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foreign country and investigate."²² After months of negotiations with the Canadian government, the committee finally sent a contingent to Ottawa to meet with the RCMP and the Canadian Department of Internal Affairs. The Canadians were not inclined to allow a freewheeling investigative foray by a foreign government, and certain restrictions were placed on the HSCA.²³

The restrictions turned out to be somewhat inhibiting. Blakey indicated that the committee got everything it wanted by way of file material, "but in terms of talking to citizens, we did not."²⁴ Some potential witnesses refused to talk.

The HSCA's Canadian investigation focused on three areas: how Ray obtained his false Canadian passport, whether he had any "criminal associations" in Canada before or after the assassination, and his financial transactions.²⁵ There is considerable evidence that Ray had contacts in Canada and that he received help. There were phone calls to him, mysterious visitors, a drinking companion. As we shall see later, the available data strongly suggests that the so-called "fat man" who visited Ray at his rooming house was a courier, however unwitting, who delivered an envelope containing money for Ray's escape to London.

Still, the committee stated that it "did not find that Ray had any criminal associates, nor did he receive any financial assistance during his April 8 to May 6 stay in Canada."²⁶ Nowhere in its final report or in the 13 volumes of published material is there any indication of a serious investigative effort in this regard. The crucial "fat man" incident was completely neglected.

Blakey told the author:

We went up there [Canada] thinking that there might be something sinister and came away with the idea that there was nothing sinister. The Canadian dimension to what he [Ray] did was just not all that significant. The idea that he had help and, therefore, that there was a dimension of conspiracy was very popular at the time [1968]. But we found out that he could have done it [gotten a passport] easier had he had access to the criminal underworld. He did it by using newspapers.²⁷

In 1968 Canadian authorities speculated that Ray had sophisticated help in obtaining a false passport.²⁸ It turned out that Canadian passport procedures were quite lax. As Blakey described, "We verified how easy it was to get a passport."²⁹ It could be gotten by looking up a birth notice, writing for a birth certificate under the name selected, then applying for a passport—all without any criminal or intelligence expertise. But Blakey and the committee confused the possibility that Ray could have gotten a passport without help with the certainty that he had no help of any kind. HSCA admitted: "Like the RCMP and the FBI, the Committee was

a composite entity invented by Ray (perhaps to make himself appear less culpable and more like a patsy). That Raoul is a composite is consistent with what we know about the post-assassination fugitive phase, during which a series of mystery figures cropped up—the fat man, the slight man, (discussed in the next chapter) the man in the bar.

Harold Weisberg believes that someone like Raoul did exist and did set Ray up as a patsy.³⁰ Nor is Weisberg surprised that Ray cannot produce proof of Raoul. In Weisberg's view, a skillful cutout or handler would employ every trick of tradecraft to hide his identity.

At least one credible investigator turned up some information which, although tentative in nature, convinced him that there was indeed a Raoul-like character in Ray's life. Andy Salwyn, now a correspondent for CBC radio in Canada, was the Montreal bureau chief for the *Toronto Star* in 1968. Salwyn and his colleague Earl McRae were assigned to investigate the two biggest conspiracy angles of the King case—Raoul and the fat man.

In 1968 Salwyn searched the neighborhood near the Neptune Bar in Montreal where Ray had reportedly met Raoul in July 1967.³¹ He could not turn up any witnesses who saw Ray together with anyone who might have been Raoul, but he did find evidence of a mysterious character who seemed to manifest Raoul-like characteristics and who, according to Salwyn's data, was in the right neighborhood at the right time. The man turned out to be Jules Ricco Kimble.

Five blocks from the Neptune Bar, Salwyn found a rooming house where the landlady remembered a mysterious American who spoke little French and was known as "Rolland" or "Rollie." A janitor in the building remembered that Rollie dated a nurse from a nearby hospital. Salwyn tracked her down and interviewed her, although he found that Marianne Levesque (a pseudonym created by the author) was very reluctant to talk and very frightened.

Miss Levesque knew the man only as "Rollie." She told Salwyn three things about him: he had a police-band radio in his car and was always asking her to translate police broadcasts, he had guns in the trunk of his car, he made a number of phone calls from her apartment. She saved her phone bill in hopes of collecting from him, but he disappeared. She had given the phone numbers to RCMP investigators and no longer had them.

