

CNN

Air Date: November 27, 1990
Transcript #179

111 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20001
Transcripts: Journal Graphics, Inc., 267 Broadway, NY, NY 10007
Press contact: Eileen Murphy (202) 898-7567

1-800-825-5746
1-800-223-1574

Larry King Live

Can War With Iraq be Averted?
Who Really Killed JFK?
Humorist Lewis Grizzard

LARRY KING Host

Guests:
JEANE KIRKPATRICK, former U.S. Ambassador to the U.N.
ROBERT GRODEN, Author, "High Treason"
JIM MOORE, Author, "Conspiracy of One"
LEWIS GRIZZARD, Humorist

Senior Executive Producer TAMARA HADDAD

Copyright © 1990 Turner Broadcasting System, Inc. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.
This transcript may not be produced in whole or in part without permission.
Condition of use: credit CNN's Larry King Live for the use of excerpts.

TRANSCRIPT CHARGES: By check or money order \$5.00 each. By credit card \$7.50 — call (212) 227-7323. Be sure to indicate air date and subject or participants. All orders must be prepaid.

If you own a personal computer and modem, you may access the index of transcripts electronically available on the CompuServe Information Service. If you are already a subscriber, type GO TRANSCRIPTS at any prompt. To join CompuServe, call (800) 848-8199.

KING: Always great seeing you.

Ambassador KIRKPATRICK: Good to see you.

KING: Dr. Jeane Kirkpatrick — her new book, *The Withering Away of the Totalitarian State* from AEI Press.

We switch gears. A new book out says that John F. Kennedy was killed by more than one person in Deely Plaza those many years ago in Dallas. Another book out says, "wrong." I'll be the referee and we'll be right back — don't go away — on Larry King Live. Stay there.

ANNOUNCER: Coming up: How many JFK assassins hid on the grassy knoll?
[Commercial break]

Who Really Killed JFK?

KING: Who really killed JFK? For nearly 30 years it has been the assassination mystery that will not die. The latest theory claims that forged photographs from the President's autopsy were used to cover up the truth. Those photographs are contained in a new book. We made an editorial decision here not to show them to you tonight. They are much too graphic. Joining us is Robert Groden, who presents this theory in his book, *High Treason*. Also with us — I think — is Jim Moore, author of *Conspiracy of One*. He claims that his book is the definitive book on the Kennedy shooting, and disputes all the other assassination theories.

Robert, this is hard, of course, in limited time, to nutshell this, but will you try? What are you contending in *High Treason*?

ROBERT GRODEN, Author, "High Treason": I was staff photographic consultant for the House Assassinations Committee and, in that capacity, I made the discovery that the autopsy photographs as presented by the government to the committee were incompatible with the descriptions of the President's body by all of the doctors in Dallas.

KING: To the committee or to the Warren Commission?

Mr. GRODEN: Well, they only spoke to the Warren Commission and what they told the Warren Commission was that there was a massive hole in the rear of the head, which is completely consistent with the witnesses in the plaza. The autopsy photographs showed the rear of the head to be totally intact. I pleaded with the committee to get the photographs and the doctors together for two years. It wasn't done, so my co-author and myself started to seek out the doctors after the committee broke up, and we got their statements, and they all said that the rear of the President's head was indeed gone.

KING: Gone?

Mr. GRODEN: The shot —

KING: And, obviously, those pictures which I saw — which are terribly upsetting to look at —

Mr. GRODEN: I know.

KING: — were taken by whom?

Mr. GRODEN: They were taken — the original photographs were taken in Bethesda Naval Hospital, but the man who took the photo-

graphs has looked at them now and said these are not the pictures that he took. The X-ray technician says that they're not the pictures, either. The photographs and the X-rays are incompatible with each other. In other words, the wounds in one do not match the wounds in the other.

KING: The pictures in your book are [of] JFK?

Mr. GRODEN: Yes.

KING: There is no doubt in your mind?

Mr. GRODEN: I'm convinced it's him. It sure looks like him.

KING: And then you went further and believe this to be high treason? These were acts in high places to kill him?

Mr. GRODEN: Well, there had to be. The question — what we're talking about as far as the photographs go is the cover-up conspiracy, rather than the conspiracy to kill the President, although the evidence is certainly there that that was the case.

