

THE FOURTH DECADE

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1983

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A JOURNAL OF RESEARCH
ON THE
JOHN F. KENNEDY ASSASSINATION

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Back cover illustration: A Legend Passes.

This clipping, furnished by Stan Weeber, indicates local news coverage of the death of Phil Willis. Willis, of course, was responsible for some fundamentally important assassination photography, and the movements of his daughters Rosemary and Linda Kay have been used in interpretation of the shot timing in Dealey Plaza.

→ This Belknap repeated
our reporter's gross
error - RATHER saw the
film - Belknap didn't (the
story of "k/r/b") - so why
is Belknap repeating this
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MARSALIS BUS NO. 1213

by
William Weston

From his high point of view, the driver of Marsalis Bus No. 1213 could see that he was getting stuck in a major traffic jam, extending at least several blocks and possibly further. Moving westward on Elm Street through downtown Dallas, his bus slowed down to a crawl. At Griffin Street it came to a momentary standstill. It was here that he heard someone knocking on the front door. The driver opened the door and a man stepped inside. It was not likely that the man had been waiting for the bus, for Griffin Street did not have a regular bus stop. If he was indeed a pedestrian, it would seem to be a little odd that he would want to get on a bus that was obviously going to be held up by congested traffic.

According to the Warren Report, [1] the man who boarded the bus, Lee Harvey Oswald, had just walked—at a brisk pace—seven blocks from Dealey Plaza. The bus he got on was headed back towards the same plaza, which at that time was a scene of convulsive activity. This was the place where the President had been shot only ten minutes before. Consequently, the traffic flow on Elm Street was severely interrupted by the chaotic aftermath. After riding on the bus for only two blocks, Oswald got off and walked to the Greyhound bus station. There he caught a taxi cab which took him to his rooming house on Beckley Avenue.

What makes the seemingly minor episode of the bus incident so controversial is the fact that a reputable deputy named Roger Craig was sure he had seen Oswald escaping from Dealey Plaza in a Nash Rambler driven by a dark-skinned man. The time when Craig saw him—around 12:40 to 12:45—was exactly the time when he was supposedly riding on a bus. The veracity of the Nash Rambler getaway story was confirmed that same afternoon by Oswald himself. When confronted with Craig's accusation, he said "Everybody will know me now." According to Craig, he said this with all the dismay and disappointment of an undercover agent who just found out that his cover was blown. [2] The Nash Rambler was obviously a conspiratorial circumstance that was not meant to be exposed. It is a measure of the success of the conspiracy

cover-up that the confused circumstances of the bus story became the official version, whereas the more credible Nash Rambler story was rejected. The purpose of this article will be to unravel the conflicting strands of evidence forming the official version and to re-establish the credibility of the Nash Rambler story by showing that Oswald could not have ridden on a bus that day.

The Warren Commission's only witness for substantiating his presence on the bus was Mary Bledsoe, an elderly widow who lived at 621 N. Marsalis. She first became acquainted with Oswald in early October 1963 when he had rented a room in her house. He stayed there for only a week. She next saw him on November 22, while riding on a bus. According to statements drawn from FBI reports [3] and her testimony, [4] the following is her account of what happened:

Mrs. Bledsoe had gone into town that morning in order to see the President. At the southeast corner of St. Paul and Main, she caught a glimpse of him and the First Lady as they waved to the crowds from their limousine. After the motorcade had passed by, she began her return trip home by walking to the intersection of St. Paul and Elm. There she boarded the Marsalis bus, paid the 23-cent fare, and took her favorite seat, which was a side seat near the door. The seat faced into the aisle towards the driver and it was the most accessible one for getting on and off the bus. Sitting in other seats near her were three other ladies. Another lady who was going to the train station sat across from Mrs. Bledsoe in the side seat behind the driver. The bus proceeded west on Elm Street. When it got to Murphy Street, she saw her former tenant, Oswald, get on the bus. He seemed "somewhat nervous," and his face appeared to be distorted. He looked "like a maniac." She saw that his clothes were dirty and disheveled, which contrasted sharply with his neat and well-groomed appearance when he was a tenant at her house. The buttons on his long-sleeve shirt were all torn off, and there was a hole in the right elbow. His shirt was tucked into gray work pants, and his pants were ragged around the waistline. He was not wearing a jacket.

After he paid his fare, he walked to the rear of the bus. [5] Mrs. Bledsoe averted her eyes as he passed, because she did not want him to notice her. She had no desire to converse with someone who presented such a disreputable appearance. Shortly after he sat down, the traffic began to get very congested. The bus made short, jerky movements as it slowly made its way down Elm Street. The lady who was going to the train station was fretting about the possibility of missing her

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train. Mrs. Bledsoe said to her, "Well, why don't you walk over there? It's just a little ways." The lady decided to take her advice. She obtained a transfer and got off the bus. No one else got off with her.

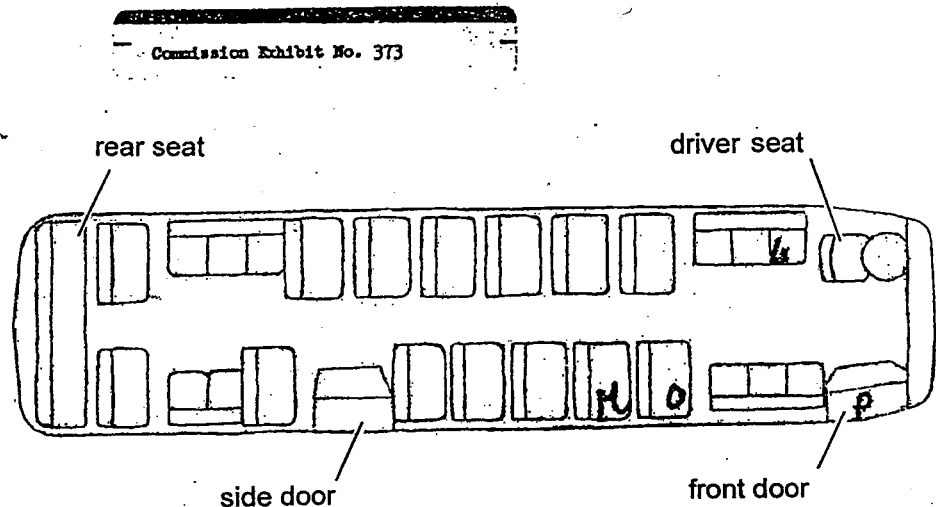
The bus became completely stalled between the streets of Poydras and Lamar. This was about two or three blocks from where Oswald got on. The people on the bus soon learned what the trouble was, when the bus driver communicated with a motorist through his window. He then turned around and relayed the news to his passengers. "Well, the President has been shot." One of the three women sitting near Mrs. Bledsoe said, "Hope they don't shoot us." Mrs. Bledsoe said, "I don't believe it. Somebody just said that." Discussion of the shooting had not begun in earnest before Oswald got up from his seat in the rear of the bus, and got off through the front entrance. Mrs. Bledsoe did not remember him speaking to the driver nor getting a transfer. She last saw him through the window as he disappeared into a crowd of pedestrians. She never saw him again.

When the above account is compared with the one given by the driver, Cecil J. McWatters (which will be presented later in this article), the following points of concordance can be recognized:

1. A man got on at Murphy, or Griffin, Street. (Murphy zig-zags into Griffin Street). After travelling only two or three blocks, he got off the bus.
2. A woman who sat behind the driver was worried that the traffic jam was going to make her late for her train. She decided to walk the rest of the way. She obtained a transfer from the driver and got off the bus.
3. The news that the President had been shot came from a motorist whose car was also stopped in the traffic jam. McWatters was unable to remember the man well enough to identify him later as Oswald. Neither could he recall a woman sitting in the

seat where Mrs. Bledsoe said she was sitting. Yet the above similarities in details at first seem to be sufficient to confirm the Warren Commission's conclusion that Mrs. Bledsoe saw Oswald on Cecil McWatters's bus. Yet in order to arrive at this conclusion the Commission had to by-pass a number of conflicting details, which indicate that either McWatters, or Bledsoe, or both, were giving unreliable information. These differences are the following: [6]

1. Bledsoe said that the traffic began backing up after the man at Murphy Street got on. McWatters said that the traffic was backing up before he got on.
2. Bledsoe said that the man was not wearing a jacket. McWatters said that he was.
3. Bledsoe said that the man took a seat in the rear of the bus. McWatters said that he took a seat near the front of the bus.
4. Bledsoe said that the woman going to the train station left before the news of the shooting was heard. McWatters said that she left after the news was heard.
5. Bledsoe said that the woman got off the bus at a different location than that of the man. McWatters said that the man and the woman got off at the same place.



L = lady going to train station
 M = man who got on at Griffin Street
 O = teenager (Milton Jones)
 P = motorist who came on bus

Note: The letters were chosen by Representative Gerald Ford and marked in position by Cecil McWatters

6. Bledsoe said that the bus driver got the news of the shooting from a motorist who spoke to him through the open windows of their respective vehicles. McWatters said that the news came from a motorist who left his car and got on the bus.

These differences defeat any attempt to make a coherent description of what happened on the bus. There is no way of determining the truth of the matter, except by means of at least one other witness. The only other known witness to have seen this incident was a teenager named Milton Jones.

Jones was a part-time student attending the morning classes at Crozier Technical High School. In the afternoons he worked at Buddies Supermarket on 10th and Jefferson Streets. When he got out of school at 11:45, he walked to the bus stop at the Majestic Theater and caught the Marsalis bus. On the 22nd of November, he took a seat near the front door. It was the first forward-facing seat opposite the driver. Thus he was situated practically in the middle of where the alleged Oswald incident was to take place.

On March 30, 1964, three days before Mrs. Bledsoe was to testify, the FBI sent agents to the home of Milton Jones in order to clarify some issues raised by the bus driver. (McWatters had testified on March 26.) An examination of the four-page report [7] reveals that Jones' statements line up with McWatters on two important points: (1) the man was indeed wearing a jacket; and (2) the man sat near the front of the bus in a seat immediately behind Jones. It would have been interesting to read what Jones had to say concerning the woman going to the train station or how the people on the bus first heard the news of the shooting. But the FBI report is silent on these matters. Nevertheless, these two points of convergence are sufficient to lead us to accept the bus driver's version of this event. This line of reasoning is further justified by a close reading of the transcript of Mrs. Bledsoe's testimony. In it can be found numerous examples of her inability to give a clear exposition of what she supposedly saw with her own eyes.

One difficulty was her confusion concerning the sequence of events. In reference to the woman going to the train station, she said: "The crowd [traffic jam?] was so bad, and we still didn't know the President had been killed and finally she got off, but I think it was before—I mean after Oswald did." [8] Her attempt to clarify the sequence of events by changing the lady's departure from "before" to "after" Oswald getting off the bus made her account even more confusing than it originally was.

Another factor which tends to dampen our confidence in her ability as a witness is her dependence on hand-written notes as an aid to memory.

Mr. Ball: But before you go into that, I notice you have been reading from some notes before you.

Mrs. Bledsoe: Well, because I forget what I have to say.

[9]

These notes were prepared under the supervision of her attorney, Miss Melodye Douthit. At one point in her testimony, when her lack of recall and mixing up of details had entirely exasperated her attorney, Mrs. Bledsoe had to be reminded of her need to keep referring to her notes.

Miss Douthit: We are just trying to get the order here in which this happened, Mrs. Bledsoe, is all, if you can just remember?

Mrs. Bledsoe: Oh, Lord.

Miss Douthit: That is the reason I asked you, if you could, to write these things down. [10]

There is also evidence that she might have been receiving coaching lessons, at least in regard to the brown salt-and-pepper shirt that Oswald supposedly wore when he was on McWatters' bus. According to an FBI report dated December 4, 1963:

When the shirt was removed from an envelope in which it was contained, Mrs. Bledsoe at first said, "No, no. That is not the shirt." She then inquired as to whether the shirt had a ragged elbow. Upon further examination of the shirt, she observed a hole in the right elbow of the shirt, at which time, she quickly stated, "Yes, yes. This is the shirt." [11]

Four months later, she still had trouble identifying the shirt, when the Warren Commission exhibited it to her. [12]

Taking into consideration the serious weaknesses in her ability as a witness as well as the fact that her testimony runs counter to the corroborating statements of Jones and McWatters, we have no choice but to reject her account of the matter. In going to this extreme I call upon no less an authority than the noted researcher, Sylvia Meagher, who after carefully sifting the evidence, had come to the conclusion that she was not on Cecil McWatters' bus that day. [13]

In one part of her testimony Mrs. Bledsoe had a slip of the tongue which may have revealed more truth than she had intended:

Oh, it [the traffic] was awful in the city, and then they had roped off that around where the President was

killed, shot, and we were the first car that come around there. [14]

She did not correct this reference to a car and it could very well be her real mode of transportation. Her reference to three other ladies—unrecalled by either McWatters or Jones—were probably her companions in an automotive excursion of the city. Nevertheless, her story of seeing Oswald on a bus might not be a complete fantasy. Some of the details in her account are too precise and specific to have emerged from her imagination: the maniacal expression on Oswald's face; the dirty, disheveled appearance; the shirt with all the buttons torn off; and the gray work pants that were ragged at the waistline. It is quite likely that these details came from a real incident on a bus, but on an earlier date. Thus her story seems to be a meld of elements from three separate sources: (1) a real but earlier incident; (2) what she herself experienced in a car with three other ladies; and (3) her written notes on the testimony of McWatters given the week before.

Having thus buried the defunct version given by Mrs. Bledsoe and shovel-patted the grave, we can now make a fresh start in our reconstruction of what actually occurred on Marsalis Bus No. 1213 by combining the details found in McWatters testimony and in the FBI report of the interview with Milton Jones.

At 12:36 the bus left the intersection of St. Paul and Elm, going west on Elm Street. Its route took it through town and then south into the suburb of Oak Cliff via Marsalis Avenue. Behind it was another bus also bound for Oak Cliff. It was the Beckley Avenue bus. The two buses would travel together down Elm Street through dense city traffic. At Dealey Plaza their routes diverged, the Marsalis bus turning south on Houston Street, and the Beckley bus continuing westward past the Texas School Book Depository. [15]

Traffic was fairly smooth for several blocks. But as the Marsalis bus crossed Field Street, the traffic started to back up. The next street was Griffin and here the traffic had completely stopped. The time was 12:40 pm. While McWatters waited for the traffic to move again, he heard a man beating on the front door of his bus. McWatters let him in. He was a medium-sized man, dressed in work clothes and wearing a cloth jacket. After paying his fare, he sat in a seat behind the teenage boy, Milton Jones. (See the diagram of the seating positions at p. 4 of this article.) Besides the teenager and the man, there were about four or five other passengers scattered throughout the 44-passenger bus—all of them elderly women.

Jones got a more careful look at the man than McWatters. He described him as a white male, 30 to 35 years old, five feet, eleven inches, medium build, about 150 pounds. His hair was dark brown and was receding at the temples. He wore a light blue jacket and gray khaki trousers. He wore no glasses or a hat and he was not carrying any packages. He did not appear nervous or excited, and to all appearances he was just an ordinary passenger. Jones also stated that a blonde haired woman also boarded the bus at the same time as this man, but they did not sit together. She took a seat further to the rear of the bus. (McWatters made no mention of the blonde haired woman in any of his statements.)

