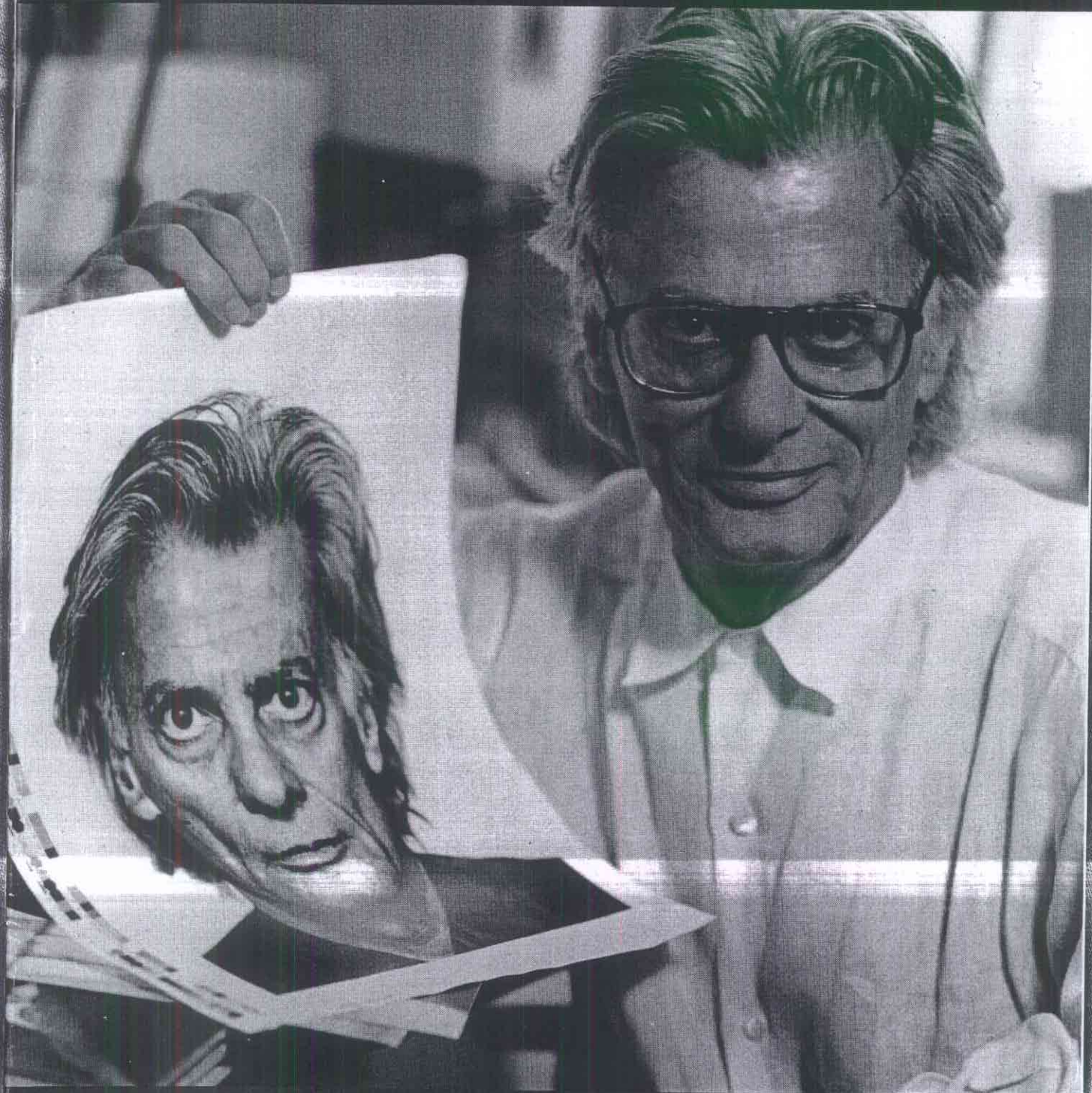




# AT RANDOM

No 6

BOOKS AND BOOKPEOPLE FROM RANDOM HOUSE • FALL 1993



**ALL PICTURES, NO WORDS: AVEDON LOOKS AT HIS LIFE**

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

E.L. Doctorow • Naomi Wolf • William Styron • Mavis Gallant • Ron Chernow

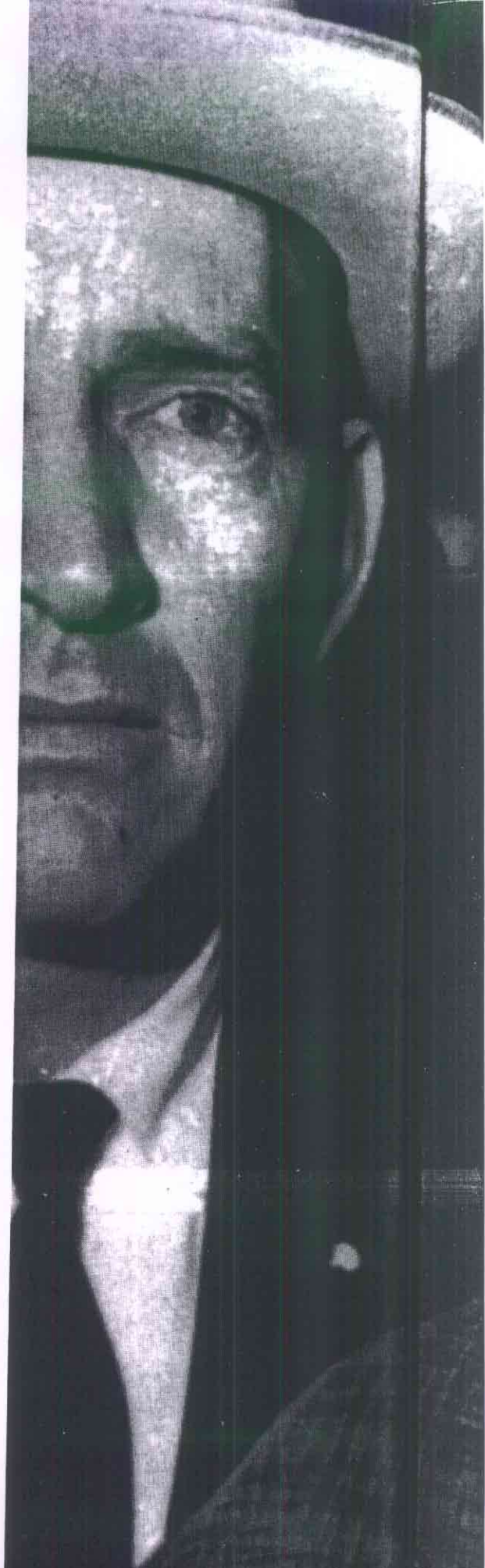
# THE MAN WHO KILLED KENNEDY

BY CARSTEN FRIES

**T**he thirtieth anniversary of the assassination of President Kennedy in Dealey Plaza, Dallas, Texas, will be commemorated in a fitting way this November: by laying to rest the myriad of doubts that have tormented the American people since 1963 about who killed him and why. It was not the KGB. It was not Castro. It was not the Mafia. It was not the sinister cabal of military and intelligence officials suggested by Oliver Stone's movie *JFK*. It was Lee Harvey Oswald—but it was not the Oswald portrayed in hundreds of books and articles.

Gerald Posner, the author of *Case Closed* (Random House, September) and of this judgment, originally set out to reexamine all the evidence. He interviewed almost two hundred individuals connected to the case, some of whom had never before revealed what they knew. In going back to primary sources and witnesses, he made discoveries, such as the undisclosed files of New Orleans attorney Jim Garrison, that will resolve many controversies. He found flaws in the Warren Commission report. He created his own index to the report and concluded that the only other one, prepared by Sylvia Meagher, reflected her bias that Oswald was innocent. He spent many hours discussing Oswald with his Russian-born

UPI/TELEPHOTO



**A DETERMINED PERSONALITY:**  
Oswald felt he lived in a world of  
intellectual inferiors



