



The FBI Oral History Project

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Interview of Former Special Agent of the FBI Thomas J. Baker (1965 – 1998) Interviewed by Susan Wynkoop On November 2, 2009

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Susan Wynkoop: Hi. Today is November 2, 2009, and this is Susan Wynkoop. Today I'm interviewing Tom Baker who was an Agent with the FBI from the years of 1967 to 1998. He was a Clerk with the FBI prior to that and we'll get into those specifics; but was an Agent, I guess, about 31 years.

Thomas J. Baker: Correct.

Wynkoop: And we are speaking telephonically today. Tom is in Arlington, Virginia. And I am going to first read in the Copyright Release form, which states:

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So, again, Tom, I welcome you today and thank you so much for your time. How I wanted to start - Tom, as I said, very much was involved at the Washington Field Office and in offices in Virginia. And I wanted, Tom, for you to just start off with telling me a little bit about your background and how you got interested in the FBI.

Baker: Okay. I was born and grew up in New York City. Two of my mother's brothers, who I looked up to, were both New York City Policemen. My mother's father, in fact, had been a policeman in the City of Brooklyn, New York, before the turn of the last Century. So I was always interested in law enforcement. I went to Fordham University and got a bachelor's degree in Government. I was very anxious to get into the Bureau.

Baker: I entered the Bureau directly in New York City as a Clerk and was fortunate to be assigned to the Photo Lab. They had a rather large photo lab at that time; so I learned a particular skill and did some work that was probably a little bit more interesting than the general file clerk type work.

Wynkoop: Exactly.

Baker: Working in the photo lab where the Agents would be coming in with their work and occasionally even taking us out with them to particular crime scenes.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: In the fall of 1967, November, 1967, I went to the training school in Quantico. I finished that at the very end of February, 1968; was assigned to my first office in Jacksonville, Florida ...

Wynkoop: Okay, Jacksonville

Baker: ... in '68. I was there almost two years, in my first office. That was a time when things were just changing. It was sort of the tail end of doing away with segregation in the South and, what was later known as, the Civil Rights Era. So we had a few civil rights investigations. But, for the most part, I worked general criminal matters. After two years in Jacksonville, I was transferred, as were several others at the time, to Alexandria, Virginia, which had just been established as a separate field office. I arrived in Alexandria in the summer of 1969.

Wynkoop: Okay.

Baker: The office had been open only for a few months at that point, and was staffed the by the original twelve, or so, Agents who had been in the Resident Agency out of the Richmond Division. Plus another twelve or twenty Agents, who had been transferred over from Washington Field Office, were there.

Wynkoop: To open up the office. I see.

Baker: To open up the office. Then a number of brand new second office Agents, myself included, were sent there. The office was very busy when we first got there. In addition to all the general criminal type work and miscellaneous work, we had a lot of military reservations and we got quite involved in crimes on government reservations.

- Baker: In those days there wasn't the prioritization that later came into the Bureau. So we were working a lot of really down on the street level crimes. I mean, simple assaults in the parking lot of the Pentagon; all kinds of just real general crime.
- Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.
- Baker: We got overwhelmed because, in addition to all the general criminal type work, we had a lot of background investigations. For the first time, we had the responsibility - in Northern Virginia - for applicant work. Richard Nixon had just been elected President in November '68. And so in the spring and summer of '69, there were new appointees in the government, as well as the Bureau applicant cases. So everybody in the office, 50 or 60 Agents before I left there, all had to handle applicant cases every week. Everybody did, in addition to your own criminal cases. This was because of this volume of applicant cases. When I say applicant, I'm including the Special Inquiries and Departmental Applicants.
- Wynkoop: And I think you learn a lot by doing those, especially you want to know your way around Washington some and ...
- Baker: You do, yes. You learn the geography.
- Wynkoop: Exactly.
- Baker: In reflecting back on it, for the first or second office Agent, it's also good practice just talking to different types of people.
- Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.
- Baker: You meet a lot of people when you're out doing background investigations. There was a very heavy workload but good experience. We continue to get more agents transferred in, even late in '69, as the applicant work started to slow down. Several interesting things happened. At this point do you want me to talk about the Donna Sue Oglesby murder?
- Wynkoop: I think that would be excellent. Yes. Which occurred in '70, 1970.
- Baker: Okay, you got me back on track there. That happened in the winter, I guess in January, sometime in the first days of '70. The office had been opened about a year. The applicant work was starting to die down. The reason I mention about that dying down ... let me just say this one aside.

What happened, and this is kind of an administrative thing: I'm not being critical of people in management; they did the best they knew at the time. But by the time we were getting the people that the SAC had asked for earlier, to help with this tremendous workload that they had back in the early spring of 1969. By the time the people got there, were transferred and then moved in, the applicant work had started to die down.

Wynkoop: Right.

Baker: We underwent our first inspection after we were open just over a year. So the inspection was, I believe, two or three months after the murder of Donna Sue Oglesby. As several of us even said at the time (chuckle), this is going to be an interesting inspection because the work had really diminished. Sure enough they found the office overstaffed and they transferred six people out.

Ultimately, I became one of those people. They transferred them all to New York, with the exception of one guy, who they transferred to Washington Field. Because by then we just didn't have the work in Alexandria that we had had a year earlier.

Wynkoop: Exactly.

Baker: But that's just the way things happened. Anyway, the murder of Donna Sue Oglesby ... I wouldn't want this case to be forgotten ... I think you have the full spelling of her name and everything.

Wynkoop: Right. I'm just going to spell it into the tape. The last name is O-g-l-e-s-b-y.

Baker: She was 18 years old. She was a relatively new hire to the Bureau; Donna Sue had graduated high school in Oklahoma just the previous June. She lived in a high-rise apartment in Alexandria, which still exists. It's has three-tiers, and is right off Duke Street, overlooking the Beltway.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: She had two roommates; other girls her age. One was from the same town in Oklahoma as she was, and the other girl was from Texas. I'll tell you they were all, and I may come back to this, by today's standards, they were quite innocent. I mean that in a very nice and positive way.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: Two of them from Oklahoma, one from Texas; two of them were Baptist, one was a Catholic. They were all very, very good girls. There's no other way to say it.

Wynkoop: Uh-huh. Right. And they all three worked for the Bureau?

Baker: Yes, as did dozens of people in this apartment building. It was a high-rise building. There were a lot of these young people sharing apartments.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: What happened was, well, what happened was she was murdered and found in her apartment. She was found by another Bureau employee.

She, unlike so many of them who wound up in the Identification Division working as new Fingerprint Clerks, Donna Sue Oglesby wound up being assigned to the Bureau Switchboard. In those days, the Bureau Switchboard was manpower intensive. In that, it was the old, plug-in place type switchboard.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm. Right.

