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BACK CHANNELS - VOLUME 2, No. 1 - FALL 1992

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Fidel Castro: Barrett reported that in the week before his killing, Castillo Armas had moved to close a gambling casino operated by American gangsters.

That intriguing tidbit led to more spadework that turned up the name of Ted Lewin, an international gambling impresario, who was the man jailed by Castillo Armas just prior to his shooting. Lewin, it turned out, had gotten his start in Los Angeles, running illegal gambling houses during Rosselli's tenure as king of the rackets there. In addition, I learned the name of Gus Nichols, Lewin's chief lieutenant in his travels, a man now working in Las Vegas training dealers their trade.

A call to Nichols brought the story full circle. Sure, he said, Lewin knew Rosselli - everyone in their business did. And sure, he'd seen Rosselli down in Guatemala. He didn't know what Rosselli was doing there, but he'd seen him around. One other thing, Nichols insisted that Lewin had been jailed after the assassination of Castillo Armas and not before, so he couldn't have been involved in the killing.

That final point was flatly contradicted by the facts: the Associated Press reported on July 23, 1957, that Lewin had posted bond after spending a night in jail on charges of operating an illegal gambling hall, and Castillo Armas was shot three days later. On that score, Nichols had to be lying, and one has to wonder why.

Is this the answer to the riddle of the CIA'S 1960 approach to Rosselli? In 1957, a period when Rosselli enjoyed red-carpet treatment from American officials throughout the region, was he involved with his friend Ted Lewin in bumping off a troublesome president? And if so, could the CIA have remained ignorant of the plot to murder one of their own stooges? Perhaps what Carlos Castillo Armas failed to realize was the lesson Castro later learned well - that in that era, in the Caribbean basin, crossing the mafia was tantamount to crossing the American government.

Charles Rappleye is the co-author of *All American Mafioso. The Johnny Rosselli Story*.

BACK CHANNELS

TALKS WITH

JIM DI EUGENIO

In September, Back Channels talked with author Jim DiEugenio whose book, *Destiny Betrayed*, has recently been released. In our conversation Mr. DiEugenio discussed many facets of the Kennedy assassination.

Destiny Betrayed, according to the author, took three years of research and nine months of actual writing. "I wanted to do a movie on the Garrison case, but Stone beat me to the punch." When asked why Jim Garrison was the only prosecutor to take on the Kennedy case, Mr. Di Eugenio replied, "he really cared - plus the fact that he was the only lawman in the country to read all 26 volumes of the Warren Commission."

I asked the author if Garrison's case against Clay Shaw was flawed from the start or did he have the right man all along? He answered by saying that he is convinced that Shaw was guilty as charged and that he is convinced that Shaw was really Clay Bertrand. Mr. Di Eugenio believes that Shaw was behind the setting up of Oswald but is more skeptical concerning Garrison's probe of David Ferrie. He said he isn't sure if Garrison should have gone ahead with the trial after Ferrie died.

In his book, Mr. Di Eugenio echoes other writers beliefs, including Philip Melanson (*Spy Saga*), that Lee Harvey Oswald was a spy. "His intelligence duties started in the Marines. He was sent to Russia on behalf of ONI to infiltrate the KGB but he failed to do so. Oswald was then taken over by the CIA as an agent provocateur (an agent, who as a plant, is ordered to associate himself with a specific target group or suspected person to whom he must pretend to sympathize). Oswald

believed that he was acting on orders of the CIA to investigate leftist organizations in the U.S." When asked about Oswald's work in New Orleans, Mr. DiEugenio noted that Oswald was being set up as a Communist agitator so he could later be blamed for the crime after the assassination took place. Oswald was following two different trains of thought - what he himself thought he was doing and what the CIA really had in store for him.

Mr. Di Eugenio believes Oswald was set up all the way and had no part in President Kennedy's murder.

Entwined in the entire spectrum of the Kennedy assassination lies Cuba and the CIA's efforts through the Mafia to kill Castro. Asked about Robert Kennedy's role in the assassination plots against the Cuban leader, the author pointed out that there are two thoughts concerning RFK's role. "The David Belin school that RFK knew of Operation Mongoose and the second instance in which he (the author) believes that Bobby did not tell JFK about plans to kill Castro. Bobby called off the CIA-Mafia plots to kill Castro but kept the independent CIA assassination plot going instead."

With regard to Richard Nixon and the plots to kill Castro, Mr. Di Eugenio points out that Nixon was the Chief Executive Officer of the Bay of Pigs invasion. He believes that Nixon knew of a plan to assassinate Manuelo Rey. On Watergate, Mr. Di Eugenio believes that E. Howard Hunt was going to spill the beans on the early plots to kill Castro and that *Washington Post* reporters, Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein did not get to the bottom of the affair.

Regarding the Shaw - Ferrie trip to

Clinton, La., Mr. Di Eugenio related that they took Oswald there to get him a job in a nearby mental hospital/or to possibly smear the CORE (Congress of Racial Equality) meeting that was going on at the same time. The idea was to brand Oswald as a "nut" with communist leanings.

Mr. Di Eugenio believes that Lyndon Johnson knew of the plot to kill JFK but kept quiet. He believes that both Hoover and LBJ were in the meeting on November 21, 1963, the day before the assassination with H.L. Hunt. In his opinion, the CIA and the Texas oil people started the plot to kill Kennedy. "The plot was much bigger than any one person, even bigger than the CIA."

Mr. Di Eugenio discussed Clay Shaw and his intelligence connections.

"Shaw worked for the OSS in World War II. All of Shaw's wartime files are still classified and the CIA has final approval of all OSS files that are to be de-classified. Shaw worked for the Western Union Company in the 1940's and rose to District Manager in 1942." Perhaps with the opening of the JFK files more information on Shaw will become available.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

As a *Back Channels* subscriber, a topical stamp collector, and a philatelic writer, I have come to realize that there is a connection between the subject matter of this publication and stamp collecting.

Topical philately focuses on collecting stamps on the basis of their design. The subject of the stamp, rather than, for example, the country of issue, or the technology in the stamp's production, is what interests the hobbyist.

How, then, does this relate to *Back Channels*? The primary subject matter of this publication is, of course, historical and modern espionage, assassinations and conspiracies, including the assassination of President John F. Kennedy and the possible conspiracies surrounding it.

In the philatelic realm, however, the "John F. Kennedy on Stamps" theme has been very popular among topical collectors for nearly thirty years, and the late president has been depicted on many stamps worldwide.

However, my real interest between the subject matter of *Back Channels* and topical stamp collecting lies in espionage, or the "Spies on Stamps" topical. I've rarely seen this subject addressed in philatelic literature, and it would be an interesting one to pursue.

For starters, the famous American Revolutionary War spy, Nathan Hale, whose immortal words, "I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country", are known by every school child, and who was executed by order of British General William Howe on September 22, 1776 without trial, is depicted on two United States definitive stamps in the 1/2 cent denomination which were issued in 1925.

Foreign stamps have also touched upon the field of espionage as well, and I believe that Raoul Wallenberg has been commemorated by a Swedish stamp, and Kim Philby is depicted on a stamp issued by the former U.S.S.R. Nevertheless, this is a fertile field for research, something I dabble in when time permits, and which might provide material for an article for these pages at some future time.

Mark H. Winnegrad
Bronx, New York

NOTES FROM THE A.S.K. SYMPOSIUM

The 29th anniversary of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy was remembered in Dallas, October 22-25, with the second annual ASK (Assassination Symposium Kennedy) Symposium held at the Hyatt Regency at Reunion Square.

An estimated 500 people from across the country and Canada assembled to honor the memory of our 35th president and to partake in panel discussions and in depth lectures on the various aspects of the death of President Kennedy.

On Friday morning, prominent researcher Mary Ferrell, gave the keynote address. A surprise guest speaker was Marina Oswald, the widow of the accused presidential assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald. Mrs. Oswald who lives in Dallas area, told the assembled guests that she was much appreciative of the

work the research community was doing and asked that the truth surrounding the assassination and her late husband's role, be fully investigated.

A bus tour of the assassination sites took passengers to Oswald's Neeley Street address (scene of the backyard photo), Oswald's Beckley St. rooming house, Officer Tippit's murder site, the Texas Theater, Jack Ruby's apartment and Dealey Plaza.

An author's signing party was held in which many writers who have published books on the Kennedy case signed their books and talked with the crowd.

A book fair was held each day of the conference in which publishers, authors and book/magazine dealers displayed their material.

In-depth panel discussions and lectures by leading Kennedy experts highlighted the four day event. Among

the topics were: The Eyewitness Panel, Medical Evidence, Oswald in Russia, Japan & Mexico City and Mafia/CIA/Cuban Connection.

Those people interested in getting audio tapes of the session can write to: Sound Solution C/O ASK PO Box 4999 Austin, Tx. 78765.

Video tapes of the panel discussions are available by contacting:

AV Presentations Inc. 7477 Airport Freeway, Fort Worth, Tx. 7618 (817-589-2159).