wife, Marina. And he had a unique interview with Yuriy Nosenko, the KGB officer who was first responsible for Oswald after he defected to the Soviet union (see following excerpt). Nosenko has been in hiding in the U.S. since his own defection.

But most of all Posner came to the conclusion that the character and role of Oswald were drastically misunderstood and purposefully ignored. "While it's important to understand every aspect of the case, including possible conspiracies, the question of why John Kennedy was killed is only answered by studying Oswald's life in detail," he says. From childhood neglect to his less-than-distinguished career in the Marine Corps to his startling defection to the Soviet Union and disaffected return to the United States, Oswald is shown in *Case Closed* as a sociopathic, often violent individual whose day-to-day existence was punctuated by bizarre fantasies. "Oswald felt he lived in a world of intellectual inferiors, and that no one appreciated his intelligence and great worth," explains Posner. "Writers who describe him as a pawn of dark forces have no understanding of the man. He was not weak, but a determined personality who knew what he wanted and went after it."

Gerald Posner is a lawyer whose interest in the assassination reaches back to his time as an undergraduate at Berkeley in the early 1970s. By that time the Warren Commission's conclusion that Oswald was the lone assassin had been under steady assault" he says. "I read many of the leading conspiracy books and later, in law school, closely followed the investigation of the House Select Committee on Assassinations." He began by cross-referencing the leading conspiracy accounts and investigating their theories "as if preparing for a legal case."