Baker: They had a row of operators and it was manned twenty-four hours a day. There were various overlapping shifts. Donna Sue Oglesby, as I recall, worked the shift noon to eight in the evening; or one in the afternoon to nine in the evening. One of those two shifts. All these young people depended on car pools. A car pool came to pick her up; they waited downstairs for her. That day, very unusual for her, she was not ready for the car pool to go to the Bureau. So, a young man, whose name I don't recall, was sent up to get her, to go knock on her door. He went up to the tenth floor. He went up and he found her body. He came down and told everybody to call the police. The Alexandria Police responded.

Later on, when we interviewed that young man, he couldn't tell us whether the door was locked; whether he turned the door knob and went in, or whether the door was open. He was in such a state of shock. He's also a pretty innocent eighteen or nineteen-year-old himself. Her body was totally nude; and I saw all the photographs of it ... laying spread, spread out on the area rug, in the center of the room. She had a number of stab marks high up in her chest and a scissors; which turned out to be her own sewing scissors ...

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: ... were left in her chest, just above the heart.

Wynkoop: Wow.

Baker: In the sternum, right down to the hilt. It was left in her.

Wynkoop: Wow.

Baker: That is the murder weapon. So this kid's like in a state of shock and he couldn't tell us, when he was interviewed, whether or not the door was opened or not. We didn't have ... and this is one of the points I want to make ... a lot of resources that are now routine. We didn't have them then.

Wynkoop: Exactly.

Baker: We didn't have hypnotism.

Wynkoop: Right.

Baker: It never came up on anyone's radar screen to hypnotize this young man and find out whether the door was opened or closed, or locked, or what.

Anyway, the Alexandria Police Department and the Field Office got along very well in those days and so immediately the SAC, Jack McDermott, who ... let me say this, was a very good leader. I thought [he] was a very good leader; a very good manager. So anything I say is not in criticism of him, it's just the way things were.

Wynkoop: Uh-huh.

Baker: He called a meeting; enlisted the whole office. We would have at the beginning and end of every day for several days there forward, a meeting of all Agents; which I said, was about 40 or 50 of us. We all had leads on this case. Everybody would report in what they had found, what they hadn't, in front of everybody else; which is a very good technique. So everybody knew what progress was being made.

Hoover was still alive, J. Edgar Hoover. He died a year or two later.

Wynkoop: In '72, exactly.

Baker: Yes. So he was still alive and, apparently, when they got the report from the police, of course, they told the Bureau immediately that this Bureau

employee, had been murdered; and sent a memo into him. Hoover sees it, writes on the memo, Jack McDermott told us this in the all Agents meeting ... that Hoover wrote on the memo, "Alexandria will solve this!"

Wynkoop: Hmmm.

Baker: So he tells us "Hoover wrote on the memo "Alexandria will solve this." Somebody in the All-Agents meeting, there, says, "Well, what does that mean? Does he mean the Alexandria Police Department?"

Wynkoop: Oh wow.

Baker: "Or does he mean the Alexandria Field Office?" Well, in the mentality of the day, the answer was "well, nobody's going back and asking him." (Laughing)

Wynkoop: Exactly. You're too afraid to go ask him "what did you mean?" Right.

Baker: Right. So, anyway, Hoover said we'd solve it. Well, the truth is ... now here's the positive side of this ... the resources we put into this murder case having extra Agents and, as I think I mentioned to you earlier, fifty Agents in these initial few days worked on it. As time went on, there were a half dozen of us, maybe, and I was one of them, who worked the leads on this for weeks and months, going forward. We covered a lot of leads and a lot of them shotgun type leads, that the Alexandria Police Department would never have attempted, nor any police department, logically, because we were looking for the needle in the haystack.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: We were going to pull the whole haystack apart to find the needle. So that's what we did. Our assistance was in no way resented by the police and was welcomed by them. That's a fact.

Wynkoop: Which is great. Uh-huh.

Baker: The second fact is, there was a lieutenant there; and I remember his name, Lieutenant Lee ... and he was around for years after this ... he was, in fact, a former Bureau Clerk. He had been a Fingerprint Clerk at the Bureau and left and became a policeman in Alexandria. He got along very well at the office.

In the very first meeting, that first afternoon, in the field office, the question was asked "Who is doing the crime scene processing?"

Meaning “has the Alexandria Police Department handled it” or will we take it and involve the Bureau Lab?

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: The Lab is just across the river, just across the bridge. Jack McDermott, the SAC, said, and he was a very strong, powerful, direct personality...

Wynkoop: Uh-huh.

Baker: He said, “No!” He said, “Lieutenant Lee has said that he handled that”... “He processed the crime scene and we’re not going to.” In other words, the SAC was firm “we’re not going to go in and contradict the police or offend them in anyway.”

Wynkoop: Right.

Baker: “Lieutenant Lee said he processed the crime scene. That’s the answer. That’s it.” He cut off that discussion. Sometimes the really dominant leader shuts up input because he’s so strong.

Wynkoop: Right.

Baker: That’s a phenomenon I’ve seen again.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: Anyway, we continued the investigation and after a day or two, I went with another Agent, Jim Siano ... we’re both new second office Agents, and we went with McDermott to the scene. Now let me digress, McDermott, it was even obvious to me at the time, he took a liking to me and Jim Siano. This is what I did myself later, as a manager. You kind of take a liking to the newer or younger Agents. I now realize why; because they’ll do exactly what you tell them.

Wynkoop: Right.

Baker: But also, they’re enthusiastic; they’re nice to be around.

Wynkoop: Exactly. Uhm-hmm.

Baker: McDermott took a liking to me and Siano; he had the two of us go to the crime scene with him, this was a day or two into the case. McDermott wanted to see the crime scene. So we drove out to the apartment. Now,

we had been out to the building there, but not in the room itself, which was the actual crime scene and was sealed.

Wynkoop: I see.

Baker: Because the police had it all sealed off. Because we had already been doing leads out there. Let me digress about the leads. The scope of shotgun leads that we did, that the Agents working on this case did was phenomenal; we interviewed everybody in that building.

Wynkoop: Wow. That's great.

Baker: As I said, dozens of them were Bureau employees; these clerks living there. We set up charts and other Agents ... I didn't do all of this, other Agents did, everybody's working on it. They interviewed and accounted for every male that went in and out of the building. It's a big building, fourteen stories tall, three wings, with a lot of turnover. There were telephone company men in and out of there several times that day; moving men, furniture movers in and out several times that day; meter readers. There were all these different men that came there for various reasons.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: They were all located and interviewed.

Wynkoop: Wow. Because there was like a doorman that kept track of all of this?

Baker: No, we went to the utility company; agents went to the phone company. Agents went to all these companies and found out who had gone to ...

Wynkoop: Who went where.

Baker: It wasn't that classy a building; there was no doorman. But we went and found all these people who had been there and located them, and we interviewed them all. I don't think a police department would normally go to that extreme an effort.