ASK plans to hold a 30th Anniversary JFK assassination symposium on November 18-22, 1993 at the Hyatt Regency, Dallas. For further information contact:

A.S.K.
Box 4999
Austin, Texas 78765
(512) 467-7979

FORESHADOWS OF JFK'S DEATH

BY JOHN S. CRAIG

President Kennedy was well aware that his office, policies, and record placed him in extraordinary danger. He spoke of the danger to friends and often remarked how easy it could be to kill a president. Many of his colleagues were also aware of the peril of his position. It is common knowledge that he was reluctant to travel to Texas and was discouraged to make the trip by Senators Hubert Humphrey and William Fullbright, and Congressman Hale Boggs. On November 22, 1963, at the Hotel Texas in Fort Worth, Kennedy told an aide that "last night would have been a hell of a night to assassinate a president... anyone perched above the crowd with a rifle could do it." What isn't so well known are the many times that Kennedy's assassination was mentioned, hinted at, and openly planned before November 22, 1963.

The Mob: The mafia has always been the source of rumors when conspiracy is considered. Mafia figures that wished either JFK or Robert Kennedy dead reads like a Who's Who of Sixties mobsters: Sam Giancana, Johnny Roselli, Santos Trafficante, Carlos Marcello. JFK and RFK had committed themselves to fighting "organized crime" well before they entered the White House. The Kennedy's investigations caused great animosity between Jimmy Hoffa and RFK. Mafia lawyer Frank Ragano revealed in early 1992 that he personally delivered a message from Teamsters head Hoffa to Mafia bosses Santos Trafficante and Carlos Marcelo to "kill the president." It is a common belief by many researchers that Hoffa wished to remove RFK from power by removing JFK from office. RFK indicted Hoffa on

jury tampering charges and deported Marcello to Guatemala. After the assassination, Marcello told Ragano that "Jimmy owes me, and he owes me big." Santos Trafficante, a Florida don, confided in Cuban exile leader Jose Aleman that JFK wouldn't be re-elected since "he's going to be hit."

Private investigator Edward Becker attended a meeting with Carlos Marcello in September, 1963 at a small Louisiana farmhouse on land Marcello intended to develop called Churchill Farms. Becker told Marcello that he thought he was getting unfair treatment from RFK. At the mention of RFK, Marcello went into a rage and said RFK would "be taken care of." Marcello vehemently argued that going after RFK would bring the president's wrath onto mafia families, but if JFK were out of office, LBJ would do nothing and RFK would lose his power since Johnson and Kennedy hated each other.

Marcello finished his diatribe by stating that the murder would have to be arranged so his men wouldn't be accused. Someone would have to be manipulated to take the fall for the murder, a "nut" to take the blame, "the way they do it in Sicily." He had already figured out a way to do it.

Marcello had strong ties with Joe Campisi who owned the Cabana Motel in Dallas where Ruby made a call to his Carousel Club at 2:30 am, November 22nd. One of several interesting characters who stayed at the Cabana on the night of November 21st was Eugene Brading. Brading had recently been released from prison and had a rap sheet of 35 arrests and possible links to the underworld. Brading was arrested at

12:45 pm, fifteen minutes after the shooting, in the Dal-Tex Building across the street from the Texas School Book Depository. Brading was arrested for acting suspicious in the building, but was quickly released after he used a fictitious name (James Braden) and convinced the authorities he was only making a phone call. At one time, Brading had told Federal authorities that his address was on the same floor and building that Carlos Marcello's lawyer kept an office and where David Ferrie worked as an investigator.

The Right Wing: Kennedy made public appearances and speeches in Chicago on November 2, 1963 and in Miami on November 18. Chicago police arrested Thomas Valle, a member of the John Birch Society, when they found he had made threatening remarks about Kennedy. Valle possessed a M-1 rifle, 3,000 rounds of ammunition, and took the day off from work on November 2. Before Kennedy's Chicago visit Secret Service agent Abraham Bolden was alerted about a threat to the president in the form of a 4 man hit team possessing high-powered rifles. The threats to the president in Chicago were never passed on to authorities preparing security in Dallas.

Two weeks before the assassination Joseph Milteer, a Miami resident and member of several right-wing organizations, had a telephone conversation taped by police informant William Somerset "He knows he's a marked man." Milteer said, He also said that Kennedy would be shot "from an office building with a high-powered rifle..." Some researchers believe that Milteer can be seen in photos of Dealey Plaza on the afternoon of the assassination.

When Kennedy arrived in Miami on November 18th, the Secret Service canceled some appearances due to rumors of trouble. A motorcade was canceled due to a concern about disenchanted Cuban exiles. Word had also been forwarded to the Secret Service that an assassination attempt would be made in Miami "from an office building with a high-powered rifle." Instead of using a motorcade the President flew by helicopter from Miami airport to the Americana Hotel where he made a speech.

Guy Bannister, an ex-FBI agent who had worked in Chicago, had set up an office in New Orleans. He seemed to support many right-wing causes and possibly covert CIA operations. In 1978 Bannister's secretary Delphine Roberts admitted that she had seen Oswald in Bannister's office in 1963. Oswald filled out an application form to become one of Bannister's "agents" and met with him several times in his office. Oswald came back several times to Bannister's 544 Camp Street address where he had access to an office full of pro-Cuban literature that he passed out on a New Orleans street. Also visiting Bannister that summer were David Ferrie, Clay Shaw and Sergio Arcacha Smith.

Target Practice: During the morning of November 20, 1963, two downtown Dallas police officers on routine patrol entered Dealey Plaza and noticed several men standing behind the wooden fence on the grassy knoll situated next to the Texas School Book Depository. The men seemed to be engaged in a mock target practice. The police officers watched the men raise rifles over the fence and point them toward the street. By the time the police arrived in the area the men with guns disappeared. The incident was reported to the FBI on November 26, but was never made public until 1978 through the Freedom of Information Act.

Rose Cheramie: During the night of November 20, 1963, Rose Cheramie was either pushed from a car or abandoned by two men outside of Eunice, Louisiana. During her stay in a hospital, she told Dr. Victor Weiss that her two companions had been discussing a plot to kill the President in Dallas. She

said that the two men looked Italian and that the "underworld" was involved in the plot. The story was later confirmed by police officer Lt. Francis Fruge.

Fruge testified to the 1978 Select Committee on Assassinations, that during a follow-up inquiry, he checked with the owner of the Silver Slipper Lounge—a brothel where Cheramie had been with her two companions. The owner examined photos shown by Fruge and picked out Sergio Arcacha Smith and a Cuban exile named Osanto. The H.S.C.A. also reported that Smith was a friend of David Ferrie and supposedly had contacts with Carlos Marcelló.

Sergio Arcacha Smith served under Batista in Cuba. He set up the Cuban Revolutionary Council with Guy Bannister's help and supposedly maintained extensive relations with the FBI and Carlos Marcelló who provided funds for the CRC. Smith created the CRC for Cuban exiles and to secretly promote the overthrow of Castro.

Fruge contacted the Dallas police after Oswald was shot, but they were uninterested in his story. Cheramie died in 1965 in an auto accident. She also told investigators that she was on a drug run from Louisiana to Houston for Jack Ruby and that Ruby and Oswald knew each other.

Oswald and the Odios: In September, 1963, three men visited Sylvia and Annie Odio in Dallas. The Odios described the men as two Latinos and an American. One of the Latinos called himself Leopoldo and introduced the American as Leon Oswald. The Odios were part of an anti-Castro community in Dallas and had helped form JURE (Junta Revolucionara) in Puerto Rico. JURE was a social democratic group involved in active anti-Castro politics. The men claimed to be members of JURE and wanted to talk to the Odios.

The men asked for funds to support anti-Castro events. They claimed they had just arrived from New Orleans where they were working with the Cuban Revolutionary Council. The meeting broke up without anything being decided, but Leopoldo called Sylvia Odio two days later.

He again requested funding and then asked what Sylvia thought of the American. She replied that she hadn't formed an opinion. Leopoldo told her that Oswald was an ex-Marine, an expert shot, but was kind of "loco" and you never know what he might do. He said Oswald was capable of getting into the Cuban underground and killing Castro. He also said that Oswald had chided the Cubans as not having any guts, stating that after the Bay of Pigs, Kennedy should have been shot.

Sylvia Odio immediately felt that there was some sort of plot against Kennedy but told no one. When pictures of Oswald appeared on television after the shooting both Sylvia and Annie Odio recognized Lee Harvey Oswald as the same man who had been introduced by Leopoldo as Leon Oswald.

Gunmen on the Sixth Floor: Fifteen minutes before the motorcade entered Dealey Plaza, Arnold Rowland and his wife witnessed two men and a rifle on the sixth floor of the Book Depository. Approximately the same time Mrs. Ruby Henderson saw two men with a rifle on the sixth floor, one with a dark complexion. Seconds before the motorcade entered the plaza, Mrs. Carolyn Walther also noticed two men with a rifle on a high floor of the Depository. Witnesses with the best view of the sixth floor were inmates of the county jail.

"Colonel" Rivera: In April, 1963, a curious encounter between a K.S. Turner and Jose Rivera eerily portended the fates of Oswald and Kennedy. Turner and Rivera met each other at a professional meeting in Washington, D.C. Rivera introduced himself to Turner as a science administrator with the National Institute of Neurological Diseases. Rivera made it clear that he had worked with hypnosis and LSD during his career. Turner noted that Rivera was addressed at one time by an acquaintance as Colonel Rivera.

When polite conversation between Rivera and Turner brought up the fact that Turner lived in New Orleans, and that Rivera had taught at Loyola University, Rivera mentioned knowing a Lee Harvey Oswald in New Orleans. Turner assumed that Oswald

was a scientific colleague. Curiously, within the same context of mentioning Oswald, Rivera encouraged Turner, whenever he might be in Dallas, to visit Jack Ruby's Carousel Club.

