

# THE FOURTH DECADE

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**Back cover illustration:** Banister and LUAC. Several assassination researchers have asserted, without furnishing primary documentation, that Guy Banister, a likely Oswald associate, was "associated" with the Louisiana Un-American Activities Committee (LUAC). Shown here is a news clipping from the New Orleans Times-Picayune which documents Banister's application for work with LUAC and indicates how his views match LUAC's notable anti-communist and anti-civil rights views. See the letter by Shinley in this issue, and the comments of Hugh Murray in the last issue and his response to Van Wynsberghe's letter in this issue.



## THE TIPPIT ASSASSINATION AND DAVID BELIN'S HEARING LOSS YOU ARE THE JURY!

by

Walt Brown, Ph.D.

Shortly after 7 p.m. on November 22, 1963, Lee Harvey Oswald, who was either a malcontent Communist Castroite or an agent of the US government who had staged a successful "defection" to the USSR, was charged and arraigned for the premeditated murder of Dallas police officer J.D. Tippit.

The Dallas authorities at least got half the story right, and in so doing, they clearly disproved the second part of the allegation. J.D. Tippit's murder was premeditated; that being the case, it is inconceivable that Oswald, suddenly aware of his "patsy" status and on the run from the Book Depository, would compound his existing problems by going to a pre-determined location and dropping the hammer on one of "Dallas' finest."

Warren Commission Counsel David Belin took the testimony and heard the evidence to prove this; he just chose not to hear what he was told, so the standard Tippit story was carved into Warren Commission cuneiform by the same witless scribes who swallowed the magic bullet and carved that fantasy on all of pharaoh's pylons and obelisks.

To his credit, Counsel Belin donated the royalties from his books, November 22, 1963: You are the Jury, and Final Disclosure: The Full Truth about the Assassination of President Kennedy, to charity. (It should strike the reader as odd that a Warren Commission staff attorney would publish a book which contained the "full truth about the assassination of President Kennedy," inasmuch as he had already put his name on the Warren Report, which we were told was the "full truth...") To his discredit, he still seems to believe the drivel contained in those books.

Many of the Warren Commission's errors and/or lapses of judgment can be attributed to the compartmentalization of their investigation. An occasional snippet (rhymes with Tippit) of testimony might be heard by one staff member without it striking an odd chord, because that counsel had not been privy to other testimony. That was not the case, of course, with the medical testimony taken by Arlen Specter, where the suborning of perjury became a fine art; nor was it true in the case of the two innocent witnesses who testified before David Belin,

and gave him the Tippit case on a platter. Ever the gracious host, he declined to accept the judicial offering from those less fortunate than he.

Belin's "Hearing Loss" began on March 26, 1964, in the headquarters of the Warren Commission, the Veteran's Building at 200 Maryland Avenue NE, in Washington, a faceless bureaucratic edifice of little note where the FBI had supplied the Commission with projectors, a scale model of Dealey Plaza, and, undoubtedly, a dozen or so undetected listening devices.

On that fateful March 26, Belin would serve as the front man for Commissioners Warren, Ford, and Dulles, who were "present" for the testimony of Helen Markham, William W. Scoggins, Mrs. Jeanette Davis, and Ted Callaway.

The operative concern here is the testimony of William Scoggins, a poor wretch of a soul who had only achieved an eighth grade education before embarking on a series of menial occupations which culminated in his being a 49 year old hack driver in Dallas on November 22, 1963.

Scoggins had delivered a fare and then gone to the Gentlemen's Club, a lunchtime eatery located not far from the infamous corner of Tenth and Patton, where J.D. Tippit would die in a hail of bullets. After the preliminary questions were seen to, Belin asked Scoggins, "All right. Did you see the police car go across right in front of yours?" Scoggins answered, "Yes; he went right down the street. He come from the west, going east on east Tenth." Belin then asked a reasonable question: "Then what did you see?" Scoggins: "I noticed he stopped down there, and I wasn't paying too much attention to the man, you see, just used to see him every day..." [emphasis added to cure "hearing loss." Testimony from 3H, 324-325.]

Scoggins told Belin, in effect, that he took no notice of Tippit because he was accustomed to seeing that officer in that particular location at that general time of day on an apparently regular basis. This strongly suggests that Tippit was not there merely by chance on Black Friday, and it also suggests that some dirty dealings were done with respect to the Dallas police radio logs (original copies of which are now available from the D.P.D. archives @ .25/page). At 12:48 p.m., November 22, amidst what was undoubtedly the greatest personhunt of the 20th century, and amidst radio traffic that is devoid of any non-assassination related comment, we find the routine transmission to two officers, one of whom was J.D. Tippit, to move into Oak Cliff and be "at large" for any emergencies that came in. Recall: no other officer was contacted for hours, except with respect to the assassination, and subsequently,

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with respect to Tippit's assassination. Clearly, the log was dummied up after the fact, as Scoggins' testimony indicated, as even a poor old cabbie knew where to find Tippit at lunchtime on most days. So he didn't have to be dispatched to that location—he was there anyhow. We shall soon discover why.

Belin's hearing loss was even more acute seven days later, on April 2, 1964, in the office of the U.S. attorney, 301 Post Office Building, Bryan and Ervay Streets, in Dallas, Texas. On this equally inauspicious occasion, Belin was on his own, taking the testimony of Mrs. Charlie Virginia Davis.

Mrs. Davis, who was sixteen on that day and had been married for seven months, lived in a dual apartment residence at 400 East Tenth Street, which is the standard address given for the Tippit murder.

Again, following preliminaries, Belin asked the reasonable question: "Where was the police car parked?" Mrs. Davis, obviously uninformed about the neighborhood, nevertheless gave an answer that would arrest anyone's attention.

Anyone but David Belin's attention, that is. She answered, "It was parked between the hedge that marks the apartment house where he lives in and the house next door." [6H 458] First we had Scoggins saying Tippit was in the neighborhood so often that he was virtually a part of the landscape, present but unremarkable. Now we have the testimony of a witness who apparently saw Tippit at that location so often that she believed he lived there!

We know, of course, that Officer Tippit did not live there, and since there is no record that the house Mrs. Davis believed he lived in was a residence where crime was so prevalent that Officer Tippit had to investigate on such a regular basis, we must question his reason(s) for being there so often. From other research that has been done, it can be inferred that Tippit was in that neighborhood that often in pursuance of an amour impropre.

Sorry, Counsel Belin. Those people did not whisper to you. They told you things you didn't want to hear, so you pretended you didn't hear them. After Scoggins gave his indication of Tippit's regularity in the neighborhood, he told of seeing someone else down the street on foot. Belin did not pursue the "Tippit in the neighborhood" concern; he asked, "When you first saw this man, had the police car stopped or not?" [3H 325] When Mrs. Davis testified that she saw the police car by a hedge where she believed the officer lived, she was asked by the ever-astute Belin, "Was it on your side of East 10th or the other side of the street?" [6H 458] This is a throw-away question born of "suppression" mentality, as there were no

doubt piles of documents and photographs which could have answered the question about which side of the road Tippit's car—and shortly after, his body, were on.

Let's put Belin aside [he earned it] and allow the plot to thicken. If the question "What one and only one event could distract a police department from an investigation of the shooting of the President of the United States, what would that event be?" were posed to a given number of individuals aware of police procedures and behavioral traits, the vast majority would answer simply, "The only such event would be the shooting of a fellow officer," and they would be right.

Now let's look at the timing. Despite several witnesses in the general vicinity of Houston and Elm who immediately told police of seeing a weapon in a specific window of the Texas School Book Depository, no officer arrived in that "sniper's nest" until Luke Mooney "discovered" three spent cartridges there at 1:12. Exactly ten minutes later, Constable Seymour Weitzman and Sheriff's Deputy Eugene Boone found—well, let's call it a rifle, since they both identified it as a Mauser.

The key times here are 1:12 and 1:22. The Tippit shooting was called in at 1:18. Now that's timing! The stage prop shells and rifle are found, but then an "officer shot" call comes in, timed more perfectly than the punchlines in vaudeville, and the focus of attention moves from the TSBD to the Tippit scene. Deputy D.A. William Alexander, upon hearing the Tippit call, decided, from his vantage point at Houston and Elm, that Tippit's killer was also JFK's assailant, and led the posse to find the one man who had committed both crimes. This might have seemed a reasonable supposition if the two crimes had occurred a few minutes and a few blocks apart. But several miles and 45 minutes stretches police theorizing, given the urgent problem of having to deal with the Dealey Plaza crime before charging off to solve the one at Tenth and Patton.

Yet charge off they did. Scoggins indicated that he called the shooting in to his dispatcher, but that an ambulance arrived at the Tippit scene before he finished giving details to his dispatcher. [3H 326] Again: the timing is too slick. Ambulances do not cruise through neighborhoods as do taxis. Of equal note, while there are numerous photos of Tippit's car, which neither committed a crime nor was a victim of one, there is no picture of the dead officer on the ground, nor were chalk lines drawn as are done in every other homicide committed since Magna Charta was signed. "Well, by that time there was more policemen there than you could shake a stick at. They were all over the place..." Scoggins concluded. [3H 333] But they were not all over the TSBD. Not any more. Not after the props were found; not after the Tippit call came



in, right smack-dab—in the middle of the most half-ass crime scene search(es) in history.

What can we conclude? For openers, we can posit three very strong motives for the death of Jefferson Davis Tippit. First, his death drew already limited manpower away from the primary crime scene well before the entire area was secured or searched; second, Tippit's death gave authorities an excuse to arrest a suspect in a theater, and convince themselves, "Case Closed," to coin a phrase, on the other, more important murder that had occurred that day. And finally, it allowed the Dallas police to be purged of an individual who was giving the department a black eye with his "amour impropre," which was so obvious that both a cab driver in the neighborhood and a local tenant believed Tippit to be part of that landscape.

And if those two folks knew where to find good ol' J.D., we can posit with certainty that his real killers knew where he was spending his not-so spare time.

Real killers? What about Oswald? Consider the motives: Did Oswald kill a police officer so that fewer people would search the building in which he worked, assuming perhaps that they would abandon the place altogether? Not likely. Did Oswald kill Tippit to draw attention to himself, to enhance his suspect status, or, like his Belinesque motive for the murder of JFK, because he was a Castro Red? Hardly. Lastly, did Oswald kill Tippit because he was carrying on with a paramour localized in and around Tenth and Patton? Of course not.

Which brings us back to David Belin, who defends every Warren Commission word and punctuation mark to this day, dusts off his bow tie whenever necessary, and points to the 26 volumes of Warren Commission evidence on selected TV appearances and boasts of how deep the investigation went. Except, of course, for the two answers spoken to him that he ignored. So, Mr. Belin, let us seek final disclosure: I challenge any group of twelve objective Americans to read your book, November 22: You Are the Jury, and my first book, The People v. Lee Harvey Oswald, and let them be "the jury" and decide on the guilt or innocence of Lee Oswald. With all due respect, sir, you will never get a conviction. Never. And I say that with confidence because you didn't demonstrate much "conviction" in your search for the truth.

## ON THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE ZAPRUDER FILM

by

Richard W. Burgess

A number of critics, including David Lifton and Harrison Livingstone, have claimed that the Zapruder film has been tampered with. [1] Most attention has focused on the head wounds. Since the Zapruder film does not match the eyewitness testimony, it is claimed that someone has darkened the back of Kennedy's head, thus obliterating the damage of the occipital-parietal area, and painted on what Livingstone calls "The Blob," a red area that covers Kennedy's face and seems to reproduce the wounds of the autopsy photographs.

*[A]n altered film might also explain why the occipital area, where the Dallas doctors saw a wound, appears suspiciously dark, whereas a large wound appears on the forward righthand side of the head, where the Dallas doctors saw no wound at all. [2]*

*One gets the distinct impression that the effusion from the head is painted on those frames of the film, and that in one of the frames the entire image was superimposed on the background but omitting the face and top of the head forward of the ears. [3]*

*There is no medical or physical way to explain what is seen in the film other than to postulate that the Blob is drawn onto the film to make it appear that a shot from behind has removed part of the face. [4]*

*The Zapruder film was obtained at once by the conspirators and forged. The large hole extending into the back of Kennedy's head was blacked out to mask this exit wound, and a large, fleshy exit wound was painted onto the film on Kennedy's face. A new "original" was struck from the fake film. It took very little time to doctor the few frames. [5]*

These are serious charges.

I have personal knowledge of the sorts of processes and effects that were available to film-makers in 1963 and I can state categorically that the Zapruder film has not had anything added to it or removed from it, apart from the splices that everyone knows about. Standard 8mm film has an especially small frame size—since it is just 16mm film split down the middle during processing, the sprocket holes take up much of the surface area— and is consequently particularly grainy. This small size and grainy quality make any kind of inconspicuous tampering almost impossible.

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First of all, arguments of fakery should arise from peculiarities within the film itself, not from comparison with other evidence. I have examined the entire sequence over and over again and there is absolutely nothing in the film itself that suggests tampering. The shadows on Kennedy's head are consistent in darkness and shape for the angle of the sun throughout the entire sequence and there is nothing about the damage to Kennedy's head that betrays any trickery. It looks horribly real. But if such tampering had been done, how would it have been possible?

Livingstone believes that all one needs to do is draw or paint on the surface of the film. This would result in a ridiculously amateurish mess that would not fool a four-year-old, even in the hands of a skilled miniature painter under a microscope. No one could paint, frame after frame, the details, the colors, the changing shape, and the movement of the flap of skull and scalp (for that is what it is) from one frame to the next, not least because Kennedy's head wound itself is probably only a half or quarter the size of the head of a pin (if that). Special effects are never painted directly onto film because it is impossible to repeat, frame after frame, the necessary details and precise location of the painting itself. There is simply no possible way it could be done and escape detection. A second problem with this method is that 8mm film does not dupe very well. It is already rather contrasty and grainy, and a film to film copy would have noticeably reduced clarity and detail. This problem is well known to researchers who have long commented on the differences between the various copies of the Zapruder film in circulation and the camera original (or even the 35mm slides made from it).

Any attempted modification would necessitate the enlargement of the film to 35mm (to maintain clarity, and reduce changes in color saturation and balance, contrast, and grain), various types of optical printing with travelling mattes, and then reduction back to 8mm. The conspirators would have to begin by rear-projecting each frame onto the back of an animator's drawing table and tracing each successive frame of Kennedy onto a piece of paper. This is known as rotoscoping. (Robert Groden uses this term completely incorrectly when he refers to his image stabilization of the Zapruder film). [6] Then an animator would have to animate the "blob" by drawing it onto the successive roto-scoped images of Kennedy's head. These drawings would then be transferred to animation cels and painted. The area around the painted wound on each cel would then be painted black. Another set of cels would then be copied, but with the wound painted black and the rest of the cel clear. These images would then be filmed with an animation camera onto two sets of film, one with the wound

surrounded by black (film 1) and the other with a black blob floating in mid-air on clear film (film 2). This is a travelling matte.

Next the Zapruder film enlargement would be run through an optical printer with film 2 on top in correct frame register, producing film 3. This film would show a black hole where the wound should be. Film 3 would then be rewound and film 1 (the wound surrounded by black) would be run through the printer exposing film 3 again. Since black does not expose the film, the surrounding black of film 1 wouldn't expose the already exposed Zapruder film and, if the copying of the cels was done exactly and the job was done properly on a high quality optical printer, the painted wound would fit right into the unexposed hole in film 3 like a moving jigsaw-puzzle piece. Film 3 is reduced back to 8mm and there you have it: faked Zapruder film.

Unfortunately this would and could never work, for a number of important reasons. The first is that the final version is three generations removed from the original. Given the generally poor quality of the image to start with, the final version would be so murky as to be almost useless, even with fine grain, low contrast 35mm masters and specialized color duping film (a new development in 1963). The second problem would be one of paints. How could the animator achieve a realistic-looking wound that didn't look like paint? The flap in the Zapruder film is obviously glistening flesh; reproducing that to match the colors, tonalities, and light source of the Zapruder film would be a job for a master. Third, the film into which this animated wound was to be set is very grainy; yet the animated wound would not be. It would show up instantly, since it would share none of the surrounding original grain (which it obviously does in the existing film). There is no way this could be faked. Even if the animated wound were filmed on 8mm film first and then enlarged to 35mm, the shifting grain structures would be different enough to reveal the joint, especially when blown up (as all images of the head by necessity are). Fourth, no matter how good the equipment the wound is so small on the original film (as I noted above, probably no bigger than a half or quarter the size of the head of a pin) that any image would lack sharpness, a problem exacerbated by the grain and the low quality optics of Zapruder's camera. This lack of sharpness would create a "matte bleed", that is, there would be an obvious "line" around the matted wound where the image of film 1 did not fit exactly into the hole in film 2 (everyone has seen such "matte lines" in films; they are usually blue because they are created with an automatic process, rather than the manual process I have described here). Even if the problems I have mentioned above



could be overcome, these problems of grain and matte lines would still give it away (this lack of grain, of course, would be even more noticeable if the image were simply painted onto the surface of the film).

The greatest problems, however, are of blurring, registration, and adding missing background. Since Abraham Zapruder had his camera set on maximum telephoto and had no tripod (apart from his secretary), the images jump around quite a bit even when Zapruder is relatively steady; hence the importance of image stabilization. Once he saw the result of the head shot, he reacted emotionally and the blur becomes even greater. It would have been impossible in 1963 to add anything to the film or alter any successive images and duplicate a realistic blur, caused either by the movement of the objects photographed or by the camera itself. Images might look fine on the individual frames but when those successive frames were run together the animated additions would take on an obvious life of their own, moving and shifting independently of the true images on the film.

Added to this impossibility is the problem of registration. It was easy above to describe the process of rotoscoping and optical printing, but it would have been impossible for anyone to have been able to maintain perfect registration of the wound on the head. Without perfect registration the wound would move around on the head, as if it weren't attached. This goes for movement in all three dimensions. Not only would the animated wound have to move back and forth and up and down in perfect synchronization with Kennedy's head, but it would also have to shift with changes in depth and angle; it would have to show foreshortening in exact calibration with Kennedy's head movements. This is impossible since even half a grain's shift would cut the animated wound free of Kennedy's head and make it look like some grotesque free-floating balloon. In the film, the wound is firmly part of Kennedy's head. Indeed, part of the flap in front actually flops about in reaction to the violence of Kennedy's head movements. Such virtually invisible "finessing" in a process already unbelievably complex is simply impossible.

Also impossible would be the replacing of background material not originally in the film. As Kennedy's head bounces forward from its backwards thrust, it is obvious that a chunk of the top and side of his head is missing. As it moves forward one can see Jacqueline's face and shoulder right through what ought to be Kennedy's head. If the film were fiddled, this portion must have originally been covered by Kennedy's intact head. There is no possible way that this background material could have been added as well as the flap. It is one

thing to add an element that is completely different from its surroundings, it is quite another to add something to what already exists on the film and achieve any kind of realistic match.

It is simply impossible that the wound on President Kennedy's head as seen in the Zapruder film is anything other than a true image of the wounds he received that day in Dallas.

#### Notes

1. David Lifton, Best Evidence (New York, 1980), pp. 555-7, Harrison Edward Livingstone, High Treason 2 (New York, 1992), pp. 155-6 and pp. 2-3 of photo insert following p. 320; Livingstone, Killing the Truth (New York, 1993), pp. 77, 89, 306-7, 540-1.
2. Lifton, Best Evidence, p. 557.
3. Livingstone, High Treason 2, p. 155.
4. Livingstone, Killing the Truth, p. 77.
5. Livingstone, Killing the Truth, pp. 540-1.
6. See Livingstone, Killing the Truth, p. 339.



## ANOTHER ARGUMENT AGAINST THE SINGLE-BULLET THEORY USING LOGICAL CONNECTIONS BETWEEN ISSUES

by

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I recently argued ("A New Type of Argument Against the Single Bullet Theory" in the January, 1994 issue of The Fourth Decade) that we should search for and use logical connections between apparently unrelated issues in order to formulate additional arguments against the single-bullet theory. In many cases, this method will yield very persuasive arguments to the effect that the Warren Commission's own evidence implies the falsity of its single-shooter conclusion.

In the aforementioned article, I explained how the Warren Commission's own reconstruction photographs as they relate to the issue of lateral trajectory implied that any double-hit, i.e., any single-bullet impact on President Kennedy and Governor Connally, would have to have occurred so early (approximately Zapruder frame 210) that Governor Connally's involuntary physical reaction to being shot (principally his "cheek puff" at approximately Zapruder 238) could not possibly have resulted from the same shot which non-fatally wounded President Kennedy.

However, being logically compelled to push its alleged double-hit back to approximately Zapruder 210 creates an additional problem for the Warren Commission's single-bullet theory and hence for its single-shooter conclusion. Once again, the Warren Commission's nemesis is its own evidence.

The Warren Commission's own reconstruction of the assassination revealed that from Zapruder 166 to Zapruder 209 any shooter firing from the southeast corner window of the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository would have had his view of the President obstructed by the foliage of a large live oak tree (the only exception to this being Zapruder 186 when the President came back into view only "for a fleeting instant").

[1] On the basis of this key claim, the Warren Commission concluded that "it is probable that the President was not shot before Zapruder frame 210, since it is unlikely that the assassin would deliberately have shot at him with a view obstructed by the oak tree when he was about to have a clear opportunity" [2] and since "it is also doubtful that even the most proficient marksman would have hit him through the oak tree." [3]

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So the Warren Commission admits that President Kennedy was shot after his reemergence from behind the foliage of the oak tree at Zapruder 210. Yet its own reconstruction photographs require that any double-hit must have occurred at approximately Zapruder 210. The problem should be clear. If the President wasn't even visible to a shooter firing from the alleged sniper's window until Zapruder 210, how likely is it that the President was shot at approximately 210? Is it likely that any assassin would have been able to reacquire a moving target, aim his weapon accurately and squeeze off a shot instantaneously? Isn't it much more likely that this three-step process would have taken one second, at least two-thirds of a second? If so, the alleged double-hit so essential to the single-bullet theory could not have taken place until at least Zapruder 222 and maybe as late as Zapruder 225. However, by these frames, President Kennedy and Governor Connally were already out of the requisite lateral alignment to have received from a single shot the wounds which they actually sustained. By Zapruder 222 through Zapruder 225, President Kennedy is much too far to the left of Governor Connally for a shot from the alleged sniper's window to go through Kennedy's throat and then (having hit only soft tissue in Kennedy) continue on in an essentially straight line to strike Connally near the right armpit. This is shown by the Warren Commission's own reconstruction photographs of Zapruder 222 and Zapruder 225. [4]

Once again, the Warren Commission's own evidence contradicts its single-bullet theory and hence its single-shooter conclusion. This is the valuable insight which can be gained by attending to the logical connection between the lateral trajectory issue and issues involving the timing of shots.

