

Power still talks about identifying just shot by computer enhancement 35

CBS

Who Killed JFK: The Final Chapter?

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HOST: Dan Rather

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: Linda S. Mason

(File footage of the presidential procession in Dallas, November 1963; footage of Ben Bradlee)

Unidentified Newscaster: (Voiceover) Here comes the first car, and here is the president of the United States.

Mr. BEN BRADLEE (JFK Friend): (Voiceover) He said it to me once very clearly. He said, 'If anybody wants you, they can get you.'

There's nothing you can do about it.

(File footage from Dallas procession)

Mr. MALCOLM KILDUFF (Assistant Press Secretary): (Voiceover) When the first shot was fired, the last thing in the world that even occurred to me was that...

(Footage of Malcolm Kilduff)

Mr. KILDUFF: ...the president could have been shot because, you know, this is America and that--this sort of thing doesn't happen here.

(Alternating file footage of President Kennedy's motorcade and footage of Harold Norman)

Mr. HAROLD NORMAN (Oswald's Co-Worker): I could hear the shots--boom! Then click-click--boom! Then, click-click--boom!

Newscaster: (Voiceover) Apparently, something is wrong here. Something is terribly wrong.

(File footage of procession; of John Connally from 1988)

Mr. JOHN CONNALLY (Governor, Texas): (Voiceover) I knew the shot was fatal. It was one of those heartrending things that you just could not understand.

'My God, how could this be happening?'

(File footage of Lee Harvey Oswald; footage of Tony Zoppi)

Unidentified Reporter #1: (Voiceover) Oswald, did you shoot the president?

Mr. LEE HARVEY OSWALD (Alleged Assassin): I didn't shoot anybody, sir. I haven't been told what I'm here for.

Mr. TONY ZOPPI (Nightclub Reporter): (Voiceover) There were a lot of people saying they should kill Oswald.

A lot of people.

(File footage of the murder of Oswald; footage of William Vanden Heuvel)

Unidentified Reporter #2: (Voiceover) Lee Oswald has been shot!

Mr. WILLIAM J. VANDEN HEUVEL (Special Assistant to Robert F. Kennedy): (Voiceover) We began to wonder what was really happening in America.

Was there a vast conspiracy afoot?

(File footage; footage of Man #1)

Unidentified Man #1: (Voiceover) Fidel Castro was behind the assassination of John Kennedy.

Kennedy tried to get Castro, but Castro got Kennedy first.

(File footage of scenes of the crime; footage of Ralph Salerno)

Mr. RALPH F. SALERNO (Organized Crime Expert): (Voiceover) Lee Harvey Oswald had the help of at least one other person.

That person probably fired from the grassy knoll.

Mr. MARK LANE (Author): I think the evidence shows that the CIA killed President Kennedy.

(File footage of the funeral; footage of Jack Valenti)

Mr. JACK VALENTI (LBJ Adviser): The enormity of the crime, its unexpectedness, and the fact that nobody got a chance to see Oswald on a stand...

(Voiceover) I think the doubts will remain 100 years from today.

Unidentified Announcer: (Voiceover) CBS Reports: Tonight, WHO KILLED JFK: THE FINAL CHAPTER? with Dan Rather.

DAN RATHER: Good evening.

For nearly 30 years, the world has been haunted by the greatest murder mystery of the 20th century: who killed President John Fitzgerald Kennedy? Were the death of a president and the pain endured by the nation caused by one lone assassin? Generations of Americans have carried these questions in their hearts--those old enough to remember where they were when they heard the news, and those young enough to know November 22nd, 1963, simply as a day that changed the course of history. On that day, I was in Dallas, reporting for CBS News.

In the three decades since, CBS News has never stopped its own independent investigation--never stopped searching for answers to the most important questions of the Kennedy assassination.

Tonight, in reliving and reviewing those four dark days in Dallas, we bring you the results of our most recent efforts: some insights you may want to consider and memories--memories that for many of us cannot--will not--die.

(File footage of the funeral; Kennedy's inauguration)

Former President JOHN F. KENNEDY: (Voiceover) (From tape) I, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of president of the United States.

Unidentified Man #1: And will, to the best of your ability...

Mr. KENNEDY: And will, to the best of my ability...

Man #1: ...preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.

Mr. KENNEDY: ...preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.

(Footage of Mrs. Kennedy at the funeral; Kennedy's inauguration)

Man #1: (Voiceover) ...so help you God.

Mr. KENNEDY: ...so help me God.

Ms. LETITIA BALDRIDGE (Mrs. Kennedy's Chief of Staff): (Voiceover) It was an era in which 'no' was an impossibility.

There was no such word as 'no.' Anything was possible, and the youth around the world felt that.

(Footage of Mary-Michael Simons; Kennedy campaigning)

Ms. MARY-MICHAEL SIMONS (Junior High-School Student, 1963): He was magic.

(Voiceover) I remember when he was on the campaign trail, and it was very late at night, and he was, like, two hours late for this campaign visit, but we all just stayed there. We just couldn't wait to see him, to touch him, to look at him. And as he came down the street, there was a streetlight in the background, and he almost was--like a halo behind him.

And it was just so incredible that you couldn't help but follow him. You just couldn't. And that's how I remember him.

(Footage of campaigning; Ben Bradlee)

Mr. BEN BRADLEE (JFK Friend): (Voiceover) I met him in the halls of the Senate. We both came from Boston.

He was a graceful man, in--in--in phrase, in physical movements. He was, despite that bad back, he was a very natural athlete--got--great golf swing. He epitomized grace for me.

(Footage of campaigning; the Kennedy children)

RATHER: (Voiceover) And Mrs. Kennedy?

Mr. BRADLEE: (Voiceover) Well, she brought this extraordinary new spirit and style to the White House that I'd never seen in my time. And those children that were just, you know, so damn decorative, weren't they?

(Photos of Kennedy's service in the White House)

President KENNEDY: (From audiotape) Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. I'm speaking to you from the White House.

JOHN KENNEDY Jr.: Dad...

Pres. KENNEDY: (From audiotape) Wait a minute, John. Wait a sec. Don't say anything because I've got to give this speech. Can you sit down over there now and be a good boy?

(John heard giggling)

Pres. KENNEDY: (From audiotape) Good-bye, John.

(Footage of President Kennedy with his children)

Mr. WALTER CRONKITE (CBS News): (Voiceover) Young John Kennedy seemed to be leading us into a new era of youthful exuberance, if you please, over the fun of life...

(Footage of Cronkite and Rather)

Mr. CRONKITE: ...fun a country could have, being itself, being important in the world. We were dancing on clouds.

RATHER: And where was the Kennedy administration in 1963? Where was the Kennedy presidency?

Mr. CRONKITE: Actually, it wasn't in very good shape. The country thought it was in better shape than it was.

(File footage of civil rights protests)

RATHER: (Voiceover) In the summer of 1963, John Kennedy faced one of his greatest tests: the bitter struggle for civil rights in the American South.

Mr. JULIAN BOND (Civil Rights Leader): (Voiceover) He came into office with a great deal of promise and didn't realize the promise. He wasn't doing what we thought he should do, what the law required him to do.

He didn't want to do anything to upset the Southern barons who ruled the Congress. He seemed to us to be moving on tiptoes, when we thought what was required was a bold march toward the future.

(File footage of protests; of President Kennedy walking across a lawn, waving to people)

RATHER: (Voiceover) But many Southern whites felt that Kennedy was marching too boldly. His popularity there fell. So on Thursday, November 21st, he left for a tour of Texas, the key Southern state in the next elections.

(Footage of Pierre Salinger; of Evelyn Lincoln)

Mr. PIERRE SALINGER (JFK Press Secretary): I received a letter from a lady in Dallas, saying, 'Tell the president not to come to Dallas, somebody's going to be out to kill him.' I was stunned by this letter. And I went to see the president. I said, 'Look, this is a warning. I mean, you've really got to be careful when you go to Dallas.' He said, 'You know, if somebody wants to kill a president, he knows he's going to get killed himself. That'll happen. That's the way I look at it.'

Mrs. EVELYN LINCOLN (JFK's Personal Secretary): He said, 'Mrs. Lincoln, I can't live a life where I'm afraid to go out into the public. I've--I've--you know, if they want to get me, they can get me in church. I'm still going to Dallas.'

(File footage of President and Mrs. Kennedy getting off a plane and waving to the crowd)

RATHER: (Voiceover; from file tape) This Texas trip is the first out-and-out political appearance for Mrs. Kennedy at her husband's side since the 1960 campaign and Democrats are making the most of it. Today at the airports and in the streets of San Antonio and Houston, crowds continually yelled 'Jackie, Jackie!' and seemed more interested in a look at her than anyone else. This is Dan Rather in San Antonio, Texas.

(File footage of President Kennedy making a speech)

Pres. KENNEDY: A few years ago, I introduced myself in Paris by saying that I was the man who had accompanied Mrs. Kennedy to Paris. I'm getting that--somewhat that same sensation as I travel around Texas. (laughter and applause) Nobody wonders what Lyndon and I wear. (laughter)

(File footage of President Kennedy meeting with the crowds)

Mr. DAVID POWERS (Special Assistant to JFK): (Voiceover) A great crowd in Fort Worth--great, great crowd.

Then we fly to Dallas, and we land in Love Field...

(File footage of President and Mrs. Kennedy meeting with the crowds)

Mr. POWERS: (Voiceover) ...and the president and Jackie went right over to the fence. The crowds were tremendous.

Mr. JOHN CONNALLY (Governor, Texas): (Voiceover) The reception there was warm, friendly, exuberant.

(Footage of John Connally from 1988)

Mr. CONNALLY: And I had always had a little bit of uneasiness about the trip because I thought that we might see some ugly signs or--or gestures along the way that would be unpleasant.

(File footage of President Kennedy's motorcade)

Mr. CONNALLY: (Voiceover) We encountered none of that, really.

Mr. POWERS: (Voiceover) Schools groups were out. There were nuns in the crowd.

And it was just like a--a Boston welcome.

(File footage of President Kennedy's motorcade)

Unidentified Reporter #1: Here comes the first car, and here is the president of the United States.

Mrs. NELLIE CONNALLY (John Connally's Wife): (Voiceover) Everybody was so wonderful to that young couple, and because I wanted it all to be so good, I couldn't resist--and feeling it was--I couldn't resist saying...

(Footage of Nellie Connally from 1988)

Mrs. CONNALLY: ...'Mr. President, you can't say Dallas doesn't love you.'

(File footage of President Kennedy's motorcade)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Soon the motorcade would turn into a murder. When we come back, the twisted trail of the alleged assassin.

(Announcements)

RATHER: Lee Harvey Oswald was barely 24 when President Kennedy was killed, yet Oswald's short life had twists and turns, adventures and secrets that provoke thoughts of intrigue and conspiracy. Oswald was born in New Orleans. His youth was troubled. He moved from state to state, school to school, failure to failure, with his struggling mother, Marguerite.

(File footage of Marguerite Oswald; photos of Lee Harvey Oswald as a child)

Mrs. MARGUERITE OSWALD (Lee Harvey Oswald's Mother): He was a happy-go-lucky youngster, actually. He had a dog. He had a bicycle. Lee was deprived of his father, and he was born two months after his father had expired, but we must understand that Lee had two brothers, so he was not raised just with a woman alone. He studied animals, he was often in the zoo, and as we know, he was picked up in the Bronx Zoo while in New York playing hooky from school. And I considered that normal, also, playing hooky from school. Many, many boys do this.

