

Edward J. Epstein: Assassin or Super-Jinx?

by David Miller

When George de Mohrenschildt, Lee H. Oswald's good buddy, died in the spring of 1977, he was set up for the blast by Edward Jay Epstein, an alleged free-lance journalist actually engaged in murder and conspiracy by the U.S. intelligence agencies.

Epstein also "interviewed" FBI honcho William C. Sullivan and former CIA spy pilot Francis Gary Powers before those gentlemen perished in '77. Powers had worked with Oswald in the CIA's U-2 planning in Alstugi, Japan in 1959. According to the 11/5/77 *New York Daily News*, a Nov. 2, 1961 memo from Acting CIA Director General C.P. Cabell resulted in Secretary of State Dean Rusk arranging Powers' release from a Russian prison in exchange for Soviet master spy Rudolf Abel. General Cabell just happened to be the brother of the Mayor of Dallas when John F. Kennedy was shot in Dallas in 1963.

William C. Sullivan in 1970 drafted the surveillance program known as the "Huston Plan", opposed by FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover; Hoover's death in 1972 may have been caused by Sullivan's machinations in and out of the Nixon White House. According to an unpublished manuscript known as the "Torbit Document", William C. Sullivan, as head of the FBI's Division V, was a key plotter in the JFK murder. Shortly before his "accidental" shooting death, Sullivan was subpoenaed by the House Assassinations Committee, joining George de Mohrenschildt and Carlos Prío Socarras in sudden deaths after being contacted by the committee.

No one is investigating Edward Jay Epstein's role in the murders of de Mohrenschildt and Sullivan, even though he was the only person to see de Mohrenschildt extensively the weekend before the shooting. Instead, Epstein's new farcical book on the Kennedy assassination, published by *Reader's Digest*, is given extensive media coverage.

Epstein's book claims Lee Oswald was working for the Russian KGB, even though he acted alone (?) in shooting JFK. Not coincidentally, *Reader's Digest* several years ago published *KGB*, John Barron's attempt to whitewash the discredited CIA by attacking Soviet intelligence. Epstein's latest book thus further whitewashes the CIA by placing CIA agent Oswald in a rival intelligence agency. Just to keep people from shouting "conspiracy", though, Epstein concludes that KGBer Oswald somehow acted alone in Dallas.

Of course, Epstein overlooks the fact that Oswald was greeted upon his return from Russia by Spas T. Raikin, representative of *Travelers' Aid Socie-*

ty (which helped the CIA erect the Vietnam "babylift" in 1975) and a man with ties to CIA front such as the Asian-American Peoples' Anti-Communist League—for which Tom Charles Huston served before joining the Nixon White House.

Epstein also overlooks the fact that Oswald's Dallas friends such as de Mohrenschildt were themselves CIA-connected, and his close friend Michael Paine had a security clearance while working for Bell Helicopter. In fact, the "Communist" Oswald was close to some rather obvious Nazi types: George de Mohrenschildt had been accused of being a Nazi spy during World War II, and his "White Russian" friends in Dallas were involved in organizations such as the Wehrmacht-trained Vlasov Army. Bell Helicopter, Paine's employers, also employed Nazi General Walter Dornberger.

Considering the John Birch



A Television First: Jack Ruby assassinates Oswald in front of 50 million viewers



Edward J. Epstein: Kiss of Death?



Carlos Prio: Another dead JFK Witness

Society's role in the anti-JFK newspaper ads, and General Edwin Walker's role in the "Wanted for Treason" posters, it seems obvious that neo-Nazis were planning to kill JFK, as numerous Walker disciples from Munich found their way to Dallas in 1962-'63, later demonstrating against Adlai Stevenson before placing anti-JFK ads (paid for by the Birch Society) in Dallas newspapers. Yet Epstein, like CIA operative Priscilla McMillan, continues to portray Oswald as a "Marxist" and a lone assassin.

Epstein's absurdity vis-a-vis JFK goes back to 1966, when the Cornell grad student met Mark Lane when the latter was on a lecture tour. Knowing that Lane's book *Rush to Judgement* was to soon be published, Epstein rushed to publication *Inquest*, a master's thesis in Government that

was published by the Viking Press—the company that was later to employ Jackie Kennedy—in the late summer of '66.

Inquest, a study of the Warren Commission's methods in arriving at their conclusions, had some criticism of the Commission but generally praised the intent of the WC, believing Gerald Ford and Allen Dulles and the others to be honorable men. In the introduction, liberal author Richard Rovere denounced the "demonologists" who believed there had been a conspiracy to kill JFK; no one was mentioned by name, but Rovere seemed to be referring to Mark Lane. The word "demonologists" came to be used quite often: Elmer Gertz in *Moment of Madness*, John Sparrow, John Kaplan, and other WC defenders used this word to denounce Lane, Jim Garrison and other WC critics. The word was *first* used in Eps-

tein's book, an odd happening for a supposed WC "critic".

