

JFK Assassination FORUM

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INSIDE

Conspiracy to kill

The latest book on the assassination of President Kennedy suggest it is more likely he was the victim of a conspiracy. In Weekend James Downey summarises its conclusions.



As the U.S. Department of Justice agonizes over what action to take on a new investigation into the JFK assassination there is otherwise a deafening silence of news and developments on the general subject. As David Truby's timely article points out perhaps more mundane obsessions such as World Peace, rampant inflation and terrorist activities has relegated Dallas to the back of Joe Public's mind. This may very well be the case but if authors and publishing houses have anything to do with it this will surely change soon as we are promised a glut of new titles over the next few months. Amongst these offerings will be: Beyond Conspiracy by Peter Dale Scott, Paul Hoch, et al (a paperback which will examine the efforts and verdicts of the HSCA). Its Chief Counsel, Robert Blakey, will unveil his account, No Stone unturned, from Times Books, and the long-promised tome from David Lifton under the title, Aspects of an Assassination is also promised soon. We will also look forward with great expectations to two more academic, fact-filled volumes - a classic, definitive(?) bibliography of JFK assassination items from Professor David Wrone and a combined Warren Hearings/HSCA Hearings/Appendices Index from Sylvia Meagher assisted by Gary Owens. News and details of all of these - hopefully- in our next issue.

Meantime, on this side of the Atlantic, Anthony Summers, has stolen a march by publishing Conspiracy: Who Killed President Kennedy? in mid-May. A more detailed analysis next time. It has appeared to mixed reviews and we reproduce one of the more objective overleaf. In only two weeks it has climbed up to the head of the best-sellers lists in paperback. A shrewd move to simultaneously publish in BOTH hardback AND paperback! (U.S. readers may be interested to learn that the (unconfirmed!) word is that it will be published around June 1980 in hardback from McGraw-Hill @ \$14.95(?)).

P.S. Perhaps the best news of all on the book front is that Richard E. Sprague's The Taking of America 1.2.3. will be available in a revised, second edition!!!!

THE OTHER CHEEK

by J. David Truby

Did you read that the Justice Department is going to back into a sort of look-see about some of the murder of John F. Kennedy? If anything significant or even looking like the truth comes out of that, I will personally eat an entire edition of the New York Times.... well done, without salt or comment.

Like the Warren Commission and the HSCA, the Justice Department is putting on investigative blinders to severely limit what it sees. They will look only at "technical findings" and stay away from "the conflicts". I think they will steer very clear of the truth, too.

My friend Guido Garboon, a streetwise crook, snickered and told me, "Hey, I wish I was one of the boys mixed up in the JFK job.... I'd still have the government covering for me, too, just 'cause I used to do other jobs for them." Garboon allows that the Justice Department's limited look into the case is like local police trying to stop speeders by examining the material composition of the roadways drivers race on.

It's a good gamble by the men who really run things in America. Frankly, I think they're right when they gamble that the public doesn't really give

CONSPIRACY: WHO KILLED PRESIDENT KENNEDY? By Anthony Summers, Gollanz, 59.95 (UK price).

WHEN PRESIDENT KENNEDY was murdered, in one of the episodes of his enemies, the thought flitted across the minds of many if not most Europeans that the assassination had probably been carried out in pursuance of a Right-wing plot.

Americans from the beginning seem to have viewed it differently. Perhaps because of the circumstances in which several previous Presidents were murdered, perhaps because they were more susceptible to the theory of a single, "hot" assassin. From these differing viewpoints, many misunderstandings have since arisen.

Both views were thrown into confusion almost immediately following the assassination of Kennedy and of a Dallas policeman, J.D. Tippit, on the same afternoon. The one man arrested, Lee Harvey Oswald — against whom there appeared to be a tremendous weight of circumstantial evidence — turned out to have lived in Russia, to have brought home to the United States a Russian wife (with much quick and easy cooperation from the Soviet authorities, who are notoriously difficult in such matters) and to have had some kind of links with Cuba. It appeared to many that, if there was a plot, it was a plot of the Left and not of the Right. But apart from the inherent implausibility of an assassin having been hired or motivated by the Russians — or even the

Who Killed Kennedy?