(Photos of Lee Harvey Oswald as a child)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Lee Harvey Oswald's youth was far from normal. His mother kept losing jobs, and they moved five times before Lee was four years old. He was put in an orphanage for a while. By the age of 12, when they had moved to New York, he was in trouble academically and emotionally.

(Footage from 1964 of Rather and Marguerite Oswald)

RATHER: You may be aware that at least one New York newspaper has quoted a social worker/psychiatrist in New York as saying that, at one time, it was recommended to you that Lee be given some treatment. Do you recall that at all?

Mrs. OSWALD: That quotation that you just said is incorrect.

(Photos of Lee Harvey Oswald as a child and a teen-ager)

RATHER: (Voiceover) She is incorrect. The doctor diagnosed Lee Harvey Oswald as 'emotionally disturbed.' After a judge ordered that he be put in a home for troubled boys, the Oswalds left New York. In high school in New Orleans, Lee began to study communism at the public library. That didn't stop him from joining the US Marines a few days after his 17th birthday.

Mr. MACK OSBORNE (Marine): (Voiceover) He was stand-offish. He felt like he was a little smarter, possibly better than the rest of the people.

He felt like that he ought to be the one doing the telling, and he was just kind of mad at everybody all the time.

(Photos of Oswald as a Marine)

score? RATHER: (Voiceover) Private First Class Oswald taught himself Russian in his spare time. The Marines taught him how to shoot. He hit 48 of 50 targets at 200 yards. He was happy to get out of the corps three months ahead of time, supposedly to help his ailing mother. He spent three days with her, then left to pursue a long-held, secret desire.

(Footage of Moscow)

RATHER: (Voiceover) In 1959, at age 19, Lee Harvey Oswald arrived in Moscow. Here he began what he called his 'historic diary.' A reading of excerpts today is revealing.

(Footage of Moscow; close-up of Oswald's passport)

Unidentified Man #2: (Voiceover) (reading from diary) October 31st. Two Russian policemen stand at the Embassy. I go in. A secretary, busy typing, looks up. I say, laying my passport on her desk, 'I'm here to dissolve my American citizenship.'

Mr. RICHARD SNYDER (Consul, US Embassy, Moscow): (Voiceover) He came into my office, stood stiffly before me.

Th--he said, 'I'm a Marxist.' And I said, 'You're going to be a lonely man here in the Soviet Union.'

(Photos of Oswald)

Mr. SNYDER: (Voiceover) I knew I was dealing with an immature young American.

Whatever he sounded like, however arrogant he may have seemed and what have you, you know, he was still--in my mind, he was a dumb kid.

(Photos of Oswald)

Ms. PRISCILLA JOHNSON McMILLAN (Moscow Journalist): (Voiceover) He was very nice-looking, and he had a slight Southern accent. I rather liked him.

He said he did not want to live in the United States because he would be living under capitalism and he would be exploited, as he'd seen his mother exploited, and therefore he wanted to stay forever in the Soviet Union.

(Footage of Moscow; photo of Oswald)

RATHER: (Voiceover) The KGB in Moscow routinely investigated foreigners to see if they were spies or could be of help to the Soviet Union. Oswald asked to stay.

Mr. YURI NOSENKO (KGB Agent): (Voiceover) KGB came to the conclusion, we don't want to deal with this person.

(Footage of Yuri Nosenko with face shadowed over and voice altered)

Mr. NOSENKO: We don't want to talk with him. We cannot trust this person. It was final.

RATHER: (Voiceover) Yuri Nosenko was the KGB officer in charge of watching Americans. For this rare interview, he asked that his identity be hidden.

(Photo of Oswald)

RATHER: (Voiceover) We asked why Oswald wasn't recruited.

Mr. NOSENKO: (Voiceover) He didn't present any interest.

He was a former Marine, private or corporal or whatever, nothing more. Of course, if this Marine was working in American Embassy in Moscow or some other country, he would present an interest. But here, nothing.

(Footage of Moscow; photo of Oswald; page from Oswald's diary shown)

Man #2: (Voiceover) (reading from diary) Evening. Receive word from police official. I must leave country tonight. My fondest dreams are shattered. I decide to end it. Soak wrist in cold water to numb the pain, then slash my left wrist, then plunge wrist into a bathtub of hot water. Somewhere a violin plays, as I watch my life whirl away. I think to myself, 'How easy to die.'

(Footage of Nosenko)

Mr. NOSENKO: Oswald is laying on the floor, bleeding, cut wrists. And he was taken in hospital, where he said, 'I still will kill myself, if they will not allow him to stay.'

(Footage from Moscow)

RATHER: (Voiceover) The Soviets say they were trying to improve relations with the United States. A dead ex-Marine in Moscow would have meant trouble, so they say Oswald was permitted to stay, but far away from the capital, raising questions whether he was lucky or a tool of the Soviets.

Man #2: (Voiceover) Official says they are sending me to the city of Minsk. I ask, 'Is that in Siberia?' He only laughs. I receive a small flat with splendid view of the river, almost rent-free. It is a Russian dream. I am to earn 70 rubles a month at the factory. I have a lot of money and hope.

(Footage of a plant)

Mr. PAVEL GOLOVACHEV (Oswald's Friend): (Through interpreter) This is the shop where Oswald worked. His work bench was right here.

Mr. VLADIMIR KAPATSKY (Oswald Co-Worker): (Through interpreter) We didn't notice anything bad about him here. He didn't like to work, but that was another matter.

(Photo of Oswald and Marina)

Man #2: (Voiceover) (reading from diary) March 17th. Went to a trade union dance. Boring, but at the last hour, I am introduced to a girl with a French hairdo and red dress. I dance with her, then ask to show her home. I do, along with five other admirers. Her name is Marina.

Ms. VALENTINA PRUSAKOVA (Marina's Aunt): (Through interpreter) Marina looked beautiful that evening, and she had lots of people interested in her. Then she came home around one in the morning and said...

(Photo of Oswald)

Ms. PRUSAKOVA: (Voiceover) (Through interpreter) ... 'I'm not alone. There's an American with me.' It was Lee Harvey Oswald.

(Photos of Oswald and Marina)

Man #2: (Voiceover) (reading from diary) She is madly in love with me from the very start. Boat rides on Lake Minsk, walks through the parks. I decide I must have her. I propose. She accepts. We are married at her aunt's. At midnight, we are home.

Ms. PRUSAKOVA: (Through interpreter) Everyone was very much against it. It all went so fast. I don't know why she was in such a hurry. But she loved him, and he also seemed to love her.

(Photos of Oswald and Marina)

RATHER: (Voiceover) The KGB, meanwhile, bugged his apartment, read his mail and asked his best friend to be an informer.

Mr. GOLOVACHEV: (Through interpreter) The agent said, 'You know Oswald, and you understand he's from the US. So you have to come see us from time to time, for the sake of your homeland.'

RATHER: (Voiceover) Golavachev says he met with KGB agents four times, told them nothing because there was nothing to tell.

(Photo of Oswald)

Mr. GOLOVACHEV: (Through interpreter) (Voiceover) I remember he bought the Russian radio, and it had this small defect in it. I repaired it in a second with a simple knife. If Oswald were a spy, he could have done it himself.

So I think he was not a CIA agent, and all that surveillance was for nothing.

(Footage of Moscow)

Man #2: (Voiceover) (reading from diary) I am starting to reconsider my desire about staying. The work is drab, the money I get has nowhere to be spent. No nightclubs or bowling alleys. I have had enough. I now live in a state of expectation about going back to the United States of America.

(Footage of Oleg Nechiporenko)

Mr. OLEG NECHIPORENKO (KGB Agent): (Through interpreter) In December of 1961, Oswald made two bombs. He also made devices to explode them. We didn't know why he was doing it. It was like his hobby.

RATHER: (Voiceover) Former KGB spy Oleg Nechiporenko recently wrote "Passport to Assassination," disclosing state secrets never before revealed.

Mr. NECHIPORENKO: (Through interpreter) He and his wife were waiting for exit visas, and I think he made the bombs to frighten the Soviet authorities to speed up his departure to the US.

Ms. PRUSAKOVA: (Voiceover) Marina didn't want to leave. They had a baby girl. But he managed to convince her to go.

(Photo of Marina and a baby)

Mr. SNYDER: He showed up one day, quite unannounced. He said, 'I have a new appreciation for freedom and for my country.' And he said, 'I've learned a hard lesson the hard way.' And that was about the--the sum total of what one might call the moral statements, you know.

(Photo of Oswald and Marina)

Ms. McMILLAN: (Voiceover) On the boat coming over to the United States, his attitude toward her, his treatment of her changed, and he started to slap her over the face.

And it was the first time he was physically violent with her, but that continued and it became worse while they lived in the United States.

(Photos of Oswald and Marina)

RATHER: (Voiceover) The FBI began to keep track of the Oswalds when they returned. In Dallas, they were kicked out of their apartment for fighting. Lee began living alone when Marina moved in with a friend to whom she was giving Russian lessons.

(File footage of Ruth Paine; photo of Oswald)

Ms. RUTH PAINE (Marina's Friend): All I knew, really, about him was that he wanted her to be sent back to the Soviet Union. And she didn't want to go. I thought of him as an unhappy person, a person dissatisfied with

the society he was in. I think he felt he wasn't noticed or given sufficient credit for being the sort of person he was.

(Footage of guns)

RATHER: (Voiceover) In March of 1963, Oswald paid 29.95 for a mail-order revolver and 21.45 for a Mannlicher-Carcano rifle and a telescopic sight.

Mr. MICHAEL PAINE (Oswald's Friend): (Voiceover) Obviously, he liked guns.

I went one afternoon to pick him up, went upstairs, and I think the first thing he did, practically, was pick up this photograph of himself...

(Photo of Oswald)

Mr. PAINE: (Voiceover) ...an eight-by-ten, holding his rifle there and some papers. I was a little startled. I suppose he was looking for a big revolution, and he'd join the revolution with his gun.

He thought that the only way change would come about was through violence.

(Photo of Edwin Walker)

RATHER: (Voiceover) A few weeks after receiving his rifle, Oswald apparently tried to change things for retired Army General Edwin Walker, a right-wing crusader, by firing through Walker's window. The bullet went through the general's hair.

(File footage of Marina Oswald)

Mrs. MARINA OSWALD (Wife): He come in the house 11:30. He was so pale, nervous and didn't want to talk. I say what happened to him? And he said--he told, 'I tried to shoot General Walker.'

Mr. PAINE: (Voiceover) She knew that he had shot at Walker.

She knew, and she didn't tell anybody. And later on, she told Ruth or someone that she was afraid of being deported back to Russia if she had revealed it.

(File footage of New Orleans and of Oswald)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Unsuspected of the crime and unemployed, Oswald quickly left for New Orleans. He found a job oiling coffee-roasting machinery and gained local fame handing out pro-Castro literature.

(Footage from 1963)

Unidentified Man #3: You're a Marxist?

Mr. LEE HARVEY OSWALD (Alleged Assassin): Well, I have studied Marxist philosophy, yes, sir, and also other philosophers.

Man #3: But are you a Marxist? I think you did admit on an earlier radio interview that you--you consider yourself a Marxist.

Mr. OSWALD: Oh, I would very definitely say that I am--I am a Marxist, that is correct, but that--that does not mean, however, that I'm a--a Communist.

(File footage of Oswald in New Orleans)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Oswald's celebrity was short-lived. Not one person joined his Fair Play for Cuba Committee. He was fired from his job for not working hard enough. Disillusioned and desperate, Oswald decided that he wanted to leave the country once again to live in either Russia or Cuba. He took a bus to Mexico City and visited the Soviet Embassy.

