THE THIRD DECADE

The number of Third Decade subscribers has dramatically increased during the past few months. Though each new reader is a welcome addition, the burgeoning circulation nevertheless underscores the sad fact that much excellent work from earlier editions remains relatively esoteric. Readers are once again reminded that copies of past issues can be obtained.

As a bonus to our patient readers, this critical double-issue is accompanied by the revised Dan Rather In Dallas piece that provoked significant response after appearing in the September 1990 issue. An excerpt from Evans' book The Rather Narrative, it proves particularly timely given Mr. Rather's recent obfuscatory (whether wittingly or not) effort on 48 Hours. Originally commissioned by The Third Decade, this book focusing on Mr. Rather's Dallas controversies and the numerous links between Dallas and other political shootings is slowly but surely attracting notice around the country.

Charter subscribers who have not obtained the complete book will find significant new information in this addendum (forgive the unusual format, since it has been grafted from TTD and text pages.) Newer readers unaware of the Dan Rather controversies will undoubtedly be intrigued. All readers have permission to copy and circulate this chapter as long as they include the information as to how the entire text can be obtained.

Again, thanks for your patience regarding the inconvenient but necessary growing pains. Though Dan Rather In Dallas appeared at the tail end of our seventh year of publication, in just eighteen months since we have grown nearly sixfold. This is just one of many notable pieces our newer "serious researchers" might want to familiarize themselves with. Write for more details on others.

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DAN RATHER IN DALLAS*

by

Monte Evans

"The President's motorcade would end at a railroad overpass just beyond an old brick building with a name no one knew--the Texas School Book Depository...our last film drop was to be staked out just on the other side of the overpass, and we were short a man to staff it. And I said, well, what the hell, I'm not doing anything, I'll go over...I picked out my spot on the other side of the railroad tracks, beyond the triple underpass, thirty yards from a grassy knoll that would later figure in so many conspiracy theories." Dan Rather, from his autobiography, The Camera Never Blinks, p. 114.

Perhaps no temporal truth in all human history has proven more elusive than that of the John F. Kennedy assassination conspiracy. Carefully concealed since its conception, it has been shielded from the public eye by flawed or outright bogus government "investigations," the violent deaths of scores of potentially crucial witnesses, and a vast welter of "misinformation" often reported as virtually a gospel-etched-in-stone by a gullible and/or compromised media. As our community of "serious researchers" struggles through that blizzard of misinformation intended to blind us from the mysterious truth, we intermittently find our ranks thinning as some become too discouraged to continue on, unable to further bear the heartbreaks of false hopes endlessly dashed. The seemingly infinite misinformational trails that lead nowhere, that leave us choking on their worthless dust and provoke the profoundest despair, are a veritable Death Valley comprising the remains of countless researchers who could carry on no longer in that vast desert of lies and half-truths. Even in this census year, there could be no counting the number of researchers, many of them extremely competent and dedicated, who were swept away to oblivion by the tidal wave of misinformation originally disseminated by the United States government and propagated a hundred-fold by the nation's mass media.

Like a volcano erupting lava, the American mass media spews out mountains of molten misinformation that engulfs and sears us all. Indeed, even the staunchest researchers, arduously defiant of government hostility and unintimidated by the hundred-odd murders connected to the case, are often humbled in frustrated shame as our uninformed peers parrot the endless "Oswald did it" or the fail-safe "Castro-did-it" tripe forever "reported" by the mass media.

It is thus the most extreme irony that our community's greatest hope for rejuvenation and a vindicating respect in the eyes of Americans lies in the very epicenter of that volanco of untruths, the seemingly inexhaustible fountain of misinformation that is the American mass media. The one great hope we have to acquaint our fellow Americans with the sheer enormity of the JFK assassination cover-up is directly proportionate to our ability to acquaint them with the fascinatingly peculiar story of that mass media's brightest star, the most familiar information authority in America today, a man whose name and face are recognizable to virtually every last citizen: CBS News anchorman Dan Rather. However obscured by the United States government and the mass media "watchdogs," the mysterious truth of the John F. Kennedy assassination does exist, even if only visible as loose threads finer than gossamer. Yet none of the truth's threads have tantalized serious researchers more than the ones cobwebbed around a mass media personality who has profited mightily from that murder, the man who has proven himself a major pillar of the "Oswald alone" myth with his constant efforts of support for that fable. Particularly when we find the Dan Rather threads weaving directly to the very crime scene.

A native Texan, Dan Rather graduated from Sam Houston State Teacher's College with a journalism degree in 1953. After a brief stint with the Marines, he launched

This chapter is excerpted from The Rather Narrative - Is Dan Rather The JFK Conspiracy's San Andreas Fault?, by Monte Evans.

This book details not only the JFK conspiracy, but also the connections between that crime and the shootings of Robert Kennedy, Martin Luther King, George Wallace, Allard Lowenstein, John Lennon, Ronald Reagan and the "Son Of Sam" victims. It is available to Third Decade subscribers for $15 (the Last Hurrah Bookshop sells it for $18 plus postage.) The book features over 1,000 footnotes, and includes more conspiratorial evidence in the shooting of President Reagan than has ever been published anywhere. No assassination student's library is complete without it.