In my view, there is no more persuasive argument against the Warren Commission's single-bullet theory than one which shows that even the Warren Commission's own evidence refutes the single-bullet theory. Such arguments are valuable weapons in the struggle to combat the lamentable tendency of many, especially those in the mainstream media, to take the Warren Commission's version of events as authoritative in the wake of Gerald Posner's Case Closed.

### Notes

1. Warren Commission Report (New York: St. Martin's Press), p. 98.
2. Warren Commission Report, p. 98.
3. Warren Commission Report, pp. 98-105.
4. Warren Commission Hearings and Exhibits, Volume 18, pp. 89-90.



## PRISCILLA JOHNSON MCMILLAN AND THE CIA

by

*Peter R. Whitmey*

In August, 1993 thousands of pages of CIA documents were made available to researchers at the National Archives that had been previously classified, including several documents associated with Priscilla Johnson McMillan, author of *MARINA AND LEE*, and the subject of several earlier articles by this writer. [1]

The first document, dated December 11, 1962 (and numbered 17456), is a "contact report," previously classified "secret," written by Donald Jameson, Chief SR/CA, which possibly stands for "Soviet Russia/Covert Actions." The report is based on a ninety-minute meeting with Priscilla Johnson in her room at the Brattle Inn, located in Cambridge, Mass. It was pointed out that, according to Mr. Butler at the "OO Office" in Boston, Priscilla was "...allowed to use the Harvard-Russian Research Center for her own work, mainly the writing of articles and a book, but that she has no other official relationship to the center."

Jameson described Priscilla as being "able, astute and conscientious," reflected also in her writing, but at the same time, was "rather nervous and shy," suggesting a "lack of self-confidence." He noted, however, that she certainly had a large number of Soviet contacts, and knew how to meet and talk to people. Jameson indicated at the outset of his report that Priscilla had been "selected as a likely candidate to write an article on Yevtushenko in a major U.S. magazine for our campaign." He recognized that Priscilla was "concerned about making her articles accurate as to fact and free from any external influence," but believed that "she might be worked around to writing an article in which she genuinely (sic) believed, but would also further our purposes for Yevtushenko" (a popular Russian poet).

Much of the report is a summary of Jameson's discussion with Priscilla about various Russian poets and Yevtushenko especially, whom the CIA seemed to be particularly interested in. Priscilla informed Jameson that she had arranged to write several articles for *THE REPORTER* including one on Yevtushenko, and emphasized that "she thought she must write only the truth, without defining exactly what that was to me."

In conclusion, Jameson pointed out that, despite what she had stated, "I think that Miss Johnson can be encouraged to write pretty much the articles we want. It will require a little more contact and discussion, but I think she could come around...Basically, if approached with sympathy in the cause she considers most vital, I believe she would be interested in helping us in many ways. It would be important to avoid making her think that she was being used as a propaganda tool and expected to write what she is told. I don't think she would go along with that idea at all. On the other hand, she is searching for both more information and more understanding of the problem of the Soviet intellectual and is consequently subject to influence."

It is certainly clear that the CIA intended to make full use of Priscilla Johnson's talents as a Soviet researcher and writer in an ongoing attempt to destabilize conditions in the Soviet Union, apparently without her complete knowledge.

The next document, dated February 5, 1964 and numbered 17458 (suggesting that there might be a document still classified in between), is a lengthy memo based on a meeting with Priscilla on Jan. 30 and 31, 1964, this time written by Gary Coit (SR/CA). Although the report was prepared two months after the assassination of JFK, there is no mention of the subject, including Priscilla's revised report of Nov. 24, 1963 about having interviewed Lee Harvey Oswald. However, in the initial four line paragraph, two full lines and a partial line have been blacked out.

Intriguingly, there is a reference to Priscilla having written to "...her former boss, President Kennedy..." in regard to the fact that her notebooks had not been returned to her by the Soviet Union; they had been removed from her luggage as she was leaving Leningrad (Priscilla pointed out that none of the material was "...particularly sensitive...and would not have really seriously compromised any of her contacts in the USSR.") Presumably Coit's reference to JFK as Priscilla's "boss" dates back to the mid-fifties when he was a senator. Nevertheless, she was able to obtain the President's assistance, as press secretary Pierre Salinger had made contact with the Soviet Ambassador about her notebooks, "...which produced no result."

The overall purpose of the Jan. 30-31 meetings (which lasted a total of eleven hours) was to "...debrief Johnson on her flaps with the Soviets when she was in the USSR, notably at the time of her last exit." Much of the memo deals with some of the problems Priscilla encountered with Soviet officials related to meeting with a Soviet lawyer and later his boss in the Foreign Office, and was asked to prepare "...a complete

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curriculum vitae on herself" which Priscilla refused to produce. She was also asked about certain issues such as NATO and Soviet-American trade, and "...whether or not she would be interested in writing articles for Soviet publications."

An attempt was made during the debriefing to learn about Priscilla's "contacts" while in the USSR, but she was unwilling to provide names (one of her contacts had been exiled for a year); therefore "...no effort was made to attempt to force the issue of a debriefing on her contacts." However, Coit indicated during the interview that he would "...probably be back to see her from time to time to see what she knows about specific persons whose names might come up, and she at least nodded assent to this."

Reference was made to a reporter/translator named Victor Louis associated with both McGraw-Hill and NANA, whom Priscilla felt had a "...lousy reputation in Moscow"; she attempted unsuccessfully to get NANA to "drop Louis." She also encouraged NANA to hire "...Ruth Danilov, the wife of another correspondent" (possibly Victor Danilov, author of *RURAL RUSSIA: UNDER THE NEW REGIME*-Univ. of Indiana Press-1988, but more likely Nicholas Daniloff, a *NEWSWEEK* correspondent who wrote *TWO LIVES: ONE RUSSIA*-Avon Publ.-1990; Coit might have misspelled Ruth's last name.) However, the Soviets refused to accredit her. Priscilla pointed out that NANA subsequently hired "Dick Steiger" who was immediately accredited, due to his "left wing past." Brief reference was also made to Frieda Lurye, a liberal Russian who had spoken at Harvard, as well as Yelena Romanova, whom Priscilla "thoroughly dislikes and thinks ought to be discredited."

Priscilla raised the question during the interview of the likelihood of being able to return to the Soviet Union as a "correspondent." Coit felt it depended on whether the Soviets believed she could be "...useful for some of their plans." Coit felt that her chances were good, since she had not been in any "...serious trouble or done anything especially bad." However, to the best of my knowledge, Priscilla never returned to the USSR again.

Coit had brought up the name "Alex Dolberg" during the debriefing, whom Priscilla knew and talked to at length when he was "...at Harvard." The CIA were quite certain that he was "...working for Sovs and therefore advised her to be careful in any dealings with him." Priscilla had been equally suspicious, although her discussions with him had "...developed her understanding of the Soviet machine...and (she) now understands power as used by the Sovs."

In his final paragraph, Coit stated that he was "...vaguely

uncomfortable after this long discussion with Johnson...", even though he found her to be "...intelligent and well informed on the Soviet Union" (although with "...an air of naivety and innocence, which is really only a mannerism.") Coit felt that Johnson's interest in the Soviet Union was "...an intellectual thing," and that she was "...not out to destroy the Communist system" (the major goal of the CIA.) Having spoken to another U.S. correspondent named Patricia Blake (who later wrote a glowing review of *MARINA AND LEE* for *TIME* magazine), Coit had noted two "...apparent contradictions" related to Priscilla: 1) she had defended Dolberg to Blake, who for years she had thought was "...no good", and 2) according to Blake, Miss Johnson had developed a "...low opinion of Lurye after the Boston press conference", in contrast to comments made by Priscilla during the debriefing.

In conclusion, Coit felt that "...we cannot expect to use Johnson actively in operations. She obviously doesn't want to get involved in deep plots. She is unlikely to be the type of informant who will volunteer information; but she will supply info she has acquired, if asked and if it's not too sensitive, such as the identities (sic) of her friends in the USSR."

There is no indication whether the CIA encouraged Priscilla to contact Marina Oswald through its publishing connections, or whether she provided any feedback based on her extensive interviews later that year, but such information could very well be included in another, still classified document.

The third document that I received, dated February 23, 1965, is also a memo written by Gary Coit, based on a phone call from Priscilla in regard to Alex Dolberg. By now Dolberg was living "...in London's demi-monde with homosexuals, drunks, beatniks, etc." and had become "...terribly paranoid", convinced that he was being "...followed everywhere." Priscilla had heard from several sources that Dolberg might be considering going back to the USSR because of the death of his mother and the condition of his father. Coit indicated that Priscilla had reported this information because of her belief that Dolberg "...could do more harm to followers of Soviet intellectual affairs, both in the West and in the USSR, than anyone else she can think of." They both agreed that "someone" should have a talk with Dolberg, and encourage him to recognize the fact that returning to the USSR would be a mistake. At the same time, Coit felt it was important to emphasize to Dolberg that no one trusted him in the West, believing he was a "...Soviet agent", but if he told the CIA everything he knew, he could be "...rehabilitated" and have his name cleared.

Based on the fact that Priscilla had made the call to the CIA,

regardless of her motivation, it would appear that she had become an informer for the Agency, although it is impossible to know how much other information she provided, and whether any of it related to her contact with Marina Oswald.

It should be noted that the CIA's interest in Priscilla Johnson began at an early date, based on the fact that a "201 file" was opened most likely in the mid-1950s [2], and, according to a fourth document declassified in 1993 entitled "Review of 201 File on U.S. Citizen," Priscilla's file had not been closed as of Jan. 28, 1975. She was listed as a "witting collaborator," although the nature of her collaboration was not described. (3)

In addition to the four documents described above, I also received a copy of Priscilla's HSCA Executive Session interview that took place on April 20, 1978, although 40 out of 113 pages of transcript have been withdrawn by the CIA. I will discuss the interview in detail in a future update, and hopefully will receive some feedback from Mrs. McMillan herself.

#### Notes

1. Thanks to Jon Meyers at AARC for letting me know about the availability of PJM documents discussed in this report.

2. According to a conversation with Major John Newman earlier this year, no date is listed on "201 files", but PJM's number (102798) precedes both Oswald's and Webster's considerably; he estimates that her file was likely opened around 1955. No date is required on "201 files."

3. I learned from Anthony Summers that Priscilla Johnson claimed in a recent interview with Summers and his wife, Robbyn, that "...the Johnson in the 1975 document is someone other than herself." (Letter from Summers to Whitmey, dated July 27, 1994). It should be noted that only the last name is given on the CIA document, unlike the other three, but all four are stamped "Approved for Release 1993 CIA Historical Review Program." I got the distinct impression from my conversation with John Newman that the "201" file number on the 1975 document was Priscilla Johnson's.

## GENERAL LANSDALE, GENERAL CABELL, PSY-OPS AND UFO'S

by

Alex Cox

In his excellent paper delivered at The Third Decade Research Conference at Providence, Rhode Island, Charles R. Drago warns conspiracy theorists and assassination researchers, "There's a Tesla-Engineered, Mason-funded, Knights of Malta-owned, Illuminati-piloted Flying Saucer leaving Dealey Plaza in ten minutes. Stay off it." Mr. Drago makes the crucial point that a political assassination such as that of JFK is an instance of authoritarian System Maintenance rather than a "coup d'etat" or aberration; he indicates that while there are some true conspiracy theories there are many more false ones out there.

System Maintenance takes many forms. One which has not been much considered is the way a wide variety of seemingly revolutionary conspiracy theories in fact serve to protect the interests of the "permanent government." It is the thesis of this piece that the said permanent government in fact uses conspiracy theories as a means of maintaining control: specifically, in the origins of the "Flying Saucer" cult of the late 1940's are the shadows of certain intelligence figures who will be more than familiar to JFK conspiracy researchers.

A couple of years ago I had lunch with one of the best of the new generation of writers on the JFK assassination. His book was source material for a major motion picture about the Kennedy hit; he is a painstaking researcher who lectures on the assassination to university students. Our lunch was pleasant, familiar, paranoid, inspirational—but what astonished me was my friend's extraordinary statement that "the real story, the real cover-up, is UFO's."

My friend is not the only assassination researcher who believes in Flying Saucers. Long John Knebel, a radio talk-show host and longtime conspiracy theorist, was a UFO fanatic. His producer, Paris Flammonde, wrote the best book on the Garrison investigation, The Kennedy Conspiracy. There is a large group of conspiracy theorists who sincerely believe 1) that UFO's crashed near a U.S. military base in New Mexico in 1946; 2) that Truman and the Pentagon made a deal with the surviving aliens for high-technology aviation secrets; 3) that ever since then the Earth—or at least the Western part of it—has been controlled by a military/political elite and one or

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more groups of aliens.

Some assassination theorists, like many UFOlogists, believe that human governments and/or aliens are involved in complicated "mind control" experiments. A large number of UFOlogists believe that JFK was murdered by a conspiracy because he planned to reveal the existence of a "secret deal" between the Truman and/or Eisenhower administrations and the aliens. Some UFOlogists even believe that Truman's Secretary of Defense, James Forrestal, was murdered at Bethesda Naval Hospital for similar reasons. For many UFO conspiracists, events such as the JFK, RFK, MLK and Forrestal deaths are explicable within the context of this secret U.S./alien deal.

Whom does such a theory serve? Consider: as a modern myth, the UFO theory has no peer. Unprovable, it leads to: 1) inertia (anything is possible); 2) fear (we are inferior; we are doomed); 3) bliss (the aliens will save us); or any combination of the above. Since the UFO literature is vastly greater than the JFK canon (itself enormous, riven with disinformation and wild speculation), it enables the "buff" or enthusiast to lose or find him/herself within an infinity of possible realities—a Borgesian or Freudian universe, wherein lies the possibility of an Aleph, or a womb, of truth.

This is where my friend—the JFK assassination cynic and dedicated researcher—is to be found. His belief in UFO's is bolstered by magazines and pamphlets, books and blurred, Zapruder-type images that "might be" alien space ships, above all by the group-mind wish for benign alien friends—a wish bolstered by Hollywood and by the allegedly factual books of George Adamski and Whitley Streiber, self-described alien "contactees."

And why not? What is wrong with this? Why do I rebel against my friend's sincere conviction that our military/civilian leaders have made a deal with alien beings? Part of the reason is as follows: at one point during lunch, our talk turned to Edwin (often erroneously called Edward) Lansdale. Lansdale was the covert action specialist employed by the Kennedy's in Viet Nam, and in their Castro assassination program in Miami. Born in 1908, Lansdale quit his job at a San Francisco advertising agency after Pearl Harbor and joined the Army Intelligence/OSS. The subject of no less than two novels, The Ugly American and The Quiet American, Lansdale was fingered by L. Fletcher Prouty and Oliver Stone as the "man in charge" of the Dallas-based hit. In his autobiography In The Midst of Wars, General Lansdale is vague as to his whereabouts in the latter part of 1963 (so, for that matter, are E. Howard Hunt and Richard Nixon!)—but I tend to doubt that Lansdale was a prime mover behind the hit, simply because a

triangulated military fusillade was not Lansdale's area of expertise. Lansdale was, like his patrons RFK and JFK, a "counterinsurgency" man. He was seemingly kept out of the loop on the Diem and Nhu assassinations in Viet Nam—partially as a Diem sympathizer, but also as someone with no real expertise in murdering heads of state (the Miami-based JM/Wave operation planned to kill Castro by James Bond methods such as poisoning his wetsuit or his soup; unlike the JFK and Diem operations, the Castro hit attempts conspicuously failed). Lansdale's area was "Psychological Operations." "Psy-Ops" are designed not to kill national leaders but to create incredulity and confusion among the population at large—to distract them from otherwise pressing issues such as elections or guerilla insurgencies.

In Viet Nam, Lansdale boasted of having the last man of a V.C. column murdered, then hanging him upside down on the trail and puncturing his throat, so that his returning colleagues would think him the victim of a much-dreaded mythical local vampire. In Miami, the Kennedys' "Operation Mongoose" sought to make Castro's beard fall, and to convince rural Cubans that the Virgin Mary had appeared and was urging them to overthrow the revolutionary government.

Lansdale's schemes may seem absurd, but there were obviously those within the CIA, military intelligence, and the federal government (not least the President and Attorney General!) who believed in them and thought them worth funding. And Psy-Ops are still with us. On 8 May 1992, the Associated Press reported from Manila that "Monster Tales Are More Intriguing Than National Elections." A.P. reporter Robert H. Reid wrote, "Filipinos will choose a new President next week. But in the squalid barrios of the capital, the big news is there's a vampire on the loose..." Supposedly, a folkloric monster called a "Manananggal" was stalking the streets of Manila. Well, perhaps. But what was more interesting (and what the A.P. report entirely ignored) was that the presidential elections of 1992 were perhaps the most important in Philippine history, amounting to a referendum on whether the United States should give up its massive naval presence at Subic Bay. A lot was at stake. Richard Armitage, a U.S. spook linked to heroin trafficking in the Golden Triangle (the U.S. Senate had refused to confirm him as Bush's ambassador to Japan) had been dispatched to Manila as the U.S.'s "special negotiator"; and a Pentagon document "leaked" to the New York Times discussed the possible need to forcibly re-take Subic as a potential battle station in a hypothetical war against Japan.

In 1992, above the Philippines, a Great Game was being

played. As always, it involved military and economic power and positioning, the use of covert operatives, and at least the possibility of destabilizing "Psy-Ops" in the run-up to a crucial election. (The A.P. piece did not say which candidate's supporters the "Manananggal" had killed!)

"Psy-Ops" do not only take place in the Third World. The U.S. government funded destabilizing campaigns against Black Power, the peace movement, and Native Americans; many activists—not least Dr. King and Malcolm X—died; others, such as Leonard Peltier and Geronimo Pratt, remain in jail as a result. Scandals dogged the careers of "moderate" Western politicians such as Wilson, Heath, Thorpe, Whitlam and Brant. Dorril and Ramsey's Smear! documents a series of slanders against Wilson and other Labour politicians in Britain during the 60's and 70's; their persuasive conclusion is that a series of "Psy-Ops" were mounted by both M1-5 and M1-6 in order to drive out mildly-leftist politicians and push the British political agenda firmly to the right. The persistent rumours of Royal scandal during the 1990's—usually leaked by "inside" sources, sometimes consisting of telephone tap transcripts which only G.C.H.Q. could provide—often came in weeks when the Tories were doing disastrously in pre-election polls.

In the U.S., recent domestic "Psy-Ops" have included the "Bulgarian Plot to Kill the Pope" (disseminated by a CIA-linked journalist, Clare Sterling, perhaps to shield the actual assassins of the previous Pope, who died in mysterious circumstances); the 1984 Nicaraguan "MIG Scandal" which distracted American media attention from a national election which the leftist Sandinistas inconveniently won; and the Iraqi "baby killer" stories widely disseminated by Kuwaiti agents to inflame public opinion against Sadaam Hussein.

Whether they work or not, "Psy-Ops" are part of the fabric of official history: designed to win, or lose, wars and elections, to confuse and mislead an already alienated populace, and to maintain business as usual for the beneficiaries of the status quo.

Doesn't the whole UFO business sound a little like a "Psy-Op" too? Especially when one considers that the UFO "scare" of the 1940's—the seed of the UFO books and beliefs of the present day, was the creation of U.S. military intelligence.

From the mid '40's, when the sightings began, all significant reports of flying discs and other objects—and the insistence that they "behaved like nothing on earth"—came from members of the U.S. military: first from Air Force pilots and ground personnel, later from Navy men. The "news" of the crashed UFO at Roswell, New Mexico, came in the form of an

official press release from the Army Air Force base at Roswell. George Adamski, the first "alien contactee" was a military intelligence man; he is buried at Arlington cemetery. Donald Keyhoe, a prominent Navy Commander, authored the book Flying Saucers Are Real, while Commander R.B. McLaughlin, a head of the Navy guided missile team at White Sands Proving Ground, N.M., wrote an article titled "How Scientists Tracked Flying Saucers" for True magazine in March 1950. James Cooper, another UFOlogist and author of the privately-published Behold A Pale Horse (in which he states that JFK was shot by his driver, Secret Service Agent Greer), claims to have been in Naval Intelligence, and accuses fellow UFO buffs Moore, Shandera and Streiber of being intelligence stooges. Streiber, it may be recalled, was a "sci-fi" novelist before becoming a UFO cult hero: he shares a Navy and a science fiction background with cult leader L. Ron Hubbard—who, legend had it, once declared at a science fiction authors' conference in the '40's, "If a man wanted to make himself some real money, he'd get out of science fiction writing and start a religion."

Throughout the '40's, '50's, and '60's, the most prominent UFO reports—though regularly debunked by the military—came from the military. "Non-military" reports came from police, state troopers, "civilian" aviators (often military-trained), even "off-duty" CIA personnel. Edward J. Ruppelt, an Air Force captain assigned to investigate Flying Saucer reports for Project Blue Book, wrote: "During July 1952 reports of Flying Saucers sighted over Washington D.C., cheated the Democratic National Convention out of headline space." The reports came from Washington National Airport, and from Andrews Air Force Base. In 1957, a huge Saucer "flap" occurred immediately after the Soviet Union launched Sputnik II (Sputnik—which carried a dog into orbit—was considered a scientific triumph by the Russians and a humiliation for the United States; the UFO excitement lessened the Sputnik story's domestic impact).