Wynkoop: Exactly.

Baker: We just had the manpower. We did this vast effort.

Wynkoop: Exactly.

Baker: We went to all the neighboring jurisdictions and collected the names of all the possible suspects; and located and interviewed all those people, too.

So, back to the second day or so ... and here was the real eye-opener. Siano and I go up and the tape's on the door. I think we got the key from the building manager or something. We take the tape off the door and open the door to walk in the room with Jack McDermott, the SAC.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: The door opens. Now we see exactly what the kid saw, who found the body, 'cause it's a very small apartment.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: There's the same rug, the edges of it under the furniture, around the corners, the chair and the couch; and here's this rug looking us right in the face, just this big massive circle of red blood and yellow, like from urine or other body fluids, just sitting right there in front of us.

Wynkoop: Hhmm.

Baker: The whole crime scene!

Wynkoop: Right.

Baker: All around the room are ashtrays full of cigarette butts and everything. These girls didn't smoke. This is from all the cops who ... and maybe some of the Agents, too, had been in there the first day. And McDermott, Siano, and I look at it, and McDermott says, "Look at the rug!?! That's the rug she was on. It's still there!"

Wynkoop: And it's still there. That's amazing!

Baker: So, right on the spot, he tells us to roll up the rug; roll it, you know, in on itself, so that the center part where the blood and maybe some hairs or something are preserved and we go straight to the Bureau. And he calls from his car and tells the Lab we're on our way.

Baker: And we drive it straight to the Lab and we don't give it to anybody else but this guy Tom Kelleher who, I think, later became an Assistant Director of the Lab. But, at that time, he was a Lab Examiner, in Hairs and Fibers, and he took it directly from me and Siano to shorten the chain-of-evidence. They processed it there at the FBI Lab.

Well, sure enough, McDermott when we saw the room he was incredulous. McDermott even said to us there, "Well, Lieutenant Lee said he processed this." The whole room, all around the door frames and the door knobs, was full of the old black fingerprint dusting powder.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: What had happened was this: Lieutenant Lee ran the Ident Section of the Alexandria Police Department. And Lieutenant Lee, when he said he processed the room, he just meant he dusted it for fingerprints. He didn't do anything else but dust for fingerprints.

Wynkoop: Ohhh.

Baker: That's what his job was; that's all it was. He had been just telling McDermott that he processed it for fingerprints. That's what he meant.

Wynkoop: Just sort of a miscommunication.

Baker: McDermott interpreted it that he had done the whole crime scene processing. Being a strong personality he wouldn't hear any contradiction. So this, this evidence, who knows how many people had walked over it.

Wynkoop: Ohhh!

Baker: When we looked around the apartment, before we left with the rug, there was still food in the refrigerator and out on the counter; and cigarettes around. I mean the whole crime scene was a mess! I mean, it just was ... and today, nothing like that would happen. Anyway, the lab found a number of hairs, human hairs...on the rug. Which is no big surprise. I've been told that any place where people live you would find some human hair.

Wynkoop: Right.

Baker: But this is right where her blood was and her body had been. So the investigation went on. We went all over the region. Every possible lead. I remember, months later, there was this guy with the improbable name Dr. Pepper, just like the soda; Dr. Pepper who is a psychiatrist in Falls Church, Virginia. He counseled sex offenders. People who had committed sexual offenses were sent to him for therapy. So we interviewed Dr. Pepper and talked about some of his people.

Wynkoop: Hmmm!

Baker: He wouldn't tell us anything, but we got the list of people who were referred to Dr. Pepper, and we located these people. In the process, the Alexandria Field Office helped solved a number of other crimes, rapes and other things that were happening.

Wynkoop: Wow!

Baker: There was one guy I interviewed, a screwed up young man, skinny, ugly looking kid, maybe twenty-one or twenty-two. He raped old women. I mean, really old women! He'd sneak into houses and stay in their attic and then come down and rape them. He was arrested and he had been one of Dr. Pepper's clients.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: We just kept finding all these weird people. My wife tells me about it years later, how I'd come home in that period and I would always be telling her, "Lock the doors! Lock the doors!"

Wynkoop: I'm sure.

Baker: Because there's all these weirdoes out there. So it was a real learning experience, but ...

Wynkoop: Well, when did you find out about ...

Baker: ... what I took away from that was ...

Wynkoop: ... the other similar murders that were going on in the area? When did you find out?

Baker: That was only one of many things. There were many, many leads; false leads and real leads. There were a lot of other murders around the area; and more than those couple right off the Beltway that the recent newspaper article mentions. There were people murdered on the Parkway. There were a lot of sexual crimes. There were a lot of things going on at the time. What we didn't have then, we didn't have a Behavioral Science Unit at Quantico.

Wynkoop: Right.

Baker: It was created a couple of years later. We didn't have ViCAP. There was no way to link these crimes together. There wasn't even the

technology with latent searching. Even if Lieutenant Lee had gotten a good latent, there was no way to search a single latent against the Bureau Fingerprint Database, which you can do today.

Wynkoop: At that time, right.

Baker: But you couldn't do that then. I realize now just how much things have changed for the better.

I got to know Donna Sue Oglesby's two roommates; that was a part of how the leads in this matter were handled. Siano and I were each informally assigned to one of these two girls; the two roommates. We were at times either chaperones or interviewers. We would go back to them for the follow-up interviews.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: In interviewing them, you may find this hard to believe today, we found that these girls were so innocent. None of the three of them had ever had sexual relations with a man. But, beyond that, we had to ask them a lot of questions. At one point, I'll never forget this, because it's something we just needed to ask to get it out of the way 'cause it took the autopsy people a long time before they told us that she had been sexually assaulted. We all kind of assumed that. But they didn't confirm it for a long time. So one of the questions, just to clear everything up, and among the many questions that we asked these girls, and it was just amazing, the one girl's answer to it. They were just so innocent ... I said, "Did Donna ever do, or say, or act in any way to give you an indication that she might be a lesbian?" And this girl looked at me, eighteen years old, from Norman, Oklahoma, and she said to me, "What is a lesbian?"

Wynkoop: That's what I thought you were going to say. Right. Yes.

Baker: I mean, it's just astounding.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm. Well, where were they when she was murdered? Were they at work? Were they on different shifts?

Baker: They were at the Bureau! They were at work. They left at eight o'clock.

Wynkoop: Uh-huh.

Baker: Well, they had to be at work at eight; they left at seven, or whatever. They were both at work at the Bureau. The reason she was there is she was on this late shift.

Wynkoop: This other shift. Yes.