The Rather Narrative can be ordered from: BARBARA BOOKS, Box 565, BARRINGTON RI 02806

Read this book and you'll understand why Dan Rather fights us so hard.

his career as a reporter in his hometown Houston. Moving from newspapers to radio to TV, he first gained national notice by courageously covering a 1962 hurricane story. That campaign earned him a position as a correspondent for CBS. The network---which we now know was a primary CIA "asset" at the time---assigned the chunky, crewcut Texan to be its bureau chief in Dallas. Some 18 months later, CBS decided to consolidate its two southern bureaus in Dallas and Atlanta into a single one at New Orleans. Dan Rather was chosen to be the new larger bureau's chief correspondent. He spent the next several months shuttling between Dallas and New Orleans, laying the groundwork for the transition.

Meanwhile, at that very time, another Texan ex-Marine with a background even more fascinating than Rather's would also be meandering back and forth between Dallas and New Orleans. His name was Lee Harvey Oswald, and he was the principal character in the assassination conspiracy that was then taking root in the latter city and would soon kill John F. Kennedy in the former.

The assassination conspiracy proved successful on November 22, 1963, when JFK's suddenly somnambulant Secret Service detail steered him into a sophisticated crossfire ambush. JFK was fatally hit some 7½ or 8 seconds after the first shot was fired. Finally ready to clear out of the killing zone, Secret Service agent Greer gunned the limousine down the sloping Elm Street toward the triple underpass that led to Parkland Hospital. Meanwhile a stunned crowd of onlookers screamed in horror and/or gave chase toward the grassy knoll, from which no fewer than seventy assassination eyewitnesses believed gunfire had originated. Somewhere among them---though by no means certain exactly where---was the CBS News New Orleans bureau chief, Dan Rather.

To begin, exactly where was Dan Rather while the team of snipers fired their bullets at John F. Kennedy? Over the years, Rather has consistently claimed to have been standing by the on-ramp leading to the Stemmons Freeway on the opposite side of the triple underpass that President Kennedy was approaching when the shots rang out.[1] He was separated from the grassy knoll assassin(s) by a twenty-five foot high railroad grade that had five sets of train tracks. Rather, who, as the CBS southern regional news chief, was in Dallas to coordinate the network's coverage of the President's trip to Dallas, claims he was standing there waiting for a roll of news film to be tossed from a mobile camera unit following the President. That, however, seems unlikely; why would the CBS southern bureau chief assign himself the menial task of retrieving a bag and relaying it to the KRLD (the Dallas CBS affiliate) studios? Any "gopher" could have handled that chore while the bureau chief monitored the newsroom for bulletins; after all, the President of the United States was parading downtown and anything could have happened. Wouldn't it seem that the bureau chief would want to be ready in the studio for any sudden development instead of posting himself at such a remote station? This makes absolutely no sense at all.

It also defies logic that Rather would choose that particular spot, the on-ramp of a highway on the western side of the underpass, because not only would the motorcade have been moving much slower on the Dealey Plaza side of that underpass, but the Dealey Plaza side was also closer to KRLD, which was located in the Dallas-Times Herald Corporation Building some nine blocks away.

However, these peculiarities pale in contrast to the report in Jim Marrs' 1989 book Crossfire that recently discovered news footage showing the fateful limousine racing up the on-ramp reveals no sign of Dan Rather.[2] Nor do still photographs taken of that scene. Rather claims he was standing there when the limo raced by, but the newsreel and photographs dispute his account. So if he wasn't by the on-ramp, where was he?

Though Rather has been consistent in his claim to have been by the on-ramp, his report of his activities immediately after the murder has been anything but. In March 1964, he told John Mayo the following, which Mayo published in his book:

"I was stationed along the expressway leading to the Trade Mart. Our production crew in the motorcade was going to throw me several reels of exposed film as they passed. I had a cab waiting to rush the film to the KRLD studios about three minutes away for developing. It's a standard procedure we use to get the film on the air faster. The Presidential limousing sped past with several Secret Service cars close behind. Although I didn't see the President, I knew that something was wrong, so I jumped into my cab and went straight to the KRLD studios. About the time I got there the first bulletin was coming off the AP wire." (Italics added.)

This account, given just four months after the unforgettable experience, is lucidly specific.

However, in his 1977 autobiography, The Camera Never Blinks, Rather's story changed significantly. This time he claimed:

> I had to hotfoot it back to the station...I started off at a full run...I topped the railroad grading a few yards away and paused long enough to shade my eyes...The moment I cleared the railroad tracks I saw a scene I will never forget. Some people were lying on the grass, some screaming, some running, some pointing. Policemen swarmed everywhere...there was nothing but panic wherever you looked. [I decided] to hustle back to the station. I ran every step.[4]

Obviously, we have a major discrepancy on our hands. Did Dan Rather hack it or hike it to the KRLD studios? He can't possibly have it both ways; either the 1964 story or the 1977 story is wrong.