Rivera asked Turner to do him a favor; to contact Lee Oswald, a person he claimed to have taught at Loyola University in New Orleans. Rivera wanted to know when Oswald planned to leave New Orleans. He told Turner to call Oswald and tell him to "kill the chief." Then Rivera cryptically added, without elaborating, that "we" are playing a joke on him. He also said that Oswald was not what he seemed, and that after "it's" over in November someone will kill Oswald. When Turner asked for more details Rivera refused.

Upon returning to New Orleans, Turner called the phone number that Rivera provided. First he spoke to Marina Oswald who claimed she did not know a Jose Rivera. Turner called later and spoke to a man who identified himself as Lee Harvey Oswald. Oswald also had no knowledge of Rivera. Turner spoke with Secret Service Agent Calvin Rice and told him about Riviera's strange statements. On November 24, 1963, Turner traveled to Washington to speak with agent Rice. Later, the FBI told Turner that they had no record of Turner's meeting with Rice. (note: K.S. Turner, From April to November and Back Again, *The Third Decade*, V.9 No. 1 p., 1-5 November, 1991).

The CIA and Marita Lorenz: Mark Lane's book, *Plausible Denial*, details the story of Marita Lorenz who claims to have been part of a two-car caravan of assassination conspirators that traveled from Miami to Dallas via New Orleans, arriving on November 21. Her story was told in a court deposition that was delivered at a defamation trial against the *Spotlight Magazine* and its publisher Liberty Lobby. The case was brought against Liberty Lobby by E.Howard Hunt. Hunt accused Victor Marchetti of libel when Marchetti, in a *Spotlight* article, accused Hunt of being involved in the JFK assassination.

Lorenz was an alleged mistress of Castro and self-admitted CIA employee. During the interview with Mark Lane, Lorenz was reluctant to say who was in the caravan, but did name Frank Sturgis, two Cuban brothers named Novis, a man named Lanz, and Gerry Patrick Hemming. Hemming has denied that she was part of this caravan. Lorenz said that Sturgis told her that Hunt would provide operating funds for cover, and plans for exit after the operation was complete. Lorenz claims that she spoke to the FBI immediately after the assassination and told them the names of the people in the caravan. "They know all about those associations", Lorenz said, "...they didn't want to go into it. Those are CIA activities, not FBI."

This curious Miami connection has been recently highlighted by the story of Michael Kensington (pseudonym) who will soon publish a book on the CIA's involvement in the JFK assassination. Kensington was a young man when he lived in the Grapeland Heights section of Miami in the summer of 1963. From his house, he and his father eavesdropped on several conversations of men who lived in a house behind theirs. Kensington believes the house was a CIA safe house where cars and trucks came and went at all hours of the day and night.

The snippets of Spanish that Kensington and his father heard were reported to the Miami police on or around November 19, 1963. The facts of the report to the police were corroborated by a former Miami police officer in 1992. Kensington's father reported that he heard several Cubans planning a trip to Dallas where they were going to do something to President Kennedy. Within a week of the assassination a "For Rent" sign appeared in front of Kensington's strange neighbors home (see M. Kensington, *The Miami Connections to the Assassinations*, *The Third Decade*, V. 9 No. 6 p. 26-31, September 1992).

John Craig is a freelance writer living in Denver.

HISTORICAL FLASHES

John F. Kennedy's health problems were common knowledge in Washington and it came as no surprise that when Kennedy decided to run for president in 1960, the Nixon campaign took notice. During the campaign burglars broke into the office of JFK's doctor looking for any information they could find. Kennedy's doctor wisely filed his patient's records under another name.

In June 1942, German submarines infiltrated two teams of saboteurs along the coast of the U.S. The most ambitious was code name **Pastorius** whose members were to destroy aircraft plants. However, once in New York one of the team members, George Dasch gave himself up to the FBI. His entire team was arrested and tried before a secret military court. Most of the German spies were hung. Dasch was given a 30 year prison term.

In 1942 the French submarine **Surcouf** was sunk in the Caribbean. It has been reported that she was responsible for attacking the ocean liner **Queen Mary** (which was being used as a troop carrier). The **Surcouf** may have been a renegade sub under the command of the pro-German Vicy French. The **Surcouf** was said to have been sunk by the United States.

During the days leading up to the **Cuban Missile Crisis**, President Kennedy sent personal representatives to inform our allies of the situation in Cuba and America's probable response. Secretary of State Dean Acheson was sent to England to confer with U.S. Ambassador David Bruce. Meeting at an airbase in Newbury England, Bruce carried a fully loaded revolver. Bruce's response to Acheson's inquiry regarding the gun was, "I was told by the Department of State to carry this when I went to meet with you."

free the trapped men in Richmond.

The major elements of Kilpatrick's plans was the release of Union prisoners in Libby Prison and the disruption of General Lee's supply lines in Richmond.

Another element of the plan was the distribution of President Lincoln's amnesty proclamation offering a full pardon to any Confederate who joined Union ranks.

The president approved the operation and, joined by Colonel Ulrich Dahlgren, the two officers began preparations for the attack on the Confederate capital.

Near Richmond, Kilpatrick and Dahlgren's troops separated for a two pronged attack on the city. During a fierce rain storm that prevented the communication by the two commanders, and with both units hopelessly lost, Kilpatrick decided to cancel the attacks and regroup his troops.

In the ensuing retreat Colonel Dahlgren was killed. When the Confederates searched his body they discovered secret papers linking the Dahlgren-Kilpatrick raid in a more far reaching plot. The papers revealed a Union scheme to kill Confederate President Jefferson Davis as well as members of his cabinet.

Elizabeth Van Lew and her agents in Richmond retrieved Dahlgren's body from his grave and kept it for eventual return to his father, Admiral John A. Dahlgren.

Elizabeth financed her espionage operation out of her own funds and after the war ended she presented a claim for \$15,000 for reimbursement. Her letter was countersigned by General Grant but to her great disappointment, her application was rejected.

Instead, she was appointed Postmaster of Richmond but was replaced by President Rutherford B. Hayes.

Alone, poor and shunned by her Richmond neighbors, Elizabeth lived a meager existence, helped out by the family of Colonel Paul Revere of Boston, a soldier whom she helped in Libby Prison.

Elizabeth Van Lew, the Union's master spy in Richmond, died at the age of 82, a woman truly alone.

OSWALD'S MILITARY INVESTIGATION

BY PETER KROSS

There have been two investigations into the murder of President John F. Kennedy in the 29 years since the crossfire in Dealey Plaza; the Warren Commission (1964) and the House Select Committee on Assassinations (1978).

Since the assassination, many of the central figures including Lee Harvey Oswald himself, have been linked in one way or another to military intelligence. While there was no formal investigation, there are clues that the military conducted their own, covert inquiry.

In the summer of 1963, Lee Harvey Oswald moved alone to New Orleans leaving his wife behind in Dallas. Oswald became the sole member of the Fair Play For Cuba Committee and could be seen handing out his pamphlets on the street. Stamped on his flyers was the address 544 Camp Street.

544 Camp St. had an assortment of shady characters with varying ties to the anti-Castro movement as well as U.S. intelligence. Among the groups using the building were the Cuban Revolutionary Council (CRC), an anti-Castro group and the offices of a private detective agency headed by Guy Bannister.

Bannister, a former F.B.I. agent had his office at 531 Lafayette St, a side entrance to 544 Camp. Bannister has been linked to O.N.I., the Office of Naval Intelligence through his friend and contact, Guy Johnson. Johnson served as a reserve officer in ONI and also was Clay Shaw's first attorney.

Bannister and David Ferrie were reported seen with Oswald in New Orleans in the summer of 1963 on numerous occasions. Delphine Roberts, Bannister's secretary, told the Dallas Morning News in a 1978 interview that Oswald was employed by Bannister as "an undercover agent."

The Warren Commission had no

idea that the U.S. military had any files on Oswald before the assassination with the possible exception being Oswald's personal military records. As a routine part of their work they wrote to the Army requesting any such records and were told that none existed. A lie.

The military did indeed have an extensive file on Oswald.

On the day of the assassination, Army intelligence officers were slated to be part of the security detail in Dealey Plaza. This is standard operating procedure for the military to augment the Secret Service. On November 22, 1963, the 112th Army Intelligence Unit at Fort Sam Houston was ready to travel to Dallas to aid in the security detail. At the last moment they were told to stand down. Why? The unit's commander, Colonel Maximilian Reich, objected to the "stand down" order but was overruled.

But if the entire 112th M.I. detachment did not proceed to Dallas, there were a number of men linked to military intelligence on the ground. Army agent James Powell was in Dealey Plaza during the assassination and had with him a 35mm. minox camera. After the shooting, agent Powell was in the Book Depository Building and said he helped the sheriff's deputies to seal up the building. But what was he really doing there?

Lt. Colonel George Whitmeyer, the commander of the local military intelligence unit was riding with the police in the motorcade. An unidentified member of Army Intelligence spent some time on the morning of the 22nd with F.B.I. agent James Hosty. Oswald had Hosty's name and car license plate number in his address book.

Other strange incidents concerning possible military men along the motorcade route include Dallas police Lieutenant Jack Revill who drove a member of Army intelligence back to

the soldier's office after the shooting.

A number of Dallas policemen on duty that day were associated with Army Intelligence including, Detective Adamick who was in the party that searched Ruth Paine's garage and W.P. Gannaway, Jack Revill's boss.

