

LOYALIST } COLLEGE
OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY
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Dear Harold,

This article suggests much but establishes only that:

I A shady operator was near the assassination site.

II The F.B.I. did an inept job.

The only possible link is a vague hint of a Ruby-Braiding link.

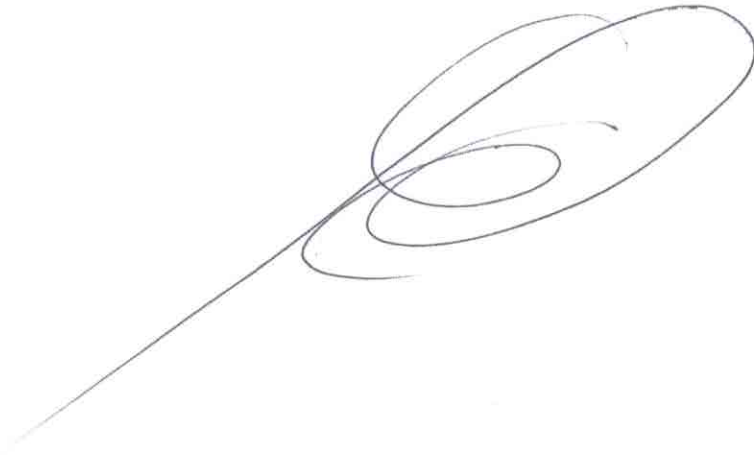
Perhaps, a further inquiry could be productive but given this theory, an oil conspiracy is more likely than a Mafia solution.

The CIA did use Mafia figures in an attempt to kill Castro but to put an emphasis on the Mafia is absurd.

Given this logic, Fawcett is a great suspect given his Marcella ties! What

do you make of this?
Until we know the
identity of The Tramps,
They are suspect. The fact
that they have never been
identified to me at
least seems odd.

Sincerely,



Dealey Plaza '63

Footnote to the assassination— or first step on an unexplored avenue?

by Earl Golz

DALLAS, Texas—Each day people from all over the world still visit Dealey Plaza in Dallas. They gawk at the sixth floor window of what was once the Texas Book Depository Building and take snapshots.

The Warren Commission's conclusions—as doubted and pregnable as they are today—are still the official history book version. A series of investigations, starting with author Mark Lane's book through District Attorney Jim Garrison's gumshoe fiasco in New Orleans, have failed to force a re-opening of the case. During the past decade, conspiracy proponents have tried to implicate the Central Intelligence Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Communist Party, the Dallas Police Department, anti-Castro and pro-Castro Cubans, Texas oil moguls, the Ku Klux Klan, the Minutemen, and lately some of the Watergate cast.

Most investigators, however, have not seriously examined the possibility of organized crime having a hand in killing Kennedy.

The President's brother, Attorney General Robert Kennedy, was reason enough to ask that question. He had set in motion plans for organized crime strike forces in most big cities in the early 1960's. Chicago Mafia boss Sam Giancana had felt Kennedy's wrath and went to jail for contempt of court. Carlos

Marcello, organized crime chief in New Orleans and in absentia in Dallas, was deported briefly to Guatemala under the direction of the younger Kennedy. And Marcello's friend, Teamster president James R. Hoffa, was on his way to prison, another Kennedy victim.

Ed Reid, in his book "The Grim Reapers," writes about a late 1962 meeting Marcello had on his Churchill Farms plantation near New Orleans with three other associates. Marcello, Reid

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*'Had the FBI known Brading's real identity,
the thrust of the Warren Commission probe
could have swung toward the Mafia'*

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reported, complained about Robert Kennedy's harassment. "Take the stone out of my shoe!"

"Don't worry about that little Bobby son-of-a-bitch," Reid quoted Marcello. "He's going to be taken care of."

However, Marcello "knew that to rid himself of Robert Kennedy he would first have to remove the President," Reid wrote. "Any killer of the attorney general would be hunted down by his brother: the death of the President would seal the fate of his attorney general."

Marcello had "already thought of using a 'nut' to do the job," Reid wrote.

If investigators had shown more alertness over the arrest of one person in Dealey Plaza on November 22, 1963, the case for organized crime might have pre-empted all other theories.

What follows is not an attempt to wrap up the assassination neatly—or to go further than the evidence will warrant. Call it an interim memorandum—first steps along a largely unexplored avenue.