Baker: The two girls stayed at the Bureau only a couple of weeks longer because, in both cases, their parents had them go back home, as you can well understand.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: When the lab told us they had found hairs on the rug ... another thing I found emotional, when I think about it, ... Siano and I, for these two girls that we each were interviewing, doing follow-up interviews with both of these girls ... was we had to get their hair from their head for elimination purposes.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm. Right.

Baker: The Lab guy told us "cut some, but comb some out." Some hair comes out when you comb it. "Comb some out" because that takes the bottom of it too, which is I believe is the follicle.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: So we had to stand there and take hair from each of these girls, each of us separately. I found that somewhat emotional; these girls were being subject to everything and it was their roommate who was murdered, they were victims of sorts. And, then they left! And they never came back.

Wynkoop: Wow.

Baker: ... one went to Texas and one to Oklahoma. It was just, it was just awful. It was never solved and it's one of those things that you kind of think about later. Here's the FBI with all their resources.

I venture to say that if that happened today, that case would be solved.

Wynkoop: Because we have so much more capability.

Baker: The technology.

Wynkoop: Yes.

Baker: Yes, the technology and also we are all talking to each other. Police departments are talking to each other today. Because we now know, we all know, that most of these kinds of crimes are done by repeat offenders. This was a very vicious crime. Done by somebody who's probably did it before and gone on and did it again.

Whereas, of course, with the Bureau investigation of this crime, a big part of it focused on the other Bureau Clerks – males – who lived in the building. One Agent, with a particularly strong personality, was assigned to one boy who was kind of sweet on Donna and one of her roommates. But nothing ever went on with them, this young man just liked them.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: They actually exchanged Bibles. I mean, it was that kind of group.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: They really focused on this one kid and interviewed him terribly hard numerous times and had him crying. But he didn't do it and had nothing to do with it. We all know now, or pretty much would conclude now, that a crime like this was done by a repeat serial offender of some sort.

Baker: No other way around it, our investigation was a kind of failure. It was a failure. But you can learn a lot from failures.

Wynkoop: And was there a great deal of publicity in the Washington, DC, area, in the Northern Virginia area, about these murders.

Baker: Not as much as you would think. I mean, it wasn't hidden at all. But, as we discovered, there was a lot of violent crime. I don't know if it's the same level today. We did general criminal work, the squad I was on in Alexandria, we had a lot of murders. There was a series then of people murdered on the Parkway; men as well as women. There were rapes on the Parkway and in the parking lots at the Pentagon. I worked on one case; a young civilian girl was sexually assaulted at Henderson Hall, the headquarters of the Marine Corps. These were all federal cases.

Wynkoop: Hmmm.

Baker: There was a lot of violent crime. It was kind of amazing. We had Lorton then, the prison for the District of Columbia; it was part of our beat. Our squad worked all sorts of assaults inside that prison.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: There were murders happening inside the prison and assaults. We were working those cases. We were like a police precinct. It was really quite amazing.

Wynkoop: It sounds it.

Baker: Yes. The Bureau has really changed since then. In this particular area, it was quite something. But that was the Donna Sue Oglesby murder case. Ray Connolly, an Agent who spent most of his career Alexandria there, may have been the Case Agent. But, as I said, it was the kind of thing that they had a lot of people working on the case and the SAC, Jack McDermott, really running it.

Wynkoop: But, again, it just shows you how, how we have changed. Which is just amazing. And, and, again, that was probably, what, 1970, '71, '72, you were working with that?

Baker: That murder must have occurred in '70, early in 1970. Yes, in January 1970 that murder happened.

Wynkoop: Okay. Uh-huh.

Baker: Yes, because, after the inspection came, then in the spring of '70, I was one of those transferred to New York. There were six of us transferred, because the office was considered overstaffed.

Wynkoop: Right.

Baker: So then I wound up in New York.

Wynkoop: So you did go to New York? Okay.

Baker: Yes. Do you want to ask me anything more about Oglesby? Or, do you want me to move on?

Wynkoop: No. I think that's good for right now. But it is interesting, you know, when you speak of the violent crimes that were going on in this period of time and how you handled them. And, you know, it's just an interesting to look at that.

Baker: Then I went to New York for three years. In New York I was on an Organized Crime Squad that was assigned one of the La Cosa Nostra families. I worked on organized crime for three years.

Wynkoop: And then I guess you got back to the, to the Academy? After New York?

Baker: Yes. After three years in New York then I went to the Academy.

Baker: One of the things that happened in New York that's worth mentioning, just for the record, is that I worked the Lucchese Family; [that] was the family that our squad handled. I worked with a number of really good Agents. In fact, the guy that was our Supervisor is still alive, Guy Berado, who ...

Wynkoop: Right; I met Guy. Uh-huh.

Baker: ... who was quite accomplished in organized crime matters. John Connolly, the Agent who later got in trouble in Boston, was on our squad.

Wynkoop: Hmmm.

Baker: As was Artie Grubert. One day, two weeks before Christmas, in 1972, maybe a week before Christmas, we were out ... we went out from the office, John Connolly, Artie Grubert and me, and it was about noon time. We were walking north on Lexington Avenue, when John Connolly grabs the two of us and he said, "That's Patrick Salemme" Francis Patrick Salemme was an LCN figure from Boston, who twenty years later, became the head of the organized crime family in New England, after Raymond Patriarca was out of the way.

But Salemme was then a fugitive. He was wanted for several murders and there was intelligence that he was in the New York City area, but that's all it was.

Wynkoop: Uh-huh. Now, you spell his last name, Salemme ...

Baker: S-a-l-e-m-m-e.

Wynkoop: Okay.

Baker: Some people pronounce it Sahlem and some say Sahlemee.

Wynkoop: I see.

Baker: It's Francis. They call him Frankie Salemme, the mob guys, but his true name was Francis Patrick Salemme.

He was a handsome man. His mother was Irish; his father was Italian. But he was in La Cosa Nostra.

Wynkoop: Uh-huh.

Baker: He had murdered. I don't know how many the Bureau thinks he murdered, maybe twenty plus people. He was actually wanted for murdering, one or two in Boston at the time, so he was an IO Fugitive.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm. Wow.

Baker: John Connolly, because he was from Boston, carried Salemme's IO in his pocket. Whenever we'd go to ... we went to basketball games a lot, because we worked a lot of bookmaking cases, he carried it with him. He always was looking for him. Sure enough, just walking up the street, he spots him and says, "That's him!" We rushed over, pushed him up against the wall. He didn't have a firearm on him. But had a screwdriver in his pocket, believe it or not. He had perfect identification in the name of another man.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: All that day he denied his true identity. Finally at the end of the day, just when we were leaving him in the Federal House of Detention, he admits his identity and makes some other admissions. Six months or so later I had to go to testify in a case in Boston, an assault case against him. Because during our apprehension of him, he did make these admissions, however obliquely, right at the end of that day.

Wynkoop: Well, that must have been exciting!