Just as they were sitting down, the people on the bus began to hear the sirens of many emergency vehicles. "When they started," McWatters later stated, "it seemed to me like they was coming from all over town." The stop-and-go traffic moved slowly about two blocks more before it came to another complete standstill. Presently a motorist in front of the bus got out of his car and walked back towards the front entrance. McWatters opened the door and the man stepped up onto the first step of the entranceway. He said, "I have heard over my radio in my car that the President has been shot." He said this loud enough so that everyone on the bus could hear. This announcement prompted lady sitting behind McWatters to get off the bus. She said, "I have to make a 1 o'clock train at Union Station. I don't believe—from the looks of this traffic you are going to be held up. Would you give me a transfer and I am going to walk down." She wanted the transfer in case the traffic cleared, and the bus caught up with her. She asked McWatters if he would pick her up, in case he got through. He said that he would and gave her the transfer. She picked up her suitcase and got off the bus. As she was leaving, the man who got on at Griffin Street arose from his seat, requested a transfer, and followed the woman out the door. Jones looked behind and noticed that the blonde woman was also getting off at the same place, leaving through the side door. (Were the man and the blonde woman somehow connected?) After the three passengers got off as well as the motorist who brought the news about the shooting, McWatters closed the front door and continued to wait for the traffic to move again. According to Jones, it was not long after they left, that two policemen came on board. Not knowing what anyone knew, one of the officers made the announcement that the President had been shot. He then said that no one was to leave the bus until after everyone had been questioned and checked to see if any were carrying

firearms. [16]

After the search was made, the bus was given permission to move on. The police had opened up a lane at Elm and Houston, allowing the buses—but not the cars—to go through. Passing through Dealey Plaza, McWatters wondered out loud where the President had been shot, perhaps referring to the actual location of the President's limousine. Jones responded to the driver's question with the remark that he was probably shot in the head, for that is the most exposed portion of the body when riding in an open car. As the Marsalis bus proceeded into Oak Cliff, it was approaching an area which at that time was the focus of an intensive manhunt. Officer J. D. Tippit was shot only two blocks from Marsalis Avenue. When the bus came near the intersection of Jefferson and Marsalis, McWatters saw the police surrounding the Oak Cliff Library. According to a story in the Dallas Morning News of November 28, 1963:

The cashier [of the Texas Theater] immediately called the police— who had just sped en masse to a false alarm at the Dallas Library branch on Jefferson, further to the east. The police sirens wailed again. Oddly enough it was at the library that McWatters, the bus driver who, unknowingly, had Oswald as a passenger earlier, had his second brush with fate. His bus pulled up at the intersection as a swarm of 10 or 15 police cars zeroed in on the library. "I couldn't imagine what was going on" said McWatters. "Little did I know!"

According to the police radio log, the police were moving in on the library at 1:35. [17] The Marsalis bus was due at that location at 12:50. [18] Thus we can calculate the delay going down Elm Street as approximately 45 minutes.

About a mile south of the library, a woman about 40 to 45 years old came on board, paid her fare, and sat in the side seat in front of the teenage boy. McWatters asked her if she heard anything about the President getting shot. The woman was sure that he was joking. McWatters said "No, I really am not kidding you." Then pointing back to the teenager, he said "Ask him, he saw it." Jones said, "I don't know anything about it. I just heard some others say that the President had been shot." The look of incredulity on the woman's face must have been amusing to both Jones and McWatters, for she said, "You are both smiling, so I don't believe it." Again McWatters assured her that it was not a "kidding matter." It was not long after this exchange that Jones exited the bus at the stop at Brownlee and Marsalis.

McWatters finished his run sometime after 3:00 pm, returning to his original starting point in Lakewood by the same route in which he left. He went home and spent some time watching TV. [19] It was at this time that he saw the face of Oswald broadcast. If Oswald had been on the Marsalis bus, he was not then recognized by McWatters.

Towards the end of the afternoon, he went back to work—this time driving a bus on the Piedmont line. The sun had already set when he came to the bus stop at Dallas police headquarters at 6:10 pm. There two men came on board and identified themselves as police detectives. They wanted him to come inside for questioning. They took him through the main entrance and up to the third floor. At that time the corridors were jammed with clamoring news reporters. He even saw Oswald in the corridors, putting up a fuss, as he was being escorted by the police. McWatters was led into the homicide office. When he was settled, they handed him a ticket and asked him to identify it. He immediately recognized it as one of the two transfers that he issued on Elm Street. It was dated November 22, 1963 and it had two distinctively shaped holes punched in it. These holes were readily identifiable as coming from the punch assigned to McWatters. One hole was punched in the Lakewood box, which prevented the bearer from using the transfer to return to Lakewood. The other hole was punched in the PM side of the AM/PM box, which allowed the bearer to use the transfer in the afternoon. This transfer had been found in Oswald's pocket more than three hours after it was issued.

After certifying the transfer as coming from his bus, McWatters was taken down to the basement, where the line-up room was located. There he was asked to look at four men who were brought out on a stage. He picked out Oswald as the one who rode on his bus. After making this identification, he was taken back to the homicide office, where the police asked him some more questions. The information he gave the police was put into an affidavit.

The bus transfer and the identification of Oswald in the line-up should have settled the matter of whether he was on the Marsalis bus. Yet McWatters' affidavit was a ticking time bomb. When it exploded, it overturned that initial identification as well as disrupting the police investigation into Oswald's post-assassination activities. [20] When the dust had cleared, it turned out that McWatters had somehow confused Oswald with Milton Jones! This can be seen in the affidavit itself:

Today, November 22, 1963 about 12:40 pm, I was

driving Marsalis Bus No. 1213. I picked up a man on the lower end of town on Elm around Houston. I went on out Marsalis and picked up a woman. I asked her if she knew the President had been shot and she thought I was kidding. I told her if she did not believe me to ask the man behind her that he had told me the President was shot in the temple. This man was grinning and never did say anything. The woman said that it was not a grinning matter. I don't remember where I left this man off. This man looks like the #2 man I saw in a line-up tonight. The transfer #004459 is a transfer from my bus with my punch mark.

/s/ Cecil J. McWatters [21]

When he saw Jones the following Monday, he said, "From all indications, we had you kind of pinpointed as the man who might have been mixed up in this assassination." [22] When McWatters appeared before the Warren Commission, he explained to them that he had picked Oswald in the line-up, because he was the one who most resembled the suspiciously grinning youth.

Neither McWatters nor Jones were able to confirm whether or not Oswald was on the bus. This leaves the official version entirely bereft of any eyewitnesses to support it. At this point in our inquiry, we find that the evidence for his presence on the bus comes down to only two factors: 1) Oswald's own statements that he was on a bus; and 2) the bus transfer found in his pocket. The remainder of this article will focus on these two evidentiary factors and show that neither one can be used to prove his presence on the Marsalis bus.

An examination of the fragmentary record of the interrogation of Oswald reveals that he was prone to making false and inconsistent statements regarding his travels on a bus. Basically, he gave two separate and completely different stories on how he got from the Book Depository to the Texas Theater. In the first story, he said that his mode of transportation was entirely by bus. Below is an excerpt from Thomas Kelley's Secret Service report of the Saturday morning interrogation session:

In response to questions put by Captain Fritz, Oswald said that immediately after leaving the building where he worked, he went by bus to the theater where he was arrested; that when he got on the bus he secured a transfer and thereafter transferred to other buses to get to his destination. [23]

James Bookhout of the FBI also wrote a report on the

Saturday morning session:

Following his departure from the Texas School Book Depository he boarded a city bus to his residence and obtained transfer upon departure from the bus. He stated that officers at the time of arresting him took his transfer out of his pocket. [24]

And from Captain Fritz's report:

During this interview I talked to Oswald about his leaving the building, and he told me he left by bus and rode to a stop near home and walked to his house. At the time of Oswald's arrest he had a bus transfer in his pocket. [25]

Oswald's story in the form presented above forestalls any questions concerning his contacts with fellow conspirators along the way to the Texas Theater. It also had the advantage of providing an alibi for the time when Tippit was killed; he was riding on a bus and he had a bus transfer to prove it. The convenience of this alibi soon ran into trouble, because of two major problems that were never resolved:

1. He said he took a bus to his rooming house, which is on Beckley Avenue. Yet the transfer found in his pocket came from a Marsalis Avenue bus. The distance between the two bus lines was seven blocks, or half a mile.

2. Both the Marsalis and Beckley buses were delayed in the traffic jam for approximately forty-five minutes. Neither bus could reach Oak Cliff until about 1:25 or 1:30. Yet according to his landlady, Earlene Roberts, he arrived at his rooming house at 1:00—a time discrepancy of twenty-five to thirty minutes.

Neither Fritz, Kelley or Bookhout mentioned the flaws in Oswald's story, yet they all must have been aware of them. It is quite probable that Oswald himself had come to recognize the critical weaknesses in this story. It was thus during that same morning session that he made an abrupt and drastic change in his story. As related by Kelley:

Fritz asked him if he had ridden a taxi that day and Oswald then changed his story and said that when he got on the bus he found it was going too slow and after two blocks he got off the bus and took a cab to his home. [26]

From the foregoing statements, it appears that the bus story had to be changed when initial false statements failed to work. Therefore any reconstruction of Oswald's post-assassination activities based on his word alone must be regarded with an extra amount of skepticism. As far as the bus incident is

concerned, there are no reputable witnesses to confirm his statement that he was on a bus. In fact, the one witness who was positive that he saw Oswald at this precise period of time was Roger Craig, the deputy who saw him leaving Dealey Plaza in a Nash Rambler.

The last remaining issue that needs to be addressed is the bus transfer itself. If Oswald was indeed riding in a Nash Rambler at the time the transfer was issued, how did he happen to have it in his shirt pocket when he was brought into custody? There is only one logical answer: the transfer was somehow passed to him at some rendezvous point—most likely by the man in the light blue coat. In this light, the transfer would therefore be an item of evidence that Oswald needed to support his cover story of being on a bus. That the transfer became a liability instead of an asset was due to the fact that it came from the wrong bus. It should have been a Beckley bus transfer. Neither did the conspirators anticipate the long delay of the buses on Elm Street. Nor could they foresee the unyielding persistence of a sheriff's deputy who insisted that Oswald left in a Nash Rambler. As a consequence of these difficulties, the bus transfer had the unintended effect of forcing Oswald to change his story. Furthermore, it left him without an alibi for the time Tippit was killed.

This does not necessarily mean that he was the one who shot Tippit. There is an abundance of evidence demonstrating that he was not at the crime scene. [27] Nevertheless it is strange that he never offered an alternative explanation for where he was at the time of the shooting. The ultimate result of his silence was to leave a 30-minute gap in his itinerary. This can be seen below in the following chronology (all times are approximations):

12:35–12:45 Oswald is outside the Book Depository with William Shelley.

12:45–12:50 Oswald leaves Dealey Plaza in a Nash Rambler.

12:50–1:00 Oswald returns into the city and gets into a taxi cab. He is dropped off at a stop near his rooming house.

1:00–1:05 Oswald enters his room, changes his clothes and gets his revolver.

1:05–1:35 ?

1:35 Oswald is seen near the Texas Theater.

That the thirty-minute gap in the chronology had something to do with the conspiracy is indicated by the fact that it was preceded by the ominous appearance of an unknown police

car in front of the rooming house. While Oswald was inside, it honked twice and then gradually drove away. Obviously the honking of the horn must have been some kind of signal. When he eventually came out, his landlady peeked out the window to see where he went. She last saw him standing at the bus stop on the southeast corner. That last glimpse of Oswald evokes many questions without answers. What was he waiting for? The northbound Beckley bus going back into town? Who picked him up? Where did he go? What was he doing at the time Tippit was killed? It was probably during that same half hour that Oswald received the transfer from the man in the light blue jacket, or from a mutual associate.

In following Oswald's movements after the assassination, we face a situation a lot like Alice chasing the rabbit into the dense and convoluted forest. After many devious twists and turns, the rabbit disappeared into a hole. Alice followed after him and fell into a nightmarish abyss where everything logical was turned on its head. Chasing Oswald into the mysterious thirty-minute hole, we find ourselves in a sunless chasm of time filled with conspiratorial whispers.

Notes

1. Warren Report, pp. 157–161. References to this source cited hereafter in format: WR157–161.
2. Roger Craig, When They Kill A President, unpublished manuscript, pp. 10, 13.
3. Commission Document 5, pp. 340–344. Pages 340 and 343 are reprinted in Warren Commission Hearings and Exhibits, vol. 24, p. 16. References to this source cited hereafter in format: 24H16.
4. 6H408–414.
5. Commission Document 5, pp. 341 and 343. During her testimony, Mrs. Bledsoe did not say he took a seat in the rear of the bus. Instead she said it was a seat "half way back down."
6. 6H408–411 (Bledsoe); 2H264–265 (McWatters).
7. FBI report of Milton Jones, 25H899–901.
8. 6H411.
9. 6H407–408.
10. 6H425.
11. FBI report DL 89–43 by Special Agents Carl Brown and Robert P. Butler.
12. 6H412–413.
13. Sylvia Meagher, Accessories After the Fact, (Bobbs-Merrill, New York: 1967) p. 81.

MACNEIL'S NEWSHOUR

by

Jerry Organ

14. 6H411.
15. 2H283.
16. McWatters made no mention of the policemen entering the bus. The search of the bus was doubtless part of a routine procedure, involving the systematic search of every bus in the area. The authorities no doubt had a surplus of police manpower and therefore they could afford to send some of the extra ones to these marginally useful tasks.
17. Dallas Police Radio Log, 23H867-869. For more information on the search of the library, see "The Arrogant Suspect," in the January 1995 issue of The Fourth Decade.
18. 16H972.
19. Jerry D. Rose, "Double Agent Unmasked: A Reconstruction" The Third Decade, Sept. 1987, p. 13. Dr. Rose made a telephone call to Cecil McWatters on November 21, 1983. McWatters said that he saw Oswald on TV and at the police station prior to the line-up. As Dr. Rose pointed out in his article, any familiarity with the appearance of the accused before a line-up invalidates any identification obtained from it.
20. Jones said that the police kept McWatters up until 1:00 am Saturday or Sunday morning. They must have had a difficult time straightening out the details in the bus story.
21. 16H971.
22. 2H280.
23. WR626.
24. WR621.
25. WR604.
26. WR626. Bookhout's (WR621) and Fritz's (WR604) memoranda on Oswald's second story are essentially the same as Kelley's.
27. For a good treatment of the Tippit case, see Henry Hurt's Reasonable Doubt (Holt, Rinehart, Winston, New York: 1985), pp. 139-169.

As the only Nova Scotian in Dealey Plaza on November 22, 1963, Robert MacNeil's activities hold special interest for me. In the November Fourth Decade, William Weston goes far in challenging MacNeil's purported brush with Oswald, exploring the "conspiratorial implications" of the newsman's story.

Weston describes MacNeil as a "reporter on the White House staff," perhaps to imply he was officially directed. In fact, since midsummer 1963, MacNeil was the number two White House correspondent for NBC News. On this, his "first big presidential trip," MacNeil was covering the Texas tour along with Washington cameraman David Weigman.[1]

The Wild Goose Chase

Weston writes: "Several police officers and spectators were running up a grassy slope toward a tree-lined wooden fence, apparently in pursuit of a gunman." However, photographs of the aftermath tell a different story.

Witnesses who would later claim shots came from the fence area (Jean Hill, the Newmans, Malcolm Summers, Sam Holland, Beverly Oliver [?]) never point or immediately move toward the fence corner. The Wilma Bond slides reveal just one officer raced up the knoll, triggering the stampede of curiosity seekers.

One of the most enduring legends in conspiracy lore is that this policeman was Bobby Hargis, the motorcycle officer assigned to the left rear of the limousine. Critics take a morbid delight in describing how the impact of debris from the fatal shot induced him to run up the knoll.[2]

Mark Lane was one of the first to nominate Hargis as the officer who rushed to the railbridge, based on his testimony: "I ran up to this kind of little wall, brick wall up there to see if I could get a better look on the bridge, and, of course, I was looking all around the place at that time." [3]

Hargis was actually referring to having momentarily run to the retaining wall, not the overpass abutment.[4] Bond's first picture of the aftermath --- taken within 20 seconds of the last

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shows Hargis "just returning to his parked cycle," as a film sequence by Mark Bell.[5] The Richard Bothun photograph captured Hargis after remounting his cycle.[6] The policeman leading the wild goose chase was identified thirty years ago by the Warren Commission: Officer Clyde A. Haygood.[7]

Haygood was still on Main when he heard shots, and apparently responded to the sight of people sprawled on the Knoll. Haygood testified:

"Some of them were pointing back up to the railroad yard, and a couple of people were headed up that way, and I immediately tried to jump the north curb. I left my motor on the street and ran to the railroad yard."[8]

Pictures disclose several photographers from the motorcade were drawn to the Newman family, described by Trask as the "most obvious focal point in the confusion of the moment." One of these cameramen (MacNeil's comrade Dave Weigman) captured Haygood from that site as he cruised past.[9] Photographs by Life's Art Rickerby and a film sequence by Malcolm Couch show a black couple with a child fled along Elm as the officer rode down the street.[10]

At 12:35, Officer Haygood radioed that a bystander thought shots came from the Depository. Within two minutes, he transmitted:

"Get some men up here to cover this building, this Texas School Book Depository. It is believed the shots came from there. If you're facing it on Elm Street looking toward the building, it would be the upper-right-hand corner, the second window from the end."[11]

Haygood's quick specification of the Oswald window readily explains why critics have preferred to nominate Hargis as the officer on the Knoll.