Reaction to *Case Closed* is likely to be intense. Posner expects to be the target of personal attacks and of charges that he is part of a continuing cover-up. "The [conspiracy] buffs hold on to their beliefs with an almost religious fervor, oblivious to contrary evidence. It seems to me that what threatens them most is the truth. Many recoil from it, wanting instead to believe anything that raises doubts. The real Oswald is the same disturbed archetype who has figured as the shooter in eight assassinations—or attempted assassinations—of American presidents." ■

**Carsten Fries** is a production editor at Random House and the managing editor off *At Random*.

An edited excerpt from *Case Closed* by Gerald Posner

## THE ORDEAL OF OSWALD'S KEEPER

**Y**uriy Nosenko sought permanent asylum in the U.S. in January 1964, only two months after the Kennedy assassination. His story stunned the CIA. He claimed to be a lieutenant colonel responsible for compromising Americans visiting Moscow. That meant Oswald was under his jurisdiction when the ex-Marine first defected to the Soviet Union. After the assassination, he was temporarily assigned to investigate whether there was ever any KGB-Oswald relationship. According to Nosenko, although Soviet intelli-

gence kept Oswald under surveillance, it viewed him as mentally unfit, had not debriefed him, and had no relationship with him. If that was true, it meant the KGB and the Soviet Union were absolved of any complicity in JFK's murder. If it was false, Nosenko could be a phony defector, intended, among other things, to deflect the Warren Commission from focusing on evidence of the real Soviet role with Oswald. The overall question of whether he was a bona fide defector or a KGB plant become the most divisive issue within the agency since its estab-

lishment. Is Nosenko a bona fide defector, and is his information about Oswald reliable?

Nosenko first made contact with an American diplomat in 1962, at the Geneva Arms Conference. The CIA dispatched thirty-seven-year-old Tennant "Pete" Bagley and an agent fluent in Russian, George Kisevalter, to meet Nosenko four times at a safe house near Geneva's center.

CIA transcripts reveal that at those meetings, Nosenko provided critical leads on a number of intelligence cases. Among other

disclosures, he exposed KGB spies in the U.S. embassy in Moscow, the British admiralty, and in the U.S. Army; revealed new Soviet surveillance technologies; pinpointed the location of hidden microphones in the U.S. embassy; and startled his CIA contacts by claiming that both Canadian ambassador John Watkins and prominent U.S. newspaper columnist Joe Alsop were homosexuals who were compromised by the KGB.

Bagley was ecstatic with the information, and not only considered Nosenko bona fide but the most important Soviet agent ever recruited by the CIA. However, Bagley was shocked when he returned to CIA headquarters because the chief of counterintelligence, James Jesus Angleton, was convinced that no matter what Nosenko said, he was a KGB plant.

The reason for Angleton's distrust was another defector, Anatoliy Golitsyn, who had arrived in America six months earlier. Golitsyn had told the extremely cynical Angleton that the CIA was penetrated by a high-ranking KGB agent code-named Sasha. The possibility that the CIA was compromised, as British intelligence had been by Kim Philby, was Angleton's worst fear. Accepting Golitsyn's revelations without hesitation, he embarked the CIA on a twenty-year hunt for a phantom mole that destroyed careers of good officers and split the Agency.

Not only was Angleton convinced the mole existed, but Golitsyn farther warned him that the KGB would send "defectors" intended to deflect the interest in Sasha. That is how they viewed Nosenko. When Nosenko was

asked if there was a KGB mole in the CIA, he said no. Told of his reply, Golitsyn reached an instant conclusion: "This is disinformation. The KGB wants me to appear bad to you. This is going to damage my leads." Bagley, too, was soon convinced Nosenko was a plant.

Completely unaware the CIA thought he was a double agent, Nosenko prepared for his eventual goal, defection. For the remainder of 1962 and all of 1963, he

In 1964, the CIA drafted 130 questions it intended to ask Nosenko about Oswald but never did. Gerald Posner put these questions to Nosenko and the substance of his answers are included in *Case Closed*

committed to memory the details of more than three hundred new leads and almost two thousand names for the Agency. In January 1964 in Geneva he used his pre-arranged signal to call a meeting with the CIA. The same two agents who had met him in 1962, Bagley and Kisevalter, flew in from Washington.

Nosenko first surprised the agents by announcing, "Gentlemen, I am not going back, so how about that?" Bagley, convinced Nosenko was a fake, tried to dissuade him from defecting, encouraging him to stay in the Soviet Union even though Nosenko had disclosed his knowledge about Oswald. At a second meeting, a week later, the disagreement over his defection continued, with Nosenko increasingly concerned the KGB might

uncover his treachery. Five days later, in the final meeting, Nosenko announced he had received a cable ordering him home immediately. He feared the KGB had unmasked him and his return meant arrest and execution. The story of the cable left the CIA with little choice since the Agency feared the repercussions of losing an agent who might have information about Oswald. Headquarters authorized his defection, and within days he passed through Germany and was in the U.S.

Nosenko's statement about the recall cable has been used to contest his credibility. There was no cable. Confronted with this fact, Nosenko explained he fabricated the story because he feared that otherwise Bagley would not allow him to defect. The story about the cable accomplished its purpose, forcing the CIA to spirit him to the West. "To this day, I do not regret making that false statement," he says. "Without

that 'cable,' they would have brushed me off" If he had been a plant, the KGB would almost have certainly provided him with a cable to keep his cover story intact.

