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Max Holland Rescues the Warren Commission and the Nation

Note: This version has been updated and revised beyond what was originally published in this issue.

By Gary L. Aguilar

The Nation Magazine has long been one of the most perceptive and eloquent voices for skepticism in publishing. Its revelations over the years have established it as one of the few national media outlets that truly functions as a watchdog in the public interest. It has always been an early voice, often the first, to question official pronouncements -- on Vietnam, on Watergate, on Iran-Contra, on Guatemala, on Haiti, and Chile. When, for example, CIA man Richard Helms told the U.S. Senate that the CIA played no role in demolishing Chile's democracy in 1973, *The Nation* called his testimony exactly what it was: perjury.^[1]

But on JFK's murder, *The Nation* has inexplicably kept shut the skeptical eye it normally keeps cocked at outfits like FBI, the CIA and the military -- the very groups it has so often caught lying, and the very groups that produced virtually all the evidence the Warren Commission said disproved conspiracy.

The Nation raised nary an eyebrow at the apparent ease with which the FBI was able to prove right FBI boss J. Edgar Hoover's astounding clairvoyance--announced on the very night JFK died and before any investigation--that Lee Harvey Oswald had done it all by himself. It never wondered whether the Warren Commission's bias toward the FBI's solution--plainly evident already during the Commission's very first meeting--might have been abetted by Hoover's having employed one of his favorite dirty tricks: "file-checking" the Commissioners for dirt.

Given that the public hasn't believed the Warren Commission since the late 60s, and since its no-conspiracy verdict was officially reversed in 1978 by the House Select Committee (HSCA), it is hard to fathom why *The Nation*, of all magazines, continues to toe the old line. In recent years, its in-house experts have been Alexander Cockburn and Max Holland. Skeptics like Peter Dale Scott and John Newman, whose credentials far surpass those of Cockburn and Holland in this case, have been restricted to limited responses on the letters-to-the-editor page.

Cockburn claimed that Kennedy "always acted within the terms of [establishment] institutions and that, against [Oliver Stone's film *JFK*'s] assertions, there is no evidence to the contrary ... The public record shows JFK was always hawkish."^[2] Thus, "whether JFK was killed by a lone assassin or by a conspiracy has as much to do with the subsequent contours of American politics as if he had tripped over one of Caroline's dolls and broken his neck in the White House nursery."^[3]

Echoing Cockburn, Holland holds that, behind a pacific facade, Kennedy was really a clanking Cold Warrior spoiling for a fight--exactly the opposite of the fantasy held by the kooky conspiracy crowd. It was but a "fantasy that Kennedy was on the verge of pulling out from Vietnam."^[4] A fantasy to suppose, therefore, that radical change--on the USSR, on Cuba, on Vietnam--was ever possible in the early 60s. (More on this later.)

The situation is about to get a lot more interesting. Sometime in 2003, Holland will finally unleash his long-promised, 650-page paean to Earl Warren. Early signs are that Holland intends to use the Kennedy case to deliver a sweeping, extraordinary history and civics lesson to the public. After what the *Boston Globe* described five years ago as "one of the most exhaustive examinations ever conducted into the Warren Commission's investigation,"^[5] Holland announced that, "It's become part of our popular culture that the Warren Commission was a joke, and that's not the case."^[6] Holland intends to stop the laughter.

Holland has written that ignorance, "cunningly manufactured falsehoods," and paranoia--but not a suspiciously inadequate investigation--have conspired to unjustly darken the reputation of the Warren Commission's "no-stone-unturned" murder

investigation. It's a remarkable theory. If his book bears any resemblance to what Holland has already written, and it would be surprising if it didn't, it appears Holland represents the *new wave* in Warren apologia: In taking down the Warren Commission, malicious and stupid skeptics have spawned a corrosive public cynicism not only about the government's honest answer to the Crime of the Century in 1964, but also about government in general.

Holland Face to Face

Here I must own up to some personal history with Max Holland. On September 13, 1999, I made a formal presentation at *The Nation* on some of the new JFK medical/autopsy evidence. Also speaking that day were historian John Newman, and researchers John Armstrong and Milicent Cranor. Max Holland, whose words have appeared in *The Nation*, in mainstream publications, as well as in U.S. government-sponsored publications, such as the CIA's own website^[7] and *Voice of America*, sat in.

The goal of that meeting was to update *The Nation* on some of the JFK disclosures that had already gotten coverage in outlets like the *Washington Post* and *AP*, and to bring some then-unpublished material to the attention of the editors. Max Holland did not appear pleased at what he heard.

Newman projected documents showing that Oswald had been impersonated in taped conversations recorded by the CIA in Mexico City six weeks before JFK's death. Newman showed declassified FBI and CIA documents proving that at least one phone recording to the Russian embassy survived after 11/22/63, despite both the CIA and the FBI later claiming that no such tapes had ever survived routine erasure and recycling. Two Commission lawyers listened to the tapes in 1964. One of them told Peter Dale Scott and the JFK Review Board about it. Peculiarly, the Warren Commission was unable to find space anywhere in its 26 published volumes to devote even a footnote to recordings that seemed to link the supposed Communist assassin to the USSR and to the KGB. Nor did they ever pipe up to refute the CIA's claim no tapes survived the assassination.

The new information Newman had found in the files was that the Oswald recording had been fabricated, almost certainly by the CIA, who found a stand-in to impersonate Oswald on the recordings. Holland scoffed that any tapes had survived; apparently unaware the story had already been publicly confirmed. During the nationally-broadcast *Frontline* documentary-- "*Who was Lee Harvey Oswald?*"--Commission lawyer W. David Slawson admitted that he had been permitted to hear at least part of one tape during his tenure with the Commission.

John Armstrong gave his usual dramatic presentation of documents showing that on numerous occasions there were two different "Oswalds" appearing simultaneously in different locations. Milicent Cranor provided strong evidence of what was behind autopsy pathologist James Humes' false testimony concerning Kennedy's throat incision.

The Rehabilitation of the Warren Commission

In a series of articles that have appeared over the past 8+ years, Holland has outlined the skeleton to which one imagines he intends to affix toned muscles and strong sinews in his upcoming opus, *A Need to Know: Inside the Warren Commission*.^[8] "It would be one thing," he sighed in the respected *Reviews in American History*, "if conspiracy theories were still only believed by a decided minority of Americans. It's quite another matter when more than 80% of Americans disbelieve or cannot accept their own history, and when the questions they ask about the past are based on palpable, cunningly manufactured falsehoods."^[9]

Conspiracists have been so successful, Holland has lamented, that, "Now the burden of proof [has] shifted decisively and unfairly from critics to *defenders* of the official story ... Almost any claim or theory, regardless of how bizarre or insupportable, [can] now be presented in the same sentence as the Warren Report's conclusions and gain credence."^[10] (Holland's emphasis. Holland appears to be suggesting that it is unfair to expect advocates of the official, only-Oswald-did-it, story to bear the burden of proving their theory; that it would be fair to require skeptics to prove a negative, that Oswald did not do it.) Holland, however, isn't troubled that the virus of mistrust has infected a few crackpots. He's vexed at the reception of Oliver Stone's pro-conspiracy film *JFK*, and the favor accorded pro-conspiracy books by authors such as Peter Dale Scott and former House Select Committee counsel Gary Cornwell.

"Even the highest level of education is not a barrier," he complained, "to judge from the disregard for the Warren Report that exists in the upper reaches of the academy." In fact, "the professional historians' most prestigious publication, the *American Historical Review*, published two articles (out of three) [*sic*] in praise of Oliver Stone's movie *JFK*. The lead piece actually asserted that 'on the complex question of the Kennedy assassination itself, the film holds its own against the Warren Report.' In a similar vein, in 1993, *Deep Politics and the Death of JFK*, by an English professor named Peter Dale Scott, a book conjuring up fantastic paranoid explanations, was published by no less respected an institution than the *University of California Press*."^[11]

Rather than explaining why one should embrace the conclusions that bear Earl Warren's name, Holland instead attacks skeptics by offering only two simple explanations for the skepticism: ignorance and paranoia. Virtually no one (but Holland, apparently) truly grasps the unique Cold War circumstances in which both the President's murder and its investigation transpired. And without it, one is totally lost. The deranged act of a lonely, pro-Cuban zealot, he maintains, was the unintended consequence of Kennedy's rabid anti-Castroism. In essence, Kennedy got from Oswald what he'd intended to give Castro through the agency of the CIA and Mafia. The Kennedy murder was a case of simple reprisal. But not from the target of Kennedy's malice, Castro, but instead from a delusional, self-appointed pro-Castro avenger.

The government's well-intended decision to protect the public from the seamier aspects of this scenario explains why the public has never understood the whole picture. The Warren Commission, for good reason Holland says, withheld this simple and indisputably true explanation: "[B]y effectively robbing Oswald of [his pro-Communist], ideological motive, Warren left a critical question unresolved and provided fodder for conspiracy theorists."^[12] In essence, Cold War jitters during the 60s encouraged the Commission to de-emphasize the ferocity of Oswald's political ardor, lest an anticommunist backlash overwhelm events, propelling us toward a hot reprisal against innocent Communist countries that had nothing to do with the Lone Nut.

So, sure, the government hid facts about Oswald and about the CIA's plots to murder Fidel Castro. So what? The secrets were kept, Holland argues, *not* to deny the basic truth of JFK's death, but instead to calm an electrified public and protect secret, vital, and ongoing, Cold War operations. "[T]he 2 percent [of Warren Commission documents still withheld] doesn't contradict the Warren Report; like the information omitted by the CIA and Robert Kennedy in 1964, it only helps to affirm Oswald's sole guilt."^[13] Rather than explaining how he knows what is in still-secret documents, Holland instead presumes to explain their meaning: secrets were kept because they had nothing whatsoever to do with Who struck John. Moreover, there is a key aspect of the secrecy that Holland believes hasn't gotten the attention it deserves: the destructive self-serving Kennedy family secrecy about JFK's death.

Holland believes that RFK, to protect the Kennedy name, and his own political future, repeatedly blocked the very avenues of investigation whose sloppy coverage in 1964 is taken as proof today that the Warren Commission got it wrong. So, in Holland's eyes, if the Warren Commission was not entirely successful, the Kennedys deserve no small portion of blame. As examples, Holland maintains that RFK prevented JFK's autopsy doctors from dissecting the President's back wound, and so the proof of an Oswald-implicating trajectory was lost. Also lost was the public's confidence in the post mortem's conclusions that only two shots, both fired from the rear, hit their mark. Besides that, RFK never told the Commission about murderous CIA plots undertaken under his command to have the Mob whack Castro, while he preserved his option to plausibly deny his own role. Thus, Holland says, it was that the ferociously anti-Castro president inadvertently inspired a communist loser's vengeful act. RFK then orchestrated a protective cover-up of his brother's death, leaving a legacy of public skepticism that continues to undermine faith in honorable public institutions to this day. (See below.)

The Seductions Of Paranoia

Ignorance of the bigger picture, whether because of Kennedy subterfuge or for other reasons, is not the only explanation Holland offers for the widely held skepticism. "To understand the JFK phenomenon," he observes, "it helps to revisit [Richard Hofstadter's] classic lecture '*The Paranoid Style in American Politics*.'" Holland says that, "the most prominent qualities of the paranoid style, according to Hofstadter, are 'heated exaggeration, suspiciousness, and conspiratorial fantasy.' Propagators don't see conspiracies or plots here and there in history; they regard 'a vast or gigantic conspiracy as the motive force in historical events.'"^[14] (Holland's emphasis)

Holland singles out historian Arthur Schlesinger, filmmaker Oliver Stone, Professor Peter Dale Scott, and, most importantly, Jim Garrison as especially responsible for the persistence of paranoia. Schlesinger, Holland tells us, "manipulates history as if he were a lifetime employee of the Kennedy White House," enthusiastically feeding the Kennedy Camelot myth, "his eloquence in the writing of history rivaled only by his skill in dissembling it."^[15] It is not mere *national myths* that so trouble Holland, for "every nation is sustained by its own myths, which occasionally collide with reality. But when myths are as divorced from reality as these are, they become dangerous. Americans are encouraged to feel nostalgia for a past that never was, wax dreamily about what might have been, or indulge in elaborate paranoid fantasies about their own government."^[16]

Oliver Stone, having punctuated Schlesinger's Camelot fairytale of JFK with a free-handed, black finale, is "one of the worst purveyors of the kind of paranoid nonsense eschewed by [Jack Kennedy himself]." "Although Stone strikes a vaguely leftish pose," Holland notes, "he in fact uses the familiar rightist logic of those who muttered darkly about black helicopters, fluoridation of the water, one-world government."^[17] As an example, Holland decries Stone's wild claim that "President Kennedy was 'calling for radical change on several fronts--the USSR, Cuba, Vietnam ... [and so] if nothing else, a motive for [JFK's] murder is evident.'" This is nothing, as Holland sees it, but pure fantasy, pure paranoia. Professor Scott fares little better. Holland concludes that the "outstanding characteristics" of Scott's book *Deep Politics*, "put it squarely in the [paranoid] tradition of most books about the assassination ... an unreadable compendium of 'may haves' and 'might haves,' non sequiturs, and McCarthy-style innuendo, with enough documentation to satisfy any paranoid."^[18]

Holland reserves his greatest contempt for the famous New Orleans district attorney, Jim Garrison, who unsuccessfully prosecuted Clay Shaw for conspiracy to murder JFK. In the introduction to an article about Garrison that appeared in the spring 2001 issue of the *Wilson Quarterly*, Holland hangs virtually all responsibility for America's loss of faith in public institutions on the district attorney. He maintains that the Shaw trial's "terrible miscarriage of justice was to have immense, if largely unappreciated, consequences for the political culture of the United States ... Of all the legacies of the 1960s, none has been more unambiguously negative than the American public's corrosive cynicism toward the federal government. Although that attitude is commonly traced to the disillusioning experiences of Vietnam and Watergate, its genesis lies in the aftermath of JFK's assassination ... Well before antiwar protests were common, lingering dissatisfaction with the official verdict that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone broadened into a widespread conviction that the federal government was incompetent or suppressing the truth or, in the worst case, covering up its own complicity in the assassination."^[19] ^[20]

And who was responsible for germinating all that dissatisfaction in the 60s? None other than the fiendishly clever chaps in the Russian KGB, whose clever conspiracy only succeeded in seducing the public because of the gullibility of a vainglorious dupe, Jim Garrison. Holland's theory is pretty straightforward. Holland says that in 1967 the KGB slipped a bogus story into a 'crypto-Communist' Italian newspaper, *Paese Sera*, that tied Clay Shaw to an a CIA front organization in Italy, "Centro Mondiale Commerciale." (More on this below.)

Lacking even a valid scintilla with which to move forward against Shaw, the bogus story was all the loose cannon in New Orleans needed. Garrison grabbed it ruthlessly. From there, events followed an inexorable, downward spiral as Garrison painted an incredible courtroom sketch of Shaw and Oswald clutched in the CIA's malefic embrace as they danced toward destiny in Dallas. Had Garrison not gone wobbly on the KGB's concoction, Holland believes that the Shaw-CIA-Oswald fairy tale would have vanished like a dream, taking the nightmarish prosecution of Shaw with it. But the communist Mickey Finn worked. The final upshot was a senseless catastrophe for Shaw, and a loss of faith in America.

Holland, it should be emphasized, does not deny that *some* cynicism about government is justified. "Commentators usually ascribe the public's [legitimate] paranoia to the disturbing events that followed Kennedy's murder: Vietnam, other assassinations, Watergate, exposure of FBI and CIA abuses in the 1970s, and finally the Iran-contra scandal, all of which undermined Americans' trust in their elected government."^[21] The distrust, however, should not be taken too far. For not only on the Kennedy case is it true that, "a more sophisticated or mature understanding is necessary among the public to realize that the government does keep secrets, but it doesn't mean that what they say isn't the truth."^[22] Of course no one argues it's *always* untruthful. But the government's problem is that, as with any proven liar, the government has already been caught telling myriad, big lies, and it takes only a few small lies to foster an atmosphere of mistrust.

