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Back cover illustration: Journalistic Apocrypha?

The Warren Commission published (as Commission Exhibits 1362 and 1363) these stories from Dallas newspapers which included references to the fact that the November 22 motorcade would make the fateful detour from Main onto Houston and Elm Streets. In this issue Cwiek reviews other evidence that no such advance routing information was available to news media, and asks us to consider the possibility that these may have been "fake" copies of the relevant news items.

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THE MOTORCADE ROUTE STORIES THAT NEVER WERE

by
Timothy Cwiek*

It is generally recognized in the critical research community that many photographs associated with the JFK murder are not authentic: most notably the backyard photograph of Lee Oswald and his paraphernalia. In the September 1986 issue of this Journal, this researcher attempted to cast doubt on the authenticity of the Pulitzer prize winning photo of Oswald being shot, which is perhaps the single most memorable photograph of that weekend in Dallas.

In this article, I would like to direct the attention of the research community to a realm which has hitherto gone unexplored: the concept that many news articles we accept as evidence also may be fake. In particular, I want to examine the three articles supposedly appearing in the Dallas papers shortly before the assassination, publicizing the motorcade's double detour onto Houston, then Elm Streets.

The Warren Report cited two articles of November 19, 1963, from the Dallas Times Herald and the Dallas Morning News, as evidence that Oswald could easily have known the motorcade would come right below his warehouse window.¹ The articles, which purportedly mentioned the zigzag turn, were quietly entered into evidence as Exhibits 1362 and 1363;² (see the back cover illustration, this issue) there was no public testimony about these articles in the records of the Commission.

The third article I wish to examine is actually a front page diagram of the route which supposedly appeared in the final edition of the Times Herald on November 21, 1963. This article is mentioned nowhere in the Warren Commission volumes, but it can be seen in microfilm records of that newspaper.

The major reason to question the legitimacy of these articles is the fact that no original clippings or intact newspapers carrying them exists, to this researcher's knowledge. The National Archives boasts that it has a 10-foot high stack of press clippings and intact Dallas newspapers in its Warren Commission files.³ But a search by curator Marion Johnson revealed that this collection does not include any original newspapers or clippings predicting the double detour onto Houston, then Elm. Even Exhibits 1362 and 1363 are "electrostatic copies of clippings," Johnson wrote to this researcher.⁴

In addition, none of the many witnesses who testified to the Commission or its attorneys ever mentioned seeing such news articles in the papers before the event. Indeed, Governor John Connally, who had more than a passing interest in the matter, claimed he never was informed about the exact route of the motorcade!⁵

On November 19, according to researcher Joachim Joesten, the local papers speculated on the route of the motorcade, but the dog-leg turn was not mentioned.⁶ Dallas police chief Jesse Curry was warned not to release any details of the motorcade route to the papers. This was a departure from Fort Worth, whose police chief released that city's motorcade route to the press. But Curry was mindful that right-wing extremists had almost assaulted Adlai Stevenson in Dallas a few weeks earlier, and he followed orders: "(Secret Service agent Winston) Lawson informed me that since the route had not been finalized, no statement was to be made by my department as to the motorcade route" Curry revealed in his memoirs.⁷

But if Commission Exhibits 1362 and 1363 are authentic, we must believe that some unidentified person notified the Dallas papers four days before the visit of the exact route, including the dogleg turn. Just who would have leaked such privileged information has never been answered, nor evidently was it even questioned by the Warren Commission. It would have been a fundamental question for the publishers of the newspapers: "Look, guys, who leaked the motorcade

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route?" An answer to this question also may have helped the Commission conclude just who decided the motorcade would take the strange dogleg; a matter about which the Commissioners never arrived at any satisfactory conclusion.

The Times Herald article stated that a "White House representative" released the information, but no Kennedy associate has ever come forward to say he did. The Times Herald article also claimed that the paper scooped a press conference supposedly to be held in Washington at 4 p.m. November 19, announcing details of the Dallas trip.

An obvious question: Why would a press conference be planned for Washington to give details that presumably only local visitors would be interested in? There were no such Washington press conferences for the other cities on the Texas itinerary. Jerry Bruno, the advance man for the Texas trip, was in Washington that day, but in his memoirs he makes no mention of such a press conference to release the motorcade route.⁸ Bruno was not questioned by the Warren Commission, but in his book he says nothing about a "White House representative" releasing the double detour to the press.

Another question: If the papers did obtain scoops on the motorcade route after much speculation, why did the hot information not merit its own story? Instead, the information was supposedly included at the tail end of a Page 1 Morning News article about who would sit where at the luncheon; in the Times Herald on November 19 it was published on page 13 at the end of a similar story. Would this downplaying satisfy the Commissioners as to why no one testified that he read such information in the papers?

Another reason to doubt that the exact route would have been released is the Warren Commission testimony of Secret Service agent Lawson. In the Warren Report, Lawson is quoted as saying the route was planned along main thoroughfares because "it afforded us a chance to have alternative routes if something happened along the motorcade route."⁹ The route never was etched in stone after all. So just who would release the treacherous double detour as if it were a matter of course, practically committing the President to a route that was supposed to stay loose and easy? The fact is that the motorcade easily could have reached the Trade Mart by staying on Main and using Industrial to the Mart; it did not have to use the double detour. I accept the argument that Stemmons Freeway would be a more attractive ride to the Mart, thereby necessitating the dogleg turn onto Elm. But if it was decided that things would be more attractive and convenient with the slowdown and detour, who would blast such a sensitive decision to the papers? Governor Connally, writing in Life magazine, blamed it on JFK's "advance men."¹⁰ But, as already stated, Jerry Bruno, the key advance man, mentions nothing about such a release to the local press. And Kenneth O'Donnell, the President's chief appointment scheduler, testified to the Commission¹¹ that he thought Governor Connally's office handled such releases to the press!

This researcher took it upon himself to do something that should have been done 22 years ago and asked the publisher of the Morning News who might have provided them with the scoop. But a response from Managing Editor Bill Evans explained that "No one recalls the agency that released information on the motorcade." Evans also stated that "We cannot determine if the Nov. 19 story appeared in all editions of this newspaper," a question with which the Commission also never grappled.¹² What I neglected to ask Mr. Evans (because I was not aware of the discrepancy at that time) was why the very same reporter (Carl Freund) who supposedly reported the Houston/Elm detour in the News story of November 19 would file a story for November 20 publication in which he describes the motorcade route but omits reference to the detour.¹³ Didn't Carl Freund even read his own dispatches?

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Joachim Joesten, the noted writer, travelled to Dallas immediately after the assassination to cover the story for a European publication. One of the first things he noticed was the fact that no Dallas newspapers warned of the dangerously slow turn through Dealey Plaza before the assassination. He spotlighted this situation in the first chapter of his book, to cast doubt on the preparations supposedly made by Oswald.¹⁴ Joesten wrote that he visited the offices of the Times Herald and Morning News but could find no articles predicting the double detour, although he found the November 19 articles giving the basic route down Main Street. Puzzled, he wrote to Earl Warren on December 11, 1963, that Oswald could not possibly have known about the hairpin turn.¹⁵ We know that the Warren Commission must have been concerned by Joesten's telegram. At a January 27 top secret executive session, Commissioner John J. McCloy pacified doubts by Senator Russell of Oswald's capabilities by noting that the Nov. 21 diagram appeared in a Dallas paper.¹⁶ But why was this paper (presumably the Times Herald) with its front page diagram never entered as evidence in the Commission files? Perhaps all the issues were sold out that day; but I think it's safe to assume that the Warren Commission would have at its disposal resources to secure at least one copy for the files. Also, why could Joesten not locate any such paper, and why did nobody in the news offices inform him of such a front-page diagram, if it truly existed? Why have we never seen such a paper in a collection or repository of Dallas material?

Dr. John Lattimer, in his book on the Lincoln and Kennedy assassinations, featured a photograph of a microfilm copy of this diagram, but he noted that it did not appear in every edition of the paper, only in the "later editions."¹⁷ The author wrote to Dr. Lattimer for clarification on the editions, but was told "I have moved on to other researches and can't readily find the answers about the newspaper edition."¹⁸

Front page changes usually are made to accommodate late-breaking news. Why would the newspapers change a front page to include information they supposedly had three days earlier? Letters to the Times Herald for edification on this matter have gone unanswered.

Another reason to doubt this diagram's existence is an article in the November 22 Times Herald Final Edition, published immediately after the assassination, stating that President Kennedy was supposed to have travelled on Industrial to reach the Trade Mart.¹⁹ If this diagram, which clearly shows Stemmons Freeway as the route to the Trade Mart, appeared before November 22, why would the reporter say that Industrial was to have been used?