KING: Didn't the committee come to the conclusion that there were four shots, but they had no other money to continue on?

Mr. GRODEN: That's correct. The House committee agreed that there were four shots, at least two people firing — one from the knoll and one from the depository.

KING: And you counted that it went as high as — how high?

Mr. GRODEN: You mean the cover-up and the assassination?

KING: Yes.

Mr. GRODEN: According to an ex-chief counsel of the House Assassinations Committee, it went to the highest levels of government.

KING: Johnson?

Mr. GRODEN: Quite possibly. He did not speculate.

KING: Jim — *Conspiracy of One* — you back up the commission and the Oswald figure concept — that he was it?

JIM MOORE, Author, "Conspiracy of One": Well, I think, Larry, that the Warren Commission did its job. I fall short of saying that it did its job well. I think they reached the only conclusion that's tenable to reasonable people and, as far as I can see, what Mr. Groden claims to see in the photographs, the autopsy X-rays, is an opinion of one, because it's not matched by the other forensic specialists and professionals who've reviewed those same materials.

KING: You mean the same materials we see in this book —

Mr. MOORE: Have been authenticated for the House Select Committee by Dr. Lewis.

KING: That that is Kennedy?

Mr. MOORE: Yes.

KING: That is his head?

Mr. MOORE: Unaltered, unaltered.

KING: What does that mean, "unaltered"?

Mr. MOORE: That means that Mr. Groden's charges of forgery aren't, in fact, what took place. Those photographs were examined and were proven to have been original and in their unaltered form.

KING: So they are the photographs and they show Oswald did it, those photographs?

Mr. MOORE: I think any forensic pathologist who has examined the

material will show the shots came from behind and above.

KING: It looks like behind, if you look at it. If the back of the head is blown like that, it didn't go through the front [sic].

Mr. GRODEN: That's what it was made to look like, but we have the doctors who saw the body, who dealt with the body. We have the medical personnel in Bethesda as well as Parkland. We have the man who took the photographs and the man who took the X-rays. We have the doctors themselves who have now seen the photographs. Every last one of them — not one or two; every one of them — says that the photographs are not genuine and that the rear of the President's head was gone. If you look at the original reports in the Warren Commission that were written the day of the assassination, they all said that the rear of the head was blasted out. The occipital area — which is the rear of the head where the bump is — was blasted out and gone. Every one of them individually wrote that in their reports, and they were very specific that it was an exit wound, that the bones were sprung open.

The verification — the sole verification that was done by the House Assassinations Committee was that the batch numbers on the films themselves were made in 1963 and stereoscopic views, to their eyes, showed no problems. What I did, beyond what they did, is I reduced the photographs into stereoscopic views so that they were View-master size, so instead of looking at one small section here and one small section there, I was looking at them in their totality, and there is a major inconsistency between them.

KING: Jim?

Mr. MOORE: Well, the problem, Larry — as you well know, being a journalist — is interviewing someone 20-odd years after the fact, particularly in the case of the Parkland doctors, the people who only saw President Kennedy for 20 minutes, never turned him on his stomach. He was always face-up, so a wound at the back of the head would have been invisible to them, to begin with. And Robert is fairly selective in the doctors that he quotes in his book, but I contend there's no mystery. There's a mystery that's been created by interviewing people years and years after the event has taken place.

KING: Do you think it's because we just can't accept the fact that one kind of nonentity person could change the world?

Mr. MOORE: Well, face it, it's a lot more fun to believe in a conspiracy than it is to believe the truth, that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone.

Mr. GRODEN: No, I can't agree with that. It's not fun. It's very, very disturbing. The point of the matter is I'm not talking about just witnesses 20 years later. I'm talking about what they wrote the day of the assassination and, yes, you're right — when the President was still breathing, when his heart was still beating, they didn't turn him over, but after he was dead, they did pick him up. They looked back there. They saw it. A fellow by the name of Gerald Custer [sp?], who was the X-ray technician, took his fist — doubled-over fist — during the time at Bethesda and, to measure for the size, actually put both fists in the rear of the hole in the back of the President's head. It was there that day. They weren't all wrong. I have witnesses in the plaza on videotape to describe —

KING: All right, let me get a break and we'll come back. Jim Moore's book is *Conspiracy of One*. Robert Groden's book is *High Treason: The Assassination of John F. Kennedy*. I'm Larry King. We'll all be back with your calls. Don't go away. *[Commercial break]*

KING: Our guests are Robert Groden, co-author of *High Treason* — it says a major conspiracy [was] involved in the death of JFK — and Jim Moore, author of *Conspiracy of One*, [who] says, "no." In fact, he even says that Robert — you called him the "best assassination sensationalist in the country." Is that true?