And who was running the "official" U.S. Air Force investigation into UFO's, Project Blue Book, along with the more secret parallel investigations, Projects Grudge and Sign? In his 1956 book The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects, Edward Ruppelt informs us,

*"Early in 1951, verbal orders came down from Major General Charles P. Cabell, then Director of Intelligence for Headquarters, U.S. Air Force, to make a study reviewing the UFO situation..."*

Anyone who has even superficially studied the cast of characters surrounding the JFK assassination will have heard of Air Force General Cabell. Former Head of Air Force



Intelligence, Deputy Director of Intelligence at CIA under Alan Dulles, Charles Pearre Cabell was fired along with Dulles and CIA Plans Director Richard Bissell following the Bay of Pigs fiasco. A native Texan with extensive business interests in the state, Cabell returned to his home town of Dallas, where his brother Earl was Mayor. A few months before the assassination of the President, Cabell was invited to address a group of businessmen at the New Orleans Trade Mart by a New Orleans booster called Clay Shaw. After the death of JFK, Cabell became an employee of Howard Hughes.

It was popular after the Bay of Pigs failure to debunk Cabell: in Dulles' absence from Washington he had been left, supposedly, to carry the can. Understandably, the Bay of Pigs vets did not like him: they referred to him disparagingly as "Old Rice and Beans." But Cabell was a military intelligence professional, the highest armed forces rep. in a supposedly civilian organization. And it is unlikely that his interest in UFO's in 1951—when he was Head of Military Intelligence—was frivolous. As a hard-nosed military man, the General may have thought them nonsense and sought automatically to debunk them (as Project Blue Book usually did). On the other hand, as a covert operations specialist, Cabell may have decided that "Flying Discs" would serve as a handy cover for "black" U.S.A.F. and CIA aviation projects, or for the recovery of crashed Soviet satellites and space probes.

At least one such incident appears to have occurred. As James Oberg reported in Omni (Sept 1993), the "crashed UFO" rumor which arose in Western Pennsylvania in 1965 was most probably a "Psy-Op" spun to mask U.S.A.F. recovery of the crashed Soviet Kosmos-96 Venus probe. Oberg wrote,

*"In the 1960's, U.S. military intelligence agencies interested in enemy technology were eagerly collecting all the Soviet missile and space debris they could find. International law required that debris be returned to its country of origin. But hardware from Kosmos-96, with its special missile-warhead shielding, would have been too valuable to give back...What better camouflage than to let people think the fallen object was not a Soviet probe but rather a flying saucer? ...And if suspicion lingered, why UFO buffs could be counted on to maintain the phony cover story, protecting the real truth."*

Just as JFK conspiracists have unwittingly and reliably maintained a series of disinformational cover stories over the years?

Almost 40 years ago, aircraft designer Kelly Johnson and CIA's Richard Bissell flew over Groom Lake, a dry lakebed in Nevada, and decided it would be an excellent base for their

top secret, high-altitude spy plane, the U-2. Today, UFO believers still gather outside the U.S.A.F. "black" base at Groom Lake, Nevada, convinced that super-secret, alien-constructed craft are being flown out of there. (See Popular Mechanics, December 1991, for a strange cover article on the weird aircraft that "might" be flying in and out of "Dreamland"—as the super-secret base is locally known. And see also Popular Science, March 1994, for a rational article on the Groom Lake base and how much of the U.S. military's \$14.3 billion annual secret program allowance actually gets spent there.)

General Cabell remains an enigmatic figure. I have seen one photo of him, head and shoulders, square-jawed, in uniform. I have not seen his autobiography (unlike Lansdale, Cabell didn't make it into print), though a copy apparently resides in Dallas, with his sons. He seems to have been seriously involved in the U-2 program. According to Michael R. Bechschloss' book MAYDAY, Cabell may have been behind a covert op to give the Russians secret U-2 information, in order to wreck the Eisenhower/Khrushchev Geneva Summit in 1960. After Clay Shaw was found innocent by a New Orleans jury, District Attorney Garrison claimed that he was going to institute proceedings against Cabell in connection with the JFK murder. But Garrison did nothing: presumably he had no jurisdiction in the neighboring state. (Perhaps by coincidence, Jim Phalen, a New Orleans reporter who took Clay Shaw's side against Garrison, is mentioned in The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects as a friend of author Ruppelt's, calling from Long Beach with "a good Flying Saucer report...")

Cabell's three Air Force Intelligence Projects, Blue Book, Sign, and Grudge, are still cited as evidence by UFOlogists convinced that the Air Force is "covering up." To me the existence of not one but three different Air Force investigations, potentially with three different explanations for the same event, and three different sets of conclusions—all of them potentially false—suggests a classic intelligence-constructed "hall of mirrors" in which the "real" truth can be hidden behind several veils from foreign spies, and, more importantly, from domestic watchdogs.

I have never seen a UFO. So perhaps I am too skeptical. But I have heard the sonic boom of a top-secret U.S.A.F. SR-1 Blackbird (the U-2's successor) flying low over Managua, Nicaragua, on the day of the 1984 elections, in a "Psy-Op" to convince the populace that bombs had begun to fall.

According to a recent Gallup Poll (S.F. Chronicle, 29 May 1994), one in seven Americans believes in UFO's, somewhat more than the one in ten who claims to have spoken person-

ally with the devil. So perhaps, given that sixty-to-seventy per cent believe that JFK was whacked by a conspiracy rather than by poor old Lee, Americans in general have their priorities more or less right. But one in seven is something like twenty-five million people. And, with Clinton's military budget higher than Bush's, there are still trillions of dollars to be made over the years from high-tech, ultra-secret aircraft like the B1-B (which President Carter tried to cancel, only to find out he could not), the B-2 (which like the B1-B cannot perform its mission), the TR-3A, the SR-75 Penetrator (successor to the U-2 and the Blackbird, but with a much sexier name), and the XR-7 "Thunderdart" hypersonic spyplane.

"Psy-Ops" involving crashed UFO's and alien abductions are the small additional surcharge we must pay, to keep our minds off the real bills.

Still watching the sky?

## OAK RIDGE BOY

by

Jerry D. Rose

This article (along with the Updates material in this issue) represents the fruit of my first sortie into the vast field of newly released documents of the House Select Committee on Assassinations that are now available from the National Archives. On a recent visit to the Archives, while I was looking for material on several subjects, I found something for which I was not looking, one of those strange appearances of a Lee Harvey Oswald in the months preceding the assassination.

On March 25, 1964 Mrs. Marvelle Awalt of Dallas called the FBI office in Dallas with information that she and her sister had visited Knoxville, Tennessee in July, 1963 when her daughter, Jean Awalt, was attending the University of Tennessee. (1) While there they visited the American Museum of Atomic Energy at nearby Oak Ridge. In a second trip in 1964 to attend her daughter's graduation, this time accompanied by her

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| AMERICAN MUSEUM OF ATOMIC ENERGY |  |                   |                |          |  |
|----------------------------------|--|-------------------|----------------|----------|--|
| VISITORS REGISTER                |  |                   |                |          |  |
| DATE                             | NAME                                   | ADDRESS           | CITY           | STATE    |  |
| 7-7-63                           | Judy Holmanson                         | 13035 Bethelville | Houston        | Texas    |  |
| 7-7-63                           | Elizabeth Ledbetter                    | P.O. Box 7183     | Corpus Christi | Texas    |  |
| 7-7-63                           | Mr. & Mrs. Hobbs Williams              | 525 Blackburn     | Grand Prairie  | Texas    |  |
| 7-11-63                          | Wayne Tiley                            | Rt. #2, Box 203   | Bluefield      | Virginia |  |
| 7-11-63                          | W.B. Virginia, Jennings & Barbara Elms | 1407. 7th Street  | Raytown        | Missouri |  |
| 7-11-63                          | Wayne M. Staley                        | Box 16            | Winton         | Texas    |  |
| 7-11-63                          | Ray Baker + Family                     | 2912 E. Main St.  | Waco           | Texas    |  |
| 7-11-63                          | Henry, Nancy, Randy, Harry, & Shale    | 1417 Cassat       | Denver         | CO       |  |
| 7-11-63                          | Ralph, Betty, Wayne & Michael Ward     | 3222 Nevada Dr.   | Conroe         | Texas    |  |
| 7-11-63                          | Mrs. J. C. Thode                       | Route 4           | Bellevue       | Texas    |  |
| 7-11-63                          | Mr. & Mrs. J. Caplan & Family          | Box 183           | Julesburg      | Colorado |  |
| 7-11-63                          | Tom & Betty                            | 413 La Salle      | Richardson     | Texas    |  |
| 7-11-63                          | Bill & N. Oswald                       | Dallas, TX        | Dallas         | Texas    |  |
| 7-27-63                          | Mr. & Mrs. Alan A. Turner              | 3024 Canal        | San Antonio    | Texas    |  |
| 7-27-63                          | Mr. & Mrs. K. K. ...                   | 111 2nd Street    | New Boston     | Texas    |  |
| 7-27-63                          | Mr. & Mrs. Richard F. ...              | 111 2nd Street    | "              | "        |  |
| 7-27-63                          | Mr. & Mrs. J. M. ...                   |                   | El Paso        | Texas    |  |
| 7-27-63                          | Mr. & Mrs. E. D. ...                   | 621 E. ...        | Wichita        | Kansas   |  |
| 7-29-63                          | Elmer ...                              | 1005 Lance        | Taylor         | Texas    |  |



married daughter, Mrs. Mark Muntzel, she, along with her two daughters, again visited the museum. Mrs. Awalt said she was searching through the visitor's register to find where she had registered the previous July when she found the notation for 7/26/63 of "Lee H. Oswald; USSR, Dallas Road, Dalls, Texas." The FBI apparently received that page from the museum's register (reproduced here), as it is found in the HSCA document that contains the FBI report. When I made a telephone call to Mrs. Muntzel on June 26, 1994 she confirmed the visit and the finding of the Oswald notation, though she was able to furnish no details beyond those in the FBI report.

The problem, of course, as with so many "Oswald" sightings or signings, is that his presence in Oak Ridge TN on that date contradicts his "official" biography as offered in the Warren Report. According to that fount of "information," Oswald had just lost his job at the Reilly Coffee Company the previous week and, on June 27, had gone by car with "some of the Murret family" to Mobile, Alabama, where Lee made a speech about Russian life to students at a Jesuit seminar where his cousin, Eugene Murret, was studying.(2) Although there is nothing about this incident in the HSCA Report, the committee's counsel was certainly aware of the problem of Oswald in Oak Ridge on July 26 if he took a trip from New Orleans to Mobile on July 27. When the committee deposed Eugene Murret (by this time no longer in a priestly vocation but a lawyer who had risen to the post of Judicial Administrator of the Supreme Court of Louisiana) on November 7, 1978, there was a rather strange exchange between Murret and HSCA counsel Gary Cornwell.(3) Somewhat out of the blue, Cornwell asked Murret about the distance between his seminary in Mobile and Oak Ridge, Tennessee. Without asking the reason for this strange question, Murret guessed the distance as about 400 miles. Cornwell then asked Murret, "Do you have any knowledge of any trip Lee may have made to Oak Ridge?" Murret's answer seems to reflect that he was caught off guard: "At that time? Well I don't have any knowledge at any time," and then went on to doubt that Lee would have gone to Oak Ridge during the same car trip that took him to Mobile. Only then did Cornwell explain the Oak Ridge questioning: "There is a visitor's register, for your information, at the American Museum of Atomic Energy which apparently has a signature which may be his. We are trying to find out how he may have gotten there and with whom." If the HSCA followed up on this investigative lead, there is no apparent record of it in their published volumes. The only reference therein to the Eugene Murret deposition is Murret's characterization of his father, "Dutz" Murret, as a "self-employed bookie." (4)

I do not know whether Gary Cornwell actually had the

museum register in hand when he was questioning Eugene Murret. If he did, he must have had some basis for saying the register contained "a signature which may be his." Did he actually compare the signature shown above with any "known" Oswald signatures? The signature does not seem to compare very closely with most other "known" Oswald signatures. (5) I am still studying my rather lengthy list of "apocryphal" Oswald signings—supposed signatures that are not in his "known" handwriting—for comparisons to this, another apparent piece of apocrypha. Rather than, for now, presenting any such signature comparisons, I want to point out a couple of interesting peculiarities of the documents. For one, the notation of USSR alongside Oswald's name is a rather obvious provocation, designed like so much else to establish the "Red" connections of Lee Harvey Oswald. Since Oswald himself apparently did not sign the register, whoever did it on his "behalf" was ready to let the world know that, in the summer of 1963, Oswald was still maintaining his "Soviet" identification.

Note also that, like other "Oswald" documents (the hotel registers in Mexico City for example), (6) the Oswald notation stands out from others on that page as though the writer were deliberately highlighting the notation. One may further note that Oswald's name is the last of the entries for 7-26-63 with a space before the beginning of 7-27-63 entries. My guess is that there were originally two spaces at this point and that the Oswald material was added after the Oswald notoriety that followed the assassination—perhaps by the FBI, which apparently "obtained" the museum register after Mrs. Awalt's call in March, 1964.

Why would the FBI—or any other investigative agency—have committed such a forgery? I don't know but I can make an informed guess, based on my study of the Bureau's case against the "atom spies," Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. When the Bureau needed the "proof" that Harry Gold was in Los Alamos, New Mexico to pick up atomic secrets from David Greenglass at the behest of Julius Rosenberg, they used as proof Gold's registration at a hotel in nearby Albuquerque. As the Schneirs have shown, the FBI almost certainly fabricated that registration. (7)

What I'm suggesting is that the museum registration of "Oswald" may have been part of some unrealized scheme to place Oswald in still another ring of atomic spies. While one doubts that the American Museum of Atomic Energy contains any atomic "secrets," the same could not be said for the A.E.C's laboratories at Oak Ridge. If it later turns out that Oswald had a relative or a buddy working as a minor function-

ary at Oak Ridge as Ethel Rosenberg's brother David Greenglass did at Los Alamos, then the story of an aborted red scare operation may be completed. And Oswald's own supposed story of how he came to have an interest in communism—that an "old lady" in New York City gave him a Communist party pamphlet on the Rosenberg case (8)—may need to be re-examined to determine whether Oswald actually said that—or whether red-baiting governmental agencies fabricated that little piece of his biography as well.

### Notes

1. FBI report from Robert P. Gemberling, 3/25/64, FBI file # DL 100-104-10461 HSCA Record # 180-10104-10382, Agency file #012907, released per P.L. 102-526.
2. Warren Commission Report (U.S. Government Printing Office), p. 728.
3. Deposition of Eugene J. Murret in New Orleans LA November 7, 1978, HSCA File #014009, released per P.L. 102-526, pp. 7,8.
4. House Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA), vol. IX, p. 86.
5. HSCA, vol. VIII
6. Jerry D. Rose, "The Trip That Never Was: Oswald in Mexico, The Third Decade 1#5 Jul 85, pp. 9-16.
7. Walter and Miriam Schneir, Invitation to an Inquest (Garden City: Doubleday, 1965), chapter 29.
8. This "information" has generally been attributed to an interview with Oswald in Moscow by a UPI reporter, Aline Mosby. See Warren Commission Report p. 695.

## FOLLOW UPS – NEW DEVELOPMENTS ON PREVIOUS ARTICLES

### 5th Floor Witnesses

The post-assassination movements of three black employees (Norman, Williams and Jarman) on the fifth floor of the TSBD is an issue raised in Weston's "Fifth Floor Sniper" article, issue of May, 1993. A possible new wrinkle on these movements is suggested in a newly-released HSCA document (JFK Document #014899), a 1977 interview with DPD motorcycle officer Marrion (sic) L. Baker. Baker, having long since "coordinated" his version of encountering Oswald in the building with Roy Truly's version (see "Coordinating the Witnesses," January 1985) repeated that story in 1977. Toward the end of the interview, however, he reports having received some new information at the time in 1964 when he went to Washington, D.C. to testify to the Warren Commission. While there, he said he met the "three negro boys who

had been watching the parade from the 5th floor window." These "boys" told Baker that they were "hiding behind boxes" when he searched the 5th floor and that they had seen him, although Baker had not seen the hiding "boys" at that time. These employees have given no such report of hiding activity after the assassination. If Baker's hearsay information is correct, their post-assassination movements need even closer scrutiny. On the other hand, Baker has himself changed his stories at various times, and the new "information" in 1977 may in fact cast more aspersion on his credibility than that of the "boys."

### FBI at Oswald Arrest Scene

In an article ("They've Got Their Man on Both Accounts," March, 1988) the speculation was offered, in trying to account for the very early information conveyed to FBI Headquarters in Washington that an assassination suspect was in custody, that the Bureau's source of this "information" was SA Robert Barrett, who was rather unaccountably at the scene of the arrest of Oswald, supposedly a suspect only in the Tippit killing at that time. Newly-released HSCA document 014321 contains an 11/22/63 statement by Barrett—as well as that of another FBI agent on the scene, made by SA Bardwell Odum on 11/23/63. Barrett tells of going to the scene of the Tippit shooting and hearing a "female witness" (presumably Helen Markham) say that, "when Tippit got out of his car he went to the back of the car where he was shot by a gunman." (Barrett observed, however, that blood was located near the left front fender) and also a unique version of this "witness's" interaction with the killer, that he told her to "leave him alone or he would shoot her."

At approximately 2:00 (actually ten minutes after Oswald was arrested) Barrett went (by mode of transportation unexplained) to the Texas Theater and entered with the intention of helping to search for the suspect. As the police were scuffling with the suspect, who turned out to be Oswald, he heard Oswald yell loudly "kill all the sons of bitches." Since Oswald has not otherwise been reported as saying any such thing, one wonders if a police officer or perhaps a bystander said "kill the son of a bitch."

Since Barrett has long been the only known FBI agent at the scene of the Oswald arrest, it was logical to assume that he was the source of the FBI headquarters information, less than 8 minutes after the Oswald arrest, that the DPD was enroute to police headquarters with an assassination suspect. The Bardwell Odum statement is an entirely new discovery, and Odum is as likely as Barrett to have made the phone call from the theater to FBI headquarters.



Be that as it may, Odum's statement is shot through with contradictions to the official version of the Oswald arrest. Like Barrett, he was informed (by an unidentified policeman) that a suspect had entered the back door of the TSBD. When he arrived, he posted himself as a guard in the lobby since "there were no officers on guard there." Most interestingly, he said the suspect, whom he later identified as Oswald, was wearing a "reddish brown jacket with zipper open all the way in front." Since Oswald supposedly shed his jacket on his flight from the Tippit murder scene, either Odum was mistaken about the suspect's clothing or there was a different Oswald, perhaps the one who entered the back door when the other entered the front.

### Paper Sack

Recent critical analysis of Posner's Case Closed has included discussions of the issue whether Wesley Frazier and his sister, Linnie Mae Randle, were witnesses to Oswald's carrying a paper bag on the morning of November 22 which may have contained the supposed assassination rifle. (See the discussions by Folliard and Organ in the November 1993 and March 1994 issues). An earlier article ("Shell Games, Part 1" July 1988) focused on the chain of possession problem of the paper bag, based on the failure of DPD detectives to photograph the bag in place at the crime scene.

At least as late as November 29, according to newly-released FBI document #62-109060-111, the Bureau was worried about the chain of possession of the paper bag. In a Bureau memo on that date, based on a telephone call from SA J.L. Handley to Alex Rosen at FBI headquarters, it is indicated that Wesley Frazier had been shown, at 11:30 p.m. on November 22, a bag that DPD Lt. J.C. Day said had been "recovered" earlier that day. According to Day, Frazier was "unable to identify this sack and told him that a sack he observed in possession of Oswald early that morning was definitely a thin flimsy sack like the one purchased in a dime store." Detective R.D. Lewis reports a similar Frazier response when he was shown the paper bag during a polygraph test.

Detective Lewis offered the opinion that, since the sack shown to Frazier was not identical to the sack in DPD possession it was "possible but not probable" that the DPD Homicide Bureau had recovered a sack like the one described by Frazier but, for some reason, had not put it in evidence. Strangely, DPD Homicide Captain Fritz was not questioned about this "improbable" scenario—Mr. Hadley's next reference to Fritz reports the results of an interview with Frazier in which a curtain rods vs. rifle issue was explored by discussing the length and the weight of the package. The "dime store"

texture of the package described by Frazier was not addressed in this interrogation.

### Milteer

An article by Scott Van Wynsberghe ("Dead Suspects Part V" January 1988) summarized much of what is known of the activities and associations of Joseph Milteer, who described to an undercover agent on November 9 some details of a planned assassination of President Kennedy. Van Wynsberghe reports that this information was forwarded to the Secret Service on November 12 and may have been the basis for the cancellation of a planned motorcade in Miami on November 18.

It now appears, with a newly-released HSCA document, JFK Document 008814, Secret Service file #CO-2-33 915 X 3-11-5563 S, that the Atlanta office of the Service maintained surveillance on Milteer as well as his right wing associates such as J.B. Stoner and Lee McCloud, both of Atlanta. In a report of 11/14/63, Stoner is characterized by an Atlanta police captain as "one of the most dangerous agitators in the south." As for Milteer, the Atlanta office had made a "thorough investigation" of him as early as October 19, 1963, when he attended the Indianapolis convention of the Constitution Party. The "most suspicious action on his part," said an Atlanta agent, was enroute to Indianapolis when he stopped off in Chattanooga to see Jack Brown, a Klan member whom Atlanta agents considered to be a "dangerous man from bombing standpoints." McCloud is described as a strong segregationist (he had called the Atlanta PD to complain that a "sex pervert and communist" living next door to him had racially mixed parties in his home) but was cleared by the Atlanta police captain as "not a violent-type person" who would not participate in any "illegal activities."

Van Wynsberghe had indicated that the Secret Service asked the Milteer informant, Willie Somerset, to call Milteer at his home to be sure that he was there at the time of the November 18 JFK visit to Miami. In an 11/27/63 memo in the newly-released document, it is shown that the Secret Service once again confirmed that Milteer was home at the time of the assassination. McCloud and Stoner were both home in Atlanta on November 22; strangely, Captain R.E. Little, of the Intelligence Division of the Atlanta PD, who had characterized Stoner as a "dangerous agitator," saw Stoner in Atlanta an hour before the assassination. With this kind of close surveillance of the Milteer crowd, it would appear that the Atlanta office was very concerned about the violence potential of this group.

