

FOCUS ON: THE SHADOW OF DALLAS

By L. Fletcher Prouty

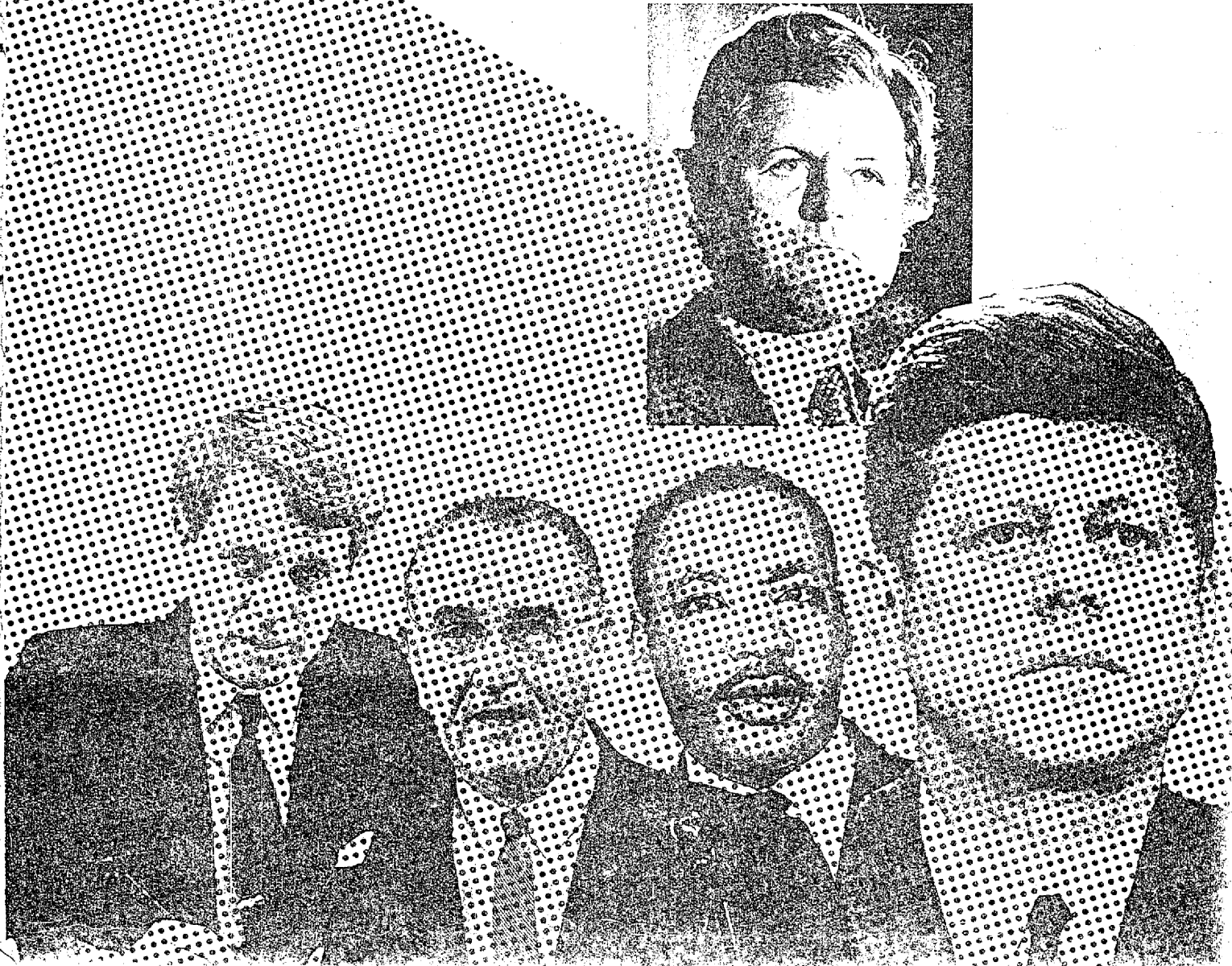
The cabal that planned the behind-the-scenes take-over of the U.S. government in November 1963 did so with consummate skill and foresight. It had one big thing going for it and one big problem: The first was that they knew that the government under its control would never really investigate the murder in Dallas that month of President John Kennedy; the second was the problem of succession. Under the Constitution, we elect a president every four years; but the cabal intended to control the

government for a long, long time.