If Dan Rather did proceed through Dealey Plaza on foot---it depends on which version of his you subscribe to---he was entering an area where scores of people were fleeing, in the hot pursuit of at least one sniper (and possibly two) who had fired from behind the picket fence straddling the grassy knoll. (And where police officers with drawn guns encountered suspicious persons who eluded arrest by flashing bogus Secret Service credentials. No Secret Service agents were assigned to the knoll---suspicious in itself---and none left the motorcade to pursue the gunmen.)[5] Yet this trained, observant reporter somehow failed to notice the surging wave of witnesses spilling into the parking lots behind the fence, though this was happening right in front of him. Nor did he notice the two men fleeing frantically through that parking lot immediately after the shots were fired.[6]

Rather then claims to have spent several seconds shading his eyes against the sun while scanning the disintegrating motorcade for the news media's "camera truck."[7] This part of his story rings true, because at that angle the sun would have been directly over his eyes. However, his statement poses another disturbing problem: how did he know the camera truck was well back in the motorcade? Indeed, it is the extremely curious positioning of the media's camera truck in the rear of the motorcade that disturbs many researchers to this very day. The camera truck always followed the President for obvious reasons; but in Dallas on November 22nd somebody scrambled the motorcade, so the cameras were unable to capture the assassination on film.[8] That, of course, proved fortunate for the conspirators.

Obviously, Rather had to know that the camera truck was in the rear of the motorcade; there is no doubting it. Yet, in his autobiography, he offers this statement: "In those days the truck often traveled well back in the motorcade; because of Dallas, it now usually travels in front."[9] That is absolutely false. The camera truck had always been in position to film the President, before and after Dallas. November 22, 1963 was the suspicious exception to that rule.

We also have to wonder why the CBS bureau chief would post himself in such a remote spot for a film that wouldn't feature the President. This is another contradiction in common sense.

Rather claims that he then ran the "five blocks" to KRLD studios (it was actually nine blocks);[9] arrived in the newsroom before anyone realized anything out of the ordinary had happened; hollered at his underlings to turn up every radio and police band they had; conversed via telephone with a CBS colleague stationed at Dallas Trade Mart; dispatched reporters to the scene of the crime; listened to the welter of frantic police radio activity, trying to decipher their codes; twice dialed Parkland Hospital, on the first call receiving word from an unnamed "doctor" that the President was shot dead and on the second receiving confirmation from a "priest" (again unnamed) that JFK had indeed been killed.[10]

Rather's autobiographical narrative continues: (see next page)

I only knew that a tumultuous few minutes had passed since my four-block run from behind the grassy knoll. On the United Press International news wire the first words of a bulletin dictated by Merriman Smith had clattered to the rest of the world:

DALLAS, NOV. 22 (UPI)-THREE SHOTS WERE FIRED AT PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S MOTORCADE TODAY IN DOWNTOWN DALLAS. The time was 12:34 P.M.[11]

Obviously, given that the President was shot at 12:30 P.M., this account is impossible. Rather could not possibly have engaged in even a small fraction of the activity he describes before the UPI bulletin of 12:34. Also, JFK's death car didn't arrive at Parkland until 12:35, so how could the hospital have known him dead when Rather called there before 12:34?

It is also very difficult to accept Rather dawdling at the assassination site for maybe a minute and then making it to KRLD by 12:34, at least by the means of transportation (taxicab and running) he claims to have used. He had to move about a half-mile, and he was a 32-year old, slightly overweight man in street shoes. Even as a teenaged football play, he was by his own admission never fleet on his feet (the time pressures perhaps account for his referring to the distance as five blocks on one page and then four on another when it was actually nine.) It is impossible to imagine him running a half-mile in three minutes flat, particularly through the huge, dispersing throngs, to arrive in time for the UPI bulletin (and never mind the other welter of activity he describes). Meanwhile, it is also difficult to accept a taxicab getting him to KRLD in that span of time. Though only a half-mile, it is not a direct route from behind the overpass to downtown Dallas, and he still would have had all that parade-spectator traffic to wend through. It seems to this observer that only an emergency vehicle equipped with siren, or perhaps a motorcycle, could have put him at KRLD in time for the UPI bulletin (it stands to reason that he did make it by 12:34, since nobody in the newsroom was aware anything was wrong.)

In summary, both of Rather's conflicting accounts are suspect---which brings to mind an old Texas proverb: Tell the truth--- it's easier to remember.

Whatever the circumstances of Rather's race to KRLD, there can be no doubt the world's most famous reporter has his story sequence glaringly out of whack in The Camera Never Blinks. That by itself is not suspicious, though it does cast aspersions on his ability as a story-teller, which is basically what a reporter is. However, the next development in the unfolding drama of Dealey Plaza Dan is extraordinarily sobering.

