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ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY - new research by Anthony Summers, author of Conspiracy (McGraw-Hill, 1980). This is a memorandum for editorial guidance, "without prejudice", and is not intended for publication.

My latest work, arising principally from contacts made following publication of Conspiracy, has centred on two key and related areas. First, allegations by a top anti-Castro leader that his 1963 CIA case officer - known to him by the alias "Maurice Bishop" -- met with alleged assassin Oswald shortly before the assassination. Second, I have focused on the evidence involving Mexico City, which Oswald visited shortly before the assassination. There has long been suspicion that, while Oswald is supposed to have contacted Cuban and Soviet officials in Mexico, he was in fact impersonated by somebody else. The basis for the suspicion has been that descriptions of the "Oswald" at the embassies do not match the details of the real Oswald. The origin of the Mexico evidence was the CIA, and concern has arisen because the CIA failed to produce a surveillance picture of the real Oswald entering the embassies, and states that tapes of bugged phone conversations (featuring Oswald and embassy officials) were erased before the assassination.

I decided, in January 1981, to intensify investigation of former CIA officer David Atlee Phillips. Phillips was, in 1963, the senior officer concerned with anti-Castro activities in Mexico City (and thus in the hemisphere), the man in charge of the embassy bugging operations, and an established disinformation expert. It is Phillips who has tried to explain away the flaws in the Oswald/Mexico surveillance record to successive congressional bodies.

JFK assassination - 2

Moreover - in connection with the "Bishop" allegation - a former CIA case officer told the House Select Committee on Assassinations that he did recall the alias "Bishop" being used - and was almost certain the officer concerned was Phillips.

What follows is a summary of recent progress, not the complete picture but enough to indicate a positive editorial direction, and one which can be contained from the point of view of time and budget:

The Mexico angle now takes precedence. Thanks to access to highly confidential official sources we now know that the Committee on Assassinations gained information on the Mexico area which was suppressed in its published Report. Field and documentary research exposed the fact that the CIA, or specific Agency officers, indeed covered up the Mexico evidence. Pictures made during the Oswald Mexico visit have either been destroyed, or were deliberately withheld from the Committee. However, statements by five CIA officers, coupled with a secret memoir left by the former Mexico Station Chief, convinced Committee staff that a photograph of Oswald was taken in Mexico City - and indeed preserved until the Station Chief's death in the early seventies. He had kept a copy of the picture, along with his written record, and both were removed from his Mexico safe following his death, by a senior and renowned Counter-intelligence chief. The photograph has now disappeared from CIA headquarters. A hint as to the reason for all this obfuscation comes from the evidence involving the bugged telephone conversations held by the "Oswald" at the communist embassies and with communist officials. In some he spoke hopelessly bad Russian, in others Spanish. The authentic

JFK assassination - 3

Oswald spoke such good Russian that he could virtually pass for a Russian from the Baltic States. He spoke no Spanish at all. This supports the notion that, while Oswald did visit Mexico, he was not the man who created a stir at the communist embassies, and who talked with a KGB official belonging to the department which handles sabotage and assassination projects. It also takes much further the notion that the real Oswald was being set up for some purpose - perhaps to take the rap for the President's murder, with the secondary aim of blaming the assassination on Cuba.

All this is the more troubling in the light of what we now know about the allegations spread after the assassination - some so detailed as to have required advance planning - which further compromised the communist nations in terms of contact with Oswald. We now know much more about them than was clear from my Conspiracy chapter on such disinformation, entitled The First Stone. As will be seen in the next paragraphs, the new knowledge directly concerns David Phillips. Further evidence, some developed by the Committee and some by me, suggests a vital new aspect to the Mexico evidence - that Oswald was accompanied by others while in Mexico. A story the Committee staff found plausible, but which was never revealed to the Warren Commission, describes Oswald in the company of two men - whose descriptions we now have. A Mexican border record shows that Oswald returned to the United States by car. Oswald had no car, and could not drive. Officially, the public was told he returned to the States by bus - alone. The source of the account that Oswald was accompanied has consistently claimed that, when she began making her allegation, she was promptly whisked into seclusion in a hotel, warned not to repeat her story, and that she was later further silenced with threats against her person.

JFK assassination - 4

It is now established that the hotel sequestration did occur. Even more troubling, the man who arranged it, and the person who later made threats, were CIA agents. I know their identities.

The specific role of David Phillips is central to this Mexican imbroglio. We now know, in vivid detail, that Phillips' sworn testimony to the Committee was so unsatisfactory that staff were convinced he was lying. His written and verbal statements of his personal role in the CIA surveillance episode were hopelessly shaky - not least because the record shows he was not even in town on days he said he did certain things. Agency cable traffic was altered in a way which further compromised communist officials - by a named officer who worked for Phillips. (Phillips was in charge of the surveillance operations in Mexico.) Perhaps most serious of all, the majority of the disinformation tales spread about Oswald and the communists are tracable to CIA contacts who were specifically agents used by Phillips - as distinct from CIA contacts used generally by the Mexico Station. The disinformation source whose story was produced most promptly, and whose account was persistently brought to the attention of President Johnson, was handled and debriefed by David Phillips.

Much of the above information was learned by Congress' Assassinations Committee. None was published in its Report, in 1979. It is contained in a 300 page staff report, which remains classified (a major story in its own right).

The import of all this cannot be underestimated. The Soviets were so convinced that Oswald's communist links were being taken seriously, and that the United States might retaliate against the USSR - or more likely Cuba - that they ordered a nuclear alert. This was only defused after

JFK assassination - 5

personal efforts by President Johnson. We are talking about a nuclear standoff, just a year after the Missile Crisis.