On the Knoll

The Newmans' predicament and Haygood's disorientation misled much of the crowd then rushing over from Houston and Main, a circumstance long exploited by manipulative critics. MacNeil's immediate assumption was that Haygood was after an assailant.[12]

Adding to the confusion was the "high unison soprano wail" described by MacNeil: the sirens of the aborted motorcade on Stemmons, yet another inducement for latecomers to overtake the Knoll.

Harry Cabluck, a Fort Worth Star-Telegram photographer

aboard the bus MacNeil left, captured the lanky newsman and some teenagers running along Elm as the solitary Haygood nears the abutment.[13]

Cabluck's next picture depicts Haygood as he climbs the abutment post.[14]

Reaching the juncture of the railbridge and stockade fence, MacNeil remained long enough to observe police begin entering the railyard "to search the tracks and two trains." [15] MacNeil and the teenagers in the Cabluck picture are pictured in the Frank Cancellare photograph Weston refers to.[16]

The reporter then "ran along the top of the Grassy Knoll, looking for a phone," leading him to the Depository. MacNeil's hasty dispatch was logged in at 12:34 by NBC in New York. Long on conjecture and miscues, the bulletin is gold to Weston, who contends it "adds weight to the evidence" of a frontal assassin.

Agents of Subterfuge

Weston presents a litany of familiar bogus "Secret Service Agent" sightings, to which he adds the man Oswald encountered in his flight. What began as a common misperception has been inflated into mythical proportions.

Robert Groden maintains the "police officers [plural?] who rushed the Knoll in response to the shots" were deterred "by men who claimed to be Secret Service agents." [17] Harrison Livingstone (no stranger to hyperbole) romantically writes: "Men flashed Secret Service identification to Dallas policemen [?] and others who ran up the Grassy Knoll." [18]

The basis for this fanciful account turns out to be Officer Joseph M. Smith, who never rushed up the Knoll. Smith instead arrived at the parking lot from the intersection of Elm and Houston, where he was assigned to traffic duty.[19] Smith investigated that area because a woman yelled to him: "They are shooting the President from the bushes." [20]

In the parking lot some minutes later, he approached a man whose credentials Smith "did not examine closely." [21] Like Harkness, Weitzman and Craig, Officer Smith merely assumed some of the plainclothes detectives inundating the area (many on the order of Chief Curry and Sheriff Decker) were with the agency.

Civilians were also prone to this fallacy. Arnold Rowland supposed a casually dressed man he saw with a rifle at a Depository window was "a Secret Service man." [22] Could Oswald have made a similar wild assumption based on MacNeil's appearance and White House press badge?

The Right Place at the Right Time

Martin Shackelford and Gary Mack have disputed Gerald Posner's support for MacNeil, claiming Oswald instead encountered WFAA Program Director Pierce Allman. In a footnote, Weston cites CD 354 as proof of Allman's certainty. This document actually reveals that Allman (and a co-worker who was with him) refused to identify Oswald as the man they encountered; nor could Allman recall flashing his press pass.[23] Last fall, MacNeil stated the man he encountered "probably was Oswald." [24]

To counter MacNeil's consistent recollections, Weston places tenuous substance in a hearsay account by Secret Serviceman Thomas Kelley.[25] Assuming Kelley recalled the details accurately, Oswald (who lied repeatedly during interrogation) could have embellished aspects of the incident to make his assumed identification of the man seem more certain (not unlike Jean Hill). We have only Oswald's word that the man verbally announced his official station and produced "a book of identification." Weston takes literally the assassin's use of the term "young," but Oswald thought the man old enough to be a Secret Service Agent. MacNeil writes: "I am blond. My hair was very short then and I was wearing a White House press badge he might have mistaken for Secret Service." [26]

Weston claims MacNeil and Oswald both described encounters outside the Depository, near the front entrance. But a careful reading of Oswald's statement indicates he "about to leave" the building, while MacNeil has always specified he first spoke to someone after going "through the door."

The Three Calm Men

Weston makes much of MacNeil's failure to include the Oswald encounter in his November 30, 1963 statement to the FBI.[27]

Oswald himself mentioned the incident just once, in confidence to a Secret Service Agent whose presence may have triggered the recollection. MacNeil admits he thought this detail inconsequential until Manchester phoned him in June 1965.

With typical abandon, Weston jumps to extravagant conclusions in his interpretation of MacNeil's description of three men he encountered inside the Depository. By virtue of their "eerie calmness," Weston purports the trio was "performing some indispensable part" of the "assassination plot." [28] With such reasoning, Oswald's cool demeanor when confronted by

Officer Baker would represent empirical proof of his guilt.

More likely, the three men were employees at the Depository, calling acquaintances with the tragic news. It is also possible that MacNeil - - - who had just completed a hectic week - - - misstated the sequence of events. Thus the second "man nearer the door" was actually the first he spoke to, a cautious Oswald trying to be inconspicuous.

Groping in the Dark

Weston draws conclusions based on the wildest of speculations, leading to stinging charges of complicity against many of Oswald's fellow workers.

Speculation: Electrical power loss in the Depository from 12:25-12:33.

Resolved: This purported outage did not affect the rooftop Hertz clock sign or the Coke machine on the second floor. As John S. Craig has noted, Geneva Hine was no doubt referring to the indicator lights on her telephone console. [29] Returning from a brief sojourn, Hine recalls going "straight up to the desk because the telephones were beginning to wink; outside calls were beginning to come in."

The reason the west elevator - - - the only one of the two freight elevators that could be summoned - - - failed to respond to Truly's call was because Jack Dougherty was in the process of using it. [30] Why would conspirators risk detection by disabling the elevators? They could not have predicted that a police officer would rush into the building with someone knowledgeable about the elevators. Like Oswald, any conspirators would have used the rear stairway to escape, which is faster than the sluggish elevators and provides alternate routes.

Weston maintains police officers searching the building ordered floodlights because the Depository was "again plunged into darkness by a second power shutoff." [31] In fact, the upper floors of the building - - - where the police search concentrated - - - were used for the storage of book cartons and left dimly lit; light from the windows supplemented the low-wattage bulbs.

In connection with this, Weston has cited the accounts of several people who reported a loss of power to the freight elevators, ignoring the fact that not one of them had experience using the ancient devices. They likely failed to close the gate properly or manipulate the controls correctly.

Weston has also referred to the testimony of Victoria Adams,

but not a fugitive fleeing

who, after leaving the building for a few minutes, tried to summon the passenger elevator only to discover "the power had been cut off." [32] However, Inspector Herbert V. Sawyer had taken that elevator to the fourth floor, possibly locking it in place while he searched that floor between about 12:34 and 12:37. [33]

Speculation: The brown coat man was seen standing next to a gunman on the fifth floor.

Resolved: Weston places unwarranted stock in Carolyn Walther's recollections. It is almost certain that the man Walther saw with "his forearms on the window" just as "someone in the crowd said 'Here they come'" was Harold Norman, seen doing the same in the Robert Hughes film. [34] Walther's "machine gun" was an embellishment after the fact (like Jean Hill's white dog and "Secret Servicemen").

Walther's "brown suitcoat" man was Bonnie Ray Williams, shown in the film to Norman's right in the same window. Bonnie Ray moved to the far edge of the adjoining window by the time of the Dillard photographs. [35] Researcher Dale K. Myers recently disproved the supposition that boxes were rearranged in the Oswald window. [36]

Speculation: Billy Lovelady and William Shelley were seen near the freight elevators at about 12:31.

Resolved: Lovelady and Shelley witnessed the initial stages of the parking lot search, which took a few minutes to organize. They entered the building no sooner than 12:34. [37]

Victoria Adams and Sandra Styles, who witnessed the assassination from a fourth floor window, claimed to have used the rear stairway within a minute of the shots. JFK shows Oswald overtaking the two women. Since they did not encounter Truly and Baker in the stairwell, nor recalled seeing those two men on the first floor, the women undoubtedly used the rear stairway sometime after Truly and Baker passed the fourth floor. [38]

Adams and Styles arrived on the first floor just as Lovelady and Shelley entered through the back entrance. The two men received their assignment to guard the elevators when Truly returned.

Speculation: Oswald came down from the second floor at 12:35.

Resolved: About two minutes after the shooting, Mrs. R.A. Reid encountered the assassin in the second floor open area on

his way to an exit that would have taken him downstairs. MacNeil's encounter places the fugitive lurking near the front exit on the first floor about a minute later.

Speculation: Oswald speaks to foreman Shelley outside for 10 or 15 minutes.

Resolved: The basis for this contention rests entirely on statements made by Oswald as recorded in a November 25 FBI report by James Bookhout. [39] As noted above, Shelley remained with Lovelady well after the assassination; about the time Weston has Oswald meeting Shelley outside, Truly assigns him to guard the freight elevators.

Speculation: Oswald leaves the area in a Nash Rambler station wagon at 12:45.

Resolved: Only Deputy Sheriff Roger Craig thought the man who ran down the hill was Oswald. Pictures by Jim Murray and William Allen appear in Cover-Up showing such a car, but Craig is seen on north Elm, contrary to his statements where he places himself on south Elm. Craig's veracity can be gauged by his claim to have confronted Oswald with the observation - - - an encounter denied by Captain Fritz - - - and "Mauser" identification. [40]

Efforts to discredit Mrs. Bledsoe and William Whaley fail to recognize that both witnesses volunteered their information.

Oswald's shirt pocket contained the bus transfer with McWatters' distinctive punchmarks. During interrogation, the assassin conceded he had obtained the transfer and then taken a cab to his rooming house. X

MacNeil's NewsHour

As with Best Evidence, William Weston's methodology - - - fantastic speculation based on eyewitness impressions and wilful acts of miscomprehension - - - leads to an improbable scenario. At its worst, such abuses deflect attention away from serious investigation and harms the general credibility of the critical community.

The MacNeil-Oswald encounter is a logical extension based on mutually corroborating accounts that conform to time restraints.

But could a young, brash reporter, intent on amassing facts, have innocently purported to be a Secret Service agent?

Although the enormity of the event led to unprecedented pool coverage among the rival networks, the initial instinct was to get the scoop. The classic example is that of UPI's

Merriman Smith who seized his pool car's only radiophone, then purposely stalled Jack Bell of AP by dictating the same take repeatedly.

Bell eventually wrenched the phone away only to discover the line dead.

When gunfire and sirens erupted, MacNeil rushed to get an edge on his competition, although he thought the incident a harmless protest. The NBC correspondent pridefully writes:

"New York told me I had been ahead of the AP and the UPI with my first bulletin but it had taken them five minutes to get it on the air."[41]

MacNeil went to extraordinary lengths to reach Parkland, where he "was vastly relieved to be back in the right place to be covering the story." Now aware of the severity of the President's condition, MacNeil's competitive urges relaxed somewhat:

"I was the only reporter in the White House press corps who knew where the shooting came from and I filled the others in."[42]

Realizing his first bulletin from the Depository contained misinformation, the reporter "played it very carefully with NBC, cautioning them not to say more than we knew." That afternoon, NBC behaved the most responsibly, twice awaiting verification of newswire reports before major announcements. The network would not have another scoop until it carried live Tom Pettit's famous coverage of the Oswald transfer.

MacNeil spent the weekend "retracing Oswald's steps." By Sunday evening, his report "had more eyewitnesses" than DA Henry Wade.

MacNeil "and another NBC reporter stayed behind for about a week in Dallas doing our own amateurish investigation."

MacNeil's own career - - - as author and NewsHour co-anchor - - - does not reflect impetuous character. MacNeil is adamant: "I certainly did not identify myself as a Secret Serviceman!"[43] But Oswald bestowed on him that designation, marking one of the case's earliest misconceptions. Oswald's human error can be forgiven, but substituting his words with the most evil possible connotation is culpable. If researchers genuinely seek understanding and closure, then common sense and leniency would make better starting places.

Notes

1. Richard B. Trask, *Pictures of the Pain*, (Yeoman Press, 1994), p. 361.
2. Robert Groden, *The Killing of a President*, (Viking Studio Books, 1993), pp. 47-48; Harrison Livingstone, *Killing the Truth*, (Carroll & Graf, 1993), pp. 326-27; Jim Marrs, *Crossfire*, (Carroll & Gaff, 1990), p. 73; Gary Shaw and Larry Harris, *Cover-Up*, p. 134; Josiah Thompson, *Six Seconds in Dallas*, (Berkley, 1967/76), pp. 129, 247. This view was also adopted by Robert Blakey and Gerald Posner. The debris was not blasted back to Hargis' position. Much of it was deposited over the Connallys, while skull and bullet fragments were driven to the front of the limo. The Zapruder film shows other matter was expelled slightly forward and upward. (Trask, p. 124, citing 1975 CBS/Itel report) Because the limousine was traveling forward at 16 feet per second, much of the suspended matter was thought to have fallen behind the car. Hargis simply rode into the field of debris as it descended. (Posner, p. 316)
3. *Rush to Judgment*, (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1966), p. 42, citing 6 H 295.
4. Trask (p. 208) cites an undated Dallas Times Herald interview with Hargis, in which the officer states he "ran to the north side of Elm." Officer H.B. McLain reported Hargis fell before crossing Elm. (Gary Savage, *JFK First Day Evidence*, (The Shoppe Press, 1993), p. 370)
5. Trask, pp. 209, 268. Bond slide: see Trask, p. 208; Groden, pp. 45 center, 50 bottom (Groden erroneously credits this picture and a Hughes frame on p. 206 to Bell); Shaw, p. 5 top. Bell: see Trask, p. 268; Groden, p. 47. *Life*, November 24, 1967 (pp. 94-95) has images from both photographers. That Bond's first slide was taken some 20 seconds after the last shot - - - long enough for Hargis' dismount and return - - - can be demonstrated by the presence of James Altgens, who crossed Elm after photographing the limousine entering the Underpass. A Bond slide (Trask, p. 211 top) reveals Hargis and his cycle long gone, as the officer and his followers race up the Knoll to the railbridge. Hargis testified he thought shots might have come from the overpass, perhaps influenced (as so many have been) by the shock of the violent head snap. After riding through the Underpass, Hargis returned to the scene. At 12:34, he radioed: "A passerby states that shots came from the Texas School Book Depository." (David