According to Salwyn, he approached the RCMP and offered to trade information: he turned over whatever data he had in return for the phone numbers. Salwyn telexed the five phone numbers back to the *Star* in Toronto. There, his colleague Earl McRae called each one—five bars in Texas and New Orleans (Ray had been in New Orleans in December of 1968 and claimed to have met Raoul in a bar there). McRae did not obtain

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In Search of the Fat Man

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Who's the Fat Man?

Toronto Star, June 10, 1968

Mounties Hunt "Fat Man" in Ray Case

New York Times, June 10, 1968

The "fat man" incident was by far the most provocative episode in the fugitive phase of the King case. Its conspiratorial implications generated considerable interest within the American media and a frenzied level of activity in Canada, where reporters and Mounties alike thought that finding the fat man might break open the conspiracy.

Ray had already been arrested in London when the fat man story broke. Ray's landlady on Dundas Street reported to police that on May 2 a corpulent stranger had come to the door asking for Sneyd (Ray's alias at the time) and had handed Ray an envelope. That very day, Ray paid up his rent and purchased an airplane ticket to London, where he flew four days later. The ticket cost \$345; Ray paid in Canadian cash. Speculation quickly arose that the fat man was a coconspirator or, at minimum, a courier delivering get-away money.

The hunt for the fat man was on. But in less than a week it was over. On June 12 Toronto police made a dramatic announcement. The fat man had been found, and he was completely innocent of any involvement in the King case. It was simply that the so-called fat man was a Good Samaritan who was returning a misplaced letter to Sneyd/Ray. A man claiming to be the fat man had come forward to police and volunteered

There are formidable problems with the police's explanation of the fat man incident. First of all, there is the claim that the letter found in the phone booth was related to Ray's seeking employment. Within hours of the incident, Ray purchased a \$345 airplane ticket and paid cash. Either he already had the necessary get-away money in his possession or it was delivered to him in the envelope. In either case, job hunting would have made little sense: The money to escape to London was in hand or on the way. Job hunting abroad would make no sense either. Presumably Ray knew nothing about London and had no idea where he would be staying. There was no suggestion by Toronto police that the letter was headed abroad.

Moreover, when we consider the circumstances and the time frame surrounding Ray's purchase of the ticket, it appears all the more likely that the fat man delivered money. It was on April 16 that Ray went to the Kennedy Travel Agency in Toronto and ordered a ticket to London and a passport under the name of Sneyd (the travel agency handled the passport application for its customer).¹⁰ Ray was informed that it would take between one and two weeks for his application to be processed by the bureaucracy in Ottawa and mailed to the travel agency. He left his Dundas Street address and Mrs. Loo's phone number with the agency.¹¹

Ten days later, on April 26, the "Sneyd" passport arrived. Ray had booked an excursion flight that departed Toronto on May 6. One would think that the world's number one fugitive would be anxious to pick up his passport and ticket as soon as possible, to have them in his possession in case he had to leave that section of the city or had to change addresses again—in case the law began to close in on him. There would be an advantage to having his get-away credentials in hand, even if it were not possible for him to arrange to leave sooner than May 6.

Yet, whatever the potential benefits, Ray was in no position to retrieve his ticket unless he could come up with the money. It might have seemed odd, and thereby called attention to himself, if he had picked up his passport but left his ticket there until later, clearly signaling that he did not yet have the necessary funds. The appearance of normalcy in this transaction was important to Ray. He told Mrs. Lillian Spencer, the travel agent, that he was a used-car salesman from a small town in Canada who had recently moved to Toronto. This was Ray's way of explaining why he had no one in Toronto who could vouch for his Canadian citizenship. And, as Ray described to HSCA, he purposely ordered a round-trip ticket because: "I figured that would be less suspicious than getting one way."¹²

Despite the obvious utility of getting his ticket and passport as soon as possible, they languished at the travel agency until May 2—the day of the fat man's visit. It will also be recalled that the visit took place at noon. Ray had all morning to go to the travel agency and retrieve his

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Canadian and U.S. authorities had kept secret the identity of the man who came forward. Released documents deleted his identity. But one document obtained by the author had failed to delete the name: William Bolton (a pseudonym created by the author).