Mr. MOORE: I believe that's a compliment, Larry, to Robert's industry.

Mr. GRODEN: No. I think I have some competition.

KING: Enterprise, Alabama, hello.

3rd CALLER: *[Enterprise, Alabama]* Hi, Larry.

KING: Hi.

3rd CALLER: Two quick points that, to me, point obviously to some sort of a conspiracy. First of all, the best military marksman in the world, that tried to fire that Italian carbine, could not pump off three shots in the allotted time and still hit a target and, number two — Let's say it was you and me, Larry, that were the two guys behind the fence on the grassy knoll. If we were just innocent bystanders, after all these years, wouldn't we have come forward and said, "Hey, we were just watching the President. We didn't have anything to do with his death?"

KING: You mean the two mysterious guys? Jim?

Mr. MOORE: Well, first of all, that reference to the carcano [sp?] is not exactly accurate. The marksmen who fired it were given no practice with the weapon and I point out in my book that that's the integral key to doing what Oswald did with it. Robert, you're probably better qualified, based on the thesis in your book, to talk about the grassy knoll assassins.

Mr. GRODEN: Well, in both cases, as far as the three shots within that period of time, it can be done, although it's difficult to hit anything. *[cross-talk]*

KING: Do it in a CBS special?

Mr. GRODEN: They had people that could fire three shots.

Mr. MOORE: But they weren't using the same rifle —

Mr. GRODEN: They were using one that was in better shape, but the other thing is that the key point is not getting off the three shots in the 5.6 seconds. It's getting those first two shots off in 1.6. That can't happen. The minimum firing time of the weapon is 2.3 seconds — not even taking time to aim at anything. The Zapruder film and the acoustics tape both, coincidentally, show exactly 1.6 seconds between the two. And as far as the people on the knoll goes, of course, we want to know who they are.

KING: Well, but his point was why wouldn't they come forward?

Mr. GRODEN: Exactly.

KING: Yes, Gallup, New Mexico, hello.

4th CALLER: *[Gallup, New Mexico]* Yes, I'm requesting information regarding whether or not Lyndon Johnson could have ordered a

cover-up for investigation purposes before the Senate or any other legal purpose.

KING: Don't you think that would have come out?

Mr. GRODEN: But personally, you know, I think that that's a very real possibility. Let's look at it from the sanest possible point of view. There are extremes, of course, but there was evidence planted against Lee Harvey Oswald that he was a pro-Castro agent. There were the phony backyard pictures. There were the films of him passing out Cuban literature—

KING: They weren't phony. Those films—

Mr. GRODEN: Those pictures—

KING: In fact, you did a radio show in New Orleans where—

Mr. GRODEN: Yeah, but the photographs in the backyard with the rifle in one hand and the socialist newspapers—

KING: Phony?

Mr. GRODEN: They have been condemned by photographic experts around the world as being forged. That—

Mr. MOORE: But you were the lone dissenter on the HSCA panel, Robert.

Mr. GRODEN: Yes, that's true, but that's—

Mr. MOORE: Everybody else thought they were genuine except you.

Mr. GRODEN: Except—Well, if you want to spend the time on that we can, but there's a more important point.

Mr. MOORE: Go ahead.

Mr. GRODEN: And we will, if you wish. The point of the matter is — to get back to the caller's question, the evidence planted against Oswald— Let's assume, for the sake of argument, that it was planted. Lyndon Johnson sees this. It points to Fidel Castro being the force behind the assassination. Now, after the Cuban missile crisis, Khrushchev backed down once. He couldn't back down a second time. If we'd have gone after Castro in retaliation, based on this phony evidence, Castro would have no choice except to ask Khrushchev to help him, and he couldn't back down a second time.

KING: So Johnson runs a cover-up to protect Castro?

Mr. GRODEN: And to bury the evidence. I think this is why—

KING: That's the kind of convoluted thinking that could keep going. You can go on forever with that kind of thing.