Incredibly, acting on word from correspondent Dan Rather in Dallas, CBS radio announced that President Kennedy was dead at 1:16 P.M. CST, seventeen minutes before the official announcement of same.[13]

Dan Rather claimed the pre-mature announcement was due to his reporting the words he had heard from the "doctor" and the "priest" at Parkland to a colleague in Dallas while being overheard by CBS executives on their phone system's multi-hookup. He wrote:

> It has never been clear exactly how, and by whom, the signal was given to announce the bulletin and play the [national] anthem. Months later, Mort Dank [a CBS editor in New York] told me, "None of us were ever sure ourselves."[14]

Rather claims he was totally distraught by the early CBS radio announcement, even though he was certain his information was correct. He continued:

> The official announcement was made to the press at 1:33 P.M., Dallas time, by Malcolm Kilduff, the assistant press secretary. More than half an hour had passed since CBS radio reported the death of the President. It does not take much imagination to know what was going through my head most of that time. I knew if the story was wrong I would be seeking another line of work. Rightfully so. I also knew I wasn't wrong.[15] (Italics added)

This is incredible. Dan Rather makes no secret that hearing the news of the official announcement of President Kennedy's violent death relieved him of an intense inner-turmoil, the kind of turmoil one feels when one's job is obviously on the brink of extinction. We can only marvel at the literal obscenity of a man who needed John F. Kennedy dead more than anything in the world eventually evolving into a four-million-dollar-per-annum anchorman. Obviously, except for perhaps the assassination conspirators themselves, nobody in the United States was happier to hear of the President's passing than Dan Rather. What is particularly galling is Rather making not even the slightest effort to conceal his emotional priority: it does not take much imagination to know what was going through my head most of that time. The man takes great pains to conceal a lot of other things about himself, but not his deeper concern for his job than for the President's survival. If he had to write in his autobiography about what he had felt in 1963, he might have at least offered us a token, "But of course, my seeking another line of work was trivial compared to the President's situation."

The second italicized portion of the above passage is another interesting statement. I also knew that I wasn't wrong. But how did he know he wasn't wrong? According to Rather, his sources were an unnamed "doctor," an unnamed "priest," and, through a colleague at the Trade Mart, the chief of staff of Parkland Hospital. But, upon examination, these "sources" evaporate into thin air. Who was the "doctor" who first told Rather that the President was dead? Parkland was in a near-panic state of emergency, with the President of the United States and the Governor of Texas in separate trauma rooms with critical gunshot wounds. What "doctor" had time to converse with Dan Rather over a switchboard phone? As for the "priest," Rather's claim sounds suspiciously like the Associated Press quotation of a priest who "administered the last sacrament of the church to President Kennedy." The "quotation" went out over AP's wire at 1:23, seven minutes after the CBS announcement and ten minutes before the official confirmation of JFK's death. However,[16] it eventually turned out that the priest in question never said any such thing;[17] and Rather claimed to have heard him before the false AP quote. Nor did the other priest present acknowledge any such remark or confirmation of Kennedy's death to any reporters. Finally, why did Dan Rather take the word of the chief of staff of Parkland Hospital when that official was not even at the hospital? Did it ever occur to Rather that perhaps a false rumor that JFK was dead might be a Kennedy ruse to discourage a second wave of attack against him until he could scurry to safety somewhere?

However, the President was dead, Rather's job was secure, and he began coordinating the CBS coverage of the tragedy. Somehow he learned of a Dallas dress manufacturer, Abraham Zapruder, who had filmed the murder with a home movie camera, and off he went in search of the cinematic amateur who had stumbled upon the crime of the century. Here we have an extremely curious situation. According to Rather:

> We started a search for anybody and everybody who might have been there carrying an eight-millimeter camera. [KRLD station manager] Eddie Barker's people began calling all over Dallas. And slowly we picked up a trail. Someone had seen a man standing at a certain spot. Someone else thought he was in the retail clothing business (wholesale, it turned out.) We ran our leads through the FBI and the Dallas police. Finally, we had a name: Abraham Zapruder.[18]

Though replete with high drama and suspense, this account is very much improbable. Who were the two "someones" who saw "a man standing at a certain spot" and who thought Zapruder was "in the retail clothing business?" Once again, Rather offers no names for his seemingly endless supply of anonymous benefactors.

However, Rather proceeds past the point of all credibility when he says CBS "ran our leads through the FBI and the Dallas police." The President of the United States is shot dead, the Governor of Texas is wounded, a Dallas policeman is shot dead, several suspects are in custody,[18] and Rather would have us believe authorities took time out to help him track down somebody said to be carrying a movie camera? And again he offers no names. We are left to ponder who brought Zapruder to Rather's attention, and who told him where to find the Dealey Plaza film-maker.

It is the author's opinion that Zapruder must have been followed from the scene of the crime. It strains all credulity that such a vague description could result in such a quick identification in a city as large as Dallas. Rather's statement that someone thought Zapruder was in the retail clothing business is telling, because Zapruder did indeed go straight to his office after filming the assassination.[19] His "tail" probably reported that the cameraman had entered a clothing establishment.

Whatever the circumstances of the Rather-Zapruder meeting, the newsman was able to make headway with the merchant. He wrote:

> When we reached him Zapruder did not know what he had. We didn't either, but we helped arrange for Eastman Kodak to process the film. This job had to be done by the best equipment. It had to be done fast. And it had to be be kept confidential.[20]

Now we run up against some very serious problems.