- Best Evidence, (Carroll & Graf, 1980/92), p. 365)
6. Trask, p. 156.
 7. Report of the Warren Commission [hereafter Warren Report], (Bantam, 1964), pp. 83, 572. William Manchester and David Lifton somehow combined Haygood with Hargis.
 8. Trask, p. 210, citing 6 H 297-98. Willis 6 (Trask, p. 175; Groden, p. 50 left center; Shaw, p. 137) shows Haygood's white helmet beneath the Fort Worth sign. Willis 7 (Trask, p. 176; Groden, p. 51 center) depicts him nearing the abutment. Towner 3 (Groden, pp. 51 bottom, 54) shows his abandoned motorcycle as followers - - - including the naive MacNeil - - - trail Haygood, and the first Press Bus enters the Underpass.
 9. Trask, p. 375; on page 426, Trask prints a Couch film clip showing the view Haygood had when he entered Elm Street. Trask indicates the front of his cycle likely appears in the extreme right of the Bothun picture (p. 156).
 10. Trask, pp. 403, 427; Shaw, pp. 154-55. A film sequence by Robert Hughes also captured Haygood dismounting as spectators from Main flood the area. (Trask, p. 266)
 11. Lifton, pp. 365-66; Warren Report, p. 572. Groden (p. 53) and Savage (p. 407) attribute this transmission to #22: Patrolman L.L. Hill. Lifton relates "the tape and Haygood's own testimony established that this is incorrect," assigning the error to the FBI transcriber. (Lifton, n. on p. 366)
 12. I have based MacNeil's activities on Chapter 13 of his book, *The Right Place at the Right Time* (Little, Brown & Co., 1982) and an interview he gave on CBC Morning News, CBC Newsworld, November 22, 1993.
 13. Trask, p. 333; Shaw, p. 134. A Bond slide (Trask, p. 210; Groden, p. 51 top; Shaw, p. 97 top) depicts MacNeil on the sidewalk just ahead of the Press Bus. MacNeil is also visible in a film sequence by Jimmy Darnell, which Trask describes on page 423. Darnell's three brief b/w film clips immediately follow the Zapruder film segment in "Who Was Lee Harvey Oswald,?" PBS, November 16, 1993. Richard Trask suggests the running man in the suit "is quite possibly Dallas Morning News reporter Kent Biffle, who was a passenger in the car between Cabluck's and the next bus." In a January 24, 1993 letter to me, Robert MacNeil positively identified himself as the man in the Cabluck picture.
 14. Trask, p. 334. The fence section through which critics like Livingstone and Grant Leitma contend an assassin fired is completely boarded.
 15. MacNeil, p. 208. This observation dissolves Gary Mack's view that the railyard held just a "solitary passenger car [with] no switch engine or any other train for hundreds of feet in either direction." (Decade, July 1994, p. 19) As proof, Mack cites the McIntire pictures which (as usual) he doesn't publish. Thankfully, McIntire's second picture is published on page 472 of Pictures of the Pain, revealing a light commuter two-car train next to the three Katy business cars. This juxtaposition is confirmed by an aerial photo taken that afternoon. (Trask, p. 350)
 16. Trask, p. 405; Groden, p. 49.
 17. Groden, pp. 47, 60.
 18. Livingstone, p. 82.
 19. Robert Blakey and Richard Billings, *Fatal Hour*, (Berkley, 1981/92), p. 101; Marrs, p. 74. Smith had his back to the Depository and could venture no opinion as to the source of shots because of the strong echo effect.
 20. Thompson, p. 163, citing 7 H 535. Possibly, this woman mistook as assailants the black couple who fled from the retaining wall corner just after the fatal shot.
 21. HSCA Report, (USGPO, 1979), p. 184. In 1978 interviews, Weitzman, Harkness and Ronald Fischer "stated that they had surmised that any plainclothes individual in the company of uniformed police officers must have been a Secret Service agent." (HSCA Report, p. 184, n. 25 on p. 625) FBI Agent James Hosty told the Committee that Frank Ellsworth, a local ATF officer with the Treasury Department, had identified himself as a Secret Serviceman, a claim Ellsworth subsequently denied. According to a 1967 interview by Mark Lane with Secret Service Agent Abraham Bolden, rumors that "an unauthorized person had used Secret Service credentials in Dallas on November 22" prompted a service-wide credential check on November 27. (*A Citizen's Dissent*, (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1968), p. 193)
 22. Trask, p. 572, citing 7 H 351.
 23. CD 354 (late January 1964 interviews with James Powell, Terry Ford, and Allman) appears in Thompson, pp. 412-13.
 24. On page 209 of *The Right Place at the Right Time*, MacNeil recounts exiting the Depository, where a hysterical woman drew her attention to his press badge.
 25. Kelley's report, dated November 29, 1963, was published in the Warren Report (pp. 562-65).

26. MacNeil, p. 213.
27. Concerning this omission, MacNeil wrote me: "It was certainly in the account I wrote several days after the assassination and published as a chapter in my book *The Right Place at the Right Time*."
28. George O'Toole also applied undue speculation to MacNeil's FBI statement (*The Assassination Tapes*, (Penthouse, 1975), pp. 227-28). O'Toole theorized the two lights on the office phone noticed by MacNeil indicated Oswald was on the second floor receiving a call from his "Bureau contact" on the first floor phone --- a conjecture presented in the JFK travesty. However, Mrs. Reid did not observe Oswald using a phone in the open office area on the second floor, nor did the lunchroom contain a telephone. → IS THIS TRUE??
29. *Third Decade*, March 1993, p. 22.
30. Warren Report, p. 143. This could explain why Dougherty failed to notice Oswald passing through the fifth floor.
31. "The Fifth Floor Sniper," *Third Decade*, May 1993, p. 31.
32. *Third Decade*, March 1993, p. 23.
33. Warren Report, p. 146.
34. Thompson, pp. 299-302. Excellent blowups of the Hughes film appear in *Frontline* (1993).
35. Perhaps this explains the "radically different configuration of images in the extreme southeast window of the fifth floor than that which is depicted in the Dillard photo." (*Third Decade*, May 1993, inside front cover) Weston is equally adventurous with his claim that the Dillard pictures were taken during the March 20, 1964 reconstruction. (May 1993, p. 26) However, the recreation photographs all show overcast conditions, while those of Dillard show the Depository's façade in full sunlight. Weston finds it odd that Williams and Norman are depicted in the Dillard photographs "looking at nothing in particular [and] waiting for something to happen." Even odder is that Weston had written on the preceding page (May 1993, p. 25) that the rush of people up the Knoll impelled "them to make the headlong dash to the westend window." This outside activity had yet to materialize when Dillard took his pictures, so the men had no reason to leave their position.
36. "Secrets of a Homicide: Exploring the JFK Assassination," Video Toaster User, November 1994, pp. 41-42.
37. Posner, p. 264.
38. Warren Report, p. 144.
39. Bookhout's report, described by Weston as "little known," appeared in the Warren Report (pp. 556-67).
40. Posner, p. 259; Warren Report, p. 151; Savage, pp. 159-65.
41. MacNeil, p. 210.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 211. When MacNeil entered the Depository, he encountered two witnesses who saw a rifleman in one of its windows. (p. 208)
43. Letter of January 24, 1993.

AN INDIANA RIFLE UPDATE

by

Sheldon Inkol

The following information comes from "The Indiana Rifle," an article I had published in the July, 1993 issue of *The Third Decade*.

A man checked into a seventh floor room at the Terre Haute House Hotel the night of November 25, 1963, registering under the name of Harry L. Power and giving a false San Antonio address. The hotel was across the street from the Democrat and Republican headquarters in Terre Haute. An unspecified threat was made against "a local official" and, on the morning of November 26, security was tightened around Governor of Indiana Matthew Welsh in Indianapolis. The man left the hotel the next day, leaving a disassembled 7.65 mm German Mauser behind. Subsequent investigation revealed that Harry L. Power had been in the Army, and was a top marksman and an outspoken member of the Young Communist League. The Terre Haute police suspected that someone might be using the name as an alias. According to Frank Riddle, Terre Haute's Chief of Police at the time, the FBI tried to link Power's presence at the hotel to a local political rally held near the hotel that night, and Power was also suspected of being involved in an attempt on the life of

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General Edwin A. Walker in Dallas the previous April.

New Developments. I have since learned that an assassination researcher living in Terre Haute by the name of Jane Robertson was able to interest Mark Edwards of W-TWO TV in the story of the Indiana rifle. Edwards conducted some of his own research and the Terre Haute TV station ran a three-part series on the incident in 1993. I have not seen this series, but I have been told that nothing new or noteworthy was broadcast.

Ms. Robertson learned from Edwards that at least one of the people he interviewed intimated that the late Frank Riddle was a "loudmouth" and a "blowhard." I had already found the former police chief's statements to be inconsistent, and it now seems even more apparent that his information is not reliable. Riddle's claim that he saw Harry Power attempting to purchase ammunition at the American Sports building, his attendant description of Power, his statements made in 1967 that the rifle was a Mannlicher-Carcano and that the Secret Service took possession of it, and his 1970 statement to researcher Larry Haapanen that there was a local political rally held near the Terre Haute House Hotel the night Power was registered there must all be called into question.

One of the people interviewed by Mark Edwards for W-TWO was Richard Van Allen, the hotel manager who called the police when the rifle was found. It was Jane Robertson who relocated Van Allen. He gave her some surprising information. [1]

Van Allen recalled that the police staked out the room, that Power returned, and that he was taken in for questioning! "The story the fellow gave was that he was out of money and was going to hock the scope," Van Allen told Ms. Robertson. He added that an attempt was made by the police to keep the matter secret, which certainly does seem to have been the case.

No other source even suggests that Power was taken into custody. It could be that Van Allen was confusing the Indiana rifle with another incident he remembered in which a revolver was found at the hotel. His confusion over the type of rifle found, whether or not it had a scope, whether Power's room was on the seventh floor or on the mezzanine level, and which maid found the rifle further undermines his credibility in regards to his surprising revelation. [2]

Corrections. I would like to take the opportunity to make a few corrections to "The Indiana Rifle."

The correct date of the Los Angeles Herald-Examiner article

on the Indiana rifle is April 3, 1967, not April 8.

It was the editor of the Terre Haute Tribune-Star, not the Indianapolis News, who told Larry Haapanen that he knew about the Indiana rifle when the incident occurred but was asked by the authorities not to publish anything regarding it.

I quoted part of a letter that author David Lifton wrote me in regards to John Robert Glenn, whom Lifton identified as "the person connected to the Indiana rifle." I theorized that Lifton had mistakenly based this information on the fact that Glenn was an Indiana resident, since Harry Power's name was not revealed until Haapanen interviewed Frank Riddle in 1970. I should have pointed out that Lifton, who met Glenn at least twice, also wrote in that same letter that Glenn "seemed pretty convincing that he had nothing to do with any [assassination] scenario—or, for that matter, with any government agency."

[3] Considering what is known about John Robert Glenn's ties to military intelligence, [4] I find this latter conclusion to be doubtful. Lifton may, however, have access to more information on Glenn and the Indiana rifle than anyone else. He pointed out to me that he originated the whole Glenn-as-a-false-patsy hypothesis in 1968 and had recently spoken with the son of the FBI agent who investigated the Indiana rifle. [5] One can only hope that Lifton makes his information on Glenn and the Indiana rifle available to other assassination researchers soon. He has declined to share it with me.

This seems an appropriate point to thank Larry Haapanen, Jane Robertson and, most of all, Bill Adams, for the immense effort each of them has put forth in investigating the Indiana rifle, and for the assistance they have provided me. I also thank Richard Bartholomew for putting me in touch with Ms. Robertson.

New Perspectives. There were a few connections I failed to make in my earlier article.

I mentioned that the confederation of right-wing extremist groups known as the Congress of Freedom, Inc. held its annual meeting in New Orleans on April 4, 5 and 6, 1963, during which its members discussed carrying out numerous assassinations of liberal leaders. One of the principal speakers that weekend was Arthur G. Blaisie, a doctor from Washington, Indiana. [6] I found it possibly significant that less than a week later, on April 10, 1963, there was a dubious attempt on the life of right-wing extremist General Walker in Dallas. Lee Harvey Oswald, later blamed for this Walker shooting, left Dallas for New Orleans before the end of that month. According to an informant, the Congress of Freedom met again on October 19

and 20, 1963, in Indianapolis, Indiana. [7] One of those in attendance was Joseph A. Milteer, who would be secretly tape-recorded accurately describing the murder of President Kennedy before it occurred. Just over a month after that Indianapolis meeting, Kennedy was assassinated, and Harry Power's rifle was found in Indiana, where threats were made against a local politician.

I neglected to point out that another man in attendance at the Congress of Freedom meetings was one W.J. Kearns, a close friend of Milteer's. [8] Woody Kearns lived in St. Albans, West Virginia, which is only about 20 miles from Manila—the forwarding address Harry Power gave to an employer in 1962. St. Albans is also, coincidentally enough, right next to Charleston, the home town of Jack Lawrence, who has long been named as an assassin but was more likely just set up to look like one. [9]

I implied that the Congress of Freedom may have had something to do with both a spurious attempt on General Walker and the Indiana rifle, in an effort to incriminate Communists. In support of this hypothesis, I failed to emphasize the fact that public Communists Oswald and Power were both implicated in the Walker shooting, while the only other suspects that I am aware of were right-wing Walker associates—William McEwen Duff [10] and the Schmidt brothers, Larrie and Bob [11]—which also tends to support my Congress of Freedom hypothesis.

I did raise the possibility that the Indiana rifle was part of a staged incident set up to provide evidence of a far-reaching Communist plot to forcefully overthrow the U.S. government. What I didn't consider was that such a plot could have been conceived after the fact of the assassination by people such as those in the Congress of Freedom, hoping to take advantage of a tragedy they had no hand in. "Harry Power" did not check into the hotel with his "JFK-type sniper rifle" until three days after Kennedy's murder, after all.

Notes

1. Letter from Jane Robertson, dated August 18, 1994, with enclosures.
2. Ms. Robertson interviewed Richard Van Allen in December of 1992 and on February 10, 1993.
3. Letter from David Lifton, dated March 18, 1991.
4. Anthony Summers, Conspiracy (New York: Paragon House, 1989), pp. 277, 278.
5. Letter from David Lifton, dated August 4, 1993.

6. "Third Decade Document Discovery: The Congress of Freedom Papers," The Third Decade 2 #2, January, 1986, pp. 6–10.
7. Dan Christensen, "JFK, King: The Dade County Links," Miami Magazine, September, 1976, p. 23; letter from Bill Barry to The Continuing Inquiry 1 #8, March 22, 1977, p. 10. Christensen wrote that the Indianapolis convention was held by the Constitution Party, one of the groups that comprised the Congress of Freedom. In any event, Milteer and other COF members were also in the Constitution Party and present at the October convention.
8. "Third Decade Document Discovery: The Congress of Freedom Papers," The Third Decade 2 #2, January, 1986, p. 9; Dan Christensen, "King Assassination: FBI Ignored Its Miami Informer," Miami Magazine, October, 1976, p. 45. Christensen gives the man's name as "Kerns." I don't know which spelling to be correct.
9. For details, see my articles on Jack Lawrence in the July, 1991 and September, 1992 issues of The Third Decade.
10. Jerry D. Rose, "Nut Country: The Friends of General Walker," The Third Decade 5 #5, July, 1989, pp. 13–15.
11. Dick Russell, The Man Who Knew Too Much (New York: Carroll & Graf, 1992), pp. 325–327.

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UPDATES: NEW DEVELOPMENTS ON PREVIOUS ARTICLES

Mobile and Oak Ridge. An article in the Sept. 1994 issue, "Oak Ridge Boy," examined the implications of a supposed signature of Lee Harvey Oswald that appeared on the guest register of the American Museum of Atomic Energy in Oak Ridge, TN on July 26, 1963—when Oswald was supposedly in Mobile, AL giving a speech at Spring Hill College, a Jesuit seminary attended by his cousin Eugene Murret. An incredible "coincidence" surfaces in a memorandum to DA Jim Garrison by his investigator Andrew J. Sciambra on May 8, 1967. Sciambra had gone to Mobile to investigate a report that one James Arville Hawkins of Baltimore had been arrested in Mobile on 7/26/63 after he had allegedly made a threat against President Kennedy in Laurel, MD. After his arrest and on a car trip back to Maryland, Hawkins "boasted" that he had been on his way back to New Orleans to attend a meeting at which the assassination of President Kennedy was being planned. Sciambra also got a lead, that he was unable to follow, that Clay Shaw had made a speech at Spring Hill College some 30–60 days after Oswald's appearance there. He was also told that Oswald may have stayed at the Salvation Army in Mobile and possibly borrowed money from the Traveler's Aid Bureau. Finally, he was unable to run down another lead, that Jack Ruby may have spent some time in Mobile in the summer of 1963, at which time he may have associated with local "vice kings."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the editor: The allegations concerning Dr. Crenshaw and our book, JFK: Conspiracy of Silence, as contained in Gary Mack's "review" of Harrison Livingstone's Killing The Truth (The Fourth Decade, January 1995), are totally false.

In his "review," Mack says that he and Dave Perry were informed by Gus Russo that Dr. Crenshaw and I had told him (Russo) that the order Crenshaw heard from President Johnson was "Make sure the son-of-a-bitch [Oswald] dies. You can drown him in his own blood." What a bunch of hogwash! Neither Dr. Crenshaw nor I have ever made such a statement...to Russo, or anyone.