### Red Scare

In an article ("The Loyal American Underground") in the

July, 1994 issue it was speculated that some early "information" about Oswald's FPCC connection, attributed to a memo from one Bernard Weisman, may in fact have come from staff of the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee. (S.I.S.S.) Some additional indirect evidence for this possibility is contained in documents recently received from Paul Hoch. The same FBI officials Wannall and Sullivan, who were sender and recipient, respectively, of the Nov. 26 memo concerning "Weisman" (correction: the retyping of this memo referred to an 11/22/63 memo from Weisman, this should have been 11/23/63), played similar roles for a memo on Nov. 29, FBI #105-82555-209, in which Edward A. Butler, an official of the Information Council of the Americas (INCA) is reported by Wannall as having testified before S.I.S.S. in executive session on 11/24/63. Although an S.I.S.S. meeting with Butler on the Sunday following the assassination is suspicious enough, the plot further thickens with an item from Hoch which is a partial transcript of the INCA record, "Lee Harvey Oswald Speaks." On that record, Senator Thomas J. Dodd, says:

*"I asked Ed Butler to come to Washington to testify before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee a few hours after President Kennedy's assassination, at a time when Oswald was still alive. Ed Butler brought this recording with him. What we heard convinced us that Oswald's commitment to Communism, and the pathological hatred of his own country festered by this commitment, had played an important part in making him into an assassin. This important and historical record completely demolishes the widespread notion that Oswald was a simple crackpot who acted without any understandable motivation."*

(Actually it does not seem that Butler needed to "come to Washington" to regale S.I.S.S. with his "truth tapes" about Oswald. Later in the same broadcast, Congressman Hale Boggs, the soon-to-be Warren Commissioner, describes how he sat with Butler in his D.C. office "just a few hours after" the assassination and listened to the same tapes, which he called "a most significant historical document" that was a factor in his deciding to serve on the commission). That the S.I.S.S. was soliciting such material "a few hours" after the assassination is indicative of a very early red-baiting operation by the committee.

## CASE OPEN: A REVIEW

by

David M. Keck

It was back in 1975, with Post Mortem, that we last saw a copyrighted book by Harold Weisberg. Before that, he wrote five other exhaustively detailed and documented works that he had to have self published. Though he has not published a book in the nearly twenty years since, Weisberg has hardly been inactive. He has graciously allowed numerous writers and researchers into his rural Maryland home to browse through his dozens of file drawers of government documents, including the likes of Robert Groden, Harry Livingstone, and many others. One of those others was Gerald Posner, author of the highly publicized Case Closed, published by Random House (1993). It was primarily Posner's production that drew Weisberg out into published writing again.

Case Open is a 178-page oversized trade paperback published by Carroll & Graf and Richard Gallen. It has two prefaces, an author's note and a conclusion, but no index and only one footnote at the bottom of the page (and none at the end). In a typed note in the front of my copy, Weisberg explains "This is about 20 to 25% of Case Open as I wrote it. Most was eliminated in the belief that this selection from it is more than powerful enough to make the case against Gerald Posner et al. and because a smaller book...can reach more people."

It is somewhat ironic that one of Weisberg's publishers is Carroll & Graf, the same publisher of Livingstone's Killing the Truth (1993). Weisberg has been quite critical of Livingstone's work and conclusions, and Livingstone was quite critical of Weisberg in that book. The lack of index in Case Open is consistent with the meager index (four pages) in the otherwise lengthy (752 pages) Killing the Truth.

As the title suggests, Case Open deals primarily with a response to the published work on the Kennedy assassination by Posner in Case Closed. But Case Open is much more than that. Through the prefaces, the text, and the conclusion, this book reveals much about the author (Weisberg) himself and how he got involved in assassination research. He shares his background as a U.S. Senate investigator and editor, World War II veteran, OSS employee, farmer, and author (p. viii-x). Weisberg was also one of the first to successfully utilize the Freedom of Information Act and was instrumental in convincing Congress to amend it in 1974 (p. xii).

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Weisberg clearly states the intent of his book in the Author's Note. In it, he accuses Posner of attempting to "diminish my work and question my character" (p. xv). He calls Posner's work "inaccurate, distorted...and grossly in error." Further, these inaccuracies to Weisberg were deliberate on Posner's part, an opinion he asserts when he says Posner "knowingly misrepresents what he knows to be the truth." Pretty strong stuff about the man who so impressed U.S. News & World Report that it devoted a cover and a major portions of an issue to his work, and the Book-of-the-Month Club that it made his book a major selection.

Weisberg digs right in with his first chapter. He cites all the pre-publication hype that the book received, then asks how Posner could have done in excess of 200 interviews, criss-cross the country to see people and places, review ten million words of the Warren Commission, digest all of Weisberg's and other records, and write about it in "not much more than a single year (p. 2)"

One of the major criticisms early in Case Open of Posner by Weisberg, and that continues through the book, is that Posner leads the reader to believe that the work by Failure Analysis, an engineering firm in Silicon Valley, California, that did investigative work for the American Bar Association on the assassination, did the work for Posner. Weisberg says "...Posner does not say that this elaborate and costly work was done for him. However, his writing is carefully designed to give the impression that it was done for him (p. 7)" (my emphasis) Weisberg points out that Posner never said who it was done for. By leaving out work done in the defense of Oswald by Failure Analysis, Posner leaves the impression that Failure Analysis concluded what the Warren Commission did: that Oswald was the lone assassin. In a telephone conversation with me on October 11, 1993, Dr. Roger McCarthy, President of Failure Analysis, said "We gave it our best and couldn't close the case." He added, "We would have loved to have solved it." McCarthy also acknowledged in that conversation with me that he felt Posner had "consciously attempted to create that image (that the work was done for him)." (parentheses added)

Weisberg goes on to criticize Posner for his conclusions drawn from "enhanced" Zapruder film copy, and accepting essentially the same conclusions about the case as Jim Moore (Conspiracy of One), even though Posner had Weisberg's responses in writing to Moore's work (p. 17). Posner wrote extensively about Yuri Nosenko, the much-discussed defector who reportedly has claimed that Oswald was not a Soviet agent. Weisberg is clear about how he thinks Posner got to

interview the CIA-protected Nosenko when he writes "Nosenko agreed to the interview because the CIA told him to grant it and the CIA would do that only if it was absolutely certain of Posner and what his book would say (p. 19)." Even with interviewing Nosenko, Posner quoted him as saying things opposite from what Nosenko was already on record as saying at earlier times. Weisberg concludes on this topic by saying "...At the very least, the CIA made Posner's book possible (p. 23)."

Weisberg also attacks Posner's footnoting throughout the book. An example is his lengthy section on Posner's writing about Rosemary Willis, the daughter of Phil Willis, who took several still photographs of the assassination. Rosemary was the girl who is seen turning around on the Zapruder film, which Posner claimed proved his timing sequence theory. Weisberg points out that in Posner's footnote about the event, he has no source note; just a comment (p. 28).

There is a rather lengthy explanation by Weisberg of how Posner, in Weisberg's view, took information from an adolescent, David Lui, who wrote as part of a school project an article about Rosemary Willis, attributed only part of what he took from Lui, leaving the reader once again to believe that Posner came up with "original" research (p. 28).

Weisberg attacks Posner for Posner's characterization of researcher Sylvia Meagher, now deceased, as a "committed leftist" (p. 32). Meagher is one of the few researchers who Weisberg agrees with and whose work he respects. Weisberg criticizes Posner's description of Meagher's work as "biased" as hypocritical (p. 33). By entering into this area, Weisberg highlights what many researchers and others have observed over the years: that what you believe about the John Kennedy assassination is often strongly influenced by your political persuasion.

True to his past writing and comments about assassinology, Weisberg is critical in Case Open of those with whom he agrees on other issues. In Chapter Five, he dissects the ABA "trial" and the role of Failure Analysis in researching for both sides in the presentation. This book is worth the \$11.95 price if for no other reason than giving the background about that trial and the results, which Posner conveniently never mentions (a 7-5 "hung jury"). Weisberg points out what McCarthy confirmed to me, and that Cyril Wecht had originally told me, that Posner did not get permission from Failure Analysis to use their information, he asked Dr. Robert Piziali, Vice-President of a subsidiary of Failure Analysis (p. 71).

Weisberg continues through the book to pick apart each of Posner's major contentions about the "evidence" in the case and how it points to Oswald as lone assassin. For example,



Weisberg criticizes Posner for ignoring what Weisberg wrote in Whitewash concerning "proof" that Oswald carried the rifle into the book depository (Weisberg claims no such thing is proven) (p. 101). Weisberg continues in that chapter (VII) by discounting Posner's proof and conclusions regarding the rifle itself, its alleged "packaging" and where it was found.

There is a liberal sprinkling of quotes from the Warren Commission, and, as is Weisberg's custom, from his previous books on the issues that Posner raises. Throughout Weisberg contends that if Posner had read what he says he read, of Weisberg's books and the Warren Commission, that he could not conclude what he has concluded. In that way, Case Open is a continuation of his other works and should be read with them.

Case Open is consistent with themes in Weisberg's work over the past thirty years. The first is that, despite great temptation that there must be for someone of Weisberg's stature on this subject (a temptation most others have not resisted, to their financial pleasure), Weisberg has consistently refused to speculate on who actually was behind the murder of the President. Secondly, as follows from the first theme, Weisberg is meticulous in his documentation and insists on it from others in the field, including especially Posner. Third, Weisberg has consistently stated to me that he doubts that the case will be solved because "the trail is cold," but that the evidence closest to the event is the best. Thus, Weisberg has consistently used the Warren Commission testimony to disprove its own conclusions about the murder.

This book is a valuable addition to the body of writing on this subject. Weisberg did not write it for profit, as he did not have a written contract with Carroll & Graf for its publication, and had no formal agreement on what he should be paid. It is valuable because it confirms that Weisberg's work of nearly thirty years ago is still solid. It is valuable because he has taken the time to actually read and analyze Posner's references and finds them clearly deceiving and inaccurate, something that was not apparently done by Random House or U.S. News.

And that is not all. Being prepared for publication now by Carroll & Graf is Weisberg's Never Again, tentatively due out in September of this year. It will primarily deal with JAMA's involvement in this case and will, I believe hint, by asking a question, at Weisberg's thinking about who may be behind the assassination. In addition, Carroll & Graf has published a welcome volume for beginners on the subject entitled Selections From Whitewash (1994), co-published with Richard Gallen. It is a condensation of his previous works on the Kennedy assassination, and a handy reference. Martin Luther

King: The Assassination, a republication of the title Frame-Up (Outerbridge & Dienstfrey, 1971), is also now available by Carroll & Graf, although the original Frame-Up, in hardbound, is available by writing to Weisberg, and is better quality.

For the 81-year-old Weisberg, the publication of these works must be rewarding. Not because any financial gain he may receive, which is unknown and undependable, but because, as he stated to me in his home in March of this year, "Writing is what I like to do." He has, for the record, responded to the recent literature on the assassination, and set the record straight. Weisberg has kept the debate on this subject on a straight course with integrity, a useful commodity to all of us.

## CASE OPEN: A CRITICAL REVIEW

by

Tom DeVries

Case Open: The Omissions, Distortions and Falsifications of Case Open by Harold Weisberg (New York: Carroll & Graf, 1994), 178 pages. In Case Open, the widely respected and unofficial dean of JFK assassination researchers, Harold Weisberg, provides a strident near knock-out punch rebuttal to Gerald Posner and his book Case Closed. Fortunately, the 178 page Case Open is only part of a longer manuscript which will be available to researchers in the near future at an archives of Hood College, in Frederick, Maryland. Unfortunately, because of major readability problems, Case Open will be more interesting to researchers than to the general public and the media.[1]

For those able to overlook poor writing and the apparent bureaucratic and financial problems of poor editing and publishing which I'll address later in this review, Case Open does have a lot of meat on its small skeleton. First let's look at the main topics and themes of Case Open.

Weisberg states that Posner's book is made possible only by the claim that Rosemary Willis is reacting to gunfire at around Z-162. Weisberg implies but does not argue that there was not a shot fired around that time. Rather, he simply attacks Posner's use of sources, particularly his citation of David Lui writing in a 1979 edition of The Dallas Times Herald which

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irritates him for several reasons. Posner implies that the observation of Rosemary Willis' alleged reaction to gunfire was only made possible by recent computer enhancements of the Zapruder film. The transparency of this lie becomes evident by the footnote which gives Lui credit for that observation in 1979. But Weisberg demeans Lui, apparently for being only 15 years old at the time he made the observation.

In 1979 Rosemary Willis told a reporter that it took her "maybe one tenth of a second" to react to the first shot. Weisberg attempts to discredit this, claiming that a ten year old (her age at the time of the assassination) has no concept of one tenth of a second. He also shows that Posner uses Conspiracy of One author Jim Moore as a secondary source when he should have used the Warren Commission volumes. Throughout this section Weisberg expertly exposes Posner's glaring omissions from the 26 volumes he was supposed to have mastered.

Although Weisberg's critique of Posner's source work throughout Case Open is important and valid, this Rosemary Willis business is the weakest of his major points. His statements regarding Lui sound petty. And Weisberg never attempts to explain why he does not believe a shot was fired as early as Z-162. The HSCA placed a shot between Z-157-161.[2] Robert Groden makes a good case for a shot at that time,[3] and researcher Martin Shackelford states that, based on Warren Commission testimony of witnesses seeing a shot hit the pavement at that time, there seems to be little doubt of a shot fired at Z-161.[4]

But a shot at around Z-161 does not make the single bullet theory any more plausible. Weisberg adequately refutes it without having to demean "little Lui." His attempt to discredit Rosemary Willis' 1979 statement also seems petty in that she was 26 at that time and was obviously recalling her reaction as instantaneous. Overshadowing this however, Weisberg points out that Posner omitted the fact that Rosemary's older (and presumably more alert) sister, Linda Kay Willis, testified to the Warren Commission that the second shot, not the first shot, missed.[5]

Posner claims that the first shot is the missed shot that hit the curbstone and then James Tague. Weisberg has filled many file cabinet drawers with documents gained through the Freedom Of Information Act (FOIA) which expose the patching of the Tague curbstone. He does an excellent job showing how Posner suppresses the official evidence while citing his own interviews of Tague in order to maintain his case. A patched curbstone means conspiracy.

Weisberg points to Posner's extreme double standard in

maintaining that a tree branch ripped the jacket off the Tague bullet whereas the magic bullet, (both, according to Posner, fired from Oswald's alleged gun, the 6.5 Mannlicher-Carcano) remained virtually pristine after destroying 10 cm. of Governor Connally's 5th rib and traversing his right distal radius. Weisberg asserts that Posner had unacknowledged help with researching a deliberately dishonest book. He discusses the time necessary for the fastest of humans to read, write, research, travel and conduct interviews, and also to re-index the Warren Commission's 26 volumes of hearings and exhibits, which Posner claims he did. He argues convincingly that the only way Posner was able to locate and interview Russian defector Yuri Nosenko was with the assistance and cooperation of the CIA. My personal suspicion is that the CIA encouraged or even initiated the interviews. Posner suppresses Nosenko's earlier statements and testimony disclosed by the CIA wherein he states that Oswald was a poor shot and that the KGB considered him to be a sleeper agent. Instead, he again uses only his own interviews of Nosenko who has been hidden away by and at the mercy of the CIA since 1964.

Case Closed struck me also as a book that no individual, let alone a relative new-comer to the JFK assassination field, could have researched and written by himself in the time he had, even with the help of his wife, whom he acknowledges as his partner.[6] Footnoted dates given for 95% of his many interviews occur during a four month period in early 1992 when he needed to be researching and writing. I was especially suspicious of Posner's statement in his "Acknowledgments" section thanking "many people and organizations (some of whom preferred not to be named)."[7]

Posner's consistent suppression of pertinent information, facts, and documents is the strongest theme in Case Open. Although Case Closed alleges to search for the truth, it is obviously written from the point of view of a prosecuting attorney arguing to convict Lee Harvey Oswald as the lone assassin. Weisberg continually hammers home the point that Posner was aware of and had access to documents, files, information, and books which absolutely refute his own cited interviews and scores of points he attempts to make in Case Closed. In doing this Posner consistently ignores his own favorite dictum that "testimony closer to the event must be given greater weight than changes or additions made years later...." [8]

Weisberg graciously hosted Posner and his wife for three days during his research for Case Closed, and gave him unlimited access to his files. Unbelievably, Posner asked him virtually no questions. Yet Posner apparently knew how to

ingratiate himself to Weisberg because he told him that the purpose of his book was to expose fraudulent assassination theories. Of course many people know that Weisberg has often been less than patient with those who would "speculate" about any number of things regarding the assassination. But my suspicion is that Posner was coached by someone who suggested a way to gain Weisberg's good graces. (Please excuse further speculation, but maybe the CIA?) It's a well-known fact that the CIA and FBI have kept files on some of the more prominent JFK assassination researchers and witnesses.[9]

For the most part, Case Open does not deal with the first half of Case Closed which attempts to impugn the character of Lee Harvey Oswald. (There is a brief section dealing with Posner's distortion of the Warren Commission testimony of Renatus Hartogs, a New York psychologist who tested Oswald when he was 13 years old.) Posner's character assassination of Oswald is based mainly on three dubious sources: FBI Reports—(J. Edgar Hoover had an unprofessional early bias for Oswald as lone assassin),[10]—Warren Commission Testimony (dubious because of dry runs, leading questions, no defense counsel, selective calling of witnesses, and Posner's extremely selective use of their testimony)—and Marina and Lee, Priscilla Johnson McMillan's biography of the Oswalds which is full of pop psychoanalysis.[11]

Weisberg cannot be unaware of the many additional distortions in this part of the book. His self-admitted limitations of time, health, and energy more likely explain this omission. Hopefully Weisberg will treat this section of the book in depth in the longer manuscript being prepared for the Hood College archives.

Of Case Open's major themes, the most space (pp. 57-100) deals with Posner's deliberate deception in implying that the Failure Analysis Associates'(FAA) work was done for Gerald Posner. In doing this Posner suppresses numerous suspicious facts relating to the American Bar Association's use of the FAA work that would have cast doubt on the lone assassin theory. For example: FAA also did work for Oswald's defense; the coordinators of the prosecution and defense were decided by a coin flip; and the extremely limited two day trial was strictly an exercise for educating attorneys in uses of modern technology and produced a 7/5 split—acquittal for Oswald.

Although Weisberg criticizes FAA for allowing Posner to get away with his distortions and suppressions, and further blames the media for praising his work, it is clear that FAA also was not happy about what Posner and the media did. Weisberg indicates this by quoting several letters from FAA employees, and also by citing FAA's Roger McCarthy's angry reaction to

Posner quoted by Dr. Cyril Wecht.

Another major theme woven into Weisberg's analysis of all Posner's deceptions in Case Open is that of the "Sieg Heil" major media (p.67), which scrambled to heap praise on Case Closed and refused to evaluate it as the big lie which it obviously is.[12] Weisberg refuses to speculate on their motives for distorting the truth, preferring instead to lambast them with sarcastic and satirical condemnation.

Despite agreeing with virtually all the major points and themes of Case Open, I was disappointed with the book. Weisberg's inimitable and sometimes awkward writing style is much more problematic in Case Open than in his earlier works. In fact, by quoting his first book Whitewash extensively, he provides the reader with a juxtaposition of clear and concise writing to the sometimes extremely strained syntax of Case Open. Intelligent readers who happen to be unfamiliar with Weisberg and the myriad nuances of the Kennedy assassination will likely find the text confusing and frustrating. Most will probably fail to appreciate the irony that good research is sometimes represented by poor writing and editing. I remarked to several other researchers that it seemed Case Open was dictated and copied without editing. Run-on and incomplete sentences abound, and poor comma usage often obscures the flow and meaning of important passages. I phoned a friend and fellow JFK assassination researcher who has maintained friendly correspondence with Harold Weisberg for years.[13] He had recently spoken with him and told me, "You're half right. It was half written and half dictated." Reading Case Open a second time, it was easy to tell which sections were which.

81-year-old Weisberg refers to the fact that he is handicapped by poor health and a lack of mobility, and has great difficulty accessing his own basement files. Case Open provides no footnotes nor index.[14] At the time of writing Case Open Weisberg was also working on another new JFK assassination book, Never Again, due for publication soon.

After leaving a phone message with a secretary, I wrote to Kent Carroll of Carroll & Graf Publishing asking him to enlighten me on the interaction between writer, editor, and publisher for Case Open. I informed him that I intended to review Case Open for The Fourth Decade and address the writing/editing problems with the book. Receiving no response, I called Carroll & Graf and was told to FAX a copy of the letter to a John Mooney, which I did, and I then followed up with another call, again failing to get past the secretary. Both letters and all phone calls requested a response, by letter or collect call. After six weeks, three phone calls, two letters,



and about \$10 phone, postage, and FAX fees, I believe it is safe to say that Carroll & Graf does not want to respond to my concerns.

I have disseminated many articles refuting Case Closed to friends and acquaintances, some of whom were unfortunately fooled by either Case Closed or the media's portrayal of Posner's deceptions. However, I hesitate recommending Case Open to these same people for one simple reason. Regardless of the fact that Weisberg is one of the most knowledgeable people in JFK assassination research, a field where credibility is necessarily called into question, the writing/editing is so poor that the novice researcher/student would have good reason to doubt the book's credibility.

For example, referring to official records regarding a burglary of James Tague's home in which only his May 1964 film of the damaged curbstone was taken, there is the following sentence. "He was not, as in records officials never expected to be public they sought to deprecate him as 'a used car salesman.'" (p.148) Meaning, I suppose: "Although officials sought to deprecate him as just 'a used car salesman' (in records they never expected to be public), he was actually very successful as an auto fleet salesman." Similar problems on dozens of pages make for very unfriendly reading and often confuse the meaning of important statements.[15]

Harrison Livingstone's two most recent books, High Treason 2, and Killing the Truth, both published by Carroll & Graf, have many of the same syntactical problems as Case Open. [16] Besides poor writing, there can be only two possible reasons for such irresponsible publishing: poor editing, or no editing at all. In Case Open, the latter seems more likely to be the case. I have to wonder if Weisberg would have submitted his manuscript and audio tapes if he had known they would not be edited properly. It appears that the book was rushed into print although the reason for this is not clear. Several eight-hour days by a good copy editor could have made the text very readable.