After word had been received that a suspect, Lee Harvey Oswald had been arrested in the president's death, word went out to the various intelligence agencies of the United States. The 112th M.I. unit searched its files and came up with a startling piece of information. They had a file on Oswald, along with the fact that he used an alias, A.J. Hidell. His name was listed because he was a "possible counter-intelligence threat."

The 112th M.I. covered five states in the Southwest including Texas and Louisiana. The Army had become aware of Oswald by the New Orleans police in the summer of 1963 after Oswald was arrested for fighting with Carlos Bringuier, an anti-Castro member of the CRC.

Oswald's file was listed under both his real name and his alias, A.J. Hidell.

The files contained all the crucial information on Oswald's background including his stay in Russia, his marriage to Marina and his return home. In an interesting twist, the 112th M.I. had a file on Oswald listing his name as "Harvey Lee Oswald" living at 605 Elsbeth St in Dallas. Oswald lived there late in 1962 and early 1963.

Lt. Colonel Robert Jones of the 112th M.I. relayed this information to the F.B.I. Jones believed he spoke to Gordon Shanklin, the Dallas F.B.I. agent-in-charge. Jones wrote an "after action" report stating all he had done in regards to sending out all relevant information about Oswald to local and federal authorities. He was never called to testify before any U.S. agency, including the Warren Commission.

It is very possible that Army intelligence knew a lot more about Oswald's activities than meets the eye.

On May 16, 1973, Army intelligence de-classified a blatantly false telegram concerning Oswald which was sent on November 22, 1963, from Fourth Army Command to U.S. Strike Command at McDill A.F.B., Florida.

"Don Stringfellow, Intelligence Section Dallas Police Department, notified 112th Intelligence Group this Headquarters, that information obtained from Oswald revealed he had defected to Cuba in 1959 and is a card carrying member of the communist party."

Oswald was never a member of the Communist Party.

When the HSCA began its investigation of the Kennedy assassination, one of the topics they looked into was the military connection to Lee Oswald. One of the people whom the committee spoke to was Mrs. Larry Huff, whose husband had played a role in the military's investigation of Oswald in 1963. Mrs. Huff related the following story.

She said her husband left Hawaii on December 14, 1963 from Kaneohe Base on board a C-54-T aircraft, serial no. 50855 bound for Wake Island. The plane's commander was Chief Warrant officer Robert Morgan. The man in overall charge of the mission was Gen. Carson Roberts.

Larry Huff served as the navigator on the flight. On board were 10-12 C.I.D. investigators whose final destination was Atsugi, Japan. Huff said that C.I.D. men told him that the purpose of the flight was to investigate Lee Oswald's possible military connections.

On the return flight, Huff said that he was given a 20 page typed report on the C.I.D.'s findings. The report found Oswald was "incapable of committing the assassination alone."

Huff reported that he believed that all army records concerning their trip to Japan might be stored in the Intelligence Division of the Marine Corps or with the Commandant of the Marines.

When questioned by the committee, C.W.O. Roger Morgan said that he in fact had flown a plane, #50855 from Kaneohe Bay to Tachikawa AFB in Japan and that the names of the crew were available. But when the committee requested the list, they were missing.

The Department of Defense said on April 19, 1978, that it had no records of any investigation and that neither it nor the Air Force Office of Special Investigations had gone to California or Hawaii in 1963. They did

say that the H.S.C.A. might have been misled because they were doing an investigation of John Edward Pic, Oswald's half-brother. The Pic records too, were destroyed.

The Department of Defense told the HSCA that its file on Oswald had been destroyed. Commenting on M.I.'s destruction of Oswald's file, the HSCA said, "the committee found this "routine" destruction of the Oswald file extremely troublesome, especially viewed in light of the D.O.D.'s failure to make the file available to the Warren Commission. Despite the credibility of Jones' testimony, without access to this file, the question of Oswald's possible affiliation with military intelligence could not be fully resolved" (Crossfire, pg. 311).

Noted Kennedy writer Paul Hoch has written in his book, *The Assassinations: Dallas and Beyond*, that Oswald may have been "sheep dipped", a spy term meaning that a person is discharged from the military and then given another secret assignment. He further relates that the F.B.I. was told that the C.I.C. and C.I.D. files on Oswald's stint at El Toro, California in 1959 were gone and possibly sent to Washington.

Oswald's possible connection to U.S. intelligence remain a mystery.

If Oswald was indeed a real defector, why wasn't he arrested upon his return to the U.S.?

Why wasn't he de-briefed at length by either the F.B.I. or the C.I.A.?

If Oswald was a genuine agent of the U.S., that would explain why he wasn't arrested after his return to Texas.

On their trip back from Russia, Lee and Marina crossed the border at Jelmstedt, between East and West Berlin. Marina's passport was stamped with that location. But Lee's does not. Where then could he have crossed?

The Oswald's next stopped in Amsterdam en-route to the U.S. But instead of staying in a government provided residence, they stayed in a private apartment.

The release of the JFK files may result in a better handling of this most puzzling piece of the mosaic.

"Top Cop" M.N. McDonald Another Warren Commission Spokesman

BY WALT BROWN

On October 29, the television show "Top Cop" featured a brief interview with M.N. "Nick" McDonald, "the man who arrested Lee Harvey Oswald" in front of the since-remodeled Texas Theater. In twenty-five words or less, it was Hollywood and the Warren Commission at their finest.

On a more serious note, however, it seems like just another example of the "dust them off and let them spout the official version" thinking that has categorized Warren Commission apologists since the release of the *Report* in September, 1964. Back then, for those old enough to remember, the best apologists were the media: they swallowed the *Report* whole and were shocked and dismayed when the first generation of critics - Weisberg, Fox, Sauvage, Epstein, and Lane - had the temerity, nay, the gall, to challenge it.

But those challenges, even in the absence of all the subsequent documentation that we have to work from, won many converts, and original media sponsors of the *Report* had to back off. It then became a matter of finding someone - anyone - to trot out and spout the official dogma one more time. In the 60's it was easy and convenient: most of the players were still alive, so there was no need to risk danger by exposing the autopsy surgeons or others whose work had come under serious scrutiny. Earl Warren would step forward (as shown in the late Jim Garrison's portrayal in *JFK* and say, "I never seen nothing to indicate any kind of conspiracy whatsoever," or something like that. The language is crucial. It would be just as easy for me, in 1992, to say, "I have seen no evidence that the Toronto Blue Jays deserve to be world champs." And I would be telling the truth, because I did not see them play. How simple the manipulation of words can be.

As surviving Warren Commission members dwindled, Gerry Ford took center stage, bringing with him the majesty of the Oval Office and the wisdom that caused him to suggest in the Presidential debate of 1976 that Poland was not under Communist domination, a theory he restated with conviction, in early October, 1992, as a commentator on a presidential debate forum. Mr. Ford, as a defender of the *Report* would point to a shiny set of 26 volumes and exclaim about the sheer zillions of man-hours contained therein, mostly by the FBI, and ask the overused rhetorical question, "How could that be wrong?" I would have loved to prove his case, had he opened randomly to Volume 16, page 514 and shown the whole world Oswald's shower slippers. That would have changed my thinking forever!

The last few years have seen so many books of such high quality that the Warren Commission and its *Report* are now seen to be exactly what they were: the American equivalents of those other great judicial inquiries, the Spanish

Inquisition, the Stalin purges, and the Hitler-plotters trials. It's always fun to know the outcome before the event starts. Last spring, no doubt in response to *JFK*, and possibly in response to Dr Charles Chrenshaw's excellent medical book, *Conspiracy of Silence*, 2 of the 3 "pathologists" stepped before microphones, wrote an article for a medical journal and *People* magazine (not under oath, mind you), and told Chrenshaw and the rest of us that we're still dogs chasing our tails.

The latest, and most hideous manifestation of this phenomenon was the appearance of officer M.N. "Nick" McDonald on "Top Cops." Although pure nonsense on face, there were a few "gems" during the (thankfully) brief interview, gems that should give us at least brief pause.

McDonald began his remarks by saying he was in Oak Cliff on November 22, 1963, and it was a "routine day" until he heard the news of the shooting of the President.

We are told that in subduing Oswald in the theater, the officer wedged his hand between the hammer and cylinder of the pistol before Oswald pulled the trigger, and when he did, the hammer hit the officer's hand. This strongly contradicts the Warren Commission's version that one cartridge in the pistol had a hammer mark on it.

The recitation continued with a series of statements further at odds with the official version: 1) We didn't make the connection with President Kennedy until we got to city hall. (Then why did officers at the theater yell, "kill the President, will you?") 2) The pistol proved to be the same one that killed Tippit. (It is well known that the pistol was re-barreled, so no ballistic examination could have ever established such a charge. Beyond that, what did connect the gun to Tippit was the hammer markings on some doubtful cartridge cases that turned up in a drawer in Dallas Police headquarters in March, 1964, and we've already seen from the "hammer" evidence above that there can be much "confusion" there.) 3) Other officers took Oswald away, so McDonald never got his "pitcher" taken with the suspect. (The danger with this statement is that the arresting officer did not travel with the suspect, raising serious questions about the claim of possession of the pistol, which was not initiated by McDonald until late in the afternoon, at headquarters. How could he possibly know it was the same gun? He certainly did not examine it at length while his thumb was in the firing mechanism, and his concern thereafter seems to have been, by his own admission, to retrieve his police cap - clearly a priority on a day that the president and a policeman have been murdered in your city. In addition, there is no published arrest report with McDonald's name on it, which lowers his appearance fee, (CONTINUED ON PAGE 20)

from a spy novel. A tall, good-looking man full of enthusiasm for his subject and life in general, he looks at least twenty years younger than his eighty years. He has only recently given up his hobby of parachuting.

