speak in Tampa, Florida, where I was in business. He started to disturb me as to the course of world events were taking, and national events too. I became concerned after hearing his thoughts, and I've always been more inclined for politics than business, and ever since I was a child, I used to listen to the legislative debates and things in Tallahassee, which is the state capital of Florida. Just always had this interest in politics, so I was in business at the time, seeing all these dramatic events taking place in politics was too much for me. So I gave up business, and began investigating different -- what you might call -- or you would call extremist right groups. Because that's the type of groups that appealed to me.

I immediately saw the Birch Society, in my opinion, didn't have what would be a satisfactory solution of the problems, so I began to contact some of the other groups. And you know about the Klan, not be too interested in that, but my next door neighbor was Bill Hendrix, was a long-time chief honcho, whatever they call him in Atlanta, or Florida. So, I already knew I didn't want to belong to that, but I did just accidentally see about Rockwell's Hate Bus, was one in the South at the time. It got very little attention in Florida. I understand it had more publicity of the places than in -- no, it actually had a very small attention, but I did read it in a small article one day.

So I came up to Washington to see what the organization's all about, and I visited, and frankly was not too impressed with it. It was sort of ramshackle old building down on Randolph Street. And in very poor condition. And men were around in sloppy clothes and in torn t-shirts and whatnot with .45s on their hips.

So, in fact, it was not a very impressive place, but I did take the literature back to my room. I had rented a room for two weeks over in Washington. I read the literature, and I was quite startled by it. I thought most of it was inherent. So, I went to the Library of Congress and checked on it. And then, it introduced me to the fact that I was ignorant of a lot of things that had gone on in the world. There were some factual things there, which I had never been acquainted with before. So, this impressed me to some extent. Now, most college people think they know it all.

And this brought me to the fact that I didn't know it all, so this intrigued me that there is this area of information that I was not acquainted with. So, I came back and talked to him personally. The first visit, I did not see him in person. The second time, I happened to walk into the door, at the same time, another man walked in, and we both assumed that the other one was already a member. Found out later, we were both brand new and just accidentally hit the door at the same time. And he was a marine -- just out of the marines, and he was coming to join up. So, we had this discussion, and Rockwell spent most of the time talking with the other guy because he was a black belt karate man, which seemed to be the type of people he wanted at that time. So, I did have a very brief discussion with him. I was rather impressed with him; although, he was not in such great shape, [inaudible 0:05:14] standpoint at that time, either he was working in the print mill and came back -- came out to speak with us.

But I was impressed with his sincerity, and he was just a dynamic individual. I think most people will assure you of that fact. He was a dynamic individual. And had a way of persuading people. To do things which they may not have done. Well, that's basically how I joined it.

Speaker 1:

I see. Your reasons for leaving were?

Karl Allen:

Well, they were -- [inaudible 0:05:45] was over tactics, and well, methods; I guess you can just sum it as tactics. See, he had a four stage program, which I was very impressed with that. But he seemed never to shift out of the first phase, and that was a major disagreement right there. Not only with myself, but with quite a few other people.

Speaker 1:

Did you form your own group shortly thereafter? Or was there a lapse of time between?

Karl Allen:

It was about a month lapse. The time I left, the party number 26 people, and 20 of us left all at one time. And I left quite independently from the others; and most of the others, as you may know from their experience with the American Nazi Party, there was never a time when there not fleets involved in the party.

Speaker 1:

Faction.

Karl Allen:

Well, I was in a faction, per se, with Rockwell. I was the only one in my faction left. And most of the others were in one or more other factions. There was not one other faction; there was several other

factions, but they all left and all left together, which was a strange coincidence because then they contacted me later. Because they would like to get together and form another organization. At first, I said no, and later I said yes after we had two or three more meetings.

Speaker 1:

Well now, on the business of the assassinations since we ought to get right to that. I take it that you believe that John Patler is innocent?

Karl Allen:

That man would be innocent.

Speaker 1:

And apparently, there's a good deal of support for that view in different parts of the country because I've done a fair amount of interviewing --

Karl Allen:

Well, let's say this; I've listened and talked to -- I've listened to the court trials; I followed it day by day. I knew most of the people involved that testified at trial. Except for those so-called eyewitnesses that were brought in from the scene. I didn't know those people personally, but most of the other people involved in the trial, I knew personally. I knew what their motivations may be for why they would say this, that, and the other in court. I was interviewed by mostly detectives who interviewed Patler, and the Nazi Party and other people. And I came up with it very closely, and there's hardly anyone who did follow the trial closely who is not convinced that Patler is not guilty. Because anyone who followed the trial was quite sure that the man Rockwell was shot by someone other than John Patler.