This problem required elaborate planning because the group wished to exercise control of a government that would outwardly appear normal. Therefore the plotters' plans encompassed not only the assassination of Kennedy but also developing relationships with a number of potential figureheads who would be emplaced in the successor government. These would be men who were already aware of the enormity and closeness of the plotters' threat, men who could be dominated by fear.

President Eisenhower had warned that the country faced a serious threat, not from international communism, but from the insidious forces of the military-

industrial complex. He had sensed during his administration the beginnings of a stealthy movement into the nerve centers of power by the major industrial organizations, who used secrecy in the Defense Department and especially in the CIA to conceal their actions. Their greatest motivation was to get more defense dollars. For instance, when Lockheed, the largest of the military contractors, was unable to sell the F-90 fighter plane to the Air Force, it redesigned the plane and came up with a high-flying reconnaissance aircraft, which it sold to the CIA. The plane was the U-2, and though it was "sold" to the CIA, it was actually purchased with secret Air Force funds. Another example is the Bell



“ . . . but until the people of this country rise up and demand that the stains of Dallas be removed, we shall continue in an uncertain manner and with an unknown shadow over us all. . . .”

Helicopter Company. By 1959 so few helicopters were being purchased that Bell was near bankruptcy when a Boston bank working with a textile manufacturer, Textron, came up with the idea of having Textron acquire Bell Helicopter. (Textron now plans to acquire Lockheed Aircraft.) Shortly after, General Charles Cabell, deputy director of Central Intelligence, and long the right-hand man of the director, Allen W. Dulles, called the Secretary of Defense and ordered that a whole squadron of helicopters be moved from a becalmed war in Laos to a conflict in South Vietnam that could potentially escalate. In other words, more money could be spent in Vietnam than ever could be spent in remote Laos. This was the first big move of American military hardware into South Vietnam. Helicopters are costly to build and maintain. The helicopters in Vietnam assured big money and lots of men.

Quietly and under cover, moves such as these were being made in late 1959 and 1960. President Eisenhower sensed what was afoot, but he did nothing to stop it except to speak of the “military-industrial complex” in his last speech before leaving office. Eisenhower’s inaction was not lost on those who took advantage of his indecision. During 1960 the CIA was heavily involved in Tibet, in Africa, in Laos, and was stepping up its activities in support of South Vietnam’s undemocratic regime, while in the hinterlands of Panama, Nicaragua, and Guatemala it was secretly building its major forces for the invasion of Cuba.

Other secret forces were shaping the future. In 1960 the Army’s nearly defunct Special Forces were secretly expanded. The Special Forces, which had been created to support secret missions in the event of nuclear war, were cleverly transformed by CIA personnel into a sinister peacetime force. By the winter of 1960, before the inauguration of John Kennedy, the Deputy Secretary of Defense went to Fort Bragg (N.C.), home of the Special Forces, to dedicate their new school. The school’s CIA-oriented curriculum was written by one of the CIA’s most important operatives, Edward G. Lansdale, and his covert staff.

All this had been set in motion, quietly and effectively, by men who believed firmly that Richard M. Nixon would be elected President after Eisenhower. Kennedy’s narrow victory over Nixon upset those plans, but did not slow their momentum. The effectiveness of the plans is seen in the fact that the Bay of

Pigs invasion of Cuba, which Nixon had actively supported but which Eisenhower had never approved, went right ahead almost before Kennedy and his administration knew what was going on.