In his excellent review of Livingstone's Killing the Truth in the October-November 1993 issue of The Investigator, James Folliard criticizes Carroll & Graf for poor copy editing but goes on to state that "Authors, of course, are ultimately responsible for what gets printed under their names." [17] Although this is true, provided they are given the opportunity to see the final copy, I have to lay the blame for the syntactical problems in Case Open at least partially, if not mainly, with Carroll & Graf. [18]

Publisher quality is commonly the standard by which books are measured, particularly in the academic community. Solid

assassination research stands to gain respect in America's high schools and universities as younger teachers and professors replace old guard establishment types. A major goal of assassination research should be to make inroads to the academic community. Secondary education could be a key to getting young people interested in assassination research. Perhaps if the academic community takes it seriously, the major media might then begin to take notice of the cogent arguments espoused by many Warren Commission critics.

Weisberg complains that no "major publisher has brought out a single truthful, responsible book that is critical of the government's record when the president was killed, when as is inevitable, we had an American coup d' etat." (p. 176) He also rails against the major media because of their total failure to tell the assassination story honestly and effectively. Both these points are true and valid. But the major media need to be challenged by the academic community. Poor writing, editing, and publishing can only hurt the reputation of good assassination research, which Harold Weisberg represents.

Harold Weisberg has probably done more for serious research on the JFK assassination than any other single individual. He has assiduously stuck to conclusions drawn only from the "OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS." His books and many FOIA lawsuits demonstrate his indefatigable spirit. He has successfully amassed vast amounts of official documents, supplying researchers with more than enough ammo to prove that there is no untainted evidence to convict Oswald of the Kennedy and Tippit murders, and to prove that our government has engaged in an on-going cover-up of the JFK assassination conspiracy. He has also been extremely generous in helping others.

Weisberg's work has of course never been properly recognized by the government or major media, and has been inexcusably ignored by some researchers. This may at least partially explain why his writing is rich with sarcasm directed not only at government agencies, the media, and those supporting their conclusions, but also occasionally at fellow Warren-Commission critics. For example, those who believe it is OK to speculate about certain "mysterious deaths," or possible assassination roles for three hobos [19] or the umbrella man, or who the gunmen or plotters were, etc., run the risk of incurring his wrath. He has been strident with criticisms of many like Jim Garrison, Oliver Stone, Mark Lane, and Jim Marrs. It irritates him that some who are convinced of a conspiracy will speculate about potentially unprovable things. But Case Open is refreshing in that it generally spews venom at real enemies such as Posner, Jim Moore, and the major

media.

But in one short paragraph, Weisberg harshly condemns Jim Marr's book *Crossfire* as "incredible trash." (p84) Oliver Stone's JFK also suffered at the hands of Weisberg when he sent a pirated first draft script to George Lardner of the *Washington Post*.

However, these two sources share with Weisberg what I believe he shows to be the most important premise of all JFK assassination research: That there is no untainted evidence to convict Lee Harvey Oswald. To wit, that Oswald was innocent of killing JFK and was framed.

The responsibility for the apparent impossibility of solving the JFK assassination clearly rests with the custodians of the evidence, the U.S. Government, and the conveyors of official mythologies like Posner, Moore, David Belin, Michael Baden, and Robert Blakey. Fellow Warren Commission critics who happen to know far less than Weisberg about the case and tend to engage in speculation are not real enemies even when they do have the clout of Oliver Stone, Jim Garrison, or Mark Lane.

I am concerned that by attacking the wrong people, Harold Weisberg has contributed to an unhealthy divisiveness in the JFK assassination research community. And by allowing Carroll & Graf to publish unedited material, he is unfortunately and unnecessarily jeopardizing the well-earned respect due him. This is not to say that many whom Weisberg has criticized have not made the mistakes he has accused them of. But academics are likely confused and put off by the poor quality of some conspiracy books. And many new-comers in this field are likely confused by the existing divisiveness among the critics. Many have been inspired, stimulated, and learned much from the likes of Stone, Garrison, Lane, and Marrs, as well as from Weisberg.

For example, Stone's JFK has served as a catalyst for releasing millions of pages of files which John Newman (a man whom Weisberg respects even though he was consultant to Stone and played a cameo in JFK) is presently researching for what will hopefully be an important book on Oswald.

The JFK assassination research community needs to ask itself an important question. "Is poor publishing actually hurting the cause of solid assassination research and scholarship by alienating the academic community and the major media?" My letter to Kent Carroll thanked Carroll & Graf for having the courage to publish controversial JFK assassination books that major publishers will not. It also asked him why basic copy editing seems to be a problem for Carroll & Graf. Since I have not received a response I can only speculate and hope for forthcoming information. Any JFK assassination researcher/

writer publishing with Carroll & Graf could advance the noble cause simply by hiring a good editor.

#### Notes

1. It is ironic that regarding his full manuscript Weisberg states that "This book shortens that lengthy indictment to make it more accessible to more people." p. 171.

2. HSCA Final Report, p. 47.

3. Robert Groden presentation given at Symposium on Political Assassinations, Chicago, Ill. April 2-4, 1993.

4. Phone call, 6-15-94.

5. 7H 498-9.

6. Gerald Posner, *Case Closed*, (Random House, 1993), pp. 505-6. Also, Posner by his own admission was a newcomer to serious assassination research in 1991.

7. Posner, *Case Closed*, p. 501.

8. Posner, *Case Closed*, p. 235. On page 26 of *Case Open*, Weisberg makes the important point that "Testimony" is what is sworn- under oath and is therefore subject to prosecution if it is perjurious." Posner inexcusably ignores the important distinction between "testimony" and "statements." I was disappointed that a recent article in the May 1994 issue of *The Fourth Decade* titled "We Are All Consumers Of Testimony" by James R. Folliard and Dennis Ford, also failed to make this important distinction.

9. See, for example, Mark Lane's *A Citizen's Dissent*, passim (DeJ, 1975). Also, in Sudbury Ontario in August 1993, Jean Hill told me of how she had many pages of FBI documents on her released under the FOIA.

10. This attitude quickly filtered down to the agents who often intimidated witnesses. For example, a pair of FBI agents told assassination witness Richard Carr, "If you didn't see Lee Harvey Oswald up in the School Book Depository, you didn't witness it." (Marrs, *Crossfire*, p.318)

11. For an excellent account of the dubious nature of this source see Peter Whitmey's three part series on McMillan in the following issues of *The Third Decade*: May, 1991; Nov., 1991; and May, 1993.

12. Weisberg makes a notable exception: Patricia Holt of *The San Francisco Chronicle* who criticized Posner. p.57-9.

13. This researcher asked not to be named.

14. There are many places footnotes are needed in *Case Open*. Several examples are: Regarding the discussion of Carolyn Arnold's statements contained in FBI documents on page 87; and for the following statement on page 93: "The

truth is that when Oswald did the firing, as again the official evidence shows, he was so lousy a shot his mates doctored his score...."

15. Some examples of awkward, incomplete, and run-on sentences can be found on the following pages: 2, 3, 11, 18, 22, 46, 65, 66, 71, 74, 81, 85, 94, 99, 101, 126, 136, 140, 150, and 171. In addition to this there are numerous typos and confusing statements such as this one from page 93. "Before the bolt action could be operated at all that rifle had to be *removed* to prevent the eye from being put out by the bolt as it is withdrawn because of the scope." [italics in original]

16. See Monte Evan's excellent review of High Treason 2 in the September 1992 issue of The Third Decade, and James Folliard's excellent review of Killing the Truth in the October-November 1993 issue of The Investigator.

17. Folliard, James. "Battered, Bruised, But Still Alive - A Review Of Harrison Livingstone's Killing the Truth: Deceit and Deception in the JFK Case," p.6.

18. In August of 1993 I presented a paper at the Laurentian University in Sudbury Ontario. The paper was published by the committee without any editing or suggestions. Despite my requests, I was not allowed to see the galley proofs. I was shocked to find that for the published product they had used a scanner which produced a version very unfaithful to the copy I had given them. I counted 194 errors which were not my fault, evidently caused by the failure of the scanner to read type by a probably somewhat faint printer ribbon at a university computer center. The publisher had not edited or proof read my work, either before or after publication.

19. Weisberg has often said that the hobos were nothing more than "winos" (Cassette tape of KGO radio program with Noah Griffen, Robert Ranftel, and Jay Davis, 1984, also, phone call to Weisberg in July 1991). However, since he cannot name these men and has produced no records which show that any one of them had been drinking wine or another alcoholic beverage either that day or had a history of such behavior, I find it wildly speculative for Weisberg to make such a statement. The irony is that he evidently makes this statement (often in a very derisive tone) in order to refute speculation by others.

## THE THIRD ALTERNATIVE: A REVIEW

by

Ulric Shannon

"It's an exasperating book."

So says Vince Palamara about his self-published opus on the Secret Service angle of the Kennedy assassination, titled *The Third Alternative—Survivor's Guilt: The Secret Service and the JFK Murder*.

The book's convoluted title is the first hint that its writing took Palamara through many twists and turns. Palamara's work in the past few years had been pregnant with suspicions that the Secret Service had been actively involved in the assassination, and his book project at first reflected that.

But if *The Third Alternative* began as a compendium of the classic suspicions about the Secret Service (the tight turn on Elm Street, driver Bill Greer's actions) and a straight The-Bodyguards-Did-It scenario, Palamara's conversations with some twenty former agents tempered that somewhat: "I started from scratch when I interviewed these guys—I had to write a whole new book," he told me.

The final product that emerges is a sort of hybrid theory: that certain agents in the White House detail were involved in downscaling the protection for the President in Dallas for motives not necessarily related to any assassination plot.

Palamara begins with the Secret Service's input in planning and arranging security for the Texas trip, which, he writes, was replete with peculiarities and departures from written procedure.

He wonders why three separate checks of the Protective Research Section's files during the planning stages of the trip showed not a single threat to Kennedy's life in the entire state of Texas, which agent Roy Kellerman termed "unusual". (p.11)

Palamara suggests that the entire Dallas trip was rife with culpably poor security arrangements, starting with the decision to hold the ill-fated luncheon at the Trade Mart, which the Secret Service conceded was the site presenting the most inherent security risks. [1]

When Gerald Behn, Special Agent In Charge of the White House Detail, was shown photographs of the catwalks overlooking the lunch site at the Trade Mart, he reportedly commented, "We'll never go there." Yet Forrest Sorrels told the

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Warren Commission that he reluctantly approved this site at Behn's recommendation. [2]

Two agents—Winston Lawson and Forrest Sorrels—were principally responsible for selecting the motorcade route. While Lawson was tabbed by the Warren Commission as having determined the eventual route, Elm Street dogleg turn and all, he told the House Select Committee on Assassinations that he didn't remember who made the final decision. (p.14)

(The HSCA concluded that Lawson "did not have control over the final determination of the route." Sorrels told the Commission that he—not Lawson—chose the motorcade's path, eschewing two other possible routes).

Palamara notes that the original motorcade route through Dallas did not call for the dogleg turn at Elm Street until it was modified on November 18, and that this coincided with Agent David Grant's arrival to assist Lawson and Sorrels. Grant had planned much of Kennedy's trip to Florida. Gerald Behn told Palamara, "I know [the route] was changed, but why... I don't know." (p.14)

Dallas County Sheriff Bill Decker told Forrest Sorrels, the day before the assassination, that he was making his men available to the Secret Service for any reinforcement that might be necessary. Yet on the day of the motorcade, Decker evidently ordered his deputies not to participate in any aspect of presidential security. (p.14)

Palamara quotes researcher Gary Shaw as saying that this order was relayed to Decker from Washington, and that two Sheriff's Deputies witnessed the call: Roger Craig and Allan Sweatt. (It should be borne in mind that this claim is being made on their behalf, since both have died, and that neither officer was especially reliable as a source of information over the years.)

Palamara's next point—a strong one—is that the explanation given for why no agents were posted on the rear runningboards of the limousine during the Dallas motorcade (that Kennedy had angrily ordered them off) does not stand up to much scrutiny.

Gerald Behn wrote in his report that Kennedy had told him he didn't want agents on the back of the limo, yet he told Palamara that he had no memory of this supposed request. Floyd Boring was quoted by William Manchester in *Death of a President* as having heard a similar request, yet Boring (who was never interviewed by Manchester) denied this to Palamara, saying that "[Kennedy] didn't interfere with our actions at all." (pp.4,5,8)

Clint Hill told of hearing the request between November 19

and November 21, 1963, not from Kennedy but from the office of the White House Detail, specifically Floyd Boring, who told him to spread the word to the other agents. Hill evidently thought this an unwise move, and on four separate occasions during the Dallas motorcade took up a position on the rear runningboard. (pp.5,7)

In addition, seven former agents specifically told Palamara that there were never any such orders from Kennedy to keep off the runningboard. Rufus Youngblood, for instance, said Kennedy "never said anything like that". The question that begs asking, now that it is clear Kennedy did not request this change in procedure, is who did? (pp.7,8)

Palamara then tackles the question of who ordered the thin plexiglass bubbletop off the limousine prior to the fatal motorcade. While Kenneth O'Donnell is usually fingered as the one responsible, Palamara quotes agent Sam Kinney as taking the blame for what he feels was a fatal decision. (p.10)

In addition, newsman Jim Lehrer wrote of having seen Forrest Sorrels order the bubbletop off. Finally, Bill Greer was quoted by a North Carolina newspaper as taking partial responsibility for the removal, and the HSCA concluded that Betty Harris and Bill Moyers had a hand in the decision. (p.10)

Palamara suggests that motorcade security was further weakened by the Secret Service's decision to scale back the Dallas police motorcycle units. On November 20, the Dallas police decided to deploy 18 units, with two positioned on each side of the limousine. Yet David Grant argued that Kennedy did not wish to be flanked by motorcycles, so the plan was modified and they were thereafter positioned behind the limousine. (This change was apparently finalized only minutes before the motorcade's departure from Love Field.) The HSCA concluded that

*The Secret Service's alteration of the original Dallas Police Department motorcycle deployment plan prevented the use of maximum possible security precautions. [...] Surprisingly, the security measure used in the prior motorcades during the same Texas visit shows that the deployment of motorcycles in Dallas by the Secret Service may have been uniquely insecure.*

The Secret Service (likely Grant) overruled the idea of having a car carrying Dallas Police homicide detectives follow the vice-presidential limousine. In addition, Winston Lawson was likely responsible for the last-minute shuffling of the procession's order. (p.17)

The cars carrying Kennedy's physician, Adm. George Burkley, and military advisers Godfrey McHugh and Ted Clifton, were

moved to the back of the motorcade, and according to Tom Dillard, the flatbed truck which normally preceded the presidential limousine and carried the corps of photographers and cameramen was substituted for three cars in the middle of the procession, which substantially reduced their view of the President. (p.49)

When the first shots echoed in Dealey Plaza, the reaction of the Secret Service was somewhere between sluggish and inert. (For a fuller discussion of the issues involved in this statement, read Palamara's article titled *47 Witnesses: Delay on Elm Street* in the January–March 1992 issue of *The Third Decade*).

As the Jack Daniel film of the motorcade shows, the limousine pulled ahead of Jesse Curry's lead car as it sped through the triple underpass. Yet Greer told the Warren Commission that he "never passed" Curry. Furthermore, three of the passengers in the lead car—Curry, Lawson and Sorrels—stated that they stayed ahead of the limousine the whole time. (pp.27–28)

If one chooses to believe that the Daniel film's version is the more reliable of the two, Palamara writes, then one must wonder how Greer found his way to Parkland Hospital, since the Secret Service insists that Curry led the way.

Greer testified that he radioed to the other cars in the procession that the President was hurt and that he needed to get to Parkland hospital. Both Roy Kellerman and Emory Roberts told the Warren Commission that they radioed the same message to Winston Lawson in the lead car. (p.27)

Yet Palamara discovered that there was no radio link between the limousine and the lead car (one wonders how Kellerman spoke to Lawson), and that Lawson's radio was "not working too well at the time." It is therefore not possible that the lead car guided Bill Greer to Parkland over the radio. It is also worth noting that James Rowley testified that "the Secret Service has not followed the practice of having nearby hospitals on alert status." (p.28)

Other interesting points raised in Palamara's book stem from his conversations with former agents. These two dozen interviews are remarkable in their own right, given the Service's traditional reluctance to expose the inner workings of presidential protection. (Hamilton Brown, the head of the former agents' association, warned Palamara early on to "cease and desist" in his efforts to locate and interview past members of the Service). (p.29)

Abraham Bolden, the White House Detail's first black agent—who was arrested, tried and convicted of accepting a bribe after having tried to reach the Warren Commission from

a White House telephone—told Palamara that it was common knowledge in the Service that unauthorized persons used Secret Service credentials on the day of the assassination. (p.29)

(Recall that, according to Bolden, there was an unprecedented Service-wide check of the agents' identification documents after the assassination, and the tie-in to the witnesses in Dealey Plaza who told of having encountered Secret Service agents who, officially, did not exist.) [3]

Bolden also told Palamara that there was a climate of racial intolerance at the Chicago office of the Secret Service, and that Kennedy's civil-rights policies earned him the ire of many agents there.

According to Bolden, one agent, Harvey Henderson, countermanded a direct order from President Kennedy on a trip to New York in late 1963 (Palamara places it on November 13), which led to his being removed from the White House Detail. According to Bolden, Henderson "...made some threats like, 'We'll get you.' I understand that he told the President 'I'll get you' or something to that effect." (pp.67–69)

Another agent, Marty Underwood, told Palamara that he learned from Winston Scott, the CIA station chief in Mexico City (who may have withheld pictures of the man who visited the Soviet and Cuban embassies, officially Oswald) that the CIA, the FBI and the Mafia "knew [JFK] was going to be hit" on November 22, 1963. On November 21, Underwood said, "we were getting all sorts of rumors that the President was going to be assassinated in Dallas; there were no ifs, ands or buts about it." (p.35)

Another ex-agent, Richard Johnsen, who is officially credited with having received the CE 399 bullet at Parkland Hospital and carrying it to Washington, told Palamara that he does not remember ever having been handed the bullet. (p.43) One must bear in mind, however, that Johnsen did write and sign a report stating that he had carried CE 399 from Parkland to Washington. [4]

James Fox, the late Secret Service employee who kept a set of autopsy pictures when he left the Service and gave them to Mark Crouch (who gave copies to David Lifton), told Palamara that it was well known in the Service that an agent had been killed in Dallas. This ties in, Palamara writes, to the Associated Press report on the afternoon of the assassination that said the same thing. (p.36)

It should be kept in mind, however, that there is no testimony from Dealey Plaza indicating another fatality, and that while Palamara exhaustively catalogs the agents on duty in

Dallas, he cannot name any agent as having been the possible victim.

The driver of the followup car, Sam Kinney, told Palamara that his windshield was spattered with blood and brain matter at the moment of the head shot; that Kennedy's wound was in the back of the head; and that he saw a large piece of bone (presumably occipital) on the back seat of the limousine when it was carried back to Washington on a C-130 transport plane. This is all new information. [5]

One of the faults of Palamara's book is that, while his many interviews with former agents make it rich with primary source material, he also accepts very questionable sources at face value (such as Gerry Patrick Hemming and *Farewell America*), which creates weaknesses and inaccuracies in his presentation of the facts:

—Trying to establish a link—ultimately a fairly weak one—between Bill Greer to Lucien Conein and Vietnam, because he had “worked one summer on the estate of [Vietnam ambassador] Henry Cabot Lodge.” (p.33)

—Implying that there is something amiss in former Secret Service head U.E. Baughman's having been hired on November 22, 1948. (p.59)

—Suggesting that Forrest Sorrels' work on counterfeiting investigations in France in 1947 led to French mercenary Jean Souetre following Kennedy and Sorrels around Texas: “...this could be of major importance to the case—perhaps this mercenary was seeking revenge in the worst way.” (p.48) There is no evidence linking Souetre to Sorrels' cases, and in fact Souetre was only 17 years old in 1947. [6]

—Asserting that the Zapruder and Nix films, as well as the Willis and Moorman photos, were “altered by the Secret Service.” (p.66)

—Stating that “Honest Joe” Goldstein's truck, which was seen around Dealey Plaza on November 22, was parked behind the picket fence on the grassy knoll during the shooting. In fact, Jean Hill told Jim Marrs this (along with many other recent modifications in her story) only in 1986. A more reliable witness to the truck's movements, A.J. Millican, stated in 1963 that it had left Dealey Plaza five to 10 minutes before the shooting. [7]

Palamara also is suspicious of the fact that, “when [Forrest] Sorrels testified before the Warren Commission he called “Honest Joe” by the name of Ruby Goldstein.” However, “Honest Joe” Goldstein's first name was Rubin. [8]

—Stating that Dallas Police deployments ended at the intersection of Main and Houston Streets. (p.12) In fact,

officers were stationed on the next two overpasses as well as at the Trade Mart. [9]

Palamara follows the main part of the book, in which he documents his suspicions of the Service, with an exhaustive listing of the many agents of the White House Detail and field offices. This is an invaluable research aid, since many of these agents had not been previously identified.

This is complemented by a somewhat subjective agent-by-agent look at the Service's performance in Dealey Plaza, and later by an exhaustive list of some 30 instances in which, in Palamara's opinion, the security afforded Kennedy in Dallas was significantly deficient or at least sub-par. If some of the points raised are debateable, the list is nevertheless impressive in the quantity of its examples. (pp.37-55, 60-61)

Palamara's main hypothesis, though it is not explicitly spelled out, is that the Dallas motorcade, for the Secret Service, was an opportunity for what he calls a security-stripping test. This deliberate downscaling of presidential protection, Palamara theorizes, was meant to underscore (for Kennedy's benefit) the Service's need for better funding. He points to James Rowley's allusion to “studies” being carried out by the Service in November 1963. (p.19)

This test, writes Palamara, was not overtly part of an assassination plot (though one can infer from passages in his book that he believes this test may have been corrupted), and was likely covered up to spare the Service from having to admit it failed to protect the President for rather selfish reasons.

Palamara names several members of the White House Detail he feels were involved either in compromising Kennedy's security or in covering it up after the fact. His chief suspects are Bill Greer, Floyd Boring and Emory Roberts.

Palamara recognizes that there are several logical stumbling blocks for such a theory, however:

—It fails to explain the all-night drinking party on the part of some members of the White House Detail on the eve of the assassination. One would think that these members of the Service would seek to minimize their own misconduct if they were aware that the Service's performance would come under scrutiny within the next few days.

—It is hard to understand why the agents would fail to react in Dealey Plaza once shots were fired on the President and it became clear that their “innocent” scaleback of security had evolved into (or been co-opted by) a full-blown assassination attempt.