One edition of a newspaper that clearly does exist in several collections is the Dallas Morning News of November 22, 1963, featuring the upcoming visit and a front page diagram of the motorcade route. This paper, which many people saved for obvious reasons after the assassination, does not show the detour onto Elm Street! If the Morning News received their scoop and published it on November 19, why wasn't it figured into the diagram of November 22? Evidently it was never mentioned again. Why would the News allow its competitor, the Times Herald, to get away with a more detailed and accurate diagram, informing readers of this birdseye view as the motorcade would have to slow down for the detour? It simply doesn't make sense. (I might also add here that the Commission knew about this Morning News diagram, but when it reproduced that particular front page in the Exhibits,²⁰ it conveniently excised the diagram from the rest of the page.)

I hope that the questions I have raised in this brief article have made researchers aware of the possibility that newspaper articles we have been using to study events surrounding the assassination have been the objects of tampering. As a former reporter for a daily newspaper, I know how easy it would be to create a mock article and headline, place it on the top of an original article, and

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photograph it for microfilm purposes. The process is not that involved. Regrettably, this is one more area in which we must exercise caution while studying President Kennedy's assassination.

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Footnotes

1. Report of the Warren Commission (New York: Bantam Books, 1964), p. 54.
2. Warren Commission Hearings and Exhibits, vol. 22 pp. 614, 615. References from this source cited hereafter in format: 22H614,615.
3. "Inventory of the Records of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy," compiled by Marion Johnson, (Washington: General Services Administration, 1973), p. 7.
4. Letter from Marion M. Johnson to the author, August 29, 1986.
5. Joachim Joesten, Oswald: Assassin or Fall Guy? (New York: Marzani and Munsell, 1964), p. 19; quoted from an article in New York Herald Tribune of November 29, 1963.
6. Joesten, Oswald, p. 17.
7. Retired Police Chief Jesse Curry, JFK Assassination File, privately printed, 1969, p. 10.
8. Jerry Bruno and Jeff Greenfield, The Advance Man (New York: William Morrow, 1971), pp. 84-96.
9. Report of the Warren Commission, p. 52.
10. Life Magazine, November 24, 1967, p. 100B.
11. 7H443.
12. Letter from Bill Evans, Managing Editor of Dallas Morning News to the author, August 11, 1986.
13. 22H616.
14. Joesten, Oswald, pp. 17-23. Joesten's book was reviewed negatively by writer Hugh Aynesworth in Editor and Publisher for August 1, 1964. But, curiously, Aynesworth did not take on Joesten's claim that no papers featured the double detour before the assassination, although Aynesworth would have had access to the Morning News files as a writer for that publication.
15. Joachim Joesten, "The Biggest Lie Ever Told, the Kennedy Murder Fraud and How I Helped Solve It," vol. 1, p. 14, April, 1968, privately printed.
16. David R. Wrone, The Freedom of Information Act and Political Assassinations, (Stevens Point, Wisconsin: Foundation Press, 1978), p. 210.
17. John K. Lattimer, Kennedy and Lincoln (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980), pp. 142, 143.
18. John Kingsley Lattimer to author, August 21, 1986.
19. "President Dead, Connally Shot," Dallas Times Herald, November 22, 1963, Final Edition, p. 19.
20. 22H617.

NEWS BRIEFS FROM DALLAS
compiled by Larry Ray Harris

Trial run: Staff and crew members from England's London Weekend Television (LWT) spent 2 weeks in Dallas in May laying groundwork for 'ON TRIAL: LEE HARVEY OSWALD.' The LWT staff sought guidance from several members of the Texas research community in evaluating and locating potential witnesses for the project, the results of which were seen in the U.S. on cable TV on Nov. 21 and 22. The LWT

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crew returned in October to film additional exterior scenes and to stage a promotional press conference which featured rival attorneys Gerry Spence and Vince Bugliosi sparring at the 6th floor window allegedly used by the accused...JIM MARRS, veteran Fort Worth newsman and JFK assassination course instructor, is putting the finishing touches on a manuscript dealing with the case and is exploring several possible avenues for publication. Marrs' work is said to be an overview which will focus on "the big picture" and may include a companion videocassette. HENRY HURT'S Reasonable Doubt, meanwhile, was virtually ignored by the Dallas media, with neither daily newspaper offering even a capsule review.. Death: JENNY "LIL" BRANTLEY (CE 2994) on May 15 at age 55; cause of death not disclosed. She was co-owner of Ray's Hardware & Sporting Goods (where JACK RUBY bought the pistol used to kill Oswald and ordered other handguns on behalf of LEWIS J. McWILLIE) and wife of RAY BRANTLEY (CE 2993)... Death: GORDON McLENDON (IX HSCA 1108), 65, of cancer on Sept. 14. Acquaintances of the broadcast pioneer and former Navy Intelligence officer ranged from JACK RUBY to J. EDGAR HOOVER; the former phoned McLendon's residence on the night of Nov. 22, 1963, and the latter (according to Dallas newspaper columnist Dick Hitt) was a weekend houseguest of McLendon on regular occasions... Death: D. HAROLD BYRD, 86, on Sept. 14 after a brief illness. The conservative Byrd, one of Texas' most successful oil men, was a co-founder of the Civil Air Patrol (whose members included a young LEE OSWALD and DAVID FERRIE) and owned the Texas School Book Depository at the time of the assassination... Death: LARRY FERRELL, son of BUCK & MARY FERRELL, was a recent Dallas homicide victim...British attorney and author MICHAEL EDDOWES and MARINA OSWALD PORTER reached an out-of-court settlement in August with two men hired by Mrs. Porter to videotape and photograph the 1981 exhumation/autopsy of the body of her former husband. The agreement called for Eddowes and Porter to pay the men \$750 in return for possession of the tapes and photos. The deal, however, had not been transacted as of Nov. 22 and was said to be held up by a dispute between Eddowes and Porter... FOIA decision: Ruling on a claims left over from several Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) lawsuits filed by Texas researcher GARY SHAW, a District of Columbia judge recently ruled in favor of the FBI. After reviewing documents concerning four French mercenaries whom Shaw believes may have been involved in the Dallas assassination, the court agreed with the Bureau's contention that "the public interest in the disclosure of the materials is substantially outweighed by the privacy interests of the individuals involved." In an earlier ruling the judge had ordered the FBI to search its files under the names of the mercenaries after the agency had said there was no need to search files other than those officially designated as part of the FBI's JFK assassination documents; the judge disagreed with the Bureau. He noted that such an assumption "does not take account of the possibility that documents exist in the agency's archives which are filed under other headings---documents, that is, that do not fit the FBI's theory of the Kennedy assassination but are nevertheless relevant to that subject." (J. Gary Shaw v. FBI, Civil Action No., 82-2109, U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia)... 23rd Anniversary: An informal banquet of critics and local buffs on the evening of Nov. 22 was the scene of a rare reunion of Texas researchers MARY FERRELL, GARY SHAW, LARRY HARRIS, GARY MACK and JIM MARRS. The group viewed videotapes, including some relating to the ROBERT EASTERLING tale, and discussed Reasonable Doubt. Also seen were excerpts from home movies taken by GEORGE & JEANNE DE MOHRENSCHILDT during their walking tour through Central America. PENN JONES, JR. declined an invitation to the banquet, but was the center of attention in Dealey Plaza earlier in the day..."Lyndon (Johnson) always called me 'Hank'," recalled District Attorney HENRY WADE (5H213-254) in an interview with Dallas Times Herald writer Brian Woolley (author of the novel Nov.22). Stepping down after 36 years as Dallas DA, the one-time FBI agent was hailed as "an authentic American

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hero" by Attorney General Ed Meese at a testimonial dinner where right-wing oilman and Dallas Cowboys owner H.R. "BUM" BRIGHT (CE 1883) was among those honoring the longtime prosecutor..."It's not an easy project to sell to Dallas people. The Dallas people who were living here when this happened still maintain so many hurts and scars and pain from the event that its not something they really want to commemorate in any way." So said a spokesperson for the Dallas County Historical Commission, commenting on the lack of success in raising funds to establish a permanent exhibit/museum devoted to the JFK assassination. Cost of the proposed project, to be located on the 6th floor of the former TSBD, is \$3 million; target date for completion is the 25th anniversary in 1988. According to the spokesperson, the exhibit will "be in good taste" and "won't be a monument to Lee Harvey Oswald"...