Speaker 1:

Mr. Allen, what are the high points in terms of the evidence that is either misleading or not very convincing? Could you touch on the things that you consider -- see, I have not had access to the transcript, nor -- yet, or I will. And I was not present at the trial, so I'm at a real disadvantage.

Karl Allen:

Well, there is no evidence at all inclining that he is guilty, with an exception of the bullets found on his father-in-law's farm. Which do fit the weapon, which was also found. But there is no direct tie between the weapon and John Patler. With the exception of testimony from people who are now members of the Nazi Party. Now, the weapon belonged to Robert Lloyd. He stated in court that he gave the weapon to John Patler. There were other Nazis who testified that they saw Patler with a weapon. But the two men who Lloyd had mentioned as being witnesses when he handed the weapon and gave it to Patler. They're both now out of the organization, and they have both signed affidavits that they never witnessed such an act. So, these two so-called witnesses to the act deny that this took place.

Of course, they were not available at the time of the trials; it was a fault of Patler's lawyers. And I may not be a good lawyer, but I don't think that Patler had very good representation. The lawyers lost interest in the case, in my opinion, before it was concluded. And they did not do a very good job, and this is a matter of -- this is my opinion.

Speaker 1:

Right. How solid were the eyewitnesses? Or the so-called eyewitnesses?

Karl Allen:

Well, none of the eyewitnesses were very definite. And none of them, actually, were allowed -- none of them who definitely said they said they saw Patler -- or who saw the killer and it was Patler, none of that testimony stood up. But each time it was a -- either ruled out by the judge or discredited by Patler's lawyers.

Speaker 1:

Do you have feelings about what actually did take place? Or --

Karl Allen:

Yeah. Let's go back one more time. So, there was a great deal of evidence brought into the case by the FBI who did the analysis and research in their laboratories of the dirt samples, paint samples, car samples, footprints, hairs from John Patler's body and on the pieces of clothing that they found on the path of flight they said the killer had discarded and so forth.

This was all brought in by the prosecutor as exculpatory evidence because there's a new ruling in Virginia that if the prosecutor has evidence, which attempts to prove the defendant not guilty, then he is obliged to introduce evidence, as well as any incriminating evidence. So, they did bring this in, and all of it, or none of it tied to Patler. the sand and the samples. They took 17 soil samples from the flight -- the path flight or the flight of the path. None of those matched the sand samples that were on John Patler's clothing. And the different police witnesses testified to whether he was wet or not. He had three police witnesses; one said he was dripping wet, the other one said he had wet trousers; and the other one said he was bone dry. So, you can take your choice with the witnesses.

He, himself said he had slightly damp cuffs, and had [inaudible 0:11:08], which sounded reasonable, it was a rainy day. I didn't mean to interrupt your question, but I wanted to get that out -- there was no evidence of any type tied directly to John Patler. The evidence brought out in court, either tended to absolve him, or left it still a matter of doubt. The one thing about the gun, they found the gun the second day after they had looked for it the first day with mine detectives from the Navy. They found it with their naked eyes the next day in a stream, which they had already investigated the day before. Which makes me believe it was probably planted there during the night. Now, this is, of course, a wild accusation on my part. And I'm working on improving it.

The second thing was the bullets found on John Patler's father-in-law's farm. Which came from the weapon, and apparently, there's no doubt that these bullets did come from this weapon. As you can believe ballistics experts, which I do believe, I do believe him. I think the bullets did come from it. But I think they could've been put there also because they went out of their way. The FBI could prove everything else. They had a detailed analysis of everything, but they could not make a definite statement as to how long the bullets had been in the tree; That was the one question they refused to answer.

Speaker 1:

What do you think accounts for the fact that the conviction by the jury was unanimous? [Interposing]

Karl Allen:

Well, I think it had to be unanimous because they wouldn't -- they wouldn't come out of the room until it was unanimous. According to an interview, which the Washington Post reporter had -- you could read this to verify whether you think what I'm saying is true or not. There were one or two who wanted to hold out and not find him guilty. And they were under quite a bit of pressure. I don't mean the other jurists twisted their arms or anything, but it was Christmastime, they had already been locked up for two weeks, and they were anxious to get home. And even if it wasn't Christmas, I'm sure they would've wanted to be out of there for two weeks.

So, the pressure was to reach a conclusion, rather than just stay locked up forever. And they compromised. And this is what it states in the article, which you could verify. They compromised to find him guilty and then give him a relatively light sentence. In other words, for the crime he is convicted of having committed, an ambush, as they call it in Virginia, in broad daylight, premeditated, he certainly, if guilty, should have received more than a 20-year sentence. In which he can't possibly be out on parole in a few years. So, this is a relatively light sentence. Now, the thinking as far as I can determined, and I've talked to a couple of the jurors on the side here, is that they figured that he wasn't necessarily guilty of this, but he was an undesirable person who probably should be put away for life. That's just what they finally concluded.