Mr. NECHIPORENKO: (Through interpreter) He came to our embassy, explaining that the FBI in the US was persecuting him, interfering with him getting a good job. To prove what he said, he pulled out a revolver. He said he was forced to carry it around all the time to protect his life.

Mr. NOSENKO: (Through interpreter) I have seen the telegram which came from Mexico City, signed by the KGB, where it was written 'American Lee Harvey Oswald visited Soviet Embassy Consulate Department, where he put the question asking to give him a visa. Please give us advice.' I said, 'Isn't this the guy who cut his wrists?' 'Yes.' I said, 'How comes he's in Mexico?' Advice was given in this way: 'We didn't want him. Who needed him?' We didn't have any interest, and the man once defected, then he returned back, now he wants again back to return. It shows the--the person, his mentality.

(Photo of Oswald)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Rejected, Oswald returned to Dallas seven weeks before the president would be killed.

(File footage of Ruth Paine)

Ms. PAINE: Lee had spent a week unsuccessfully looking for a job in Dallas. And this was a Monday, and my neighbor and I, Marina, were all talking about this difficulty, how hard it was for him, since he, for one thing, was not able to drive, couldn't get to a good many jobs that might be available. And a third neighbor who was there suggested that there might be an opening at the school book depository.

(Photo of Oswald; footage of a building)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Oswald got the job, filling book orders for \$1.25 an hour. One month later, on November 19th, it was announced that John Kennedy would visit Dallas.

Mr. PAINE: I would have supposed that when he saw the--the newspaper with the track going right past the window of the building where he worked, it occurred to him that he could have--he shoot the president. And there, he had--he had already shot Walker and got away with it scot-free--shot at Walker...

(File footage of Buelle Wesley Frazier driving a car)

Mr. PAINE: (Voiceover) ...and he came out on Thursday night to get his rifle, hitched a ride with a fellow down the street.

(Footage of Frazier)

Mr. BUELLE WESLEY FRAZIER (Oswald's Co-Worker): He brought a package with him that day, and he put it on the back seat. And I said, 'Lee, what's that?' And he said, 'Remember yesterday I told you I was going to bring some curtain rods.' I said, 'Curtain rods. Oh, OK.' I never thought anything else about it. I pulled up.

(Footage of the Texas School Book Depository building)

Mr. FRAZIER: (Voiceover) He gets out of the car, takes the package, sticks it under his arm and walks off.

(Footage from 1964)

Mr. HAROLD NORMAN (Oswald's Co-Worker) That particular morning, three or four of us were standing by the window, and Oswald came over, and he said, 'What's everybody looking at, and what's everybody excited about?' And so we told him we was waiting on the president.

Mr. JAMES "JUNIOR" JARMAN (Oswald's Co-Worker): And he asked me which way would the president be coming. And I told him. And so he said, 'Oh yeah?' And I said, 'Yeah.' Then he turned around and he walked off.

(Footage of the Texas School Book Depository building; file footage of President Kennedy's motorcade)

RATHER: (Voiceover) The paths of John F. Kennedy and Lee Harvey Oswald were about to cross. The shots and shock would reverberate for three decades.

(Announcements)

(File footage of President Kennedy's motorcade)

Mr. TOM WICKER (New York Times Correspondent): (Voiceover) The motorcade went right through the heart of Dallas. It then turned right and went a short distance and then turned more than 90 degrees left.

And the Texas School Book Depository is at that corner.

(Footage of Powers; file footage of President Kennedy's motorcade)

Mr. POWERS: We had just about made the turn, and I'm--had the job of keeping the president on time. And I--I looked at my watch, and it was exactly 12:30 Texas time.

Unidentified Reporter #2: The president's car is now turning on to Elm Street, and it will be only a matter of minutes before he arrives at the Trade Mart.

Mr. POWERS: And then I heard the first shot.

Reporter #2: It appears as though something has happened in the motorcade route. Something, I repeat, ~~has~~ happened in the motorcade route.

Mr. CONNALLY: (Voiceover) I heard what I thought was a rifle shot.

(Footage of Connally from 1988)

Mr. CONNALLY: I thought the shot came from behind me, and I didn't see anything, so I was in the process of turning to look over my left shoulder into the back seat.

Mr. POWERS: I'm looking right at the president, and he had his right hand out, waving to the people, and now he had pulled it in.

(File footage of President Kennedy's motorcade)

Mr. POWERS: (Voiceover) And it's up around his neck, and he had fallen toward Jackie. And I said, 'I think our president's been shot.'

Mr. CONNALLY: I had not gotten turned to my left to see the president when I felt a--a sharp blow, like somebody'd walked up behind me and hit me with a closed fist. The force of the blow was strong enough to bend

me over. And I saw immediately that I was covered with blood. And I said, 'My God, they're going to kill us all.'

(File footage of President Kennedy's motorcade and of people along the street)

Reporter #2: You see Mrs. Kennedy's pink suit. We understand Governor and Mrs. Connally are in the car with President and Mrs. Kennedy. We can't see who has been hit, if anybody's been hit, but apparently something is wrong here. Something is terribly wrong.

Mr. SETH KANTOR (Journalist): It was such a strange moment because there were people still smiling and waving little American flags and applauding because the motorcade blocked out the action that was going on.

(File footage of President Kennedy's motorcade and of people along the street)

Mr. KANTOR: (Voiceover) On the other side, people were screaming and hurling each other down because of the shots that were being fired.

Reporter #2: There's numerous people running up the hill alongside Elm Street. Police officers are rushing...

Mr. CONNALLY: (Voiceover) Nellie then pulled me over in her lap and put her head down on mine...

(Footage of Connally)

Mr. CONNALLY: ...and said, 'Be still. Everything's going to be all right.' I was still conscious. Then I heard another shot.

(File footage of President Kennedy's motorcade)

Mr. CONNALLY: (Voiceover) I knew it had hit because it sounded with an impact (Connally claps his hands together) that loud, and after that shot, the car...

(Footage of Connally)

Mr. CONNALLY: ...our clothes were covered in blood and even chunks of brain tissue.

(File footage of President Kennedy's motorcade)

Mr. POWERS: (Voiceover) And now I'm looking at Jackie as she had climbed out in the rear of the car just about the time it had started to accelerate. And Clint Hill, the Secret Serviceman who was on the left front running board in my car, managed to get onto the car and push Jackie down and get on top of her at a time that we were going between 70 and 90 miles an hour.

And it was a--a great act of bravery on--on the part of Clint Hill.

(File footage of President Kennedy's motorcade)

Reporter #2: The Secret Servicemen are still spread-eagled over whoever is in the car. The president and Mrs. Kennedy...

Mr. CLINT HILL (Secret Service Agent): (Voiceover) Had I turned in a different direction, I'd have made it. And it was my fault.

If I had reacted just a little bit quicker--and I could have, I guess--and I'll live with that to my grave.

(File footage of a car going down a highway)

Unidentified Man #4: (voice on radio) Parkland Hospital, there has been a shooting. Parkland Hospital has been advised to stand by for a severe gunshot wound.

Mr. MALCOLM KILDUFF (Assistant Press Secretary): We in the press pool car sped off.

I said to the driver, 'Where could we be going?' And he said, 'Well,' he said, 'the only thing that I can think of is that we're going to Parkland Hospital.' But I'll be very frank with you, Dan, the last thing in the world that even occurred to me is that the president could have been shot, because, you know, 'This is America, and that sort of thing doesn't happen here.'

(File footage taken outside Parkland Hospital)

Reporter #2: Many police cars converging on Parkland from every angle, from every point.

Unidentified Reporter #3: The president's wife, Jackie Kennedy, was not hurt. She walked into the hospital at her husband's stretcher's side.

Mr. CRONKITE: (Voiceover) I was at the studio at the moment that the bulletin came.

I turned around and shouted, 'Let's get on the air, let's get on the air.'

(Excerpt from "As the World Turns")

Mr. CRONKITE: (Voiceover) Then we interrupted the soap opera that was on the air, "As the World Turns."

(Excerpt from "As the World Turns," which is interrupted by a CBS News bulletin)

Mr. CRONKITE: Here is a bulletin from CBS News. President Kennedy shot today just as his motorcade left downtown Dallas. He was wounded in an automobile driving from Dallas Airport into downtown Dallas, along with Governor Connally of Texas. They've been taken to Parkland Hospital there, where their condition is as yet unknown.

(Footage of Jack Valenti)

Mr. JACK VALENTI (LBJ Adviser): Hysteria hung like Spanish moss. It was a--an unbelievably sad scene because none of us knew at that time the state of Governor Connally nor President Kennedy.

Dr. KENNETH E. SALYER (Parkland Hospital): JFK is on the stretcher. The right side of his head is blown off. He has a wound of his neck, and the doctors are working and leaning over him, trying to get an airway. And--and all of us then embarked on trying to--to--to save his life.

(Footage of Connally from 1988)

Mrs. CONNALLY: It was a lonely, terrible place to be. And somebody brought two chairs--one for Mrs. Kennedy they put outside trauma room one and one for me outside the room John was in. And I sat there, and she sat there. And we--we didn't converse.

Mrs. LINCOLN: There sat Jackie on a chair, just like a statuette. I went over and put my arms around her, but she didn't move.

Mr. WICKER: The motorcade went where it had originally been intended to go, to the Dallas Trade Mart...

(File footage of the Dallas Trade Mart)

Mr. WICKER: ...where all this crowd was gathered at the lunch, waiting for President Kennedy. And as we came in, it was the only time in my life that I've ever seen a rumor.

You--you could see across that vast room, hundreds of people, many tables--you could see the rumor moving. People would turn and listen and say--throw up their hands, you know.

(File footage taken outside Parkland Hospital)

Unidentified Reporter #4: Women here in shock. Some have fainted. Secret Servicemen standing by the emergency room, tears streaming down their faces.

Mr. KILDUFF: By that time, I'd gotten on the telephone with the Secret Service follow-up car to advise Salinger, who was on his way with Secretary Rusk to the Far East.

Mr. SALINGER: It was just a shock. And we--nobody knew what to do. We were on this plane, and we did have a discussion, and Dean Rusk said, 'I think we should get ahold of the State Department and have them contact all our embassies and see if there's any possibility that this is an international plot to kill John Kennedy.'

Mr. WICKER: It was not implausible in 1963 to think that if there were going to be a nuclear attack on the United States, you might take out the president first. It may sound silly now--it is silly--but it was not implausible that day. Nothing was implausible that day.

(Photo of President Kennedy)

Mr. ROBERT MORGANTHAU (US Attorney): (Voiceover) I was having lunch with Bobby and Ethel Kennedy at their home in Virginia.

And there was a housepainter, and--and he walked over with a radio and started to say something that I couldn't quite understand. At the same time, the--the phone rang, and--and Bobby ran to the phone, clapped his hand over his mouth, came back, said, 'That was J. Edgar Hoover--the president's been shot in Dallas.'

(Photo of President Kennedy)

Mr. NICHOLAS KATZENBACH (Deputy Attorney General): (Voiceover) I talked with Bobby within a few minutes after that.

RATHER: (Voiceover) And what did he say?

(Footage of Rather and Katzenbach)

Mr. KATZENBACH: What he said was that he'd heard about it from Hoover, and he thought Hoover had taken great pleasure in telling him. As you know, they didn't get on at all.

(File footage taken outside the Texas School Book Depository)

RATHER: (Voiceover) While John Kennedy lay in Parkland Hospital, Dallas police surrounded the Texas School Book Depository.