Researchers have long wondered what happened to six extremely important Zapruder film frames. Two brief sequences representing fractions of seconds, numbers 155-56 and 208-11, have never been located (though Rather claims only one frame was lost.)[21] These two missing sequences might have provided concrete proof of conspiracy. According to Robert Groden, doubtlessly the leading Z-film expert, frames 155-56 coincided with the first gunshot heard on the acoustical tape of the assassination, and frames 208-11 could have shown a bystander across Elm Street snapping a picture that would have provided a perfect synchronization of the movie.[22] The mystery of the missing frames was perhaps solved in 1980, when assassination researcher David Lifton wrote:

> [After discovering numerous discrepancies] I then began exploring the possibility that the Zapruder film itself had been altered sometime before it became Warren Commission evidence in 1964, perhaps even before it went to Life [magazine, which purchased it from Zapruder] on November 23, 1963...But alteration of the film required a film laboratory with the sophisticated apparatus normally used by Hollywood to create special effects. Was the original Zapruder film at some point taken to such a laboratory? Officially, the film went only from Zapruder to Kodak in Dallas; then to the Jamison Film Co. in Dallas, where three prints were made...then back to Zapruder, and then to the vault at Life. I suspected it had taken a secret detour, but I could find no direct evidence to prove that.
>
> Then, in 1976, among records released by CIA under the Freedom of Information Act, Paul Hoch found CIA item 450, a group of documents indicating that the Zapruder film was at the CIA's National Photo Interpretation Center (NPIC), possibly on Friday night, November 22, 1963, and certainly within days of the assassination. NPIC is one of the most sophisticated photo labs in the world.[23] (Italics added.)

* - This is mistaken. Frames 208-11 aren't missing, but were obviously tampered with. Only #s 155-56 are actually missing.

Meanwhile, we have another nugget of information from perhaps the unlikeliest source, David Belin. As Counsel to the Warren Commission and Executive Director of the 1975 Rockefeller Commission that whitewashed CIA complicity in the assassination of President Kennedy, Belin is the undisputed champion of the "Oswald alone" myth. However, in his recent book Final Disclosure Belin, perhaps unwittingly, reveals:

> The person who had actually first contacted Abraham Zapruder after the assassination was Dan Rather, CBS News, who, after finding Zapruder, took the film and was able to have the processing of the film expedited.[24] (Italics added.)

This is fascinating. Was Dan Rather the first person to acquire possession of the most precious piece of evidence in the assassination case? If so, that might solve the mystery of how the CIA lab was able to acquire it before Life purchased it on November 23rd. It is also yet another disturbing discrepancy in Rather's autobiography concerning his consistently curious behavior in Dallas that tragic weekend. According to Rather, he never had possession of the film, though he acknowledges obtaining Zapruder's name from mysterious sources and expediting the processing. But, according to Belin, Rather "took the film." Belin, it should be noted, is a lawyer's lawyer; he is the most competent Warren Commission apologist because he is very rarely caught making statements that can be proven to be untrue. Even his fiercest adversaries, who number many in the serious researcher community, must concede his supreme advocation skills, however suspicious his outright refusal to acknowledge the countless conspiratorial aspects of the case. If Belin says Rather "took" the film, it is a safe bet that Rather did exactly that.

Rather can probably be believed when he says he only saw the movie when Zapruder's lawyer showed it to him in the lawyer's office on November 23rd; had he seen it earlier, he would have certainly reported its contents to television viewers. Also, it stands to reason that Rather didn't personally take the film to the Kodak lab or Jamison Film because, as he readily admits in his autobiography, he was ready to show it on the air without Zapruder's permission and damn the consequences. (When Rather realized he might lose out on the bidding for the movie to Life, he said to himself: If I have to, I'll just knock [the 59-year old Zapruder] down, grab the film, run back to the station, show it one time and then let him sue us. He makes this startling admission in his autobiography, and even adds, "Later, someone at the network suggested half-jokingly, but only by half, that I should have done just that."[25] Only a fateful twist scuttled his assault-theft plans.)

It appears that someone else was in league with Rather when it concerned the Zapruder film; anyone ready to knock an elderly man down to steal his movie could not possibly have resisted an opportunity to view and broadcast the film if he had had access to it after its development. Obviously, somebody else---probably whoever "expedited" the film to Kodak---must have turned it over to the CIA for its apparent tampering at the NPIC labor. But who? We must keep in mind that Rather makes constant references to anonymous helpers in his Dallas story; one of these shadowy assistants is probably responsible for the "secret detour" suggested by Lifton. On this particular count Rather's ruthlessness ironically seems to exonerate him from having the film directly to NPIC himself, or returning it from there; if Belin is right, if he was the first person to take possession of the film from Zapruder, he almost certainly turned it over to someone else. Obviously, that someone else must have had a mighty influence on Rather for him to have surrendered it so readily.

After finally viewing the Zapruder film in the lawyer's office on November 23rd, Rather made his famous "honest mistake" that has haunted him for years. Rushing to the KRLD studios, he requested and was granted immediate air time to describe what he had seen. According to Rather, President Kennedy's head snapped "forward with considerable violence" upon receiving the head shot. This, as we now know, is totally at variance with the truth. Eventually a bootleg copy of the film made its way into the public domain - Time-Life failing to keep it under wraps as it had hoped

after purchasing it from Zapruder - and the American public saw that, contrary to what Rather had reported, the President's head had snapped backward (and leftward) after taking the shot.[35] That, of course, was consistent with a fatal shot fired from the grassy knoll to the right-front, where the overwhelming majority of witnesses placed the sniper at. Rather's "mistaken" version, of course, aligned perfectly with the "one-rifle-from-behind" cover story.