Speaker 1:

Now, your interest in the case, aside from the fact that keeping an innocent person from -- [Interposing]

Karl Allen:

[Interposing] I don't [inaudible 0:13:50] by innocent people anymore. I lost interest in those types of crusades. I found out from my own personal experiences in court that justice is very seldom rendered. It depends on the strength of power behind you. See, I have been in court suspicion -- I mean, often. As in an innocent capacity. And have been found guilty to know that if you're innocent, you're not always found innocent. And so, it's usually -- such as these students nowadays who have a mass communications of media and so forth behind it, they're almost never found guilty in court because they have this strength behind them, this power, this force. Whereas the Nazi Party had almost no backing. I mean, [inaudible 0:14:31] small numbers. So, it quite easy for a judge to find them guilty, without any real crime or without any recourse because they usually couldn't even afford to carry the case on an appeal.

Well, if you're interested not in -- now, John Patler and I have never been very friendly, we still are not. Especially close friends, I am cooperating with him now more than I had before because I think he has a cause, which I would like to see established. Now, I'm not out for personal, selfish reasons. He and I never got along; he never got along with other people in the organizations. He [inaudible 0:15:06] were deadly enemies, they had fights with each other, they were stabbing each other in the back, politically speaking, [inaudible 0:15:13] remember is an organization. And they never liked each other. And yet, Seth Ryan was the first one to say well, he's not guilty. Because we followed this case. And other people and hardly anyone in our organization was very close to John Patler. And we're still not close to him, but we do think he's not guilty. And we think that the case should stay open so we can determine who is the actual murderer. If we just accept the fact John Patler's guilty and let it be closed, as the prosecutor would like to do, and everyone else. The AEL and everyone else would like to do, then it would be a closed case, and we'll never determine who actually was the culprit.

Speaker 1:

What would be your guess as to when the review comes up; knowing as much as you do, and you obviously know a great deal about it. What would be your guess as to what the outcome will be? I've

already asked John this, and he seems to think that he could be easily exonerated and the whole thing would be finished.

Karl Allen:

I don't think so, I think he gets one chance. I hope I'm proven wrong. But I think he gets one chance what's in the courtroom, and his lawyers flubbed it for him. I'm not saying they did it on purpose. Because I witnessed -- I sat in their office many of hours myself, I witnessed them hard at work. And I don't care if you're poking on this, it won't make me verify for the lawyers, but I could see the wind blowing out of their sails, day by day. In other words, they were not getting paid for this case. They were not especially well-to-do lawyers. They're two young beginning lawyers who haven't really established themselves firmly enough yet to withstand months of no income. And this is what they forced to do because Patler didn't have money. We sent out an appeal letter and got several hundred dollars, and it was \$1,200 total by the time it all came in, but this didn't even pay for the transcripts of the preliminary hearing.

So, they didn't [inaudible 0:16:56]. And Patler's investigator had to quit his investigating job and go to work as a bus driver to make a living, while he's carrying on his investigation. So, this is the type of investigation and legal representation, which he was receiving. Now, as I said, I'm not going to say they sold out, I don't see a conspiracy or any event. But I think that definitely think the wind went outta their sails, and he did not receive, toward the end of the trial, the type of representation and the investigative research tat he should've received.

Speaker 1:

Well now, Patler seems to think that -- and he told me this just yesterday -- that if he isn't exonerated, so the thing is forgotten, that he then can take it to a higher court. And I'm wondering, if in your judgment, whether there's any chance of his doing that? I mean, why would he get favorable review, once his review has been turned down in another court. Does he have that legal opening, do you know?

Karl Allen:

If the courts will accept it, I don't think they will. I think that if he's found guilty in the Virginia courts, and the two steps, the circuit courts and the panelists, Virginia Supreme Court. He's found guilty, and -- or rather, they don't reverse the previous decision. I think he's just had it, he'll serve his time.

Speaker 1:

I think that's very realistic. Because that -- I told him yesterday --

Karl Allen:

Well, he has to prepare himself psychologically. Patler's one of these people who has to believe in himself, what he's saying. There are other people who can say things and not necessarily believe them. But Patler has to prepare himself mentally and make a statement and actually think he believes at the time he says it.

Speaker 1:

But the legal procedure, the next step is that the -- is that the Virginia Supreme Court is reviewing?

Karl Allen:

Patler's more accurate on this than I am. I didn't know that it had ever gone past the first stage of appeal. Like I said, the Supreme Court of Virginia is the second stage of appeal. There is then there's an intermediary court.

Speaker 1:

I see. Well, maybe the intermediary [Interposing]

Karl Allen:

Well, it may have --

[END RECORDING—0:18:50]