An illustrative example is one Holland cites himself: the edifying parallels between the JFK case and the government's white lies about the Cold War-related events at Roswell, New Mexico over 50 years ago. The suppression of information about our use of high-tech spy balloons, he says, allowed flying-saucer and conspiracy buffs to 'adorn the Roswell incident with mythic significance.' In the Kennedy case, similarly, "the suppression of a few embarrassing but not central truths encouraged the spread of myriad farfetched theories."^[23] In both cases, the government's white lie-encased good intentions backfired, creating more skepticism than confidence. And in the Kennedy case, "[t]he assassination and its aftermath have never been firmly integrated into their place and time, largely because of Cold War exigencies." And so "Americans have neither fully understood nor come to grips with the past."^[24]

This amusing nonsense is assailable on so many levels one scarcely knows where to begin. First, the public didn't "adorn" the Roswell incident with paranoid mythic significance because the government told the truth but not the whole truth; it did so because the government invited farfetched theorizing by offering three different "factual" explanations for what really happened there, at least two of which were lies.

A more "sophisticated understanding" doesn't lead one to trust the government more, as Holland would have it, but less. Confining his gaze to the myriad government conspiracies betokened by the words *Vietnam*, *Watergate*, *Iran-Contra*, and *CIA and FBI abuses*, doesn't give the government its due. And it doesn't reflect the changing nature of what properly constitutes "paranoia" today.

Since Hofstadter delivered his famous lecture in 1963, "paranoia" has been beating a steady retreat. Had Hofstadter read in 1963 that in 1962 the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff had unanimously approved a plan to commit acts of terrorism against U. S. citizens on American soil, he might have withheld his sermon on the foolhardiness of paranoia. ABC recently publicized the story that was first disclosed in investigative reporter, James Bamford's book, *Body of Secrets*. In a once-secret operation codenamed *Operation Northwoods*, ABC.com reported that, "America's top military leaders reportedly drafted plans to kill innocent people and commit acts of terrorism in U.S. cities to create public support for a war ... to oust Cuba's then new leader, communist Fidel Castro."^[25] Luckily, the plans (which can be read in the original on the web at George Washington University's National Security Archive^[26]) "apparently were rejected by the civilian leadership" of the Kennedy administration, and never carried out.^[27]

In the year Hofstadter spoke, it would have been considered pure paranoia to believe--especially after the Nuremberg convictions of Nazis for grotesque human experiments--that our government was then conducting and covering-up ongoing dangerous and secret drug, LSD, radiation and syphilis experiments on unwitting, law-abiding, American citizens.^[28]

Had the documents themselves not been declassified, Hofstadter would likely have called crackpot a recent AP report that cited secret FBI memos linking the FBI's J. Edgar Hoover to breathtaking lawlessness. On July 28, 2002, AP reported, "For more than 20 years, FBI headquarters in Washington knew that its Boston agents were using hit men and mob leaders as informants and shielding them from prosecution for serious crimes including murder." It also reported that a known murderer was allowed by the FBI to go free, "as four innocent men were sent to prison in his place."^[29]

Whereas in 1963, Hofstadter would have howled, today no one calls *The Nation* paranoid when it reports, "[Once secret] 'archives of terror' (sic)... demonstrate that a US military official helped to draw up the apparatus of the Paraguayan police state while he was ostensibly merely training its officers. They also conclusively prove an official US connection to crimes of state committed in Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay and Bolivia, under Operation Condor ... The moral callousness exhibited in the US response to these disclosures is shocking."^[30] Given that these appalling acts occurred during the very era in which he delivered his reassuring admonitions, Hofstadter's advice today seems foolishly naïve and misguided. He was encouraging Americans to feel nostalgic for a past that never was, to wax dreamily about what might have been. And he discouraged "paranoid fantasies" about government that were often vastly less "paranoid" than the suppressed reality.

Hofstadler, alas, is obsolete because it has long since ceased being "paranoid" to believe that the government has lied to the public about its secret wars abroad; that it has lied about its illegal support of murderers at home and murderous totalitarian dictatorships abroad in Central America and elsewhere; that it has lied about the immoral and illegal assaults on citizens who took lawful exception to its misguided policy in Vietnam,^[31] and even on citizens whose only crime was to be accidentally in the wrong

place at the wrong time and so fodder for clandestine human experimentation

If Holland is right that there is a “widespread conviction” that the federal government has suppressed the truth or covered up its own complicity in myriad, lawless acts, that conviction exists entirely independently of the efforts of Schlesinger, Stone, Scott and Garrison. In fact, so many deplorable government conspiracies have been proven that Hofstadter would never have dreamed of, most detailed eloquently in *The Nation*, one can't help but wonder if conspiracy-exorcist Holland ever reads even the magazine he writes for.

The True History of a Remarkable Investigation

By putting the “extraordinary investigation” into its historical context, it appears Holland expects to redeem the checkered reputation of Earl Warren's most famous accomplishment. “The Warren Commission's inquiry occurred at what we now know was the height of the Cold War, and it must be judged in that context. Perhaps with its history understood, the Warren Commission, instead of being an object of derision, can emerge in a different light, battered somewhat but with the essential integrity of its criminal investigation unscathed^[32] ... In time the Warren Commission will be seen for what it truly was ... *a monumental criminal investigation carried to its utmost limits* and designed to burn away a fog of speculation. It did not achieve perfection, and in the rush to print (there was no rush to judgment) (sic) the language on pivotal issues, such as the single bullet, was poorly crafted ... the accuracy of the report's essential findings, holding up after three decades, is testimony to the commission's basic integrity.”^[33] (emphasis added)

Commission Appointments: The Wisdom of LBJ's Tricky Balancing Act

Holland attributes much of the Commission's success to the wily LBJ, whose conscription of two reluctant appointees was especially inspired. Chief Justice Earl Warren and Senator Richard Russell, staunch political enemies, were essentially coerced. Holland sees enormous wisdom in Johnson's move. If Warren, a liberal Republican, could cobble together a consensus conclusion about the tragedy with a well-respected political enemy, the conservative Democrat Russell, there would be no doubting the fundamental integrity of the investigation and the nonpartisan nature of the conclusions. “If Richard Russell could possibly have disagreed with Earl Warren he would have,” observed Holland. “Yet they did agree--it's a unanimous report.”^[34]

Holland hastens to remind readers that the unanimity was the end product of an honest process that was established at the outset. On the day the Commission met for the first time--January 20th 1964--Warren set the tone when he admonished the assembled staff: “Truth is our only client here.” That phrase became, as Holland put it, “the commission's unofficial motto.”^[35]

Earl Warren's No-Stone-Left-Unturned Investigation

With that mandate, the Commission began “a probe that truly spanned the globe.”^[36] Holland described as especially clever the Commission's use of intelligence agencies. These groups were of incalculable value to perhaps the most sensitive aspect of the investigation: the possibility that Oswald had been a tool of Cuba or the USSR. “New intelligence reports from Mexico City suggested a link between Oswald and the Cuban government. The supersecret National Security Agency and allied eavesdropping agencies went into overdrive to decipher intercepted conversations, cable traffic, radio, and telephone communications at the highest levels of the Soviet and Cuban governments ... In about forty-eight hours the intercepts showed beyond a reasonable doubt that both the Soviet and Cuban governments had been as shocked as anyone by the news from Dallas.”^[37] This fabulous intelligence coup, Holland argues, allowed cooler American heads to prevail. And yet the Commission has been criticized for having been too reliant on the intelligence apparatus, rather than on its own independent investigators. Holland has little patience for such nonsense.

“The lawyers on the staff were investigators of a sort. I mean they went out in the field, they interviewed witnesses, they deposed witnesses, they conducted a first hand evaluation of evidence ... [While] you can say [the Commission staff] weren't trained homicide investigators--that's true--but the FBI didn't also [sic] investigate a lot of murders either. Murder was a state problem ... so, number one, the staff of the Warren Commission were investigators. Number two ... the Commission realized that the FBI had a lot of sensitivities about the assassination because they had the largest file on Lee Harvey Oswald and once they realized this

they tried to double check and sometimes triple check the reliability of the FBI's information by also getting it thorough the Secret Service and/or the CIA."^[38]

To prove his point, he says that the Commission, for example, "did an extremely thorough check of the indices [they were shown] at FBI headquarters. There was no Lee Harvey Oswald listed as an informant." And if that wasn't adequate disproof of rumors Oswald had ties to the Bureau, Holland adds that, "All the FBI agents who ever came into contact with Oswald signed affidavits saying they had never attempted to recruit Oswald. Hoover signed an affidavit saying the Bureau had never recruited or attempted to recruit Oswald." And so, after reviewing files the FBI supplied, files Holland can't imagine Hoover would have sanitized, and after getting affidavits from agents, affidavits Holland can't imagine might not be true, "insofar as possible, I believe the Commission put that rumor to rest."^[39]

Thus, Holland maintains it is wrong-headed to believe that the Commission was too dependent on intelligence agencies that were biased toward the single-assassin theory from the beginning. Instead, Holland holds that not only did the investigation greatly benefit from the remarkable data federal snoops gathered, the Commission was also satisfactorily able to cross check any important information from them it doubted.

The Crux and Crucible

In a crucial sense, this may be the crux of Holland's pro-Warren case: The Commission was a splendid, if imperfect, national effort to solve the JFK's murder, but it doesn't get the respect it deserves because of the misunderstandings, lies and paranoia of critics. In many ways, Holland's defense marks a new tact in defending the Warren Commission: characterizing the Commission as a *monumental criminal investigation carried to its utmost limits*, while dismissing skeptics on the grounds they are either too stupid to grasp the Cold War circumstances of both the murder and its investigation, or on grounds they are liars or paranoid, or both. It isn't surprising that such a novel defense has never been tried before by anyone--except, perhaps, by ex-Commissioners Gerald Ford and David Belin.

Instead, skepticism about the Warren Commission has been the rule. And perhaps the most scathing critiques to come along have not come from "paranoid" skeptics, but from two groups of skilled government investigators: Frank Church's Senate Select Committee in 1976, and the House Select Committee in 1978 (HSCA). Those critiques, it should be noted, bear an eerie similarity to the critiques of skeptics such as historian Michael Kurtz, journalist Henry Hurt, Sylvia Meagher, Notre Dame law professor and former HSCA chief counsel, Robert Blakey, Peter Dale Scott, as well as many others.

There is no denying that the Commission learned little about Oswald's associates. Though the FBI had Jack Ruby's phone records, it failed to spot Ruby's suspicious, and atypical, pattern of calls to known Mafiosi in the weeks leading up to the assassination. The Commission's "investigators" didn't know enough to *triple-check* the FBI, or to check themselves, and so the Commission learned next to nothing about Ruby, or his calls. Basing its conclusions on FBI-supplied "character references" from, among others, two known mob associates (Lenny Patrick and Dave Yaras),^[40] the Commission ultimately concluded Ruby was not connected to the mob.

Then in 1977, the HSCA performed the rudimentary task of actually analyzing Ruby' calls and exposing Lenny Patrick's and Dave Yaras' mob ties. It made the obvious connection--one that fit other compelling, and previously ignored, evidence that tied Ruby to the Mafia, and the Mafia to the crime. The importance of this reversal was entirely lost on Holland, who wrote, "[The HSCA] corroborated every salient fact developed by the Warren Commission."^[41] Perhaps the connection had been missed in 1964 because the FBI's senior mafia expert, Courtney Evans, was excluded from the probe. (Evans told the HSCA: "They sure didn't come to me. ... We had no part in that that I can recall."^[42]) Instead, the Bureau turned to FBI supervisor Regis Kennedy, who then professed to believe Carlos Marcello, the New Orleans capo to whom Ruby had ties, was a "tomato salesman and real estate investor."^[43] And perhaps the Commissioners also willingly averted their gaze, lest they agitate the sensitive FBI director.

"The evidence indicates that Hoover viewed the Warren Commission more as an adversary than a partner in a search for the facts of the assassination," the HSCA concluded in 1978.^[44] Speaking for all the Commissioners in 1977, chief counsel J. Lee Rankin admitted that in 1964, the Commissioners were naïve about Hoover's honesty and yet were afraid to confront him when he

wouldn't properly fetch for them. "Who," Rankin sheepishly asked, "could protest against what Mr. Hoover did back in those days?"^[45] Apparently not the President's commissioners. And so, "The Commission did not investigate Hoover or the FBI, and managed to avoid the appearance of doing so." This had repercussions on possibly the most explosive rumor the Warren Commission ever dealt with--that Oswald had been an FBI informant. The HSCA found that, "The Warren Commission] ended up doing what the members had agreed they could not do: Rely mainly on FBI's denial of the allegations [that Oswald had been an FBI informant]."^[46]

The FBI never informed the Commission of Oswald's threatening note to Hosty, which it destroyed. The Commission never heard about the mafia threats against JFK and RFK that had been picked up in FBI wiretaps. Nor did they ever learn that even before the Commission started, Hoover already had a secret informant in place: Representative Gerald Ford.^[47] The record also suggests the CIA had been little better than the FBI.

Two years before the HSCA issued its report, the Senate Select Committee reported on its own examination of the process employed by both agencies. It reported, "The Committee has developed evidence which impeaches the process by which the intelligence agencies arrived at their own conclusions about the assassination, and by which they provided information to the Warren Commission. This evidence indicates that the investigation of the assassination was deficient and that facts which might have substantially affected the course of the investigation were not provided the Warren Commission or those individuals within the FBI and the CIA, as well as other agencies of Government, who were charged with investigating the assassination."^[48]

Thus, Holland's most threatening enemies *aren't* the informed skeptics, or even the university-published skeptics who mistrust the government, but the government itself. That is, two government bodies that--armed in abundance with the one key capacity the Commission needed but lacked, a staff of experienced and proven criminal investigators--uncovered good reasons to incline any reasonable person toward skepticism.

The HSCA vs. The Warren Report

The list of Commission shortcomings the HSCA assembled is not short. A brief summary of them runs some 47 pages in the *Bantam Books* version of the report (p. 289--336), which outlines what required all 500+ pages of volume XI to cover.

To cite a particularly important one, the HSCA found that, "Even though [the Commission's] staff was composed primarily of lawyers, the Commission did not take advantage of all the legal tools available to it. An assistant [Commission] counsel told the committee: 'The Commission itself failed to utilize the instruments of immunity from prosecution and prosecution for perjury with respect to witnesses whose veracity it doubted.'"^[49] And despite Earl Warren's bold declaration, "Truth is our only client here," it was no less than the Chief Justice himself who recommended relying on the FBI's investigation instead of conducting an independent investigation. Warren inexplicably refused to seek one of the most essential tools necessary for *any* serious criminal investigation: the authority to issue subpoenas and to grant balky witnesses immunity from prosecution. His opposition had to be overcome by the other Commissioners.^[50] But in practice, they proved no more courageous than Warren. For although they admitted doubting, and with good reason, the truthfulness of some of the witnesses, the Commissioners freely admitted they never once found even a single occasion to offer a grant of immunity to pursue their *only client*.^[51]

The HSCA's chief counsel, Robert Blakey, an experienced criminal investigator and prosecutor himself, was impressed with neither the Commission's vigor nor its independence. "What was significant," Blakey wrote, "was the ability of the FBI to intimidate the Commission, in light of the bureau's predisposition on the questions of Oswald's guilt and whether there had been a conspiracy. At a January 27 [1964] Commission meeting, there was another dialogue [among Warren Commissioners]:

John McCloy: ... the time is almost overdue for us to have a better perspective of the FBI investigation than we now have ... We are so dependent on them for our facts

Commission counsel J. Lee Rankin: Part of our difficulty in regard to it is that they have no problem. They have decided that no one else is involved

Senator Richard Russell: They have tried the case and reached a verdict on every aspect.