Baker: It was exciting and we were all commended for it because we caught this IO Fugitive ...

Wynkoop: I'll say!

Baker: It's later, when John Connolly got in trouble, and there were all these series of internal investigations and then these criminal cases. Several times, this has actually been written and I've actually heard Bureau officials say this, that the mob set up the arrest of Salemme to make Connolly look good. Well, that's absurd on the face of it because Connolly was sitting in the office and it was Artie Grubert and I who said to him, "C'mon, let's go! Let's go out."

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: He didn't want to go. We had this thing, you may or may not remember, "posting" a case. John was posting his cases before he went on leave.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm. Yeah.

Baker: Well, he was taking a week's vacation to go to Boston for Christmas. Artie Grubert and I both lived in New York. Our families were in New York. John's posting his cases. They'd just opened on 86th Street a Bloomingdales ... the field office was on 69th Street ...

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: I hadn't gotten my wife a Christmas gift yet and neither had either of these two guys. So we said, "Let's go up to Bloomingdales and get our wives Christmas presents."

Wynkoop: (Chuckling)

Baker: We literally had to drag him out of the office, because he wants to stay to post his cases. As we're walking up the street, he spots this guy.

Wynkoop: Right.

Baker: So there's no way in the world the mob could have set that up. But, yet, that's the kind of stories and rumors that got out there.

Wynkoop: They came up with...that, that's interesting.

Baker: That's probably off the subject. After three years in New York, I went to Quantico. I had a Masters Degree in Police Management that I had gotten while I was in New York, an MPA. So when the Academy expanded, the new Academy opened in the fall of '72, and I was transferred and joined the faculty down there in the spring of '73, in the Management Science Unit, which later they called Management and Leadership. Now they call it the Leadership Institute; it's the same thing.

I was there for almost five years, and then I went from there on the Inspection Staff; and then from the Inspection Staff, I went to be a Field Supervisor in Mobile, Alabama. I was there about two years. We worked a lot of Public Corruption cases there.

Wynkoop: Hmmm.

Baker: Then from Mobile, Alabama, in 1979, the spring of '79, I was transferred to Washington Field as the ASAC in Charge of the Criminal Division. While I was there, as we had been talking earlier, there was a lot of activity with terrorism; there was the assassination of the Shah's former ambassador to the United States, Ali Tabatier. Then ultimately ...

Wynkoop: Right.

Baker: ... on March 30th, I think. I don't know if you remember, March 30th. It's March 30, 1981. I'm certain. President Reagan was shot.

At that time, there were three ASACs in Washington Field. Actually there were only two at that moment as there was a vacancy for the Administrative ASAC. So, at that moment, there were two ASACs. The other ASAC, Phil Parker, had Foreign Counterintelligence, and I had Criminal. The SAC was out of town at the Annual SACs Meeting. In those days they would have it in out-of-the-way place, like a retreat. So Judge Webster, who was the Director, and our SAC, were both in Williamsburg at an off-site, with all the other SACs, on that particular day.

Wynkoop: Right. Okay. I was thinking you were there also. But, of course, you were not because you're an ASAC. Okay.

Baker: That's right.

Wynkoop: So you were around.

Baker: But there was no SAC. That's, that's one of the points to this story.

Wynkoop: Okay.

Baker: I'll jump ahead for a second. As the leads developed that day, we had a lot of leads in Texas, in the Dallas Division, and a lot of leads in Denver. That's because that's where Hinckley came from, and that's where his family was; and that's where he had lived immediately before coming to Washington ... to shoot the President. So the people on the end of the phone in those two places were the ASACs, Gary Penrith in Dallas and the ASAC in Denver. I knew both of these guys. So we all knew each other, quite well. Which always helps.

Wynkoop: Oh yes.

Baker: Another thing that helped that I should mention which helped that day. When President Reagan was inaugurated in January of 1981, the Bureau - Washington Field - got very involved in a proactive way with the inauguration. I know they've gotten even far more involved in these things now. But we did, at that time, at the field office level, we were involved with the Washington Metropolitan Police Department and the Secret Service in a lot of planning for the inaugural events.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: That was good because, as the Criminal ASAC, I wound up on a lot of these committees. So I got to know my counterparts pretty well. I had often sat down at meetings with people in the Secret Service and in the Washington Metropolitan Police Department.

Wynkoop: And, as you said, that does help so much, just knowing individuals.

Baker: That helps tremendously.

Wynkoop: Yes.

Baker: Additionally, ironically, we had had several meetings of the Inaugural Committee, and of several sub-committees on security that we attended, at the Washington Hilton Hotel.

Wynkoop: Oh, I see. Uh-huh.

Baker: Ultimately, I got to know ... this is before the assassination attempt ... I got to know the general manager of the Washington Hilton and their head of security, a guy named Al Fury, who was a retired Washington Metropolitan Police Department detective from their Bank Robbery Squad.

Wynkoop: Hmmm!

Baker: He had worked, in that same period when I was in Alexandria, on Bank Robberies and Violent Crime. So I knew these people already. That becomes a positive later on in the story.

In any event, the day the President was shot, I was in my Bureau car out of the office because I had a meeting at Headquarters on a whole different subject - applicant matters - and I was leaving the J. Edgar Hoover Building, Bureau Headquarters ...

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: ... I just got out on the street in the car and I had the commercial radio on to a local radio station.

Wynkoop: Right. Right.

Baker: I hear a news flash and they just say that the President's just been shot in front of the Hilton Hotel. Now that's what I hear as my car emerges onto the street from the J. Edgar Hoover Building.

Wynkoop: Wow.

Baker: I get on the FM radio to the Washington Field Office base and I asked them, you're supposed to be discreet in speaking on the radio, "Which Hilton is the incident at?" Well, I found out later it had literally just happened because there were reporters right with the President when this happened.

Wynkoop: Right.

Baker: The field office, nobody knew about it yet.

Wynkoop: Uh-hmm.

Baker: I get on the radio and say "which Hilton is the incident at" because there's the big Washington Hilton just off Connecticut Avenue, at Connecticut and Florida Avenue. There's another equally big Hilton, the Capital Hilton, that's on K Street and 16th. And they're both very big prominent hotels in Washington.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: So I said "which Hilton is the incident at?" I was called Number Three. They said, "What are you talking about Number Three?" I said, "The big incident - Which Hilton is it at?" And they said, "What incident?"

Wynkoop: Right.

Baker: I finally just say, "The President's been shot outside the Hilton Hotel!" And meanwhile, both Hiltons are north of where I am, so I'm heading in the right direction anyway.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: Went over to Connecticut and then north. I finally hear it that it's the Washington Hilton. I don't know if I heard it on the commercial radio or they told me. But I get there. But lo and behold, I'm the first FBI person on the scene!

Wynkoop: Wow!