Mr. GRODEN: Well, I think this is why Earl Warren said we would never know the truth about the assassination in our lifetime.

KING: Columbus, Ohio, hello.

5th CALLER: [Columbus, Ohio] Good evening. In 1963, I was stationed at Grand Prairie Naval Air Station between Dallas and Fort Worth. On the day of the assassination, I was in Dallas, on the west side of the freeway, heard the shots — two very close together, then the third shot. Shortly thereafter, I saw the limousines speeding up the freeway, north toward Parkland Hospital. As a naval officer, and knowing something about weapons, I concur with the thought that a bolt-action rifle cannot be fired that quickly — in 1.6 seconds. From my perspective — and I was probably 300 yards away—

Mr. GRODEN: Well, this is the point—

KING: Boy, I'll bet you'll never forget that, huh?

5th CALLER: It's like yesterday.

KING: Yeah, I'll bet. Jim, what about that point?

Mr. MOORE: Well, obviously, from what he says, as a witness — and, certainly, three football fields away — you have to attach some "give-mes" there — obviously, there were three shots fired. That's the central contention. Walter Cronkite said, back in the 60's, the reason Oswald was able to do it was because he did and because he was shooting at a president. So far, we haven't given that point any weight. Unusual things do happen and they happened that day.

Mr. GRODEN: But not that unusual. Again, those first two shots could not be fired fast enough.

KING: That is that unusual.

Mr. GRODEN: Exactly. The acoustics evidence, the eyewitness testimony and the medical evidence all back up at least one shot from the front.

KING: Caller, do you think Oswald was shooting that day?

5th CALLER: From where I was, I would have sworn the first shot came from the overpass.

KING: Yeah. Was Oswald shooting that day?

Mr. GRODEN: I don't think so, no.

KING: You don't think he was shooting at all?

Mr. GRODEN: He passed a paraffin test. He was seen five minutes before and 72 seconds after the shooting in the second-floor lunchroom. He was not out of breath. He had no known motive. His statements have passed PSE and VSA tests.

KING: Do you find it interesting, Jim, what he said to the arresting officer, who I interviewed — caught him at a theater? He said, "I'm a patsy."

Mr. MOORE: Well, he also said, "This is it. It's all over now and everybody will know who I am."

KING: Durham, North Carolina, hello.

6th CALLER: [Durham, North Carolina] Hello?

KING: Yes.

6th CALLER: Hi, Larry. I have a question I've never understood, that there's this magic bullet that really links Oswald with the shooting. And I'm a mechanical engineer and I know that a bullet that goes that fast, goes through two bodies and exhibits no distortion is physically impossible. They also did tests in the 60's during the Warren Commission investigation, I think.

KING: What's the question?

6th CALLER: Well, how can you — I just have trouble believing this magic bullet thing that links Oswald with the Kennedy assassination.

KING: Jim, can you explain it?

Mr. MOORE: Well, there are three crucial points here, Larry. First of all, that rifle had a muzzle velocity of 2,100 feet per second. We've never used carbines that fast in the United States Army. Secondly, the wound on the governor's back is elongated — it's not round — meaning that that bullet struck something first and all of Governor Connally's doctors agree that he was hit by the same bullet. There was only one bullet that caused those injuries, so, thirdly, if the bullet

went through President Kennedy's neck and didn't hit Governor Connolly, where did it go? Why didn't it hit one of the other four occupants of the limousine?

Mr. GRODEN: We published the autopsy photographs in *High Treason*. The President was not hit in the back of the neck. He was hit in the back six inches below. We have the autopsy photographs to prove it. We have his shirt, his jacket. We have the testimony of the doctors and the autopsy fact sheet.

KING: Do you ever get used to looking at those pictures?

Mr. GRODEN: Well—

KING: I mean, I know you've looked at them a lot, but geez!

Mr. GRODEN: Yes, they are very gruesome.

KING: We couldn't show them, folks. Albert Lee, Minnesota — last call for Robert Groden and Jim Moore; then Lewis Grizzard — hello.

7th CALLER: *Albert Lee, Minnesota*! Mr. Groden, [I've] been doing research for about 14 years. I think you could agree that the scenario for multiple assassins rests on a more convincing evidence foundation — medical, acoustical, eyewitness and the whole Warren report — than a single assassination version. Would you agree?