When I related Mack's charges to Jens Hansen, one of the three co-authors of the Crenshaw book (and penman for the very first manuscript), Hansen replied, "Someone is lying. Doc [Crenshaw] never, in any of our many interviews, made such a statement. Nothing like that was ever in any of the manuscripts. And that stuff about the publisher having had us 'tone down' the part about the LBJ phone call just flat never happened...it didn't need to."

Mack's JAMA-type style (he contacted none of the book's three co-authors regarding the allegations) is unworthy of this journal. All that can be truly said about those responsible for this piece of wishful and willful fabrication is that they appear to possess highly developed and fanciful imaginations. Or, perhaps, an agenda!

—J. Gary Shaw, P.O. Box 722,
Cleburne, TX 76033-0722

Mack responds: Mr. Shaw is apparently trying to shoot the messenger for delivering bad news. My review related information told to me, Dave Perry and others by Gus Russo in 1991, a full year before the release of Conspiracy of Silence. Russo, who has not been contacted by Shaw about this matter, insists the quotation I used was completely accurate and adds that there was also a discussion of how much blood it would take to make sure Oswald died. In addition, Gus says the quote was told to him directly by Shaw in the lobby of the Stoneleigh Hotel and Dr. Crenshaw was not yet present.

Among the movie crew who also heard about an LBJ order to kill Oswald was Jane Rusconi, Oliver Stone's research coordinator. She and I discussed the quote four years ago and she stands by her recollection today; in fact, Jane first learned of it from Larry Howard, the late co-founder, with Shaw, of the JFK Assassination Information Center. That version was "Make

sure the bastard's dead," or words to that effect. She later heard a similar quote from either Shaw or Crenshaw during a meeting in the Stoneleigh bar that included Shaw, Crenshaw, Jens Hansen and Oliver Stone. Jane says she made notes of the incident at the time and they still exist.

Researchers should also know that in a New York Times interview with Dr. Lawrence K. Altman, published May 26, 1992, Crenshaw complained that co-authors Shaw and Hansen had taken "poetic license" with his role in the treatment of Kennedy and that the book "had exaggerated his role in Kennedy's care." Furthermore, Crenshaw told the FBI, in two 1992 interviews, that parts of his book were incorrect, and likewise "poorly worded." Those interviews are available from the National Archives.

—Gary Mack, 6646 E. Lovers Ln. #604,
Dallas, TX 75214-1619

To the editor: In the November 1993 issue there are several articles commenting on Gerald Posner's book, Case Closed. (A beginners guide to warping facts, distorting the truth, and fabricating events.) As you know, this book was extensively reviewed and highly praised in the Aug. 30 – Sept. 6, 1993 issue of U.S. News & World Report. On page 74 of this issue of U.S.N&WR, there is an article entitled "The Sniper's Nest" by Gerald Posner.

Most fairy tales begin with "Once upon a time..."; but Posner begins with "They had quarreled earlier in the evening, as they so often did, and during the night when Marina Oswald rested her foot against Lee's leg, he shoved it away with a ferocity that surprised her. When she got up the next morning, her husband was gone and the coffee pot in the kitchen was cold. Returning to the bedroom, Marina was startled to see that he had left \$170 on top of their bureau. It was a remarkable sum for the Oswalds, and she knew it must be all of their savings. She did not notice something else that would have alarmed her. On the bureau, in a hand painted demitasse that had belonged to her grandmother, Lee had placed his wedding ring. He had never before taken it off. It was Nov. 22, 1963."

Supporters of the Warren Commission's finding that Oswald was the lone assassin of President Kennedy often cite the "fact" that Oswald left his wedding ring and \$170 on the dresser, in Marina's bedroom at the Paine residence, on the morning of the assassination. They claim that his action indicates that he was planning the attack, and knew he would probably not live to see Marina again. Therefore he left her all his money and

his wedding ring. Posner states in his opening paragraph as quoted above, she did not notice the ring in the tea cup, yet he writes the sentence in a manner that leads the unwary reader to believe the ring is there. If Marina did not notice the wedding ring in the tea cup, how could anyone else know it was there? Where did the Fairy Tale originate? I believe attention came to be focused on the ring after the death of her husband when Marina would have logically asked for the return of the ring.

I must admit that the wedding ring, and life savings tale, has always been one of the facets of the assassination story, that has caused me some doubt that Lee had no cognizant role in the conspiracy. When a friend challenged my belief that Oswald was simply a patsy, and cited the wedding ring story to support his contention of Oswald's involvement, I decided to do some research to see if I could find the facts about the wedding ring.

The testimony of Ruth Paine can be found in Volume III of the "Hearings". Her testimony before the Warren Commission on March 19, 1964, reveals a much different picture concerning the wedding ring story, than the picture that Posner portrays. On page 112 she states that FBI agent Bardwell Odum was PRESENT in her home when she found the wedding ring.

On page 17 Mrs. Paine states that no FBI agent visited her home between November 5th and the afternoon of November 23, 1963. She said two FBI agents visited her home looking for Marina, on the afternoon of the 23rd. (On page 110 she identifies them as agents Hosty and Abernathy) She testified that this was the FIRST visit by the FBI after the assassination. (Marina was being hidden from the FBI and the general public [reporters] by The Secret Service. Agents Hosty and Abernathy were trying to find out where the S.S. were keeping Marina. Mrs. Paine had overheard the S.S. men talking about housing Marina at the Executive Inn and she called there looking for her. [Probably at the behest of Hosty] Marguerite answered the phone but would not let Mrs. Paine talk to Marina. Soon after the call, the Secret Service moved Marina, Robert, and Marguerite to the Six Flags Hotel in an effort to keep the FBI away from Marina.)

At about noon on November 24th, (shortly after Ruby silenced Oswald) Marina called Mrs. Paine, (see page 90) and asked Mrs. Paine to gather together her personal belongings, so the police could pick them up and bring them to her. One of the items Marina mentioned was "a little purse with some

money in it that she had left on top of the dresser." During this conversation there was no mention of the wedding ring, but Marina did ask about the little purse containing the \$170.

On page 112 Mrs. Paine states that FBI agent Odum came to her home and said Marina wanted Lee's wedding ring and asked Mrs. Paine to see if she could find it. (This was probably after Oswald's funeral.) Whereupon, FBI agent Odum accompanied Mrs. Paine to the bedroom, and was present when Mrs. Paine found the ring in a little tea cup.

It would have been impossible for Marina to have asked FBI agent Bardwell Odum to retrieve the wedding ring until sometime after November 24th because the FBI did not know where she was being kept, and they did not talk to Marina until sometime after the 24th. Therefore she could not have asked Odum to find the ring and the ring could not have been found on the morning of the assassination.

If, however, the FBI had possession of Lee's ring (a distinct possibility because, after Nov. 24th, they could easily have removed it from Lee's cold, dead body) they could easily have planted the ring, making it possible for the ring to be "found" when agent Odum visited the Paine residence and "helped" Mrs. Paine find the ring.

No matter how one looks at this story, it is obvious that someone was lying. (Either Ruth Paine or the FBI or both, actually anyway you slice it the FBI was lying because Ruth Paine was by her own admission a confidential informant for the FBI.) It certainly seems clear that Marina did not find Lee's wedding ring along with the \$170 on the morning of the assassination.

Another aspect of the story that casts doubt on its plausibility is the fact that by Ruth's testimony on page 112 we know that Marina never mentioned that Lee had left his ring when he left that morning. It seems to me that if he had left the ring, that would have signified something to Marina, if she had found it that morning. It would not take much imagination to imagine Marina saying something like "Lee and I quarreled last night and this morning he left his wedding ring on the dresser." She would probably have wanted to talk to someone about it, especially on the afternoon and evening of the assassination yet there is no evidence she ever mentioned it to Mrs. Paine or her mother-in-law, or anyone else.

It is my belief that attention came to be focused on the ring when Marina asked about her husband's wedding ring some time after his death, and this simple inquiry was then used to fabricate another tale to bolster Hoover's shaky fabrication

that Lee Oswald was an unstable malcontent loner bent on killing John Kennedy.

Since I have mentioned the U.S. News & World Report at the opening of this letter, I would like to call your attention to a couple of photos that appear in the "Sniper's Nest" article in the Aug. 30–Sept. 6, 1993 issue of U.S.N.&W.R. which reveal something I find very interesting. On page 78 there is a reprint of a Tom Dillard photo taken at the time of the shooting. This photo shows Bonnie Ray Williams and Junior Jarman in the 5th floor window. The famous S.E. 6th floor window is directly above them. Just to the viewer's right or on the east side of the vertical column dividing the two 6th floor windows, is a box which must be sitting on top of another box. This box appears to be tight against the inside south wall right next to the dividing column. On page 82 is a reprint of a Dallas police photograph (CE 715) taken at about 1:15 pm, 11-22-63 of "Sniper's Nest" showing the spent shells lying on the floor directly on the spot where Tom Dillard's photo shows a box was sitting at the time of the shooting. If the box was there, (Dillard's photo assures us that it was,) how did the shells get under the box? How could Deputy Mooney have spotted the shells if they were under the box? Many Dallas police officers testified that nothing had been moved in the "Sniper's Nest" after it's discovery and yet the box is gone in the police photo (CE 715) and the spent shells are in its place. The answer to these questions cannot be that Mooney simply moved the boxes and discovered the shells UNDER the box because the shells would not have been ejected from the rifle and landed under the box, nor would Mooney have anyway of knowing they were there (unless he had X-ray vision.) Can you shed some light on this puzzle for me?

—Walt Cakebread, Box 514,
Denair, CA 95316

To the editor: I think that Jack White is on the right track in suggesting that the Zapruder film must be studied for evidence of tampering (November Fourth Decade). I have studied frames of the film intensively for quite a while, and have submitted several research papers to my congressman asking for Congress to initiate a review process to appoint a special prosecutor or criminal investigative group to reinvestigate the assassination. ①

The alteration of the film can be discerned in various spots and includes both intentional frame removal and masking (using techniques to create blurring and fake shadows) to ②

certain frames).

What follows is a portion of my research relating specifically to what I believe shows the Z-film tampering:

1. Alteration number one—frames 144–153 (one-half second based on the WC statement of 18.3 f.p.s.) In frame 144, one can see, left to right, a person with a white outfit, a woman in blue, a man in a black suit and a woman with white pants, blue/gray jacket, red scarf and tan purse. To her left is a gap in which one can see a white car in the motorcade proceeding north on Houston Street. By frame 153 a man, Hugh Betzner, Jr., has come from the south on Houston and is about to go past the woman in the white pants. Betzner's actions in approximately a half second much exceed human capabilities.
2. Alteration number two—between frames 155 and 161 further removal occurs. In frame 155 a young girl in a black coat, Linda Kay Willis, is stepping up on the curb with her back to Elm Street. By frame 161, only one-third of a second later, she has turned 180 degrees and photographer Robert Croft, who is standing to her left, seems to have reached his hand out and grasped her coat. Again, actions exceeding human capabilities in a third of a second.
3. Alteration number three—between frames 161 and 180, Mr. Croft seems to pull Linda Kay back several steps to where she is obscured behind him and the other daughter, Rosemary Willis, who was standing behind him, has moved several steps away from him...all in 19/18.33, or just barely over one second. Additionally, in frame 161 the top and side borders of the Stemmons sign seem to be in perfect condition, but by frame 183 there is a significant notch on the top left border of the sign. But by frame 188 no notch is apparent. Also, in frame 155, the left border of the Stemmons sign has serrations.
4. Alteration number four—at frame 255 there is a fake shadow processed onto the film which obscures the position of the limousine driver, William Greer. The limousine was heading west, and the sun was almost directly overhead and slightly to the south at 12:30 pm in Dallas that day, so shadows should be consistent with the direction of the sun; but in this frame the shadow falls to Greer's front. No similar shadow pattern is observed in

the frames previously mentioned.

5. Alteration number five—in frames 312 to 321, a wounded Governor Connally who is leaning back in his wife's lap, turns 90 degrees in one half second. Also, in this sequence there is a white object in the background in the grassy area of the background. The limousine is 21 feet long and nearly half the limousine passes this object in a half-second.
6. Alteration number six—frames 321 to 326. In frame 321 President Kennedy's head has been driven backward to where it is almost touching the top of the rear seat backrest. By frame 336 (15/18 of a second later), he is shown bent forward with his head lying on Mrs. Kennedy's left arm... This movement supposedly occurring in less than one second defies the laws of physics. In addition, the fake shadowing of the limousine driver obscures his position.
7. Alteration number seven—I am now working on proving that in numerous frames showing the limousine approaching the Stemmons sign, the large group of persons immediately to the left of the sign show little or no movement for several frames; in the sequence of several seconds the crowd of about ten persons all remain frozen, not waving or changing positions. I theorize that some frame tampering may have occurred here, but the deletions would have caused obvious jerkiness if the crowd had been deleted also; therefore, to maintain continuity, the people lining Elm Street had to be stabilized by repeating their image in several frames to disguise that one or more frames at this point had been deleted or altered. It is essential that the Zapruder film be intensively studied frame-by-frame to determine whether any alterations occurred such as these or those suggested in White's article.
8. Alteration number eight—In frames 153–155 a woman, the thirteenth person to the left (east) of the Stemmons Freeway Sign, has shifted her feet position significantly. This action in 2/18.3 seconds or approximately 1/9 of a second exceeds human capabilities.
9. Alteration number nine—In frames 335–336 Mrs.

→ why would film be altered prior ²² to any shots being fired (Z155)

Kennedy has moved right arm clockwise (as you view the frames) a significant distance between two frames, 1/18.3 seconds.

The fastest lab tested movement is an eyeblink in 1/25 second. Flinching or other appendage movements like being startled, etc. take 1/5 second. This movement, too, far exceeds human reaction time. Additionally one can note the distance that a fixed point on the limousine changes in relation to the bystanders shadow on the grassy strip, south of the vehicle as further verification that frames appear to have been removed in this sequence.

10. Alteration number ten—In a photo taken by Mr. Phillip Willis (enclosed) you can note that there a five adults and a child framed between the posts of the Stemmons Freeway Sign. A black family, Mr. and Mrs. John Chism and son are three of six.

Hugh W. Betzner took a picture with the five people framed within the Stemmons Freeway Sign.

Itek Corporation determined that the President's limousine had travelled approximately five feet farther along Elm St. in the Willis photo. If this is accurate, the limousine must have been moving very slowly (security car behind the limousine has brake lights on in the Willis photo) for one and perhaps two of the women centered between the sign posts in the Betzner photo have moved from the position that they occupied a second or so earlier. In the Willis photo the two women are not seen and had to have moved to their left and become blocked from view by the forms of Clinton Hill and William McIntyre, who are standing on the running board of the security vehicle.

In observing the series of Zapruder frames which cover the time sequence of the Betzner and Willis photos (approximately frame 188 to frame 210) you will note that the two women who had to have walked to their left into Zapruder's camera view do not appear in these frames which is another indicator that the Zapruder film has been altered.

—Ron Redmon, 211 East Market St.,
Vevay, IN 47043

To the editor: First, as a new subscriber to the Fourth Decade I wanted to compliment everyone on such a superb magazine. The main reason for my letter, however, is to state where I think the ongoing fascination with this assassination is

ultimately headed. Unfortunately I don't think it's going to agree with the attitude of some of the contributing writers. And before you pass me off as just another cynic, give me some breathing room. After all, I am a Pennsylvania resident who is currently suffering with embarrassment of Arlen Specter's presidential bid.

I honestly don't believe that total, precise truth is ever going to be known in this case. By that I mean names of assassins, who exactly was behind them, and so forth. I believe you can only follow a string of facts and evidence so far, and then time and disinformation and confusion eventually wear it out. There are no smoking guns left, even if important documents continue to surface because documents and issues relating to a conspiracy have been popping up since 1963 and nothing substantial has ever been done government-wise (the fact that two FBI agents present at Bethesda noted that the wound in the back was probed and was found only to have gone in a few inches and stop, thus refuting the entire Warren Report, should have reopened the case on its own).

We are left with two hypotheses. One is a scam, the evidence we do have makes us aware of that much. The other, a conspiracy, has the weight of the evidence and more importantly, the weight of pure common sense attached to it. However, the fact is that everybody else out there, whether they think it was a conspiracy or not, just don't give a damn, and popular opinion is the most important thing in terms of bringing about a resolution. Every piece of new evidence that emerges is for you and I to understand what we all ready know a little better, and that's about it.