When Nosenko first arrived in the U.S., he was placed in a safe house. He did not know that his CIA debriefers were interested only in exposing him as a liar. However, when J. Edgar Hoover learned about him, he immediately obtained access for the FBI. A deep-cover FBI informant at the Soviet mission to the United Nations, code-named "Fedora," personally confirmed to Hoover that Nosenko's defection had caused an uproar in the highest Kremlin circles.

The FBI believed Nosenko about Oswald and supported his request to testify before the Warren

Commission. But Angleton outmaneuvered them. Richard Helms, then deputy director of plans, met privately with Earl Warren on June 24, 1964, and informed him the CIA doubted Nosenko's credibility. Helms warned that if the commission used his information and it was a lie, it would ruin the rest of their work. Nosenko did not testify and is not even mentioned in the commission's twenty-six volumes.

Helms did not tell the chief justice that since early April, with the backing of Attorney General Robert Kennedy, Nosenko had been under hostile interrogation, treated as a captured spy rather than a voluntary defector. The FBI was denied access to him, and his CIA jailers expected him to crack within a few weeks. Robert Kennedy called frequently to discover whether he had confessed yet.

Nosenko's ordeal had started on April 4, 1964, when he was driven to a three-story safe house in a Washington suburb. He was given a medical exam, and then strapped to a polygraph machine. The operator, Nick Stoiaken, knew the CIA thought Nosenko was a liar. After an hour of questions, Stoiaken made a big show of discussing the prearranged results with some of the CIA personnel. Then Bagley appeared and denounced Nosenko as a "liar." Several guards rushed into the room. Nosenko was stripped, inspected inside his mouth, ears and rectum, and then marched into the house's tiny attic that would serve as his prison for more than a year.

The windows were boarded over. The only furniture was a metal bed fastened to the middle of the floor. Guards watched him twenty-four hours a day through a wire mesh built into the door. The room had no heat or air con-

ditioning, and during the oppressive Washington summers it was like a furnace. Nosenko was given little food, allowed to shower only once a week, and not allowed a toothbrush or toothpaste. Human contact was banned. There was no television, radio, reading material, exercise, or cigarettes. He was told he would be kept like that for twenty-five years. The interrogations, which began within days, were extremely aggressive. He was constantly attacked as a KGB plant and told his only chance for freedom was to confess. Over the months, the CIA agents became increasingly frustrated that he refused to admit he was a bogus defector. Robert Kennedy had long since stopped telephoning for an update, and the Warren Commission had released its report. Nosenko was a forgotten man, a prisoner of the CIA.

On August 13, 1965, after sixteen months closeted in the attic, Nosenko was moved by the CIA to a new prison, a top-secret facility constructed especially for him. Located on the grounds of the CIA's training facility, Camp Peary, it made the attic seem luxurious. On a heavily wooded site on the ten-thousand-acre compound, Nosenko was locked inside a ten-foot-by-ten-foot windowless concrete bunker. A single bare bulb illuminated the room's only piece of furniture, a metal bed so small that his feet hung over the edges. The luxuries from the attic—a pillow, sheet, and blanket—were gone. The bunker accentuated the weather, either brutally hot or freezing cold. A ceiling camera monitored him. His allotted food was lowered to the subsistence level. Documents reveal that while the government spent \$1.5 million to construct and man the prison, it spent less than a dollar a day

feeding him.

After four months, he was finally allowed to walk in a small enclosed yard that had been constructed outside his jail. It was the first time in nearly two years he had seen daylight or been in fresh air. The yard was encircled with a twelve-foot-high chainlink fence, and several feet beyond was an eighteen-foot-high fence of solid material. The CIA did not want anyone, even at Camp Peary, to see what had become of him.

He tried to keep his sanity in a variety of ways. When his jailers finally allowed him to brush his teeth after two years in captivity, he was so starved for something to read that he secretly kept a printed piece of paper from the toothpaste package. Though it was only a list of ingredients, he kept rereading it until his guards saw him and confiscated it. Another time he painstakingly created a makeshift deck of cards from shreds of paper napkins. The guards watched him for several weeks and destroyed it on the day he completed it. The same happened to a chess set he fashioned from pieces of lint.

Meanwhile, each subsequent Soviet defector who knew of the Nosenko case vouched for his bona fides. Most of them were quite surprised to learn that the CIA thought Nosenko was a plant, and told the Agency of the KGB's panicked reactions when he had fled to the West. Nosenko had been tried in absentia and was to be executed on his recapture. But to Angleton and Golitsyn, the moment a defector vouched for Nosenko's bona fides, it branded that defector as a plant. Angleton concluded that in the decade after Golitsyn, the Soviets sent twenty-two phony defectors to the U.S. Today, the CIA and FBI consider every one of those defectors as bona fide.