Baker: Which I didn't expect at all. I don't know what I thought, that I would get there and there'd be like twenty Agents and I could start telling them what to do. I'm the first one there! (Laughing)

Because I had been at all these other meetings, the Secret Service and the MPD knew me. We had worked together, other attempts, actually a murder of a diplomat.

Baker: Lieutenant Wilson of the Homicide Squad of the MPD, came straight up to me; he's their main man on any shooting. He's already there. He knows who I am and he comes straight at me as I'm getting out of my car. I parked the car in the middle of the street 'cause the street's already crowded.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: The Marine Corps helicopters are just above the buildings with their rotors going and they stay there for about ten minutes, making a hell of a lot of noise ...

Wynkoop: Right. Tom, I'm gonna just pause real quickly to flip this over. I don't want to miss anything.

Baker: Okay.

Wynkoop: Now, now you're on. I'm sorry.

Baker: Lieutenant Wilson has the pistol that they have just taken from Hinckley in a glassine envelope and he tries to hand it to me. I said, "No. Hold on." "Now, the lab's going to come here, give it right to the FBI Lab." Because in the five minutes while I was driving from Bureau Headquarters up to the Washington Hilton, I had been on radio already telling people and they had already notified the lab.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: I knew the lab was going to send a crime scene truck up there, which they did. But that's the kind of situation that, initially, I walked into. That they're trying to hand me a ...

Wynkoop: A major piece of evidence.

Baker: Yes! I said, "No, you hold it." to shorten the chain of custody.

Wynkoop: Exactly.

Baker: Give it right to the lab truck. Now, there's a couple of things I want to mention to you about this case. I'll just talk about the assassination. Because there's a couple of interesting points I wanted to make about this major event. As I'm going up there, in my mind, I realize this is a big deal. (Laughing)

Wynkoop: Well, I was thinking, and people must be going crazy. And the streets must be crazy.

Baker: Exactly.

Wynkoop: And everything must just be crazy. I would think.

Baker: As I said, I left my car literally in the middle of the street because the streets all blocked. They had a whole bunch of ambulances there.

Wynkoop: Right.

Baker: The helicopters are above the street. But what I'm also thinking of is when I was in training school and in my early years in the Bureau. We were all told about the assassination of President Kennedy, and how the Bureau and the Secret Service got in some disputes. I'm thinking, this is our job now, the investigation. There's been a shooting. I'm anticipating in the back of my mind that there may be an ugly scene here...

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm. Right.

Baker: ... a dispute. Well, far from it. When I got there the police were running up to me the minute they spotted me. They want to hand me the weapon. The Secret Service SAC is already there, he immediately says to me, "You're taking charge of the investigation now." I mean, that's his opening words to me.

Wynkoop: Wow! That's great.

Baker: There was no fighting. Everybody's just throwing this right at me, at the FBI. So, as Agents started to show up, I would give them assignments. What I did, I used the Criminal squad supervisors. They were herding the witnesses into an auditorium, from which Reagan had just been leaving. He had been talking to a labor union group. So I had Pete Marcoline, a Supervisor, go in there and take his guys; "You start interviewing the witnesses in there." There was another Agent, Glen Tuttle, I asked him to stay with me and write down all the instructions, to be my scribe. I realized that it was very important to record what was happening.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm. Very much so.

Baker: I said, "Write down all the assignments I give." Because we're just standing in the street. He started doing that and stayed with me the whole day, which was very valuable.

Another one of the Supervisors, Dan Sullivan, I told him go to the GW hospital where Reagan had first been taken, and take over the investigation there. There were two Agents, not Supervisors, from the Bank Robbery Squad, who were by reputation, very good interviewers. I told them to go down to the Homicide Division of the MPD, Lieutenant Wilson's office, because that's where the police told me they had taken, John Hinckley, the would-be assassin.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: To go and attempt to interview him there. So I'm giving out all these assignments. But then people from the White House come to the Hilton. People from the press come. It got very congested very quickly. Well, fortunately, the general manager and the director of security of the Hilton are there. Al Fury comes up to me, "Tom," he said, "I can give you a room right off here, right on the same level." It was off a garden-like area. They gave us a suite of rooms and immediately he knew just what was needed. They came in there with flip charts, started running in extra telephones because there were no cell phones then.

Wynkoop: Exactly.

Baker: Everything was hard line.

Wynkoop: Right.

Baker: We set up a model command post. We were able to do that, I'm very happy to say, because we already had the relationship not only with the Secret Service and the police, but with the general manager of the hotel and the director of security of the hotel. They knew who we were. They knew who I was.

Wynkoop: Which is great.

Baker: Had we not had that relationship, had I been there and they didn't know my face, I'd be walking around this crowd, tugging on people's sleeves, "please listen to me" and "Hey, I'm from the FBI."

Wynkoop: Exactly.

Baker: It is what I've always thought. I always tell that story to people. It's so important to get out of the office. SACs, even Supervisors, who don't get out and meet the people in the community, they're missing out on a lot. Because it can really pay off.

Wynkoop: Exactly. You're so right.

Baker: We set up a command post and then Al Fury even set up a separate room across the hall where the extra Agents and cops could hang out, who didn't have an assignment, and to keep them from flooding the command post. We were using the correct command post procedure. The Hilton people had coffee urns and brought in sandwiches and donuts, and had it all set up in this separate, but nearby, room. So that kept the extra people out of the command post.

Throughout the day we'd have periodic meetings. We had a Section Chief from the Lab, Deputy Chief and Captains from the MPD; a high ranking Secret Service guy ...

Wynkoop: Uh-huh.

Baker: And we'd periodically have meetings. I had open lines, to Denver, to Dallas, to WFO, as we figured out who this guy was and what was going on. Meanwhile, the SACs are all in Williamsburg, with the Director.

Wynkoop: Right.

Baker: So the Director and the SACs finally all start to come back, but it isn't like it is today where these kinds of executives have jets. Today the Bureau has planes and helicopters. Then we were dealing with a four or five hour automobile ride. (Laughing)

Wynkoop: Right.

Baker: So we were left on our own to do this and my counterpart, the other ASAC, he set up a command post in the field office. We were talking back and forth to each other. I was in this forward command post, at the crime scene, almost the whole day.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: Then this mutual friend of ours, Tom Bush, drew up the affidavit for a search warrant of Hinckley's room. I guess it was nine or ten at night, when they got to execute that warrant. That's when I finally left the Hilton area and we rendezvous'd at Hinckley's hotel with Tom Bush and the search team. We had found out, from the investigation of these other Agents who had interviewed Hinckley, where he was staying.

Wynkoop: Now, what was his identification on him? Was it John Hinckley identification?

Baker: Yes. He never had a phony name.

Wynkoop: Okay.