Born in Sarajevo in 1911, he remembers as a child playing at the feet of Colonel Aspis, a family friend and then head of Serbian Military Intelligence, on the very day Archduke Ferdinand was assassinated. It was Aspis who had been instrumental in organizing the plot that was to lead to the outbreak of the First World War.

It was while studying mathematical physics at Princeton that Dediger turned to Marxism in an attempt to find a "science to explain the world situation" and while working around the steel mills of Pennsylvania as a Communist Party activist that he was approached by Soviet Intelligence. Dediger became involved in, amongst other activities, smuggling out the passports of steel workers and miners which were then used by Soviet agents being infiltrated into America.

Membership of the American Communist Party does not seem to have worked against him when the Second World War broke out. He joined the forerunner of the CIA, the OSS, where it was felt his mastery of several languages and good Central European contacts could be best used. However, his support for Tito, a close friend of his younger brother, led to his expulsion. He joined the American army as a paratrooper and was one of General Maxwell Taylor's personal bodyguards at Arnhem, later saving the general's life during the Rhine offensive. After a special request from Tito to Eisenhower he returned to his native country and ended the war as Secretary to the Vice-President of Yugoslavia.

In the immediate post-war years, Dediger was a government official, a foreign correspondent and later, editor of several Yugoslav papers, before becoming vice-director of the Yugoslav News Agency. In 1949, he moved to the Boris Kidric Institute in Belgrade, the Yugoslav national center for nuclear sciences, becoming its Director in 1952. Two years later he resigned because "I thought it crazy that Yugoslavia should be building a bomb."

He decided to move to the Tait Institute for Theoretical Physics in Edinburgh where he had friends. It was while he was there that "a gentlemen from the Foreign Office, who introduced himself as "Mr. Marriot" took me out to lunch and asked if I would work for British Intelligence. Of course I said no."

In 1962 he began his association with the University of Lund and four years later, founded his Research Policy Institute as part of the department of Business Administration. Drawing on a variety of academic disciplines he has created a course which now emphasizes how intelligence gathering by countries is not dissimilar to economic research by companies.

Dediger's admirers include Bill Colby, the former head of the CIA, and Professor R.V. Jones, both of whom have contributed to a book to mark Dediger's eightieth birthday. The discipline of social intelligence has been sufficiently recognized to merit its own journal and for the United States to have a flourishing Society for Competitor Intelligence Professionals whose aim is to improve intelligence and securi-

ty within business corporations.

Dediger, having been among the first to recognize that intelligence was an academic discipline worthy of study in itself, has now led the way in arguing that intelligence has more to do with trade secrets than military deployments. As he points out "The Great Game is not dead. It just has new players and a slightly different focus."

Andrew Lownie is the author of *North American Spies*.

"TOP COP" M.N. McDONALD

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18)

no doubt, as he is at best, "the man Oswald slugged"). 4) "I was the only one who hit Oswald". (if so, why did the Warren Commission ask so many questions about Oswald's appearance on November 22, and why did they ask whether anyone in the theater saw a policeman strike Oswald in the back with a shotgun?)

McDonald did make the statement that a reporter labeled him, "the only one who had done anything right" that day. Anyone familiar with what the Dallas cops did that day will find agreement with that statement, although there is the possibility that an officer named Roscoe White also did what he was supposed to do that day. McDonald continued, and I found this curious, that they were prepared to present photographic evidence of Oswald resisting arrest when it was time for him to appear in court. What photographic evidence? A mouse under Oswald's eye? Or have we all missed something? McDonald evidently did, as he began his wrap-up, concluding that he believed Oswald was guilty, because there was an eyewitness to the Tippit shooting, and "I'm equally sure he assassinated the President." Hey! Forget "free the files"; M.N. McDonald, in a moment of deep contemplation, has told the world of an eyewitness to the Tippit slaying, and his own gut feeling about JFK. Incontrovertible!

What was fascinating, and somewhat lost among the laughter from anyone familiar with the case, was the scene, shown twice of Ruby shooting Oswald. Complete with sound track, it clearly presents Ruby firing **three shots**. That damn near woke me up. Just when I'm convinced that the whole video is just more rehashed vintage 1964 claptrap, there's Ruby busting in and firing **three shots**. And while any of us "buffs" or "critics" (truth-seekers is a term we rarely hear), were doing double-takes, they ran it again - and Ruby fired three shots again! And there's no mistaking it - I've played the tape any number of times and for a number of folks, and the sounds are all the same, and the cadence is just what three shots, fired in haste with purpose, would sound like. Could we have been accidentally handed food for further study?

While that tape ran, retired officer McDonald told that Ruby had no right to do what he did and that Oswald deserved his day in court. As the author of *People v. Lee Harvey Oswald*, I would like to thank the Warren Commission apologist for getting something right.

Walt Brown is the author of *People v. Lee Harvey Oswald*.

Towards The Final Investigation

BY JIM DIEUGENIO

I have now attended both Assassination Symposiums on John F. Kennedy (ASK conferences). Last year I was a spectator and this year I was a speaker. One of the more disappointing aspects of the 1991 conference was the fact that of the more than 25 speakers in attendance, only one ever proposed a reopening of the case (Mark Lane devoted about two sentences to the subject). Behind the scenes, activist Fred Sturges tried to push the idea but it never got off the ground. Perhaps only Lane foresaw the media sensation the Oliver Stone's *JFK* would produce. In any event, the ASK conference of 91 would have been the perfect place to begin to mull over the practical fact that Stone's film probably provides us the last opportunity to pry open the Kennedy case before it recedes down the dusty halls of the Lincoln-McKinley historical museum.

One could argue that many of us, including the ASK organizers and advertisers, unaware of the potency of *JFK* and were just happy to have a nationwide convention. Therefore they failed to realize the opportunity the first conference represented. No one can offer that excuse for the 92 event. Everyone was aware of the renewed interest in the case after the 80's decade of rigormortis. Mr. Sturges and myself were making calls more than a month in advance to both organizers and speakers. Mark Lane did not appear this year and, perhaps as a result, I did not hear one speaker in the main auditorium panels advocate a reopening of the case. This was to be directly addressed on the last day of the event, Sunday October 25. This proceeding was hosted by eminent author and respected critic George Michael Evica. It was appropriately titled "Call to

BACK CHANNELS

Action." Professor Evica outlined three possible paths:

- 1) The Oliver Stone-Jim Garrison "free the files" option.
- 2) The appointment of a Texas Board of Inquiry, a first step to a full-fledged state prosecution.
- 3) The appointment of a special prosecutor at the federal level.

The last choice was the one advocated by Fred and myself. I circulated a petition on the first night of the conference moving that this specific point be discussed before the conference as a whole. Over two-thirds of the speakers signed the petition. In spite of this, the special prosecutor alternative was pressed between the other two and given the shortest shrift, about two sentences. At the conclusion of the Sunday session, no resolution from the "call to action" had been

placed in final, written form, distributed to the participants, or presented to the media.

Why this very important item was addressed on the last day of the symposium when many people had already departed is a mystery. Why it was then done too late to be fully discussed, resolved and formally enacted is a second mystery. It was made even more painfully ironic because Jim Garrison, the only man to prosecute a criminal case in the Kennedy murder, had died the day before ASK began.

After 29 years, a constellation of events has converged to make this a propitious time to begin a final effort to use media attention and public interest to jimmy open the case through some government action. Besides Stone's film, there was the publication of Dr. Charles Crenshaw's book in which he publicly stated that both Kennedy's head and neck wounds came from the

front. This partly provoked the now famous-notorious? JAMA articles in which the three Bethesda autopsy doctors went on the attack against Crenshaw and Stone. The startling result of these articles was that most of the letters from doctors seemed to endorse Crenshaw's view. The Parkland doctor is now contemplating a lawsuit over the JAMA pieces. Also, Marina Oswald appeared at the ASK conference and she went on record as finally agreeing with her late husband's plea, namely that he was "just a patsy." A television film on her life has been completed and is scheduled for broadcast in 1993. Jean Hill's book, *JFK: The Last Dissenting Witness* has been picked up by Columbia Television and a film contract is being finalized. The director's cut of *JFK* is being touted for a January, 93 release. It will include a previously cut 17 minutes. The documentary on the making of Stone's film, *Beyond JFK* is to be released on video at about the same time. Of course, next year will mark the 30th anniversary of the Dallas murder. We can expect one last burst of media publicity before the burn out of this decade's Kennedy comet.

To all these media and historical events, one must add the political facts of the 1992 elections. Over 100 new people will be on Capitol Hill for the first time in January, 1993, including the occupants of the White House. Bill Clinton and Al Gore make for a welcome relief from their predecessors. Both had frequently invoked the name of John Kennedy during the campaign. The most emotionally charged image at the Democratic convention was the brief black and white clip of a young, gangling Bill Clinton shaking hands with President Kennedy on the White

House grounds. Clinton and Gore seem to have consciously and cautiously cultivated this connection down to the casual tossing of footballs together. The motif became so clear that during the campaign a page one story appeared in the July 20th *Los Angeles Times* entitled, "Clinton, Gore Invoke Imagery of the Kennedy's." It went on to detail a rally in McKeesport, Pa. where the pair were asked what they thought of the Warren Report's conclusion of Oswald as the sole assassin. Gore replied that the House Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA) had concluded that Kennedy was killed by a conspiracy. He then added, "I believe that. I think that most Americans believe that." Clinton then added: "My opinion is slightly less formed. I don't know whether Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone or not, but I know there are a lot of questions that the American people don't have answers for."