CONCERNING DAVID LIFTON AND "BEST EVIDENCE"

by

Harrison Edward Livingstone*

David Lifton advances the thesis that President Kennedy's body was removed from its coffin on Air Force One shortly after its arrival, "in a body bag seemed the only remaining possibility. Disguised as luggage, it might have been put in the baggage hold, or in the forward galley area." (David Lifton, Best Evidence, New York: Macmillan, 1980, p. 680---references to this source cited hereafter in the format: L, p. 680.) "The critical period was 2:18 to 2:32. It appeared, from the public record, that the coffin was then unattended." (L, p. 677)

The "record" as developed in William Manchester's Death of a President (New York: Harper and Row, 1967) is quite otherwise. While the total accuracy of the Manchester account has been questioned by some, Lifton himself relies heavily on this account. Dave Powers, President Kennedy's close friend, wrote that the coffin was put aboard AF 1 at 2:20. (Manchester, p. 309---references to this source cited hereafter in format: M, p. 309) "The pallbearers were unaware of another passenger across the aisle. In one of the two light plaid seats on the starboard side Mrs. Kennedy sat alone, watching intently. She had slipped in right behind them..." (M, p. 309); moments later, "the stewards locked 26000's rear door, Jacqueline Kennedy quietly rose..." (M, p. 310) and went to the bedroom a few feet away, close to the coffin, but "reclining in the bed was Lyndon Johnson...Mrs. Kennedy returned to the tail cabin [where the body was]...Mrs. Kennedy had resumed her seat across from the coffin, and the new President...entered the bedroom's powder room to change his shirt and comb his hair." (M, p. 312) For quite some time Mac Kilduff searched for Johnson, and "it never occurred to him that Johnson might be behind the closed powder room door..." (M, p. 314) Mrs. Kennedy and numerous others were in attendance at the coffin up to this point, a good part of the 14 minutes Lifton allows for the theft of the body. The body was certainly not taken during this time.

Then Mrs. Kennedy was provided with the bedroom and Mr. and Mrs. Johnson came in and sat with her on the bed, one on each side. (M, p. 316) The plane was crowded with people, now including two presidential parties, the Secret Service detail, secretaries and assistants of President Johnson, who were in the forward part of the plane along with newspaper reporters, flight attendants and crew, military aides and others. The tail compartment contained at all times much or most of President Kennedy's staff and Secret Service men, except for brief moments when one or another moved to another part of the plane, including a moment when Ken O'Donnell and Larry O'Brien entered the bedroom with Mrs. Kennedy and the Johnsons. (M, p. 319)

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Moments later Judge Sarah Hughes arrived and the scene was set to swear Johnson in as President in the presidential stateroom next to the bedroom. Johnson was sworn in at 2:38 CST. Lifton admits that the coffin was attended during the previous six minutes; he claims that it was unattended from the moment it was put on board for the next 12 to 14 minutes. As we have seen, this was untrue. It is unlikely that the coffin was ever without being attended by someone who had been very close to President Kennedy. General McHugh, although making several trips forward to try to order the plane to take off, was present, along with Mac Kilduff part of the time and also Larry O'Brien, Ken O'Donnell and Dave Powers. In addition, several of President Kennedy's Secret Service men were present and, unless they all conspired together, or unless one of them removed the body and the others knew about it and did not tell this story, the body could not have been removed by any stranger.

During the swearing in, Kennedy's aides remained in the rear, with General McHugh on guard at the casket, "standing rigidly at attention." (M, p. 321). "Ken O'Donnell withdrew to the corridor" (M, p. 321) which was only a few feet from the coffin, in full view, and paced up and down. (M, p. 325) Any untoward incident at that time such as the removal of a body bag or a large (very large) piece of luggage from the plane, or from the coffin, would have been observed by him. But Lifton does not imply that anything was done during those minutes. A lot of people on the ground would have seen and noted such an event.

There was a closet across from the coffin but this served the galley there, and it is highly unlikely that there was any space in which to put a body. Even if there was space somewhere to hide a body, it could not have been moved forward at any time during the flight without being seen, even if disguised as a very large piece of luggage. There is no evidence that any such "luggage" ever moved through the plane. Since the rear door had been locked immediately after the coffin arrived, the body could not have exited that way, to enter the baggage compartments before takeoff. In addition, it would have taken time to open the coffin, put the body in a body bag, remove it, then close up the coffin again and hide the body. The amount of time needed to do this is inconceivable during the few (if any) possible seconds the coffin might not have been observed. Certainly one man alone could not have put the body into a body-bag and removed it during that time. Also, had the body been removed from the coffin after it was put on board, it would have weighed 1/3 less when removed from the plane, and the Kennedy aides who helped remove it from the plane would have noticed the difference.

After a flight of little more than two hours, Air Force One landed at Andrews at 6:05 P.M. (Manchester, inside front cover) (Lifton, perhaps to allow a little extra time for the DC-area shenanigans with the body that he postulates, estimates the landing time a little earlier: between 5:58 and 6:02 P.M.---L, p. 702.) Lifton writes: "I established that the chopper took off within ninety seconds of the arrival of Air Force One..." and Lifton quotes from NBC: "The Presidential jet is seen arriving, along with an Army helicopter." (L, p. 683) In fact, there were many helicopters arriving and departing during that tragic period. But Lifton does not see this or any helicopter take off 90 seconds later. He hears it on a tape:..."thundering in the background, could be heard the turning rotor of a helicopter, accelerating, growing louder. There was nothing ambiguous about the sound. A chopper took off from very near Air Force One..."(L, p. 683) Lifton completely overlooks the many other helicopters arriving and departing from Andrews with persons connected to the tragedy, described in Manchester: "It was noisy with the incessant flap of the olive-drab rotors..." (M, p. 384) "They couldn't even hear it any more, because the Colonel had switched off three of his

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Pods, and the fourth was drowned out by the warm-ups of two of the wasplike helicopters." (M, p. 387)

Lifton tells us "If the instructions given in these transmissions [from Air Force One] were followed...a ramp was also put on the starboard side at the front galley door. Did the body come off the plane via that exit, and leave by the helicopter so clearly audible on the network tape?" (L, p. 688) Lifton drops this, without answering it. This is only his supposition, there is no evidence for it. There is no ramp there in any film that I have seen. There were thousands of people watching the plane come in and in the films the only thing out there was the large truck lift used to remove the casket. A ramp was brought up to the port forward door and Robert Kennedy ran on board to go to the widow. No other ramp appears. The crew of the plane would have seen something being removed that remotely would have had the bulk of a body, and they would have commented on it. The body could not have been brought forward at any time during the flight and, as he says, exit the plane a moment after it landed. They could not have moved a ramp forward to that spot from the terminal area in those seconds, removed the body and put it into the helicopter he imagines was there. There would be some account of any helicopter that was in the imagined position he claims, but there is no evidence of it. The scenario he describes for removal of the body is not possible.

Next Lifton tries to describe events at the autopsy at Bethesda Naval Hospital, after---he theorizes---the body had been altered clandestinely at Walter Reed Hospital. He begins by quoting a Naval corpsman who was present, Dennis David. David was the un-named informant for an article published on May 1, 1975 in the Waukegan, Illinois News-Sun. Actually the major point of the article seems to deal with the apparent murder of a Naval photographer present at the autopsy: Lt (actually Lt. Cmdr.) William Pitzer. Nowhere does Lifton mention what the article is about, but instead he picks up on what David might have seen, and from this begins to weave his elaborate hypothesis. "Dennis David replied that he didn't actually see the second ambulance arrive at the back, but that the first ambulance had the body. That's how he knew the second was empty." (L, p. 572) It is this article which Lifton says motivated his entire investigation into what he calls the altering of the body. Why does he completely ignore what the article is about? Why does he direct attention to something else? The article implies that the photographer knew too much and was killed because of it. If what he knew supported Lifton's thesis, Lifton would have commented on this. Lifton believes that the body was altered, in order to make the autopsy pictures (and presumably X-rays) show what the conspirators wanted to show. He dismisses out of hand evidence for the forgery of the autopsy photos and x-rays. (Robert Groden told the House Select Committee on Assassinations---Hearings, vol. 6, p. 299---"My visual inspection of the autopsy photographs and X-rays reveals evidence of forgery in four of the photographs...") Was it, in fact, Pitzer's involvement with handling the X-rays and/or photographs that may have led to his demise?

How did this "two ambulance" puzzle ever develop? Manchester writes (p. 399): "General Wehle had stationed himself beyond the cornerstone in a staff car, with Lieutenant Bird and his body bearers right behind him in a truck. They had observed Mrs. Kennedy's arrival, but the darkness, the great blocks of silent people, and the many moving vehicles distracted them. It had confused two naval physicians, too. When an ambulance drew away from the curb [in front of the hospital] they called: 'That's it---we'll guide you to the morgue.' At the morgue, Wehle, Bird and the six enlisted men debarked and inspected each other's uniforms while awaiting some movement from the ambulance. It was still as still. The Lieutenant crept up and peered inside. It was empty..." This was behind Bethesda.