As for Phillips, we now have a great deal more background on his personal character, and proclivities - he was prone to outbursts of violence, and above all to instances of serious professional lapses e.g. loss of top-secret documents. His retirement, allegedly, was for psychiatric reasons. As for the allegations about the mysterious CIA officer "Bishop", we have confirmed the firmness with which he was identified as Phillips by the former CIA case officer. In view of the Mexico evidence, it is obviously highly relevant that "Bishop" is alleged to have asked his anti-Castro operative to fabricate evidence linking Oswald with the communists in Mexico. In the general "Bishop" area, qualified sources corroborate important details. The US mining company office in Havana, where "Bishop" allegedly arranged training for his anti-Castro recruit back in 1960, was a CIA front. A witness, traced by me, linked the name "Bishop" promptly with that of an American journalist who turns out to be of strongly right-wing persuasion, said by a top CIA source to have been an Agency "asset" - handled by David Phillips. I am in touch with a former U.S. Army officer, once seconded to the CIA to train anti-Castro commandos, who says he can offer information that may lead to the identification of "Bishop". (He will do so only in person, not over the telephone.)

Separately from all the above, but tied in by Agency association, we now know sufficient to prompt intensive investigation of the activities of one-time senior CIA officer William Harvey. Harvey, in 1959, was one of only three officers who would have been privy to plans to send

MARCH 61

JFK assassination - 6

false defectors into the Soviet Union. 1959 was the year of Oswald's suspect defection - thus suggesting possible early awareness of Oswald by Harvey. Subsequently, Harvey was the man who conceived and planned the CIA's ZR-RIFLE program, designed to plot the assassination of foreign leaders. As such, he was the Agency's key man in the plotting of assassination as an operational effort. Next, Harvey was in charge of anti-Castro operations, and personally contacted Mafia bosses Trafficante and Roselli to incite them to murder Fidel Castro. Finally, because of his folly in sending commando teams into Cuba in the midst of the Missile Crisis - without authorisation - he incurred the wrath of the Kennedys. ("Bishop" was involved, allegedly, in similarly provocative operations, designed specifically to flout administration policy.) Following his actions over Cuba, Harvey was removed to a European posting, an apparent demotion which led to a personal hatred of (Robert) Kennedy which became Agency folklore. By 1963, his ZR-RIFLE assassination program was closed down. Yet I have learned he was that year in Florida, where the anti-Castro operations were being mounted.

In direct connection with all this, I have discovered an entirely new twist to the story published by columnist Jack Anderson about the CIA/Mafia plots to kill Castro. According to the published Washington Post account, Mafia figure Roselli (Harvey's contact) revealed to Anderson that the people sent to kill Castro were exposed, then turned around by Castro to kill President Kennedy. What Roselli really told Anderson, sources reveal, was not that Castro turned the killers against Kennedy, but that they turned against Kennedy of their own volition, or on the order of their U.S. - Mafia or CIA bosses. That is very different. Roselli, and his top Mafia colleague in the

March '81

JFK assassination - 7

anti-Castro plots, Giancana, were both murdered before they could testify to the Senate Intelligence Committee. In addition, I have been contacted by a Mafia figure - ideally placed to have had good information on Giancana who says he can provide information that meshes with all the above.

Working Thesis: The evidence, now breaking encouragingly and making sense, supports the thesis that an element of the CIA, involved as it was already in assassination plots with the Mafia, manipulated Oswald and may have directly planned the President's murder. My speculation, for the purposes of this memorandum, and based on the evidence I have developed, is that David Phillips' role was to run disinformation. If the operation was compartmentalized, as a good intelligence plan should be, he may not have understood what he was doing until the President was already dead. The result of the disinformation, however, - and remember that Phillips was a master of the art - could have been to spark an invasion of Cuba, and thus potentially - and we can say this without hyperbole - a nuclear war.

What should be done next: It would now be possible to write a controversial piece, but it would be far better to research further and make it a damning and major news story. For my part, I am professionally loath to go ahead with a finished article at this stage. Indeed, it would be wrong to do so - as we would have to at the moment - basing much of our material on key information given me by my official sources, (even though I regard them as entirely reliable). I recommend a real effort to follow up the specific leads we now have. We must interview the Mexico City CIA witnesses, whose names I know. We should investigate the sources of disinformation

March '81

JFK assassination - 8

on Oswald, particularly the Phillips' agents, and I know the names and whereabouts of some of them. We should interview the former Army man who offers information on the identity of "Bishop", and we should interview the Mafia associate with information on Roselli/Giancana and the CIA/Mafia role. So far as I can tell as of now, this will involve travel to Mexico City (via Dallas where I need to pick up documents), Florida, and Illinois. There would also be work in Washington, and further personal contact with the official sources who have proved so useful.

*Oswald
find the logs
not so much
found was well
can be a list
which I have
the boy since last
year
T.S.*

While one must beware of over-confidence on a story which involves the intelligence area, and this case especially, latest progress certainly justifies going ahead. I suggest, at this stage, a further four weeks' work, to be followed by the writing of a major article - unless new discoveries are sufficiently dramatic as to warrant more effort. As I have explained, I myself would like to escape from coverage of the case as soon as possible. If we get it right, the new information should make sufficient impact to stir some action from the mainline U.S. media, and hopefully in Congress or the Justice Department. Story value aside, it would be irresponsible - given the facts we now have - to let the case rest. Nobody else, so far as I know, is currently on this trail, or has had access to my official sources.