

REFORM JUDAISM

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Union of American Hebrew Congregations

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*Focus on...
DEAD SEA SCROLLS*

**WHEN ASKED
WHAT IS YOUR
RELIGION
1 IN 5 JEWS REPLIED
NONE**

**SPECIAL
WUPJ
SUPPLEMENT:
Reform Around
the World**

**WHAT CAN WE DO
TO BRING GO
INTO OUR I**

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THE BIGGEST BIENNIAL "JFK": THE BIG LIE

OPINION

by Gerald R. Ford and David W. Belin

"JFK": The Big Lie

The media treatment of the Kennedy assassination tragedy and the Warren Commission Report is a microcosm of one of the central problems facing our democratic society: False sensationalist claims are given wide dissemination, the truth is submerged, and the responsible press usually does not undertake sufficient effort to expose the fraud that is being perpetrated. Two vivid examples are the recent series of five one-hour A&E television programs about the Kennedy assassination called "The Men Who Killed Kennedy" and the Oliver Stone-Kevin Costner film, "JFK."

The common denominator of these productions is the big lie—the assertion that the top echelons of our government were conspiratorially involved in the assassination, and that Lee Harvey Oswald was not the lone gunman who killed President Kennedy and Dallas Police Officer J.D. Tippit.

The basic format underlying the dissemination of lies is to cover up the overwhelming weight of the evidence and instead paste together scraps of testimony to form a case for conspiracy and an attempt to cover up the guilt of Lee Harvey Oswald. For instance, approximately twenty doctors have examined the autopsy photographs and X-rays of President Kennedy as members of formal panels. Nineteen of these experts have concluded that all of the shots that struck President Kennedy came from the rear. The twentieth asserts that there was supposedly a simultaneous fourth shot that struck President Kennedy in the head and disintegrated, leaving no physical evidence of the bullet. This odd-man-out appeared repeatedly on the A&E network.

Nowhere does any one of the overwhelming majority of nineteen experts appear in the telecast or in "JFK." Nowhere is there any mention of the fact that they concluded that all of the shots came from the rear and that this conclusion is confirmed by the unequivocal ballistic evidence which shows that the bullet that struck President Kennedy's head and the bullet that passed through President Kennedy's neck and struck Gov. Connally were fired from Oswald's rifle found at the Texas School Book Depository Building. Instead, "JFK" and the television production emphasize the backward movement of President Kennedy's head when he was struck, without telling the audience that wound ballistic experts unequivocally testified that the movement was not caused by the impact of the bullet but was rather caused

by a massive neuromuscular reaction that occurs when there is major damage inflicted to the nerve centers of the brain.

Like the A&E series, "JFK" alleges a conspiracy supposedly including elements of the CIA, with the ultimate proof of the conspiracy supposedly being the killing of Oswald by Jack Ruby on November 24, 1963. Oliver Stone's fantasy involves what Garrison calls "triangulation"—three separate gunmen firing a total of six shots, with Oswald as the "patsy" who is killed by the conspirators' hit man, Jack Ruby. But nowhere in the movie do viewers see anything about the overwhelming evidence that disproves the conspiracy claims, and proves beyond a reasonable doubt that Oswald was the lone gunman, and that there was no cover-



ILLUSTRATION BY FRANCES MIDONICK

up by Earl Warren or by the Warren Commission.

There are some who assert in the face of this conspiracy barrage by the mass media that we will never know the truth. Those of us who served on the Warren Commission and those lawyers on the staff who examined the evidence in depth know the truth—beyond a reasonable doubt. If the press were ever to approach this with the kind of diligence and with the kind of fairness that the American people have the right to expect, then the overwhelming majority of Americans will not only eventually understand the truth but will also understand the deceptive techniques used by the producers of "JFK" and the A&E series. The press owes that obligation to the memory of President Kennedy, to the memory of Earl Warren and, indeed, to the American people.

Former President Gerald R. Ford was a member of the Warren Commission. David W. Belin was counsel to the commission and is honorary vice chairman of the UAHC Board.