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In other words, this might not be the same ambulance that was in front. Lifton describes their attempt to chase the ambulance they saw pull away, but they lost it. At this point they noticed that the casket was sitting on the loading dock, guarded by General McHugh. (M, p. 399) Lifton writes (p. 572) that "the casket entry he [David] described didn't sound like the casket team's..." Manchester writes that the ambulance entered through the main gate, "even the casket team there was by-passed." (M, p. 398)

But the team did locate the casket on the loading dock and put it on a gurney. They only moved it a bit, as Manchester tells us on p. 399. "Lieutenant Bird decided that he wasn't an authorized person. After his men had lowered the casket to a wheeled gurney he shepherded them into the corridor and mounted guard." Lifton is right in that this is as far as the team went. "Dennis David said he had called 'seven or eight sailors' to help unload the casket. He stood there watching the unloading." (L, p. 572) We must now look at the flaw in Lifton's way of thinking, the way his mind works. Because two groups of men were used to move the casket, Lifton has two "lenses" to observe this, and begins in his mind to imagine things. "You're saying they carried in an empty casket?" (L, p. 572) "Dennis David repeated quite matter-of-factly that there were two caskets, that the second one was empty." (L, p. 573) "I was told by the doctor that the body was in the first casket." (L, p. 573) "Oh, I see, I said, trying to be mellow..."

While Lifton is being mellow, I spotted a flaw in his thinking. He is confused by the fact that after the ambulance with President Kennedy's body arrived at the front entrance through the main gate, it dropped off Mrs. Kennedy and others there. It then went around back to the morgue, where the casket was unloaded.

Lifton is in quite some shock to hear that there were two caskets. It is true that shock badly distorts the perception and memory of the victim. Mrs. Kennedy, for instance, has no memory of her crawling out onto the trunk of the limousine as it sped away after the murder. Mrs. Johnson repeatedly recalled climbing stairs at Parkland to see Mrs. Connally, when this was impossible. Manchester comments on the shock effect on witnesses.

Of course there were two coffins in the anteroom (cold room) of the morgue, but Lifton never understood the reason for this. Dave Powers, Ken O'Donnell, Larry O'Brien and Muggsy O'Leary went to a funeral home and bought another coffin to replace the damaged casket, which they described as "plain." (M, p. 431) This arrived in a black Cadillac hearse belonging to Gawler's Funeral Home. This hearse causes Lifton enormous problems. Lifton, hearing that there were two ambulances, a hearse, two caskets, begins to weave his elaborate fantasy.

But first of all Lifton hasn't got the time of these events pinned down. He ignores completely the arrival of the ambulance and casket from Gawler's. Dave Powers (M, p. 431) describes the Irish mafia visit to Gawler's as "around midnight." But Manchester does say (p. 432) that "the two caskets, O'Neal's and Gawler's, lay side by side for a while in the morgue anteroom."

Lifton uses Dennis David's recollections to time the arrival of the black Cadillac hearse at 6:40 P.M. (L, p. 580), which means that the conspirators had only 35 minutes (or 38 to 42 if you use Lifton's more generous estimate of the arrival at Andrews) to steal the body from the plane, take it to Walter Reed, remove it from its wrappings, examine it, remove the brain, forge wounds on the body, bag it and move it to Bethesda. I think this is impossible, even with the

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use of a helicopter. Further, would it make sense for the conspirators to transport the "altered body" in a black Cadillac hearse through thousands of spectators, or would they use a less conspicuous means of transportation?

Nevertheless, Lifton begins to indicate that the body came in via the black hearse. Quoting David again, "I couldn't say definitely that Kennedy's body was in the black ambulance...[but] he also assured me that the casket he saw being brought in didn't appear to be empty." (L, pp. 581-2) David describes the casket as being very heavy. If it was the casket from Gawler's it was heavy, as it was a Marsellus #710, made from 500 year old solid mahogany. (M, p. 432)

To deal with the severe time problems associated with "body alteration" between Andrews and Bethesda, Lifton uses the "recollections" of another Naval corpsman, Paul Kelley O'Connor, to introduce into the scenario the use of a helicopter in the transport of the body to Bethesda. "O'Connor was under the impression that the shipping casket in which he said the body arrived was brought to Bethesda by helicopter...I heard the helicopter for one thing...then they rushed the body in...O'Connor explained that the heliport at Bethesda was at the front of the hospital, and that he would not have heard a helicopter landing there because the morgue was at the rear of the hospital." (L, p. 605) This leads Lifton to "speculate" that a helicopter carrying the altered body landed at the rear of the hospital and was transferred into the black hearse whose arrival at the morgue with the body was supposedly witnessed by David.

Actually, it was considerably more likely that O'Connor heard (circling the hospital) the helicopter bearing the casket team that landed at the front heliport just as the body arrived at the hospital. (M, p. 390) Other helicopters probably brought others who needed to be there, as well. Since the casket team's helicopter was on the landing pad in front, additional helicopters carrying General Wehle and other dignitaries had to land somewhere, and behind the hospital was the most logical place.

Much of Lifton's hypothesis is based on O'Connor's recollection that the body only came at 8 P.M. and it came in a "body bag" inside of a shipping casket and that the "cranium was empty." (L, p. 602) Lifton says that O'Connor saw this through the lens of actual events. I think that these recollections are not credible. They are so totally in conflict with the fact that many people were present from the time the body officially came in, that it could not have happened. O'Connor may have imagined things due to the shock of events he did not witness. He says, for instance, that they filled the cranium with plaster of paris after the autopsy, "and they took and combed his hair. And his hair just happened to be combed in that direction. He had a lot of hair, and they just---they were able to hide the wound." (L, p. 603) The alleged autopsy photographs clearly show the scalp, and also clearly show a hole in the head with no scalp. Since all medical witnesses describe a large hole in the back of the head with no scalp or hair, merely combing hair over this area does not account for scalp visible in the alleged photos.

Again Lifton makes much of the statement by a witness that the President was wrapped in clothing. (L, p. 595) The use of the word clothing, in this instance, can safely be assumed to be a poor choice of words to describe what Admiral Osborne saw. People often misspeak themselves, especially under stress. It is of course ridiculous to suppose that the body had been dressed on the way over to Bethesda, as Lifton implies, having its sheets and plastic removed. The sheets, plastic and mattress cover in which the President was wrapped could also very likely be what O'Connor describes as a "body bag." (L, p. 595) I have no doubt that O'Connor knows what a body bag is, but he is simply not persuasive that this is what he saw.

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In support of O'Connor's assertion that the President's brain was missing when the body arrived, Lifton makes quite something out of the fact that, just after the casket team brought in the body, "two Navy corpsmen passed, rolling a litter. Nothing appeared to be on it except a small lump wrapped in sheeting" (L, p. 644). On Manchester's (p. 399) account of this incident, it was witnessed by Lt. Sam Bird, who asked one of the corpsmen "What's that?" and to which he got a mumbled response, "Baby. Born dead." It hardly makes sense that the brain, as Lifton implies, would be entrusted to Naval corpsmen and transported on a gurney. A brain, especially with half its mass missing, is far smaller than a still born baby large enough to be moved on a gurney. Lifton tells us (p. 644) that official records at Bethesda show that "no baby was stillborn at Bethesda Naval Hospital on November 22, 1963." This proves nothing. A morgue is a place where bodies may be kept for weeks until their disposition is decided. Stillborn babies are often kept for study. The baby did not have to be stillborn at Bethesda at all, but there for autopsy, as was the President.

Lifton writes on p. 526: "In short, I was beginning to suspect that what I called 'Lens 3'---the photographic and X-ray record---was created sometime after midnight on November 22, 1963." 139 pages later he finally gets round to telling us that his original "suspicion" was wrong: "that no one saw any photography taking place after midnight, during the period the funeral director was doing his work. "By a process of elimination, I concluded that the pictures, assuming they were in fact made in the Bethesda morgue, must have been made before the autopsy" (L, p. 664) He then claims that there was "reconstruction" of the head for X-rays and photographs. This is after the body has arrived, altered and without a brain, according to Lifton.

I showed these pictures to several morticians and cosmeticians working for funeral homes. They stated that it would take days, perhaps a week, to recreate what we see in the photographs. As we have seen, by the time it is firmly established that the body had arrived at the hospital, there would not have been time to reconstruct the head for the photos we now see. How does Lifton propose that this reconstructive work was done: by whom and when did it happen, given the fact that the body was probably never left alone by the principals in the event? Was there even a spare minute in which this work could be done, let alone the hours it would have taken to reconstruct the head?