Baker: I think he was registered in the hotel room under his name. When we got in the room, he had laid out on the desk, as I recall, a map of where he was going. There was an article on the desk showing where the President was going to be that day - I think they now conceal the President's itinerary until after the fact - and the whole letter of statement that he was doing this to impress Jodie Foster.

Wynkoop: Right.

Baker: A twisted mind.

Wynkoop: And I had forgotten how much of ...

Baker: It was the Park Central Hotel, which is where he had been staying.

Wynkoop: Okay.

Baker: Tom Bush drew up the affidavit for the search warrant. Then he got the warrant over to the hotel site. A team of us went in and did the search of the room and found all this stuff. Then the story and motive just started to unfold from there.

Frank Waikart was chosen as the case agent. Ted Gardner was the SAC and by that evening he had come on the scene. He and I agreed that Frank Waikart should be the case agent. Frank Waikart was a guy who had been a Supervisor previously and was then a Street Agent again; and later he became a Supervisor again. He was a good choice. He's a very polished and bright guy.

Something I was thinking about as I went back to the office that night. We stayed there very late that night and the SAC was back. I started to think, well, somebody's going to have to interview the President.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: In my mind, I thought, "well, that can't be me and it shouldn't be the SAC either." We had to keep this on a very business level. The best thing is to have one of the regular working Agents interview the President. Frankly, I was afraid the SAC would decide he should interview the President.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: I just didn't think that would be appropriate. I didn't think I should either. Well, it turns out, that was one of the things we discussed, and we both felt the same way about it; had a meeting of the minds.

Baker: Yes. We decided it that very night although they didn't get to do it for about two days. But I think it was that very night we decided it. It was to be two of my Supervisors: John Pavlanski and Robin Montgomery.

Wynkoop: Okay.

Baker: And Montgomery later became an SAC.

Wynkoop: Well, I was going to say, I know Robin Montgomery who now is the police chief.

Baker: That's him!

Wynkoop: He's wonderful.

Baker: He had worked for some corporation. Now he's a police chief.

Wynkoop: Yes.

Baker: Yes. Well, that's the guy!

Wynkoop: He's great.

Baker: Robin Montgomery and the other guy was John Pavlanski. Robin Montgomery had a Criminal Squad; Pavlanski had a Criminal Squad that did Accounting and Fraud matters. They were both Supervisors, GS-14s. But they both had been combat veterans, which I am not.

Wynkoop: Exactly. In Vietnam.

Baker: They both had been shot. They both had suffered gunshot wounds.

Wynkoop: Yes, I do. Montgomery, he's very decorated.

Baker: Yes. Pavlanski was in the Army; Montgomery was in the Marine Corps.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: They both had been wounded by gunshot. So we thought they'd be two good guys to interview the President. That they could empathize ...

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: have that empathy with him. They did. They interviewed the President. I forget the sequence, whether it was two days or a day later, but they interviewed him. By then the President was in Walter Reed or Bethesda. They told us that President Reagan admitted that he doesn't know what happened. He said it all happened so fast. He had made all these jokes on TV to make the whole country feel good, but he did not remember.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: He said he didn't know what the hell happened. It just all happened so fast. Then after that was all over, Director Webster, wanted to visit the President. He went to see him like a day later when the interview was over because we didn't want to taint any evidence. We wanted this investigation to go meticulously well.

We remembered stories about the Kennedy assassination. There are all these allegations later; something wasn't handled right and it would lead to all these wild theories or stories.

Wynkoop: Right.

Baker: We wanted everything done right.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm. Which is smart.

Baker: So Webster did hold back for a couple of days. But then before Reagan was released from the hospital, Webster went to see Reagan and he gave him a replica of the bullet that they had taken out of him; the bullet that had lodged right near his heart.

Wynkoop: That's what I read.

Baker: They took that bullet and the lab made a replica. They created a cube of clear plastic with a bullet in the middle. It wasn't the real bullet, it was a replica.

Wynkoop: Right.

Baker: It was Webster's idea to give this to Reagan as a gift, which he did.

Wynkoop: Hmmm!

Baker: Which, you know, some people thought it was silly and others thought it was appropriate. I don't know what to think. People do what they think is appropriate at the moment.

Wynkoop: Right. And I wonder what did, how did Webster, I mean, I'm sorry, did Reagan like it? Or who knows.

Baker: Apparently! You know, the feedback we got was all positive.

Wynkoop: Hmmm!

Baker: The lessons from this event are to know the people in your community and training. We had, all the ASACs, gone through training about command post procedures. It all worked out well.

Wynkoop: Which is good.

Baker: It worked very well.

Wynkoop: Well, it sounds like. As I said, you know, I can't even imagine all of the, all of what was going on at the time. As you said, there's helicopters overhead; other people have been shot; they're like laying on the sidewalk bleeding. And you're trying to get folks there. And Secret

Service, I've seen videos of the assassination attempt. I mean, there was a lot of stuff going on.

Baker: Yes. And there's always the dual problem. We, in the command post, moved the extra people to another room. That was good. There's always the dual problem that you're trying to get your leads out and information back in. At the same time, you're getting banged, pinged at, in our case, by Bureau Headquarters. They're calling up and asking for updates on everything and you're trying to do your thing; get the investigation, get the leads out and they're calling you ... and everybody wants to talk to whoever's in charge.

Wynkoop: Exactly.

Baker: They don't want to talk to the second-in-command. I think there's been some discipline introduced in procedures now where people realize you have to isolate. You see the way the SIOC works now, you have to isolate different people. You can't be constantly bothering them.

But we had the dual problem then of being pinged ... and it wasn't just the Bureau Headquarters because people, all kinds of people pinging at you. We had the White House calling. We had, of course, the Vice President, if you remember, was somewhere else in the world.

Wynkoop: Right. Alexander Haig made his statement that he was in charge until the Vice President got back.

Baker: It really was handled very well; our investigation. In fact, I hold it up. I say it was a model of how to do these things. There were a few little snafus, which I don't think are recorded anywhere (chuckling).

First with the President ... there is the football; with the atomic codes.

Wynkoop: Hmmm.

Baker: There was a military officer who had the football. It's like a big briefcase with the commands for the nuclear weapons. The officer, followed behind the President wherever he went. But it turns out that the people in the hospital, the doctors and the nurses, cut the clothes off the President and stripped him right down. As I said, one Supervisor, and several Agents followed behind him, went into GW hospital and tried to recover everything they could ... his clothing, because it could all potentially be evidence.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: They recovered [it]. We sat in the office the next day and looked at this thing and then we found out, we were told what it was a card, c-a-r-d.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: It looked basically like a credit card or an ATM card. It had some punched through holes in it. Anyway, the only person who can have this card is the President...it's the authentication card for the codes. There is a military officer [who] follows the President around with this thing they call the football. But it is this authentication card that the President can slip into the "football" that really authorizes the use of the nukes.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: But only the President has it... and he had it in his pocket, President Reagan ...