As of this writing the assassination was thirty-one years and three months ago, and the brand new textbook I just purchased for my U.S. History class (The American People Volume Two: Since 1865, Third Edition by Nash and Jeffrey, published by Harper Collins) handles the moment our president was assassinated as follows:

"Suddenly shots rang out, and Kennedy slumped forward as bullets ripped through his head and throat." (American People, p. 968).

Huh? Slumped forward, did he? Didn't Dan Rather pull that one? Didn't the historians who wrote that ever see the Zapruder film, which even if altered, shows a very different picture? So much for everyone else benefiting by what we've learned.

If you disagree with me, try springing the involved conspiracy theory on the next person you meet, maybe at a party.

I do it for fun, just to see the amazing range of responses. Even if they initially appear interested, what I wind up hearing is usually something to the effect of, "but that was so long ago," or "there's nothing we can do about it now."

Let's be honest. What are the chances of yet another investigative body forming, one without a predetermined lifespan so it's able to outlast the FBI and CIA when they start stonewalling on producing documents. What are the chances of this new investigation being thorough and authentic and not piloted by another pompous, ambivalent yes-man like Robert Blakey? Most importantly, what are the chances of Kennedy being exhumed and studied for real, something that desperately needs to be done?

I would venture to say that the body is in the ground for good, and we critics might get the Zachary Taylor treatment a hundred or so years from now as we watch our great grandchildren sift through a pile of ashes looking for traces of CE399. And if somehow another investigation into this gets underway soon, I'll bet it's going to be tainted with the same nonsense we've put up with in all the others.

In the most basic way, the real truth is known. Every reader of The Fourth Decade knows it in their hearts. The lure and the struggle lies in our dissatisfaction with our government who continue to fail us time and time again, president after president, Democrat or Republican, with no real difference between the two. I can't blame these men for their attitude toward us. What truth do they owe a people who have allowed them to turn our country inside out; who have allowed them to mercilessly kill whoever they despised whether it be a president or a senator or a reverend or Malcolm X, who is dead but apparently still worthy of victimization; who have allowed them to fill our streets with drugs; who have allowed them to wage bogus "military actions" where young marines who don't know any better die for no reason; who have allowed them to devalue our money, and turn the process over to a privately owned bank called the Federal Reserve?

They don't owe us anything but the smack in the ass we deserve.

—Kevin Brown, 1301 South Broad St.,
Philadelphia, PA 19147

To the editor: This letter takes strong exception to a central issue of William Weston's admittedly excellent article The Arrogant Suspect, January 1995.

First, allow my acknowledgment that Mr. Weston has proven

himself a first-rate researcher with his superior body of work appearing in recent issues of The Third-Fourth Decade. His startling discoveries regarding the Texas School Book Depository put virtually all senior researchers to shame and demonstrated once and for all two critical points: First, the JFK case still has a vast store of rich, unexplored material and second, the conspiracy was more sophisticatedly planned than practically any of us dared posit. Mr. Weston's works are unexpected bolts of lightning illuminating the darkest shadows; they have catapulted him to a platform shared by precious few.

The Arrogant Suspect only augments Mr. Weston's burgeoning reputation. However, like a long line of others before him, he did not even begin to dissuade me from my conviction that Lee Oswald did indeed kill J.D. Tippit. Though I strongly agree with Mr. Weston's contention that LHO was a "sham patsy" with full knowledge of the death plot—I published that same thesis in 1977—our opinions dramatically diverge on the Tippit matter.

It would require an article as lengthy as The Arrogant Suspect to effectively counter and rebut Mr. Weston's points—most of them valid—about the automatic-or-revolver controversy, the discarded jacket, the eyewitness confusion, et al. Suffice to say that I believe human error is more than an adequate enough explanation for the bullet shells, the jacket being white or grey, or the one inch discrepancy between the assailant's described height and LHO's actual 5'9". Instead, I wish to emphasize that the experience of having a police officer pointing a gun at you is a relatively rare one; that pointing your own gun at a police officer is rarer still; and that Lee Oswald, who according to all available information had never been in either situation before 11/22/63, found himself undergoing both in a span of just an hour-and-a-quarter that fateful afternoon. I find it not at all difficult to accept that at the midpoint of those 75 minutes a third such incident might have occurred.

To briefly recount the dramas, President Kennedy was murdered at exactly 12:30 pm. (I am as convinced as anyone that LHO was not a Dealey Plaza assassin.) About two minutes later, Officer Marion Baker encountered Oswald in the second-floor cantina. Something about Oswald caused Officer Baker to aim his pistol at LHO's midsection, though the latter was armed with only a pop bottle at the time. Officer Baker continued his way after TSBD foreman Roy Truly identified Oswald as a TSBD employee. Oswald left the building almost immediately afterward, went to his rooming house via uncer-

tain transportation, and retrieved his pistol and a light-colored jacket.

I believe that the Baker incident unnerved Oswald enough to launch a deviation from his instructions, or perhaps it (or something else) led him to believe he was scheduled for quick elimination. (An accurate surmise in my view.) Thus the beeline for his Oak Cliff pistol.

Some 35 minutes after Oswald was staring down the wrong end of Baker's gun, Officer Tippit began conversing from his squad car to a pedestrian. When Tippit emerged from the car, the pedestrian shot him several times. I believe it is significant that Tippit's pistol was found under his body; the mortal wounds he sustained seem to preclude his drawing it after the pedestrian opened fire, and suggest that the pedestrian drew his gun in response to seeing Tippit pulling his as he stepped out to the street.

Whether LHO was the gunman or not, it certainly doesn't seem unreasonable to assume that a man believing he had just narrowly escaped one policeman executioner (Baker) because Roy Truly fortuitously followed the cop into the room which is how it undoubtedly looked to Oswald—might panic when he saw another officer preparing to point a gun at him.

However, it is the next Oswald-cop gun incident that I believe is concrete proof of "the patsy's" true wherewithal. Of the dozens of researchers who have delineated the Texas Theater arrest, not a single one—not even Mr. Weston—got to any pains to dispute the eyewitness accounts of Oswald violently resisting the arresting officers. As Mr. Weston himself described it: "(LHO) threw a punch at MacDonald's face, sending him reeling back onto the seats. A scuffle broke out with several uniformed and plain clothes officers piling on the suspect...(A key witness) saw a hand holding a gun projecting out of the fray. Someone hollered "he's got a gun." Several hands were trying to grab it from him, the click of the hammer was heard, but it had misfired...finally, one of the detectives standing by grabbed it away from the jouncing hand...fists were flying, and they were hitting him. The man still kept fighting back. After an immense effort, the police managed to put handcuffs on him." (Italics added.)

Mr. Weston believes that Oswald was merely a designated patsy whose post-assassination movements were co-ordinated with the actual Tippit killer by a third party "handler" employing short-wave communication. Mr. Weston appears convinced that, quote, "There was no specific plan of where Oswald would be captured. It was simple happenstance that

he got caught in the theater. If no one sounded the alarm, Oswald would have just moved on, continuing to behave suspiciously until someone noticed him and called the police. His 'panicky' appearance was merely a masquerade to attract attention to himself."

I beg to differ. I cannot imagine anyone putting up such immense resistance to police officers if he did not genuinely fear for his life. I frankly find it ludicrous that a man designated to lead police astray to buy time for his confederates would in the process pull a gun and try to use it when the cops closed in, or that after being disarmed he would still continue to fight and invite police bullets. That type of dedication to a plan transcends all boundaries of sanity. It is simply far likelier that Oswald knew several witnesses would identify him as the policeman's slayer, which guaranteed him the electric chair. The only chance he had was to fight his way out, and the cornered rat tried exactly that. Once in custody, the role he had been coached to play assumed command of his demeanor. But up to that point it is hardly incredulous that somebody who fought the police like that might have killed a cop 35 minutes before, particularly since another policeman had put a gun to his belly only 35 minutes before that.

As for the Tippit aftermath, all I wish to point out is that the deadly incidents involving Warren Reynolds and Domingo Benavides do not necessarily mean the assassination team was covering for an unknown Tippit gunman. Though I concede it is possible there may have been two Tippit killers—there is some persuasive evidence of this—I wish to stress that neither Reynolds nor Benavides said Oswald was not the man they saw, only that they weren't certain. What befell them later may have only been memory refreshers, or attempts to eliminate witnesses whose confused observations might have inspired a deeper probe.

In closing, I must acknowledge that I'm aware my opinion on LHO's culpability in the Tippit shooting conflicts not only with Mr. Weston but a great many other researchers whose views I deeply respect, including Dr. Jerry Rose. It might even very well be that in an adversarial examination of the available evidence their position could be deemed stronger by impartial observers, though I believe the bulk of the eyewitness identification incriminates Oswald. But evidence is one thing and common sense is another. Lee Oswald had two confirmed encounters with police in the early afternoon of November 22, 1963, and the way he behaved in the latter of them is certainly suggestive of their sandwiching a third.—Monte Evans

To the editor: Just some scattered comments on the January issue. I found the Martin Shackelford and Christopher Sharrett articles to be of some interest, since both of them dealt with "Black Dog Man," a subject I'd written about myself ("The Man Behind the Wall" in the January, 1991 issue of The Third Decade).

In my article, I concluded that Gordon Arnold was likely the man behind the wall. I no longer feel this to be the case. First of all, as Sharrett quotes James Altgens as saying, that location was "an odd place to watch the parade from." Why would Gordon Arnold want to film from there? I also find it extremely unlikely that the encounter with the policemen that Arnold described taking place after the shots were fired could have occurred without someone else witnessing it. I wrote in my article that "Arnold was extremely convincing when he reacted to a Moorman blow-up and his possible appearance in it," as seen in The Men Who Killed Kennedy. Since then, during a discussion with Dave Perry, I became aware of another possible explanation for Arnold's reaction. It's possible that Arnold broke down not because he was the only person who saw the knoll assassins, but because he feared the knoll assassins would think he saw them, and that by fabricating such a story he had placed himself in danger.

Statements made by Ralph Yarborough are usually used to back up Arnold's claims. Recall that Emmett Hudson was standing on the stairs leading up the knoll with two other, unidentified men. Once the shooting started, Hudson testified that one of these men told him to take cover: "He says 'Lay down, lay down,' and he kept on repeating 'Lay down,' so he was already lying down one way on the sidewalk, so I just laid down over on the ground..." (7H559-560; emphasis added.) Could this young man be the "combat veteran" whom Senator Yarborough saw throwing himself to the ground?

I am still certain that the man behind the wall was not one of those three men on the steps, as concluded by Itek. Since there are already two men on the steps with dark pants in the Willis and Betzner photos, and Hudson was wearing light pants, there must without a doubt be an additional person behind the wall during the period the shots were fired. Martin Shackelford has concluded that this person was a young black woman eating lunch with a companion.

Although I have not seen the enlargement from the Betzner photo that Matthew Smith published, referred to by Shackelford, I have seen the enlargements published by Robert Groden. To say that the "Black Dog Man" image "definitely" looks like a

woman, as Shackelford does, is stretching things. Shackelford also neglects to mention the pink flesh tones Sharrett brings up in his article, which is certainly a selective use of information on Martin's part. And if Shackelford is right and "Black Dog Man" is really the young black woman, then where is her companion? Why doesn't he appear in the Willis or Betzner photos? I echo Sharrett's comment that Marilyn Sitzman's statement is the only evidence for a young black couple being there. As for her credibility, I find it hard to believe she would even notice such trivial details as the kind of pop the young couple was drinking in the first place, let alone recall that information 29 years later.

I did notice the bench behind the concrete wall when I saw the Frontline show. I find it astounding that not a single researcher mentioned that bench for 30 years, while at the same time many of them were insisting that "Black Dog Man" must have had a sinister reason for being there. The bench and the lunch bags found on it should put an end to such suspicions. Anyone who has stood behind that wall should immediately realize that no assassin would ever fire from such an exposed position. Anyone standing there at the time of the shots, however, would seem to be an extremely important witness. I wonder why such a person has never come forward, whoever it was?

I also find it surprising that there is still debate over the identity of the person seen in Z-413. It occurs to me that comparing this frame with the corresponding frame in the Nix film might help resolve the issue once and for all. Is Emmett Hudson in the right place at the right time? Is he stationary enough? One of his unidentified companions has already started running and the other one is in the process of hitting the dirt, so I don't think they can account for the Z-413 person. If it's not Hudson, then it must be someone behind the wall.

While I'm on the subject of the assassination films, I would like to tip my hat to Richard W. Burgess for his excellent article on the Zapruder film in the September issue. I won't discuss his work in detail, but as someone who works in the movie business and actually shot and edited Super-8 movies at film school, I feel I am somewhat qualified to give an opinion. I agree with Burgess. The images on the Zapruder film have not been tampered with. Researchers who think that alterations could have been accomplished by such methods as the removal of frames just don't know what they're talking about. For something like that to work, all the elements involved would have to be completely stationary, including the cam-

era. Completely stationary. Otherwise, any such edit could be easily detected.

I am familiar with the research John Armstrong has been doing into Stephen Landesberg, and I enjoyed Stan Weeber's article on this most unusual person. The following points of interest went unmentioned, however. From the New York Post of November 29, 1963, page 3: "Oswald is said to have lived in Russia between Oct. 13, 1959 and June 13, 1962, when he returned here with his Russian-born wife. But several informants have placed him in New York during at least part of this time." (Emphasis added.)

From "FBI Searches The Village For Pal of Oswald's," Newsday, November 30, 1963, page 5: "Several bars and coffee-houses in [Greenwich] Village that cater to the college crowd reported that FBI agents had been around and showed a color snapshot of a dark-haired, bearded man in his early or mid 20s. The man was dressed in a blue coat and wore a red scarf." Who was this man? The FBI had already interviewed Landesberg in person by this time, and the Post described "Oswald's pal" as having a mustache, not a beard.

Finally, the New York Times reported on page 18 of its December 6, 1963 edition that Landesberg "was discharged from the Marine Corps after eight months for a physical disability." All of these news items were provided to me by John Armstrong.

In closing, I hope that all readers paid close attention to the last page of the Sharrett article. Sharrett has written about what must be the most important period of evolution in assassination literature. The time is now. When I first read Gaeton Fonzi's book I knew I was reading something important and, yes, historical. Some of Fonzi's passages actually gave me a shock. "Today most Americans BELIEVE there was a conspiracy to kill President Kennedy, but they don't know it...because KNOWING it would mean having to do something about it." Absolutely. And yet, here I am, still researching "assassination minutiae" (just look at this letter) and submitting articles with a very narrow, esoteric focus. Why?

Obviously, on one level, I must enjoy it. But perhaps, because the scope of this crime is so large, I KNOW in my heart that I can do nothing about it. I am made to feel small. As a result, my interests are microscopic. The first question any non-researcher always asks me is "Who did it?" I usually say that I can't really answer that question, that I can't say precisely who did it, that my opinions change with the new information I learn. I think I'm lying to myself.

I challenge regular contributors to this journal to submit articles that approach the case in a more general, decisive sense. Who did it? Who covered it up? What should we do about it? Let us dare to write what we think happened (or, rather, what we KNOW happened), instead of just cataloguing trivialities— the man behind the wall was really a young black woman, or a young military man, or a suspicious police officer, we'll probably never know for certain. Where does that lead us? After all, it's almost the next century.

—Sheldon Inkol, 54 Raglan Ave., Apt. 14,
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6C 2L1

To the editor: Inasmuch as my review of Richard Trask's book was characterized negatively as "rather generous" in the first sentence of Christopher Sharrett's "Pictures of the Pain: Another Appraisal" (January 1995 issue), I feel compelled to address several points raised.

Although I was impressed by Dr. Sharrett's impassioned and well-stated polemic, it seems reasonable to say that his "not seeing the forest-for-the-trees" arguments miss the mark.