Mr. GRODEN: Absolutely, beyond any question. Every area of the evidence proves it.

Mr. MOORE: Generally speaking, most people haven't read the report, so they don't know how to make that statement truthful.

KING: In other words, most people have not read the Warren Report?

Mr. MOORE: Exactly.

KING: Thank you both very much. We'll do more on this. Robert Groden, the co-author of *High Treason: The Assassination of John F. Kennedy* — it's a best-seller, by the way; and Jim Moore, author of *Conspiracy of One*. We'll be back to explain all of this — Lewis Grizzard of Atlanta. Don't go away.

ANNOUNCER: Coming up: Humorist Lewis Grizzard gets Georgia off his mind.

(Commercial break)

Humorist Lewis Grizzard

KING: According to columnist Lewis Grizzard's calculations, the Christmas season started this year at 7:36 a.m. Saturday, November 3rd. That's when he spotted the first commercial. Lewis Grizzard is here, along with his latest book, *If I Ever Get Back to Georgia, I'm Going to Nail my Feet to the Ground*. It's dedicated to Ferman Bishue [sp?], one of the great sportswriters of all time. Lewis Grizzard, who actually started as an executive sports editor — to only then become a columnist after hating Chicago — this book is about his— This is about your career in newspapers, right?

LEWIS GRIZZARD, Humorist: Which ended in 1977 when I became a columnist because, we explained before, columnists have nothing to do with the newspaper whatsoever. I used to be the guy that would go in there and design the thing at 5:00 a.m. in the morning, and then go to the composing room and fight with the composing

room to get it out.

KING: You were the editor.

Mr. GRIZZARD: To get a newspaper out is still one of the great miracles of all time. I mean, people complain about newspapers—

KING: Yeah, how do they do it every day?

Mr. GRIZZARD: Oh, it's amazing. People come to me all the time and say, "Why can't you be more truthful and accurate in the newspapers?" I say, "Hey, it don't cost but a quarter. For 25 cents, you want the truth? Buy *Time* magazine."

KING: But a columnist has nothing to do with a paper?

Mr. GRIZZARD: Nothing to do whatsoever.

KING: He's home. You're home, right?

Mr. GRIZZARD: I'm home and the great thing about being a columnist is you can make stuff up. If you're a reporter, you've kind of sort of got to stick to the facts — not every time, you know.

KING: A columnist has leeway.

Mr. GRIZZARD: Yeah, I do want to tell you one thing. I sort of feel like the guy they've brought out to kind of loosen up the survivors on the *Titanic*. After we've been here talking about wars and threats of wars and assassinations, here I am. But I just had a good thought about the war and Saddam. I cannot believe that we have sent all these kids over there and they can't have any beer. I mean, that's ridiculous.

KING: This is your thought on this war?

Mr. GRIZZARD: It's incredible. I mean, there's no way — You look at what part beer has played in American history. First of all, I believe people don't know this, but Washington look a six-pack along when he was going over the Delaware. That's how he had courage to stand up in the front. The aides to Lincoln were complaining about General Grant drinking too much and he said, "Well, what does he drink?" They said, "He drinks Miller Lite," so, "Get a six-pack for all my generals, then." But I think that we should tell the Saudis, "Hey, we've got to have beer for these kids," and the American people — everybody go out and buy a case of beer and send it.

KING: And send it. Well, the Saudis, you're going against everything they stand for — every principle, every ethic, every religious concept.

Mr. GRIZZARD: OK, that's fine, all right. OK, we can't do it. That's OK. You know, we'll call in Switzerland over here to protect you from Saddam Hussein. You know, I think that's good —

KING: We're leaving. Bring in the Swiss.

Mr. GRIZZARD: Yeah, the Swiss can do it.

KING: All right, things that are missing in newspapers. There's no sounds any more in newspapers, right? We talked about this. Newspapers used to have a feel.

Mr. GRIZZARD: Oh, it was a great feeling and that's the reason I loved it. You walked in and there was noise. There was — People were coughing and throwing things and —

KING: They'd put cigarettes on the floor —

Mr. GRIZZARD: Cigarettes on the floor, and there was paper and there were teletype machines. Occasionally, the teletype machine