Unless the Carter-Mondale ticket made a similar statement that I missed, this constitutes a milestone in the expression, on the record, of a presidential team on the case. Sadly, this was

not mentioned or used by any of the organizers at ASK.

The research community has never been politically acute, poised or entrenched. This lamentable trait must change soon. The Midwest Symposium in Chicago this April would be a good place to begin. The "free the files" movement led by the admirable and tireless John Judge has done some good work. John and I agree that his organization's goal and the appointment of a special prosecutor need not be opposing. Much new and welcome information will emerge from the files. But not enough to fill in the whole story or to bring the living conspirators to justice. The combination of the two can do so. After 29 years and a staggering amount of work by the research community some very large lacunas still exist.

To name two obvious ones: what exactly was David Ferrie doing in Texas the day of the assassination? What were the controlling circumstances around the final route of the motorcade? Some important witnesses who should be called for a new inves-

tigation are the autopsy doctors, Humes, Boswell and Fink, Dr. Carlos Bringuier, Ruth Paine, Antonio Veciana and Richard Helms.

On a recent syndicated television show, Robert Blakey, the former chief counsel of HSCA, was asked about charges of conspiracy as stated by Robert Morrow in his new book, *First Hand Knowledge*. He said that we should all let John Kennedy rest in peace. The interviewer didn't think quickly enough to reply, "And let his murderers roam free?"

If we, those dedicated to unearthing the authentic circumstances and true perpetrators of this crime do nothing, we will, in effect, have let Mr. Blakey write the last official word on this case. We owe John Kennedy, Jim Garrison and ourselves much more. Let us seize the moment before it passes away. Perhaps forever.

Jim Di Eugenio is the author of *Destiny Betrayed. JFK, Cuba & the Garrison Case*.

VIDEO REVIEW

Coverup. Behind the Iran Contra Affair. M.P.I. HOME VIDEO. 72 MINUTES COLOR/BW.

This highly informative video takes the viewer behind the Iran-Contra scandal and the men, and covert dealings that left the Reagan administration in shambles.

It centers on the hostage deal allegedly struck between the Reagan/Bush 1980 election campaign and their plan to sabotage Jimmy Carter's re-election bid, the so called "shadow government", ex-CIA agents committed to overthrowing governments, political assassinations around the world, and the CIA-drug connection.

Coverup traces the early history of the arms for hostage scandal, using clips from the televised hearings. Of particular interest are interviews with Peter Dale Scott, former CIA officer John Stockwell, Rep. Jack Brooks, Fawn Hall, and ordinary Americans on the street.

The movie centers on the careers of the main players involved in Iran-Contra: Edwin Wilson, Theodore Shackley, Thomas Clines, Gen. John Singlab, Richard Secord and Albert Hakim.

Coverup is a well documented and very reliable research tool for anyone interested in the Iran-Contra affair and the secret dealings that have become part of our recent history.

Book Reviews

The Assassination of John F. Kennedy. A Complete Book of Facts. James Duffy & Vincent Ricci. (Thunders Mouth Press, New York, 1992, 524 p., \$14.95.)

With interest in the Kennedy assassination growing, especially after the release of Oliver Stone's *JFK*, more and more books on the various aspects of the case have hit the stands. From *Mortal Error*, to *The Texas Connection*, writers have been giving the public more information to digest on America's continuing obsession.

Now, in a concise and highly readable volume, the Kennedy novice as well as the long time researcher/writer, have a book that brings all the people, places and events surrounding the Kennedy assassination in one place.

The Assassination of John F. Kennedy. A Complete Book of Facts lists in alphabetical order all the major and minor characters, books, incidents and theories that have been part of the JFK investigation.

From the well-known names such as Jose Aleman, Robert Blakey, Roger Craig, Gerald Ford, to the minor players such as Dr. Gene Akin (a Parkland Hospital anesthesiologist, Charles Brown (a Dallas police officer who drove the car that was supposed to take Oswald to the Dallas County jail) and Monica Kramer, an American tourist who visited Oswald in the Soviet Union.

Such important groups as Alpha 66, the "Mafia", U-2 Spy Plane and the ZR-Rifle project are all well documented.

This book is a joy to read, with the authors putting a tremendous amount of information into a small space. Anyone interested in the murky world of John Kennedy's death will find this book indispensable.

Destiny Betrayed: JFK, Cuba and the Garrison Case. By James DiEugenio. (Sheridan Square Press, New York, 1992, 283 p., \$19.95.)

Since Oliver Stone's movie, *JFK* hit the big screen, in

terest in the Kennedy assassination has been rekindled nationwide. Mr. Stone chose to highlight the role of New Orleans D.A. Jim Garrison and his hunt for the president's killers.

Now, a new and compelling book covering Jim Garrison's 1967 investigation of the president's death and its ramifications has hit the stands.

Jim DiEugenio's *Destiny Betrayed: JFK, Cuba and the Garrison Case* tells the story behind the assassination and of Mr. Garrison's futile effort to prosecute New Orleans businessman Clay Shaw.

The book is divided into three distinct parts. The first being an overview of the historical ingredients leading up to the cold war, the early CIA-Nazi connection and the secret plots of the CIA in the 1950's.

Mr. DiEugenio then relates in a brisk style, Lee Harvey Oswald's activities in New Orleans, his relationship with David Ferrie, Clay Shaw, the anti and pro-Castro forces, etc. He goes into Oswald's military past and tells us that in his opinion, Oswald was a spy. Also covered are the Warren Commission investigation, the president's autopsy and how the establishment press failed to investigate any aspect of the assassination.

The second and most interesting part of *Destiny Betrayed*, is a factual, no-holes barred description of Jim Garrison's trial of Clay Shaw and the behind the scenes political manipulation that went on.

Unlike Stone's *JFK*, Mr. Di Eugenio presents Jim Garrison, warts and all, including the D.A.'s legal trouble after the Shaw trial ended.

For the trained Kennedy researcher there are seventy pages of end notes for further study.

Destiny Betrayed is a valuable study of the various forces and personalities surrounding the Kennedy assassination and is highly recommended both to beginners and serious students of the events that took place almost thirty years ago.

First Hand Knowledge. By Robert Morrow. (SPY Books, New York, 1992, 301 p., \$22.95.)

In 1976, Robert Morrow, an ex-CIA contract agent, wrote a book called *Betrayal*, a part fact, part fictional account of

certain clandestine events leading up to the Bay of Pigs operation and the Kennedy assassination. Now, Mr. Morrow once again delves into the murky world of the JFK assassination, in what he describes as how he participated in the CIA-Mafia murder of President Kennedy.

First Hand Knowledge takes the reader through the CIA's covert war against Castro beginning in the late 1950's, its alliance with members of organized crime in their attempts to rid Cuba of Castro, of the role of J. Edgar Hoover in the Kennedy murder, the behind the scenes covert dealings leading up to the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis and former President Richard Nixon's prominent role in the Castro plot.

Mr. Morrow tells of his recruitment in the CIA and of his work in the Washington, D.C. area in counterfeit Cuban currency that the agency believed would undermine that island economy. All this had been previously published in *Betrayal*.

But what really makes this book different is the author's claim that he unwillingly participated in the plot to murder President Kennedy and the people who gave him the orders to carry out his clandestine activities.

First Hand Knowledge names names, seeks to rewrite history, while at the same time, giving a good and fair account of the history of the Cuban revolution and the people who participated in it.

Mr. Morrow tells us that the Bay of Pigs invasion was just a diversion; the real purpose of the raid was to monitor certain electronic signals coming out of Cuba which turned out to be the first installation of Soviet missiles leading up to the missile crisis. Mr. Morrow says that he was on the plane sent to Cuba and the pilot was none other than David Ferrie. He also claims that President Kennedy knew of the missiles in Cuba as early as 1961 and waited until they were installed in order to confront the Cubans and the Soviets, thus, making certain that the Democrats would win the 1962 Congressional elections.

The author says that Clay Shaw (the man brought to trial by the late New Orleans D.A., Jim Garrison), acting in his capacity as a CIA agent, tried to blow up his (Morrow's) plane with explosives. This is the same Clay Shaw that is in league with anti-Castro Cubans, possibly CIA people to kill JFK.

Mr. Morrow says that he was ordered by his superior and CIA case officer, Tracey Barnes, to acquire four Mannlicher 7.35mm rifles from a Baltimore supply store for an unknown purpose. He also received transceivers which cannot be detected, also for an unknown mission (Lee Harvey Oswald is accused of killing President Kennedy with a 6.5 Mannlicher-Carcano carbine).

So much for the good stuff.

The rest of the book deals with material that has been covered in every Kennedy assassination book: the roles of the mob, Hoover, Johnson, the Warren Commission cover-up, the Garrison trail of Shaw and the work of the House Select Committee on Assassinations.