Instead of being persuaded by growing evidence that Nosenko might be authentic, Angleton and Bagley grew increasingly impatient and debated drugging him to hasten his breakdown. Internal documents show an assortment of drugs were considered, including a so-called truth serum; an amphetamine, and even LSD. Nosenko is positive he was drugged, recalling injections by CIA doctors, followed by days of panic and terror. "Once, following an injection, I couldn't breathe," he remembers. "I was dying." His guards dragged him to a shower, where they ran alternating hot and cold water to revive him.

In October 1966, two and a half years after he was placed into solitary confinement, and shortly after the incidents with drugs, a second polygraph was administered. Nosenko recalls it was "even uglier than the first." The same operator, Nick Stoiaken, conducted the test. But instead of asking yes-and-no questions as on the first test, he spent an hour calling Nosenko a "liar" and asking demeaning questions about alleged homosexuality. Then Stoiaken took a lunch break, leaving Nosenko strapped to the machine. Guards ensured he did not move.

When Stoiaken returned a couple of hours later, he continued the questioning for another two hours. No matter how Nosenko responded or what the polygraph showed, Stoiaken said he was a liar. It was conducted so he would fail. Shortly after the test, Bagley presented him a fake confession, that admitted he was a plant and there were moles inside the CIA. Nosenko took a pencil and turned to the last page. Summoning his last reserves of strength, he scrawled near the signature line, "Not true."

Bagley was infuriated. His desperation was evident when he soon made a list of how the festering case could be closed. Included among his choices were "liquidate the man," "render him incapable of giving [a] coherent story (special dose of drug, etc)," or committing him to a "loony bin without making him nuts."

After the second polygraph, Nosenko was at his lowest point since defecting. But unknown to him, his fortunes were about to

## Blindfolded and handcuffed, Nosenko thought the CIA was going to kill him

improve. In June 1966, Richard Helms became the Agency's director. Although undecided about Nosenko's bona fides, he knew the matter had to be resolved. Within several months of Helms's taking office, he assigned a complete review to Bruce Solie, a sixteen-year veteran and the Agency's most experienced spycatcher. To offset Helms's moves, Angleton and Bagley produced a nine-hundred page report detailing why Nosenko was a plant.

Without deciding whether Nosenko was bona fide, it took Solie six months to determine that the Angleton/Bagley work was seriously flawed, more an unchallenged prosecutor's brief than an impartial report. As a result of Solie's preliminary conclusions, CIA guards entered the concrete bunker, blindfolded, handcuffed, and shackled

Nosenko, and stuffed him into the backseat of a car. He thought they were finally going to kill him. Instead, they drove him to a small CIA safehouse in a Washington suburb. After three and a half years, he was no longer in solitary confinement.

He was soon moved to a farm house, where he was given a comfortable bedroom, ate normal meals, and could exercise. However, he was still the Agency's prisoner, and during 1968 Solie interviewed him, often six days a week. He found a very different man than the one portrayed by Angleton and Bagley.

In August 1968, after eight months of interviews with Solie, Nosenko had a third polygraph, the only valid test he was ever given. It was monitored by several Agency departments. He passed it, including those questions about whether he was telling the truth about

Harvey Oswald. One month later, Solie submitted his final 283-page report. It was the first CIA document to accept Nosenko as a bona fide defector. J. Edgar Hoover received a copy and dispatched FBI agents to interview Nosenko for the first time in over four years. They discovered nine new counterintelligence cases and seventy-five leads on pending cases.

While Angleton watched with frustration, an independent review by the Soviet Division also declared Nosenko a bona fide defector. In March 1969, Helms employed him as an independent consultant on the KGB, at a salary of \$16,500 per year, and arranged for limited compensation for his illegal imprisonment. By April, five years after he was locked into an attic, he was released from all security restrictions. He changed his name and married within a year.

All six directors of Central Intelligence who followed Helms agreed that Nosenko was a bona fide defector. The FBI never wavered from its initial determination of his bona fides. The official CIA position today is that Nosenko is the most valuable KGB defector to come to the West as of 1964.

WHEN OSWALD DEFECTED in 1959, a foreigner could not visit the USSR without a visa and the purchase of a preset package tour. That ensured all foreigners were in regular contact with personnel of the Soviet tourist agency, Intourist, which, according to Nosenko, was an organization made up entirely of KGB informants or agents. An Intourist guide, Rima Shirokova, played an important role in Oswald's first weeks in Russia.

Oswald arrived in Moscow on October 16, 1959. He was taken by an Intourist representative to the Hotel Berlin. Since the KGB had no inkling that he was anything but a student visitor, it had absolutely no interest in him until Rima Shirokova informed them that, on his second day in Moscow, Oswald had told her he wanted to defect and become a Soviet citizen.