—Abraham Bolden told Palamara that the FBI was interested in taking over presidential protection duties from the



Secret Service. It seems to me that the Service would be playing into the FBI's hands by feigning incompetence and allowing any sort of incident to mar Kennedy's visit to Texas, when they had been adequately warned about the state's volatile political climate." (p.75)

—It fails to explain why certain agents would volunteer evidence contradicting the official version of events, such as Paul Landis' testimony that shots were fired from the right front of the presidential limousine (the grassy knoll area). [10]

"The book talks out of both sides of its mouth," says Palamara. The security-stripping scenario, which has been advanced in various forms by other researchers, such as Mary Ferrell and George Michael Evica, [11] remains theoretical at best. Palamara concedes that "as much as I try to make this assertion of the security-stripping test, it does strain to the breaking point in certain instances."

He adds that the theory was "an out," a chance to present evidence without having to be nailed down to one theory or another. "I'm torn between thinking these men were complicit and thinking there's a third alternative. So I thought, 'Why don't I let the chips fall where they may, and present as little of my speculation as possible?'"

*The Third Alternative's* strength is not its theorizing. Indeed, Palamara seems to stretch somewhat to cast suspicion on the Secret Service without falling into the trap of accusing it of active complicity in the assassination, a view unsupported by evidence apart from the Service's ultimate failure at a critical moment.

The book's value to the research community lies in the wealth of primary source material generated by hours of interviews with former agents and their relatives. I'd hesitate to call it the definitive book on the Secret Service angle of the assassination, since Palamara's theory doesn't preclude others based on the same evidence.

Nevertheless, *The Third Alternative* will need to be considered as a major source of quality information in any evaluation of the Secret Service's performance in Dallas. Says Palamara, "I just hope the book doesn't stand or fall on one theory. I put the facts out there, and I'll let people decide for themselves."

#### Notes

1. Warren Commission Report, p.31
2. *The Third Alternative*, p.11; Appendix 3
3. Mark Lane, *A Citizen's Dissent* (New York: Fawcett-Crest, 1968) p.214
4. Warren Commission Hearings and Exhibits, Vol. 18,

p.799. References to this source cited hereafter in format: 18 H 799.

5. *The Third Alternative*, Document Addendum, p.1
6. CIA Document 632-796
7. 19 H 486; Jim Marrs, *Crossfire* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 1989) p.38
8. Greg Doyle, "Who Was 'Honest Joe'", *The Third Decade*, November 1992, p.44
9. 22 H 606
10. 18 H 755
11. Jeff Meek taped interview of Mary Ferrell, December 27, 1975; George Michael Evica, "The Surrounding Silence—The Terrible First Sound in Dealey Plaza," p.12, a paper presented at the second *The Third Decade* conference, Providence, RI, June 18, 1993.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### To the Editor:

Thanks to Jerry Rose for publishing Garrett B. Timmermans' well-written and thoughtful letter in the July, 1994, issue. I regret to say I disagree with Mr. Timmermans' conclusions about my views and about Best Evidence. I find it ironic that a fallibilist has to argue in these pages on behalf of realism.

I don't believe I ever argued that researchers should ignore the issues of the authenticity and the integrity of the evidence. Of course, authentication of the evidence is fundamental to any research program. I apologize if I wasn't clear on this point.

I have argued that some researchers misuse evidence they believe to be fraudulent. It is this point that Mr. Timmermans has either misunderstood or ignored in his defense of Best Evidence. Mr. Timmermans writes: "Body alteration theory is the only way to give serious credence to evidence for a grassy knoll assassin (p. 35)." To my way of thinking, this statement is completely wrong. Body alteration theory (or any theory involving fraudulent evidence) can give credence to nothing beyond the possible fact of its falsification.

It is impossible to use fraudulent evidence to make a case for (or against) the existence of a knoll shooter. In Mr. Timmermans' terms, it is impossible to use Pattern One to support Pattern Two, if Pattern One contains fraudulent evidence.

Perhaps I can illustrate this point by a sordid event which occurred some years back in psychology. It was discovered

that Cyril Burt, a prominent British psychologist, had come by his data the old-fashioned way, by fabricating it. (His data purported to show that intelligence was mostly inherited.) Once Burt's data was shown to be fraudulent, it lost all relevance to theories about the heritability of intelligence. His data could not be used to argue any position. In like manner, once a piece of assassination evidence has been shown to be fraudulent, it loses all relevance to theories about who did what in Dealey Plaza.

Mr. Timmermans insists that David Lifton's theory of body alteration is empirical. Again, I disagree completely. Lifton's approach differs from that of most researchers because his theory, as it is phrased in Best Evidence, is inherently irrefutable, hence nonempirical. Body alteration, X-ray alteration, photographic alteration, and Zapruder-film alteration, shield the theory from refutation. There seems to be no evidence which can prove body alteration theory wrong: all such evidence is declared fraudulent. And there seems to be no view one can take toward the evidence that Lifton does not hold. Let me provide an example of the latter. Lifton argues, sensibly enough, that Oswald couldn't be the assassin if there were no entrance wounds on the rear of the President's body. Lifton also argues that Oswald couldn't be the assassin if there were entrance wounds on the rear of the President's body. This is an irrefutable position—rear wounds absent, Oswald didn't do it; rear wounds present, Oswald didn't do it. It is also a position wrongly derived through the use of fraudulent evidence.

The theory of body alteration is empirical if one surrenders the claim that all potential counterevidence is fraudulent. The theory is also refuted if one surrenders such claims—which is a reason fans of body alteration cannot consider such counterevidence valid and legitimate. I believe that any one of the following refutes the possibility of body alteration: the difficulty in passing off wounds made on a corpse as wounds made on a living person; the seeming impossibility of removing President Kennedy's body from the Dallas casket; the seeming impossibility of returning President Kennedy's body to the Dallas casket, from which it emerged at the start of the autopsy. It can be argued that Lifton's theory is not fully developed or that the theory does not need to explain all the elements of the body alteration scenario. These are fair defenses, but they are very different than the defense that counterevidence is fraudulent.

These methodological issues go beyond an exchange of letters between Mr. Timmermans and myself. I can't resist adding that claims of fraudulent evidence appear regularly in

conspiracy books and in the pages of our journal. In the July issue of The Fourth Decade, four of ten conspiracy-oriented papers (those by Houston, Eaglesham, White, and Cranor) discuss fraudulent evidence. This practice, which many critics applaud and defend, is an advance in the wrong direction. It takes us away from the real world. At best, it lessens our standards of proof; at worst, it eliminates our standards of disproof. I can't emphasize enough that only the possibility of disproof—our old friend, refutation—keeps our theories empirical.

I'd like to add in closing an ironical implication. Researchers who insist evidence is fraudulent may shield their theories from refutation, but they also shield the lone gunman theory from refutation, since fraudulent evidence has no relevance to any empirical position. I don't think any critic intends to give life to the lone-gunman theory, but that is the inevitable result of shielding conspiracy theories with claims of fraudulent evidence.

—Dennis Ford, 3247 Kennedy Blvd., Jersey City, NJ 07306

#### To the Editor:

Dennis Ford attempts to attack Best Evidence from a philosophical position. He states that the theory is not subject to proof, or disproof. That being the case, it is simply one man's conjecture. Unfortunately, Ford misstates my arguments, and, more seriously, misuses vocabulary. Best Evidence may not be a fact—but it is certainly not conjecture. It is a theory, based on the facts in evidence. And it is certainly not irrefutable.

This Kennedy case is different from most because whereas normally, prosecution and defense argue about what is relevant and what certain evidence means, here the most critical issue is whether key facts were altered to mislead an entire fact-finding process.

Moreover, in this particular case, because the body of the President was observed at two different locations, six hours apart, we are in the position of someone who removes a mask and asks: a) what did the evidence look like before the mask was put in place? b) who manufactured the mask?

This is a very powerful methodology. Ford either misses this point entirely or does not understand.

Let's take a closer look at some of his statements:

"Body alteration theory (or any involving fraudulent evidence) can give credence to nothing beyond the possible fact of its falsification."

Ford is wrong on two counts:

1. In this case, we have a record of the evidence—the body—before it was altered (i.e., the Dallas record). Therefore, within permissible bounds, one can draw sensible inferences from what the doctors saw—and that's what I do in Best Evidence, noting that just about everybody saw an exit at the rear of the President's head (See Chapter 13)

2. Ford's statement that it tells us "...nothing beyond the possible fact of its falsification" is like saying that proof that the Watergate tapes were erased for 18 minutes doesn't tell us anything more than the fact that they were erased. Again, not true. As in Watergate, where the possession of the tapes by Nixon, at the time of erasure, implicated him in a plot to cover-up, that is similarly the case here. If the body was altered while in the custody of the Secret Service, then that implicates someone high in the Executive Branch of the government. So come now, Mr. Ford: let's own up to the fact that the implications of body alteration, if it took place, are truly important; and go way beyond the complaint that it interferes with our ability to pinpoint, with precision, exactly where on Dealey Plaza some sniper may have been hiding.

"It is impossible to use fraudulent evidence to make a case for (or against) the existence of a knoll shooter."

Ford then cites the case of British psychologist Cyril Burt, whose conclusions about inherited intelligence were rejected because it was found he had fabricated his data.

Mr. Ford's analogy is fallacious. He confuses the forger and the discoverer of the forgery. In this case, I discovered evidence of forgery. I did not forge anything. Ford seems to imply that my conclusions should be tossed out because I discovered forgery. The analogy here (which Ford apparently missed) is that if the autopsy is fraudulent, then its Bethesda conclusions should be rejected—which is exactly what I say in Best Evidence.

"Once a piece of assassination evidence has been shown to be fraudulent, it loses all relevance to theories about who did what in Dealey Plaza."

Wrong.

To return to my metaphor: Proving a piece of evidence fraudulent is akin to removing a mask that someone has been wearing. Once that mask is removed, we can then attempt to see what the person looked like.

The same principle applies here. If the autopsy is shown to be false, then one must revert to the Dallas observations in order to understand how the shooting took place (and they said, of course, that the President was shot from the front.)

But more important, Ford's statement that my work is damaging to finding out "who did what in Dealey Plaza" is very revealing as to how he conceives of conspiracy—i.e., "who did what in Dealey Plaza." Truthfully, I am less interested in "who did what in Dealey Plaza" (which is the way Ford seems to define conspiracy) than who did what to the body. If I didn't believe the body was altered and the medical and ballistic evidence in this case fake, then I probably would be on the other side of the issue in this case.

Ford states that my theory, as set forth in Best Evidence, is "inherently irrefutable."

Here is where Ford attempts to wax eloquent as a philosopher and attempts to foist off as erudition the notion that a theory that asserts that evidence has been altered makes reality "unknowable." But his facts are again wrong, and he misapplies the vocabulary.

My work is not irrefutable. Ford's problem stems from the fact that key evidence in this case is unavailable. The body is buried. The original Zapruder film is by and large unavailable. However, if the body and the film were available, certain new facts could easily be adduced: a) whether that film is an original, or a copy; b) whether (on the body) the large hole in the head extends to the back, where the Dallas doctors said it did. If that proved to be the case, then the theory would be largely proved, and it would turn out that an array of evidence was forged in this case: the body, the film, and the X-rays and photos. Dr. Mantik's recent work using a densitometer at the National Archives and developing data that there is a "patch" on the X-ray towards the rear of the skull represents a significant step in this direction.

But there is nothing "inherently irrefutable" in the theory presented in Best Evidence.

Moreover, Ford seems unaware of the basic tenets taught in freshman logic: *modus ponens* and *modus tollens*. These are logical abstractions that are irrefutable. That doesn't make them wrong.

Ford seriously misstates my argument about the rear entrance wounds and erects a straw man. He writes: "Lifton argues, sensibly enough, that Oswald couldn't be the assassin if there were no entrance wounds on the rear of the President's body. Lifton also argues that Oswald couldn't be the assassin if there were entrance wounds on the rear of the President's body. This is an irrefutable position—rear wounds absent, Oswald didn't do it; rear wounds present, Oswald didn't do it."

Ford would be absolutely correct, if I said what he says I did.

But I didn't. Dennis Ford is the author of the second statement, not I. I only made the first statement, and I stand by it: that Oswald couldn't be the assassin if there were no entrance wounds on the rear of the President's body.

Ford cites the following specific items as his "evidence" to refute Best Evidence:

a. "The difficulty in passing off wounds made on a corpse as wounds made on a living person."

This is refuted by the record in this case: it was recognized. FBI agents Sibert and O'Neill state that when the body arrived, it was "apparent" that there had been "surgery of the head area, namely, in the top of the skull." Sibert has stated in a memo back in 1966—and confirmed to me in detail on the phone—that he wrote down what the doctors said. "I'd swear on a stack of bibles that the doctor said there was surgery." Thus the source of the statement is Dr. Humes—and the implications are twofold: first, man made wounding was recognized, and second, was recognized by the chief pathologist doing the autopsy. The FBI only wrote down what he said.

b. "The seeming impossibility of removing President Kennedy's body from the Dallas casket"

This ignores the machinations that went on aboard AF-1, which the Kennedy party found puzzling: LBJ's insistence that the flight be delayed so that there could be a swearing in. And if by impossibility Ford is referring to the mechanics of lifting the lid on the casket, he is again just plain wrong. Contrary to false claims made in Posner's book, Aubrey Rike has assured me that it would take no more than 5 seconds to release the latch. It just opens. Its simple. There is nothing complicated about it.

c. "The seeming impossibility of returning President Kennedy's body to the Dallas casket." Here, Ford ignores what I have documented using government documents: that the large casket entered twice: once at 7:14–7:17 p.m. (according to both FBI and Army documents) and then entered again, under full escort at 8 p.m. (according to the report of the military casket team). (See Chapter 25, Best Evidence)

At the end of his letter, Mr. Ford worries that a theory of false evidence "takes us away from the real world." I can only conclude that Mr. Ford's "real world" does not include the world of espionage, where "false facts" are regularly manufactured to achieve this or that end; and it certainly does not include the possible foresight of plotters who planned to murder the President (whose brother was Attorney General), and then, by manipulating the evidence (and relying on the

credulity of people like Ford, who cannot conceive of such a possibility) were able to get away with this ugly crime.

—David S. Lifton, 11500 W. Olympic Blvd., #400, Los Angeles, CA 90064

#### To the Editor:

In the July 94 issue, there was a "Letter to the Editor" from Mr. Bryan Lindstrom in which Mr. Lindstrom addressed the mysterious "Oswald Confession Tapes." First-of-all MEGA KUDOS for striking the nail directly on-the-head! Perhaps, Mr. Lindstrom isn't aware of the background of one of the parties, Ted Gandolfo, that's been mentioned as a "prime" figure in the tape scenario, and some background is required. I guess it was two winters ago that it was announced in the "Grassy Knoll Gazette" that Gandolfo was: A) dying and B) later "RIP". His wife was trying to sell-off his video collection to off-set some of her expenses. For the record, I have copies of the issues, if anyone is interested. Sometime, early this year, it was reported in both "The Investigator" and "Probe" that Gandolfo had risen from the dead, and was back. Copies of letters/notes in which Gandolfo admitted and denied existence of the "Oswald Tapes" were published—if my memory is correct.

Perhaps, these "tapes" do, in fact, exist. I certainly don't know. I do feel comfortable in saying this. If they "do exist" the research community is going to be the LAST to hear them, because someone is going to market them for all they are worth to some gonzo T.V. news program(s), and then, and only then will the rest-of-us be given the opportunity to "purchase" our set. You can also bet, THEY WON'T BE CHEAP! Before anyone assumes anything, I'm not opposed to anyone making money—I wish I knew the secret. I am against ANYONE THAT MISLEADS, LIES, OR FRAUDS people by taking advantage of their emotions and/or interest.

Thanks to Mr. Lindstrom, for addressing an issue that the research community needs to be made aware of. I've read where someone was "selling" a particular photo collection, and after a number of people had sent their money—they never received the photos. Perhaps this has been corrected by now. The ONLY good thing about the JFK assassination was the lack of opportunities for individuals to profit—from his death. If there is anyone reading this, that collects ANYTHING OF VALUE, you have probably already had your heart broken, when you purchased a FAKE, thinking it was real. I have a friend that collects WW2, German militaria. We've gone to shows, and seen obvious "reproductions" being sold as "legit items." If that wasn't bad enough, there would be another dealer, at the next table, swearing the items were "good"



because they might need the "other guy" to help them "sell" something. My point? If these "tapes" do materialize, don't worry about being the "first-on-your-block" to acquire a set. Let the experts test them, and after that, if you can afford them...

—Buddy Cousins, 100 Randolph Cr., Ashland, VA 23005

#### To the Editor:

Here's a project for JFK researchers, especially those who are dentists or have an interest in Oswald's dental records. I now have a set of Oswald's postmortem dental x-rays. I showed them to my personal dentist for his opinion so I could compare an impartial opinion with the Norton report and the LHO dental records in the WC volumes.

He made three observations which I found interesting and which some knowledgeable researchers may wish to pursue.

1. There is a wisdom tooth discrepancy between postmortem and antemortem x-rays. Norton said the tooth was "partially erupted" but my dentist thought that even an unerupted tooth should show.

2. A root-canal is present on the left (#14). The Norton report mentions this. But no existing Marine Corps medical record shows that LHO underwent a root canal if I interpret the records correctly. When and when did he undergo this procedure?

3. Of the complete set of dental x-rays taken by the Norton team, all molars are fully depicted, but my dentist commented that only one view was present of the front teeth instead of the expected four, and found this puzzling.

Having done an extensive study of Oswald's dental records several years ago, I would be happy to help or correspond with qualified researchers who want to check the subject in depth. A good starting point is to get a copy of the Norton report on the Oswald exhumation, which can be obtained by writing Dr. James A. Cottone, Department of Dental Diagnostic Science, The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio Dental School, 7703 Floyd Curl Dr., San Antonio, TX 78284.

Oswald was a man with many dental problems: one extraction, 13 fillings, four untreated cavities, and a root-canal by age 24. Is anyone interested in studying these clues to his identity?

—Jack White, 704 Candlewood Road, Fort Worth, TX 76103

#### To the Editor:

By golly, the July issue moved me to write about the articles from Allan R.J. Eaglesham ("The Sniper's Nest That Never Was"), Alan Houston ("Tramp, Tramp, Tramp?"), Hugh Murray ("Surveillance State Louisiana—Coming of Age in New Orleans in the 1950s and 1960s"), and Gary Mack ("Jerry Organ, or the Second Posner Theory").

For Eaglesham:

Did Eaglesham ever consider the possibility that the November 23, 1963, New York Times photograph of the Depository interior does not even show the so-called sniper's nest? The caption merely states, "Room from Which Shots were Fired," not "Window from Which Shots were Fired." In fact, as Eaglesham should well know, there was no "room" on the Depository's sixth floor, the entire floor being one big storage space. So what we have here is a caption that was rattled off too quickly by some hardpressed editor. Since the caption does not, however, claim that the photograph shows the precise point in that "room" where the shots originated, I fail to see why it should be regarded as such.

For Houston:

Houston would do well to place less faith in the Craig-Rogers book, The Man on the Grassy Knoll (New York: Avon, 1992), and to forget about Chauncey Holt while he is at it. The Craig-Rogers work features altogether too many questionable elements for it to be a standard JFK source. In the preface (pp. xiii–xiv), the authors state, "Dialogue has been created for dramatic interest, but it all reflects subject matter known to have been discussed." Even a pro-conspiracy researcher has to be wary of that: Sylvia Meagher felt no need for information to be "created," nor does Anthony Summers show such a need. Elsewhere, Craig and Rogers claim (p. 112) that Charles Rogers did some codebreaking for the ONI in WWII. I have been over this once before (see The Third Decade for May, 1992, p. 39), and I reiterate that the authors do not have a firm grasp of the history of U.S. intelligence. Since intelligence matters are a central concern of the authors, this is unacceptable. Likewise, their use of photographs in concert with forensic artist Lois Gibson is troubling, since Gibson's accomplishments as an artist still do not make up for her own admission that her "success rate" is just 40% (see Martin Shackelford's ASK '91 summary in the January–March 1992 TTD, p. 5). Therefore, The Man on the Grassy Knoll is marred by "created" material, misunderstandings about intelligence, and dubious photo comparisons.

Perhaps worst of all, The Man on the Grassy Knoll relies on

Holt. After my negative comments about Holt in the May, 1992, *ITD*, I began receiving letters from him. Did he provide any real evidence that he was on the margins of the JFK assassination? No. Annoyed, I called his bluff and sent him a list of names that I wanted him to peruse with respect to his background (or what he said was his background) in the Detroit underworld. Did any of the names ring bells, I asked, and, if so, how? The letter was mailed on July 25, 1992, and I have yet to receive an answer. Case closed.

For Murray:

It was good to see Murray surfacing in the pages of this journal—here was an articulate, political person who was in the right place at the right time—but I was disappointed that he was still not seeing some of the implications of his experiences that I thought were obvious when I first received from Paul Hoch a copy of Murray's article "Gays in the JFK Assassination" (*New York City News*, November 16, 1983). As Murray pointed out both in that article and his July piece, Guy Banister was used as a security guard at the Junior University of New Orleans when the teachers went on strike there in January, 1964. That is amazing: this is the guy who supposedly was at the center of the crime of the century just two months earlier, and he was reduced to guarding a college. Worse, as Murray adds, Banister would later be threatening teenagers on a bus with a handgun. Keep in mind that he died in June of 1964, so these were among his final acts. Thanks to Texan researcher Jerry Shinley, I learned that Banister died with 11 months of rent unpaid at the Newman Building, where he had his private-investigation office, forcing building owner Sam Newman to sue the estate (*New Orleans Times-Picayune*, June 18, 1964). Once you put together enough items like these—and I have not touched on Banister's known, neurological problems—the picture that emerges is pretty pathetic, not pretty deadly. Even if there was an association between Oswald and Banister, it appears to be more than arguable that New Orleans is going the way of Oswald's Soviet sojourn. The more that is known, the less impressive it becomes.