The necessity of a wider realization of a "state crime protected by the state" was probably never stated so boldly as Jim Garrison did back in 1967. Various others like Gaeton Fonzi, as Sharrett ably points out, have followed suit. But to say that too much current assassination research is engaged in "ransacking data" strikes me as stridently inflexible. A number of myths and old, creaky walls of illegitimate "so-called evidence" (to coin Oswald's phrase) are being broken down or subjected to newer scientific methodology. Old methodologies and outmoded analyses have been exposed to the light in part by relative newcomers with medical and/or scientific backgrounds. These are healthy developments and often bring new life to this case. The trail from Sylvia Meagher to Oliver Stone's film has produced much fruit, though not without inherent turbulence. Nonetheless, Dallas as indicative of a deeper sociopolitical malaise (apparently the main concern of Sharrett's article) has been convincingly examined, most effectively by Peter Dale Scott's Deep Politics. There is room for both "nuts-and-bolts" research and the political analyses and coalitions sought by Dr. Sharrett. Thus was C.O.P.A. (Coalition on Political Assassinations) started, and it has already been effective in monitoring the Review Board and its continuing releases of long-withheld documents. A "united front" of researchers is idealistic but not likely since most of us are well aware of how much dissension and

absence of cohesiveness there is in the "critical community" (which, like the Reagan-era term "moral majority," is often neither).

Dr. Sharrett chastises us for going about the "morbid business of rehashing data", yet cannot resist doing some of his own regarding Trask's book, specifically the sixth floor box arrangements, the Mentesana film and "Black Dog Man." How strong his arguments are is beside the point here (I stand by my review). But a long-time researcher such as Dr. Sharrett should perhaps realize that, since the government's permanent aversion to "fess up" to it's own crime and subsequent cover-up will never deter those of us who remember November 22nd and still care, it is incumbent upon us to sift data, experiment anew, challenge orthodoxy, question authority and demand accountability. But we must first demand it from ourselves, and that requires responsibility and an openness to both the competent re-examination of the assassination's raw data as well as a willingness to consider political manifestos, such as Dr. Sharrett's. Only then can we better hope to see both the forest and the trees themselves.

—Jan R. Stevens, 52 W. Hudson Ave. #2,
Englewood, NJ 07631

To the editor: I am pleased and grateful that my book, Pictures of the Pain: Photography and the Assassination of President Kennedy, has been of interest enough to receive two reviews in Jerry Rose's important journal, The Fourth Decade. Jan R. Stevens' November 1994 review was very generous. I believe it to be detailed, thoughtful, and even-handed. He understood the approach I took in researching and writing the book, and commented fairly about his disagreements with it. I was thrilled that someone I did not know had so carefully read the book and generally captured the essence of my research and motivation.

Christopher Sharrett's appraisal (January 1995) was not near as heartwarming to me, although I appreciated his candid views. I do take exception to his claiming I "traduced" Richard Sprague's pioneering photographic work. I and every other researcher are indebted to Sprague's gathering and preserving photographic evidence, and I believe I represented him fairly and without any mean-spiritedness. One can, however, disagree with interpretations made many years ago in light of new information which has surfaced. As for Dr. Sharrett's disagreement with my research and interpretation of "The Sniper's Lair," "The DCA/Mentesana Footage," and "The

Black Dog Man," I reconfirm my beliefs in my research and interpretation of these subjects as presented in the book.

Finally, it seemed Dr. Sharrett would rather I had written a different book—one that would have focused "...on the political dynamics of the murder." After ten years of research and writing, two years of self-financing and self-publishing, I created the book I wanted to present. It is not a "Who done it" or a "Why it was done," but rather a micro-study of the assassination photography and its use and abuse by the government, critics, and media. If Dr. Sharrett finds much of the current writing wanting, then perhaps he should step forward to produce in written form what he believes to be significant.

I have been very pleasantly surprised at how many researchers, many of whom disagree with various aspects of my interpretation, still find Pictures of the Pain to be an important work which adds to the historic record. I do want to thank both J. Stevens and C. Sharrett for their reviews, as well as to the many readers of The Fourth Decade who have contacted me about my book to praise, critique, correct and share further information.

—Richard B. Trask, 35 Centre St.,
Danvers, MA 01923

Sharrett responds: Jan Stevens' remarks about "newer scientific methodology" causing evidence to be "broken down" speaks to the problems I touched on in my Jan. piece. There is an assumption here that scientific method stands outside of ideological impulses. This is a reductionist, overdetermined argument hearkening to, for example, the faith held by sectors of British Romanticism that the new technologies of the industrial revolution would be in themselves liberatory. There is a similar naivete (or disingenuousness?) saturating the current moment, but there is also something more insidious.

In Stevens' judgment, scientific method appears to stand beyond the rule of law, adversarial process, and essential principles of democracy. Much of the so-called scientific testing of our moment is being used to prop up "evidence" that the authorities themselves discarded or deliberately muddled at the outset of the assassination investigation, believing, should push come to shove, this evidence could not withstand adversarial contest. For Stevens, the onus seems to be primarily on members of the public, whose creaky, illegitimate research comes tumbling down in the cybernetic age. While all this bilge and balderdash is debunked, the evidence of self-admitted liars, undermined by their own media apparatus, is

validated. Credibility is axiomatically accrued to those whose guilty behavior has always been manifest, those who have murdered fourteen million in their postwar policing of their colonial domain.

Stevens speaks of "healthy developments" that have brought "new life" to this case. It is true that Sylvia's book is definitive, and that the Stone movie is important, but what exactly is being resuscitated? How is this "new life" serving the public good? In what way is study of the JFK case, as this study currently stands, bringing about any awareness, on a lasting, systemic basis, of how power is structured in America? As an academic, I am hardly adverse to discourse, or to the idea that truth is slippery, even illusory, but at some point I must ask the price of eggs. What is the purpose of this discourse? What end is it intended to serve? At what point does this matter stop being a parlor game and have some political utility? For most of the public, the JFK issue is indeed academic—meaning arcane and marginal. It seems that researchers such as Stevens and Trask are unwilling, even at this late hour, to assume that a criminal government will behave criminally; they appear to believe that it is reasonable for us to keep peeling away at state-provided onions that inevitably lead to a void, but keep us hungry and fascinated. Gaeton Fonzi did more than make bold statements; anyone truly familiar with his research knows, and knows with certainty, that David Atlee Phillips was instrumental to the frame on Oswald. Do I need to adumbrate the career of Phillips, or to suggest that he was not a lone ranger but an agent of the state, for whom official murder is a commonplace?

I confess to involving myself with the data in my piece, but only to speak up for Dick Sprague, who in my judgment was misrepresented in Trask's book.

I have given money to COPA, but I'm afraid I wasn't referring to it when I spoke of coalitions, and I have no illusions about nor do I need to be instructed in the nature of the critical community.

As for Trask's suggestion that I produce in written form what I deem significant, what I would offer has already been enunciated by Vincent J. Salandria in the Nov. 2, 1964 issue of the Philadelphia Legal Intelligencer. I could only repeat, with different emphases, Salandria's "The Assassination of President John F. Kennedy: A Model for Explanation," Computers and Automation, Dec., 1971. I have not seen any "new methodologies" overturn this work. Beyond this, my thoughts on the subject have been expressed in articles, lectures, and

correspondence. I'm afraid I have little more.

I have no doubt that Stevens and Trask represent majority opinion within the critical community. That such views prevail on a topic so potentially instructive to our people is among the reasons why I ceased active research fifteen years ago.

—Christopher Sharrett, Ph.D., Assoc. Prof. of
Communication, Seton Hall University,
South Orange, NJ 07079-2696

To the editor: Scott Van Wynsberghe has contributed a piece to the Toronto Globe and Mail ("Memoirs of a Former Conspiracy Theorist" 21/1/1995) in which he refers to your journal and to my piece on General Cabell, Psy Ops, and UFOs.

To wit: "The next to go was The Fourth Decade, an oasis of at least semi-rational JFK research...the public spectacle of my conversion to the anti-conspiracy side was topped last September when the journal's first UFO piece appeared. The author, Alex Cox, maintained that there was a fascist conspiracy in the U.S. security establishment to encourage belief in UFOs and that the same conspirators were tied in with the events in Dallas.

In the same article, Mr. Van Wynsberghe trashes Mark Lane for associating with "vile anti-Semites" and announces that the "rot" has set in at LOBSTER, the very useful British parapolitics magazine. The door is open, Mr. Van W reports, "to every popeyed wahoo shivering with The Truth."

I am not quite sure what a popeyed wahoo is. I certainly do not recall a "public spectacle" over Mr. Van W's conversion to the Posner/Specter camp. If he had read my article, he would have found it anti-UFO: there is no reference to a "fascist conspiracy" at any point.

So what is Mr. Van W up to, misrepresenting my article and trashing two of the best periodicals in the field?

(Wahoos and others who would like to read LOBSTER can subscribe c/o the Editor, Robin Ramsay at 214 Westbourne Ave., Hull, HU5 3JB, England. There is a good piece on Gerald Posner's imaginary interview technique (!) in the current issue.)

—Alex Cox, P.O. Box 1002,
Venice, CA 90294

PROOF AND MORE PROOF

By

Milicent Cranor

In the September issue of this journal, Dennis Ford said that I (and others) made claims about fraudulent evidence that cannot be proven or disproven. [1] In July's TFD, I provided the ultimate proof of a fraud: two tapes of the same interview, before and after doctoring; a passage lasting only 3.5 seconds was removed —almost seamlessly— from a historic statement by Governor Connally in which he says he turned to his left after hearing a shot, and saw Kennedy "slumped," after which he himself was shot, action that, according to the FBI, had been on the Zapruder film. It is now gone from that film as well. Connally's full left turn, performed before he was hit and after Kennedy was grasping at his throat, completely contradicts the single bullet theory. [2] Does Ford suggest I don't have such films? I played them before hundreds of people at COPA. Did I splice footage of an actor impersonating Connally into the film? Or put words into his mouth? NY Times writer Martin Agronsky put the same words into his mouth. FBI film expert Lyndal Shaneyfelt spent considerable time studying the Zapruder film; did he imagine this left turn which he says occurred at the exact time Connally said it did (before he revised his story)? Are witnesses only right when supporting the single bullet theory?

Ford says publishing papers like the above "lessens our standards of proof." It is instructive to examine the sort of work that meets with Ford's standards:

Dennis Ford on Gerald Posner's Case Closed:

"...scientific... brilliantly written... well-researched... a literary model for all books of this genre." [3] [emphasis added]

There is a great deal of proof in Case Closed—proof of conspiracy. But you might not know it unless you compare Posner's versions of facts and testimony with the actual source, something Dennis Ford would never suggest you do. The following samples from Posner's degenerate book show his unethical methods of discrediting eyewitnesses. For Howard Brennan he performed the opposite service.

SAMPLES FROM A "LITERARY MODEL"

Milicent Cranor
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On page 234 of Case Closed, Posner says Will Greer "slowed the vehicle to almost a standstill." Few would argue. Robert MacNeil put it more strongly, saying Greer "slammed on the brakes," [4] and this description was echoed by many witnesses, some of whom say the car swerved to the left at that time. Apparently Posner's source of information is eye witness testimony: It can't be the Zapruder film, for it shows no such thing, one more possible indication the film has been cut. The change in the car's speed is barely perceptible, except when it finally speeds up. Why is it that neither Ford nor Posner have mentioned this discrepancy?

Ford gleefully states that "[t]he most exciting aspect of Case Closed is the debunking of conspiracy theories. Posner attacks such theories in the most decisive manner, by impeaching the testimony of crucial conspiracy witnesses." Decisive or just derisive? You decide:

CAROLYN WALTHER

Carolyn Walther swore that, just before the motorcade arrived, she saw two men in a southeast window of the Depository building, one had a white shirt, blond or light brown hair, and a gun with a "short barrel and seemed large around the stock." to the left of this man, she could see a portion of another man...with a rifle...As the window was very dirty, she could not see the head...She is positive this window was not as high as the sixth floor. This second man was apparently wearing a brown suit coat..." Mrs Walther said she heard at least four shots. [5]

In an effort to discredit this witness, Gerald Posner points out that (a) she said nothing about the gunmen to her companion, Mrs. Pearl Springer, and (b) Mrs. Springer did not see the two men. [6]

Mrs. Walther said she "thought there were guards everywhere." Is it not possible that Mrs. Walther made no remark about the men because she thought their presence unremarkable? In fact, what is remarkable is that guards were not everywhere. Secondly, although her companion Mrs. Springer did not see the two men, her statement explains why: "They stood there for about fifteen minutes waiting for the parade. During that time, she looked around at the crowd but never looked up above the ground floor of [the TSBD]."[7]

ARNOLD ROWLAND

Arnold Rowland said he saw two men on the sixth floor about fifteen minutes before the motorcade came by, an

apparently white (or "light Latin") man with a gun whose face he could not see well, and a balding "elderly Negro" in the "sniper's nest." [8] His testimony presented two problems for the Commission: (a) He saw the man with the gun at a time when Oswald was said to have been elsewhere, and (b) he continued to see the Black man until very close to the time of the shooting: "Approximately 5 minutes prior to the time the motorcade, he wasn't there. About 30 seconds or a minute prior to that time he was there." [9]

Posner tries to cast doubt on Rowland's testimony because he did not comment on the "Negro gentleman" to his wife. But numerous Black employees were leaning out of windows in anticipation of seeing the President, and both Rowlands commented on this. [10] Rowland probably made no remark to his wife about the one on the sixth floor because, once again, the situation was not remarkable. But contrary to Posner's false claim, Rowland did try to report it later.

"...I told them I did see the Negro man there and they told me it didn't have any bearing or such on the case right then. In fact, they just the same as told me to forget it now." [11]

Posner also tried to discredit Rowland with seemingly damaging quotes from Mrs. Rowland.

"I know there weren't any other people on that floor looking out the windows that could be seen from the outside." [12]

Posner omitted: "I mean I know they couldn't be seen from the outside because I couldn't see them. I am nearsighted." [Emphasis added.] [13] Posner continues:

"When asked, 'Do you feel you can rely on everything that your husband says?' she replied, 'At times my husband is prone to exaggerate. Does that answer it?' [14]

Posner omits her direct reply to the question above: "I don't feel that I can rely on everything anybody says." [emphasis added] He also omits "Usually his exaggerations are not concerned with anything other than himself..." [15]

Posner also tries to discredit Rowland with false information:

"Rowland also claimed that while the gunman was standing fifteen feet back of the window, he could see all of the rifle and two thirds of the man. The author [Posner] stood at the same spot...it is impossible to see inside the sniper's nest because of the right wall, and also to see anyone more than a few feet behind the

window." [16]

As Posner himself says, Rowland said the gunman was in the west window [17] which is not the sniper's nest. On two occasions, Rowland explained the gunman stood only 3 to 5 feet back from the west window, and complained that the FBI mistakenly recorded 15 feet. [18] As for seeing the black man, he was leaning out of the east window, [19] making it unnecessary to "see inside." Posner is as sloppy as he is deceptive.

AMOS EUINS

Posner writes that "After the third shot, Euins remembered the sniper "pulled the gun back in the window." While he could not describe the shooter, he ran..." [20]

Euins said he pulled the gun back in after he heard a fourth shot. Euins' did describe the man originally, and that description corroborates Rowland's. Reporter James Underwood testified that Euins told him he was sure the shooter was a "colored man" [21], to Agent Sorrels, "he couldn't tell whether he was colored or white." [22] In Euins' statement to the Sheriff, the man became white; [23] by the time he testified before the Warren Commission, the "white man" had been reduced to a "white spot" [24] (the forerunner of the blue dot?); elsewhere, he described a man of indeterminate race with a "bald spot" [25] But there is more: "Another man told him [the policeman] he seen a man run about the back...He said the man had kind of bald spot on his head." [26] I have no opinion on the race of the man or men in the window, but it is very clear that neither the Warren Commission nor Gerald Posner pursued any leads that might contradict the case against Oswald.

