

TO: H. WFAUCAG

# "Where were you when JFK was shot?"

## (3) A member of the Fair Play For Cuba Committee

We are confident that our subject this month is unique. He is the only current or past member of Dealey Plaza UK who is a former member of the Fair Play For Cuba Committee. As he explains below, his FPCC links meant that the days immediately following the assassination brought concerns and fears not experienced by the average U.S. citizen.

Well-known and respected within the research community, **HAL VERB** has been researching the JFK assassination since the early 60s. He has run college courses on the subject and also hosted a series of TV specials in the San Francisco area (*Assassination Update*). Some of our members may recall that Hal was one of the speakers at the 1996 DPUK meeting in Dallas.

Here are Hal's recollections of 22nd November 1963 and the days following.

I first heard about JFK being shot as I was leaving my apartment in Berkeley, California in the late morning of Friday 22nd November 1963. Remember that there is a two hours time difference between California and Texas. As I was exiting the front entrance two women remarked to me: "Did you hear? The President was shot." They did not say that he had been killed so most probably any report they had heard would have been a very early one before JFK was pronounced dead at Parkland. My initial thought was that he was maybe standing in a crowd and someone shot him at close range. My mind interpreted this as JFK being wounded but not dead.

Perhaps we should not forget that when people recount where they were when JFK was shot, they normally describe where they were when they first *heard* the announcement. They could well have been elsewhere at the exact moment he was shot.

I had left my apartment that day because at that time I was unemployed and was looking for work. I had applied for a position at a firm (whose name I cannot now recall) and I was there when the news came in that the President was dead.

As the day wore on, people were either tuned in to the radio or glued to their TV set. On the first day (22nd November), Oswald was named as the suspect and he was also identified with the Fair Play For Cuba Committee. Since I was then associated with the FPCC, as were many of my friends on the West Coast, I was quite fearful because as the next few days developed I began to feel that a 'pogrom' would be in progress where FPCC members would be rounded up and hauled in for questioning. I had known the original founder of the FPCC, Richard Gibson, and the subsequent director, V. T. Lee, so I quite naturally had considerable concern for my own well-being and also for that of other people.

My fears were not unfounded. I learnt that very day (22nd) that the FBI had called the Student Union of the

UC Berkeley Campus and demanded the names of all the FPCC members. It just so happened that the fellow who handled the telephone at the time was an FPCC member and he told the FBI that they would *not* get that information from him.

As time went on for those first few days, from Friday 22 through Sunday 24 when Ruby shot Oswald, I was beginning to think that the FPCC was being set up to take a fall in the style of the Reichstag Fire when Hitler's men falsely pinned that incident on a German Communist.

I must say here that when Ruby shot Oswald, I immediately began to think 'frame-up'. Of course I had no evidence for this but it was then a very reasonable position to take.

It is obvious why I became so heavily involved in trying to learn the truth about what really happened. I knew about the FPCC, I knew people connected with the *Militant* newspaper who had seen the famous 'Oswald with weapons and newspapers' photo. (I believe that the one he sent was real and not faked, but that's another story!)

My suspicions were further aroused in the period *after* the first few days because there was *no* 'pogrom' against leftists and progressives. There was *no* round-up of 'the usual suspects'. It was my feeling that because this did not occur, the issue of the assassination took on a political character that was deeper than I had realized. I believed this then and I continue to believe it to this day.

That is why I continue to search, examine and question whatever comes down the pike. There may never be a final answer to what happened but that is no reason to give up. As someone once said: "Just because you can't do everything is no reason not to do everything you can!"