

Did the "Mafia" Assassinate President Kennedy as a Favor to the CIA?

by Earl Golz

A Tennessee author has supplied the Rockefeller Commission with the name of an alleged "front man" for Mafia chiefton Carlos Marcello whom he said was linked to a conspiracy to assassinate President John F. Kennedy.

Eugene Hale Brading is one of three names W.R. Morris of Loretto, Tenn., gave the commission after he was asked to help in its investigation of the CIA.

Brading, once a University Park resident, changed his name to Jim Braden two months before the assassination. At the time, he lived in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Morris contends the assassination was carried out by mobsters and financed by the CIA. Most of his information was obtained, he said, from a former CIA operative who maintains that accused assassin Lee Harvey Oswald was on the CIA payroll but did not do any of the shooting.

Brading "organized" the assassination plot which caught Kennedy in a "crossfire" of blasts from at least three weapons, Morris asserted.

The names of two of the triggermen were among those Morris turned over to the Rockefeller Commission. He would not publicly identify them. One of the two men is now dead, Morris said.

Morris wrote the book on which the movie "Walking Tall" was based. He is completing a book on Oswald and the CIA, using some documents furnished him by Oswald's mother, Mrs. Marguerite Oswald.

Most of his information about Oswald, however, was obtained from the former CIA operative who quit the agency several years ago to practice law in California. He has refused to give even the Rockefeller Commission the name of his CIA informant, stating "his life wouldn't be worth a dime" if he

Commission investigators apparently are skeptical of Morris' story because they haven't even personally interviewed him.

Morris, however, is skeptical of the commission's intent to learn whether the CIA played a part in the Kennedy assassination. He said "it is just a hoax" because commission investigators "already got their minds made up" that the CIA wasn't involved and Oswald was the lone assassin.

He noted that David Belin, executive director of the Rockefeller Commission, was a counsel to the Warren Commission and wholeheartedly endorses its lone assassin conclusion.

Morris, however, said he gave the Rockefeller Commission most of what he knows about the assassination because he was asked to do so. He claimed the former CIA operative had Oswald's CIA number, 107, and told him Oswald was paid \$400 a month plus traveling expenses by the controversial agency from June, 1962, until the assassination.

Brading was fronting for Marcello because Marcello "could not afford to get directly involved," Morris told the Rockefeller Commission.

Brading, 49, an ex-convict with a police record dating back to 1934, was arrested shortly after the assassination across the street from the Texas Book School Book Depository building.

He gave Dallas County sheriff's investigators his new name on his California driver's license and got away with it. He was released after questioning because authorities did not know his true identity. FBI agents swallowed the same story when they reinterviewed "Jim Braden" two months later in January, 1964.

Brading told authorities he was in Dallas for several days from Beverly Hills on oil business. He said he was an independent oil operator. He

also said he was not familiar with the Dallas area.

The day before the assassination Brading checked with the U.S. Probation Office in Dallas, which was required for interstate trips for four years after a convict leaves prison. He gave chief probation officer Roger Carroll his real name—not the "Jim Braden" he used after his arrest by deputy sheriffs 24 hours later.

Carroll filed a report of the visit stating Brading "advised that he planned to see Lamar Hunt and other oil speculators while here." Brading later told authorities he never saw Hunt. The son of the late Dallas oil billionaire H.L. Hunt denied ever knowing Brading.

Federal parole records do not show the whereabouts of Brading from the afternoon of Nov. 22 to the afternoon of Nov. 26, 1963, when he checked with the Houston U.S. Probation Office.

"Marcello is the key to the whole thing," Morris said. "Marcello was bitter at the whole Kennedy bunch. In the first place, Robert Kennedy (then U.S. attorney) deported him to Guatemala."

The man who piloted the plane that secretly flew Marcello back into this country is a key figure in Morris' version of the assassination conspiracy. He was David Ferrie, a private investigator for one of Marcello's lawyers, G. Wray Gill of New Orleans.

Ferrie, who died in 1967, was a major figure in the investigation by New Orleans Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison of an alleged plot to kill Kennedy. Garrison had him pegged as the getaway pilot in the plot.

Although Garrison's investigation has since been generally discredited, Morris insists Ferrie is a link between Brading, Marcello and Jack Ruby, who killed Oswald in the basement of the Dallas police station on Nov. 24, 1963. Morris describes Ruby, who died less than two months before Ferrie, as a "two-bit thug who had underworld connec-

tions."

Ferrie, Morris said, piloted planes on which Ruby made trips to Chicago and Miami.

Morris said he also has evidence that Ferrie and Brading knew each other. He asserts he has talked to a New Orleans court clerk who claims he saw Ferrie and Brading meet twice in July, 1963, in a restaurant at New Orleans Lakefront Airport.

Ferrie "worked for the CIA flying guns to Miami and helped train guerilla troops for combat in Cuba," Morris said.

The CIA's motive for wanting Kennedy dead, Morris said, was that Kennedy "was in the process of abolishing the CIA" after the spy agency had "blundered the Bay of Pigs invasion" of Cuba.

The Mafia was a willing partner in the Dealey Plaza killing, Morris said, because of unprecedented pressure being placed on organized crime by a Justice Department headed by Atty. Gen. Robert Kennedy. The pressure included Marcello's deportation.

Brading, Morris asserts, was within walking distance of the Los Angeles hotel where Robert Kennedy was killed in 1968.

Morris said he first met his CIA informant early in the morning of Nov. 24, 1966, at Oswald's graveside at Rose Hill Burial Park in Fort Worth. Then a reporter for the Sherman Democrat, he

had been retained by the Associated Press to write a feature story about the people who visited the grave on the third anniversary of Oswald's death.

He surprised the then CIA operative who was the only person at the graveside. He was placing a vase of yellow mums, which Oswald's mother claims he sends her each anniversary, and a note on the Oswald headstone.

The neatly typewritten note read "Lee Harvey Oswald. Did he assassinate the President? Was he truthfully accused? Guilty, yes? Or was he innocent? He has left all the world confused."

Morris said the CIA agent was "shocked when he saw me" at Oswald's grave. The operative pleaded with Morris not to print anything about the incident, but Morris told him he must because the scene was so unusual.

Later, the man was thankful Morris didn't identify him in any way in the AP article and both became good friends. He showed Morris his CIA credentials and said he was quitting the agency because it was "ruthless and dangerous... and nothing but hired killers on the taxpayers' payroll," Morris said.

The CIA operative gave Morris "the name of another man that I went to and started checking on and Brading came up," the author said. □