From that moment Nosenko took charge of the matter. Although Oswald had declared his intention to defect, Nosenko is adamant the KGB did not interrogate him. Anthony Summers charges that "is transparent nonsense." Garrison says, "The newcomer [Oswald] underwent extensive interrogation, although when, where, and under what circumstances have never been revealed."

"Not true," insists Nosenko. "The KGB was not at all interested in him. I cannot emphasize that enough absolutely no interest."

But what of Oswald's Marine background and his service at Atsugi, where the U-2 spy plane was based? The Soviets had made the U-2 a top priority and finally shot one down on May 1, 1960, less than seven months after Oswald's arrival. "People who raise this point do not understand intelligence work," Nosenko says. "I am surprised that such a big deal is made of the fact that he was a Marine. Even the House Select Committee kept saying to me, 'But he was a Marine—that must have interested the KGB.' I was astonished at their naïveté. So what is the big deal that he was in the Marines? First, he wasn't in the Marines any longer, but even if he had come to us in a uniform, we still would have had no interest. What was he in the Marine Corps—a major, a captain, a colonel? We had better information already coming from KGB sources than he could ever give us.

"If he had been a Marine guard at the U.S. embassy, then we would have been very interested. But that wasn't the case with Oswald.

"As for Atsugi, we didn't know he had been based there. The media section of the KGB would have seen Oswald's public interviews, but they would not necessarily have transferred that information to us. Even if we knew about Atsugi, it is unlikely we would have spoken to him. Our intelligence on the U-2 was good and had been for some time." The Soviets already had considerable knowledge about the plane. They had often tracked its path, speed, and altitude. Intelligence experts on the U-2 concur that Oswald could not have contributed to its eventual downing, as some have suggested.

Based on the information it received, Nosenko's department

vetoed Oswald's request for citizenship. "We had no reason to let him stay," remembers Nosenko. "Soviet citizenship was not some thing lightly given out to foreigners and there was certainly no reason to make an exception for Oswald."

In his diary, Oswald wrote what happened after he received the news that his citizenship request was rejected: "I am stunned....Eve. 6.00 Recive word from police official. I must leave country tonight at 8.00 P.M. as visa expires. I am shocked!! My dreams! I retire to my room. I have \$100 left. I have waited for 2 years to be accepted. My fondes dreams are shattered because of a petty official; because of bad planning I planned too much! 700 P.M. I decide to end it. Soak rist in cold water to numb the pain. Than slash my left wrist. Than plag wrist into bathtub of hot water. I think when Rimma comes at 8. to find me dead it will be a great shock. somewhere, a violin plays, as I wacth my life whirl away. I think to myself. 'how easy to die' and 'a sweet death,' (to violins)." [sic]

Oswald was rushed by ambulance to nearby Botkinskaya Hospital. Blood transfusions stabilized him.

Prompted by his suicide attempt, the KGB ordered a mental evaluation. Oswald was transferred to a psychiatric ward at Botkinskaya, where he was kept for three days. "We had two psychiatrists, neither of whom was a KGB doctor, examine him," recalls Nosenko. "One was on the Botkin staff and the other came in from outside. I read their reports. Both concluded he was 'mentally unstable.' It made us feel one hundred percent that he should be avoided at all costs." ■



# Three decades of conspiracy theories—all of them wrong



*Case Closed* begins as a historical study of Lee Harvey Oswald, but in the course of it Gerald Posner explodes the popular conspiracy theories. From home-produced newsletters to such slickly engineered productions as Oliver Stone's movie *JFK*, the Kennedy assassination has spawned a veritable industry of conspiracy theories. Details of apparent discrepancies, supposed cover-ups, and—more bizarre—purported sightings of JFK have been published in everything from supermarket tabloids to “serious” reexaminations from major publishing houses.

Americans are attracted to conspiracies, points out Gerald Posner, especially when they concern the violent or sudden death of a public figure. “Even when the assassin is caught redhanded, as in Sirhan-Sirhan killing Robert Kennedy, there are still some who refuse to believe that he was the lone shooter.” For Posner, it is understandable that the more plausible JFK theories should have a grip on the American imagination. “There is also the troubling disparity between the victim and the killer—that a life of great promise could be ended by a man of such seeming ordinariness. Many people want to believe there was more than just Oswald involved in the assassination, since if he acted alone Kennedy was killed for nothing.” CF

**WRONG:** Oswald was one of two shooters employed by a right-wing Texas conspiracy headed by multimillionaire “Mr. X” in order to dominate the world oil market. (Thomas Buchanan: *Who Killed Kennedy*, 1964)

**WRONG:** Oswald was framed by a conspiracy of right-wing elements including former FBI and CIA officials, Texas oilmen, and LBJ. (Joachim Joesten: *Oswald: Assassin or Fall Guy?*, 1964)

**WRONG:** Author places three shooters at Dealey Plaza, killing the president in their crossfire. (Josiah Thompson: *Six Seconds in Dallas*, 1967)