Wynkoop: Uh-huh.

Baker: This card, which, when put it into this device, tells the device, and command and control down the road for the nuclear weapons, that this is the President!

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: Our Agent picked that up off the floor in George Washington Hospital.

Wynkoop: Wow! That card?

Baker: It wound up in Washington Field. Gardner and I sat there and looked at it and passed it between us. Then we found out what it was (laughing).

Wynkoop: Oh my goodness.

Baker: So we recovered that; which is a very good thing.

Wynkoop: Hmmm! That's amazing.

Baker: Yes. Another thing, which got a little difficult, involved his gold cufflinks. The President had been wearing gold cufflinks, which had a symbol on each of the cufflinks. It wasn't just simply the Presidential Seal. I mean, it wasn't anything as simple as that. I don't know if it was buffaloes or horses; a set of gold cufflinks, real gold, that President Reagan had been wearing.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: When they cut off his shirt, of course, they fell to the floor. Well, this one Supervisor recovered the one cufflink but they never found the second cufflink. That became an issue later. Somebody on his staff raised hell about it and what became of it. They almost tried to imply that somebody was taking souvenirs.

Wynkoop: Uh-huh.

Baker: But I viewed it quite the opposite, is that we were lucky that we found, recovered the one that we did find.

Wynkoop: Right. But it is interesting. You wonder, you know, where the other one went. Gosh knows where it went. That's interesting. So you were involved in that for months and months? Or the Case Agent just sort of took it all over, I would suppose.

Baker: Yes. The Case Agent did. For several days there was a series of meetings that we had in the field office and the SAC of Secret Service came over. Because they started to run a parallel investigation afterwards, while our position was "this is ours now." They said that they were running it to see where their procedures had gone wrong. Chuck Ruff was the U.S. Attorney in the District of Columbia then. He was very competent and very much involved.

And then, of course, ultimately they decided that Hinckley was insane and he was committed to Saint Elizabeth's Hospital. Then there was the follow-up.

There was an incident, at Hinckley's parents' home, I don't know if it was in Denver or in Dallas. There was a problem with one of the Secret Service Agents who went in there and took family pictures from inside the home. He then slipped them to a press contact. There we go again! How did pictures from Hinckley's earlier life get in the news?

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: We all sweated that one. It turned out that a Secret Service Agent had picked them up when he was in Hinckley's parents' home. There is always some of these ugly things around the fringe. But the day of that shooting, that thing was handled very, very well. It was because everybody knew each other, the police, the Secret Service, the people at

the Hilton hotel. We all knew one another and that really made things go very smooth.

Wynkoop: Were you in charge of press releases and things of that sort? Or who was talking with the, like the public? Or, you know, TV stations?

Baker: Well, at the Bureau there's Public Affairs and there was a Press spokesman at the Washington Field Office; who we later got involved and became a buffer for us.

Wynkoop: Okay.

Baker: Initially, I spoke to the press on the scene ... and the message ... on the way driving up there, I was thinking about the message that I wanted to deliver: "The FBI is here"...The FBI is investigating the case." In the newspapers, at the time, that is what I'm quoted as saying right at the scene. I wanted to get that message out. That was the only message I wanted to get out and, other than that, we didn't get involved with the press at the scene. I never got into any deeper details with any press contact at the scene.

Wynkoop: I see.

Baker: But that was sort of an on-the-sidewalk thing. I had thought about that in the car driving to the scene; that's what I wanted to say and I was going to limit myself to that factual statement.

Wynkoop: Because, again, just, you know, when you think about the effect of this whole day on the Washington, DC, area and, therefore, the United States; because it's their President. You know, I think, initially, they didn't realize how badly he was wounded and, you want to try and calm down the Nation because we've been through this before.

Baker: We wanted at the outset to handle the evidence right and handle the investigation right. Now everybody knows that Hinckley was a nut. But that first hour or so, we didn't know that at all.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: We just knew somebody tried to kill the President. We didn't know if this was a conspiracy; if they were going to try to shoot other officials. Initially, you don't know what you have.

Wynkoop: You're so right. You didn't know for a long time that day. So you are trying to, just find out so much as to where he had been and, you know, just so much about him so quickly.

Baker: Yes. We actually found out early on this bizarre twist, that this sick person, Hinckley, was doing this to impress Jodie Foster, who was a movie star. She had appeared in movies as a very young woman; *Taxi Driver*, and those kinds of things. Then, she was at Yale in college.

Wynkoop: Right. Right.

Baker: She's a college student at this very time. So Agents from the New Haven office went to Yale and interviewed Jodie Foster and her roommates. All of whom, it turns out, had been contacted by Hinckley.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: He had made contact with them! I mean much earlier, you know, days or weeks or months prior to this shooting.

Wynkoop: Right.

Baker: Then we get from the New Haven office, we were a couple of days into the investigation by the time we got it, a tape that Jodie Foster made of this guy calling her. She made it because this guy, Hinckley, was calling her so much and bothering her.

Wynkoop: Uhm-hmm.

Baker: She was living in a dorm with other college girls, her room mates. I remember sitting there listening to this tape and you hear her voice on it, when he calls her. You hear her saying to him, "You shouldn't be calling me. You shouldn't be calling me like this." And he's saying, "Well, I need" and "I want this and that". And she's saying, "You really shouldn't call me here. You shouldn't do this. You shouldn't bother me here." But she stays on the phone with him, talking to him in this way.

Wynkoop: Hmmm. That's amazing.

Baker: I'm just sitting there, with whoever brought it in, listening to the tape at the time, just yelling at the tape ...at the machine playing on the desk, "Hang up! Hang up!"

Wynkoop: Exactly.

Baker: Because this is what we tell our daughters. You don't stay on the phone with this kind of guy. You hang up!

Wynkoop: Oh, I know it.

Baker: But she's on the phone with him, so reasonable, talking to him.

Wynkoop: That's amazing.

Baker: But she knew enough to make a recording of it.

Wynkoop: Yes. And maybe she was trying to stay on the line thinking that if she hung up it might irritate him more. You know, you just don't know what they were thinking. I didn't realize how much Hinckley got from the *Taxi Driver* movie. How so much of this played into scenes from that movie and the assassination attempts there. It got somewhat convoluted, I would have to agree ... with the whole scene. But I think, again, and I'm sure your quick reactions in managing the whole investigation, I'm sure did enable the Nation and Washington to calm down and see that things were being handled and that he was gotten to the hospital so quickly. Which was great.

Baker: So that's where that is.

Wynkoop: Okay. Well, why don't we end this for today.

Baker: Yes.

Wynkoop: Well, I'll say a few words; I'm going to turn this tape off at this time, but I thank you again. And I'm going to stop this at this moment.

Baker: Okay.

Wynkoop: Thank you.