Senator Hale Boggs: You have put your finger on it. (Closed Warren Commission meeting.)^[52]

The HSCA gave a compelling explanation for how the case was so swiftly solved: "It must be said that the FBI generally exhausted its resources in confirming its case against Oswald as the lone assassin, a case that Director J. Edgar Hoover, at least, seemed determined to make within 24 hours of the of the assassination."^[53] (The Bureau's ability to prove is legendary. It proved that Nixon was innocent of Watergate after what then-Attorney General Richard Kleindienst, with unintended irony, described as the greatest (FBI) effort since the assassination of President Kennedy.^[54])

In essence, the HSCA concluded that Hoover had divined the solution to the crime before the investigation, and then Hoover's agents proved his epiphany. The intimidated Commission didn't put up much of a fight. (*Who could protest against what Mr. Hoover did back in those days?*) Despite the Commission's admission that it would probably need an independent investigative staff to properly investigate certain intelligence "tender spots," it chose not to get one. As the HSCA succinctly put it, "[T]he Commission did not go much beyond the agencies in investigating the anticipated [intelligence] 'tender spots.'"^[55] J. Lee Rankin explained the Commission's spinelessness: An independent investigative staff would have required an inordinate amount of time, and "the whole intelligence community in the government would feel that the Commission was indicating a lack of confidence in them ..."^[56] Echoing Rankin, Allen Dulles pressed his fellow commissioners to accept the FBI's investigation so as to, as Dulles' biographer Peter Gross put it, "avoid frictions within the intelligence community."^[57]

The HSCA's criticism is particularly damning given the fact it was delivered by an official body. Holland, however, is unlikely to be impressed. Complaining in *The Nation* that HSCA deputy chief counsel Gary Cornwell "recycles some of the hoariest clichés regarding the Warren Commission (in his book *Real Answers*),"^[58] Holland seems disinclined to accept *any* of the HSCA's critique of the Commission. For Cornwell had made an admission that one imagines would have immediately disqualified him as far as Holland is concerned: "Before joining the Select Committee, I had been a federal prosecutor with the Organized Crime and Racketeering Section of the Justice Department, and Chief of the Organized Crime Strike Force in Kansas City. I had investigated numerous conspiracies, and indicted and tried the organized crime members who participated in those conspiracies, including the head of the Mafia in Kansas City, and the head of the Mafia in Denver. I believe criminal conspiracies do exist. Unlike [pro-Warren columnist] Tom Wicker, my bias ran toward a belief that conspiracies are a very integral part of 'how the world works.'"^[59] Certainly anyone with Cornwell's sterling credentials as a murder investigator, someone who had so often proved conspiracies actually exist, could not possibly have been relied upon to investigate JFK's murder, or the Warren Commission's investigation of it.

The Senate Select Committee vs. The Warren Commission

Very well, ignore Cornwell and the HSCA. But how about the conclusions of Frank Church's Senate Select Committee, rendered two years *before* the HSCA? It is still celebrated even today for having revealed prior, gross intelligence failures, lies and abuses committed by the same agencies that Holland hails for having cracked the Kennedy case. The Church committee, moreover, did not "disqualify" itself by having disagreed with the Warren Commission's conclusions about Oswald. For it did not address that question. It only addressed the manner in which JFK's murder was investigated.

"Almost immediately after the assassination, Director Hoover, the Justice Department and the White House 'exerted pressure' on senior Bureau officials to ... issue a factual report supporting the conclusion that Oswald was the lone assassin. Thus, it is not surprising that, from its inception, the assassination investigation focused almost exclusively on Lee Harvey Oswald ... The pressure to issue a report that would establish Oswald as the lone assassin is reflected in internal Bureau memoranda. On 11/24/63, Assistant FBI Director Alan Belmont informed Associate FBI Director Clyde Tolson that he was sending to Headquarters supervisors to Dallas to review '... [interviews and findings] so that we can prepare a memorandum to the Attorney General ... [setting] (sic) out the evidence showing that Oswald is responsible for the shooting that killed the President."^[60] So while Hoover immediately sought to narrow the scope to Oswald, a powerful brigade swiftly joined him in lockstep.

The Senate Select Committee also addressed one of Holland's central concerns: to rebut the notion the Commission was overly

dependent on intelligence agencies. Apparently Commissioner McCloy's word--"We are so dependent on [the FBI] for our facts"--accounts for nothing with Max Holland. His retort is that the FBI *did* work satisfactorily with the Commission, which was *not* overly dependent on the Bureau. The Commission, you see, independently double-, or triple-checked any important FBI evidence it doubted.

Unfortunately for Holland, the Senate committee saw things pretty much the way McCloy had described them: "[T]he Commission was dependent upon the intelligence agencies for the facts and preliminary analysis ... The Commission and its staff did analyze the material and frequently requested follow-up agency investigations; but if evidence on a particular point was not supplied to the Commission, this second step would obviously not be reached, and the Commission's findings would be formulated without the benefit of any information on the omitted point."^[61] Furthermore, "although the Commission had to rely on the FBI to conduct the primary investigation of the President's death ... the Commission was perceived as an adversary by both Hoover and senior FBI officials ... such a relationship," as the Committee dryly put it, "was not conducive to the cooperation necessary for a thorough and exhaustive investigation."^[62]

The Senate discovered that Hoover had deployed one of his favorite dirty tricks to deal with the Warren Commission. "[D]erogatory information pertaining to both Commission members and staff was brought to Mr. Hoover's attention."^[63] Given the FBI's history of destroying Oswald's note to FBI agent James Hosty, Hosty's recent admission that his own personnel file, and other FBI files, had been falsified,^[64] and given the report by author Curt Gentry that assistant FBI director William Sullivan learned of other JFK documents in the Bureau that had been destroyed,^[65] skeptics find cold comfort in the Committee's follow-up comment that, "the Bureau has informed the Committee staff that there is no documentary evidence which indicates that such information was disseminated *while the Warren Commission was in session*."^[66] (emphasis added)

Although Holland touts Earl Warren's bold declaration, "Truth is our only client," he omits a more telling Warren directive, one that has been borne out by the Commission's own internal record: "[O]ur job here is essentially one for the evaluation of evidence as distinguished from the gathering of evidence, and I believe that at the outset at least we can start with the premise that we can rely upon the reports of the various federal agencies."^[67] Peter Gross noted that Warren's inclination toward the FBI's solution was shared by another powerful Commissioner, Allen Dulles, who "urged that the panel confine its work to a review of the investigation already being made by the FBI."^[68]

The Unbiased Warren Commission

But is Holland right that the Commission really resisted pressure from Hoover, the Justice Department and the White House to pursue only the truth? Internal records suggest that rather than truth being its only bias, the Warren Commission's bias was to believe what the FBI said was true. From the record, author Howard Roffman has pointed to a clear inclination on the Commission's part that existed before it had begun its investigation.

He has written:

Now, Rankin and Warren drew up the plans for the organization of the work that the staff was to undertake for the Commission. In a "Progress Report" dated January 11, from the Chairman to the other members, Warren referred to a "tentative outline prepared by Mr. Rankin which I think will assist in organizing the evaluation of the investigative materials received by the Commission." Two subject headings in this outline are of concern here: "(2) Lee Harvey Oswald as the Assassin of President Kennedy; (3) Lee Harvey Oswald: Background and Possible Motives." Thus, it is painfully apparent that the Commission did, from the very beginning, plan its work with a distinct bias. It would evaluate the evidence from the perspective of "Oswald as the assassin," and it would search for his "possible motives."

Attached to Warren's "Progress Report" was a copy of the "Tentative Outline of the Work of the President's Commission." This outline reveals in detail the extent to which the conclusion of Oswald's guilt was pre-determined. Section II, "Lee Harvey Oswald as the Assassin of President Kennedy," begins by outlining Oswald's movements on the day of the assassination. Under the heading "Murder of Tippit," there is the subheading "Evidence demonstrating Oswald's guilt." Even the FBI had refrained from drawing a conclusion as to whether or not Oswald had murdered Officer Tippit. Yet, at

this very early point in its investigation, the Commission was convinced it could muster "evidence demonstrating Oswald's guilt."

Another heading under Section II of the outline is "Evidence Identifying Oswald as the Assassin of President Kennedy," again a presumptive designation made by a commission that had not yet analyzed a single bit to evidence.^[69]

With Earl Warren confident in the FBI's solution so early in the game, Warren critic Dwight McDonald made an insightful comment in 1965 on how the rest of the chips so easily fell into place. He described the young and inexperienced staff counsels who actually did the Warren Commission's legwork, as, "ambitious young chaps who were not going to step out of the lines drawn by their chiefs."^[70]

So it is not surprising that in recent years some of the Commissioners have had second thoughts. Alan Dershowitz reported that one-time Commission attorney, Stanford law professor John Hart Ely, "has acknowledged that the (C)ommission lacked independent investigative resources and thus was compelled to rely on the government's investigative agencies, namely the FBI, CIA and military intelligence."^[71] In other words, Holland's notion that the Commission double- and triple-checked the investigative agencies' evidence is not exactly how the Commission lawyer remembered it. HSCA counsel Robert Blakey reported, "When (the HSCA) asked (Judge Burt Griffin) if he was satisfied with the (Commission's) investigation that led to the (no conspiracy) conclusion, he said he was not."^[72] And author Gus Russo reported that Griffin also admitted, "We spent virtually no time investigating the possibility of conspiracy. I wish we had."^[73]

Finally, in crowing about how Richard Russell and the Commissioners, "did agree--it's a unanimous report,"^[74] Holland is mum about the fact that Russell was one of three Warren Commissioner who rejected the sine qua non of the Commission's case against Oswald, the Single Bullet Theory. So also did LBJ. As the *The Athens Observer*, put it in a story published on 12/8/94, "A recording released earlier this year by the Lyndon Johnson Presidential Library has brought to light some important new facts concerning the Warren Commission's investigation of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. As a result of disclosure of the recording it is now evident, more than three decades after the assassination, that President Lyndon B. Johnson and three members of the Warren Commission (Sen. Richard B. Russell, Sen. John Sherman Cooper, and Rep. Hale Boggs) rejected the so-called single bullet theory, an essential part of the Commission's single-assassin thesis." [That is not to say, of course, that LBJ ever let his skepticism be known publicly.]

Moreover, *The Athen's Observer* also noted that Russell has never hidden his dissent. "Sen. Russell's objections to important findings of the Warren Report received further publicity when the senator's views were mentioned in various JFK assassination books, including notably Edward Epstein's *Inquest* (1966), Harold Weisberg's *Whitewash IV* (1974), Bernard Fensterwald's *Coincidence or Conspiracy?* (1977), and Henry Hurt's *Reasonable Doubt* (1985)."

Holland Redeems Nicholas Katzenbach

In a telling paragraph, Holland sought to salvage the sullied reputation of the Deputy Attorney General in 1963. "A memo by Deputy Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach, written after Oswald's slaying, advocated a process that would put rumor and speculation to rest, because a purgative trial had been rendered impossible. In (former HSCA investigator Gary) Cornwell's tendentious account (in his book, *Real Answers*), this memo becomes documentary proof of an effort to 'put the machinery of government into gear to make the lone, deranged assassin story a convincing one.'"^[75]

In his famous memo, written but three days after the assassination, Katzenbach makes it clear that he already knows the truth and that he wants it disseminated. Writing presidential assistant Bill Moyers, Katzenbach urges that, "the public must be satisfied that Oswald was the assassin; that he did not have confederates who are still at large; and that the evidence was such that he would have been convicted at trial."^[76] Holland never lets on that the "process" Katzenbach advocated to "put rumor and speculation to rest" consisted of "making public as soon as possible a complete and thorough FBI report on Oswald and the assassination," since "the reputation of the Bureau is such that it may do the whole job" of quelling public doubts. If, however, the FBI's report doesn't succeed, Katzenbach suggested a backup plan: "[T]he only other step would be the appointment of a Presidential Commission of unimpeachable personnel to review and examine the evidence and announce its conclusions."

Holland grossly mistreats Cornwell's analysis of this memo. Cornwell's case that the 'machinery of government' was prematurely set in motion against Oswald does *not*, as Holland intimates, rest solely on Katzenbach's memo. It rests instead on multiple lines of evidence Cornwell elucidates, but which Holland ignores, including some sworn statements from Katzenbach.

Holland, for example, ignores that Katzenbach nowhere recommended that the backstop Presidential Commission actually *investigate* the murder, only that it "review and examine the [FBI's] evidence and announce its conclusions." Katzenbach made his logic crystal clear during his HSCA testimony, though Holland doesn't reveal it: "... there is no investigative agency in the world that I believe compares with the FBI then [in 1963] and I suppose it is probably true today."^[77] And, "very simply, if that was the conclusion that the FBI was going to come to, then the public had to be satisfied that was the correct conclusion."^[78] Had Katzenbach already forgotten that in the late 50s J. Edgar Hoover denied the existence of organized crime in the U. S.? Had he also forgotten that by the time he testified to the HSCA, the Church Committee's expose of widespread Bureau corruptions publicly had demolished the myth of the investigative supremacy of the Bureau? By then, the FBI had disgraced itself in another investigation: after what was called the most exhaustive investigation since the Kennedy assassination, it announced it had proved Nixon innocent of Watergate.

Cornwell's discussion of the early, official bias against Oswald draws from multiple sources, and is perfectly reflected by Katzenbach himself in his own memo. It is for that reason that Cornwell's interpretation of the memo is *the* standard account of it. It is no coincidence that this same "tendentious" interpretation was also reached by the Senate Select Committee in 1976,^[79] by the HSCA in 1978, and others. Defending the deputy A. G., Holland argued that, "Katzenbach has acknowledged that his memo may have been worded inartfully. But in no sense was he arguing for a pre-cooked verdict, and to believe, in any case, that J. Edgar Hoover's FBI obeyed *diktats* (sic) from lowly deputy attorneys general is absurd."^[80]

Of course Holland is on solid footing arguing that the imperious Hoover would *never* have prostrated himself before a mere lawful superior, like the Deputy A.G. But the record Holland ignores is that, rather than Hoover obeying his boss, it was his boss who was obeying "diktats" from the subordinate. Was it not, after all, Hoover who announced Oswald's sole guilt within 24 hours of the assassination, not Katzenbach?

And as Michael Kurtz has observed, the day *before* Katzenbach wrote his memo, Hoover called presidential adviser Walter Jenkins and said, as if anticipating Katzenbach's memo, "The thing I am concerned about, and so is Mr. Katzenbach, is having something issued so we can convince the public that Oswald is the real assassin."^[81] ^[82] Moreover, that Katzenbach got Hoover's message about Oswald can be gleaned in yet another Walter Jenkins memo Holland leaves out of the discussion. On 11/24/63, Jenkins relayed to LBJ the story that one Homer Thornberry of the Justice Department had "talked with Nick Katzenbach and he is very concerned that everyone know that Oswald was guilty of the President's assassination."^[83] Thus, if Holland is right that his memo of 11/25 inartfully conveys Katzenbach's early openness on the identity of the culprit, it is a remarkable coincidence that Katzenbach was just as inartful in conveying that openness to a subordinate the day before.

Holland, however, shouldn't be faulted for scurrying to Katzenbach's side--he wasn't wearing the executive chef's hat during the pre-cooking of the Kennedy case. The Senate Select Committee had him pegged as no more than a sous-chef. "Almost immediately after the assassination, Director Hoover, the Justice Department and the White House 'exerted pressure' on senior Bureau officials to complete their investigation and issue a factual report supporting the conclusions that Oswald was the lone assassin ... "^[84] So the view Holland so detests--that *the machinery of government was put into gear to make the lone, deranged assassin story a convincing one*--is not merely Cornwell's paranoid fancy; it is the only conclusion the record supports, the conclusion that was reached not only by informed skeptics, but also by two independent groups of government investigators. (Perhaps therein lies a legitimate conspiracy worth Holland's attention after all!)