**WRONG:** Right-wing conspiracy involving two or more assassins. At first suggests that Oswald was part of the conspiracy, but later that Oswald was a patsy. (Harold Weisberg: *Whitewash*, 4 vols., 1965-74)

**WRONG:** Oswald had links to the CIA and FBI; multiple assassins, one of them may have been Oswald; an extensive government cover-up and the mob may have been involved. (Robert Sam Anson: *They've Killed the President*, 1975)

**WRONG:** “Oswald” was actually a KGB double, swapped for the young American when the real

Oswald defected to Russia in 1959. The Soviets killed JFK. (Michael Eddowes: *The Oswald File*, 1977)

**WRONG:** Jack Ruby fulfilled a Mafia contract hit on Oswald, implying that the mob also orchestrated JFK's death. (Seth Kantor: *Who Was Jack Ruby?*, 1978)

**WRONG:** Right-wing conspiracy with the CIA—possibly a rogue group inside the agency—involved. (Anthony Summers: *Conspiracy*, 1980)

**WRONG:** The CIA, together with the FBI and Secret Service, planned the assassination, with Oswald as a patsy. Oliver Stone's movie *JFK* largely follows this theory. (Jim Garrison: *On the Trail of the Assassins*, 1988)

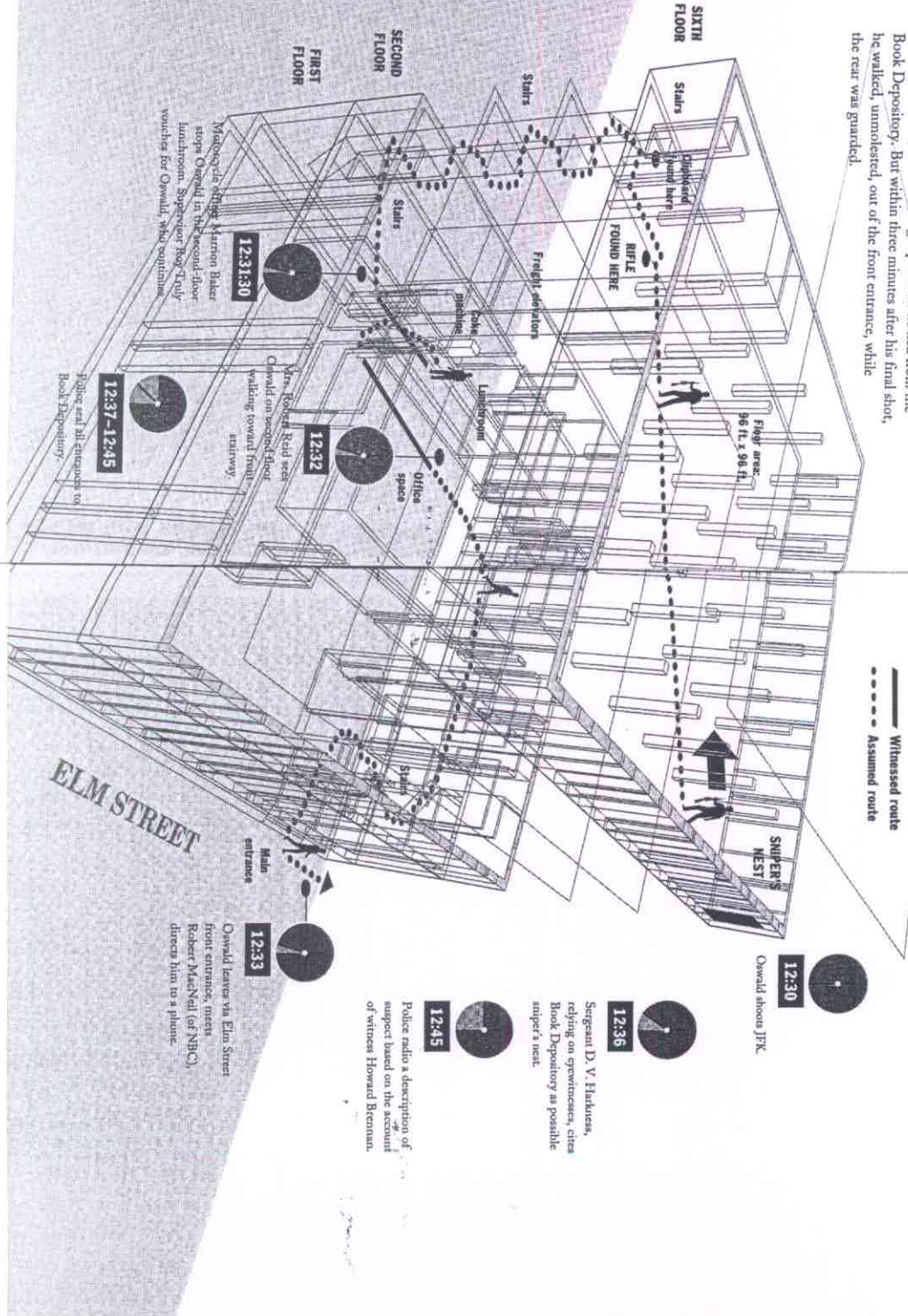
**WRONG:** Leading suspects are the CIA, FBI, and right-wing Dallas oilmen. Oswald is likely innocent. (Jim Marrs: *Crossfire: The Plot That Killed Kennedy*, 1989)