When confronted with his obvious error after the film finally reached the public in 1973, Rather simply claimed he had made an honest error because Zapruder's lawyer hadn't allowed him to take notes.[36] However, it is difficult for anyone seeing the film even once to forget the dramatic left-rearward reaction of the President's skull as it exploded in a pink halo of blood and brain. The sheer horror of it is startling and invariably leaves an indelible impact. Rather then tried to explain his "mistake" by making mention of the head's "double-movement," obviously referring to the forward movement of JFK's head from frames 312-to-313 - a timespan representing a mere one-eighteenth of a second, immediately before the much more obvious rearward thrust of the stricken President.* Though visible on a frame-by-frame perusal, at normal speed the forward head snap is difficult for even a trained eye like Rather's to observe; and even if he did see the forward head snap - which is extremely unlikely, given the conditions - it only makes his failure to notice the much more dramatic rearward snap even more inexplicable than it already is.

Whatever the case, there is no denying that Dan Rather glar-

*See David Lifton's Best Evidence, pp. 51-52 and 331-32 for excellent analysis of the head's double-movement.

ingly mis-reported the contents of the Zapruder Film. What makes this particularly disturbing is that he was the only broadcasting reporter allowed to view the movie.[37] Time-Life, a media giant with extensively intimate connections to the CIA[38] -more on this later - kept the film from the public for almost ten years before a "bootleg" copy found its way into the hands of assassination researchers.[39] It is obvious that some people intended to conceal it from the American public forever, not allowing even reporters to see what it showed: An obvious crossfire that executed the President of the United States in broad daylight while his Secret Service "guardians" merely relaxed and watched the show. Except, that is, for Dan Rather, who did not see fit to mention the most basic picture on it, the horrifying backward thrust of John F. Kennedy after a bullet had obviously struck him in the temple from the right-front, where at least 78 witnesses placed gunfire.

It is also noteworthy that Rather had two opportunities to describe the film correctly. It seems CBS insisted he repeat the first take because of yet another controversial Rather report. The network executives forced Rather to do another take and delete an offensive reference to Jacqueline Kennedy "fleeing" the death car.[40] In actuality, she was reaching out for a piece of her husband's skull that had been blown backward onto the limo's trunk, itself more evidence of a shot from the front.[41] Rather reluctantly omitted the reference, but "I wished I had not."[42] (Rather apparently wasn't so reluctant to refer to Mrs. Kennedy "fleeing" in private conversation; soon the "sick comic" Lenny Bruce was wisecracking about her "hauling ass" out of the limousine. What she was really doing was gathering her husband's brains for stuffing back into his skull.)

Now we will examine why Dan Rather was in Dallas during that

tragic weekend. Remember, he had moved from Dallas to New Orleans only a few weeks previous, having completed the transfer of the southern bureau to the latter city. According to Rather, while in New Orleans he was asked by CBS editor Ralph Paskman for recommendations as to how the network should cover the President's pre-campaign trip to Texas. Rather later wrote:

> I quickly put my report together. The President's swing would take him through San Antonio, Houston, Fort Worth, Dallas and Austin. "This is not a routine trip," I said. "Not routine politically. Not routine in terms of security."
>
> Paskman said, "You'll have to explain that to me about the security."....He was aware that Dallas had been the scene of angry political incidents. His question was intended to draw me out. Whatever manpower CBS assigned to Texas would be based on his judgement.
>
> So I reviewed the recent trouble signs: Adlai Stevenson had been spat upon in Dallas in October; even Lyndon Johnson had been brushed by a picket's sign. The John Birch Society flourished there. IMPEACH EARL WARREN bumper stickers were a big seller. And General Edwin Walker had recently moved to town and was a popular speaker at Right-wing rallies.
>
> The President's advisors were known to be nervous about his visit to Texas. Some Dallas businessmen had urged him to postpone the trip until the temper of the city had cooled.....
>
> ....Paskman agreed that we should lay on double coverage all over Texas and quadruple it in Dallas. He went to the top and fought for more people. When the President's party left Washington, CBS was staffed for the road as fully as a network can be without planning an invasion. Still, I do not mean to invest in this any mystical implications. We were preparing for the unexpected. An incident. A reaction. A story. We were not having visions.
>
> But whatever was to happen in Dallas, I knew we would be in an unusually good position to cover it.[43] (Italics added.)

We can gather from this fascinating passage that Dan Rather knew the President was taking a major security risk in traveling to Dallas; that Rather was in fact responsible for CBS dispatching a huge contingent of broadcasting technicians to that city in anticipation of the President's trip; and that, in Rather's exact words, "whatever was to happen in Dallas, we would be in an unusually good position to cover it."