In conclusion I would say that Lifton's theory that the body was removed from the coffin on the plane and altered somewhere before going to Bethesda is unnecessary to an understanding of this case and, as a theory, cannot hold water. The recollections of those on whom he relies would never stand up as best evidence in any court of law, and certainly can be explained in terms of error and shock at the time. In his zeal to develop his view of the body itself as a "medical forgery," Lifton ignores a more plausible explanation of discrepancies in the medical evidence: that the "best evidence" as preserved in photographs and X-rays is a product of the infinitely more believable process of forgery of these materials.

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DEAD SUSPECTS PART II by Scott Van Wynsberghe*

3. Jack Leon Ruby

As Jacob Rubenstein, Jack Ruby was born in Chicago in 1911.¹ He was no stranger to the dubious environment of that city in those days: as a child, he ran errands for Al Capone.² He continued to swim in the underworld milieu during his early adult years, and became involved in violent labor-union activity. Specifically, he fell in with Local 20467 of the Scrap Iron and Junk Handlers Union. In December 1939, the financial secretary of the local, Leon Cooke, was fatally wounded with a pistol; Ruby, who was still going under the name Rubenstein, was one of the people questioned by police about the shooting.³ Thereafter, Ruby infrequently used the middle name "Leon," in memory of Cooke.⁴ As will be discussed later, that name is not without significance in JFK research.

The period 1943-46 found Ruby in the ranks of the U.S. Air Force, as a draftee. Most of this time was spent at USAF bases in the South---Kessler Field, Mississippi, Seymour Jackson Field, North Carolina---with the resultant training qualifying him as both an aircraft mechanic and a "sharpshooter" with the M-1 carbine.⁵ Although it would be reckless to make too much of such facts, one cannot help feeling a slight tingle when aircraft, the American South, and rifle marksmanship come up in connection with the death of President Kennedy. David Ferrie and Lee Harvey Oswald are also known to inspire talk along those lines. In any event, Ruby's release from military service appears to have marked a turning point in his life. By 1947, he had moved to Dallas, had changed his name to Jack L. Ruby, and was running night clubs.⁶

Ruby's Dallas days stretch without much interruption from 1947 to the events of 1963, so his many affiliations and acquaintances take on an added weight during this time. It has been argued that he⁷ was not an outright "member" of any particular section of organized crime, but this judgment seems to be a technicality, at best. Ruby allegedly knew at least two Chicago contract killers, Lenny Patrick and Dave Yaras, the second of whom was close to two people who figure on the list of dead suspects, Chicago mob boss Sam Giancana and Teamsters President Jimmy Hoffa.⁸ This is merely the first bit of glue that connects Giancana and Hoffa to the night club owner in Dallas.

In the case of Hoffa, the glue is very strong indeed. Going back to the 1930s, Ruby's union experiences involved Paul Dorfman.⁹ Dorfman was crucial in convincing the Mafia that it should assist Hoffa's rise during the 1950s; in return,¹⁰ Hoffa put the man's stepson, Allen, in charge of various Teamsters funds.¹⁰ In the month leading up to the assassination of President Kennedy, Ruby---who was then having labor-union difficulties at his Carousel Club---phoned Irwin Weiner, a bondsman linked to the Teamsters, and two Hoffa lieutenants, Robert "Barney" Baker and Murray "Dusty" Miller.¹¹ According to one Teamsters official, Leopoldo Ramos Duclos,¹² Ruby also knew a third lieutenant, Frank Chavez, who was notorious for violence.¹² As a matter of fact Ramos Duclos is not the nicest individual himself. On behalf of the Teamsters, he assumed control of a culinary-workers union in Puerto Rico in the wake of a February 1962 firebombing.¹³ As well, the Warren Commission at one point sought a "Leopoldo Ramos Ducos" (the Commission's usual spelling trouble?).¹⁴ In any event, the name "Leopoldo" should cause as much interest as the name "Leon," and it is perhaps at this point that the Sylvia Odio incident merits treatment.

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The basic tale is fairly well known, and requires no great detail.¹⁵ Sylvia Odio was a Cuban exile whose parents had been arrested in her homeland in 1961 for involvement with an anti-Castro group, Maniolo Ray's MRP (which apparently evolved into JURE). By 1963, she was living with a sister in Dallas. In late September of that year---while Lee Harvey Oswald was still doing strange things in Mexico---three men called at her apartment. Two of them were Latins, and introduced themselves as "Leopoldo" and "Angelo" (or may "Angel"), while the third was a non-Latin, and was introduced as "Leon Oswald." "Leopoldo" asked Odio to help them solicit funds for anti-Castro activities. Odio remained wary, and the trio left. A day or two later, "Leopoldo" telephoned her, but now seemed more interested in talking about "Leon Oswald," whom he described as an ex-Marine, a crack shot, "kind of loco," and given to proclaiming that President Kennedy should be assassinated. That was the last she heard of any of the three until November 22, when she saw Lee Harvey Oswald on television and recognized him as "Leon Oswald."

In dealing with the Odio incident, the FBI traced three anti-Castro soldiers of fortune, Loran Hall, Lawrence Howard and William Seymour. The Warren Commission ruled that the three had been fund-raising in Dallas at the time of the incident, and that Odio had simply made too much of Seymour's supposed resemblance to Oswald. All three, however, eventually denied seeing Odio, and Odio---on the basis of photographs shown her by the FBI---said they were not the same men anyway.

There are a couple of intriguing "coincidences" suggesting the possibility of a Ruby and/or Hoffa tie to the Odio affair. One is the fact that Sylvia Odio was living in Puerto Rico in 1962, when Jimmy Hoffa's Leopoldo showed up there.¹⁶ Another is the fact, appearing in Sylvia Odio's Warren Commission testimony, that she originally suspected that her strange visitors were sent by one Antonio Alentado Leon, with whom she frequently spoke and who was described as a leading local figure in Ray's JURE organization.¹⁷ The coincidence arises from the fact that Ruby's notebook and list of Carousel Club courtesy card holders include one Jack T. Furlong, employed by Colombo's Italian Pizza Bakery on Haskell Street, Dallas.¹⁸ In Mary Ferrell's compilation of information about various persons (published in an insert to THE CONTINUING INQUIRY for September 1976) Alentado Leon is described as a "certified public accountant" working for this same Colombo's Bakery; again the "small world" of Jack Ruby.

Those researchers who have wagered an opinion about the Odio incident tend to see in it an attempt by persons unknown to smear Oswald in preparation for his "patsy" role in the assassination. As such, its importance is beyond exaggeration. To implicate people like Ruby and Ramos Duclos would be a breakthrough, but, alas, the available evidence does not go beyond the circumstantial crumbs offered here.

As for Ruby's ties with the organization of Sam Giancana, these,¹⁹ too, were considerable. In fact, it is claimed that Ruby knew Giancana himself. Whether or not this was the case, Ruby has still been linked to Dave Yaras, as noted above. He may also have known one of Giancana's main deputies, John Roselli; U.S. Army intelligence and Justice Department sources have been cited as indicating that Ruby and Roselli met in Miami during the two months before the death of Kennedy.²⁰ Two other important Chicago gangsters familiar to Ruby were Jimmy Weinberg and Paul "Needle Nose" Labriola. Although they were not around for long---both were found dead in 1954, garroted and stuffed into a car trunk---the two gained significance by appearing in Dallas at an early point to introduce Ruby to Paul Roland Jones.²¹ A murderer and narcotics trafficker who represented the Chicago mob in Dallas, Jones had gained notoriety in 1946 by attempting to bribe the local sheriff's office. The proximity of this event to Ruby's arrival in the

city inevitably leads to speculation that Ruby was much more than just a night club owner; for his own part, he frequently gave the impression in both private and public that his move had been ordered by the Chicago syndicate.²²

Such was the scope of Ruby's seedy socializing that the Hoffa and Giancana crowds hardly begin to exhaust his store of contacts. Another set of underworld figures he knew included a gambler, Lewis McWillie (with whom he was very close), a "notorious hoodlum" named Russell Matthews, and a certain Jack Todd. Each one of these men was associated in some fashion with Santos Trafficante, the foremost mafioso of Florida.²³ (As of this writing, he is a suspect, but not yet dead.) Trafficante's history is an eventful one, as he had numerous interests in Cuba prior to the 1959 overthrow of Batista. Arrested by Castro's people on June 9, 1959, he was held in a camp at Trescornia until August 18, and was expelled soon after that.²⁴ Ruby---who is thought to have been a courier for Cuban gambling circles in 1959---may have tried to get Trafficante out of Trescornia, and appears to have met him there.²⁵ Whatever the case, Trafficante went on to participate in the CIA-Mafia plots to kill Castro in the early 1960s.²⁶ The most-relevant aspect of his career, however, did not occur until September 1962. In conversation with a Cuban exile, Jose Aleman, Jr., Trafficante revealed that President Kennedy was "going to be hit." As Aleman related it, the remark was made in specific reference to the plight of Jimmy Hoffa, who was then enduring much official wrath.²⁷