THE LATEST book about the assassination of President Kennedy suggests it is far more likely he was killed as a result of a conspiracy rather than by an individual. JAMES DOWNEY summarises its conclusions.

to believe that some half-crazed, insecure person — and there was plenty of instability in Oswald's background — had murdered Kennedy in the same way that similar people had murdered other Presidents. And that very way out was given a powerful impetus during the year that followed by the Warren Commission, set up by President Johnson, chaired by the Chief Justice of the United States, and composed of some of the wealthiest and most respected people in the country.

When Warren reported in late 1964, a year after the assassination, that Kennedy had indeed been killed by Oswald

and proceedings by some of the commission members. Suspicion grew that the members had decided on the "hot" theory at the very beginning and were determined to make the evidence fit the theory.

Two years later, in 1966, this viewpoint was argued forcefully in a celebrated book, "Dash to Judgment", by Mark Lane, who had been briefly accused by Oswald's mother. His book set out to prove not only that the commission had done its work badly, but that Oswald was innocent. It was highly praised by eminent persons on this side of the Atlantic, but its impact in the United States was negligible. Lane even had to find a British publisher, not an American.

IN THE YEAR that followed there were other books, but few were hit-sellers. There were many newspaper and magazine articles, but these mostly concentrated on the sensational aspects of the affair — like the remarkable number of people on his fringes who died untimely and mysterious deaths — and made few efforts to fit the pieces together. It was not until the middle and late sixties that serious investigation was renewed, first by the Senate Intelligence Committee, then by the Congress Assassinations Committee; and even these were far from satisfactory. When Jay Anthony Summers was researching the present work, he was astonished to find that people who had relevant stories to tell had never before been interviewed, either by the authorities or the media. If they had, and if the investigative agencies of the United States had been as honest and painstaking as his, it is impossible to believe that the "hot assassin" theory could have survived so long.

And it must surely be impossible, or almost so, for anybody with an open mind to read this book and still refuse to believe that there was no conspiracy.

Free by careful piece — the research he adds up to a staggering amount of work — Mr. Summers begins with the assassination itself and works his way through the subsequent and previous events in Dallas and those other sinister cities, Miami and New Orleans, through Oswald's strange background and career, through the activities of the CIA, the Mafia and the Cuban exiles, back to the Bay of Pigs and forward to Watergate. He does not tie up all the loose ends — he makes no claim to do so, and it may be now be impossible — but he does enough to establish an overwhelming case that the murder of Kennedy was the climax of a carefully-laid plot by the Mafia, the anti-Castro Cubans, and elements of the CIA.

He does even more than that. He suggests that the conspiracy succeeded in one of its chief aims, to change American policy by someone Kennedy from the scene, and that the events in Dallas on November 22nd, 1963, altered for the worse the course of modern history.

OF WHAT CAME OUT of that appalling Pandora's box, more later. First to the mysteries which have not been cleared up, and may never be cleared up.

These mainly hinge on Oswald himself. Was he part of the plot at all? If so, was he one of Kennedy's assassins? Or was he merely a "patsy"? Whatever one chooses to believe, some of his behaviour falls fit into any clear pattern.

Did he, as at first appeared, maintain his sanity, leaving himself open to attack? The obvious answer would of course seem to be "yes". He did go to Russia, where his relations with the authorities were good; he did hand out leaflets in New Orleans calling for "fast play for



Dallas nightclub owner, Jack Ruby, who shot Lee Harvey Oswald.

openly about killing the President and "training" a "patsy".

THE MAFIA had close relations with some of the Cuban exiles in Miami who in turn had their long-standing friends in the CIA. One of these was Howard Hunt, who was later to make a major appearance in the Watergate affair. It is unclear how much he knew about the lead and wonderful plot to murder Castro, but he certainly blamed the CIA, with extreme bitterness, for the Bay of Pigs fiasco; the exiles were a lawless band in Florida; he wanted to normalise relations with Cuba, if for no other reason than to prevent Cuban subversion in Latin America; and he wanted an accommodation with the Russians, and to avoid a deeper involvement in Vietnam (where, by the time taken, the Americans, whether or not with Kennedy's acquiescence, were involved in the murder of another President).

It was negotiating secretly with Castro, using as his intermediary Ambassador William Attwood — who now says that Mr. Summers' book has convinced him there was "a plausible trail of evidence leading to a conspiracy". Did word of Mr. Attwood's negotiations leak out? And was this the match that set fire to the fuse? That now seems highly probable. The conspiracy failed in what seems to have been one of its immediate objectives: to bring about an American invasion of Cuba and the overthrow of the Castro Government. But in a wider and a very dreadful sense, it succeeded all too well.