Holland Denies The CIA Would Lie To Presidents

One of Holland's more careless assertions is that the CIA would *never* lie to the President. Arguing in the *Boston Globe* that Richard Helms was truthful when he told President Ford's emissary, Henry Kissinger, that Robert Kennedy had personally managed the CIA's assassination plots against Castro, Holland wrote, "It is inconceivable that Richard Helms told Henry Kissinger anything less than the full, hard truths as Helms knew them and as Kissinger needed to know them. As Allen Dulles once

explained the need-to-know principle, 'I would tell the president of the United States anything ... I am under his control. He is my boss.'^[85] That the CIA would neither mislead nor disobey a president is pure myth, an ironically self-serving one coming from Dulles, an agent who had himself told at least one president a lie.

"The CIA's history reveals," Kate Doyle has written, "that when President Eisenhower summoned CIA director Allen W. Dulles and his top covert planners to give a formal briefing (about the 1954 Guatemalan coup), the CIA team lied to the president. A CIA briefer told Eisenhower that only one of the CIA-backed rebels had died. 'Incredible,' responded the president. And it was. In fact, at least four dozen were dead, the CIA records show."^[86] Similar examples abound.

Relevant to Holland's example of Helms and Kissinger, the recently declassified CIA's Inspector General's report of 1967 offers a useful parallel. It reveals that in May 1962 Robert Kennedy was briefed on *Phase One* of the CIA's anti-Castro plots, which were begun during the Eisenhower administration. The Agency's own I.G. admitted that the CIA could not "state or imply that (in its assassination plotting against Castro) it was merely an instrument of (administration) policy," and so approved by the White House. "When Robert Kennedy was briefed on *Phase One* in May 1962, he strongly admonished (CIA agents) Houston and Edwards to check with the Attorney General in advance of any future intended use of U.S. criminal elements. *This was not done with respect to Phase Two* (the murder plots), which was already well under way at the time Kennedy was briefed."^[87] (emphasis added) So while Holland insists it is inconceivable that Helms would have lied to Ford's emissary, Kissinger, the CIA's own Inspector General had determined that RFK, a much closer emissary to JFK than Kissinger had been to Ford, had been lied to by the Agency, if only by omission.

There is, moreover, a particular beauty in Holland's choice of Helms, who was called a perjurer by *The Nation* after he told the Senate that the CIA had played no role in demolishing Chile's democracy. For it is possible that Helms had also lied to the "President's Commission," too. On June 26, 1964, in response to a question by J. Lee Rankin asking him about the capabilities of Soviet mind control initiatives, Richard Helms responded that, "Soviet research in the pharmacological agents producing behavioral effects has consistently lagged five years behind Western research." Yet when moral qualms had led to a suspension of clandestine LSD-testing of unwitting Americans, Helms lobbied to continue them under the CIA's "MKULTRA" program. Helms then made the argument that such tests were necessary to "keep up with Soviet advances in this field."^[88] Helms' moral blindness and dishonesty were again exposed when he told the American Society of Newspapers Editors in 1971, "We do not target American citizens [with LSD testing] ... The nation must to a degree take it on faith that we who lead the CIA are honorable men, devoted to the nation's service."^[89] (If Helms appears as a credible source in Holland's new book, it will provide a useful indicia of his standards.)

Even The Agency's unswerving loyalty to presidents is not beyond dispute. In his book *Bay of Pigs--The Untold Story*,^[90] Peter Wyden reminds us that JFK repeatedly made it clear he wanted *no* American men landing on the beaches during the Cuban invasion. The CIA disobeyed, sending in some of its own agents. Anthony Summers has described how the CIA refused to honor several requests from Richard Nixon to see the internal investigation of the Bay of Pigs discussed above, the scathing post mortem critique of the invasion conducted by the CIA's own Inspector General Lyman Kirkpatrick.^[91] This is not the only example of Agency deception undertaken to prevent exposure of its own lapses.

In a 1995 *National Public Radio* story entitled, "CIA Passed Tainted Info to the President in the 80's."^[92] The story, which was also reported by the *Los Angeles Times*,^[93] recounted that under three different CIA directors--James Woolsey, Robert Gates, and William Webster--the Agency knowingly passed dubious information regarding the Soviets along to Presidents Reagan, Bush and Clinton. "Instead of acknowledging they had lost their most important spies in the USSR in 1985 and 1986, and were recruiting only double agents," the CIA "knowingly provided tainted information to the White House."^[94] The dubious information was taken at face value, prompting costly military acquisitions. The episode provoked Senator Arlan Specter to charge that the CIA disinformation had cost the U. S. "billions of dollars" in needless military purchases.

Holland thus exaggerates a bit when he endorses Dulles, asserting that the CIA was "the President's personal instrument, for good or ill, during the cold war."^[95] It is far from *inconceivable* that the CIA would do nothing but tell the President *the full, hard truths as the CIA knew them and as the President needed to know them*. Instead, what may really be inconceivable is that anyone could look at the record and still believe that the CIA was *the President's personal instrument, for good or ill, during the Cold War*.

Holland Examines The Evidence

Since neither Cockburn nor Holland is expert on the Kennedy assassination, they've relied upon others. The expert Alex Cockburn featured in *The Nation* was a faithful Warren Commission counsel, Weslie Liebler, who both Warren critics and loyalists alike can be forgiven for regarding as less than the most objective, or even close to the best, source. To savvy *Nation* readers, if to no one else, how compelling is a Warren Commissioner who tells us to trust the Warren Commission? And what kind of a source is Holland, who apparently doesn't know the case well enough to realize that one of his most prized authorities, Posner, did *not* debunk the work of numerous, respected skeptics, but was instead himself debunked?

One of Holland's trusted experts is Gerald Posner, the controversial author of the anti-conspiracy book *Case Closed*.

According to Holland, Posner has 'exhaustively and patiently debunked every canard posited to date about the assassination.' Perhaps unbeknownst to Holland is the fact that his favorite conspiracy exorcist has himself been debunked, not only by the skeptics,^{[96][97][98][99][100][101]} but also by no less than the legitimate authorities Posner reverently cites in his own book. Writing in the peer-reviewed *Journal of Southern History*, Historian David Wrone, a widely respected authority^[102] Posner deferentially cites, said Posner's book "stands as one of the stellar instances of irresponsible publishing on this subject."^[103] Robert Blakey, the chief counsel of the House Select Committee that reversed the Commission's no conspiracy finding, and Roger McCarthy, the man behind the work Posner claimed had proved one of the Warren Commission's most controversial theories--the Single Bullet Theory--are both favorite Posner sources. Both have slammed Posner for dishonesty and unfairness.^[104] Even the recently disbanded panel of civilian historians hired by the government to declassify millions of once secret records--the JFK Review Board--took a whack at Posner in their final report, after Posner stonewalled two personal requests from the Board for information.^[105]

In the few instances in which he actually discusses specific evidence, Holland places too great a reliance on dubious sources and incautious speculation. One of his favorite authorities is Gerald Posner, author of the book *Case Closed*. Holland says Posner makes it "exhaustively clear ... that Oswald had no accomplices and there was no conspiracy,"^[106] and Posner, "exhaustively and patiently debunks every canard posited to date about the assassination."^[107]

The First Shot

Apparently borrowing from Posner, Holland attempts to prove an early shot at Zapruder frame 160. Such a shot allows Oswald enough time to reload and shoot again by Zapruder 224, an interpretation that favors Oswald's guilt. He writes, "But what of the first shot, since the consensus was that three rifle retorts (sic) were heard in Dealey Plaza? The Zapruder film of the Kennedy assassination shows a little girl in a red dress and white coat running alongside the motorcade while the president and Mrs. Kennedy drive by. Shortly before the president is obviously wounded, this little girl stops abruptly in her tracks. When asked why, she said she stopped because she heard a loud noise. I believe, as many other students of the subject do, that this loud noise was in fact the first shot, and that it missed the occupants of the limousine entirely."^[108]

This analysis, virtually perfect Posner,^[109] has it wrong. As Stanford physicist Arthur Snyder noted in *Skeptic Magazine*, the little girl, Rosemary Willis, does *not* slow and turn at Z-160, which might have allowed enough time for a second Oswald shot by Z-224.^[110] Rather, she continued running and glancing at JFK's limousine until about Z-180, which is too late for Oswald to have fired another shot (by the required frame 224)." Thus if Holland and Posner are right that the little girl turned in reaction to a missed, first shot, the timing of her turn excuses Oswald.

Thus Holland offers as evidence of Oswald's guilt the misinterpreted motions of this single person, while ignoring far more credible accounts of numerous other witnesses who place the first shot at circa Z-180-195. Ironically, one of these accounts happens to include the testimony of his star witness's father, Phil Willis. The elder Willis specifically refuted his the Posner/Holland interpretation. He also told the Warren Commission that the first shot "caused me to squeeze the camera shutter." The HSCA determined this image had been taken at Z-202. (A delay is expected due to the time required for the sound to travel and for Willis's neuromuscular response. So an event at, say, Z-190 -195, might not be captured on film until Z-202.) But Holland remains mute about the senior Willis, if he even knows about him at all. It doesn't "fit." He is also silent about the fact the HSCA concluded

the first shot was fired circa 190. And he is mute about the fact that not a single person visible in the Zapruder film reacts as early as would be required to allow Oswald to fire again by Z-224. Borrowing from Holland's astute observation about author Gus Russo, it is clear that, whether a witness like Rosemary, or a writer Gerald Posner, Holland, like Russo, is also "not much inclined to take a hard look at sources he likes."^[111]

"Prior to That Friday, No One Called him Lee Harvey Oswald"

Writing in the *Reviews in American History*, Holland took pains to point out that in order to make sense of the grandeur of his act, after the murder the media had sought to inflate the puny identity of the assassin. Quoting Jackie Kennedy, Holland writes, "'It's--it had to be some silly little Communist.' Significantly, the search for meaning extended outside the immediate Kennedy family circle too. It can be seen in such minor details as the media's use of Oswald's middle name, as if employing it gave him more stature. Prior to that Friday (November 22, 1963), no one called him Lee *Harvey* Oswald." (Holland's emphasis.)^[112] In a follow-up letter published in *Reviews*, Peter Dale Scott pointed out that, "In fact he had been called Lee Harvey Oswald in newspaper accounts of his 1959 defection to the USSR (and 1962 return) in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *New York Herald Tribune*, *Washington Star*, *Fort Worth Press*, etc. to name only some of those press accounts filed under 'Lee Harvey Oswald' by the FBI, the ONI, Texas Department of Public Safety, etc."^[113] One needn't have had Scott's access to these government files to discover that Holland had got it wrong. Any decent public library would have sufficed.

For example, the *San Francisco Chronicle* published a UPI report on 11/1/59 about Oswald's defection. The first sentence reads, "Lee *Harvey* Oswald, 20, a recently discharged U. S. Marine ..."^[114] On the same day, the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times* both published an AP dispatch that quoted and named the defector in the second sentence: "'I have made up my mind, I'm through,' said Lee *Harvey* Oswald."^[115] Even more telling of Holland's scholarship, however, is that there are at least two pre-assassination references to "Harvey" by journalists that are mentioned in the very Warren Commission volumes about which Holland affects such expertise: In the Commission's "(Priscilla) Johnson exhibit No. 2," she refers to "Lee *Harvey* Oswald" in a 1959 dispatch to the *North American Newspaper Alliance*. New Orleans radio journalist Bill Slater introduced "Lee *Harvey* Oswald" as one of his three guests, as reflected in a transcript of the summer, 1963 interview published by the Warren Commission in its so-called "Stuckey Exhibit No. 3."

While this error is a rather minor one, it deserves attention given how Holland had placed himself above academics such as Scott, who he had castigated for unreliability. Having thus set his standards so high, one might have expected that Holland (or the fact-checker at *Reviews*) would have undertaken the few minutes of library work that would have been required to eliminate from Holland's text so obvious an error as this.

Kennedy Family Interference Explains Many of the Failings of JFK's Autopsy?

Although Holland has nowhere in print yet explored it, after my presentation at *The Nation* on the mysteries of the JFK medical/autopsy evidence, Holland said he believed it was likely that JFK's pathologists didn't dissect the back wound because of pressure from the Kennedys. In a personal letter I responded that, although "William Manchester,^[116] Gus Russo^[117] and John Lattimer, MD have advanced this notion,^[118] the weight of the evidence is against it. (Not even the discredited Gerald Posner buys it.^[119])"

I followed with, "I won't argue that the Kennedys probably wanted JFK's Addison's disease, which was irrelevant to his cause of death, left unexplored. So although there's no solid evidence for it, perhaps they *did* request that JFK's abdominal cavity, which houses the adrenals, be left alone, especially since JFK suffered no abdominal injuries. But even if the Kennedys had made that seemingly reasonable request, it was ignored. (autopsy pathologist Pierre Finck, MD and author Gus) Russo recount that one of JFK's pathologists, Pierre Finck, MD, said that, "The Kennedy family did not want us to examine the abdominal cavity, but the abdominal cavity was examined."^[120] And indeed it was--Kennedy was completely disemboweled.^[121] If Finck was right, so much for the military's kowtowing to the Kennedys. Perhaps the only "victory" the family may have won was that the doctors kept quiet about JFK's adrenal problems, at least until 1992.

"Perhaps," I continued, "they also won the choice of venues for the post mortem: Bethesda Naval Hospital. But they didn't win

much else, and they didn't interfere with the autopsy. They didn't, for example, select the sub par autopsists; military authorities did. Realizing how over their heads they were, the nominees requested that nonmilitary forensic consultants be called in.

Permission was denied,^[122] restricting access to second-rate military pathologists exclusively ... Moreover, Humes apparently confided in a personal friend--CBS's Jim Snyder--that, as Bob Richter put it in 1967 in a once-secret, internal, CBS memorandum, "Humes also [told a personal friend, who happened to be a CBS employee, that] he had orders from someone he refused to disclose--other than stating it was *not* Robert Kennedy--to not do a complete autopsy."^[123] The House Select Committee (HSCA) explored the question of family interference in considerable detail finding that, other than (reasonably) requesting the exam be done as expeditiously as possible, the Kennedys did *not* interfere.^[124] And, finally, as an important, though not dispositive, legal matter, RFK left blank the space marked "restrictions" in the permit he signed authorizing his brother's autopsy."^[125]

Holland vs. Garrison

As mentioned, Holland's latest and perhaps most ambitious theory involves a successful Communist conspiracy.^[126] Eschewing his usual publication outlets and using instead the Central Intelligence Agency's website, Holland detailed his remarkable new discovery of KGB chicanery. Namely, that via a false story planted in the Italian paper *Paese Sera*, the KGB had hoodwinked Jim Garrison into believing Clay Shaw had CIA ties, ties that in Garrison's febrile imagination also bound Shaw to Oswald, and both to Dallas. "The wellspring for his ultimate theory of the assassination was the DA's belief in a fantasy published by a Communist-owned newspaper."^[127] "*Paese Sera's* successful deception," Holland says, "turns out to be a major reason why many Americans believe, to this day, that the CIA was involved in the assassination of President Kennedy."^[128] But that wasn't all. The commie concoction left collateral damage extending far beyond doubts about Dallas. "Of all the legacies of the 1960s, none had been more unambiguously negative than the American public's corrosive cynicism toward the federal government."^[129] As we will see, Holland's CIA-abetted conspiracy theory is not only difficult to sustain, it may also not even be his own notion.