HOWARD BRENNAN

Howard Brennan, the Government's star witness, testified that he only heard two shots. [27] There is nothing wrong with this—one shot can sound like two, two shots can sound like one, and four shots can sound like two—but Posner does not tell you Brennan only heard two shots. The following paragraph suggests Brennan heard three:

"He [Brennan], like many others, thought it was a backfire. "...Then came the sickening sound of the second shot...I wanted to cry, I wanted to scream, but I couldn't utter a sound." A woman next to him screamed when she realized the noises were rifle fire. Brennan's eyes locked on the solitary figure steadying his rifle for the final shot. "He was aiming again and I

wanted to pray, to beg God to somehow make him miss the target... Then another shot rang out." Brennan hit the ground, afraid there would be more gunfire. The President's car started to speed away. He looked up at the window a final time. "To my amazement the man still stood there in the window. He didn't appear to be rushed..." [28]

The above is a composite of two separate descriptions of the same shot, the second and last one heard by Brennan; it gives the impression that the second description refers to a third shot. Or did Brennan change his story?

Posner glosses over a far greater problem with this witness—his ability to distinguish one man from another, both of whom he saw up close and spoke with: Inspector J. Herbert Sawyer, and Secret Service agent Forrest Sorrels. Who provided the description of the man in the window at 12:45 to Sawyer? And whom did Brennan give his description to shortly after the shooting? According to Posner, "Brennan mistakenly called the plain clothes officer "Sorrels," the name of a Secret Service agent he met about fifteen minutes after he met Inspector Sawyer." [29] But Brennan never said he met a second Secret Service agent after the first. It is one thing to confuse names, and another for a star witness to confuse faces.

Brennan testified that the same man at the car who took down his description (Sawyer?) also took him to the sheriff's office (Sorrels).

Brennan said that within seconds of the last shot, he ran to an officer who "had to give some orders or something on the east side of the building on Houston Street. And then he had taken me to, I believe, Mr. Sorrels, an automobile sitting in front of the Texas Book Store...I related my information and there was a few minutes of discussion, and Mr. Sorrels had taken me then across the street to the sheriff's building." [30] Sorrels testified that he returned to the Depository building and was directed to Brennan whom he interviewed, and then took to the Sheriff's office. [31]

Inspector Sawyer did not identify Brennan as the man who came up to him with a description, not even with hindsight; Sawyer said he never saw him again. [32] Surely Sawyer would have seen Brennan again and again. He described the witness as "white, around 35" and could remember nothing more. [33] If Brennan had been the man, wouldn't Sawyer have mentioned something as emblematic as his hardhat? James Jarman, Harold Norman, and Sorrels said Brennan was wearing it at the time he was talking to the police, leading them

to characterize him as a "construction worker with a hardhat."

Another reason to suspect the witness was not Brennan: Asked about the gunman's clothes, Sawyer replied to his dispatcher, "Current witness can't remember that." [34] But Brennan had been very specific, saying the gunman wore "light colored clothes, more of a khaki color." [35]; and his pants were "similar to the same color of the shirt or a little lighter...that was another thing I called their attention to at the lineup...That he was not dressed in the same clothes that I saw the man in the window." [36] Sorrels testified that Brennan described the gunman's clothes to him. [37] Was Brennan's memory prompted, or did he only speak with Sorrels? Sorrels says he returned from the hospital within 20 minutes after the shots, i.e., 12:50, just five minutes after the gunman's description was broadcast. [38]

ANOTHER FILM CUT?

Photographic evidence that could have cleared up the mystery has disappeared. Consider this fascinating exchange between Commissioner Belin and Brennan:

...I believe you said that the car that you talked to the Secret Service agent in was at point "G" approximately? Right.

Now, are these accurate or approximate locations, Mr. Brennan?

Well, don't you have photographs of me talking to the Secret Service men right here?

I don't believe so.

You should have. It was on television before I got home—my wife saw it.

On television?

Yes.

At this time we do not have them. Do you remember what station they were on television?

No. But they had it. And I called I believe Mr. Lish [FBI] who requested that he cut those films or get them cut of the FBI. I believe you might know about them. Somebody cut those films, because a number of times later the same films were shown, and that part was cut." [39]

Once again, it seems that critical seconds were cut out of a film. It would have shown Brennan talking to either Sorrels or Sawyer. What difference would it make? If it was Sawyer, it would prove that Brennan mixed up two people. If it was Sorrels, it would prove that Sorrels got back faster than he says

he did, but so what? It would prove that a witness other than Brennan reported a gunman with perhaps too many specifics to be observed from such a distance. What else was on that film? It would have shown the front of the TSBD within minutes of the shooting.

CONCLUSION

A president of the United States has been violently cut out of office. Action contradictory to the official version of this event has been cut out of films and testimony. Effective critics are cut out of the media. The truth has been cut to pieces, and now some very strange people want to keep us from examining the pieces. What next?

Notes

1. Dennis Ford, Letter to the Editor, *The Fourth Decade*, Vol.1,#6, September, 1994, pp. 30, 31.
2. Milicent Cranor, "FBI Copy of Z Film," *The Fourth Decade*, Vol.1,#5, July, 1994, pp. 38,39.
3. Back Currents, 1/93
4. Robert MacNeil, *The Way We Were* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 1988).
5. Warren Commission Hearings and Exhibits, vol. 24, p. 522. References from this source cited hereafter in format: 24H522.
6. Gerald Posner, *Case Closed*, (New York: Random House, 1993) p.231.
7. 24H523.
8. 2H188.
9. 2H178.
10. 2H175.
11. 2H183.
12. Posner, *Case Closed*, p. 231.
13. 6H185.
14. Posner, *Case Closed*, p. 231.
15. 6H192.
16. Posner, *Case Closed*, p. 231.
17. 2H169.
18. 2H171,182.
19. 2H175.
20. Posner, *Case Closed*, page 247.
21. 6H170.
22. 7H349.
23. CE 367.
24. 2H208.
25. 2H204.
26. 2H205.
27. 3H144.
28. Posner, *Case Closed*, p. 248.
29. Posner, *Case Closed*, p. 249. CC 249, Sawyer/Sorrels
30. 3H145.
31. 7H349.
32. 6H317. 3H197,207.
33. 3H197,207.
34. 7H348.
35. 3H144,161.
36. 3H144, 161.
37. 6H317.
38. 7H348.
39. 3H150.

WHO'S KILLING THE TRUTH?

by

Harrison E. Livingstone

In his article in The Fourth Decade (January, 1995) reviewing my book, Killing The Truth, Gary Mack makes repeated misrepresentations. He implies but does not say that I did not in fact measure, draw, and observe the long bullet scar on the sidewalk on the north side of Elm near the lamppost. I have a very precise record of that which I performed in the early Seventies. I think it more than passing strange that as soon as I conducted my study of it, and the fact that the bullet scar pointed to the old storm drain on the south end of the overpass, the block of cement was removed and is in the possession of Gary Mack himself, with claimed fabric in the cement which, he says, discounts the possibility of a bullet strike there. How come this is not in the National Archives? Why does he not ship it there? Does he plan to exhibit it with the mummy of some important person at a future carnival? The storm drain was then paved over, completing the obliteration of this important piece of our history.

To answer his question about my "careless research" of the bullet scar, which is one more piece of evidence I cannot get at because it is in Mack's closet along with the Bronson film, is that yes, in my opinion, there is no question but that it is a bullet scar. But I am no expert and have no way of knowing other than from comparisons in my mind's eye with previously seen bullet scars on sidewalks. The presence of fabric in the cement proves nothing at all, except that all sorts of trash gets into freshly laid cement, along with the dog and hand prints and expressions of love and identity written with sticks. Does Mack deal with the fact that it pointed to the storm drain? In all of his brilliant wisdom in this case, did he study that himself before he removed it? He fails to deal with this issue but instead attacks me on a side issue of fibers in the cement.

He states that my last book presented a "bizarre collection of false and misleading information that has no basis in fact." What is that information? How come the book got past one of the best libel lawyers in the United States? Is Mack so afraid of the new scientific information about to be published in my

new book? I'm very glad that Mack has told us several instances of his personal blocking of my research into the Bronson film and other areas. Again, he has this film? How? Why? First he seems to say that Bronson's lawyer Sigalos has it, but then it is clear that Mack has it himself, and then got a cold so that the police officers working with me were unable to see it when they were in town. We tried repeatedly to see it. How come Mack has it and Sigalos or his lawyer does not? That is what he says in this article in The Fourth Decade. How come his Bronson film is not in the National Archives?

Does Mack answer or deal with the fact that the FBI report on the film stated that it does not show the assassination sequence, and that my interview with Bronson was accurate when he denied that the film could have possibly shown the assassination sequence because he was taking snapshots of the murder? His photos were published.

The plain facts are that Robert Groden has repeatedly promised to introduce "never before seen" films of the assassination, and he and Mack fielded a film now known as the Bronson film which cannot exist, except for the final moment when Jackie is on the trunk, when Bronson got his camera going. Mack's own writing in this article makes it clear that he cannot explain or dare show this film to anyone seriously studying it. Why is it not in the National Archives at this point?

Mack is the man who put forward a tape he and Mary Ferrell claimed contained the actual shots of the assassination. This tape was calculated to explode in our faces, as it did. They, along with Robert Groden, even complied with the Committee's needs in placing a motorcycle where it could not be. Mack was filmed listening to the tape and announcing each shot with a strike downward of his hand. Now he tells us that this was a mistake. I never read or saw his retraction, and those issues of TCI, which Mack edited, were and are unavailable. A little late, don't you think, to retract it and make a new claim entirely without foundation: "I wrote in his March 1980 issue...that the noises I thought were shots were actually in an earlier part of the recording" (that's Show Biz!), when the National Science Foundation and the very policeman he and Ferrell and Groden needed to record the shots proved that it could not have happened? A little late, after misleading not just the United States House of Representatives and their committee on assassination, but the entire nation?

Does Mack answer directly in this article the charge that

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there are no sirens for two full minutes on that tape after the shooting obviously had to have happened, after Decker lets us know in no uncertain terms he has got to get his men up on the overpass to see what happened there? This is what puts the lie to his false tape. He can stand behind it until doomsday, but it goes to the trash heap along with his Bronson film.

As for my "antics" at the JAMA press conference, I received wide spread praise for mounting what many called the only effective on the spot criticism of the abortion that occurred there. My statements were calm and well reasoned, and good enough to be carried that night on Dan Rather's CBS news, as well as CNBC that night. I made such a good impression, in fact, that my own press conference the following week was packed so greatly with all the same newsmen that the physician, Dr. Larry Altman, who is the medical reporter for the NY Times, had to stand on a chair for two hours. It was so packed that I did not see Mack's close associate, Robert Groden, in the room handing out mug shots of me, thus shooting down my credibility at perhaps the most important moment of the entire case in the last thirty years, as I presented for the first time some of the autopsy witnesses who denounced the photographs and X-rays. JAMA had no witnesses.

As for Mack's attack on Madeleine Brown, stating that I am a questionable judge of character because I accept some of what he says, Madeleine is a fine person. The false and politically inspired charges against Madeleine Brown, common in the way Texas does things, were thrown out of court, and therefore Mack's statements are not only false but show his constant mistakes and incompetence to the detriment of his victims and this country.

I have no question but the main evidence Madeleine Brown puts forward about LBJ's foreknowledge of the assassination is correct. Mack is more interested in protecting LBJ, so he falsely attacks the personal character of a 78 year old lady—an important witness. Even Jim Marrs will do battle with Mack on that one, and defend Madeleine and what she says in these pages.

Mack's credibility is blown by his own words and actions. This latest foray into the realm of criticism reveals him as an intellectual flyweight. R.I.P.



Page 33A

Pearl Harbor survivor

Phillip Willis dies at 76 Pilot captured 1st U.S. POW of WWII

By Joe Simmacher

Staff Writer of The Dallas Morning News

Phillip L. "Phil" Willis, 76, whose patrol captured the United States' first World War II prisoner the day after the Pearl Harbor attack, died Friday of leukemia at his Dallas home.

In civilian life, Mr. Willis served two terms in the Texas Legislature. His amateur photos taken during the Kennedy assassination were studied by the Warren Commission.

Mr. Willis was honored in Dallas in December with a Pearl Harbor Day fly-by of vintage aircraft. He had told friends that he wanted to see a fly-by before he died.

The Kaufman native was stationed at Bellows Field in Hawaii on Dec. 7, 1941, when the Japanese

attacked Pearl Harbor.

Second Lt. Willis was still in the tuxedo he had worn to a farewell celebration at the officers' club just hours before the 5:55 a.m. attack.

That Sunday he had planned to escort the body of a close friend back to Tulsa, Okla., for burial. He planned to remain on the mainland and get married in a few weeks.

"At first, we thought somebody was playing hell on maneuvers, but then we saw the red ball on the sides of the Japanese Zeros," he told *The Dallas Morning News* in 1975.

Short of sleep and suffering the effects of parrying into the morning, Mr. Willis couldn't find his shoes and opted for his cowboy Please see WWII on Page 37A.

WWII war veteran, legislator Phil Willis dies at 76 of leukemia

Continued from Page 33A.

boots. "We Texans die with our boots on," he recalled telling a friend at the time.

Assigned to the Army Air Corps' 86th Observation Squadron, Mr. Willis initially saved his aircraft by quickly getting it airborne during the first attack. Hugging the treetops in his unarmed aircraft, he saw the Zeros buzzing all over Pearl Harbor. The next morning, his plane was destroyed in a second attack.

Afterward, Mr. Willis — staying awake on coffee, cigarettes and adrenaline — took a group of enlisted men to patrol the beach for an anticipated invasion of Japanese soldiers.

The Japanese used five two-man submarines as part of the attack. Mr. Willis' beach patrol captured a Japanese sailor, Kazuo Sakamaki, who had sought refuge on the beach after his sub hit a reef. The sailor was America's first prisoner of World War II and the only one of the Pearl Harbor attack, according to Walter Lord's book *Day of Infamy*.

Just 23 and fresh from pilot school, Mr. Willis moved quickly from observation aircraft to fighting aircraft, eventually flying 52 combat missions in a B-17 bomber.

Because of a back injury he suffered when he was shot down over the Pacific, Mr. Willis retired in 1946 as a major. He was 27.

"At first, we thought

somebody was playing hell on maneuvers, but then we saw the red ball on the sides of the Japanese Zeros."

— Phillip L. Willis, recalling Pearl Harbor

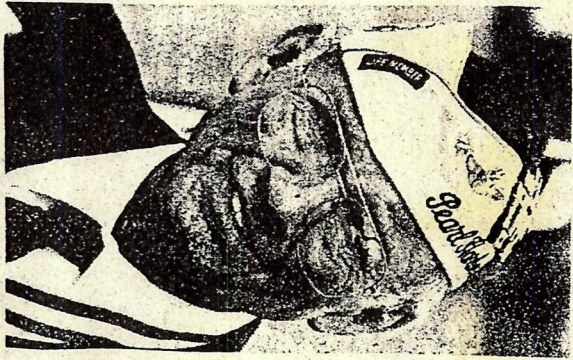
He shot down eight enemy planes, sank four ships and received 16 citations, including two Silver Stars for gallantry in action and a Distinguished Flying Cross. He lost no crew members during two bomber crashes.

When he returned to Texas, he enrolled at North Texas State University, now the University of North Texas, and earned a bachelor's in government in 1948. He was elected to the Legislature in 1946 and 1948. He and his brother, Doyle Willis of Fort Worth, are the only brothers to have served in the Texas House simultaneously.

After serving in Austin, Mr. Willis worked in the real estate business, built civil defense shelters and sold new cars.

On Nov. 22, 1963, Mr. Willis again witnessed history, this time in Dallas with his wife and two daughters.

The family selected a position at the end of the JFK parade route to avoid the crowds, he said in the book *Pictures of the Pair*, by Rich-



Phillip L. Willis ... served two terms in the Texas Legislature.

"I figured that would be the ideal spot," he said in the book. "I wanted them to see him and get some pictures. I had no idea what I was getting into."

Mr. Willis' motorcade photos of the assassination moments were studied by government and private researchers. He and his daughter Linda Kay later testified before the Warren Commission.

Mr. Willis is survived by his wife, Marilyn Willis of Dallas; two daughters, Linda Kay Pipes of Houston and Rosemary Roach of Amarillo; his brother, Doyle Willis; and four grandchildren.

Services will be at noon Monday in Restland Funeral Home's Memorial Chapel. Burial will follow in Restland Memorial Park.

Memorials may be made to the Leukemia Society of America, 2651 N. Harwood St., Suite 240, Dallas, Texas 75201.