The man in question was Eugene Hale Brading, a 48-year-old ex-convict with underworld connections and a police record dating back to 1934. Federal agents are now investigating reports that Brading has an important role of courier for laundering the mob's illegitimate money to Amsterdam and Zurich.

Assassination buffs speculate his role in Dealey Plaza may have been one of the mob's observers

and its bag man.

Brading was given no more than a few brief paragraphs in one of the Warren Commission's 29 volumes and was treated no more sensitively than dozens of nonentities rounded up by authorities for questioning on November 22.

Brading gave Dallas deputy sheriffs an alias. They let him go. He got away with the same ploy when FBI agents re-interviewed him several months later, in January 1964. Had they known his real identity, the thrust of the Warren Commission's probe could have swung toward the Mafia.

Brading told authorities he was "Jim Braden" of Beverly Hills, California, in Dallas on "oil business." He was taken into custody after he had stopped off

an elevator in the Dal-Tex Building across the street from the Texas Book Depository, minutes after the assassination. Two months earlier he had changed the name on his California driver's license to Braden.

While Brading waited two to three hours in the sheriff's office for the quizzing, his hotel roommates beat it and checked out at about 2 p. m. on November 22, leaving Brading behind. This was 90 minutes after the assassination. Why did they leave so abruptly? When they had registered on November 21 the desk clerk noted they would stay until November 24.

Brading was asked by sheriff's deputy C. L. (Lummie) Lewis

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what he was doing across the street from the Texas Book Depository. He said he was an "oil dealer" from Beverly Hills walking down Elm Street, trying to flag a taxicab, when he "heard people talking saying 'My God, the President has been shot.'"

In a signed statement he gave Allan Sweatt, chief deputy sheriff, Brading said "Police cars were passing me coming down toward

the triple underpass and I walked up among many other people and this building was surrounded by police officers with guns and we were all watching them.

"I moved on up to the building that was surrounded and asked one of the girls if there was a telephone that I could use and she said 'Yes, there is one on the third floor of the building where I work.' I walked through a passage to the elevator they were all

getting on (freight elevator) and I got off on the third floor with all the other people and there was a lady using the pay telephone and I asked her if I could use it when she said it was out of order and I tried to use it with no success...."

Brading was taken into custody after the elevator operator pointed him out as a stranger in the building. He told authorities he was descending from the third

the village VOICE, November 28, 1973

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bullets struck the President. This would mean Brading moved farther west—after passing the Dal-Tex and Texas Book Depository buildings—before he retraced his steps to the Dal-Tex to try to phone. The day before the assassination Brading had checked with the U.S. Probation Office here, still required for his out-of-state travels after four years out of the penitentiary. He gave chief

floor where he had gone to try to telephone his family. They apparently believed him. Lewis and Sweatt recently identified Brading in an enlarged photograph of a man standing in a crowd about halfway between the Texas Book Depository and the triple underpass. The photo, taken about 10 minutes after the assassination, showed a group of people on the sidewalk about parallel with the spot where the

Dealey Plaza

the village VOICE, November 28, 1973

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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 Braden "advised that he planned to see Lamar Hunt and other oil speculators while here." Hunt is one of the sons of Dallas oil billionaire and

right-wing leader H. L. Hunt. Years later Brading reportedly told an official of the Los Angeles Police Department he didn't go to the Hunt offices in downtown Dallas on November 21 because of his criminal record.

He said one of his traveling companions, Morgan H. Brown of Los Angeles, did show up November 21 in the Hunt reception room with two other men seeking a meeting with one of the Hunt sons. It was Brown, who has since served time in a California prison, who had signed

for the third floor suite for Brading, himself, and possibly others on November 21 in the Cabana Hotel in Dallas.

A spokesman for Lamar Hunt said the name Braden "didn't mean a thing to him, nor did the other three names. I checked back on the calendar that year and if they came up to see him, they didn't get in to see him because they are not on the calendar for having seen him," the Hunt spokesman said.

A former Hunt Oil Company official, however, said he recalls seeing Braden and the others in the receptionist's office November 21, waiting to see Lamar's brother, Nelson Bunker Hunt. He said he didn't know if they ever got an audience with the oilman, who is the most outspoken conservative of the Hunt brothers.

"Ostensibly, these people came up on oil deals," he said. "I mean, that's what they told the receptionist out there."