It took Mark Lane two years to locate a publisher for *Rush to Judgement*, yet as soon as he found one, Viking Press immediately set out to print Epstein's slim volume. Master's theses in Government are seldom accepted for publication by major publishers, and master's theses in Government are seldom written on topics such as the Warren Commission. Epstein seemed to have astonishing luck in getting his dubious thesis approved, then published; a "demonologist" might accuse him of having contacts in the Government. It *does* appear that *Inquest*, a book with very mild criticism of the Warren Commission, was rushed into print as an Establishment response to the harsh probing of Lane.

Epstein's next book, *Counterplot*,

was an attack upon New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison, with such blatant lies that William Turner refuted the falsehoods in the Sept. 23, 1968 *Ramparts*. This second book, denouncing Garrison's tactics in the conspiracy trial of Clay Shaw, accused the DA of using "McCarthyite" methods to smear Shaw. Not coincidentally, the author of the introduction to Epstein's first book, Richard Rovere, wrote the 1959 criticism of McCarthy, *Senator Joe McCarthy*. Thus the certified "liberal" defenders of the Warren Commission now smeared the WC critics with the epithets usually reserved for the Right: Lane and Garrison were either Birch Society-type "demonologists" or "McCarthyite" zealots who were obviously not as sincere as their liberal adversaries.

In May, 1969 Epstein further attacked Lane and Garrison in a *New York Times Magazine* article attempting to sound the requiem for the

critics. In three short years Epstein had gone from obscure grad-student, with no writing at all to his credit, to a published author who was now getting into the Establishment's own media. Lane and Garrison are lucky if they get a yearly letter in the *New York Times*, but Edward Jay Epstein has been much "luckier".

Later that year Epstein began writing for the *New Yorker*, the magazine that—surprise!—has employed Richard Rovere for many years. In this capacity, Epstein incurred the wrath of the Left by claiming that very few Black Panthers had been killed by police—despite the recent FBI COINTELPRO disclosures, Epstein has never retracted his 1969-'70 statements denying a systematic cam-

paign to kill off Panthers. The 1966 "critic" was now a top Establishment defender, and he began writing for *Commentary*, the magazine of the "neo-conservatives", i.e., old liberals paid off with CIA money to defend the Right.

The May 31, 1974 *New York Times Magazine* reported on p. 67 that Epstein was one of several American journalists visiting India on behalf of the United States Information Service. The USIS is an official U.S. Government propaganda outlet, and Epstein's acceptance of money and travel from them is an admission that the one-time "critic" is actually a government agent posing as a journalist.

Consequently, his new "book" on Oswald should be interpreted as another government-sponsored disinformation effort, designed to put down the "demonologists" and reinforce the "lone nut" theory. The

choice of an ultra-rightist publisher (*Reader's Digest* in 1939 printed Charles Lindbergh's pro-Nazi views on race, printed pro-Axis articles during World War II) by Epstein reveals his true leanings as a right-wing agent spreading disinformation on behalf of the people who killed JFK and other threats to the Right.

Interestingly, Epstein seems to come up with CIA photographs that the CIA never divulges to anyone else. Back in December, 1966 in an *Esquire* article he printed a CIA photo of a heavy-set man claiming to be Oswald; in his new book Epstein shows John Wayne sharing a meal with Marines in the Phillipines in the late 1950's, with Lee Oswald or a look-alike standing in the background.

Edward Jay Epstein himself may have been working for military intelligence in the late 1950's. Epstein was born in 1935 and graduated from college in 1957. In 1959 he suddenly joined the Army, an odd decision for a college grad in peacetime—obviously Epstein served in military intelligence about the time Lee Oswald was "defecting" to Russia. What did he do between 1957 and 1959? What did he do between leaving the military and entering graduate school in 1965? No one seems to know; there are Shakespearean gaps in the life of Edward Jay Epstein.

Epstein was 31 when he started his master's thesis, an advanced age for even a professional student in the 1960's. He became friendly with Mark Lane, then stabbed Lane in the back. He became the official Establishment spokesman in regard to JFK, Fred Hampton, and other victims of the intelligence agencies. After taking money from the USIS, he helped kill William Sullivan and Francis Gary Powers and George de Mohrenschildt, preventing those intelligence agents from revealing the true killers of JFK.

All in all, Edward Jay Epstein is quite a journalist. I just wouldn't want to be interviewed by him.