Ruby's final set of associations with top crime figures leads to New Orleans. Here again, one finds an acquaintance who acts as a bridge between one set of persons and another, the man in question being James Henry Dolan. Not only did Dolan have ties with Santos Trafficante, he also knew the capo of New Orleans, Carlos Marcello.²⁸ (As with Trafficante, Marcello is a crucial suspect, but does not yet appear to be dead.) Among other pertinent points, Marcello ran an organization that was familiar with the Oswald clan: Oswald's uncle, Charles "Dutz" Murret, was a gambler actively involved with it, while Oswald's mother, Marguerite, fraternized with individuals on its fringe.²⁹ Just as important, Marcello himself was directly linked to the conspiracy candidates of 544 Camp Street. He had David Ferrie fly him back from Guatemala (whence he had been deported) by June 1961, and received legal help from both Ferrie and Guy Banister in the ensuing court battle with federal authorities.³⁰

All the more disturbing was an anti-Kennedy threat reportedly uttered by Marcello in September 1962---in other words, at about the same point in the year when Santos Trafficante was making his own grim comments. As the story goes, a gathering of mafiosi at an estate north of New Orleans featured Marcello blurting out with a classic (and deadly) Sicilian oath with respect to President Kennedy: "Livarsi na petra di la scarpa!" ("Take the stone out of my shoe!") In the same tirade, he spoke of using a "nut" to carry out an assassination.³¹ Because of the excellent security of the Marcello gang, the FBI (we are told) was unable to conduct much electronic surveillance against it at this time, hence there is no confirmation that the gangster chief followed up his threat in even a modest manner.³²

Whatever the significance of the Marcello threat, there can be no doubt about Ruby's connections in New Orleans. In the month leading up to the assassination, he telephoned Nofio J. Pecora, a Marcello lieutenant³³ (supposedly to speak to his night club owner friend Harold Tannenbaum, a resident of a trailer court operated by Pecora). Then there is the tale told to the FBI by William Gaudet, the CIA man who applied for a visa to Mexico just before Oswald did. If Gaudet can be believed, Ruby turned up in New Orleans in August 1959---at roughly the time he may have been trying to get Trafficante out of Trescornia---while on his way to Havana.³⁴ He bought some paintings and, since the seller of the paintings was

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Lorenzo Borenstein---supposedly a relative of Leon Trotsky---it has been suggested that this bit of gossip was pushed mainly as a clumsy effort to portray Ruby as some sort³⁵ of fellow-traveller. (Borenstein, for the record, confirmed the purchase).

If Ruby's relationship with James Henry Dolan can lead researchers to two suspects who are still alive today (Trafficante and Marcello), it can also lead to a third one, albeit of lesser standing. As far back as 1951, Dolan had been seen in Phoenix, Arizona in the company of a man who was then calling himself "James Bradley Lee." The man's actual name was Eugene Hale Brading.³⁶ Although apparently not noted for murder, Brading had done just about everything else, including robbery, gambling, and black-market activities; possibly because of his reputation, he had adopted the name "Jim Braden" in the last months prior to the assassination.³⁷ On November 21, 1963, he and an individual going under the name of "Morgan Brown" checked into the Cabana Motel, just off Dealey Plaza in Dallas.³⁸ Jack Ruby is known to have appeared at that place on the night of November 21, having been invited over by Lawrence Meyers, an old Chicago friend of his who was in town. Unless Meyers has given out false information, however, this encounter did not³⁹ last very long, and Ruby continued to haunt the Cabana for unknown reasons.

On November 22, moments after the assassination, Brading was detained by police just as he was leaving the Dal-Tex Building at Dealey Plaza. While he was questioned about his presence in the building,⁴⁰ "Morgan Brown" left the Cabana Motel, and has never since been traced. Be that as it may, Brading insisted he was in Dallas on oil business, had been walking by Dealey Plaza when he heard the President was shot, and dashed inside the Dal-Tex Building to find a telephone.⁴¹ The "oil business" that he was pursuing involved such people as Lamar Hunt,⁴² a son of the eccentric right-wing billionaire H.L. Hunt---who may be regarded as one more dead suspect. Brown as well as a "friend" thought to be Brading had indeed been spotted⁴³ at the commercial headquarters of H.L. Hunt on the afternoon of November 21. Ruby likewise appeared there at about the same time of day, having driven over a job-hunting friend, Connie Trammel.⁴⁴ Ruby took Trammel to the office of Lamar Hunt, but reportedly did not go into the office with her, and instead waited outside.⁴⁵

There is even more to the Hunt angle. Authorities would later come across the name of Lamar Hunt⁴⁶ in Ruby's notebook, while H.L. Hunt literature would turn up in his apartment. His car yielded a transcript of a June 19, 1963 broadcast of H.L. Hunt's radio show, entitled "Heroism."⁴⁷ Indeed, there is a chance that Ruby and H.L. Hunt actually met, as existing evidence indicates that Ruby joined one Harry Hall (alias "Harry Sinclair, Jr") in a gambling fraud aimed at fleecing such wealthy⁴⁸ Dallas figures as the elder Hunt. Hunt did lose money because of this scheme.

A final aspect of the ramifications produced by Eugene Hale Brading is that they extend to two cities and one man whose names have already recurred too many times in this narrative: Chicago, New Orleans and David Ferrie. Two months before the assassination, Ferrie telephoned a Chicago apartment building then housing a certain Jean West. On the night of November 21, West was part of the dubious cast of characters at⁴⁹ the Cabana Motel, having appeared in Dallas in the company of Lawrence Meyers. As well, the personal address that Brading provided police was a room in the Pere Marquette Building in New Orleans,⁵⁰ and this room was on the same floor as one then being used by Ferrie.

No accounting of the friends of Jack Ruby would be complete without touching on his gunrunning operations aimed at Cuba. He is said to have provided Castro's guerillas with arms as early as 1957, as part of a Mafia bid to make an ally out of the rebel commander.⁵¹ Ruby kept up his Castro link following the January 1959 fall of Batista, and may have attempted to send military equipment to the new

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regime (and obtain freedom for several unidentified persons) through a gunrunner named Robert Ray McKeown at some point in 1959.⁵² If true, this could tie in with the incarceration of Santos Trafficante at Trescornia. Prior to the fall of Batista, McKeown had participated with Dr. Carlos Prío Socarras in an effort to arm the fidelista insurgents. Both men were arrested.⁵³ Note that one version of the Ruby-McKeown episode places it in early 1959, and has Maurice Brooks Gatlin, Sr.---an associate of Guy Banister---telling Ruby to desist from arming Castro.⁵⁴

While Castro's government was still in favor among Americans, Ruby possibly contacted a second gunrunner, Thomas Eli Davis III.⁵⁵ This is important because Davis is regarded by some as an Oswald look-alike, which could have a bearing on the Odio incident.⁵⁶ For the record, however, Davis spoke fluent Spanish,⁵⁷ whereas Sylvia Odio had the impression that "Leon Oswald" did not understand the language at all.⁵⁸ Even without the Odio incident, Davis cannot be regarded as free from JFK-related suspicions, since a "T.E. Davis" was recorded as staying at a New Orleans hotel in August 1963, while Oswald was still in the same city.⁵⁹ In the preceeding May, Davis himself was in California, trying to recruit mercenaries for an invasion of Haiti.⁶⁰ What is intriguing here is that May was the same month in which George de Mohrenschildt, Oswald's mentor (or Svengali) from Dallas, was trying to convince the Pentagon that toppling the regime of Francois "Papa Doc" Duvalier was a good thing.⁶¹