As evidence of the KGB's chicanery Holland cites testimony from Richard Helms that proves "*Paese Sera's* well-documented involvement in dezinformatsiya."^[130] On 2 June 1961, Richard Helms was the sole witness in a Senate hearing on "Communist Forgeries."^[131] Helms recounted an episode in which *Paese Sera* was involved in what Holland argues had been a previous, near identical ruse: planting KGB "lies" that the CIA had supported rebellious French generals in a failed coup against President De Gaulle. Holland writes that, "Altogether, Helms observed, the episode was an 'excellent example of how the Communists use the false news story' to stunning effect. And it had all started with an Italian paper that belonged 'to a small group of journals published in the free world but used as outlets for disguised Soviet propaganda ... instead of having this originate in Moscow, where everybody would pinpoint it, they planted the story first in Italy and picked it up from Italy... Six years later, a grander and more pernicious concoction originating in the same newspaper, *Paese Sera*, would go unexamined, unexposed, and unchallenged."^[132] The upshot? A wild-eyed New Orleans district attorney off on a snipe hunt.

But nowhere in the 1967 *Paese Sera* series was there any mention of the Kennedy case. Only that Shaw had been on the board of directors of an international trade organization headquartered in Rome, Centro Mondiale Commerciale [CMC], and that it had been a CIA front. The fact that the first of *Paese Sera's* six articles appeared a scant three days after Shaw's arrest was taken as more damning evidence against the news outlet. "*Paese Sera's* 1967 scoop about Clay Shaw," Holland reasoned, "matched the earlier story in the speed and pattern of its dissemination."^[133]

Holland's new, CIA-abetted theory about Garrison would probably have drawn little public attention had it not won praise from an unexpected source, *Foreign Affairs Magazine*. In an unusual departure from his custom of writing only book reviews, *Foreign Affairs* contributor Philip Zelikow wrote a favorable commentary on Holland's web-only piece. Two well-known Garrison sympathizers took special notice: Oliver Stone and Zach Sklar, the authors of the screenplay of the film *JFK*. They wrote a letter to *Foreign Affairs'* editor, which the magazine refused to run. Ironically, Stone and Sklar then published their snubbed letter as an advertisement in, of all places, *The Nation*,^[134] where Holland has served as a contributing editor. It was a fascinating rebuttal to Holland's KGB conspiracy theory, which, they said, was based virtually entirely on a single handwritten note of a Russian defector that makes no mention of Clay Shaw, of CMC, or of Jim Garrison.

Moreover, they charged that Holland had published his story without having done as elemental a background check as contacting the editors of *Paese Sera*. Stone and Sklar cited a respected scholar who had, Joan Melon. Had Holland bothered to do his

homework, they said, *Paese Sera's* editors, "would have told him that the six-part series had nothing to do with the KGB or the JFK assassination, that they had never heard of Jim Garrison when they assigned the story six months before [which was also six months before Garrison had charged Shaw], and that they were astonished to see that Shaw might have any connection to the assassination."

The filmmakers also answered Holland's assertion that "everything in the *Paese Sara* story was a lie." "Two important facts from the *Paese Sera* story remain true: 1. CMC was forced to leave Italy (for Johannesburg, South Africa) in 1962 under a cloud of suspicion about its CIA connections. 2. Clay Shaw was a member of CMC's board" They also pointed out that an important part of Holland's case depended on a "released CIA document saying that the Agency itself looked into *Paese Sera's* allegations and found that the CIA had no connection to CMC or its parent Permindex." "Holland," they continued, "may be willing to accept this as the whole truth, but it is unconvincing to the rest of us who have noticed the Agency's tendency to distance itself from its fronts, to release to the public only documents that serve its interests, to fabricate evidence, and to lie outright even under oath to congressional committees"

They also dismissed as nonsense Holland's claim that, "the *Paese Sera* articles were what led Garrison to believe the CIA was involved in the assassination," noting that, "Garrison's book *On the Trail of the Assassins* describes in detail how his uncovering of various pieces of evidence actually led him to the conclusion that the CIA was involved. This gradual process began two days after the assassination when he questioned David Ferrie, a pilot who flew secret missions to Cuba for the CIA and trained Lee Harvey Oswald in his Civil Air Patrol Unit"

But Holland fired right back with gusto, answering Stone and Sklar in the letters pages of the *The Nation*.^[135] He apparently correctly pointed out that Garrison had wrongly claimed in his book (Or, as Holland would have it, he "lied.") that he hadn't heard of the *Paese Sera* articles before he tried Clay Shaw in 1969. Holland found notes from *Life* correspondent Richard Billings dated in March and April 1967 that suggested Garrison had gotten wind of *Paese Sera's* charges. Though Holland was probably right that Garrison had heard of the charges from Italy in 1967, it is far from clear that he thought that much about them, that they were the 'wellspring for his ultimate theory' of Agency involvement.

Former FBI agent turned FBI critic, William W. Turner, a close confidant of Garrison in that era, told the author that *Paese Sera* in no way influenced Garrison's actions. "First of all," Turner said, "Shaw was arrested before the first article in the series was published in Italy. Second, you can't name a single action Garrison undertook that can be explained by those articles. Garrison and I spoke all the time in those days, and I can assure you the articles were of peripheral interest at most ... Since Garrison couldn't cite the stories in court, and since he couldn't afford to send investigators to Italy to prove the charges, they weren't useful legally."^[136]

Turner proposed a perfectly sensible alternative explanation for Garrison's "lying" that he didn't know of the news from Italy until after the trial: he had totally forgotten about them by the time he got around to writing his book. *On the Trail of the Assassins* was first published in 1988, 21 years after Shaw's arrest.^[137]

Whether Garrison secretly burned with the rumors from Rome may never be known. But it is clear that, other than perhaps to Billings, Garrison thereafter made scant mention of them and probably did forget about them by the time of the trial, two years later. As Edward Epstein has pointed out, during his twenty-six-page interview in *Playboy Magazine's* October 1967 issue, Garrison's most comprehensive review of his position that year, the D.A. ticked off eight reasons to suspect the CIA. None of them included the CMC or *Paese Sera*. Nor did he mention Clay Shaw, although perhaps because of the pending legal wrangle.^[138] Moreover, in 1967 Garrison wrote the foreword to Harold Weisberg's 1967-published book, entitled "Oswald in New Orleans-- Case of Conspiracy with the CIA."^[139] Despite the perfect opportunity, as with *Playboy*, Garrison again uttered not a word about *Paese Sera*, the CIA, or Shaw.

Finally, it is unhelpful for the central role Holland has *Paese Sera* playing that Garrison never once cited or referred to those reports during the Shaw trial. Nor did he even use them as a basis for questioning Shaw. He never asked Shaw, for example, whether he had worked for CMC or for the CIA. Shaw's own attorney did that.

"Have you ever worked for the Central Intelligence Agency?" lead defense attorney F. Irvin Dymond asked. "No, I have not," replied Shaw.^[140]

But as even Holland admits, Richard Helms later disclosed that Shaw's denial was perjurious. In fact, Shaw had had an eight-year relationship with the CIA, sending the Agency information on 33 separate occasions that the CIA invariably graded as "of value" and "reliable."^[141] Holland hastens to reassure readers that Shaw's perjury was unimportant, that Shaw's CIA links "innocuous," even patriotic. Holland never thought to question whether Helms's innocent version of its arrangement with Shaw was fully truthful, or whether the Agency files he has seen had been sanitized.

Responding to Holland's imaginative theory, William Turner published a letter in the May issue of *New Orleans Magazine*^[142] that offered additional insights on whether Garrison was duped.^[143]

With Turner's permission, his letter is reproduced below:

The answer to Max Holland's "Was Jim Garrison Duped by the KGB?" (February) is no. I am a former FBI agent and author who assisted Garrison in his JFK assassination probe. What Holland omits is that last April he contacted me about my calling Garrison's attention to Italian press reports on Shaw's link to CIA-influenced trade organizations. I told him that the DA's office would not use press clippings as evidence, and that it should have been up to the FBI, which had the resources and the reach to investigate the alleged links. What Holland overlooked is that on March 30, 1967, Betty Parrott, who was in the same social set as FBI agent Regis Kennedy, informed the DA's office that "Kennedy confirmed to her the fact that Clay Shaw is a former CIA agent who did some work for the CIA in Italy over a five-year span." Subpoenaed by Garrison, Kennedy refused to testify on grounds of executive privilege.

Holland portrays the Shaw trial as a farce. In fact, Shaw was indicted by a grand jury, and a judge at a preliminary hearing ruled that there was probable cause to bring him to trial. The jury found that Garrison proved a conspiracy but did not produce sufficient evidence to plug Shaw into it. In 1978 the House Select Committee on Assassinations thought Garrison had the right man. "While the trial of Shaw took two years to bring about and did eventually end in acquittal, the basis for the charges seems sound and the prosecution thorough, given the extraordinary nature of the charges and the time," wrote counsel Jonathan Blackmer. "We have reason to believe that Shaw was heavily involved in the anti-Castro efforts in New Orleans in the 1960s and was possibly one of the high-level planners of the assassination."

I recount all of the above in my current book *Rearview Mirror: Looking Back at the FBI, the CIA and Other Tails*.^[144]

Besides Betty Parrott's pre-trial revelation, and Weisberg's book naming the CIA in 1967, Garrison had other reasons to link the CIA to the crime. The Agency was then well known to have been responsible for the botched Bay of Pigs affair, and Garrison then knew that numerous Oswald associates had ties to that episode. As Philip Melanson has noted, "The shadowy figures who surrounded [Oswald]--de Mohrenschildt, Ferrie, Banister, and some of the anti-Castro Cubans--were CIA-connected." Melanson added that, "This does not mean the Agency as an institution conspired to assassinate the president ... One of the things we learned from the Iran-Contra affair is that in the clandestine world it is difficult to determine who is really working for the government, as opposed to those who pretend they are or who think they are. Elements of the CIA's anti-Castro network (including the Cubans and their CIA case officers) (sic) could easily have conspired to assassinate the president, using Oswald as the centerpiece of the operation."^[145]

Finally, a key element of Holland's case for conspiracy is, as Holland put it, "*Paese Sera*'s well-documented involvement in dezinformatsiya."^[146] That, in other words, *Paese Sera* really was a "disguised Soviet propaganda" outlet that had disseminated KGB disinformation. Holland's evidence for the paper's KGB pedigree is less than perfect. For, as we have seen, it consists primarily of CIA man Richard Helms's 1961 Senate testimony about an April 23, 1961 *Paese Sera*'s story. It was the one Helms said had first connected the CIA to the "generals" coup against De Gaulle, a smear that grew as it was retold by other media outlets. Though on the web Holland doesn't give it, the *Paese Sera* passage Helms told the Senate was nothing but KGB *dezinformatsiya* is worth considering here:

"It is not by chance that some people in Paris are accusing the American secret service headed by Allen Dulles of having participated in the plot of the four 'ultra' generals"^[147]

Helms was wrong about the date the story premiered, and about *Paese Sera*, too. In his authoritative, pro-Agency book (*CIA--The Inside Story*), Andrew Tully reviewed the case against *Paese Sera* and cited an American report that the rumors about the CIA had actually started circulating in France on April 22, the day before the story ran in Rome.^[148] Thus, "rumors" weren't planted in <http://www.webcom.com/ctka/pr900-holland.html>

Italy first; they were accurately reported in Italy first, by *Paese Sera*. Tully added that, "the evidence indicates there were CIA operatives who let their own politics show and by doing so led the rebels to believe that the United States looked with favor on their adventure."^[149] Despite printing Agency denials, even *The New York Times* acknowledged that, "CIA agents have recently been in touch with the anti-Gaullist generals."^[150] Thus, even if the Agency hadn't conspired, the French had every reason to start rumors that it had.

But ironically, perhaps the most detailed account on the CIA's role in the failed coup ran in *The Nation* on May 20, 1961: "Here in Paris," European correspondent Alexander Werth wrote, "responsible persons are still convinced that the rumors had a solid basis in fact." Quoting an *I'Express* report, Werth added that, "[Rebel general Challe] had several meetings with CIA agents, who had told him that 'to get rid of de Gaulle would render the Free World a great service.'" Presumably, Holland credits *Paese Sera* with deceiving not only Garrison, but also *I'Express*, the *New York Times*, and *The Nation*. Thus, Holland's working premise of "*Paese Sera's* well-documented involvement in *dezinformatsiya*" during the failed French coup is not exactly well-documented.

It is fair to wonder at Holland's embrace of Helms, a man of no small accomplishment in the art of spreading *dezinformatsiya*.^[151] During the very 1961 Senate appearance discussing "Communist Forgeries" Holland cites, Helms displayed what he characterized as fabricated reports alleging an "American Plot to Overthrow [Indonesia's President] Sukarno."^[152] Although the specific documents Helms displayed may indeed have been false, Helms withheld the vastly greater truth from the Senators: the "fabrications" had gotten the history right--the U.S. *had* covertly conspired to topple Sukarno.^[153] Thus, at least in this instance, foreign *dezinformatsiya* was closer to the truth than the Senate testimony of a high CIA official.

In relying on Helms, Holland may be forgiven for not knowing the misleading nature of some of Helms testimony in 1961, but he surely could not have forgotten that Helms had lied to the U.S. Senate. Helms told the Senate the CIA had played no role in demolishing Chile's democracy in 1973. This time he was caught. As the *New York Times* headlined Helms's conviction on page 1 of its 5 November 1977 issue, "Helms Is Fined \$2,000 and Given Two-Year Suspended Prison Term--U.S. Judge Rebukes Ex-C.I.A. Head for Misleading Panel."

Holland Hoodwinked?

A search of the web turned up a fascinating postscript to Holland's treatment of the Garrison/*Paese Sera* story: the whole idea probably didn't originate with him. The first time Holland presented his KGB-duped-Garrison theory was apparently in an article entitled, "The Demon in Jim Garrison," published in the spring 2001 issue of the *Wilson Quarterly*. Holland's account bears an eerie resemblance to a web newsgroup post by a teacher at Marquette University, John McAdams, whose version was published on the web at least one year before.

On 15 October 1999, McAdams started a thread in the "alt.assassination.jfk" on-line newsgroup entitled, "IL PAESE SERA and Communist disinformation."^[154]

In its entirety, McAdams' message reads:

From "Communist Forgeries," a Senate Internal Security Sub-Committee hearing on 2 June 61, testimony of Richard Helms, pp. 2-4:

In recent days we have seen an excellent example of how the Communists use the false news story. In late April rumors began to circulate in Europe, rumors charging that the Algerian-based generals who had plotted the overthrow of President De Gaulle had enjoyed support from NATO, the Pentagon, or CIA. Although this fable could have been started by supporters of General Challe, it bears all the earmarks of having been invented within the bloc.

In Western Europe this lie was first printed on the 23rd of April by a Rome daily called *Il Paese*.

Senator KEATING: Is *Il Paese* a Communist paper?

Mr. HELMS: It is not a Communist paper, as such. We believe it to be a crypto-Communist paper but it is not like *Unita*, the large Communist daily in Rome. It purports to be an independent newspaper, but obviously it serves Communist ends.

The story charged --

"It is not by chance that some people in Paris are accusing the American secret service headed by Allen Dulles of having participated in the plot of the four 'ultra' generals * * * Franco, Salazar, Allen Dulles are the figures who hide themselves behind the pronunciamientos of the 'ultras'; they are the pillars of an international conspiracy that, basing itself on the Iberian dictatorships, on the residue of the most fierce and blind colonialism, on the intrigues of the C.I.A. * * * reacts furiously to the advance of progress and democracy * * *."

We found it interesting that *Il Paese* was the starting point for a lie that the Soviets spread around the world. This paper and its evening edition, *Paese Sera*, belong to a small group of journals published in the free world but used as outlets for disguised Soviet propaganda. These newspapers consistently release and replay anti-American, anti-Western, pro-Soviet bloc stories, distorted or wholly false. Mario Malloni, director of both *Il Paese* and *Paese Sera*, has been a member of the World Peace Council since 1958. The World Peace Council is a bloc-directed Communist front.

On the next day *Pravda* published in Moscow a long article about the generals' revolt.