Unidentified Man #5: (Voiceover) For your information, on the fifth floor of this bookstore company down here, we found empty rifle holes, and it looked like a man had been there for some time.

RATHER: (Voiceover) Only one man had left the building: Lee Harvey Oswald. As sirens wailed and police radios blared his description...

(File footage of police car and of Oswald's home)

Unidentified Man #6: (on police radio) Attention all squads! The suspect in the shooting...

RATHER: (Voiceover) ...Oswald hurried to his rooming house, picked up a revolver and set off on foot. Moments later, Dallas police officer J.D. Tippitt pulled up beside him.

(Photo of J.D. Tippitt; file footage of police car; of Helen Markham)

Ms. HELEN MARKHAM (Witness): This police car was driving very slow, and finally he stopped, and the man stopped. He folded his hands like this. He put them in through the window, up on the window, and he leaned over like this.

(Footage from 1963)

Mr. DOMINGO BENAVIDES (Witness): The policeman got out of the car, and as he walked past the windshield of the car, where it--it kind of lined up over the hood of the car--well, then this other man shot him.

(File footage of the shooting and of a movie theater)

Unidentified Man #7: (on police radio) We have an officer involved in a shooting.

RATHER: (Voiceover) As police found J.D. Tippitt, father of three, dead on the sidewalk, Lee Harvey Oswald took refuge in a movie theater.

(Photo of M. "Nick" McDonald)

Mr. M. "NICK" McDONALD (Dallas Police Officer): (Voiceover) I was on my normal routine patrol duties...

(Footage of McDonald)

Mr. McDONALD: ...until I got a report that a suspect was seen going into the Texas theater.

(File footage of theater)

Man #7: (on police radio) We have him in the Texas theater now.

Mr. McDONALD: So I walked up towards the back of the theater, where he was seated, and when I got to his row, I sort of turned in, and I was about a foot away from him. I said, 'Get on your feet.'

Mr. JOHNNY BREWER (Witness): And when Oswald gets up, he just throws a right cross and knocks McDonald back and, at that time, reaches under his shirt and pulls out a revolver.

Mr. McDONALD: And while he was doing that, I was reacting and coming back, and I was reaching for his waist, and as I reached for his waist, the pistol landed in my hand.

Mr. BREWER: And there was a struggle with the gun, and the gun was just a matter of a foot or so from McDonald's head, and Oswald actually pulled the trigger.

Mr. McDONALD: The hammer and the firing pin hit me here, in the fleshy part of my hand between the thumb and the forefinger, which saved my life.

(Photo of Oswald and police officers)

Mr. McDONALD: (Voiceover) We handcuffed him and took him out of the theater, and he was all the time protesting police brutality--`Don't hit me anymore.'

Well, I was the only one that had ever struck him in the first place.

(File footage of Oswald being led out of movie theater)

Mr. McDONALD: (Voiceover) But I was elated that we had got the guy so quickly, because it was only 90 minutes after the shots had been fired that he was arrested in the Texas theater.

RATHER: (Voiceover) The pistol seized from Oswald was the weapon he'd purchased by mail seven months earlier and, according to the KGB agent in Mexico City, was the same model as Oswald pulled out of his pocket in the Soviet Embassy.

(Excerpt from CBS News bulletin)

Mr. CRONKITE: Regarding the probable assassin, the sheriff's officers have taken a young man into custody at the scene, a man 25 years old, we are re--we just have a report from our correspondent, Dan Rather in Dallas, that he has confirmed that President Kennedy is dead. There's still no official confirmation of this. However, it's a report from our correspondent, Dan Rather in Dallas, Texas.

(File footage of reporters outside of Parkland Hospital)

Mr. KILDUFF: (Voiceover) The doctors there worked for 10 or 15 minutes or so before they concluded it was no use and pronounced him dead.

I wandered through Parkland Hospital and found an office, and I called my New York office.

(File footage of people outside of Parkland Hospital)

Unidentified Man #8: (Voiceover) Dallas, November 22nd, (weeping) President--President John F. Kennedy was shot and killed here today, period. With no one to--I'm sorry--(weeping)--with no one attending him but physicians and nurses, he died without regaining consciousness or uttering a word.

Mrs. LINCOLN: Johnson was running up and down the corridors, saying, `Oh, it's been a conspiracy, it's been a conspiracy.' And he said, `Let me go out to Air Force One. I want to go right away.' And he did. And he laid in the bottom of the--of the--of the car on the way out.

(File footage of press conference)

Mr. KILDUFF: President John F. Kennedy died at approximately 1:00 Central Standard Time today here in Dallas. He died of gunshot wounds in the brain.

(Voiceover) It was a very difficult announcement to make.

I have no other details regarding the assassination of the president.

(Footage of Kilduff)

Mr. KILDUFF: And I recall thinking that by saying it will make it so, and if I didn't say it, it wouldn't--all this horror would not be so.

(Excerpt from CBS News bulletin)

Mr. CRONKITE: From Dallas, Texas, the flash, apparently official, President Kennedy died at 1 PM Central Standard Time, 2:00 Eastern Standard Time, some 38 minutes ago. (crying) Vice President Lyndon Johnson has left the hospital in Dallas, but we do not know to where he has proceeded. Presumably, he will be taking the oath of office shortly and become the 36th president of the United States.

(Photo of swearing in ceremony)

Unidentified Woman #1: I do solemnly swear...

Vice President LYNDON JOHNSON: I do solemnly swear...

Woman #1: ...that I will faithfully execute...

Vice Pres. JOHNSON: ...that I will faithfully execute...

Woman #1: ...the office of president of the United States...

Mr. VALENTI: Before that, the president beckoned Mrs. Kennedy to come into that picture.

(Photo of swearing in ceremony)

Mr. VALENTI: (Voiceover) Dan, she had on this pink outfit which was visibly and heavily splattered with blood of the president. She refused to take it off.

And when the coffin was brought aboard and they draped the flag over it, she sat no more than three feet from it, never left it.

Mr. POWERS: It was the longest ride of my life, from--from Love Field, Dallas, to--to Washington, but I was hoping it would never end because I knew that once we got to Washington, that it was going to be different.

(File footage of Air Force 1)

Sergeant JAMES L. FELDER (Head of Honor Guard): We went out to Andrews Air Force Base to meet Air Force One.

And there was a lot of commotion and almost chaos there. The Secret Service wanted to handle the body. We thought it was our duty to do it, and so there was some pushing and shoving as to who was in charge.

(File footage of coffin being taken off the plane and being put into an ambulance and of Mrs. Kennedy getting into the ambulance)

Sgt. FELDER: (Voiceover) Finally, we got the body off the plane and into a Navy ambulance.

Unidentified Reporter #5: Mrs. Kennedy and Robert Kennedy. They are to ride in the ambulance, presumably to Bethesda Hospital, where the body will remain for the night.

Mr. BEN BRADLEE (JFK Friend): (Voiceover) She was dazed. She was dazed. We were all dazed.

It was a terrible blur. People in, people out...

(Photo of Bobby Kennedy and Mrs. Kennedy)

Mr. BRADLEE: (Voiceover) ...people trying to get her to take a rest, and she wouldn't. And Bobby Kennedy was there, looking lost, just lost.

(File footage of ambulance)

Unidentified Reporter #6: President John F. Kennedy comes back to the White House for the last time.

Mr. SALINGER: (Voiceover) And I finally went to bed, I think it was around five in the morning. And at seven in the morning, the phone rings next to my bed, and the operator says, 'The president's calling you.'

I suddenly said, 'Oh, my God, I've just had a terrible nightmare.' And then I hear this voice saying, 'Pierre, this is Lyndon. We've got to talk.' And that was, for me, the final blow that John Kennedy was dead.

(File footage of Oswald)

RATHER: (Voiceover) When we return, Oswald meets his fate.

(Announcements)

RATHER: When President Kennedy's body was in Washington, Lee Harvey Oswald was in a Dallas cell, unaware that he soon had a violent rendezvous with Jack Ruby, a man much like himself: two lives full of failure and desperate for recognition; both finally found fame and infamy in the same jail.

(File footage of Oswald being led by police officers)

Unidentified Man #9: Get down in front!

Mr. OSWALD: I positively know nothing about this situation here. I've...

Mr. KANTOR: (Voiceover) On Friday night at midnight, Lee Harvey Oswald was led down into the basement to a police lineup room.

He was put on display, especially for all the out-of-town and foreign reporters who were flying into Dallas from everywhere.

(File footage of Oswald talking with reporters)

Unidentified Reporter #7: Did you kill the president?

Mr. OSWALD: No, I have not been charged with that. In fact, nobody has said that to me yet. The first thing I heard about it was when the newspaper reporters in the hall asked me that question.

Unidentified Reporter #8: You have been advised of that...

Unidentified Reporter #9: Nobody said what?

Mr. OSWALD: Sir?

Reporter #8: You have been advised...

Reporter #9: Nobody said what? We can't hear you back here...

Mr. SNYDER: (Voiceover) I was in Tokyo at that time, and on the road I turned on Armed Forces Radio, and the announcer said that a man named Lee Harvey Oswald had been arrested in connection with the assassination.

Well, I said, 'That son of a bitch.'

(File footage of Oswald)

Unidentified Reporter #10: Oswald, did you shoot the president?

Mr. OSWALD: I didn't shoot anybody, sir. I haven't been told what I'm here for.

Mr. PAINE: (Voiceover) At the police station, when I saw him later on that night, he was proud of what he had done. He thought that he'd be recognized now as somebody who did something. Marguerite, his mother, came home with us, and while we were talking with Marguerite that evening...

(Footage of Paine)

Mr. PAINE: ...she was--she was obviously trying to think of ways she's going to make money out of this. She wanted Lee to be enough involved that her story would be valuable, and she didn't want him to be so involved that he'd get executed.

(File footage of Oswald)

Mr. OSWALD: But I emphatically deny these charges.

Mr. RALPH B. SALERNO (Organized Crime Expert): (Voiceover) I saw Lee Harvey Oswald being led to an interrogation room. They're taking him down the hall. Unbelievable that that kind of a situation was allowed to exist. That hall was so crowded with newspaper people and onlookers who didn't belong there...

(Footage of Salerno)

Mr. SALERNO: ...plus police officers and so on, if anyone had shot Oswald that night, he couldn't have fallen down.

(File footage of Oswald being led down a hallway)

RATHER: (Voiceover) As reporters fired questions and photographers jostled for better angles, one interested bystander just looked on that Friday night: a Dallas strip joint owner named Jack Ruby.

Mr. EARL RUBY (Brother): Jack was like an honorary policeman. That's why he could get into the police station and follow those detectives and policemen.

They used to visit Jack's nightclub. He was a likable fellow.

Mr. TONY ZOPPI (Nightclub Reporter): Ruby was like horse manure. Wherever there was anything going on, he was all over town.

(File footage of the Carousel Club)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Ruby ran the Carousel Club. To find new strippers, he dealt with the Mafia. To keep his license, he courted cops.

(Photo of Jack Ruby with three women)

RATHER: (Voiceover) To get attention, he'd do almost anything.

Mr. ZOPPI: (Voiceover) He wanted notoriety so badly. He just wanted people to know Jack Ruby was there.

Mr. RUBY: A tough guy. He was his own bouncer in his nightclub.

Mr. ZOPPI: Jack was a loser.

(Photo of Ruby with a stripper)

Mr. ZOPPI: (Voiceover) Nice guy; pretty handy with his fists. If he was upset with you, he'd just grab you and throw you down the steps.