I located William Bolton in 1984, expecting that his very appearance might preclude his having been the fat man. In 1968 Mrs. Loo had described the man as tall, "fat," with dark hair, and appearing to be about 40 years old. The man who did not answer his front doorbell, but whom I confronted near his car when he emerged from his back door, appeared to be in his mid fifties. He had dark hair, was about six feet three inches tall, appeared to weigh around 180 pounds, and was powerfully built. He also had a significant paunch. Even if the paunch was only in its embryonic stages 16 years ago, this was definitely a man who, when wearing a t-shirt tucked into his trousers, could easily have impressed a small Oriental woman as being not only tall but "fat."

I delivered a carefully rehearsed opening line, the logical response to which—for anyone other than the fat man—would be something like: "What are you talking about?" or "You must have the wrong address." The line was: "I'm a professor of political science and I'm interviewing a number of persons like yourself who had interesting encounters sixteen years ago."

Bolton stared silently at my rented car parked on the street. His face provided the answer to his identity long before he spoke. A hard, yet anguished expression swept his visage. His racing thoughts were almost palpable. Finally, he looked directly at the interviewer. "How did you find me?" he asked.²³

The encounter was tense. Bolton's initial shock at being discovered after 16 years gave way to panic. "What's going on with this case?" he asked. "Is this a new investigation?" He demanded to know my identity and carefully wrote the name on a card in his wallet. Apparently somewhat relieved that the interviewer's affiliation was academic rather than investigative, he argued for continued anonymity. As I broached the substance of the incident, he became visibly agitated. "Nothing to it. I told them all I know."

Even so, Bolton went on to claim that he feared for his life. "They [the FBI] wanted me to be a witness [in 1968]. I refused. Why go [to Memphis] and get a bullet in my head?" He referred to the deaths of assassination witnesses in the John F. Kennedy case.

Bolton's sense of fear seemed genuine. But as he elaborated his story, it was clear that either it was not genuine—perhaps it was his way of

to open the door to get his breakfast tray.¹⁸ Instead, he asked Mrs. Thomas to leave it outside the door. Nor would he open the door to receive telephone messages: Mrs. Thomas had to slip them under the door, even though Ray was in his room at the time. Ray's behavior is easy to understand. He was, after all, the most sought after criminal in the Western world.

In contrast, when Mrs. Loo went up to Ray's room and told him "Mr. Sneyd, there is man with a letter for you," she recalled that Ray nodded and came downstairs.¹⁹ Not only did Ray come downstairs directly, without hesitation, but he went straight to the door and began talking with the visitor.

Shouldn't Ray have been very suspicious of the caller, or, at minimum, hesitant to come downstairs? How did he know that it was not the police? Didn't he want to try to check out the supposed stranger before greeting him, perhaps by trying to catch a glimpse of him? Didn't Ray want to check out the situation—to see if there were cars outside or to make sure that there was only one person rather than a bevy of plain-clothes detectives?

If Ray would not open his London door to receive food or messages, why should he immediately make himself available to receive "a letter"? Didn't he want to ask "What kind of letter?" Ray could easily have told Mrs. Loo to get the letter for him and slip it under his door; he could have instructed her to tell the man to leave the letter. Are we to believe that, within the context of the police's version, Ray remembered he had lost a job-application letter somewhere and was hoping, or expecting, that some Good Samaritan would return it? Ray's behavior, as well as his very presence in his room, are much more logically explained by the idea that he was waiting for a delivery of money, that he knew full well what the envelope contained.

The press and official investigators from 1968 to the present have failed to perceive the relevance of another occurrence which bears upon the fat man incident. Ray's first Toronto landlady, Mrs. Szpakowski, reported that on April 25 a visitor came to see Ray at the Ossington Street address where he was registered as Paul Bridgeman.²⁰ Mrs. Szpakowski vaguely remembered that the visitor who knocked on her front door may have proffered some identification, but she could not recall what it was.²¹ The visitor was "short, slight" had blond hair, and wore a suit and tie. He held up a white envelope with the name Bridgeman typed on the front.²² When she informed him that "Bridgeman" had moved on and that she did not have a forwarding address, the visitor left.

What the press and official investigator's have missed is how closely this parallels Mrs. Loo's account of the fat man incident. She recalled that the fat man had given Ray an envelope with a name typed on it (although she did not see the name). The fact that the slight man had

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lobbying for continued anonymity—or the police's Good Samaritan story was a cover for something much more provocative.