Mr. Morrow writes that Tracy Barnes told him of the identity of the rogue assassin known as QJ/WIN as being Michel Mertz and goes on to say "The Cuban-Mafia consortium planned to rely on Santos Trafficante's assets: Cuban

mercenaries, Kohly's anti-Castro exiles, inside men on the Dallas police force and an assassination expert who worked on the CIA's official hit squad-John Michael Mertz.

Is all this too good to be true? It seems that Mr. Morrow just happens to be in the right place, at the right time, with the right people. Who knows?

The Missiles of October. By Robert Smith Thompson. (Simon & Schuster, New York, 1992, 357 p., \$25.00.)

Thirty years ago, the world came to the brink of nuclear war during the Cuban Missile Crisis of October, 1962. Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev sent nuclear missiles to their ally, Fidel Castro in Cuba setting off the first and only potential nuclear conflagration.

In response to the threat, President Kennedy instituted a quarantine of all offensive missiles headed for Cuba and warned of a military confrontation if they weren't removed. In the end, Khrushchev and Kennedy reached an understanding whereby the missiles would be removed after a pledge of non-aggression on the part of the U.S. against Cuba.

In *The Missiles of October*, by historian Robert Smith Thompson, the crisis of October, 1962 is placed squarely on the shoulders of President Kennedy.

Mr. Smith begins with an historical perspective of the events that took place after World War II focusing on the U.S. sponsored mutual security pacts including NATO, the Truman doctrine and the Korean conflict. He does a good job in telling how the United States got involved in the internal affairs of countries in Latin America including the overthrow of Arbenz in Guatemala, the rise of Fidel Castro in Cuba, etc.

The author, no admirer of JFK, portrays Kennedy as a man without principles, whose family would do anything to make him President. Mr. Smith blames JFK's father, Joseph P. Kennedy as the evil brains behind his son's rise to power, pulling the strings from afar.

The basic thrust of *The Missiles of October* is that President Kennedy knew of the placement of Soviet missiles in Cuba in March of 1962, a full seven months before the first U-2 photographs were brought to his desk. Mr. Smith, using documents from the Kennedy library as his source, said that President Kennedy used the crisis for his own (and the Democratic party's) gain in a bid to look "tough" after the failure at the Bay of Pigs and in the confrontation with Khrushchev in Vienna over Berlin.

Mr. Smith also takes JFK to task for knowingly bartering the Jupiter missiles we had in Turkey as part of the deal ending the crisis.

Be that as it may, *The Missiles of October* is a well written and detailed account of one of the most dangerous times in our history.

war for independence, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The author's narrative, delivered in a somewhat sardonic style of writing which makes his presentation seem all that more perversely humorous, is enhanced further by an excellent section of "Notes" (divided by chapters), and a very thorough Bibliography containing important works of American political and social and intellectual history. The Bibliography could serve as a legitimate reading list in its own right.

This reviewer recommends *Stealing From America* for purchase by public, school, and college libraries because it is a good example of the portions of American history not taught in school.

REVIEWED BY MARK H. WINNEGRAD

The Man on the Grassy Knoll. By John R. Craig and Phillip Rogers. (Avon Books, New York, 1992, 279p., \$4.50.)

If there was more than one gunman involved in the assassination of President Kennedy where did he shoot from? The possibility of additional gunmen have been placed throughout various areas of Dealey Plaza: lower floors of the Texas School Book Depository, the Dal-Tex Building, County Courts Building, and sewer drains. But the most celebrated location for an additional gunman has been the "grassy knoll", a small area with trees and shrubs that sits on a hill to the right of where the presidential motorcade traveled.

In investigating a murder of an elderly Houston couple that occurred on June 23, 1965, the authors found that the main suspect, the couples' son Charles Frederick Rogers, had some interesting connections to the assassination of Kennedy. Rogers is characterized as a brilliant, eccentric, anti-social man involved in right-wing politics and anti-Castro organizations. He has never been positively seen after the murder of his parents.

The authors detail a possible meeting of Oswald and Rogers in September of 1963 in Houston. The Reverend Elmer and Marietta Gerhart claim they gave assistance to two men who identified themselves as Lee and Charles when they were unable to meet a man named Carlos at a bus station. Later Carlos appeared at the Gerhart's house. Elmer Gerhart, who knew Charles Rogers, recognized Carlos as Charles Rogers. After the assassination the Gerharts realized that the man named Lee was Lee Oswald.

The writers claim that Rogers's whereabouts were unknown during the entire last part of November, 1963. They believe that Rogers was one of the tramps arrested in a train car by Dallas police about an hour after the shooting. Though the Dallas Police released the arrest records of the three tramps in January of 1992, and identified them as Harold

Doyle, John Forrester Gedney, and Gus Abrams, the authors dispute the police's identification. They claim that photo analysis proves that at least Doyle can't be one of the tramps. The police records showed that the men were not fingerprinted though they were held for four days for suspicion of robbery. An examination of court records by the authors found that no robbery charges were filed against the men. They believe, through eyewitnesses and photo analysis, that the three men are Charles Rogers, Charles Harrelson, and Chauncey Holt.

A Charles Harrelson is currently serving time for murdering a judge (Judge John Wood). Before his arrest for the murder he claimed involvement in the Kennedy shooting. A man named Chauncey Holt has come forward and claimed to be the elder tramp. He admits connections with organized crime and the CIA. Holt says he went to Dealey Plaza to deliver phony identification to the other two tramps who identified themselves as Harrelson and Richard Montoya. He delivered a phony pilot's license to Montoya, a handgun to Harrelson and Treasury department credentials to both men. Craig and Rogers speculate that Harrelson is in fact Charles Harrelson and that Montoya is Charles Rogers. Christine Anderson, who knew Rogers, identified him as one of the tramps. A Houston forensic artist recently investigated the resemblance between Rogers and the "short" tramp. The artist believes they are the same man.

Chuck Rolland, the owner of the Winterland Houston ice-skating rink that David Ferrie visited on November 23, 1963, recognized one of the tramps as a regular customer who never skated but made and received phone calls from the skating rink's pay phone.

This is a fascinating book that is devoted mostly to the Rogers murder. Though Charles Rogers is a strange character who is the prime suspect in the murder of his parents, substantial evidence that Rogers was either in Dallas, an assassin, or one of the celebrated tramps is missing.

REVIEWED BY JOHN S. CRAIG.

JFK. The Book of the Film, The Documented Screenplay. By Oliver Stone and Zachary Sklar. (Applause Books, New York, 1992, 571p., \$18.95.

After studying the assassination of President Kennedy for almost nine years, collecting hundreds of books and articles on the subject, I am convinced that *JFK* and Oliver Stone are the best developments in the case in years. I do not accept everything postulated in the movie as fact, but it was intended for entertainment as well as to get people thinking about the assassination (again). Now that Congress has passed a bill to release at least most of the classified documents locked up by the Warren Commission and the HSCA, as well as the CIA

and FBI, it remains to be seen if a smoking gun link to the actual conspiracy appears.

In addition to the actual screenplay (including scenes cut from the final release of the three-hour plus docudrama) Oliver Stone's actual documentary notes are included in this comprehensive book spanning almost 600 pages. This allows anyone who wants to analyze the movie systematically to see where Stone got his facts.

The other section of the book includes *The JFK Debate-Reactions and Commentaries*, an extensive section making up more than half the book. This area also allows Stone to answer his critics in print, with a large collection of essays on the movie and reactions in general to the recent interest in the JFK assassination. This is perhaps the best part of this work, as the entire gamut of theories is examined and presented with criticisms by Stone and others.

Stone has also let his allies, such as L. Fletcher Prouty, answer his critics, as follows:

"Johnson expressed his belief (to Leo Janos--an old friend in the *Atlantic Monthly* of July, 1973) that the assassination had been part of a conspiracy: "I never believed that Oswald acted alone; we had been running a damned Murder, Inc. in the Carribean" (p. 262, JFK).

How does a responsible person condemn Oliver Stone when they ignore the opinions of Lyndon Johnson?

Roger Kossner states in his brief contribution:

Stone's contribution is in reminding us that complacency is a threat to democracy just as much as, if not more than, we thought communism was. The Pentagon Papers, the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, Watergate and Iran-Contra should be proof enough that we need no reminder. But apparently our blind acceptance of the invasion of Grenada and lack of outrage at Pentagon censorship throughout the gulf war indicate that we have not fully learned our lesson. Stone should be applauded for continuing what has been, and should continue to be, one of our wisest traditions; raising a healthy dose of skepticism at the words and deeds of our government" (p. 263 JFK).

HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

The last section of *JFK* is a selection of National Security Memorandum that prove to Oliver Stone and others that JFK was planning to pull out of Vietnam, whereas Johnson immediately escalated the war. This benefited contractors, and Johnson's buddies, such as Brown and Root. They effectively paved over much of the country in construction of military bases which were abandoned at the disgraceful retreat when we pulled out of Vietnam.

REVIEWED BY ROBERT SEVERIN.

FICTION OF INTEREST

Final Answers. By Greg Dinallo. (Pocket Books, New York, 1992, 309p., \$20.00.)

The fate of the MIA/POW's from the Vietnam War are still are sore point, almost twenty years since the last Americans left Southeast Asia. Now, a powerful and suspenseful novel takes the reader into the clandestine world of powerful men who hold the answers to their fate.

Final Answers by Greg Dinallo, author of *Rockets Red Glare* and *Purpose of Evasion*, finds ex-Vietnam vet, and successful businessman, Cal Morgan in Washington, D.C. where, at the Vietnam Memorial, he suddenly and unexpectedly, sees his name on the Wall. Not knowing what it all means, Morgan, tries to get the Final Answer.