Came from that kind of a neighborhood in Chicago. That's the way he grew up.

Mr. RUBY: (Voiceover) Jack was very upset from the time Oswald shot Kennedy.

He hated him for killing the president. He loved President Kennedy and so did millions of other people--millions.

Mr. ZOPPI: There were a lot of people that were saying they should kill Oswald--a lot of people.

(File footage of Oswald being led down a hallway)

Mr. JAMES R. LEAVELLE (Dallas Police Officer): On Sunday morning, we were getting ready to transfer Oswald to the county jail.

I kind of jokingly or in jest said to Lee--I said, 'Lee, if anybody shoots at you, I hope they're as good a shot as you are;' meaning, of course, that they'd hit him and not me. He kind of laughed or smiled, and that's the only time I saw him smile or a--during the entire time he was in custody.

(File footage of Oswald being led down a hallway)

Mr. LEAVELLE: (Voiceover) When I started to transfer him down to the basement, I had my left arm handcuffed to his right, and I was wearing a light-colored suit. I could see out of the corner of my eye Jack Ruby come out of the crowd with a pistol in his hand.

Mr. KANTOR: I saw what I thought was a detective.

(File footage of Oswald being led down a hallway)

Mr. KANTOR: (Voiceover) He was dressed just like a detective with a snap-brim fedora hat, and it was Jack Ruby.

Mr. ZOPPI: He saw all the cameras there. This was like a big Broadway stage. Oswald is coming toward him.

(File footage of Oswald being led down a hallway; of Oswald being shot and put into an ambulance)

Mr. ZOPPI: (Voiceover) And he would look at us like we were dirt. 'This is one thing that got to Ruby. He mentioned the fact that he didn't like his smirk.

Unidentified Reporter #11: There is Lee Oswald... (gunshot) (groaning) He's been shot! He's been shot!

Unidentified Reporter #12: He's been shot!

Reporter #11: Lee Oswald has been shot! There's the man with a gun.

Unidentified Man #10: Get him! Get him!

Reporter #11: It's absolute panic, absolute panic here in the basement of Dallas police headquarters. Detectives have their guns drawn. Oswald has been shot.

Unidentified Reporter #13: Here comes Oswald. He is ashen and unconscious at this time. He's now being moved in. He's not moving.

Unidentified Man #11: (Voiceover) My statement will be very brief. Oswald expired at 1:07 PM. We have arrested the man. The man will be charged with murder.

(File footage of press conference)

Unidentified Reporter #14: Who is he?

Man #11: The man--the suspect's name is Jack Rubenstein, I believe. He goes by the name of Jack Ruby.

Mr. McDONALD: (Voiceover) I knew Jack Ruby from years back.

And I asked him later--I went to see him in the jail after that. I said, 'Jack, why did you do that? You didn't have to kill him.' I says, 'I could have killed him over there in the theater, but I wanted to know what he was all about.' And he said, 'Well, the reason I did it was because I didn't want Jackie Kennedy to have to go through a lengthy trial here in Dallas.' So he was just an emotional man. He always was.

Mr. WILLIAM F. ALEXANDER (Dallas Prosecutor): I talked to Jack in jail just--or within an hour after he killed Oswald...

(File footage of Jack Ruby being led down a hallway)

Mr. ALEXANDER: (Voiceover) ...and his explanation was that 'You guys couldn't do it--kill the man that killed the president.'

Of course, Jack's problem was that when he killed Oswald, he had taken the sporting element out of it. Oswald was in handcuffs, and y--it just really isn't socially acceptable if you shoot somebody in handcuffs.

Mr. KANTOR: I'm positive that he--he saw himself appearing on the "Ed Sullivan Show" the following Sunday. There was an outpouring of--of telegrams and letters and phone calls praising what he had done by shooting Oswald before much of the country came to its senses and realized that he had silenced the one human being who--who could unlock the whole story about the--the president's death.

Mr. BRADLEE: I can see that today. That weird sheriff in the back who was sort of awkward-looking.

(Photo of Oswald at the time of his shooting)

Mr. BRADLEE: (Voiceover) I remember Oswald's face.

RATHER: (Voiceover) Do you remember what you thought?

Mr. BRADLEE: 'Where will it all end? Where will it all end?'

'What's--what's going on here?'

Mr. WILLIAM J. VANDEN HEUVEL (Special Assistant to Robert F. Kennedy): You began to wonder what was really happening in America. I mean, was there a vast conspiracy afoot? What was being accomplished here?

Mr. ARTHUR SCHLESINGER Jr. (Historian): That began for the first time to awaken theories that there might have been some larger participation in that and that Oswald had been rubbed out because--to keep him quiet and that--the theories of mob involvement in the assassination. Jack Ruby had had mob connections.

(Photos of Jack Ruby)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Those underworld ties had begun in Chicago. Some of Ruby's childhood friends had become big shots in the mob, but there is no proof that Ruby ever did business with any of them.

(File footage of Ruby in Havana and New Orleans; photos of Ruby)

RATHER: (Voiceover) He visited Havana the year Castro took over, but apparently only to have a good time. He often went to New Orleans--that's where he found his showgirls and where he dealt with the Mafia--but there is no solid evidence of any other mob connection or conspiracy.

Mr. ALEXANDER: He's been accused of being a front for the Mafia and a fixer for this and that. He couldn't even fix his own traffic tickets, and as far as him being around the Mafia, they wouldn't have let that blabbermouth within a half a mile of one of their hotel rooms.

(File footage of Jack Ruby; of courtroom)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Ruby was charged with murder. Just four months after killing Oswald, he heard the verdict.

Unidentified Judge: We the jury find the defendant guilty of murder with malice, as charged in the indictment and assess his punishment at death. Signed, Max E. Causey, foreman.

(File footage of Ruby's funeral)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Ruby died in jail: 'Cancer,' said all the doctors; 'Cover-up,' charged conspiracy buffs. More about charges of cover-ups and conspiracies when we come back.

Unidentified Announcer: WHO KILLED JFK: THE FINAL CHAPTER continues with Dan Rather.

RATHER: A president killed, the alleged assassin murdered, insatiable curiosity and unanswered questions. It's no wonder that there's widespread belief there was a conspiracy to kill JFK. According to a special CBS Reports poll last month, an astonishing number, almost nine out of 10 Americans, said they believed Oswald did not act alone. Four out of five people, more than ever before, said they believe there was an official cover-up to keep the public from learning the truth about the assassination.

(File footage of the Warren Commission approaching the White House; of JFK's motorcade moving down Texas street)

Unidentified Reporter #15: (Voiceover) The seven members of the Warren Commission, headed by the chief justice of the Supreme Court, come to the White House to give to the president the results of their painstaking investigation into the determinable facts in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. The Commission reports that the fatal shots that entered President Kennedy's head and throat were fired by Lee Harvey Oswald from the Texas school book depository acting solely by himself, and that there was no conspiracy, either foreign or domestic.

Mr. GUS RUSSO (Conspiracy Researcher): (Voiceover) The Warren Commission was a Band-Aid on open heart surgery.

(End of excerpts)

Mr. RUSSO: The attempt was to quiet down the country, to--to let them know the country was going to move ahead. It was not to get justice for John Kennedy.

RATHER: And it's been put to me a number of times by people who studied the Kennedy assassination, they say, 'Well, listen, you had a case of--Katzenbach decided early on it was Oswald. He helped get the Warren Commission started. And a--and a momentum started, perhaps with the best of intentions, to conclude quickly and convince the public quickly that Oswald was the one and the only one.'

Mr. KATZENBACH: If Oswald was the only one, it was going to require a thorough investigation by people who are impeccable to get all of the facts out, not to suppress anything, if that was to be believed.

RATHER: What was your biggest mistake?

Mr. KATZENBACH: I certainly wrote a memo to the president--to Bill Moyers, I guess, which is not as artfully worded as I would like it to be.

(Katzenbach's memo shown)

RATHER: (Voiceover) The first part of Katzenbach's memo urges a thorough investigation. It's the second part that strikes some as conspiratorial.

It said, and I quote now from it...

(Graphic on screen)

"The public must be satisfied that Oswald was the assassin; that he did not have confederates who are still at large; and that the evidence was such that he would have been convicted at trial."

RATHER: (Voiceover) ...'The public must be satisfied that Oswald was the assassin; that he did not have confederates who are still at large; and that the evidence was such that he would have been convicted at trial.'

Continuing to quote...

(Graphic on screen)

"Speculation about Oswald's motivation ought to be cut off..."

RATHER: (Voiceover) ...'Speculation about Oswald's motivation ought to be cut off,' end of quotation.

Mr. KATZENBACH: What I meant was that if you don't put all of the facts out and they don't have all of the facts and there are some facts that are concealed, you are never going to get them to get rid of--to believe that Oswald did this all alone, even if that is your conclusion.

Mr. RUSSO: I think if you showed that document to 1,000 people, 999 would view it as a--some kind of a cover-up.

(File footage of government personnel investigating the crime scene)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Instead of hiring enough investigators of its own, the Warren Commission mainly relied on the FBI and CIA. Those agencies withheld information, leading to speculation that the FBI and CIA were part of a plot to kill Kennedy, and covered it up.

(End of excerpt)

Mr. RUSSO: Hoover's FBI had at least one major thing they had to cover up, and that would have been their inadequacy in protecting the president.

(File footage of Secret Service men guarding a moving car; still photo of James Hosty)

RATHER: (Voiceover) The Secret Service has the job of protecting presidents. It relies on the FBI for information. The FBI agent in charge of tracking the Oswalds in Dallas was James Hosty.

(End of excerpts)

Mr. JAMES HOSTY (FBI Agent): I don't think we had any information at all--or at least I had no information at all that Oswald was dangerous.

(File footage of Oswald; a CIA message to the FBI shown)

RATHER: (Voiceover) But he did have new information that Oswald might be an imminent threat. The CIA had been bugging the Soviet Embassy in Mexico and told the FBI of Oswald's mysterious visit. But Agent Hosty still saw no reason to inform the Secret Service.

(End of excerpt)

RATHER: The CIA lead did prompt Agent Hosty to look for Lee Oswald to see what he was up to. But Hosty only found Marina. Oswald later came to the Dallas FBI building and left Hosty a note. Hosty's secretary says that note was a warning. 'Stop bothering Marina or else the Dallas Police Department or FBI office would be blown up.' Hosty says the note contained no violent threats. This was in early November.

Mr. HOSTY: I just tossed the letter into my file drawer for--for further investigation at a later time and forgot about it until the day of the assassination.

(File footage of the day JFK was assassinated)

RATHER: (Voiceover) And on that day, the FBI still had not warned the Secret Service that Oswald might be a security risk and could have a clear shot at the president.

(Still photo of Oswald after being shot)

Mr. HOSTY: (Voiceover) After Oswald was killed...

(End of excerpts)

Mr. HOSTY: ...I was told to get rid of the letter. That I--that the agent in charge said that he didn't ever want to see the letter again. So I then carried out his instructions.

(File footage of the FBI building; excerpts of J. Edgar Hoover)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Agent Hosty flushed the letter down a toilet in the FBI building the evening Oswald was killed. J. Edgar Hoover never told any of this to the Warren Commission. But how relevant is that to a possible murder conspiracy?

Mr. SCHLESINGER: It's evident that the FBI withheld information from the Warren Commission, information that would have been vital for an adequate investigation. I do not think, personally, that they withheld it as part of some sinister cover-up. I think they withheld it for self-protective, bureaucratic reasons. Because they would have exposed their own incompetence and failure.