An old friend of the Hunt brothers who first met Brading almost 20 years ago said Morgan H. Brown, Brading's traveling partner, "knew the Hunts very well—knew Lamar and Bunker and all of them." Brown and his wife and other couples played "mixed poker" in Dallas with the Hunts about 25 years ago, he

woman, Connie Trammell, to the Mercantile Securities Building here for a job interview with Hunt the morning of November 21. He said he attended to some tax matters with his attorney in the same building while Miss Trammell went up to the Hunt offices.

The Warren Report also relates that Ruby met the evening of November 21 with friends from Chicago in the Bon Vivant Club of the same Cabana Hotel where Brading and Brown were staying. The Brading-Brown suite faced what would have been Kennedy's parade route up Stemmons Freeway the next day, had the President not been killed.

Hotel records show that 39 local telephone calls were made from the hotel suite November 21-22. Two long distance calls were recorded—one to a Mobile, Alabama, oil well driller and a one-minute person-to-person call the night of November 21 to an unpublished number in Houston. Most likely these were not Brading's calls but an associate of his insists he never makes calls from anything but a pay phone, no matter how lavishly he is living otherwise.

The hotel records also show Brown checked out at 2:01 p. m. on November 22, while Brading was waiting to be interrogated at the sheriff's office.

As far as federal parole records relate, Brading's whereabouts are not known from the afternoon of November 22 to the afternoon of November 26, when he checked with the Houston U. S. Probation Office.

Brading's parole office in Los Angeles, Sam Barrett, had told him he had permission to travel for 10 days in Texas, leaving November 20, on oil business. He

was to go directly to Dallas and remain until November 25, when he was to go to Houston and then to Opelousas, Louisiana, according to Barrett's instructions. Barrett said the Dallas probation office reported that Brading had "promised to notify us of his departure from Dallas unless this should occur over the weekend (November 23-24). We told him if this should occur then he might check in with Mr. (Lawrence) Miggins in Houston on Monday, November 25."

Barrett said Brading in November 1963 "had expressed a kind of contempt" for Brown over a painful financial transaction and "wanted as little to do with him as possible." The parole officer said he was surprised to learn they traveled together to Dallas on November 21 and shared the same hotel suite. He also noted, however, that Brading's company with Brown may have been cause for revoking his parole.

Barrett said he also was surprised to learn that Donald D. Ford, a vice-president of J. Paul Getty's Tidewater Oil Company offices in Houston, did not remember nor had records of any contact with Brading when Brading traveled to Houston on September 15, 1963. Permission for Brading to make the 10-day business trip to Houston "in connection with Tidewater Oil Company litigation" was asked the U. S. Parole Board on September 11, 1963, one day after the California Department of Motor Vehicles had changed the name on his license from Eugene Hale Brading to Jim Braden for "business reasons."

On September 13, the day the Dallas Times-Herald first printed

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said.

Jack Ruby, the Dallas nightclub owner who killed Oswald, also was heading for Lamar Hunt's offices November 21. But he, too, contended he never went upstairs.

Ruby told Warren Commission investigators he drove a young

came in 1934 when, at the age of 19, he was sentenced to state prison in Kansas for burglary. He got out on parole in 1939 and three years later was arrested in Miami for operating a gambling house. He was arrested three times for selling World War II gas ration coupons on the black market and was sentenced to one year in jail the third time. He was arrested in 1948 in Camden, New Jersey, where organized crime flourishes, as a material witness in a criminal case.

In addition to his underworld connections, Brading has seemed to have an affinity with the Teamsters Union during the past 15 years. Fresh out of prison in 1960, he married a wealthy widow of a Teamsters official from Chicago who accidentally shot himself with a .45—twice, in the

The Decker ultimatum, which got front page play with photographs, made Brading a public figure in Dallas.

Yet Brading, 11 years later, was to tell the FBI during his assassination interview that he was "not familiar with Dallas." He said from his California home that he "had been in Dallas twice before, but that was over 10 years ago," the FBI report stated.

Despite his lavish style of living, Brading never lost his touch for groveling for loot. About three months after the assassination, he pleaded guilty to shoplifting after pushing a cart full of groceries out the door of a Safeway store in West Hollywood without going through the check-out counter. He paid a fine of \$56 for trying to get away with \$20.14 worth of food.

Brading's first taste of prison

a 12-year sentence, he was paroled from a federal prison. He and his partner, Victor Periera, both went to prison for embezzling \$50,000 from a wealthy Roswell, New Mexico, widow after she was conned into marrying Periera. Their 1951 convictions were appealed all the way to the U. S. Supreme Court before they lost in 1951.