Several paragraphs later in The Camera Never Blinks, Rather claims that, though he was responsible for the launching of a small CBS army to Dallas, he himself was in that city only by fluke, because someone unnamed "discovered that Friday - November 22, 1963 - was the ninety-eighth birthday of (former Vice President) John Nance Garner.....So it was decided that I would fly that morning to the Garner ranch at Uvalde, Texas, and film an interview, then return to Dallas and feed the piece, with the rest of our coverage, to New York."[44]

This statement would apparently cause Rather considerable

consternation in the period immediately following publication of The Camera Never Blinks. In the July 22, 1977 issue of The Continuing Inquiry, Penn Jones published a savaging review of Rather's autobiography, pointing out numerous inconsistencies and outright lies told by the newsman. Included was this observation:

> Rather reports he went to Uvalde, Texas for an after-breakfast meeting with former Vice President John Nance Garner at his home there, but he doesn't mention the distances involved. He does not bother to tell his readers it was a six hundred mile round trip and that he was back in Dallas before the President's parade.
>
> That kind of timing would have required a jet, we think. Whose jet, Rather didn't say.[45]

Jones apparently struck a nerve, for in ensuing publications of the Camera Never Blinks the passage was altered to "it was decided I would fly that morning to Dallas and feed the piece...." The old words of the Garner ranch at Uvalde, Texas, and film an interview, then return to (Dallas) were each omitted![46] Obviously, Jones had raised an extremely interesting point, for there was certainly no round-trip commercial air traffic from Dallas to Uvalde* that could have enabled Rather to make two 300-mile journeys in just a couple of hours. Rather clearly needed to delete that peculiar sojourn in future editions of his autobiography, because the alteration of prose is particularly glaring when we realize that all of the other inaccuracies we have examined remained intact. Yet the mysterious Uvalde trip was excised. We can only wonder what significance it might have had.

Once back in Dallas, Rather, who had encouraged his network to

* A farming community of less than 10,000 residents.

give quadruple the coverage a President normally received in a heartland city, decided, in his own words, "What the hell, I'm not doing anything, I'll go over" to cover an unmanned film drop. This is yet another glaring inconsistency in Rather's Dallas narrative. On the one hand he would have us believe he is an alert analyst who senses the President might be in danger in that volatile city. But on the other hand he tries to persuade us that he had no reason to hang around the newsroom waiting for bulletins, instead volunteering to man a remote film drop, totally out of communication from the army of CBS personnel he was responsible for massing. Obviously, Rather, who takes pains to assure us his foresight of possible Presidential danger was not invested with "mystical implications," intends to have it both ways by portraying himself as a nonchalant fellow with his feet kicked up on a desk during the Presidential motorcade, shrugging, "What the hell, I'm not doing anything, I'll go over" to man the incommunicado spot.

Whether we give Rather the benefit of the doubt on both ends of that contradiction or not, we must certainly marvel at his good fortune in that film drop just happening to be virtually adjacent to the assassination site. As he modestly told Current Biography twelve years later, "It was simply a matter of having been in the right place at the right time."[47] Indeed. (Rather also told Contemporary Authors that he was writing a play about the assassination, more evidence of his frivolous attitude toward the crime and his perceiving that tragedy as his ultimate windfall.)

So, thanks to Dan Rather's remarkable prescience in getting CBS to quadruple the Dallas coverage, and his great luck in stumbling upon the assassination site, his network was thus the first

to go live to the assassination story, and enjoyed a huge "beat" on its ABC and NBC competition.[49]

Obviously, this was very fortunate for CBS, which, according to Carl Bernstein, was, like Time-Life, not only intimately connected with the CIA but was also "unquestionably the CIA's most valuable broadcasting asset."[50]

Yes, very fortunate. Perhaps the most intriguing phenomenon to compare the great CBS "luck" to is the record "short-selling" spree that swamped the New York Stock Exchange on the morning of the assassination before the shots were fired. According to Lincoln Lawrence, the people prompting that massive short-sell proved extremely fortunate, reaping some five hundred million 1963 dollars (worth at least two billion of their puny 1998 descendants) when the market crashed upon news of the assassination, quite a bonanza for one morning's effort.[51]

So the quadrupling of CBS staff for Kennedy's visit to Dallas proved to be a stroke of good luck for the network. However, one cannot help but wonder why, with so much extra manpower on hand, Dan Rather, southern bureau correspondent in charge of the entire apparat, stationed himself in an out-of-the-way spot to perform a menial task while the President of the United States paraded thru the city streets. The abundance of CBS personnel in hand makes that peculiar chore seem all the more perplexing.