Murray speculates that agencies like the Louisiana Sovereignty Commission and the "Louisiana Un-American Activities Committee" (technically, the Louisiana Joint Legislative Committee on Un-American Activities) may have been up to something, but that path does not lead far. The nature of Louisiana throughout this century (that is, ramshackle and eccentric) and the nature of federal-state relations in the South (acrimonious) both mean that a significant Louisiana component does not fit well anywhere in the assassination. To

propose that a Louisiana agency was actively in on Dallas would be folly, because any such conspiracy would have been a mess. To propose merely that a Louisiana agency knew something about Oswald is safer, but so what? It is difficult to believe that such an agency would have enjoyed (or even wanted) a significant liaison with elements in, say, the FBI or CIA. Feds are Feds, whatever their politics, and so the hypothetical information could have been doomed to fester down in the bayous.

For Mack:

Jerry Organ seems to be a big boy, and I imagine he will be defending himself, but I could not resist three queries.

1) Honestly now, what does Mack think was in Oswald's famous paper bag? On November 22, of all days? Carried by a man not known for interior decoration? Was it just a...coincidence? Or was Oswald so pitifully dull-witted that he could be talked into anything by the alleged conspirators, even talked into carrying around curtain rods?

2) Does Mack not agree that Oswald was out of the Depository in a very short time? We have Mrs. R.A. Reid, who saw him on the second floor of the building, heading for the stairs to the front, just a couple of minutes after the assassination, and we have the bus ticket that was found on him when he was arrested, which apparently was issued roughly fifteen minutes after the assassination (*WC Report*, pp. 154, 157, 159). Considering the minutes needed to walk to a bus stop, wait for a bus, and then travel a short distance on a bus, the timeframe of Mrs. Reid's observation appears to be nicely corroborated. So Oswald was out of the building and leaving the area of Dealey Plaza in the space of a few minutes—and a President had just been shot in that area. What would Mack have done, if he were an innocent Depository employee? Stand around and gawk, or vanish within, perhaps, 180–300 seconds? And remember, now—Oswald did not have a car, and running would have attracted attention. Within those constraints, the term "flight" sounds fair.

3) Finally, what is so important about the expression on Oswald's face, calm or wild? The history of wrongdoing is full of people who can butcher without blinking an eye or who go to pieces over just a traffic offense. More to the point, does Mack deny Oswald's wife-beating? I imagine the expression on Oswald's face made little difference to Marina when he bashed the hell out of her. Deeds, not appearances, are what matter, especially concerning a frustrated, violent man who carried a mysterious bag and later fled.

—Scott Van Wynsberghe, 87 Cornell Dr., Winnipeg,  
Manitoba, R3T 3C2 Canada

**Eaglesham Responds:**

Yes, I did consider the possibility that the New York Times photograph does not depict the window of the so-called sniper's nest. In fact, there is no room for doubt on this question. The Times picture shows windows that are equidistant from the corner of the building—a feature that is unique to the southeast edge of the Depository (see floor plan in Commission Exhibit 1118 on p. 150 of the Warren Report, and the external southwest view of the building on p. 206 of Robert J. Groden's The Killing of a President). Moreover, a half-open lower window was present only on the sixth floor (see p. 158 of Groden's book). Therefore, the Times photograph was definitely taken at the southeast corner of the sixth floor of the Depository.

Mr. Van Wynsberghe is probably correct in his assertion that the caption "Room from which the shots were fired" was rattled off by a hardpressed editor back in NYC. Although the caption does not state that the photograph shows the window from which shots were presumably fired, it is inescapable that the Times picture, with its fundamentally important differences, shows the area depicted in Commission Exhibit 1301 on p. 138 of the Warren Report, commonly referred to as "the sniper's nest."

—Allan Eaglesham, 100 Graham Rd. #10C,  
Ithaca, NY 14850

**Houston Responds:**

I agree with Van Wynsberghe that the evidence in Craig and Roger's book should not be taken at face value, which is why I suggested that researchers should re-interview the witnesses that the authors relied upon. My main purpose was to call to the attention of Oswald biographers the alleged encounter of Oswald with Rogers and Harrelson, which wasn't mentioned in the earlier TTD articles. Obviously, I hope that researchers will consult with other forensic artists besides Lois Gibson, and William Kelly has stated that one has already confirmed her identification of Harrelson as one of the tramps.

As for Chauncey Holt's credibility, I think that we should reserve judgment until the publication of his book, which he says will occur shortly. But if Van Wynsberghe was as rude to Holt as he was in his letter, I don't blame Holt for ignoring him. Judging from the letter and book excerpt which he sent me, Holt is highly intelligent and quite sane.

—Alan Houston, 200 Beall #129, Nacogdoches, TX 75961

**Murray Responds:**

I am flattered that anyone recalls my 1983 article published

in a gay newspaper in New York City—an article that did nothing for my popularity in some gay circles.

Van Wynsberghe criticizes my recent article on two grounds:

1) Guy Banister was a pathetic, impoverished school guard, clearly not a man involved in the crime of the century, and 2) Louisiana agencies, eccentric and inefficient, could not possibly join with federal agencies in any successful plot. Moreover, we can probably dismiss anything contained in the local files.

I'll discuss the second charge first. Apparently, in New Orleans both government agencies and individuals, like Kent Courtney, kept surveillance on young radicals. Would they ignore an American defector who distributed pro-Castro leaflets? What is in those files?

Furthermore, if Oswald, Shaw, or any other outsider, were in Clinton during a voter registration drive, some agency probably recorded their license plate and described the passengers.

Finally, Louisiana officials not only could, they did conspire with federal officials in the famous case of Dombrowski v. Pfister which began with the Louisiana Un-American Activities Committee's raid on Southern Conference Education Fund offices and officials in October 1963. When a local judge ordered LUAC to return the SCEF files, LUAC secretly transferred them instead to federal jurisdiction, to Julien Sourwine, counsel to Sen. Eastland's U.S. Senate Internal Security Committee. Not until a major Supreme Court decision in 1965 did SCEF regain its confiscated files. (See Peter Dale Scott, Deep Politics, pp. 264–65, and for lengthier accounts, consult most books on civil rights law in the South in the 1960's.)

Regarding Guy Banister, Van Wynsberghe might be right, but the only time I visited inside Banister's home, in 1956, he did not appear to be impoverished. Though a small Junior University had existed for a few years in Jefferson Parish, the new Junior University of New Orleans (an elementary and high school) opened in the fall of 1963 with much advertising in a multi-storied office building on St. Charles Ave. Overnight, it became the largest, non-sectarian, private, segregated school in Louisiana. The Director, James Spencer, was the brother of the Charles Spencer, one of the top officials of Jefferson Parish.

If, by December 1963 the existence of the largest, segregationist school in Louisiana was threatened by a teachers' lawsuit and strike, with at least one of those teachers a known radical, Banister may have delighted in the role of guard for

ideological, rather than merely monetary reasons. Or, there might have been a possible Spencer–Spencer–Marcello–Banister connection. Or Banister may have taken the job as guard for assorted reasons.

New Orleans newspapers reported that during the early 1960's large quantities of weapons were stored in Banister's office. Do impoverished people engage in large-scale weapons deals? Roy Cohn paid no taxes, but lived the life of a millionaire. It is unlikely that Banister could maneuver finances like the famous attorney, but there may have been reasons other than financial for Banister's failure to pay the rent at the Newman Building.

Finally, even if Banister walked the halls of a school with pistols in his belt in January 1964, even if he boarded a bus waving his pistol at someone who insulted his lady friend, that rip-roaring persona does not necessarily exonerate him from any conspiracies during 1963.

Courtney was paying people to spy on young radicals, and others allege Banister did the same. True, one can be poor and still hire others—Oswald hired people to leaflet for FPCC. However, being rich or poor, pathetic or proud, has nothing to do with the question of possible involvement in a conspiracy to kill JFK.

—Hugh Murray, 928 N. 15th St., #306,  
Milwaukee, WI 53233

#### Mack Responds:

1) No one knows what Oswald's bag contained. Since the physical characteristics argue against it containing the Carcano, what is the evidence the rifle was inside?

2) If I were an innocent TSBD employee, I would stay at the scene; but if I were being framed for the crime, I would leave immediately. The record is clear that Oswald took his time, at least three minutes (R156), before departing.

3) My analysis of the lunchroom encounter pertained to Oswald's lack of reaction when confronted by Baker, so the reactions of others are irrelevant. And what does wife-beating have to do with the assassination? By this line of thinking, O.J. Simpson would be guilty of murder solely for having abused his former wife.

—Gary Mack

#### To the Editor:

I would like to add one more question to the two questions posed by Ms. Brown in the July issue of TFD (Vol. 1 No. 5). As much as I feel that a conspiracy was behind the death of

President Kennedy, the one question that must be resolved in my mind before the case can be laid to rest is "how were the conspirators able to get Oswald placed into the TSBD prior to the assassination?" Thrash Posner as much as you like, he pokes the biggest hole into any conspiracy theory on page 202 of Case Closed when he states:

*That single incident, Oswald obtaining the job at the Book Depository, highlights two key flaws in almost every conspiracy theory—the constant interpretation of coincidence as evidence of conspiracy, and the inordinate number of people who would have had to be involved in any such plot—more than a dozen on just this issue.*

The story normally told behind this incident involves primarily Ruth Paine, who is supposed to have phoned Roy Truly at the insistence of Marina after a conversation earlier in the day with Marina, Dorothy Roberts, and Linnie Mae Randle concerning Lee Harvey Oswald's lack of employment.

This "official story" fits in so well with the "lone nut" assassin theory that the whole case for or against a conspiracy revolves around it. Resolve this question and you do not need to debate the single bullet theory, Oswald's marksmanship or any of the other inane fantasies forwarded by the anti-conspiratorialists.

If Oswald were part of a conspiracy that was as well planned as this conspiracy had to have been, the conspirators surely could not have left Oswald's location on the day of the assassination up to chance. If they were setting him up as the "patsy," they must have had a place in mind from which the plan was to be executed. So how did they manage to get him into position?

The only clues to the possible answers I have seen are in Marrs' Crossfire, where he implies that the Paines (Ruth and Michael) were not the innocent bystanders we are lead to believe they were. Surely, Michael Paine's claim to ownership of Oswald's Minox camera should raise eyebrows, especially after the pictures developed from the film left in the camera were of sites near Minsk in Russia. Was Michael Paine ever in Russia?

Gaeton Fonzi, on page 10 of The Last Investigation, also makes reference to the Paines as possible collaborators:

*One glaring example of the quality of the Committee's investigation is the fact that a woman named Ruth Paine was never called as a witness. She just slipped through the cracks of the investigation plan. Yet Ruth Paine was one of the key individuals in Oswald's life, playing an important role immediately before and after the assassination. It was in Ruth Paine's garage, the WC said, that Oswald stored and retrieved the rifle used in*



*the assassination. Ruth Paine was instrumental in getting Oswald his job at TSBD...A now declassified document revealed that it was on Ruth Paine's telephone that a "confidential informant" overheard immediately after the assassination, a male voice say he didn't believe Oswald killed Kennedy, and then added, "we both know who is responsible."*

If we find out how Oswald actually got the job at the TSBD, it might answer the question, "who is responsible?" We know that the damning evidence against Oswald was already being laid by this time. He got the job at the TSBD on October 15th. Yet the conspirators were already at work setting him up through the Silvia Odio incident, etc. beginning in late September.

So three possibilities exist. 1) The conspirators placed Oswald in the TSBD through the help of co-conspirators such as the Paines; 2) The conspirators were setting up multiple "patsies" in hopes that one would be close enough to the assassination for framing; or 3) They just got lucky.

Of these three, No. 3 can be ruled out as not fitting the "well planned" signature of this conspiracy. It is doubtful that the planners would invest as much thought and effort and leave one of the most important aspects to chance. No. 2 can be ruled out due to the sheer numbers needed to cover every probability. Therefore, the conspiracy required that Oswald be in the TSBD on the day of the assassination. Does anyone know how it was accomplished and by whom?

—Michael J. Kalscheuer, 17730 Creek Ridge Pass,  
Minnetonka, MN 55345

#### **To the Editor:**

Jack White has pointed out (issues of May 1994 and July 1994) indications that a "curious photo" of the Oswald family is a fake and has asked for ideas about the possible motivation. I suggest that the photo was faked by Lee Harvey Oswald himself.

The baby that Marina is holding in the photograph is much too large to be Rachel, who was born October 21, 1963, in Dallas. Therefore, the baby must be June, the older daughter, who was born on February 15, 1962, in Minsk. Judging from her size, the photograph must have been taken in or about the last half of 1962.

Lee Harvey Oswald worked as a photo developer at the Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall photo processing company in Dallas from October 12, 1962, to April 6, 1963. There, he had access to a lot of equipment with which he could manipulate photographs. This curious photo of the Oswald family might have

been an early experiment that he performed on a photograph he selected primarily just because it was handy. Also, he might have reasoned that his supervisors would not seriously object if they found him using the company's equipment to develop a family photograph for sentimental purposes.

I cannot imagine any sinister motivation for this particular montage. Oswald simply pasted the people from one photograph onto the background of another photograph, touched in some false shadows, and tried a couple of other elementary experiments.

However, this explanation of the curious photograph raises the possibility that Oswald also manipulated the backyard photographs that show him with his rifle. The backyard photographs were taken on March 31, 1963, when he was about to be fired from Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall and when he was planning to assassinate retired General Edwin Walker. This situation raises the possibility that Oswald faked these backyard photographs for a sinister purpose.

Oswald foresaw he might be arrested for shooting Walker and therefore thought beforehand about preparing evidence for his legal defense. Oswald might therefore have cleverly created a photographic montage that he knew he would later be able to prove was fake. His legal defense would then be that he had been framed by right-wing conspirators who had the resources to manipulate photographs so skillfully.

He was informed by his supervisor on Monday, April 1, that his employment at the company would end on the upcoming Saturday, April 6. This week's notice gave Oswald both an opportunity and a motive to concoct this fake evidence against himself and ultimately against Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall. If Oswald was later tried for shooting Walker, Oswald could have pointed out the fakery in the photographs, but then raised embarrassing questions about the secret relationship of Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall to some intelligence agency. Furthermore, Oswald might have planned to testify that intelligence officers had arranged for the company to hire him and had also trained and used him as a secret agent during his employment there.

Taking this speculation further, I would like to point out one of Oswald's colleagues in particular, John Caesar Grossi, who used the alias Jack Leslie Bowen while working at Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall. When Oswald obtained a library card during this period, he provided this "Bowen" as a personal reference, whose name and address were written on the library card (HSCA, vol 8, pg. 376; JFK F-505, B1-10). After the JFK assassination, when the FBI tried to find and question Grossi/Bowen, this important witness turned out to be impossibly elusive. The FBI found out that Bowen was really Grossi, who

had been born in Patterson, New Jersey, and spent time in several penitentiaries before coming to work at Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall as an "assistant art director." Although Grossi/Bowen lived in Ft. Worth from at least August, 1961, until January, 1964, his wife, Patricia Gervan Bowen, lived during this period in Ontario, Canada, with her mother, Mable Gervan, and near her sister, Edna (nee Gervan) Elliott. According to an FBI report, Grossi/Bowen while in Ft. Worth was frequently in contact with his in-laws, the Elliott family. Before the FBI could interview him, Grossi/Bowen disappeared and has never been found (Exhibit 2195, pp. 65-67).

The alias John (Jack) Bowen appears several times among Oswald's subsequent associates. A second such person had the real name Albert Osborne. He was born in Grimsby, England, in 1888 and immigrated to the United States in 1914. He claimed at one time that he was ordained that year as a minister in Trenton, New Jersey. In 1916, he moved to Canada, where he served as a soldier until about 1920. He subsequently returned to the United States and settled in Knoxville, Tennessee in 1929. He lived there for the next 14 years and said that one of his closest friends there was a social worker named Mary Elliott. He managed a boys club there for a while, but was fired for encouraging homosexual and anti-American activities among the boys. In 1943, he left Knoxville and began to travel as a minister throughout the United States, Canada, and Mexico. By 1956, he had assumed the aliases John Howard Bowen and John H. Owen and was operating an orphanage in Mexico.

In September 1963, he sat next to Lee Harvey Oswald on a day-long bus ride to Mexico City. (Another passenger on the bus had the last name Rowen.) When the FBI tracked Osborne/Bowen down for questioning, he lied repeatedly, claiming to be just Osborne or just Bowen, until he finally admitted that he had both identities, but denied he sat next to Oswald or knew him (Exhibit 2195). However, the 28 November 1993 issue of the Knoxville News-Sentinel (Tennessee) includes a long article by a real reporter, Jim Balloch, titled "JFK: Oswald trail led to ex-Knox man," revealing that Osborne subsequently confessed to a friend he indeed rode to Mexico City with Oswald.

The third such person was Fred Lee Crisman, Jr., who was implicated in the assassination in several letters that were sent to New Orleans Attorney General Jim Garrison. One of the letters alleged that one of the Crisman's fellow conspirators in stealing money from the CIA was a person named Martin Grassi. Subsequently, a Texas lawyer using the pseudonym William Torbitt released a manuscript called Nomenclature of

an Assassination Cabal, which provided further information about Crisman and Osborne/Bowen. According to Torbitt, local US customs officials he knew had discovered from their own sources in the early 1950's that Bowen's Mexican orphanage was really a training school for contract killers, who were occasionally employed by FBI Chief, J. Edgar Hoover. Torbitt also alleged that Crisman worked with Osborne/Bowen and sometimes even used the alias John Bowen.

A fourth possible such person was David Ferrie, who on the night of November 22, 1963, drove to Houston, Texas, and waited the next day there talking on pay telephones at a couple of skating rinks. When he returned to New Orleans on November 25, he learned that the FBI was looking for him because his name was on Lee Harvey Oswald's library card. Ferrie turned himself in, denied that he knew anything about the library card, and was released. This entire episode with the library card remains a mystery, because the only known Oswald library card in the FBI's possession had the name Jack Bowen, not David Ferrie, as a reference. It is therefore possible that David Ferrie also used the name Jack Bowen as an alias and that someone in the FBI knew about it. (John H. Davis, *Mafia Kingfish: Carlos Marcello and the Assassination of John F. Kennedy* (New York: Signet, 1989, pp. 204-222).

I speculate that Oswald faked the backyard photographs as a kind of insurance that would allow him to eventually put an investigative spotlight on these Bowen conspirators if they double-crossed him. Oswald was not caught when he shot at Walker on April 10, but he took the fake backyard photographs along with him when he moved to New Orleans on April 24.

On November 23, when Oswald was confronted with the backyard photographs during his interrogation, he immediately denounced them as fakes. Here is how that conversation was reported by Dallas Police Captain J.W. Fritz:

*I showed Oswald an enlarged picture of him holding a rifle and wearing a pistol. This picture had been enlarged by our Crime Lab from a picture found in the garage at Mrs. Paine's home. He said the picture was not his, that the face was his face, but that this picture had been made by someone superimposing his face, the other part of the picture was not him at all and that he had never seen the picture before. When I told him that the picture was recovered from Mrs. Paine's garage, he said that picture had never been in his possession, and I explained to him that it was an enlargement of the small picture obtained in the search. At that time, I showed him the smaller picture. He denied ever seeing that picture and said that he knew all about photography, that he had done a lot of work in photography himself,*

*that the small picture was a reduced picture of the larger picture, and had been made by some person unknown to him. ...He told me that he understood photography real well, and that in time, he would be able to show that it was not his picture, and that it had been made by someone else. (Warren Commission Report, Exhibit 11, pages 608-609, emphasis added).*

In a similar report of the conversation written by Postal Inspector Thomas J. Kelley, Oswald "said at the proper time he would show that the photographs were fakes." (ibid., pg. 628).

Afterwards, the conspirators must have seen into Oswald's gambit (they knew they themselves had not faked the backyard photographs) and faced a decision—to either point out that Oswald himself might have falsified the photographs or to insist that they were genuine photographs. The problems with the first option was that it would lead to a more determined investigation of Oswald's associates and activities at Jaggard-Chiles-Stovall and that most citizens would presume that if the photographs were indeed fake, then someone else had faked them besides Oswald. Therefore, the Government has stubbornly insisted that the photographs are genuine.

At some point, the conspirators decided to reinforce the authenticity of the photographs by creating a fiction that Oswald had given a signed copy of one to George de Mohrenschildt. Fortunately for citizen investigators, however, the conspirators botched this trick. In early 1967, as Jim Garrison was beginning his investigation, George de Mohrenschildt happened to find one of the photographs in a package of phonograph records that Oswald had supposedly sent him back in 1963, but de Mohrenschildt didn't open until 1967. On the back of this photograph, in Oswald's handwriting, was the note "For my friend George from Lee Oswald, 5/IV/63." Also in feminine Russian handwriting was the note, "Hunter of fascists—ha—ha—ha!!!"

Apparently, the original idea here was to convince the public that Oswald had developed the photograph during the first few days of April, and then Lee and Marina had signed a copy for the de Mohrenschildts on April 5. Jeanne de Mohrenschildt visited the Oswald home on about that day and even saw the rifle and discussed it with Marina, but neither of them has ever testified that the photograph was signed and presented that day. The feminine Russian handwriting is significantly different than Marina's, so that note had to be written by Jeanne, if one of those two women actually wrote it. Probably, neither of them wrote it.

George de Mohrenschildt was in New York that week, but he and his wife visited the Oswald home together on April 13. During this visit, the Walker shooting and Oswald's rifle were

discussed, but neither of the de Mohrenschildts nor Marina have ever testified that the signed photograph was presented on that day either. So, it is worthwhile to wonder why, if Marina and Lee signed this photograph on April 5, they did not give it to the de Mohrenschildts on April 5, when Jeanne visited or on April 13, when both George and Jeanne visited.

Priscilla Johnson MacMillan tried to explain this mystery in her book *Marina and Lee*. MacMillan doesn't address the problem that the feminine Russian handwriting is not Marina's and that Marina has no memory of writing that note on the photograph for the de Mohrenschildts. MacMillan explains it all as follows:

*It [the note] read: "For my friend George from Lee Oswald." Beneath the inscription was the date written, as Lee might have done it, in a combination of Latin and Arabic script: 5/IV/63." The date was probably supposed to be May 4, 1963, and Lee had, as nearly as can be guessed, mailed the records—and the photograph—from New Orleans.*

*What happened, apparently, is that after George's lucky guess on April 13 [that Oswald had shot at Walker], Marina, half idly, and half as a warning to Lee that he must not go around shooting people or he would be found out, simply took one of the photographs and wrote on it, mocking Lee, "Hunter for the Fascists," a word she had heard both Lee and George use, and "ha-ha-ha," an expression that was characteristic both of her and George. The sketch of a little dog links her inscription to George's remarkable guess. She must have done it, characteristically, to warn Lee and simultaneously mock him, to laugh him out of further dangerous adventures.*

*Lee's choosing a copy of the photograph that had this inscription on it to send to George was itself a message that contained a whole world of meaning. George, and George alone, had made a guess that it was Lee who tried to kill General Walker. ...As the days following the Walker episode passed without discovery and Lee realized that there was going to be no evidence, not even a clue, to link him to the attempted killing, he decided to let George know that his uncanny guess had been on the mark. (Priscilla Johnson MacMillan, *Marina and Lee*, (New York, Harper and Row, 1977), pp. 362-363.*

Another possibility is that both notes on the back of this photograph were forged.