RATHER: Just about every FBI agent says any and all leads were pursued. But many Americans still point to what they consider to be four main suspects as possible conspirators: the Soviets; extremists in the CIA; the Mafia; and Cubans, pro- and anti-Fidel Castro. Each may seem to have had a motive to be part of a conspiracy to assassinate the president. For 30 years, there has been much speculation.

Tonight, let's look at some facts.

(Footage of Soviets)

RATHER: (Voiceover) First, the Soviets.

Mr. MICHAEL BESCHLOSS (Historian): One of the first things that the US government did after John Kennedy was assassinated was what an intelligence service always does, which is to...

(Footage of Khrushchev)

Mr. BESCHLOSS: (Voiceover) ...locate the leader of the enemy power, in this case Khrushchev.

They couldn't find where he was, and they couldn't find him for a period of time. That led many people in the American government to think that maybe this was a case in which the Russians were involved; that they might have killed Kennedy; they might have had the intention of doing this to confuse the United States, throw it into chaos, at which time they could launch a surprise attack against the United States.

(File footage of citizens)

Mr. BESCHLOSS: (Voiceover) This is something that the American people did not know that afternoon. Had they know it, they would have been even more anxious and upset than they already were.

(File footage of nuclear missiles)

RATHER: (Voiceover) The Cold War was near its height that November. Only one year earlier, the Americans and Russians nearly went to war when Russia secretly sent nuclear missiles to Havana. Khrushchev removed the missiles, but tension and a Soviet motive to get rid of Kennedy were very much in existence on November 22nd, 1963.

Mr. NOSENKO: The first reaction, it was shock.

(File footage of Kennedy's funeral; still photo of Oswald)

Mr. NOSENKO: (Voiceover) Simply shock. 'How come he was killed?' But especially that he was killed by the American who defected to Soviet Union and then returned back.

(End of excerpts)

Mr. NOSENKO: This was the shock that they will not be put fingers on the KGB, on the Soviet Union. And as far what I have seen, there wasn't a single indication that it was done by the Soviets.

Mr. BESCHLOSS: Khrushchev, when he found the news that a suspected assassin of Kennedy, Lee Harvey Oswald, was a defector to the Soviet Union and back again...

(Still photo of Khrushchev)

Mr. BESCHLOSS: (Voiceover) ...Khrushchev was terrified that the United States would then immediately presume that Kennedy had been killed by the Russians.

And, therefore, the United States might retaliate very soon with a surprise attack against the Soviet Union.

(Still photo of the American Embassy)

Mr. BESCHLOSS: (Voiceover) He rushed to the American Embassy without warning.

And what he said was, 'You must believe me, the Soviet Union had nothing to do with the murder of John Kennedy.'

Mr. NOSENKO: As a former officer of KGB, if they became mad, decided to kill American presidents, they will try not to leave any spots, traces to them.

(Footage of Soviet Union; the Central Intelligence Agency logo shown; excerpts from movie "JFK")

RATHER: (Voiceover) Since the end of the Cold War, thousands of KGB documents have come to light. None has revealed any Soviet plot. So how about the Central Intelligence Agency? Belief that the CIA killed Kennedy, was a theme of the popular, not always factual, movie "JFK."

(Excerpts from the movie "JFK")

RATHER: (Voiceover) The CIA was a conspiracy contender long before the motion picture.

(End of excerpt)

Mr. MARK LANE (Author): Well, the motive. I suppose we can think of three different things. Number one: John Kennedy was ending the war in Vietnam.

(File footage of Fidel Castro)

Mr. LANE: (Voiceover) Number two: John Kennedy was involved in a program of rapprochement with Fidel Castro.

(End of excerpt)

Mr. LANE: But above all, John Kennedy said, 'I'm going to destroy the Central Intelligence Agency.'

Mr. RICHARD HELMS (Director of Planning, CIA): Absolute nonsense. This is--there's not a shred of truth in that. I don't know a single person in the whole Central Intelligence Agency--and at that point I'd been there about 25 years--who have--who would have felt anything like that.

RATHER: There's no possibility that mavericks within the agency did things that you were not aware of?

Mr. HELMS: There was an unwritten but nevertheless written-in-blood law in the agency, and that was that since we were involved in clandestine work overseas--lying, sometimes bribing, corrupting, whatever the case might be--that the one thing that a member of the CIA could not do was lie inside the agency to his superiors.

Mr. VALENTI: And I've learned one thing in my 30 years in Washington, Dan, and that is, if more than two people know anything, it will leak.

(Footage of the making of "JFK"; file footage of JFK; file footage of Mafia leaders)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Sometimes fiction is more believable than fact. But to date, the only evidence of a CIA connection is conjectural, circumstantial, and cinematic. If not the CIA, what was the Mafia's motive to see Kennedy killed?

(End of excerpts)

Mr. SCHLESINGER: The mob had been something which had never much concerned the FBI until Robert Kennedy became attorney general.

(File footage of Robert Kennedy in 1959)

Mr. SCHLESINGER: (Voiceover) The mob obviously did not like this.

RATHER: (Voiceover) Robert Kennedy first won the disrespect of the Mafia as chief counsel to a Senate Rackets Committee.

Mr. ROBERT KENNEDY: (From historical footage) If you have opposition from anybody, that you dispose of them by having them stuffed in a trunk. Is that what you do Mr. Giancana?

Mr. SAMUEL GIANCANA (Mafia): I decline to answer because I believe my answer might tend to incriminate me.

Mr. KENNEDY: I thought only little girls giggled, Mr. Giancana.

(Photo of Carlos Marcello; footage of Robert Kennedy)

RATHER: (Voiceover) As attorney general, one of Robert Kennedy's prime targets was Carlos Marcello, head of the mob in New Orleans. The best way to stop Robert, say the Mafia school of conspirators, was to kill John. Mobster Marcello supposedly equated them to a dog.

(End of excerpts)

Mr. EDWARD BECKER (Businessman): 'You cut off the head of the dog and then the tail dies.' And I had instant recognition on that sentence.

(Still photo of John and Robert Kennedy)

Mr. BECKER: (Voiceover) I think it meant, 'You kill the president, and Bobby is taken care of.'

(File footage of Marcello)

RATHER: Marcello denied saying this. And because of an FBI nationwide operation, agents should have known what any mafioso was up to.

(End of excerpts)

Mr. WILLIAM F. ROEMER Jr. (FBI Agent): We had put microphones into the headquarter of the Chicago mob, and specifically in the headquarters of the boss of the Chicago mob, Sam Giancana. And at...

(Photo of Giancana)

Mr. ROEMER: (Voiceover) ...and at that time, they spoke constantly of everything that they were doing: Who they were going to murder, the public politicians, who they were corrupting. And so they were hiding nothing. Then when the assassination took place, they were very, very happy, very gleeful that he had been killed. They made no bones that they were happy that it happened.

But at no time did they indicate that they had anything to do with it.

(Footage of New Orleans; photo of building in New Orleans and of Guy Bannister and David Ferrie; footage of Marcello)

RATHER: (Voiceover) But conspiracy theorists point to Oswald's alleged ties to marginal Mafia figures while he was living in New Orleans. An address on some of his handouts was of a building where Guy Bannister, a right-wing radical and ex-FBI agent, had his detective office. He often was visited by David Ferrie, a fervent anti-Communist. Both did some investigation work for Carlos Marcello lawyers, but there's neither evidence of any collusion between the three nor solid proof that Oswald even met them.

(End of excerpts)

Mr. KATZENBACH: I can't believe that the Mafia would have given this to somebody like Oswald, would have said, 'You're our man, you go up there and make some remarkable shots.' And I think that if Oswald--if the Mafia had done this, Oswald wouldn't have been alive to be arrested.

(File footage of Fidel Castro)

RATHER: (Voiceover) If not the Mafia, what about Cubans and Castro?

Mr. SAM HALPERN (Special Assistant, CIA): On the day Kennedy was killed, on November 22nd, 1963, a case officer from CIA was offering to an agent of CIA a ballpoint pen to be used to kill Castro.

(File footage of Fidel Castro)

Mr. HALPERN: (Voiceover) A pen which had been converted by a medical doctor into a hypodermic which would be used to put some poison in Castro if he could get close enough to him.

(End of excerpts)

RATHER: Did it occur to you to volunteer this to the Warren Commission? You said you wanted to ask.

Mr. HELMS: No. You can't run secret intelligence operations and go around telling the world about them, including anything as open as the Warren Commission, and expect to have any operations left. And since we didn't see how there could be any connection between these two things, obviously we didn't say anything.

(File footage of Bay of Pigs invasion)

RATHER: (Voiceover) But it was never a secret to Castro that President Kennedy wanted to kill him. Two years before the assassination, JFK authorized the Bay of Pigs invasion. It was a disaster. Within three days, the army of CIA-trained Cuban exiles gave up. President Kennedy kept going.

(End of excerpts)

Mr. FRANK STURGIS (Soldier Of Fortune): We tried to kill Castro. I made three attempts to try to kill Castro. OK? Kennedy made his attempts with other people as double agents to try to kill Castro. You think for a minute they're going to sit on their ass and not do anything to retaliate?

(File footage of gentlemen on the Warren Commission)

RATHER: (Voiceover) The CIA had even approached some Mafia figures to kill Castro. But none of JFK's secret war against Castro was told to the Warren Commission. And so the allegation persists that the Warren Commission did not try hard enough to find any Cuban conspiracy connection.

(End of excerpts)

(File footage of Fidel Castro being interviewed)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Fidel Castro, interviewed by CBS Reports in 1977, denied any involvement. 'Cuba,' Castro said, 'risked being blown off the map by US bombs if we were behind any conspiracy.' 'Anyone who thought otherwise is insane.'

(End of excerpts)

Former President GERALD FORD (Member, Warren Commission): The staff report said there was no conspiracy, period.

(File footage of the Warren Commission meeting)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Former President Gerald Ford is the only living member of the Warren Commission. He remembers there was discord between the commissioners and their staff, prompting critics to say that's evidence of a cover-up.

(End of excerpts)

Mr. FORD: Well, we on the Commission said, 'We're not in a position to make that firm conclusion.' So we wrote in our report, 'The Commission found no evidence of a conspiracy, foreign or domestic.' Now that's very important. I would add, however, I have seen no evidence since then--and this is 30 years--that would indicate to me there was a conspiracy.

(File footage of JFK)

RATHER: (Voiceover) And no one else in the three decades since has found any conspiracy. Motives? Plenty. Credible evidence? None. Knowledgeable skeptics remain unconvinced.

(End of excerpts)

Mr. RUSSO: The Warren Commission went along with making things calm again--not going out to see who killed Kennedy; who could have gotten Oswald to do it? And, you know, 30 years later, it's tough to go back and retrace those steps.

RATHER: And who do Americans believe are the conspirators? Almost half the people polled by CBS Reports think it was the CIA; more than one out of three blame the Mafia; over one in five points to the Cubans; 13 percent say it was the Soviets. And one more revealing finding: The younger you are, the more likely you are to believe that there was a conspiracy.

(Theme music)

(Announcements)

(Theme music)

RATHER: Searching for secret conspiracies is torturous, complex, frustrating. Actually determining what happened in the broad daylight in Dealey Plaza before hundreds of witnesses should be an easy chore. But in this murder mystery, no answers are easy; no findings free of debate.

(Computer animation of how the assassination happened)

RATHER: (Voiceover) This CBS Reports animation is exactly the way it was, according to the Warren Commission. The Kennedy limousine was traveling at 11 miles an hour, about to make a left turn onto Elm. On the sixth floor of the book depository building, alone, hidden from any co-worker who might pass by, lurked Lee Harvey Oswald. What happened next?