In retrospect, Brading got tougher treatment in Dallas County for being a vagrant than he did when sheriff's deputies encountered him 11 years later near the assassination site. In 1952, after Periera paid Brading's \$50 vagrancy fine here, Dallas Sheriff Bill Decker refused to release either man unless they both left Dallas County in 48 hours.

Brading complained that he and Periera were being harassed and Decker shot back, "You're in my county now." He could have added back then that suspected organized crime contacts caught visiting in Dallas County got more degrading treatment than a black person violating the law.

The vagrancy rap stemmed from Brading's lingering presence, without any apparent effort to earn his take, at the Dallas area mansion of D. A. Little, president of Magnolia Oil Company. Little had died and Mrs. Little had become Periera's sixth wife after a whirlwind courtship.

liaison for some Californians, including Brading, who had owned the leases.

Ford said his daily reminder had a note that Bauman "called me and will come by on September 17." He couldn't find a subsequent note that Bauman had come by on September 17 so "he may have been in contact with Braden at that time and may not have followed up—may not have come by."

Brading seemed to be deceiving his Los Angeles parole officer on trips to Texas in late 1963. Why? If he was not involved in an assassination plot, did he have other reasons? Who was the real Brading/Braden?

For one thing, he was a natural born swindler who was accustomed to living high off the hog, thanks at least in part to the rich women he married. Some women whom he stung, however, also gave him trouble. In 1959, after serving almost five years of

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an unofficial report that President Kennedy would visit Dallas in November, Brading was given permission to go from Los Angeles to Houston on September 15 "to discuss business with a Mr. D. D. Ford, land man with Tidewater Oil Company (now Getty Oil Company)."

According to the Warren Report, Oswald, on his mysterious trip to Mexico from New Orleans, was to have left Houston by bus about 2 a. m. on September 25, the last day of Brading's visit to that city.

Ford told this reporter that a check of his daily reminder book for 1963 shows that "the only time I have in any way shown him (Brading) here in Houston was November 26." He said he was dealing directly with Dallas oil promoter Roger L. Bauman in September 1962, on the possible purchase of production rights by Tidewater of a gas field near Opelousas. Bauman was the

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stomach. The Bradings lived in what was once Bing Crosby's luxurious home on the 18th hole of the Thunderbird Country Club in Palm Springs, California.

Two months after the assassination, Brading became a charter member of the Teamsters-financed La Costa Country Club about 20 miles south of President Nixon's Western White House at San Clemente.

Brading's wife, the Teamsters official's widow, had her marriage dissolved with Brading about one month before the assassination, after learning he was still married to another girl or two. In all, Brading's marriages, at last count, were pushing one dozen, according to an informed source on the West Coast.

In the late 1960s, he returned to Dallas to marry the rich widow of the founder of a Cadillac agency. Her money began shrinking fast and the relationship crashed after a brief stint. Brading's last venture into matrimony about two years ago involved a wealthy Mexico City girl from whom he inherited a Lear Jet to travel abroad and live in Mexico and Spain, as well as La Costa.

Brading was traveling abroad before the assassination, however. An associate remembers he returned from Switzerland with a new vicuna coat, popular at the time because of the scandal involving President Eisenhower's top aide, Sherman Adams.

Brading liked to dress well and

was "a notorious name dropper," the associate said. This might have meant he used the names of Donald D. Ford and Lamar Hunt to get permission from his parole officer to come to Texas when he was actually meeting with "the lowest echelon of people" on his oil deals, he said.

"If you'd listen to Braden talk, he dealt only with J. Paul, J. Paul, Jr., and Walter and George," the associate said. "He was on a first name acquaintance with these people (Gettys). And if you'd listen to him long enough, your head would swim with the names he'd drop.

"He'd be a perfect courier. Of course, tying Braden to all this is kind of hard to feature because with all of his name dropping, I've never heard the man drop

any name that wasn't a public figure of a top-flight citizen of the highest caliber."

"I've never heard him say anything about Costello or Marcello. Of course, an operator of that caliber wouldn't because he's such a pro and he's so well grilled in his methodology that it's just drummed into him. "He's a perfect cover man."

It's a good enough line with which to leave, for the moment, the Braden story. But maybe the questions that no one has bothered to ask and no one can answer about the JFK assassination will get better attention in the next decade than they did in the last.

EARL GOLZ is an investigative reporter on the Dallas Morning News.