Whatever the connections, Davis was out of the country when Kennedy died, having left for Morocco on November 2, 1963. By November 22, he had been arrested in Algeria for (what else?) selling arms, but was allegedly freed through the intervention of "QJ/WIN," a primary agent of the CIA's "ZR/RIFLE" assassination program.⁶² This, of course, begs the question of whose authority (if anybody's) QJ/WIN was acting on. ZR/RIFLE---first known as "Executive Action"---was concocted by one William Harvey in 1961.⁶³ Late in that year, Harvey took control of "Task Force W," which oversaw CIA efforts to unseat Castro.⁶⁴ In April 1962, he became involved with Giancana deputy John Roselli in a plot to kill the Cuban leader,⁶⁵ but this ended with his removal from Task Force W around the following October, which pretty much finished his career.⁶⁶ However these things worked out, Davis was again arrested for arms offenses in December 1963, this time by Moroccan authorities. He is said to have had in his possession at that point a letter in his own handwriting that referred to Oswald and the assassination, but this document has never turned up since then.⁶⁷ In 1973, Thomas Eli Davis III died in a rock quarry in Wise County, Texas, at the age of 37. The police version of events portrayed Davis as attempting to steal some copper wiring, and accidentally cutting into a power line.⁶⁸

Although of considerable interest, the pro-Castro activities of Jack Ruby came to an end by 1961-62, according to a former employee of his. Nancy Perrin Rich, who worked in Ruby's Carousel Club during July and August of 1961, was present with her husband, Robert Perrin, for four meetings in Dallas that brought together various anti-Castro conspirators over the course of late 1961 and part of 1962. Jack Ruby appeared at three of the four meetings.⁶⁹ The veracity of Perrin Rich is open to doubt,⁷⁰ but there is no disputing that she frequented shadowy circles. On August 29, 1962, her husband died in New Orleans (that place again) from a dose of arsenic. Some accounts regard the death as a straight suicide, but others insist it has never been fully explained.⁷¹ The mere fact that it followed the Dallas meetings by just a few months is cause for concern.

When he was not running guns, Ruby seems to have been running drugs. At the very least, the FBI had this impression of him by 1956.⁷² (indeed, the Bureau took him on as a "potential criminal informant" during the period March-October 1959, but supposedly dropped him for lack of worth---even though this period covered Santos Trafficante's time at Trescornia.⁷³) Narcotics figured at other points in

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Ruby's career, as demonstrated by the background of Paul Roland Jones, the man at the center of that 1946 bribery attempt. As well, the Warren Commission heard a rumor that J.D. Tippit, the Dallas policeman shot down under mysterious circumstances soon after the ambush in Dealey Plaza, was involved in that trade.⁷⁴

The mere mention of Tippit, of course, opens an entirely new can of worms. Although there is no definitive evidence of a tight connection between him and Ruby, one cannot help pondering such odd details as Tippit's moonlighting, which involving guarding a restaurant owned by Austin Cook, whose own connections led all the way to one of Ruby's closest associates, Ralph Paul.⁷⁵ Even if Ruby and Tippit were not even loosely linked, surprisingly few Dallas policemen could say the same about themselves. Estimates of the number of officers who knew Ruby range from dozens to hundreds. Favors appear to have gone both ways, with Ruby keeping the lawmen happy at his various clubs in return for tolerance when legal infractions occurred.⁷⁶ Considering Ruby's disquieting ability to zero in on Lee Harvey Oswald at a precise time and place, the possibility of police collusion is hard to ignore.

Having so far touched on cops and robbers, it might be wise to bring in lawyers, since the weird little man from Chicago does not fail us there, either. The crucial figure is Pete White, whose contacts with Ruby went back to at least 1954, when⁷⁷ he succeeded in having some charges against the night club owner dismissed. According to White's own statements, he met with Ruby mere days before the assassination, on November 20, 1963.⁷⁸ For some reason, Ruby considered White so important that the lawyer's name, address and telephone number were all listed in his notebook.⁷⁹ Plainly, White had some interesting clients,⁸⁰ but some of his colleagues were also unique. For one thing, his partners included Ivan Irwin, Sr., who had come from a law firm identified by none other than Paul Roland Jones as a conduit for Mafia bribes.⁸¹ Likewise to be found in White's offices was William McKenzie, who had previously been a law partner with Bedford Wynne, a member of the Wynne family that was closely associated with the oil-rich Murchison clan of Texas. Beyond that distinction, McKenzie was destined to serve as an attorney for Oswald's widow, Marina.⁸²

Given the breathtaking extent of Ruby's circle of acquaintances, all sorts of details from his last days of liberty seem to take on new meaning. There was, to cite one case, the way financial problems that had been dogging him since the start of 1963 appeared to vanish by November, allowing him to strut around with thousands of dollars in his pocket and his tax lawyer to inform the IRS of the imminent settlement of his longstanding income tax delinquency.⁸³ After the actual shooting⁸⁴ of JFK, Ruby was seen at Parkland Memorial Hospital by reporter Seth Kantor. Later on November 22, he turned up at the headquarters of the Dallas Police Department, just when District Attorney Henry Wade was speaking to journalists. In his recital of details, Wade said Oswald was tied to the Free Cuba Committee, which was a shock, since that group---more properly known as the Crusade to Free Cuba Committee---was an anti-Castro front founded by a New Orleans advertising man, Robert Caire. It included such people as David Ferrie and Sergio Arcacha Smith, both of whom were linked to Guy Banister. Ruby promptly "corrected"⁸⁵ him, pointing out that he must have meant the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. Another funny coincidence featuring Ferrie occurred on the evening of November 23, when Ruby phoned a friend in Galveston, Breck Wall. It took several attempts to get through to Wall, as the latter was just arriving from Dallas for a visit with his family. By the time the two finally did talk, however, Ferrie was also in Galveston, having just driven in from New Orleans on a trip of questionable intent.⁸⁶

On the morning of November 24, a pistol-wielding Ruby somehow got into the basement of the headquarters of the Dallas Police Department, and fatally wounded

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Oswald while the latter was being transferred to the county jail.

Almost four months later, on March 14, 1964, Oswald's murderer was sentenced to death.⁸⁷ His defense was that the killing had been committed while he was in a state of insanity brought on by "psychomotor epilepsy." In a taped interview just after the trial, Ruby proclaimed: "The world will never know the true facts of what occurred..."⁸⁸ On June 7 of that year, he went before the Warren Commission which, amazingly, had allowed over four months of witness testimony to pass before getting around to him. His testimony was given in the interrogation room of the Dallas County jail.⁸⁹ Ruby soon began requesting that he be moved to Washington, informing the Commission that "unless you get me to Washington, you can't get a fair shake out of me..."; another claim: "Gentlemen, my life is in danger here."⁹⁰ This was ignored.

On March 19, 1965, Ruby again emerged from his cell, this time to appear in court with the requests that counsel be changed and the case shifted to federal jurisdiction. (Both were denied.) Sylvia Meagher, watching the televised coverage of Ruby on his way to court, heard him talk about a "complete conspiracy...if you knew the facts you would be amazed."⁹¹ During July 12-15, 1965, Ruby was examined in prison by a psychiatrist, to whom he stated: "I was framed to kill Oswald."⁹² On June 13, 1966, a Texas state court upheld his sanity.⁹³

Events speeded up in late 1966.⁹⁴ On October 5, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals overturned Ruby's conviction, and ordered a retrial. Also in the autumn of that year, Ruby began to suffer from nausea and fever; although he was even spitting out blood, prison officials refused him medical attention, maintaining that it was all just a show. On December 7, another legal decision came down, this one designating Wichita Falls as the site of the retrial. The key point of that decision was that Wichita Falls lay outside the jurisdiction of the Dallas Police Department. Some people believed that Ruby stood an excellent chance of being convicted of "murder without malice," sentenced to time served, and then set free. On December 9, however, he was transferred to Parkland Memorial Hospital with a diagnosis of pneumonia. At this point, Ruby started to exhibit much paranoia, and went as far as to contend that he had been deliberately poisoned by mustard gas. When further tests revealed terminal cancer, he insisted someone had injected him with cancer cells, but prison authorities emphasized that there had been no mistreatment of their prisoner. In the second half of December, the dying man allegedly made a tape recording in which he reverted to the defense line of the original trial, characterizing the slaying of Oswald as the work of a lone man not responsible for his actions. He succumbed on January 3, 1967, technically because of a blood clot, although an autopsy confirmed a widespread malignancy.