(Footage of Dealey Plaza)

RATHER: (Voiceover) That question has haunted people for 30 years.

Unidentified Man #12: I don't believe that Oswald was the only one.

RATHER: (Voiceover) Many make a pilgrimage to Dealey Plaza from around the world looking for answers.

Unidentified Woman #2: I want to know what happened.

RATHER: (Voiceover) Some looking for money.

Unidentified Street Vendor: Yeah, these are three bucks.

RATHER: (Voiceover) The assassination isn't just an obsession...

Unidentified Man #13: And if this is all hogwash, let it be hogwash, then. If I'm wrong, let me be wrong.

RATHER: (Voiceover) ...it's a national industry.

Unidentified Sales Clerk: You want me to ring it up?

(Footage of people purchasing JFK memorabilia)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Trinkets for tourists, almost 500 books, and still counting.

Unidentified Man #14: It was the crime of the century. This was the president of the United States. And we don't know--we don't know the answer. And I feel like, as an American citizen, I have a right to know who killed my president.

(Footage of Dealey Plaza)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Most Americans don't think they know who was the real murderer. According to our poll, almost nine out of 10 Americans now think that were at least two gunmen. This distrust of the Warren Commission's single-gunman theory is often tied to the testimony of three self-proclaimed eyewitnesses. All claim seeing a second gunman shooting from behind the picket fence. There is Beverly Oliver...

Ms. BEVERLY OLIVER (Self-Proclaimed Eyewitness): The shots that killed Pre--President Kennedy didn't come from the book depository.

RATHER: (Voiceover) ...deaf mute Ed Hoffman...

Mr. EDWARD HOFFMAN (Self-Proclaimed Eyewitness): (Through interpreter) They were talking about the fact that Mr. Oswald was up in that schoolbook, and I kept saying, 'No, he was not there.' I saw this. I was standing here. I saw this. I saw the whole thing.

RATHER: ...and Jean Hill.

(File footage of Jean Hill watching JFK's motorcade)

Ms. JEAN HILL (Self-Proclaimed Eyewitness): (Voiceover) They know me as the lady in red because it was the only thing in red that the cameras picked up that day.

RATHER: (Voiceover) How credible are their stories? First Miss Hill, who is standing across the street from the grassy knoll and picket fence.

Ms. HILL: So I was standing right here when Kennedy's car came down and the shots started ringing out. And I looked up across the street, behind the picket fence, up there by the tree. There in--right there in the bushes, this man was shooting with a rifle. And I saw a puff of smoke and a flash of light at the very instant that Kennedy's head exploded.

Mr. FARRIS ROOKSTOOL III (Assassination Researcher): Over the years, Jean has changed her story a number of times. She is a very sweet lady.

(Footage of Rookstool looking over photographs of the Kennedy assassination)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Farris Rookstool is an FBI employee by day, an assassination researcher by night. He maintains each witnesses' story falls apart on close examination.

Mr. ROOKSTOOL: But she's changed her story from saying that she said that she saw some activity in and around the picket fence now.

(Photo of Hill being interviewed back in 1963)

Mr. ROOKSTOOL: (Voiceover) Back in '63, she was unable to put a shooter or a gunman behind the grassy knoll.

(File footage of Hill being interviewed in 1963)

Unidentified Reporter #16: Did you see the person who--who fired the shot?

Ms. HILL: No. I--I did not see the person who fired the weapon.

Reporter #16: You only heard it?

Ms. HILL: I only heard it.

(File footage of Kennedy's assassination)

Ms. HILL: (Voiceover) Just as the president became--came right even with us, we looked at him and he was looking at a dog in the middle of the seat.

RATHER: (Voiceover) There was no dog. It's now suggested Miss Hill may have mistaken flowers in the limousine for an animal.

(End of excerpts)

Mr. ROOKSTOOL: This has caused her the source of a lot of embarrassment. Yet at the same time, Jean Hill has stated that some half a block to a block away--she stated that in fact she saw a man running at a high rate of speed which she is able to identify as a man resembling Jack Ruby.

RATHER: (Voiceover) How about Ed Hoffman and his story?

Mr. ROOKSTOOL: Over here on Stemmons Freeway was where Edward Hoffman parked his car; got out of it to watch the presidential motorcade. And as he looked back over here toward the schoolbook depository--of course, the trees weren't as full in 1963--this is where he said he saw some activity happening around the picket fence area. As you can clearly see, it's some 200 yards between the freeway and over there near the concrete colonnade and picket fence area.

RATHER: (Voiceover) Mr. Hoffman, with the help of an interpreter, recalls what he saw.

Mr. HOFFMAN: (Through interpreter) And I happened to see someone fire a rifle and I--and I was absolutely stunned. And then I saw the person run back this way.

Mr. ROOKSTOOL: Ed Hoffman went to the FBI in 1967, some four years after the assassination, and first reported seeing some sort of activity near the picket fence. Two hours later, he went back to the FBI and claimed that he was not able to see any activity near the picket fence as his view was obstructed by the fence.

Mr. HOFFMAN: (Through interpreter) It was very clear to me what I saw. And, you know, I can't lie about what I saw. You know, this is really important. We're talking about the death of the president of the United States.

Mr. ROOKSTOOL: Mr. Hoffman's own father, in 1967, said that he found his own son's story to be incredible. He said his son had made up things in the past and he found--found his son not to be a very credible witness.

(Photo from 1963 of people watching the motorcade)

Mr. ROOKSTOOL: (Voiceover) To the right of Jean Hill we see a figure that's been identified as the Babushka Lady, simply because this lady was wearing a scarf wrapped around her head.

Today we have someone who claims to be the Babushka Lady, a woman by the name of Beverly Oliver.

(Photo from 1963 of people watching the motorcade)

Ms. OLIVER: (Voiceover) I was standing right behind Jean Hill with a movie camera. The shot that kill Pr--President Kennedy didn't come from the book depository. Came from behind that picket fence.

RATHER: (Voiceover) Oliver says her film might show a gunman behind the picket fence. The problem is that no one has appeared who has seen the film.

Ms. OLIVER: I didn't go back to work until Monday night, at which time there was two men waiting on the landing of the stairwell at the Colony Club. One of them identified himself as an FBI agent by the name of Regis Kennedy, and he took my film. And it's never been seen since.

Mr. ROOKSTOOL: Beverly is the only person that can place herself here in Dealey Plaza at the time of the assassination, and she did not surface until some--1969, 1970--some five years, six years after the assassination.

Mr. GERALD POSNER (Author, "Case Closed"): There are substantial problems with her story. Among them...

RATHER: (Voiceover) Gerald Posner has investigated evidence, new and old, for his book "Case Closed."

Mr. POSNER: She says that she was taking her pictures that day with a Yashica super-eight zoom movie camera. Turns out that after she first told her story, somebody looked that up and that camera didn't exist in 1963. It wasn't manufactured until 1968.

(1963 photo of people watching the motorcade)

Mr. POSNER: (Voiceover) She said she was 17 or 19 years old.

The Babushka Lady appears middle-age. The Babushka Lady is heavy.

(File footage of Oliver dancing)

Mr. POSNER: (Voiceover) There are pictures of Beverly Oliver at the time. She was a dancer and singer, one of the clubs that competed with Jack Ruby in Dallas--one of the strip clubs. She was quite trim.

(End of excerpts)

Mr. POSNER: Regis Kennedy, the FBI man she says that confiscated her film, was an agent based out of New Orleans. He wasn't even in Dallas on the day she claims he took the film.

(File footage of Kennedy's assassination)

Mr. POSNER: (Voiceover) She picked the wrong city.

(Theme music)

(Announcements)

(Theme music)

RATHER: This is a Mannlicher-Carcano, an Italian-made 6.5-mm military rifle, the same model as the one Lee Harvey Oswald owned and allegedly used to kill President Kennedy. It's a relatively simple weapon, but many researchers are convinced that neither it nor Oswald could fire as fast and accurately as stated by the Warren Commission.

(1963 photo of two men looking out a window)

RATHER: (Voiceover) The Warren Commission began its case against Oswald with accounts of his co-workers, photographed here seconds after the shooting, looking out from the floor beneath Oswald.

Mr. HAROLD NORMAN (Oswald's Co-Worker): I could even hear the cartridges hitting the floor, I mean, after the shots had been fired.

Mr. BONNIE RAY WILLIAMS (Oswald's Co-Worker): It was a bang, then a bang, bang, like that.

Mr. NORMAN: About like, you know: Boom!

(Computer animated version of how the shots were fired)

Mr. NORMAN: (Voiceover) Then, click-click--boom! Then, click-click--boom!

(Excerpt from Warren Commission's reenactment of the assassination)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Here's the Warren Commission shooting scenario of those three shots. Oswald did not first pull the trigger until the limousine went past the tree. Two shots hit; one missed.

(File footage of Kennedy's assassination)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Using the now-famous Zapruder film, the Commission calculated there were about five and a half seconds between the first shot and the third, fatal shot. Using just a stationary test target, the Commission concluded Oswald could have done it.

(Footage of marksmen shooting at a target)

RATHER: (Voiceover) CBS News did its own independent test in 1967. We built a target and test track to match exactly the dimensions of Dealey Plaza and asked 11 volunteer marksmen to see how quickly they could fire a Mannlicher-Carcano. They shot at a target moving at the estimated speed of the motorcade. One shooter, a weapons manufacturer, made three hits within five and a half seconds. Only three others managed two hits in that short time; all 11 had several chances. So it can be done, but the odds are against it, supporting the theory that there, perhaps, was more than one gunman.

(Computer animated version of how the assassination)

RATHER: (Voiceover) But what if the Warren Commission scenario of five and a half seconds is wrong? What if Oswald had more time--much more time? What if he took his first shot before the car passed the tree, (shot fired) and missed, giving more time for the second shot (shot fired) and making the third and fatal shot the easiest of all (shot fired).

Mr. POSNER: Oswald, in fact, had eight and a half seconds for all three shots. To be able to readjust your sight and your aim is what makes the difference in this shooting.

RATHER: (Voiceover) Author Gerald Posner's findings are provocative, but are they provable?

(File footage of the Warren Commission's re-enactment of the assassination)

Mr. POSNER: (Voiceover) We can look at the Zapruder film, and with new enhancements and new technology, that film can answer exactly what took place on November 22nd.

RATHER: (Voiceover) The first shot, said the Warren Commission, might have struck the president.

(Computer animated version of the assassination)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Posner disagrees, saying it was deflected by the tree (shot fired).

(File footage of Kennedy's assassination)

Mr. POSNER: (Voiceover) There is some evidence on the film itself of this early missed shot. The president is just bringing his hand down from a wave, and I believe this is part of what you'll see in his reaction to the first shot. And there's key testimony from a young girl, Rosemary Willis, with a white jacket on and a red skirt.

who's running along with the automobile. As the president is bringing his hand down from a wave, she starts to slow up and then she stops completely here.

She is turning around, as she correctly remembers, because she heard a shot from this direction.

(File footage of Kennedy's assassination)

RATHER: (Voiceover) That filmed discovery of a possible early missed shot and a longer time to fire three shots is new. The theory is old. Twenty-six years ago, CBS reported on the findings of physicist Luis Alvarez. Alvarez noticed that Abe Zapruder slightly jiggled his 8mm camera three times, causing the film to blur. Could he have been startled by three rifle shots?