Senator KEATING: May I interrupt there? Did *Pravda* pick it up as purportedly from *Il Paese*? Did they quote the other paper, the Italian paper, as the source of that information?

Mr. HELMS: *Pravda* did not cite *Il Paese*. But instead of having this originate in Moscow, where everybody would pinpoint it, they planted the story first in Italy and picked it up from Italy and this is the way it actually went out in point of time [sic].

This is important context for understanding the PAESE SERA articles that linked Clay Shaw (correctly) to CMC/Perminindex, and connected CMC/Perminindex (falsely) to support for the OAS attempts against DeGaulle, various fascist and Nazi forces, etc. The PAESE SERA stories were quickly picked up and repeated by leftist journals in France, Moscow, and Canada.

This by no means proves that the CMC/PERMINDEX stuff was a KGB disinformation operation. The left-wing journalists at the paper would have been happy to smear what they considered to be the "forces of capitalist imperialism" without any direct orders from Moscow. Indeed, Helms is only *inferring* that the earlier story about anti-De Gaulle generals was a KGB operation.

But this episode does put the 1967 articles on Shaw/Perminindex into context. The articles were, in one way or another, motivated by a communist ideological agenda.

Holland nowhere credits McAdams with his KGB/*Pease Sera*-duped-Garrison "find." In light of the record Holland ignores in advancing the theory, one can't help but wonder if it is not Holland, rather than Garrison, who has been duped.

Summary

In his articles in *The Nation*, *American Heritage Magazine*^[155] and elsewhere, Holland follows a path Alex Cockburn blazed in *The Nation* in the early 1990s: As a "functional representative"^[156] of American elites, the deceitful and arrogant, and "always hawkish," Kennedy was an enthusiastic manifestation of America's powerful militaristic inclinations. He in no way represented a change in America's direction--whether on Vietnam, on Cuba, or on the Cold War. In Holland's world, the Kennedys themselves bear the greatest responsibility for not only the President's death but also the weaknesses of the controversial investigation of it in 1964: Kennedy's rabid anti-Castroism provoked an unstable Castroite to take his revenge. After that, the family hobbled the

government's no-holes-barred investigation to protect the daft myth of Camelot.

Furthermore, the Warren Commission's shortcomings, which Holland does not totally deny, were not the product of errors made in bad faith. They were instead missteps that resulted from the honorable, if imperfect, efforts of government to protect vital state secrets during a particularly nasty stretch of the Cold War, all the while struggling against Kennedy family impediments in conducting as thorough an investigation as was humanly possible.

While this analysis may please the minority who still cling to the Warren Commission, it is fated to be washed away under a tsunami of recent scholarship. A strikingly different, more favorable, view of Kennedy is emerging. Rooted in documents declassified in the wake of the public's reaction to Oliver Stone's film JFK, academics and researchers have discovered that the real JFK, despite his considerable flaws, was worlds away from the hawkish clown of Holland's (and Cockburn's) imagination. What is perhaps most surprising is how broad, diverse and mainstream the new consensus is.

This new image has been drawn by, among others, Naval War College historian David Kaiser,^[157] Harvard historians Ernest May and Philip Zelikow,^[158] University of Alabama historian Howard Jones,^[159] and Boston University historian Robert Dallek. It turns out the public record now shows that JFK was clearly *not* "always hawkish." And that Kennedy *did* represent a threat, even a "radical threat" to powerful institutions.

Once-secret records demonstrate a pattern in Kennedy we are unaccustomed to seeing in presidents: rather than JFK following advice on critical issues--the way presidents usually do, the way LBJ did--Kennedy often ignored it. He withstood pressure from the CIA and the military to follow-up the foundering Bay of Pigs invasion with a military assault on Cuba.^[160] He rejected advice to use force in Laos, pushing against the defense establishment to achieve an ultimately successful negotiated settlement.^[161] He shouldered aside the defense and intelligence establishments to advance a nuclear test ban treaty with the Soviets.^[162] And as May and Zelikov note, during the Cuban Missile Crisis, taped conversations prove that JFK was often "the only one in the room [full of advisors] who is determined not to go to war."^[163]

And, finally, on the contentious issue of what JFK would have done in Vietnam, a rising current now runs strongly against Holland (and Cockburn). For example, in *Harper's Magazine*, Naval War College historian David Kaiser wrote that in his new book, *American Tragedy*, he had extensively documented that there were "numerous occasions during 1961, 1962, and 1963 on which Kennedy did exactly that [stopped the United States from going to war in Southeast Asia], rejecting the near unanimous proposals of his advisers to put large numbers of American combat troops in Laos, South Vietnam, or both."^[164]

Among informed observers, Kaiser's view of JFK's contrary nature now reigns. University of Alabama historian Howard Jones said that when he began his study he "was dubious" about the assertions of "Kennedy apologists [that] he would not have sent combat troops to Vietnam and America's longest war would never have occurred." A look at declassified files changed his thinking. "What strikes anyone reading the veritable mountain of documents relating to Vietnam," Jones admitted, to his own surprise, "is that the only high official in the Kennedy administration who consistently opposed the commitment of U.S. combat forces was the president."^[165] "The materials undergirding [his, Jones'] study demonstrate that President Kennedy intended to reverse the nation's special military commitment to the South Vietnamese made in early 1961."^[166]

Historian Robert Dallek came to much the same conclusion. "Toward the end of his life John F. Kennedy increasingly distrusted his military advisers and was changing his views on foreign policy. A fresh look at the final months of his presidency suggests that a second Kennedy term might have produced not only an American withdrawal from Vietnam, but also rapprochement with Fidel Castro's Cuba."^[167] Dallek produced a Kennedy quote that gets to the heart of the matter: "The first advice I'm going to give my successor is to watch the generals and to avoid feeling that just because they were military men their opinions on military matters were worth a damn."^[168] This is scarcely the Kennedy we get from Max Holland. But it is close to the one we get from Oliver Stone.

So it may well be that the greatest irony of all is that in the mountain of documents released in response to the public uproar over the pro-Kennedy and pro-conspiracy film that Max Holland so abhors, the Bronze Star-winning, Vietnam veteran movie maker, Oliver Stone, has won again.

To The Establishment, JFK was a threat. He *did* represent change--right up until the moment the shots rang out in Dealey Plaza.

Notes

- [1] *The Nation*. 11/19/77.
- [2] Alexander Cockburn, letter in reply. *The Nation*, March 9, 1992, p. 318.
- [3] Alexander Cockburn. J.F.K. and JFK. *The Nation*, January 6/13/1992, p. 6.
- [4] Max Holland. After Thirty Years: Making Sense of the Assassination. *Reviews in American History* 22(1994):208-209.
- [5] Adam Pertman. *Researcher says Cold War shaped Warren Commission conclusions*. *The Boston Globe*, 12/8/98.
- [6] Quoted by Adam Pertman, in: *Researcher says Cold War shaped Warren Commission conclusions*. *The Boston Globe*, 12/8/98.
- [7] Max Holland, *The Lie That Linked CIA to the Kennedy Assassination*. Available at: http://www.cia.gov/csi/studies/fall_winter_2001/article02.html
- [8] Adam Pertman, in: *Researcher says Cold War shaped Warren Commission conclusions*. *The Boston Globe*, 12/8/98.
- [9] Max Holland. *After Thirty Years: Making Sense of the Assassination*. *Reviews in American History* 22(1994):209.
- [10] Max Holland. *After Thirty Years: Making Sense of the Assassination*. *Reviews in American History* 22(1994).
- [11] Max Holland. *The Key to the Warren Report*. *American Heritage Magazine*. November, 1995, p. 50--52.
- [12] Adam Pertman. *Researcher says Cold War shaped Warren Commission conclusions*. *The Boston Globe*, 12/8/98.
- [13] Max Holland. *After Thirty Years: Making Sense of the Assassination*. *Reviews in American History* 22 (1994).
- [14] Max Holland. *Paranoia Unbound*. *Wilson Quarterly*, Winter, 1994, p. 88. (See also Max Holland. *The Key to the Warren Report*. *American Heritage Magazine*. November, 1995, p. 50.)
- [15] Max Holland. *Stokers of JFK Fantasies*. Op-Ed. *The Boston Globe*, 12/6/98, p. D-7.
- [16] Max Holland. *Paranoia Unbound*. *Wilson Quarterly*, Winter, 1994, p. 90.
- [17] Max Holland. *Stokers of JFK Fantasies*. Op-Ed. *The Boston Globe*, 12/6/98, p. D-7.
- [18] Max Holland. *Paranoia Unbound*. *Wilson Quarterly*, Winter, 1994, p. 87.
- [19] Max Holland. *The Demon in Jim Garrison*. *Wilson Quarterly*, Spring, 2001, p. 10.
- [20] Max Holland has published an article detailing his case that the KGB duped Garrison into linking Shaw to the CIA that is titled, *The Lie That Linked CIA to the Kennedy Assassination* . It appears at: http://www.cia.gov/csi/studies/fall_winter_2001/article02.html

Holland makes much the same argument in an article, *Was Jim Garrison Duped by the KGB?*, that appeared in the February, 2002 edition of *New Orleans Magazine*.

- [21] Max Holland. *Paranoia Unbound*. *Wilson Quarterly*, Winter, 1994, p. 88.
- [22] Max Holland interview with Chip Selby in Washington, D.C., July 26, 1997, p. 9.
- [23] Max Holland. *The Key to the Warren Report*. *American Heritage Magazine*. November, 1995, p. 50.
- [24] Max Holland. *Paranoia Unbound*. *Wilson Quarterly*, Winter, 1994, p. 88.
- [25] David Ruppe. *Friendly Fire--Book: U.S. Military Drafted Plans to Terrorize U.S. Cities to Provoke War With Cuba*, November 7, 2001. Available at: http://abcnews.go.com/sections/us/DailyNews/jointchiefs_010501.html
- [26] George Washington University's National Security Archive, April 30, 2001: *Pentagon Proposed Pretexts for Cuba Invasion in 1962*. Documents can be viewed at: <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/news/20010430/>
- [27] The Northwoods plan is discussed in detail by James Bamford in his book, *Body of Secrets*, [New York: Anchor Books, a division of Random House, 2002] on pages 82--91.
- [28] "[A]fter a half-century of official denial and derision, the government is just now beginning to admit its responsibility for poisoning its own citizens" with wildly immoral and illegal Plutonium injections. (*The Nation*, 2/28/00) "After decades of denials, the government is conceding that since the dawn of the atomic age, workers making nuclear weapons have been exposed to radiation and chemicals that have produced cancer and early death." (*New York Times*, 1/29/00) "The Treasury Department shredded 1262 boxes of potential evidence in a multibillion-dollar lawsuit over Native American trust funds, then covered it up for more than three months." (*AP*, 12/7/99)
- [29] Jeff Donn, "Top FBI officials knew of mob deals--Director's office commended agents for shielding Mafia hit men." *AP*, July 28, 2002. In: *Marin Independent Journal*, 7/28/02, p. A-3.
- [30] *The Nation*, 9/6-13/99.
- [31] Frank Donner. *Protectors of Privilege*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991.
- [32] Max Holland. *The Key to the Warren Report*. *American Heritage Magazine*. November, 1995, p. 52.
- [33] Max Holland. *The Key to the Warren Report*. *American Heritage Magazine*. November, 1995, p. 64.
- [34] News from Brown. *The Brown University News Bureau*, distributed 11/11/98.
- [35] Max Holland. *The Key to the Warren Report*. *American Heritage Magazine*. November, 1995, p. 57.
- [36] Max Holland. *The Docudrama that is JFK*. *The Nation Magazine*. 12/7/98, p.26.
- [37] Max Holland. *The Key to the Warren Report*. *American Heritage Magazine*. November, 1995, p. 54.
- [38] Max Holland interview with Chip Selby in Washington, D.C., July 26, 1997, p. 4.
- [39] Max Holland interview with Chip Selby in Washington, D.C., July 26, 1997, p. 4.
- [40] Curt Gentry. *J. Edgar Hoover--The Man and His Secrets*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1991, p. 552.
- [41] Max Holland. *After Thirty Years: Making Sense of the Assassination*. *Reviews in American History* 22 (1994)

[42] HSCA, Final Report, p. 242.

[43] "[FBI agent Regis Kennedy told the HSCA that] he believed Marcello was not engaged in any organized crime activities or other illegal actions during the period from 1959 until at least 1963. He also stated that he did not believe Marcello was a significant organized crime figure and did not believe that he was currently involved in criminal enterprises. Kennedy further informed the committee that he believed Marcello would 'stay away' from any improper activity and in reality did earn his living as a tomato salesman and real estate investor." In: HSCA, vol. 9:70-71. See also Curt Gentry. *J. Edgar Hoover--The Man and His Secrets*. New York: *W. W. Norton & Co.*, 1991, p. 530.

[44] HSCA, vol. 11, p. 53.

[45] HSCA, vol. 11, p. 49.

[46] HSCA, vol. XI, p. 41.

[47] 12/12/63 memorandum from C. D. DeLoach to Mr. Mohr. ("Ford advised that he would keep me thoroughly advised as to the activities of the Commission. He stated this would have to be on a confidential basis." See also: Curt Gentry. *J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and His Secrets*. New York: *W W Norton & Co.*, 1991, p. 557.

[48] *The Investigation of the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy: Performance of the Intelligence Agencies, Book V, Final Report of the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, United States Senate*, p. 6.

[49] In: *The Final Assassinations Report--Report of the Select Committee on Assassinations, U.S. House of Representatives*. New York: *Bantam Books* edition, 1979, p. 334.

[50] Full quote: "At the very first meeting of the Commission, on December 5, 1963, Warren announced his belief that the Commission needed neither its own investigators nor the authority to issue subpoenas and grant immunity from prosecution to witnesses if they were compelled to testify, after first having chosen to take the Fifth Amendment on grounds of self-incrimination. The Chief Justice was overruled by the Commission on the subpoena and immunity authority, thorough immunity was never used; but he held sway on his insistence that evidence that had been developed by the FBI would form a foundation for the Commission investigation." (In: R. Blakey and R. Billings. *Fatal Hour--The Assassination of President Kennedy by Organized Crime*. New York, *Berkley Books*, 1992, p. 82)

[51] "Immunity under these provisions (testifying under compulsion) was not granted to any witness during the Commission's investigation." (In: *Report of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1964, p. xi.)

[52] In: R. Blakey and R. Billings. *Fatal Hour--The Assassination of President Kennedy by Organized Crime*. New York, *Berkley Books*, 1992, p. 29. This testimony was also published in: Mark North. *Act of Treason*. New York, 1991, *Carroll and Graf*, p. 515--516.

[53] *The Final Assassinations Report--Report of the Select Committee on Assassinations, U.S. House of Representatives*. New York: *Bantam Books* edition, 1979, p. 150.

[54] Fred Emery. *Watergate--The Corruption of American Politics and the Fall of Richard Nixon*. New York: *A Touchstone Book for Simon & Shuster*, 1995, p. 217.

[55] HSCA, vol. XI, p. 33.

[56] R. Blakey and R. Billings. *Fatal Hour--The Assassination of President Kennedy by Organized Crime*. New York. *Berkley*

Books, 1992, p. 82--83.)

[57] "Supported by the commission's cautious counsel and staff director, J. Lee Rankin, [Allen Dulles] urged that the panel confine its work to a review of the investigation already being made by the FBI. In taking this stand he implicitly turned his back on the sentiments of his old friend, Hamilton Fish Armstrong, who wrote Allen that the truth must come out, 'no matter who it affects, FBI included.' Allen argued, to the contrary, that a new set of investigations would only cause frictions within the intelligence community and complicate the ongoing functions of government on unspecified matters of national security." In: Peter Grose. *Gentleman Spy--the Life of Allen Dulles*. Amherst: *The University of Massachusetts Press*, 1994, p. 544--555.

[58] Max Holland. *The Docudrama That is JFK. The Nation*, 12/7/98, p. 28.