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Footnotes

1. Report of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1964), p. 779; cited hereafter as Warren Report.
2. Robert Sam Anson "They've Killed the President!" (New York: Bantam, 1975), p. 231.
3. Anson, "They've Killed the President!", p. 227.
4. Warren Report, p. 695.
5. Warren Report, pp. 790, 791. U.S. House of Representatives, Appendix to Hearings Before the Select Committee on Assassinations, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979), Vol. IX, p. 1080. Hereafter, House Select Committee material will be cited as HSCA, followed by Report or hearings volume

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- number and page number(s).
6. Warren Report, pp. 700-701; note that HSCA IX, p. 1080 has the name change taking place on November 3, 1955.
 7. HSCA Report, p. 149.
 8. HSCA Report, p. 150; Anthony Summers, Conspiracy (London: Victor Gollancz, 1980), p. 599n108.
 9. Anson, "They've Killed the President!", p. 227, 233.
 10. Steven Brill, The Teamsters (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978), pp. 13-14.
 11. HSCA Report, pp. 154-155. There is even strong circumstantial evidence that Ruby was closely connected with a meeting of Hoffa's Southern Conference of Teamsters held in Dallas in June, 1963. See George Michael Evica, "Who Were These Men? The Dallas Connection," The Third Decade 1 #2 January, 1985, pp. 12-23.
 12. Committee to Investigate Assassinations, Coincidence or Conspiracy? (New York: Zebra Books, 1977), pp. 362-363. Peter Dale Scott in Crime and Cover-Up (Berkeley: Westworks, 1977), pp. 45-46, notes a November 26, 1963, internal memo of the Justice Department that also mentions a Chavez-Ruby link, but it is hard to say what information this memo was based on. The same document likewise connects Ruby to Anthony Provenzano, the mafioso who would later be suspected of a role in the 1975 disappearance of Hoffa.
 13. Ed Reid and Ovid Demaris, The Green Felt Jungle (New York: Pocket Books, 1964), p. 87; the authors note that a "Frank Chavey" was the point-man for this ruthless take-over, and it appears this is a mis-spelling of "Chavez."
 14. Anson, "They've Killed the President!", p. 198.
 15. The following account is based on: HSCA X, pp. 19-35.
 16. HSCA X, p. 24.
 17. Warren Commission Hearings and Exhibits, vol. 11, pp. 314-317. Hereafter, references to this source cited in format 11H314-317.
 18. 22H502.
 19. Warren Hinckle and William Turner, The Fish is Red: The Story of the Secret War Against Castro (New York: Harper and Row, 1981), p. 216.
 20. Summers, Conspiracy, p. 605n124.
 21. Summers, Conspiracy, p. 459; Anson, "They've Killed the President", p. 234.
 22. Summers, Conspiracy, p. 458.
 23. HSCA Report, pp. 151, 173; HSCA IX, pp. 528-529; concerning Matthews, HSCA IX, pp. 531-532, notes the amazing allegation that he and two other men were involved in a plot by H.L. Hunt to assassinate Fidel Castro and Guyanese Prime Minister Cheddi Jagan in Mexico in 1963---a plot that collapsed when the trio chickened out. (A dead suspect, Hunt will be mentioned again in this report.)
 24. HSCA IX, p. 173.
 25. HSCA Report, pp. 152-154.
 26. Summers, Conspiracy, pp. 268-269.
 27. HSCA, Report, pp. 173-174; Scott, Crime and Cover-Up, p. 17, says that Aleman was the son of Jose Aleman, Sr., a Cuban cabinet minister during the 1948-52 presidency of Dr. Carlos Prío Socarras, who himself may be regarded as a dead suspect, and who will also pop up again later on.
 28. HSCA Report, p. 156.
 29. HSCA Report, p. 170; HSCA IX, p. 97, says Murret died in late 1964.
 30. Committee to Investigate Assassinations, Coincidence or Conspiracy?, p. 310; HSCA X, pp. 110, 127.
 31. HSCA Report, p. 171.
 32. HSCA Report, p. 172.

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33. HSCA Report, p. 154.
34. Summers, Conspiracy, p. 467; Scott, Crime and Cover-Up, p. 54n34.
35. 26H337.
36. HSCA IX, p. 424.
37. Summers, Conspiracy, p. 476.
38. Summers, Conspiracy, p. 476.
39. Summers, Conspiracy, pp. 475-476.
40. Seth Kantor, Who Was Jack Ruby? (New York: Everest House, 1978), p. 36.
41. 24H202; 25H626.
42. Anson, "They've Killed the President!", p. 329.
43. Peter Noyes, Legacy of Doubt (New York: Pinnacle, 1973), p. 75.
44. 25H194.
45. Warren Report, p. 343.
46. 26H473.
47. HSCA IX, p. 1087; Mae Brussell, in "The Nazi Connections to the John F. Kennedy Assassination," The Rebel, January, 1984, p. 31, turns this into multiple copies of the book Lifeline, by Warren Carroll---a scriptwriter for the Hunt radio show of that name---with the section entitled "Heroism" having been consulted. A Ruby associate, Ed Pullman, "explains" the Hunt material in Ruby's effects as resulting from a Ruby visit to a Lifeline booth at a trade show after which he showed Pullman the material, exclaiming: "I want to send this stuff to Kennedy...Nobody has any right to talk like this about our Government." 15H225.
48. Mark Lane, Rush to Judgment (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966), pp. 237-238.
49. Summers, Conspiracy, pp. 477-478.
50. Noyes, Legacy of Doubt, p. 157.
51. Summers, Conspiracy, p. 460.
52. HSCA IX, pp. 177-183.
53. Committee to Investigate Assassinations, Coincidence or Conspiracy? pp. 512-513.
54. William Turner, "The Garrison Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy," Ramparts, January, 1968, p. 61.
55. HSCA IX, pp. 183-185.
56. Henry Hurt, Reasonable Doubt (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1986), p. 403.
57. Hurt, Reasonable Doubt, p. 402.
58. HSCA X, p. 26.
59. Hurt, Reasonable Doubt, p. 403.
60. Hurt, Reasonable Doubt, p. 401.
61. HSCA XII, pp. 56-57.
62. Hurt, Reasonable Doubt, pp. 402-404.
63. U.S. Senate, Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders (New York: W.W. Norton, 1976), p. 83. Hereafter: SSC.
64. David C. Martin, A Wilderness of Mirrors (New York: Ballantine, 1981), pp. 126, 128.
65. SSC, pp. 83-84.
66. Martin, Wilderness of Mirrors, p. 144.
67. Hurt, Reasonable Doubt, pp. 403-404.
68. Hurt, Reasonable Doubt, p. 405.
69. HSCA IX, pp. 187-188; Committee to Investigate Assassinations, Coincidence or Conspiracy?" pp. 490-491.
70. HSCA IX, p. 188.

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71. HSCA IX, p. 1083; Committee to Investigate Assassinations, Coincidence or Conspiracy?, p. 491; Penn Jones, Jr. Forgive My Grief III, p. 43.
72. Anson, "They've Killed the President!", p. 237.
73. Summers, Conspiracy, p. 466-467.
74. 4H177, 178.
75. Hurt, Reasonable Doubt, p. 165; for more details on the Ruby-Tippit issue, see Jerry D. Rose, "Jack Ruby and J.D. Tippit: Coincidence or Conspiracy?" The Third Decade 1 #3, March 1985.
76. Summers, Conspiracy, pp. 459, 487-488.
77. Scott, Crime and Cover-Up, p. 36.
78. Scott, Crime and Cover-Up, p. 36. In its chronology of people who saw Ruby before the assassination (HSCA IX, p. 1099), White's contact with Ruby is made to sound more innocuous: that White "saw and talked to" Ruby at the courthouse on November 20.
79. 19H73.
80. One of the more interesting was a student from Denton, Texas named Robert Hatfield, who had been involved in the Edwin Walker-inspired "heckling" demonstrations against Adlai Stevenson during a Dallas visit in October, 1963; a demonstration in which Hatfield was arrested in a spitting incident. The fact that White was defending Hatfield emerges from reporter Seth Kantor's notes concerning a dinner meeting on November 23 between himself and two longtime friends: White and FBI agent Vincent Drain. 20H420-421.
81. Scott, Crime and Cover-Up, p. 37.
82. Scott, Crime and Cover-Up, pp. 36-37.
83. Summers, Conspiracy, p. 474, 600n111; Evica, "Who Were These Men?"
84. Anson, "They've Killed the President!", pp. 34, 220.
85. Anson, "They've Killed the President!", pp. 221, 250.
86. Summers, Conspiracy, p. 482.
87. Sylvia Meagher, Accessories After the Fact rev. ed. (New York: Vintage, 1976), p. 452.
88. Hurt, Reasonable Doubt, p. 189.
89. Lane, Rush to Judgment, pp. 241-242.
90. 5H191-198.
91. Meagher, Accessories After the Fact, p. 453.
92. Hurt, Reasonable Doubt, p. 189, 475n114.
93. Meagher, Accessories After the Fact, p. 452.
94. Information in this paragraph is based on: Meagher, Accessories After the Fact, pp. 452-453; and F. Peter Model and Robert Groden, JFK: the Case for Conspiracy Rev ed. (New York: Manor Books, 1977), p. 259.

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