

'JFK' stirs Bee readers' theories conspiracy

Bee Staff

THE CIA killed John F. Kennedy. Or Richard Nixon killed him. Or Lyndon Johnson. That way they could be president. Or Aristotle Onassis. That way he could get Jackie.

Of course, maybe it was the FBI, the Mafia, Hollywood moguls, the Cubans, or Ernest Borgnine. The motives? They are, respectively: Revenge by Hoover, revenge for the war on crime, revenge for Marilyn Monroe, revenge for Bay of Pigs, and who-with-any-kind-of-grip-on-reality-knows?

Ernest Borgnine? What, do we have some sort of bizarre "McHale's Navy"-P.T. 109 connection here that



only the Travis Bickles of the world could possibly understand?

Well, when you ask people to tell you who they think killed JFK, it's like opening the doors to the conspiracy theory smorgasbord, inviting the level-headed and the loon alike to see just which array of culprits is the easiest to swallow.

We asked. You called.

A couple of hundred of you responded to our BeeLine request to tell us who you think killed JFK, whether you accept Lee Harvey Oswald as the lone assassin or, like Oliver Stone's thesis in the mov-

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Conspiracy: If this theory were

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ie "JFK," you think larger forces were at work. You filled the BeeLine phone mailbox to capacity a couple of times, so we weren't able to take all the calls. We apologize.

What we were able to discern, though, is that preponderance of callers didn't have fringe theories; that they were serious folks who have given thought to the assassination theories, especially since the release of Stone's movie. An overwhelming number believe the CIA had some hand in a conspiracy.

NOW, BEFORE all you sane ones out there get upset, we're not calling you loons. We're calling the loons loons. And, of course, you know who you are. Of course. Like the one who called — anonymously (natch) — and claimed that Lee Harvey Oswald is still alive, but has changed his name to Lee Arby Oswald and has opened a fast-food franchise and is waiting for the right customer.

Who's that? Who knows? Maybe ... Ernest Borgnine.

Here's a sampling of comments:

Michael Welch, 41, artist, Sacramento:

"I really don't know who killed Kennedy, but I definitely think the CIA is a real possibility, given their history in Latin America. The media have spent so much time criticizing Oliver Stone. If they would have spent the same amount of time criticizing the Warren Report, considering how ludicrous it was, I don't think we would be in the position we're in now."

Dan Sawyer, 33, insurance sales representative, Sacramento:

"The theory that the CIA assassinated JFK is absolutely correct. What is not understood by 99.9 percent

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— Dan Sawyer, 33, insurance sales representative

of conspiracy theorists is that the CIA was not the planner or instigators of the JFK assassination, although they had their own secondary and less-important reasons for wanting to eliminate Kennedy. The CIA was merely the muscle or the machine used to carry out the orders issued to them by individuals much more powerful than they. Kennedy was actually eliminated by the globalist tri-lateral commission or tri-lateral combine, this group being the torch-bearers of the ominous new world order, or, more accurately, the formation of a one-world government."

Branden Little, 17, student, John F. Kennedy High School, Sacramento:

"I feel that Lyndon Baines Johnson was behind the assassination plot to kill Kennedy, and there's definite evidence to show that he was powerful enough to do that."

Wesley H. Osman, 69, retired, Sacramento:

"I do believe that there is some dimension of conspiracy concerning the Kennedy assassination. I do not

believe that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone. My gut feeling is that the CIA was involved, and maybe even the FBI. ... I think it's imperative to solve this problem because it is a big shadow over the country."

Kevin O'Banion, 32, bus driver supervisor, Fair Oaks:

"I do believe that there was a conspiracy to kill John F. Kennedy because he was pulling out of Vietnam, and he was also cracking down on the Mafia. So the CIA and the Mafia planned to assassinate him."

Jean Carroll, 65, hospital switchboard operator, Carmichael:

"I think at this point in time it doesn't matter. The only reason it keeps resurfacing every couple of years is to write a book or make a movie. Money. Who is ever going to prove anything? Let's let it go."

Jennifer DeLury, 16, student, Oakmont High School, Roseville:

"I always thought that JFK was singly killed by Lee Harvey Oswald. I didn't think there was a conspiracy — until I saw the movie. Now there's no doubt in my mind that there was

put to a vote, many would say yes

more behind it, and the American public was definitely lied to."

Art Stewart, 52, independent salesman, North Highlands:

"I discount most of the conspiracy theories, and I definitely discount Lyndon Johnson. That's gibberish. If there was a conspiracy, it might have involved Fidel Castro. Obviously, with the Bay of Pigs and the quarantine, he definitely had reason to be angry at John F. Kennedy. So there may have been some support there, but basically I think Oswald was working alone or at the direction of Castro, but there was nobody helping him."

Larry Dick, 38, maintenance person, Auburn:

"A president today can't blow his nose without the mass media analyzing it forward and backward for months. In '63, the president gets his brains blown away and the mass media goes to sleep. Where were all the hotshot reporters, all the Dan Rathers? Didn't we have anything that resembles '60 Minutes' in '63? The biggest news story around and you people act like a bunch of gullible schoolchildren."

Dan Graham, 57, California Highway Patrol lieutenant, Sacramento:

"I've seen the movie, and I certainly think it's worthy of Oscar consideration. However, I do not agree with Stone's conspiracy theories. With 35 years of law enforcement experience, I have knowledge of ballistics, and I think the pristine bullet theory — while unusual — is a possibility. I also think the gunshots that were heard and believed to be from a source other than Oswald's rifle very well could have been echoes. I tend to think that Oswald acted alone, based on what I know and my own

background."

Bob Leach, 37, real estate development, Sacramento:

"I recently saw the Oliver Stone movie, and it brought back the horrible memory and the realization that there was definitely a conspiracy, probably involving outlying members of the CIA and other political groups. Unfortunately, I think there's an arrogance among politicians, even today, that dictates the fact that the American public shouldn't know the truth, and that politicians have a better idea of what's good for America than the actual American public does. I think people ought to go back and reinvestigate the issue . . . Our government in the future should be based on the truth to the American public in all cases."

Dorothy Wallace, 57, high school counselor, Citrus Height:

"I thought that the movie 'JFK' raised some very disturbing questions. I have never believed that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in killing the president. I don't think our country has been the same since his death. And I also feel that the government only lets us know that which it wants to let us know, and that continues to this very time. John Kennedy has been discredited as a person and as a politician by the press, and the movie reminded me of what a fine president and person he was."

Pete Brady, 33, public school teacher, Sacramento:

"I believe the movie version makes about as much sense as any of the things I have heard. It certainly doesn't surprise me, and it shouldn't surprise any intelligent person, that agencies of the government of the

United States in cooperation with criminal elements could do something against a leader of this country or a leader of another country. Anyone who believes otherwise is hopelessly naive."

John H. Kaiser, 22, student, American River College, Folsom:

"I think Oliver Stone is completely off base. I think it was actually a Hollywood conspiracy of producers who killed JFK because they felt he was responsible for the murder of Marilyn Monroe."

Larissa Richert, 21, student, CSUS, Orangevale:

"I don't think anyone except the people involved can know who was responsible for the murder of JFK. . . . It's painfully obvious that Oswald didn't act alone, but he may not have acted at all. We have to keep looking for the answer, though. Films like 'JFK' are essential to keep our questions alive. If we ever expect an honest explanation of what happened, we'll have to fight for one. I'll be 59 when the FBI files are opened, and I'll be right there, waiting."