"Why would anyone kill you?" I asked. "Your only involvement in the case was as an innocent bystander trying to do a good deed. Substantively, there's no real involvement in the case."

Bolton was now anxious, even angry; but both emotions were controlled. "Ray and those people are gangsters," he asserted. "They'll kill anyone."

"Why would such gangsters want to kill a man whose only connection with the case was to find a letter about a job?" I asked.

He snorted and shook his head. "I've never told. . . . It was a job, all right." He talked softly and in ominous tones. "It was a job in Portugal and it [the letter] showed that he had help." Bolton asserted that there was "big money" behind Ray.

He went on to claim that it was the Portugal-related substance of the letter that led authorities to Ray. Thus Bolton contended that he was responsible for Ray's arrest.

I asked to whom the letter was addressed and whether it mentioned mercenaries. (Ray was, in fact, attempting to make contact with mercenaries in Portugal.) Bolton responded that he did not remember. I asked what he meant when he said the letter showed that Ray had "help." He replied darkly: "That's all I'll say."

In 1968 there was never so much as a hint that the substance of the letter had anything directly to do with the case, except that it was penned by Ray. It is true that Ray was headed for Portugal when arrested in London on June 8, but it is clearly not true that what Bolton told the police led to Ray's arrest: The fat man incident did not surface until after Ray's arrest, and neither did the self-announced fat man.

That Bolton could have been confused about the sequence of events leading to Ray's arrest, that he might have genuinely believed that it was his information that got Ray arrested, is highly improbable. Bolton seemed sharp. There was nothing slow about his intellectual processes. The very newspapers in which he supposedly first read about the fat man incident not only contained headlines and articles dealing with Ray's capture (on the same pages as the fat man stories) but most of the articles about the fat man contained references to Ray's arrest. Ray was arrested June 8. For the next five days, Toronto newspapers gave extensive coverage to his arrest, his extradition, and to the police work that led to his capture. The fat man articles appeared June 10 and 11, at the peak of coverage concerning Ray's capture. It strains credulity to believe that someone could be cognizant of the fat man story and avoid knowing that Ray was already behind bars.

The story that Bolton gave to the author was more substantively detailed, and more credible, in dimensions which did not relate directly

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to the letter. He accurately described the Dundas Street neighborhood and the house where Mrs. Loo lived. He recounted how the police checked out his story, taking him to the Dundas Street area and requiring that he lead them to the phone booth where the letter was allegedly found. He told how police dismantled the public telephone and checked the phone booth from top to bottom, how a frightened Mrs. Loo identified him for police.

Then I asked one of the most crucial and sensitive questions of all: What was Ray's demeanor? Bolton laughed (a forced, nervous laugh).

"He [Ray] was nervous, scared—turned his face from me and grabbed the envelope." Bolton mimed Ray's alleged actions. " 'Thanks,' he says to me."

Not only does this conflict with Mrs. Loo's description of the exchange between the two men; but if Ray was truly scared about the encounter, he would have had no reason to come down and meet the stranger.

There were always three possible scenarios for the fat man incident:

1. The man who came forward with the Good Samaritan story was not the real fat man, but concocted his story at the behest of others who needed to resolve the matter or who wanted to dead-end a lead to the conspiracy.
2. The man who came forward was the real fat man and the Good Samaritan story was true.
3. The man who came forward before he was discovered was, in fact, the fat man but he was a courier who delivered funds to Ray, even though he may not have known what was in the envelope, who "Sneyd" really was, or on whose behalf the delivery was made.

It is yet another indication of the HSCA's lack of initiative, or its myopia, that it did not find Bolton and thoroughly investigate the incident. On the basis of the data gathered here, the matter remains as intriguing as it was in 1968. Available evidence suggests that option 1 is not likely: William Bolton fits the description of the fat man and demonstrates a credible familiarity with the scene of the incident. In the author's opinion, William Bolton is the fat man. Yet, the Good Samaritan story remains as shaky now as it was in 1968, especially when considered within the context of Ray's behavior, Mrs. Loo's description, and the striking similarity of the "slight man" incident.

As for William Bolton, the interviewer was impressed with the credibility of one facet of his story: He seemed genuinely afraid for his personal safety. His primary reaction to being rediscovered after 16 years was not bemusement, annoyance, or apprehension about publicity. It was more like the kind of fear one might expect from someone whose cover identity under the federal witness-protection program had just been blown.