After the invasion debacle, the CIA quickly transferred its military assets, people, and hardware—a large force—to South Vietnam. After the Bay of Pigs, John Kennedy, and especially his brother Robert, who was Attorney General, began to realize some deep problems. In a directive issued in June 1961, President Kennedy undertook the task of establishing control over the CIA and its willing accomplices in the clandestine units of the Army, Navy, and Air Force. Only recently have copies of these National Security Action Memoranda been made available from a hesitant National Security Council.

But the Kennedy team, unskilled in such maneuvers of power, was unable to gain control of Secret Operations from the CIA and the Defense Department. And so for the next two years, the United States was drawn into South Vietnam regardless of the will of the President. In fact, the reduction of forces ordered by John Kennedy began in late 1963. After his death, one can find back-page reports in the *New York Times* reporting the return of small numbers of troops from South Vietnam.

Those who plotted his death had moved with great skill. They had arranged it so that the vice-president, in a rare action, was on the scene of the assassination. He was in a car right behind John Kennedy in the Dallas motorcade. Ordinarily, the president and the vice president would never have been in the same motorcade. The plotters had made certain that the succeeding administration would be under control. Johnson said shortly before he died that he knew the CIA operated a “Murder, Inc.,” but that there was nothing he could have done about it.

But the cabal did even better. It arranged a sure parlay. On the morning of Kennedy’s death someone had seen to it that Richard M. Nixon would “just happen” to be in Dallas. The thud of those bullets fired in six seconds by experts who were never apprehended was not lost on his ears, either. In a television interview in January 1971, Nixon said he had inherited nightmares. He did, and he knew the power of the threat.

When Lyndon Johnson decided to give up his office rather than continue under those conditions, the stage was

already set for another “Dallas-conditioned” man to take over. Nixon rose from the ashes of his disastrous California campaign, ran for the presidency, and squeaked through. Watergate shows us now how cleverly this succession of Dallas-tainted men had been worked out, and how much under the control of “higher forces” Nixon had been.

Consider the tape that brought him down. Not until that last day, when the tape of June 23, 1972 was released, did his last-ditch support collapse. It is most significant to consider carefully what really brought about Nixon’s collapse.

On the June 23 tape there was undeniable evidence that Nixon had taken direct action to cover up the Watergate break-in. But what is absolutely astounding is that what bothered Nixon only five days after the break-in was not Watergate at all. It was “that Hunt thing” (E. Howard Hunt, the former CIA agent) and “the Bay of Pigs.” Why, at that crucial time, should Richard Nixon have been so worried about Hunt and the Bay of Pigs? Why did those two things scare him so much that he organized one of the greatest cover-ups in history? Later, Nixon said it would be easy to raise one million dollars in “hush money” to pay Hunt. What did he know? What did he fear that much? What did he know that Hunt knew? Whatever it was, Nixon feared it more than the Watergate break-in.

It was the crime of “cover-up” that pushed Nixon out of the White House, not the crime of breaking into Watergate and all of the other White House “horrors.” Thus it has been with the murder of John Kennedy. Oswald did not murder JFK; most everyone knows that now. The continuing crime of the cover-up of John Kennedy’s murder festers on the body politic of our country.

No wonder Nixon had to order the otherwise senseless “Saturday night massacre” of Watergate special prosecutor Archibald Cox. Highly motivated and skilled lawyers like Elliott Richardson and Cox would have continued the Watergate initiative and would have pursued the sources of the real crimes. This investigation would inevitably have led to Dallas and John Kennedy’s murder. This is what Nixon really feared: so even though it hurt his own defense badly, he had to remove them in favor of more “reliable” prosecutors.

The sinister forces behind all of this have contrived that the men who now appear high on the national scene are still tainted or threatened by that day in Dallas, and the later, related killings of Robert F. Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

President Ford himself was the most active and vociferous of all of the Warren Commission members. In effect, he played a major part, perhaps unwittingly,