[59] Gary Cornwell. *Real Answers*. Spicewood, Texas: *Paleface Press*, 1998, p. 166.

[60] *Final Report of the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations*, Book V, p 32--33.

[61] *Final Report of the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations*, Book V, p 46.

[62] *Final Report of the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations*, Book V, p 47.

[63] "[D]erogatory information pertaining to both Commission members and staff was brought to Mr. Hoover's attention." In: *Final Report of the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations*, Book V, p. 47. Also cited by: Curt Gentry. *J. Edgar Hoover--The Man and His Secrets*. New York: *W. W. Norton & Co.*, 1991, p. 549.

[64] James P. Hosty, Jr. *Assignment: Oswald*. New York: *Arcade Publishing*, 1996, pp. 178--180, 184--185, 243--244.

[65] Curt Gentry. *J. Edgar Hoover--The Man and His Secrets*. New York: *W. W. Norton & Co.*, 1991, p. 546, footnote.

[66] *Final Report of the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations*, Book V, p. 47.

[67] Testimony of Burt. W. Griffin in Appendix to HSCA Hearings, vol. 11:32.

[68] Peter Grose. *Gentleman Spy--the Life of Allen Dulles*. Amherst: *The University of Massachusetts Press*, 1994, p. 544--555

[69] Howard Roffman, *Presumed Guilty.*, Chapter 2. ©1976 by A.S. Barnes and Co., Inc. ©1975 by Associated University Presses, Inc. Available at: <http://www.ratical.org/ratville/JFK/PG/PGchp2.html>

[70] Dwight Macdonald. *A Critique of The Warren Report. Esquire Magazine*, March, 1965.

[71] Alan M. Dershowitz. *Los Angeles Times*, 12/25/91.

[72] R. Blakey and R. Billings. *Fatal Hour--The Assassination of President Kennedy by Organized Crime*. New York, *Berkley Books*, 1992, p. 94.

[73] Gus Russo. *Live by the Sword*. Baltimore: *Bancroft Press*, 1998, p. 374.

[74] News from Brown. *The Brown University News Bureau*, distributed 11/11/98.

[75] Max Holland. *The Docudrama That Is JFK. The Nation Magazine*, December 7, 1998, p. 29.

[76] Memorandum, Nicholai B. Katzenbach to William B. Movers, 25 November, 1963. Cited in: HSCA. vol. XI. p.4.

- [77] Gary Cornwell. *Real Answers*. Spicewood, Texas: *Spicewood Press*, 1998, p. 150.
- [78] Gary Cornwell. *Real Answers*. Spicewood, Texas: *Spicewood Press*, 1998, p. 151.
- [79] *Final Report of the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations*, 1976, Book V, p 23 to 32.
- [80] Max Holland. *The Docudrama That Is JFK*. *The Nation Magazine*, December 7, 1998, p. 29.
- [81] Michael Kurtz. *The Assassination of John F. Kennedy: A Historical Perspective*. *The Historian* (1982), vol. 45, p. 1--19. See also, HSCA, vol. XI, p. 3.
- [82] See HSCA vol. XI, p. 5, for good discussion.
- [83] Memorandum to the President, 24 November 1963, from Walter Jenkins, concerning subject, "Oswald." Reproduced at the National Archives, from "COPY Lyndon Baines Johnson Library" (sic). Released at NARA, 8-5-00.
- [84] *Final Report of the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations*, 1976, Book V, p. 32.
- [85] *Boston Globe*. Op-Ed, 9/18/98, p. A-27.
- [86] Kate Doyle. *Guatemala--1954: Behind the CIA's Coup*. In: Robert Parry's *The Consortium*, 7/14/97. Available at: <<http://www.consortiumnews.com/archive/story38.html>>
- [87] Available in a National Archives-released version of the I.G. Report, and also published under the title, "CIA Targets Fidel," and published by *Ocean Press* in 1996. This quote appears on page 119 of the latter.
- [88] Martin A. Lee and Bruce Shlain. *Acid Dreams--The Complete Social History of LSD: The CIA, the Sixties, and Beyond*. New York: *Grove Weidenfeld*, 1992, p. 285.
- [89] Martin A. Lee and Bruce Shlain. *Acid Dreams--The Complete Social History of LSD: The CIA, the Sixties, and Beyond*. New York: *Grove Weidenfeld*, 1992, p. 285.
- [90] New York: *Simon & Schuster*, 1979.
- [91] Anthony Summers, *The Arrogance of Power: The Secret World of Richard Nixon*: New York: *Viking Penguin*, p. 176-177.
- [92] From: *CIA Passed Tainted Info to the President in the 80's*. NPR, *Morning Edition*, 11/1/95. Available at: http://www.elibrary.com/getdoc.cgi?id=9...docid=567840@library_d&dtype=0~0&inst= (In the article, Senator Arlan Specter is quoted saying, "The customers [of these dubious Agency reports--U.S. policymakers] were making purchases of military equipment with vast sums of monies involved and were making judgments vital to the national security and this information went to the rank of the president of the United states and other key members of the defense establishment.")
- [93] *CIA Bureau Seen as Conduit for KGB Information*. James Risen and Ronald J. Ostrow. *Los Angeles Times*, 11/3/95, Home Edition, Part A, page 1.
- [94] Melvin A. Goodman, "Espionage and Covert Action," an essay in: *National Insecurity--U.S. Intelligence After the Cold War*, edited by Craig Eisendrath. Philadelphia: *Temple University Press*, 2000, p. 26.
- [95] Max Holland. *The Docudrama That Is JFK*. *The Nation Magazine*, December 7, 1998, p. 26.
- [96] Scott, Peter Dale. *Case Closed? Or Oswald Framed?*. *The San Francisco Review of Books*. Nov./Dec., 1993, p.6. (This <http://www.webcom.com/ctka/pr900-holland.html>

review is perhaps the most eloquent, concise, authoritative and damning of all the reviews of *Case Closed*.)

[97] Kwitny, Jonathan. *Bad News: Your Mother Killed JFK*. *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, 11/7/93.

[98] Nichols, Mary Perot. *R.I.P., conspiracy theories?* Book review in: *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 8/29/93, p. K1 and K4.

[99] Costello, George. *The Kennedy Assassination: Case Still Open*. *Federal Bar News & Journal*. V.41(3):233, March/April, 1994.

[100] Frank, Jeffrey A. *Who Shot JFK? The 30-Year Mystery*. *Washington Post--Book World*, 10/31/93.

[101] Weisberg, Harold. *Case Open--The Omissions, Distortions and Falsifications of Case Closed*. New York: A Richard Gallen Book, Carroll & Graf, 1994.

[102] Kurtz is author of the 1992, *University of Tennessee*-published book, *Crime of the Century*.

[103] *Journal of Southern History*, vol. 6, #1, (2/95), p. 186.

[104] Affidavit of Roger McCarthy, 12/6/93, sworn before Notary Karen Gates, Comm. # 965772, San Mateo County, California. Available at: <http://www.assassinationscience.com/mccarthy.html>.

Robert Blakey, *The Mafia and JFK's Murder--Thirty years later, the question remains: Did Oswald act alone?* In: *Washington Post National Weekly Edition*, November 15-21, p. 23.

[105] Final Report of the Assassination Records Review Board, p. 134. ("The Review Board's initial contact with Posner produced no results. The Review Board never received a response to a second letter of request for the notes [Posner had claimed to have of conversations he claimed to have conducted with James H. Humes, MD and J. Thornton Boswell].")

[106] Max Holland. *After Thirty Years: Making Sense of the Assassination*. *Reviews in American History* 22(1994).

[107] Max Holland. *After Thirty Years: Making Sense of the Assassination*. *Reviews in American History* 22(1994).

[108] Max Holland. *Richard Russell and Earl Warren's Commission: The Politics of an Extraordinary Investigation*. An article by Max Holland published in the Spring of 1999 by the Miller Center of Public Affairs.

[109] Gerald Posner. *Case Closed*. New York: Anchor Books, 1993, p. 320--322.

[110] Arthur and Margaret Snyder. *Case Still Open*. *Skeptic Magazine*, vol. 6, #4, p.51, 1998.

[111] Max Holland. *The Docudrama That Is JFK*. *The Nation*. 12/7/98, p. 30.

[112] Max Holland. *After Thirty Years: Making Sense of the Assassination*. *Reviews in American History* 22(1994): 193. *The Johns Hopkins University Press*.

[113] Letter by Peter Dale Scott in: *Reviews in American History* 23(1995): 564.

[114] *San Francisco Chronicle*, 11/1/59, p. 11.

[115] *New York Times*. 11/1/59, p. 3. *Los Angeles Times*, 11/1/59, Part one, p. 4.

[116] William Manchester. *The Death of a President*. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 419. (Note: Manchester makes the flat statement (quoted by Russo's in his book on page 324): "The Kennedy who was really in charge in the tower suite was the

Attorney General." But the decisions Manchester attributes to RFK had nothing whatsoever to do with autopsy limitations.

[117] Gus Russo. *Live by the Sword*. Baltimore. Bancroft Press, 1998, p. 324--328. (Russo cites Livingstone's assertion, in *High Treason*, [1992, p. 182] that Robert Karnie, MD--a Bethesda pathologist who was in the morgue but not part of the surgical team--claimed the Kennedys were limiting the autopsy. However, the ARRB released an 8/29/77 memo from the HSCA's Andy Purdy, JD [ARRB MD # 61], in which, on page 3, Purdy writes: "Dr. Karnei doesn't '... know if any limitations were placed on how the autopsy was to be done.' He said he didn't know who was running things.")

[118] John Lattimer. *Kennedy and Lincoln*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980, p. 156.

[119] Summarizing what appears to be his own view, Posner writes, "The House Select Committee concluded that Humes had the authority for a full autopsy but only performed a partial one." (In: footnote at bottom of p. 303, paperback version of *Case Closed*.)

[120] Dennis Breo. *JFK's death, part III--Dr. Finck speaks out: 'two bullets, from the rear.'* JAMA Vol. 268(13):1752, October 7, 1992. [Without citation, this episode was also cited by Gus Russo in: *Live by the Sword*. Baltimore. Bancroft Press, 1998, p. 325.]

[121] See JAMA, May 27, 1992.

[122] John Lattimer, MD has suggested that Drs. Humes and Boswell requested, and were discouraged from, seeking local, non-military experts. Lattimer does not identify who discouraged them. In *Kennedy and Lincoln*, Lattimer writes, "Commanders Humes and Boswell inquired as to whether or not any of their consultants from the medical examiner's office in Washington or Baltimore should be summoned, but this action was discouraged." In: John Lattimer. *Kennedy and Lincoln*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980, p. 155.

[123] Memo reproduced in: *Hearing before the Legislation and National Security Subcommittee of the Committee on Government Operations House of Representatives*, One Hundred Third Congress, First Session, November 17, 1993. Washington, D. C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1994, p.233--234.

[124] HSCA volume 7, p. 14:

"(79) The Committee also investigated the possibility that the Kennedy family may have unduly influenced the pathologists once the autopsy began, possibly by transmitting messages by telephone into the autopsy room. Brig. Gen. Godfrey McHugh, then an Air Force military aide to the President, informed the committee that Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy and Kenneth O'Donnell, a presidential aide, frequently telephoned him during the autopsy from the 17th floor suite. McHugh said that on all occasions, Kennedy and O'Donnell asked only to speak with him. They inquired about the results, why the autopsy was consuming so much time, and the need for speed and efficiency, while still performing the required examinations. *McHugh said he forwarded this information to the pathologists, never stating or implying that the doctors should limit the autopsy in any manner, but merely reminding them to work as efficiently and quickly as possible.*" (emphasis added)

[125] The question of family interference in JFK's autopsy is explored at length in the essay, "The Medical Case for Conspiracy," by Gary L. Aguilar, MD and Cyril Wecht, MD, JD. It was published in: Charles Crenshaw. *Trauma Room One--The JFK Medical Coverup Exposed*. New York: Paraview Press, 2001, pp. 170--286.

[126] Max Holland. *The Lie that Linked the CIA to the Kennedy Assassination*. Available at: www.odci.gov/csi/studies/fall_winter_2001/article02.html.

[127] Max Holland. *The Lie that Linked the CIA to the Kennedy Assassination*. Available at: www.odci.gov/csi/studies/fall_winter_2001/article02.html

[128] Max Holland. *The Lie that Linked the CIA to the Kennedy Assassination*. Available at: <http://www.webcom.com/ctka/pr900-holland.html>

www.odci.gov/csi/studies/fall_winter_2001/article02.html

[129] Max Holland. *The Demon in Jim Garrison*. The Wilson Quarterly, Spring, 2001.

[130] Max Holland. *The Lie that Linked the CIA to the Kennedy Assassination*. Available at: www.odci.gov/csi/studies/fall_winter_2001/article02.html

[131] See: Hearing Before the Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws of the Committee on the Judiciary United States Senate--Testimony of Richard Helms, Assistant Director, Central Intelligence Agency, June 2, 1961.

[132] Max Holland. *The Lie that Linked the CIA to the Kennedy Assassination*. Available at: www.odci.gov/csi/studies/fall_winter_2001/article02.html

[133] Max Holland. *The Demon in Jim Garrison*. The Wilson Quarterly, Spring, 2001.

[134] *The Nation*, August 5-12, 2002.

[135] Max Holland, letter to the editor, *The Nation*, 9/2-9/02.

[136] Interview with William Turner, 8/31/02.

[137] Jim Garrison. *On the Trail of the Assassins--My Investigation and Prosecution of the Murder of President Kennedy*. New York: *Sheridan Square Press*, 1988. (Paese Sera is discussed on pp. 88--89.)

[138] In: *The Assassination Chronicles--Inquest, Counterplot, and Legend* by Edward J. Epstein. New York: *Carroll & Graf*, 1992, p. 250--263.

[139] Harold Weisberg. *Oswald in New Orleans--Case of Conspiracy with the C.I.A.* New York: *Canyon Books*, 1967, p. 7--14.

[140] Testimony reproduced in: Max Holland. *The Lie that Linked the CIA to the Kennedy Assassination*. Available at: www.odci.gov/csi/studies/fall_winter_2001/article02.html.

[141] Max Holland. *The Lie that Linked the CIA to the Kennedy Assassination*. Available at: www.odci.gov/csi/studies/fall_winter_2001/article02.html. Reference here is made to "Memo to Director, DCS [Domestic Contact Service], from Chief, New Orleans Office, re Clay Shaw, 3 March 1967, JFK-M-04 (F3), Box 1, CIA Series; Memorandum re Garrison Investigation: Queries from Justice Department, 28 September 1967, Box 6 Russell Holmes Papers; various Information Reports, JFK-M-04 (F2), Box 1, CIA Series--all JFK NARA."

[142] Available on line at: http://publications.neworleans.com/no_magazine/36.8.12-Letters.html

[143] Max Holland, Was Jim Garrison Duped by the KGB? *New Orleans Magazine*, February, 2002.

[144] Letter by William Turner to *New Orleans Magazine*, available on-line at: http://publications.neworleans.com/no_magazine/36.8.12-Letters.html

[145] Philip Melanson. *Spy Saga--Lee Harvey Oswald and U.S. Intelligence*. Preager, 1990, p. 145.

[146] Max Holland. *The Lie that Linked the CIA to the Kennedy Assassination*. Available at: www.odci.gov/csi/studies/fall_winter_2001/article02.html

[147] Hearing Before the Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws of the Committee on the Judiciary United States Senate--Testimony of Richard Helms, Assistant Director, Central Intelligence Agency, June 2, 1961, p. 2.

In context, the full quote reads as follows:

P. 2: "In late April rumors began to circulate in Europe, rumors charging that the Algerian-based generals who had plotted the overthrow of President De Gaulle had enjoyed support from NATO, the Pentagon, or CIA. Although this fable could have been started by supporters of General Challe, it bears all the earmarks of having been invented within the bloc.