US-CUBAN RELATIONS were never normalised. Ronald Reagan, who may well be the next President, talks of blocking the island, Castro's political and economic dependence on the Russian's



increased, he exports his criminals to Miami, where the profession is overcrowded, while his troops act as the "Browns" from time to time. Johnson, who might have been a great President, was destroyed by Vietnam, and the horrors multiplied in South-East Asia. The American Government fell into the hands of a criminal, then of incompetent, mediocre, frightened for a time, only to be evicted by one of the most East-West confrontations of our times.

Did all these terrible consequences flow directly from those bullets in Dallas? Not only Americans but Europeans must recoil from such a conclusion. It is hard to believe that world history can be changed, and so greatly for the worse, by a suicidal criminal conspiracy. Yet that is the conclusion that faces those on the reader of this admirable and chilling book. To invent consequences where none exist is taken as a mark of the madman; but to deny them in the face of overwhelming evidence is the mark of a foolhardy or a closed mind.

Mr. Summers does more than remind us how such human affairs are subject to time, chance and malice; he reminds us how important it is to find out the truth. The full truth has not yet been disclosed, and it will be no small part of his contribution if his book provokes a further and more determined effort to dig it out.



Lee Harvey Oswald after his arrest in Dallas in connection with the assassination.

Cubans — no evidence was ever brought forward to suggest any such thing. The prime suspect never told his story. He was himself murdered by a shady character, Jack Ruby, in circumstances which suggested at least extreme negligence, and in all likelihood corruption, on the part of the Dallas police.

Ruby had ties with the Mafia. So within a couple of days of the assassination there were as possible elements of a plot: the Mafia; the Dallas police; anti-communist reactionaries in the Southern United States; the Russians and the Cuban Communists. To this list of a few extremes, and others who added the new President, Lyndon Johnson, but the idea of his complicity was not taken seriously by reasonable people.

IT WAS ALL rather too much for the average American, or the average Irish, or, to trap, it was such a



Transfers Union leader, Jimmy Hoffa (above), had bitter confrontation with Robert Kennedy (left) long before his brother became President.

a damn anymore about who really was behind the JFK killing. Inflation, Iran and gasoline prices are on our minds today. These men have gotten away with murder. I still don't like the idea, though. And, I am really upset that our major news media continue to promote the coverup. But, finally, at long last, I now understand WHY the major national news media could care less about the truth behind JFK's death. It took Mike Wallace's honesty to make me see that.

There's a feisty national magazine known as Mother Jones. They do some great investigative journalism, e.g. breaking both the Karen Silkwood and Ford Pinto stories before the Media Giants knew what was happening. Jeffrey Klein did a tough interview with Mike Wallace for Mother Jones. Klein easily out-wallaced Wallace in tough questions pointing out specific sacret cattle in whose stool Wallace and CBS feared to tread. In candid fashion, Wallace said he was a member of the establishment press covering establishment stories from an establishment point of view. He said the establishment press never goes after the establishment body. Mike Wallace said openly that he never questions any of the premises of the society in which he lives. Wow!

He's right. For all its pizzazz, "60 Minutes" would ignore Richard Helms' murderous lies, Henry Kissinger's deception that's behind erupting gasoline prices and the Iranian crisis, or the truth of Nelson Rockefeller, et. al. Mike Wallace and "60 Minutes" are premium grade chewing gum for the slightly higher class mind bored with "The Gong Show".

Here's what happened, then. The Power Control Group within the establishment had tried without success to cajole, bribe and then blackmail John Kennedy into their circle. Later, they heard the Mob was going to use some ex-CIA contract gunmen to shoot the President. They turned their heads and simply let it happen - a blessing of non-action and of silence. Today, they are still covering up what really happened in Dallas.

To these men war is more profitable than peace, while inflation and unemployment make more money for them than sense for the rest of us.

A poor man kills someone and is often executed for it, while a man in uniform is often given a medal for the same act. Sometimes he gets more medals for the more people he kills. Meantime, a rich man has someone hire someone who hires someone else to get some people to shoot a President. He is deadly sure his Country Club Cousins will close silent ranks behind him. He's right. That's how it works. Mike Wallace was right. You know only what you are supposed to know. Establishment America will now finally lay to rest the death of John F. Kennedy, and hire the Justice Department to throw the final shovelfuls of dirt over the facts of the conspiracy responsible for his death.

Obviously, muck and murder are only in the eye of the raker!



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