—Mike Sylwester, 710-B Caroline St.,  
Fredericksburg, VA 22401-5904

**To the Editor:**

In connection with Hugh Murray's July article, "Surveillance State Louisiana – Coming of Age in New Orleans in the 1950's and 1960's," it is interesting to note that another teacher at the Junior University of New Orleans was Lee Harvey Oswald's well-traveled cousin, Marilyn Murret. In her WC testimony, Murret describes how she heard the news of the assassination from a student's portable radio. (8H156,174)

In addition, I am enclosing an article from the Times-Picayune of September 22, 1960, documenting Guy Banister's tie to the Louisiana Joint Legislative Committee on Un-American Activities.

–J.P. Shinley, 2601 N. Repsdorph #1512,  
Seabrook, TX 77586

(Editor's Note: Please see the back cover of this issue for the newspaper clipping sent with this letter.

## THE SECRET OF COMMISSION EXHIBIT 399

by

Milicent Cranor

Publication of the true penetrating power of a bullet like CE 399 is so dangerous to the conspiracy that every time they try to stop it, they just provide more evidence of what the bullet can do, and what those who try to stop it are made of.

Fortunately for the conspirators, most critics have been asking how could that bullet do so much—go through Kennedy's neck, Connally's torso and wrist—when they should have been asking why didn't the bullet do more? John Lattimer put a stop to that question 26 years ago.

### Nominal Velocity: 2,200 Feet per Second

Ronald Simmons, Chief, Infantry Weapons Evaluation Branch, Ballistics Research Laboratory, Department of the Army, established the average nominal muzzle velocity of the ammunition allegedly used by Lee Harvey Oswald (using Oswald's gun) was 2,200 ft/sec [1] Variation: +/- 40 ft/sec. [2] At 200 feet: 2,000 ft/sec. Watch these figures change.

### The Buried Question

The only critic to understand the significance of the bullet's speed, apparently, was the late John Nichols, M.D., Ph.D., a

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pathologist at the University of Kansas Medical Center, who performed experiments with weaponry identical to that allegedly used by Oswald. He fired at various anatomical specimens, and then gave the bullet the ultimate test: At a distance of 195 feet, at 1,960 ft/sec, the bullet was fired at laminated, knotless pine (fiber strength: 6,000 pounds per square inch) [3,4]. The bullet didn't stop until it had penetrated 47 inches of it.

This, of course, is equivalent to several necks, several ribs, and several wrists . . . [3]

Why, Nichols asked, why didn't that bullet go all way through Connally's thigh?

### Lattimer's Solution: Slow the Bullet in the Muzzle and the Neck

Nichols made the mistake of describing his yet-unpublished results to John Lattimer, a urologist who had been defending the Commission since 1966. Lattimer, claiming the critics "have done no ballistics experiments of their own," [5] duplicated Nichols' experiments using telephone poles [6], and presented the results as support for the claim, unfortunately disputed, that the bullet had the power to go through two men. He also pointed out the bullet's lack of deformity. [7] To explain why CE 399 didn't penetrate the femur, Lattimer just thickened the structures the bullet supposedly penetrated, thus distorting the significance of Nichols' work beyond recognition:

*“. . . Passing through the soft tissues of Kennedy's neck, with its two layers of tough skin, and brushing a vertebra would have slowed the bullet slightly more than 30 percent, according to Nichols's figures.” [5,8] [Emphasis added.]*

In 1966, Lattimer claimed the bullet went through Kennedy's esophagus among other structures. [9] He gave as a reference the hand-written version of the Autopsy Report, which is the same as the typewritten version only much less readable. Neither included the esophagus. Was he already stirring in a little neck-thickener?

If the neck were that dense, wouldn't it cause the bullet to tumble inside, resulting in an exit wound that looked like an exit wound? When Arlen Specter asked Dr. Charles Baxter if the small wound in the throat [3–5mm] was a result of little resistance through the neck, Baxter agreed that the bullet would then behave "as if passing through a sheet of paper." [10] Was Kennedy's neck the equivalent of 16 inches of pine, or a sheet of paper? Was it denser than Connally's torso?

“. . . The passage through the thorax of Governor Connally with its two additional layers of skin and a glancing (tangential)



contact with his fifth rib would have slowed it still more, although less than the passage through President Kennedy." [5,8]

Before John Nichols finally published his results in 1973, Lattimer correctly reported the nominal speed of the bullet as 2,200 ft/sec. [11] After 1973, Lattimer changed the bullet's speed to 2,000 ft/sec. [12] And he claimed the **neck** left the bullet with only 1,400 ft/sec with which to strike Connally [13]. Please compare Lattimer's figures with those of Edgewood Arsenal.

#### **Government Solution: Slow the Bullet in Muzzle and the Torso**

Dr. Alfred Olivier of the Edgewood Arsenal gives the lowest possible nominal figure: 2,160 ft/sec. [14] When firing at gelatin simulating **neck** at an average striking velocity of 1,904 at 60 yards, the average exit velocity was 1,779 ft/sec, a loss of 125 ft/sec [15], that is, seven percent of the striking velocity, results similar to Nichols' and nowhere near Lattimer's 30 percent.

Edgewood personnel assassinated a goat in a suit (simulating Connally's **torso**) from a distance of 70 yards at 1,929 ft/sec. [16] The bullet exited at 1,664 ft/sec, a loss of 265 ft/sec. [15] They fired at **wrists** with an average velocity of 1,858; the average loss in exit velocity through the **wrists** was only 82 ft/sec [17], results similar to Nichols'. [18] With so little energy lost through the **neck** and **wrist**, this put the burden on the **torso** to explain why, if CE 399 did the job, it didn't live up to its potential. They said a pristine bullet through the Governor, instead of the goat, would have lost 400 ft/sec because "the Governor was about half again thicker," [19] a claim that needs confirming. [20]

#### **When Dr. Nichols fired at a fresh human torso, the bullet lost only one-third the Olivier's 265 ft/sec — 88 ft/sec. [18]**

So how many feet per second would have been lost by a bullet that hit nothing else first? 400? 286? 88? The testimony of Connally's orthopaedic surgeon, the late Dr. Robert R. Shaw, may explain Nichols's results.

*"The texture of the rib here is not of great density. The cortex of the rib in the lateral portions of our ribs, is thin . . . very spongy, offering very little resistance to pressure or to fracturing." [21]*

*" . . . the bullet struck the fifth rib at a very acute angle and struck a portion of the rib which would not offer a great amount of resistance." [22]*

#### **Case Closed Solution: Slow the Bullet Everywhere**

In Case Closed, Gerald Posner makes several attempts to keep the public away from the ballistic evidence, complaining

that Oswald's "intricate personality and temperament are obscured under a deluge of technical details about trajectory angles and bullet speeds." [23]. He even makes a statement that means no one ever suggested Kennedy's throat was shot from the front: "[The critics] insist only that the fatal head shot came from the front." [24] When he does get into the little "details" about bullet speeds, the figures seem to have gone through a funhouse of mirrors.

*. . . The 6.5mm slug left Oswald's rifle at 2,000 feet per second and hit Kennedy at the base of the **neck** between 1,700 and 1,800 feet per second. Passing only through flesh, the bullet lost another one to two hundred feet per second and hit Connally at 1,500 to 1,600. It left his **chest** and entered the **wrist** at 900 feet per second. Anything above 700 feet per second is enough to shatter bone. When it left the **wrist** it was near 400 feet per second, just enough to break the skin and imbed itself into his thigh." [25]*

Posner's sources for the above: Dr. Olivier of Edgewood Arsenal who, as shown above, gave quite different figures, and Dr. Martin Fackler, a ballistics expert (Chelsea Naval Academy; Bethesda). [25]

#### **Tip-off From the Real Missile**

Dr. Charles Gregory, the surgeon who repaired Governor Connally's **wrist**:

*" . . . The wound of entrance is characteristic in my view of . . . an irregular missile which has tipped itself off as being irregular by the nature of itself." [26]*

Explaining that the smooth nose of a bullet pushes material aside, and a deformed, irregular bullet tends to "catch and tear," [27] Dr. Gregory felt the **wrist** was hit by an angular, irregular object with sharp edges, because it snagged individual coat threads, carrying them into the wound, cut part of a nerve, and a tendon leading to the thumb.

*"The only way this missile could have produced this wound . . . was to have entered the **wrist** backwards." [28] [Emphasis added in view of preceding.]*

#### **No Tearing of Individual Cloth or Tissue Fibers; No Lead Shed**

If CE 399 entered Connally's back, it could only have done so sideways, with the base leading: The flattening of the bullet increases toward the base, indicating greatest impact there. Why, then, didn't the base do to the **torso** what it supposedly did to the **wrist**?

Dr. Gregory noticed the hole in the back of the coat did not have the ragged appearance of the sleeve on the jacket and shirt [26], and he thought it strange that no lead fragments were found in the **torso**. According to Lattimer, the bullet's

lead is "unusually soft" [28], and when travelling backward and sideways, "the protruding leaden fragments were now scraped off by the arm and leg bones . . ." If CE 399 entered backwards, wouldn't the "unusually soft lead" protruding from the base come off in the torso?

For reasons stated above as well as below, Gregory told the Commission in plain English he thought the bullet behaved as if it had never hit anything else first. [29]

#### Lattimer to the Rescue with a New "Tip-off"

Two serious problems for the Commission, CE 399's penetrating power, and evidence of a bullet that was very different from CE 399 striking Connally's wrist, apparently lead John Lattimer to transform the small wound in Connally's back to one that was the exact length of CE 399, 3cm. [38,39] The size would presumably prove: (1) Connally was struck by CE 399, (2) the bullet struck sideways, so it had to be tumbling, a result of hitting Kennedy first, (3) a sideways hit would also slow the bullet down, helping to explain why it didn't go through the Governor's thigh. In at least five different places [30-34], Shaw described the entrance wound in Connally's back as 1.5cm. Gregory described it as 3/4" (approximately 1.5cm), elliptical, "rounded central portion" [35] — 1/8" larger than the holes in the back of Connally's jacket and shirt. [36]

Shaw explained that he had enlarged the hole to 3cm when debriding it [37]. The hole, as it appeared on Gregory's diagram of the body, reflected the enlarged size, and Shaw, following Specter's instructions, drew the smaller, actual size in a space above the diagram.

Lattimer never told his readers the hole had been artificially enlarged, and "proved" the 3cm size with Gregory's diagram — cropped to exclude the corrected hole — and testimony, cropped (below, in bold print) to give the illusion Shaw was speaking of the entrance wound when, in fact, he was referring to the exit wound in the chest: [40]:

***You say the hole which appears on Governor Connally is just about the size that it would have been on his body?***

*Yes; it is drawn in good scale.*

*In good scale to the body?*

*Yes.*

*Would you draw it on another portion of the paper here in terms of its absolute size?*

*Five cm. it would be — about like that — do you want me to mark that?*

*Put your initials right in the center of that circle.*

*I'll just put "wound of exit."*

John Lattimer, now in his 80's, is still at it. This spring, he published something called "Experimental duplication of the important physical evidence of the lapel bulge of the jacket worn by Governor Connally when Bullet 399 went through him." [41] For once, we have a published report of an experiment in which a bullet like CE 399 was fired through all three anatomical parts (or simulations thereof). The jacket bulged at a much lower level than it does in Zapruder frame 224. More important, not once was bullet speed mentioned.

#### Notes

1. 5H443 [2,200 ft/sec]
2. 5H400 [+/-40]
3. Nichols, J. Assassination of President Kennedy. The Prac 1973; 211:625-633.
4. Nichols, J. The Wounding of governor John Connally of Texas November 22, 1963. Maryland State Med J, October, 1977; 58-77.
5. Lattimer, J.K., Lattimer, The Kennedy-Connally Single Bullet Theory. A Feasibility Study. International Surg 1968;50(6):524-532. [critics: no studies; neck: 30%]
6. Lattimer, Gary, Lattimer, John K., Lattimer, Jon: The Kennedy-Connally One-Bullet Theory. Medical Times 1974;102:33-56. [telephone poles; 3cm entrance into Connally]
7. A bullet travelling through stable, homogeneous material, such as a wide, deep block of wood does not deform, perhaps, because it is continuously surrounded on all sides by a hard substance; the nose can't be smacked to the side if there is resistance on the side.
8. Lattimer, John K. Kennedy and Lincoln: Medical & Ballistic Comparisons of Their Assassinations. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980 [neck: 30%]
9. Lattimer JK. J Am Med Assoc 1966;198(4):328-333. [esophagus]
10. 6H43 [Baxter]
11. Lattimer JK, Lattimer G, Lattimer J. Could Oswald have shot President Kennedy? Further ballistic studies. Bull NY Acad Med 1972;48:513-524. [2,200 ft/sec]
12. Lattimer JK, Lattimer J, Lattimer G. An experimental study of the backward movement of President Kennedy's head. Surg, Gynecol & Obstet 1976;142:246-244. [2,000 ft/sec]
13. Lattimer JK. J Am Med Assoc 1993;269(12):1544-1547. [1,400 ft/sec]

14. 5H75 [2,160 ft/sec]
15. 5H77-78 [neck]
16. 5H80 [goat]
17. 5H81-82 [wrist]
18. Nichols, J. 1977, p.68
19. 5H86 [goat]
20. A veterinarian who wishes to be unnamed told me that a goat's torso, unlike that of a human, is a very resilient, weight-bearing structure, thicker dorsal-ventrally (barrel-chested) than laterally, and is likely to slow down a bullet more than would a human torso. To date, I have not confirmed whether the thickness is greater in goats than in humans in absolute values.
21. 4H105 [rib]
22. 4H113 [rib]
23. Posner, Gerald L. Case Closed. Random House, New York, 1993, p.x [details]
24. Case Closed, p.237 [only head shot]
25. Case Closed, p.338 [slow bullet]
26. 4H122,124 [irregular fragment, debris]
27. 4H121 [backwards]
28. Kennedy and Lincoln p.269 [lead]
29. 6H103 [Gregory: pristine]
30. 4H104 [1.5cm]
31. 4H107 [1.5cm]
32. 4H110 [small shirt hole]
33. 6H85 [1.5cm]
34. 6H86 [1.5cm]
35. 6H97 [Gregory 3/4"]
36. 5H63 [jacket, shirt]
37. 6H88 [enlarged to 3cm during debridement]
38. Lattimer, Medical Times 1974;102:33-56. [3cm p.270]
39. Kennedy and Lincoln, p.266 [3cm]
40. 6H87 [exit wound]
41. Lattimer JK, Laidlaw A, Heneghan P, and Haubner E]. Experimental duplication of the important physical evidence of the lapel bulge of the jacket worn by Governor Connally when Bullet 399 went through him. J Am Coll Surg 1994;178:517-522.

## EDITORIAL: OVER THE WALL

One of the occupational hazards of a professional sociologist such as myself is that we tend to see oft-repeated patterns of human behavior in widely separated episodes. So with the ongoing investigation of the murders of which O.J. Simpson is accused. As Simpson's trial nears, the close student of the JFK assassination may get that old *deja vu* feeling—haven't we seen much of this before? Haven't we seen the instant recovery of evidence suggesting that the suspect in the murder went out of his way to incriminate himself? Oswald supposedly carries identification on his person that ties him to the "Hidell" who ordered the rifle and the pistol, Simpson supposedly leaves one bloody glove at the scene of the crime and another on the grounds of his residence, apparently with a "thump" on Kato Kaelin's air conditioner, just to be sure that police will be directed to search in the area in which the glove is left. Haven't we seen police officers leave a primary "crime scene" to go to another location not because of a major crime committed there but because it would put them on the trail of a designated patsy? I refer, of course, to the phalanx of DPD officers who rushed to a location in Oak Cliff where a citizen had committed the dastardly crime of entering a movie theater without paying. I refer to four LAPD detectives who left the murder scene to go to Simpson's residence—not, God forbid, because they suspected him as the killer, but to "inform" him of Nicole's death and to arrange for the protection of children that were already being cared for at the police station. And finally, so as not to go on and on, haven't we seen a botched medical examination twice now: in 1963, when the autopsy surgeons couldn't trace the path of a bullet from the point of its supposed entry (in the back) until a phone call to Parkland informed them of a throat wound that they had not observed—and in 1994 when a coroner did not examine the bodies until 11-14 hours after their deaths, so that a 3-hour span of "time of death" was the best the coroner could do?

The Simpson prosecution claims it has a "scientific case" against the defendant. Haven't we JFK assassination researchers, if no one else, come to question the claims of police agents that they have maintained a decent chain of possession of the evidence? The big difference between 1963 and 1994 is that now, but not then, we have a vigorous defense team that will challenge evidence based on the integrity of that chain of possession. But, of course, one must wonder if the LAPD, like the DPD, has its "Jack Ruby" waiting in the wings to short circuit the playing out of the judicial process.

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members participation, 1#5 Jul 94 (25-27).  
Tippit witnesses, 1#6 Sep 94 (3-5).
- Weberman, Alan  
Keck on, 1#2 Jan 94 (10).
- Weisberg, Harold  
Case Open (reviews), 1#6 Sep 94 (19-26).  
Keck on, 1#3 Mar 94 (10).  
and Posner's Case Closed, 1#1 Nov 93 (11,12).
- Weissman, Bernard  
and USIA "informant", 1#5 Jul 94 (28-30).
- Weston, William  
on Furniture Mart incident, 1#2 Jan 94 (13-19).



- on Texas School Book Depository, 1#1 Nov 93 (34,35);  
1#4 May 94 (24-29).
- White, Jack
- on Burkley arrival, 1#2 Jan 94 (11,12).
- on curious photo, 1#4 May 94 (35); 1#5 Jul 94 (36-38);  
1#6 Sep 94 (38-40).
- gun identification, 1#2 Jan 94 (34,35); 1#3 Mar 94 (25-26).
- on Nix film, 1#3 Mar 94 (35).
- on Oswald's dental records, 1#6 Sep 94 (34).
- on TSBD history, 1#5 Jul 94 (36).
- Whitmey, Peter R.
- on Isaacs identification, 1#1 Nov 93 (32,33).
- on Jean Hill's observations, 1#4 May 94 (34); 1#5 Jul 94 (33-  
35).
- on Pershing Gervais, 1#4 May 94 (3-7).
- on Priscilla Johnson McMillan, 1#1 Nov 93 (18-21);  
1#6 Sep 94 (9-11).
- Willis, Rosemary
- in Posner, Weisberg, 1#6 Sep 94 (20-22).
- Wounds (JFK)
- location, 1#3 Mar 94 (31-34).
- Posner on, 1#1 Nov 93 (4-5).
- Shackelford on, 1#3 Mar 94 (24,25).
- Zapruder Film
- authenticity issue, 1#6 Sep 94 (5-7).
- and Connally wounding, 1#5 Jul 94 (38,39).
- and limousine speed, 1#4 May 94 (19-22).
- and single bullet theory, 1#2 Jan 94 (3-5); 1#6 Sep 94 (8).
- Zoppi, Tony
- and Jack Ruby, 1#3 Mar 94 (31).



# Pfister Notes La. Subversion

## Private Investigators' Applications Heard

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP)—Chairman James Pfister of a new legislative committee on un-American activities said Wednesday his group wanted to inform Louisiana there are subversive influences in this state. "We feel the people just don't believe it," he said.

The 10-man committee organized here, naming the New Orleans state representative chairman and Sen. Samuel Broussard of New Iberia vice-chairman.

The new group, created in the 1960 Legislature, heard applications from private investigators seeking committee assignments, made no decision, and drafted committee rules of procedure.

One applicant, Guy Banister, former assistant New Orleans private investigator, told the lawmakers Louisiana Negro sit-ins were led by white leftwingers.

"The Negro race is not capable of the leadership or organization for sit-ins," Banister said. "It is white people. And I might add, the Negro race never has produced a great criminal, either."

Banister said the committee on racial equality operates out of New York City and is behind

troubles caused by colored students in the South.

### LETTER READ

New Orleans police, acting under a new state law, broke up recent sit-in demonstrations.

Chairman Pfister did not mention racial issues.

He said, "We want the people of Louisiana to know we're working for their benefit, and our committee will let them know what we are doing."

During an open session, Sen. Wendell Harris, Baton Rouge, vice-chairman of the state sovereignty commission, pledged full co-operation and offered use of the commission staff.

Pfister read a letter of congratulations from Festus J. Brown, New Orleans, chairman of the un-American activities committee of the Louisiana American Legion, also offering assistance.

### PROSPECTS MENTIONED

Brown appeared in person to offer Legion co-operation.

"The informed and thinking citizens of Louisiana," his letter said, "are prayerfully and anxiously looking forward to effective and determined operations by this splendid committee. . . . through this committee, Louisiana has joined with honor a growing list of sister states. . . ."

The American Legion letter mentioned several men as prospects for investigators, Banister, Atty. Guy Johnson of New Orleans and atty. Guy Johnson of New Orleans and atty. Jack N. Rogers of Baton Rouge, and

George Schultz of the Caddo parish sheriff's office.

### HEARINGS CONDUCTED

Rep. George Tessier of New Orleans, a cosponsor of the committee with Pfister, invited applications from all trained investigators. Only Banister personally addressed the committee.

Banister said "there has been no real exposure of subversive influences in this state, although the joint committee on segregation in the past did some work in that direction."

Several years ago, the segregation committee, then under former Sen. William Rainach of Homer, conducted hearings seeking Communistic influence behind racial unrest.

Tessier told the committee that in the name of doing good, it might "do a tremendous amount of harm to innocent people."

Chairman Pfister said "we want to return to basic principles of Americanism."

The committee held a closed session to discuss general objectives.