In Western Europe this lie was first printed on the 23d of April by a Rome daily called "Il Paese."

Senator Keating: "Is Il Paese a Communist paper?"

Mr. Helms: "It is not a Communist paper, as such. We believe it to be a crypto-Communist paper but it is not like Unita, the large Communist daily in Rome. It purports to be an independent newspaper, but obviously it serves Communist ends."

The story charged

It is not be chance that some people in Paris are accusing the American secret service headed by Allen Dulles of having participated in the plot of the four 'ultra' generals *** (sic) Franco, Salazar, Allen Dulles are the figures who hide themselves behind the pronunciamientos of the 'ultras'; they are the pillars of an international conspiracy that, basing itself on the Iberian dictatorships, on the residue of the most fierce and blind colonialism, on the intrigues of the C.I.A.*** reacts furiously to the advance of progress and democracy ***. (sic)

We found it interesting that Il Paese was the starting point for a lie that the Soviets spread around the world. This paper and its evening edition, Paese Sera, belong to a small group of journals published in the free world but used as outlets for disguised Soviet propaganda. These newspapers consistently release and replay anti-American, anti-Western, pro-Soviet bloc stories, distorted or wholly false. Mario Malloni, director of both Il Paese and Paese sera, has been a member of the World Peace Council since 1958. The World Peace Council is a bloc-directed Communist front.

On the next day Pravda published in Moscow a long article about the generals' revolt.

Senator Keating: May I interrupt there? Did Pravda pick it up as purportedly from Il Paese? Did they quote the other paper, the Italian paper as a source of that information?

Mr. Helms: Pravda did not cite Il Paese. But instead of having this originate in Moscow, where everybody would pinpoint it, they (p. 3) planted the story first in Italy and picked it up from Italy and this is the way it actually went out in point of time.

Senator Keating: Yes.

[148] Andrew Tully. *CIA--The Inside Story*. New York: William Morrow and Co., 1962, p. 48.

[149] Andrew Tully. *CIA--The Inside Story*. New York: William Morrow and Co., 1962, p. 53.

[150] James Reston. *Pentagon to Get Some C.I.A. Duties*. *New York Times*, 4/29/61, p. 3, column 6.

[151] **The Nation*, 11/19/77, editorial entitled, "They Never Laid a Hand on Him (Helms)." ("Helms [walked out] of that court with only the faintest tap on the wrist for his lies to the Senate about the CIA's sinister \$8 million involvement in the corruption of Chile's politics")

*Helms Cops a Plea. *Newsweek Magazine*, 11/14/77, p. 31. ("For nineteen months, the government had been trying to determine whether to prosecute Helms for misleading the Senate Foreign Relations Committee about CiA attempts to oust Chile's Marxist President Salvador Allende.")

**Helms Makes a Deal--Ex-CIA chief's conviction shows shift in attitudes about spying. Time Magazine, 11/14/77, p. 18.*

* Anthony Marro. *Helms Is Fined \$2,000 and Given Two-Year Suspended Prison Term--U.S. Judge Rebukes Ex-C.I.A. Head for Misleading Panel. New York Times, 11/5/77, p. 1.*

[152] Hearing Before the Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws of the Committee on the Judiciary United States Senate--Testimony of Richard Helms, Assistant Director, Central Intelligence Agency, June 2, 1961. See pages 44, 45, 59 and 81.

[153] See: Interim Report: Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders, the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities (U.S. Senate), 20 November 1975, p 4. See also: David Wise and Thomas B. Ross. *The Invisible Government*. New York: Random House, 1964, pp. 136--146. A good overview of the CIA's role in Indonesia during the period prior to Helms's testimony (1957--1958) is also available in: William Blum. *Killing Hope--U.S. Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II*. Monroe, Maine: Common Courage Press, 1995, p. 99--103.

[154] Available on the web at: <http://mcadams.posc.mu.edu/siss.txt>.

[155] *American Heritage*, November, 1995.

[156] Alexander Cockburn. *J.F.K. and JFK. The Nation*, January 6/13, 1992, p. 7.

[157] David Kaiser. *American Tragedy*. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 2000.

[158] Ernest R. May & Philip D. Zelikow. *The Kennedy Tapes--Inside the White House During the Cuban Missile Crisis*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997.

[159] Howard Jones. *Death of a Generation - How the Assassinations of Diem and JFK Prolonged the Vietnam War*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

[160] "During the Bay of Pigs crisis in April 1961, against intense pressure from the CIA and the military chiefs, [JFK] kept to his conviction—as he had made explicitly clear to the Cuban exiles beforehand—that under no conditions would the United States intervene with military force to support the invasion. He held to this position even when it became evident that without that support the invasion would fail. I saw the same wisdom during the tense days of the Cuban Missile Crisis" Robert McNamara. *In Retrospect - The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam*. New York: Times Books for Random House, 1995, p. 96 - 97.

[161] Kennedy's decision against sending troops to Laos is covered particularly well in the second chapter of David Kaiser's book, *American Tragedy*, entitled, "No War in Laos." David Kaiser. *American Tragedy*. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 2000.

See also: Howard Jones. *Death of a Generation - How the Assassinations of Diem and JFK Prolonged the Vietnam War*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 41 - 46 and 185 - 187.

[162] "McNamara privately told the Joint Chiefs, 'If you insist in opposing [the Nuclear Test Ban] treaty, well and good, but I am not going to let anyone oppose it out of emotion or ignorance.' ... [JFK] was told that congressional mail was running 15 to 1 against the treaty. His aides were astonished when [JFK] told them that, if necessary, he would 'gladly' forfeit his reelection for the sake of the treaty." In: Michael Beschloss. *The Crisis Years - Kennedy and Khrushchev 1960 - 1963*. New York: Edward Burlingame Books, an imprint of HarperCollins, 1991 p. 632. And see Beschloss at pp. 620 - 632 for a good discussion of JFK's spirited campaign to win approval of the Test Ban Treaty.

[163] Ernest R. May & Philip D. Zelikow. *The Kennedy Tapes--Inside the White House During the Cuban Missile Crisis*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997, p. 692.

[164] David Kaiser, letter to the editor, *Harper's Magazine*, June, 2000, p. 15.

That Kennedy would not have "Americanized" the Vietnam War has gained wide support since Oliver Stone advanced that notion in his film *JFK*. That idea was first proposed in 1972 by Peter Dale Scott in an essay entitled "Vietnamization and the Drama of the Pentagon Papers," which appeared in volume V of the Senator Gravel edition of the *Pentagon Papers*. Historian John Newman was the first to popularize it in his book, *JFK and Vietnam* (Warner Books, 1992), Newman being the source Oliver Stone relied upon for his film

But that JFK would not have sent in troops is an idea that has long been defended by people in the know. In chronological order, a partial listing of sources that have supported the Scott/Newman interpretation, follows:

Roger Hilsman. *To Move A Nation – The Politics of Foreign Policy in the Administration of John F. Kennedy*. New York: Doubleday & Co., 1967, p. 537. ["No one, of course, can know for sure what President Kennedy would have done in the future – had he lived. But his policy had been to keep the fighting as limited as possible ... President Kennedy made it abundantly clear to me on more than one occasion that what he most wanted to avoid was turning Vietnam into an American war"]

Kenneth P. O'Donnell. *'Johnny, We Hardly Knew Ye.'* New York: Little Brown, 1972, p. 13 – 16.

Arthur Schlesinger. *Robert Kennedy and His Times*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1978, chapter 31.

George W. Ball. *The Past Has Another Pattern*. New York: WW Norton & Co., 1982, p. 366. ["To commit American forces to South Vietnam would, in my (George Ball's) view, be a tragic error. Once that process started, I said, there would be no end to it. 'Within five years (Ball told JFK) we'll have three hundred thousand men in the paddies and jungles and never find them again. That was the French experience. Vietnam is the worst possible terrain both from a physical and political point of view.' To my surprise, the President seemed quite unwilling to discuss the matter, responding with an overtone of asperity: 'George, you're just crazier than hell. That just isn't going to happen.' (JFK responded)"]

William J. Rust. *Kennedy in Vietnam – American Vietnam Policy 1960 – 1963*. New York: A Da Capo Paperback for Charles Scribner's Sons, Inc. Copyright by U.S. News and World Report, 1985, p. 180 – 182.

Roger Hilsman, letter to the editor, *New York Times*, 20 January 1992. ["On numerous occasions President Kennedy told me that he was determined not to let Vietnam become an American war ... Gen. Douglas MacArthur told (JFK) it would be foolish to fight again in Asia and that the problem should be solved at the diplomatic table ... MacArthur's views made 'a hell of an impression on the President ... so that whenever he'd get this military advice from the Joint Chiefs or from me or anyone else, he'd say, 'Well, now, you gentlemen, you go back and convinced General MacArthur, then I'll be convinced.'"]

John Newman. *JFK and Vietnam*. New York: Warner Books, 1992.

Roger Hilsman, letter to the editor, *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 74(4):164-165, July/August 1995. ["(Robert) McNamara does conclude (in his book, *In Retrospect*) that Kennedy would not have made Vietnam an American war. But Kennedy's view was much stronger than McNamara suggests. Kennedy told me, as his action officer on Vietnam, over and over again that my job was to keep American involvement to a minimum so that we could withdraw as soon as the opportunity presented itself."]

Robert McNamara. *In Retrospect – The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam*. Times Books for Random House, 1995, p. 97.

Mike Feinsilber. [Did JFK Plan to Quit Viet War?](#) *Associated Press*, 12/23/97, in: *San Francisco Examiner*, 12/23/97., p. A-9. ["Newly declassified government documents support the theory that weeks before his assassination John F. Kennedy wanted his military leaders to draw up contingency plans for a U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam following the 1964 presidential election."]

Tim Weiner. [New Documents Hint that JFK wanted U.S. Out of Vietnam](#). *New York Times*, 12/23/97, in: *San Francisco Chronicle*, 12/23/97. ["The documents also show that the Joint Chiefs were unhappy with the idea (of withdrawal) ... Members of the Joint

Chiefs believed that the United States should go to war against North Vietnam. But as one newly declassified memorandum shows, the chiefs knew that 'proposals for overt (military) action invited a negative presidential decision.'"]

Oliver Stone. *Was Vietnam JFK's War?* *Newsweek*, 21 October 1996, p. 14. ["(T)he evidence is clear that he had made up his mind to pull out of a losing effort in Vietnam."]

John Newman. The Kennedy-Johnson Transition: The Case for Policy Reversal. In: Lloyd C. Gardner, ed. *Vietnam – The Early Decisions*. Austin: *University of Texas Press*, 1997, p. 158 – 176.

Larry Berman offers an opposing view in the same volume. ["The public record shows that Kennedy expended and never reduced military operations. Never was there an explicit decision made to give up on the South Vietnamese. Indeed, Fredrik Logevall documents how Kennedy and his advisers opted to reject, at each opportunity, negotiated resolutions to conflict and chose instead to increase American military presence ... Never did Kennedy ever publicly state that he was willing to leave Vietnam if the result was defeat for the South Vietnamese. The public outcry would certainly have been loud." Larry Berman. NSAM 263 and NSAM 273: Manipulating History. In: Lloyd C. Gardner, ed. *Vietnam – The Early Decisions*. Austin: *University of Texas Press*, 1997, p 184.

Richard Mahoney. *Sons & Brothers – The Days of Jack and Bobby Kennedy*. New York: *Arcade Publishing*, 1999, p. 278 – 281.

David Kaiser. *American Tragedy – Kennedy, Johnson, and the Origins of the Vietnam War*. Cambridge: *Belknap Press of The Harvard University Press*, 2000, p. 70 – 132.

James William Gibson. *Revising Vietnam, Again*, a review of David Kaiser's *American Tragedy*. In: *Harper's Magazine*, April 2000. [P. 83:"As we know, neither Kennedy, Johnson nor Nixon stopped the United states from going to war in Southeast Asia. To the contrary, Kennedy and Johnson escalated the war, and Nixon continued it at a high pitch for years."]

David Kaiser responded to Gibson in a letter to *Harper's* editor (*Harper's Magazine*, June, 2000, p. 15), writing: "*American Tragedy* extensively documents numerous occasions during 1961, 1962, and 1963 on which Kennedy did exactly that ["stopped the United States from going to war in Southeast Asia"], rejecting the near unanimous proposals of his advisers to put large numbers of American combat troops in Laos, South Vietnam, or both. He also showed – and not at all 'reluctantly' – that he preferred a neutral government in Laos to American military involvement on behalf of pro-Western forces ... it is now clear beyond any doubt that he had refused, on a number of earlier occasions, to do what Johnson did during those years. He also had a wide-ranging diplomatic agenda, explored at length in *American Tragedy*, which could not be reconciled with war in Southeast Asia – an agenda abandoned by his successor."

Robert Dallek. *An Unfinished Life – John F. Kennedy 1917 – 1963*. New York: *Little Brown Co.*, 2003, p. 670 – 693.

Howard Jones. *Death of a Generation – How the Assassinations of Diem and JFK Prolonged the Vietnam War*. Oxford: *Oxford University Press*, 2003, p. 1 – 13, p. 452 – 453.

[165] Howard Jones. *Death of a Generation – How the Assassinations of Diem and JFK Prolonged the Vietnam War*. Oxford: *Oxford University Press*, 2003, p. 1.

[166] Howard Jones. *Death of a Generation – How the Assassinations of Diem and JFK Prolonged the Vietnam War*. Oxford: *Oxford University Press*, 2003, p. 11.

Fred Kaplan. *The War Room – What Robert Dallek's new biography doesn't tell you about JFK and Vietnam*. Posted on line at Slate/MSN on May 19, 2003; available at: <http://slate.msn.com/id/2083136/> ["The historian Robert Dallek doesn't state the matter this dramatically, but his new book, *An Unfinished Life: John F. Kennedy, 1917-1963*, argues that JFK would not have waged war in Vietnam. I agree. But if I didn't, this book would not have persuaded me. There's a compelling case to be made, but Dallek doesn't nail it ... What, then, is the compelling case for why JFK wouldn't have gone to war? Those who argue that JFK would

have gone into Vietnam just as LBJ did make the point that Kennedy was every bit as much a Cold Warrior as Johnson. They also note that the advisers who lured Johnson into war—Bundy, Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, and the rest—had been appointed by Kennedy; they were very much Kennedy's men.

"But this is where there is a crucial difference between JFK and LBJ—a difference that Dallek misses. Over the course of his 1,000 days as president, Kennedy grew increasingly leery of these advisers. He found himself embroiled in too many crises where their judgment proved wrong and his own proved right. Dallek does note—and very colorfully so—Kennedy's many conflicts with his military advisers in the Joint Chiefs of Staff. But he neglects the instances—which grew in number and intensity as his term progressed—in which he displayed equal disenchantment with his civilian advisers. Yet Kennedy never told Johnson about this disenchantment. It didn't help that Johnson was a bit cowed by these advisers' intellectual sheen and Harvard degrees; Kennedy, who had his Harvard degree, was not ...

"Indeed, the [secret tapes](#) are rife with examples of JFK's challenging the wisdom of Bundy, McNamara, and the other architects-to-be of Vietnam. These disputes show up nowhere in Dallek's biography. Yet the argument that Kennedy would have withdrawn from Vietnam becomes truly compelling only when you place his skepticism about the war in the context of his growing disenchantment with his advisers—and, by contrast, [his failure to share this view with Johnson](#).

"Long before "the best and the brightest" became a term of irony, Kennedy realized that they could be as wrong as anybody. Kennedy knew he could trust his instincts; Johnson was insecure about trusting his. That is why LBJ plunged into Vietnam—and why JFK would not have."]

[167] Robert Dallek. [JFK's Second Term](#). *Atlantic Monthly*, June 2003, p. 58.

[168] Robert Dallek. [JFK's Second Term](#). *Atlantic Monthly*, June 2003, p. 61.



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