Back home in Los Angeles, he is followed by unseen watchers, flies around the country looking for clues to his mysterious riddle, while his family is struck by sudden and violent tragedy.

Morgan meets Kate Ackerman whose husband is missing in action. Together, they travel to Hawaii where the remains of missing Americans are brought, set out for Thailand where Ackerman's contacts guide them across a maze of drug lords and danger, finally across the Mekong River into Laos, where America fought its "secret war". It is here that Morgan and Ackerman learn the deadly conspiracy that has been the fate of the MIA's for so long.

Final Answers is more than just a great page-turner. It is powerfully written, complete with important background concerning the entire MIA/POW issue. It brings to life the hopes and fears of the families who have been waiting in limbo for so long as to the fate of their loved ones. *Final Answers* will not leave the reader sitting on the fence.

Flying In To Love. By D.M. Thomas. (Scribner's Sons, New York, 1992, 242 p., \$20.00.)

This reviewer has never read a so called "literary novel" before but D.M. Thomas's splendid work, *Flying In To Love* is the exception.

There have been other fictionalized accounts of the assassination of John F. Kennedy, most notably Don DeLillo's *Libra* and Charles McCarry's, *The Tears of Autumn*.

But D.M. Thomas (*The White Hotel*) takes another, more refined track into the events surrounding the president's death.

The novel centers around a group of nuns who were along the parade route through downtown Dallas on November 22, 1963. Mr. Thomas skillfully weaves through time as the sisters tell of their meeting with JFK, recalling the sights and sounds of what happened that fateful day.

Mr. Thomas has done his homework concerning all the possible conspiracy theories surrounding the assassination; the umbrella man, the roles of J.Edgar Hoover, Johnson & Nixon, the two casket theory, Ferrie, Oswald, etc.

For those readers who still believe in the myth of Camelot, *Flying In to Love* is not for you. JFK is portrayed, warts and all, especially his liaisons with the various women he happened to latch on to.

In *Flying In To Love*, Mr. Thomas has written and rewritten history, telling in moving passages, with style and grace, one man's interpretation of America's continuing national obsession.

Moving Targets. By Sean Flannery. (Tom Doherty Books, New York, 1992, 384 p., \$19.95.)

With his newest book, *Moving Targets*, Sean Flannery enhances his reputation as a master of international intrigue and conspiracy. His previous books are *Crossfire* and *Countdown*. He also goes by the name David Hagberg. In *Moving Targets*, Flannery paints a disturbing picture of Russia and the defunct Soviet Union after the fall of communism.

The cold war dies slowly, and old habits linger on. Still in place, and being used are the mental hospitals for political dissenters. Brutal, humiliating interrogations are conducted on suspected American spies. Flannery details them graphically in some of the book's most compelling scenes.

Meanwhile, the Soviet Premier's own secret security was established to spy on the KGB itself, which holds on to a thread of the power and intimidation they held in the days of Communism. The KGB conspires for one last campaign to assassinate prominent American spies. Operation Homeward Bound is created to reunite the Soviet Union, and restore it to its glory days as a totalitarian superpower.

The targeted enemy of Homeward Bound is the American government, including the President, cabinet officials and members of Congress. At the heart of the story is a prominent government official in the president's cabinet, suspected of revealing American security operations to a female Soviet spy with whom he'd developed an amorous relationship.

The book is peopled with complex characters, whose strengths and weaknesses make them easy to identify with. Flannery also gives an in depth, highly detailed and credible look at the mechanics of government, from the smallest to the highest levels. The detail and information in this book can only be constructed by an expert such as Mr. Flannery. For those interested in tales of international affairs, the fast pace of *Moving Targets* will not disappoint.

REVIEWED BY VAL MCDOWELL

Scimitar. By John Abbott. (Crown Publishers, New York, 1992, 289p., \$20.00.)

The publisher of this highly charged assassination novel, has kept the author's identity a secret, only saying that he is a world famous author who lives in Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

Secrecy aside, *Scimitar* by John Abbott, takes the reader into the world of a long time " sleeper agent", a man just waiting to receive his wake up call which will send him off on his most deadly and dangerous mission. The sleeper is a top Middle Eastern assassin called Sonny Hemkar, a doctor by profession and a killer by trade. When Sonny gets his call, he boards a train to New York where he meets and beds Elita Randall. In New York, two women carrying British passports are brutally murdered and a group of law enforcement departments including the NYPD, CIA, FBI and British intelligence try to solve the crime.

It turns out that both women had scimitar's on their bodies and low and behold, so does Sonny Hemkar.

Hemkar's masters send him on an assassination mission to kill President George Bush while he is in New York. While he plans his kill, Elita Randall tries to locate Sonny for her own, private reasons.

The climax of *Scimitar* takes Sonny to the Statue of Liberty where he and the president's fate hang in the balance.

If *Scimitar* were a movie it would be rated X due to its excess of violence and killing. Nonetheless, the book rattles with pure excitement, right up to its most surprising ending. *Scimitar* will be a great movie.

The Pelican Brief. By John Grisham. (Doubleday, New York, 1992, 371 p., \$22.50.)

Surely, author John Grisham has become to American fiction readers what country artist Garth Brooks represents to contemporary music-a mega-selling pop cultural phenomenon whose audience refuses to be type-cast by critics or the media.

The Pelican Brief is Grisham's follow-up to his enormously successful 1991 novel, *The Firm*. Similarly structured between the loopholes of the law and the corridors of power, this latest novel maintains, and occasionally surpasses, the relentless excitement and furious pace of *The Firm*.

Within a two-hour span one October evening, two Supreme Court justices are murdered. Abe Rosenberg, ninety-one years old and the center of controversy for his against-the-grain rulings is shot while sleeping at home. Glenn Jensen, the Court's youngest justice, is strangled in a gay porno movie house. So begins a non-stop whirlwind of intrigue for Darby Shaw, the brilliant and beautiful Tulane law school student who discovered an obscure lawsuit linking the

justices through environmental injunctions, Louisiana wetlands, and oil exploration.

Her constitutional law professor and lover, Thomas Callahan innocently offers Shaw's apparently obtusely imaginative "pelican brief", which describes her research and conclusions, to a friend in the FBI. The brief quickly finds its way to the White House and suddenly Callahan is killed in a car bomb explosion intended for Shaw.

Early on, the reader learns that international terrorist Khamel was the assassin of the justices. But who hired him? What was the involvement of the President and his power-hungry Chief-of-Staff, Fletcher Coal? Whose side is the FBI, and later the CIA on?

Darby Shaw avoids her untimely end as deftly as a young James Bond, finally enlisting the support of *Washington Post* reporter Gary Grantham to unravel the final mystery and find a corroborating witness. The nail-biting conclusion as the *Post* prepares to print her story while evil-empire kingpin Victor Mattiece tightens his noose, will leave the reader breathless.

Grisham's character development is minimal, his romance secondary, and his attention to detail very un-Clancy like. But his breakneck plot structure, realistic locations and passion for a complex yet highly believable script place the writings of this Mississippi attorney at the top of the "you can't put it down" list.

If your appetite craves a trim, taught legal/political thriller, take flight with *The Pelican Brief*. And be ready to explain why you're late for work the next day.

REVIEWED BY ERIC EISENSTEIN.

The People V. Lee Harvey Oswald. By Walt Brown. (Carroll & Graf Publishers, New York, 1992, 612 p., \$25.00.)

It is 1965. The place, Lubbock, Texas. The scene, the chambers of Judge Franklin Davis. The defendant, Lee Harvey Oswald.

In this fine historical novel, Lee Harvey Oswald, the accused assassin of President John F. Kennedy, has survived Jack Ruby's attempt on his life and is now standing trial for his crime. Oswald is represented by Edward Barnes, a young Minnesota lawyer, out to try and clear his client's name. The prosecution is headed by Raymond Matthews, a veteran lawyer who is handed a "set" case by the Dallas authorities. So begins *The People V. Lee Harvey Oswald*.

Mr. Brown, an ex-FBI agent and currently a history teacher in New Jersey, has combed every facet of the Warren Commission's 26 volumes of testimony to bring JFK's accused assassin his day in court—the one he never got. Mr. Brown uses the testimony of hundreds of witnesses before the

Warren Commission, and some who did not testify, to probe what is known and what is still murky concerning the events of November 22, 1963.

Blending fact with fiction, Mr. Brown, using his legal expertise, brings the many major and minor players of the Kennedy drama into court. Among those testifying are Commander Humes, Gordon Arnold, Texas A.G. Waggoner Carr, Clint Hill, the Parkland Hospital doctors, the New Orleans contingent, numerous Dallas police officers, Kennedy cronies like Kenneth O'Donnel and Ruth Paine

It is obvious from this book that Mr. Brown has done his homework well. He knows of what he speaks. From the research angle, *The People V. Lee Harvey Oswald* is as good as any of the hundreds of "non-fiction" books on the Kennedy assassination. Mr. Brown, through defense counsel, Barnes, paints a clear and unmistakable picture of the failure of the Warren Commission to prove Oswald's guilt "beyond a reasonable doubt." The testimony and the outcome of the trial are a direct outgrowth of the author's scholarship.

The People V. Lee Harvey Oswald is as close as we'll ever get to what a trial of Mr. Oswald would have been like.

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