**WRONG:** JFK's wounds mean that was shot from the front rather than from the rear (Oswald's position) according to a Parkland Hospital (Dallas) doctor. (Charles Crenshaw: *JFK: Conspiracy of Silence*, 1992)

Graphic analysis of Posner's study by John Grimwade and Clive Irving, with the help of the Failure Analysis Associates, on the next four pages

# THE ESCAPE

Oswald came very close to being captured as he fled from the Book Depository. But within three minutes after his final shot, he walked, unmolested, out of the front entrance, while the rear was guarded.



12:30

Oswald shoots JFK

12:36

Sergeant D. V. Harkness, relying on eyewitnesses, cites Book Depository as possible sniper's nest.

12:45

Police radio a description of suspect based on the account of witness Howard Brennan.

12:33

Oswald leaves via Elm Street front entrance, meet Robert Maxwell (of NBC), directs him to a phone.

12:31:30

Madame de la Roche, Marion Baker stops Oswald in the second-floor lunchroom. Supervisor Roy Tully watches for Oswald, who continues.

12:37-12:45

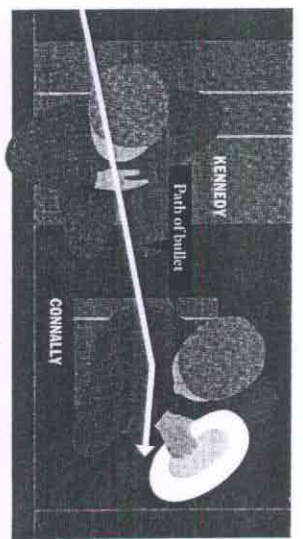
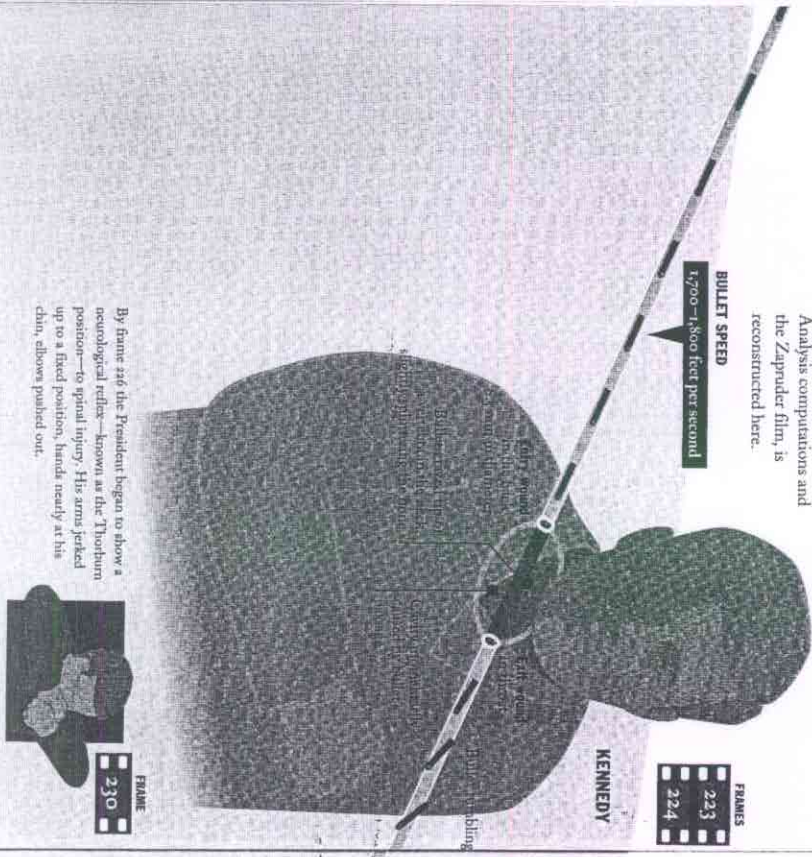
Elliott and all others go to Book Depository.

12:32

Mrs. Robert Reid sees Oswald on second floor walking toward front hallway.

# THE SINGLE BULLET

Oswald's second shot, the first to strike, is the most contentious. It is variously called the "magic" or "pristine" bullet by conspiracy theorists, who contend that no single bullet could have so seriously wounded both Kennedy and Connally. The bullet needed no magic and was not pristine. Its trajectory, based on the Failure Analysis computations and the Zapruder film, is reconstructed here.



**View from above**  
The trajectory, plotted in accordance with the exact postures of both men, was not significantly altered until the bullet was slightly deflected by Connally's rib.