When we recall: the photographs and newsreels of that remote spot reveal no trace of Rather; his two accounts of his movements in the first sixty seconds after the shooting contain glaring and irresolvable discrepancies; his apparent blindness to the obvious conspiratorial activity in the grassy knoll area he was inhabiting; his curious knowledge of the camera truck being out of its

proper motorcade sequence; his haphazard account of the initial assassination coverage at KRLD that is replete with mis-statements and inaccuracies; his mysterious telephone conversations with people that convinced him to declare the President dead before that official announcement; his obvious lack of compassion for the slain President and his widow; his seemingly supernatural discovery of Abraham Zapruder's identity and his remarkable ability to pry cops and FBI agents from the assassination case to help him make that identification; his having "first possession" of the Zapruder film that we now know was tampered with soon afterward; his blatant failure to accurately report the explicit film's most significant feature after being the only broadcaster allowed to view it; his insistence that CBS vastly increase its manpower in Dallas, though he himself saw no reason to wait in the newsroom for bulletins; the seemingly impossible round-trip visit to Uvalde on the assassination morning that was quickly excised from paperback editions of his autobiography after Penn Jones focused on it....when we recall all of these peculiarities, we cannot help but wonder exactly what was going on with the CBS News New Orleans Bureau Chief in Dallas that tragic weekend. In a murder case that is internationally famous as a bewildering murder mystery, it is infinitely ironic that the one man most noted for denying any mystery exists is himself a cauldron of puzzling uncertainty. Indeed, Dan Rather is even a rival to his fellow Dallas-New Orleans ex-Marine Lee Harvey Oswald himself as the most enigmatic figure connected to the John F. Kennedy assassination.

However, whereas Oswald's personal contact with the infamous case terminated that very weekend, courtesy of Jack Ruby, Dan Rather's would not. Indeed, he would prove, if only unwittingly, to be a key player in the massive effort to conceal the truth from the American public for many more years to come.

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For insured mail copy send $18 to: BARBARA BOOKS, BOX 565, BARRINGTON, RI 02806

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Sussex County Chronicle, Lewes, Del., 10/10/90

Barefoot Tin

Dan Rather As Metaphor For Weakness In The Nation's Mass Media

Monte Evans, familiar to many in the coastal Delaware area over the past several years as a continuing statements over the years as a commentator that has been single-minded in his purpose for the greatest part of his adult life. He is obsessed with unearthing and exposing the truth about the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

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A copy of the Journal, including Evans's work, has been sent to the Lewes Public Library.

The lone and driving force behind Mr. Evans's book is stated in a 1964 Bertrand Russell quotation used to begin the final chapter:

"There has never been a more subversive, conspiratorial, unpatriotic or endangering course for the United States and the world than the attempt by the United States Government to hide the truth behind the murder of its recent President."

Dan Rather, because of a series of events and statements dating back to his presence as a newsman in Dallas on the day of the assassination, and most particularly as a man who stationed himself near "the grassy knoll" from where many theorists assert the mortal bullets were fired (not by Lee Harvey Oswald), is established as having been very close to the entire chain of events including assassination and subsequent investigation.

Mr. Evans takes no pains to hide his belief that Mr. Rather's involvement, certain reporting inaccuracies, and his possession of the famous Zapruder film which many say establishes that the mortal bullets were fired other than by Oswald, could make the newsman part of an evil conspiracy of worldwide importance that continues today.

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From his purported position behind the grassy knoll when the shots were fired, to his responsibility for the first public announcement of the President's death some 17 minutes before the latter was made official, from his obtaining the Zapruder film and then mis-describing its contents to millions of television viewers, Dan Rather has proven to be a major player in the story of John F. Kennedy's murder.

Many "serious researchers" of the JFK assassination have long speculated on Mr. Rather's role in Dallas that tragic weekend, particularly when his numerous "mis-statements" of fact are examined with the known truths. Time after time after time, his various accounts have either contradicted themselves, raised serious questions about their sources, and, most crucially, have been proven to be outright falsehoods. Indeed, this extreme supporter of the "Oswald-alone" fraud has provoked widespread suspicion about his exact function at the grassy knoll that tragic day. His various accounts are consistently at variance with one another, and his years of support for the fraudulent Warren Report is quite possibly the major factor in his evolution to four-million-dollar-per-annum network news anchorman of CBS, which Watergate reporter Carl Bernstein has established was "unquestionably the CIA's most valuable broadcasting asset." (Source: Rolling Stone, 10-20-77, p.56.)

The Rather Narrative is a 240-page treatise that includes over one thousand supporting footnotes. It documents not only the extremely suspicious behavior of Dan Rather in regard to the Dallas assassination, but illuminates glaring links between that tragedy and the shootings of Senator Robert Kennedy, Dr. Martin Luther King, Governor George Wallace, Congressman Allard Lowenstein, peace activist John Lennon, President Ronald Reagan and the "Son Of Sam" victims. The author, Monte Evans, is well-known in the "serious researcher" community for the publication of his 1977 "quadrilateral conspiracy" thesis, which maintained that JFK was slain by dispossessed elements of CIA acting in concert with Organized Crime, a hosting Texas Oil oligarchy and a renegade faction of Dixie-jingoistic Pentagon brass. The conceivers and incubators: General Charles Cabell and a Mob-Oil lobbyist cited frequently in The Rather Narrative. The shooters: "Chuck" (Rogers), "Charles Wilson" (Harrelson), a bogus police officer (Hall), a "paunchy, balding" Cuban (Carlos) and "Frenchie" (SARTI-STURGIS.) That cast of characters, introduced by Evans in 1977, has since gained in credibility immensely.

No JFK assassination student's library is complete without The Rather Narrative. Send $18 to: BARBARA BOOKS, BOX 565, BARRINGTON RI 02806