(Footage of a test done on cameramen by CBS)

RATHER: (Voiceover) We tried it ourselves, using other cameramen standing on a rifle range, holding similar cameras, filming an automobile while shots were fired over their heads. Their instructions: 'Hold the cameras as steady as possible, and keep filming, no matter what happens.' (Three shots fired) The reaction was obvious. They jiggled with each shot. The blurs in the films they took occur at the same times as in the Zapruder film.

(File footage of Kennedy's assassination)

RATHER: (Voiceover) And the first blur happens precisely when Posner says Oswald got off the first shot, supporting the theory that Oswald had more time to get off three shots, not the far more difficult five and a half seconds estimated by the Warren Commission.

(Computer animated version of the assassination)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Making it easier, yet again, says Posner, (shot fired) is that Oswald had more time to aim his rifle for the shot that hit Kennedy (shot fired). The Warren Commission thought that bullet struck Kennedy when the car was behind the sign. Posner says it was later, after the car passed the sign.

(End of excerpts)

Mr. POSNER: The president is emerging here.

(File footage of Kennedy's assassination)

Mr. POSNER: (Voiceover) You can see the president coming down from a wave. In the next frame, the president's elbow jerks off of the car.

(End of excerpts)

Mr. POSNER: What has happened to the president is the bullet that struck him in this portion of the back has passed through, has chipped some bone along his spinal cord, and induced the neurological spinal reaction called the (unintelligible) position.

(File footage of Kennedy's assassination)

Mr. POSNER: (Voiceover) You can see the president's hands coming up, not to his throat but locking in front of his chin and they will be locked in that position. Until he's shot in the head and the cortex is destroyed, he cannot lower his arms. They are physically locked.

(Bullet and bullet casings shown)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Now for the greatest controversy, about this single bullet, what critics call the magic bullet. These three shell casings were found on the sixth floor of the book depository. Only two bullets were recovered. 'This fragmented bullet,' said the Warren Commission, 'was the third shot, the one that hit the president in the head.'

(File footage of Kennedy's assassination; the bullet shown; computer animated version of the assassination)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Therefore, the Warren Commission concluded, this other, what critics call, magic bullet must have gone through President Kennedy and then into Governor Connally's back, out his chest, through his right wrist, and finally into his left thigh.

Dr. CYRIL WECHT (Pathologist): (Voiceover) The single-bullet theory, which is the Warren Commission report sine qua non.

If you don't have a single-bullet theory, you've got two people shooting.

Mr. DAVID W. BELIN (Assistant Counsel, Warren Commission): But what happened to the bullet that went through President Kennedy's neck?

RATHER: (Voiceover) David Belin was the lawyer for the Warren Commission. He came up with the single-bullet theory.

Mr. BELIN: To reconstruct the motorcade, went frame-by-frame using the Zapruder film...

(File footage of Kennedy's assassination)

Mr. BELIN: (Voiceover) ...it turned out that they were right on line at the time that shot first struck.

(PBS computer animated version of the assassination)

RATHER: (Voiceover) To test the single-bullet theory, PBS two years ago used computer animation techniques not available to the Warren Commission. Precise measurements of Dealey Plaza and the speed and location of the Kennedy limousine were taken to analyze if one shot from the sixth floor of the book depository could duplicate the angle and damage of the magic bullet shot. If the governor did turn as he recalls, perhaps reacting to an earlier shot that missed, the trajectories line up and lead back to the sixth-floor window.

(File footage of Kennedy's assassination)

Mr. POSNER: (Voiceover) This is frame 223 on the Zapruder film. The president--you're just starting to see his shirt cuff here, coming up from behind the sign. Here you can see on both sides of Governor Connally, his white shirt, and there's the tie right in the middle. In the next frame, something very interesting happens.

(End of excerpts)

Mr. POSNER: The lapel on his jacket...

RATHER: His right lapel.

(File footage of Kennedy's assassination)

Mr. POSNER: (Voiceover) ...right lapel--blows up, covering this part of his shirt. It now eliminates this great question mark of when was the governor and the president struck by a second shot.

(Computer animated version of how the assassination happened)

RATHER: (Voiceover) And how about the third and fatal shot? (shot fired)

(File footage of Kennedy's assassination)

RATHER: (Voiceover) For nearly 30 years, critics of the Warren Commission insist it came from the front, proving, they say, there was a second gunman.

Dr. WECHT: (Voiceover) We have the body going forward; we have a car moving in that direction.

(End of excerpts)

Dr. WECHT: We have the bullet coming in this direction, according to the Warren Commission, and yet we have the body moving back this way.

(File footage of Kennedy's assassination)

RATHER: (Voiceover) That's a popular theory. But the film reveals Kennedy's head first goes slightly forward.

Mr. POSNER: (Voiceover) There is a small movement of the president, it's calculated at about two and a half to three inches. Then this exit takes place.

Dr. MICHAEL M. BADEN (Pathologist): All the evidence clearly shows there were two and only two gunshot wounds from behind.

(Graphic of a head that has sustained two bullet wounds)

Dr. BADEN: (Voiceover) And there is no question that the bullet wound in the back of the head is a typical, classic entrance wound.

(End of excerpts)

RATHER: Those in the military and those who hunt know that the entry wound tends to be the small wound.

Mr. POSNER: Absolutely.

RATHER: If you hit--hit a deer or a person, you're most likely to have a small movement forward when the bullet enters. And then, as the bullet exits, it blows back.

Mr. POSNER: That's right.

(File footage of Kennedy's assassination)

Mr. POSNER: (Voiceover) It happened so fast.

(End of excerpts)

Mr. POSNER: We can see, it's terrible because--not to be gruesome...

(File footage of Kennedy's assassination)

Mr. POSNER: (Voiceover) ...but this pinkish cloud coming out of the president, to the front...

Now this is key that the president has been hit from the rear. If he's hit from the front, we would expect to see ~~on~~ this film, the red cloud showing behind the president as the bullet exits. In addition, you can see right here a line of material.

(File footage of Kennedy's assassination)

Mr. POSNER: (Voiceover) This is also shooting out of the president's head. This is partially skull and ~~brain~~ matter that's going up and to the front. We now have the photographic evidence of a shot from the rear.

RATHER: (Voiceover) And the last and fascinating question: Was the limousine really going at 11 miles ~~per~~ hour when Kennedy was killed?

Mr. POSNER: (Voiceover) Bill Greer, who was the oldest member of the Secret Service detachment, he...

(End of excerpts)

RATHER: He was the wheel man?

Mr. POSNER: He was the wheel man.

(File footage of Kennedy's assassination)

Mr. POSNER: (Voiceover) He remembered looking around toward this commotion in the back of the car, ~~after~~ the president was first hit, which would have been this shot near the sign.

(End of excerpts)

Mr. POSNER: Seeing the president react, he said he then turned around before the fatal head shot, hit ~~the~~ accelerator, and they were zooming out of Dealey at the time the bullet hit the president in the head.

(File footage of Kennedy's assassination)

Mr. POSNER: (Voiceover) What we will see is, before the president's fatal head shot, Mr. Greer over on ~~the~~ lefthand side of the car, in front of the windshield--very difficult to see--but his head here will turn around...

RATHER: (Voiceover) Indeed it does.

Mr. POSNER: (Voiceover) ...and you will see him actually looking at the president at the moment of the ~~fatal~~ head shot. He then--if we follow him after the shot--turns around in panic, ducks down--you can see him hunched over--and hits the accelerator.

What it means is, he has inadvertently given Oswald the easiest of the three shots.

(File footage of Kennedy's funeral)

RATHER: (Voiceover) When we come back, day four, when everything stopped, everyone watched, and nobody forgot.

(Theme music)

(Announcements)

(Theme music)

Sergeant JAMES L. FELDER (Head Of Honor Guard): I remember the morning of the last day, that Monday morning. Like, 15, 16 blocks, almost of people just waiting in line, moving quietly. The police said crime went down during that period. But it was something that--kind of an eerie feeling. Like, 'What do we do next?'

(File footage of Kennedy's funeral)

Ms. LETITIA BALDRIDGE (Mrs. Kennedy's Chief of Staff): (Voiceover) Washington, DC, was stunned. Washington, DC, was silent, unable to function. The town closed up like a black flower. There were no enemies.

(End of excerpts)

Ms. BALDRIDGE: People who had criticized President Kennedy felt guilty. And everybody was just united.

(File footage of Kennedy's funeral)

Mr. HEUVEL: (Voiceover) The president's assassination was a wound for the nation as graphic and meaningful and painful as it was for so many individuals. And Mrs. Kennedy, who really instructed the details of those days much more directly than anyone, understood that. And the nation should be forever in her debt.

Mr. POWERS: (Voiceover) She knew it was John's birthday, the day of the funeral. And we all went back upstairs.

(End of excerpts)

Mr. POWERS: We call the living quarters The Mansion. And then Jackie and Bobby and Teddy and myself, and Lee and my wife Jo, were singing 'Happy birthday,' you know, all of us with tears in our eyes. It was the saddest damn thing. But as Jackie said, 'He--John knows it's his birthday.'

(File footage of Oswald's funeral)

RATHER: (Voiceover) On the day of John Fitzgerald Kennedy's funeral, a smaller service was held in Fort Worth, Texas. There were few mourners. And newsmen, anxious to finish their assignment, helped carry the casket. So Lee Oswald was buried, and with him, the answers to questions about his crime that would haunt the nation. Why do so many Americans still doubt?

Mr. VALENTI: The enormity of the crime, its unexpectedness, and the fact that nobody got a chance to see Oswald on stand, people still had these doubts. And I think the doubts will remain a hundred years from today.

Ms. BALDRIDGE: I never accepted the conspiracy theory. I've never given two seconds to it. I don't even want to tolerate it as an idea. There are a lot of people around trying to make money off of new ideas for books and movies. Bully for them. But let him rest in peace.

(File footage of Kennedy's funeral)

RATHER: (Voiceover) Neither before nor since do I remember being so mesmerized by anything as I was by the funeral procession, Mrs. Kennedy...

Mr. CRONKITE: The finality of it overwhelmed me at the moment. Up till then, it was a nightmare quality as developments piled one on the other.

(File footage of Kennedy's funeral)

Mr. CRONKITE: (Voiceover) This said, 'It's all true.' That it happened. It was over. It's done. And we're about to bury it, bury something of our past along with that.

RATHER: (Voiceover) The drumbeat; the long march to Arlington.

Mr. CRONKITE: (Voiceover) John-John saluting.

(End of excerpts)

Mr. CRONKITE: Tough day. Anchormen shouldn't cry.

(File footage of Kennedy's funeral)

Sgt. FELDER: (Voiceover) To be a part of the casket team, after 1,200 funerals, it conditions you for it. But this was John F. Kennedy, my hero, the senator from Massachusetts who I'd admired since age 16. We folded the flag, presented it to the cemetery director, who then presented it to Mrs. Kennedy. And I just sort of went to pieces.

Mr. HEUVEL: (Voiceover) Robert Kennedy was in a state of shock, I think, for literally months.

(End of excerpts)

Mr. HEUVEL: We would, on many nights working late, go to Arlington and climb the wall and walk quietly to the president's grave. And the sentries there all knew him and saluted when he arrived.

(Footage of a flame burning)

Mr. HEUVEL: (Voiceover) And then, very quietly, he would kneel and say a prayer. And then, just as quietly, we would leave.

Mr. BRADLEE: (Voiceover) This bright and promising young man just blown away.

(End of excerpts)

Mr. BRADLEE: How can you make sense of this? How can you understand it?

(File footage of JFK)

RATHER: (Voiceover) When you talk about it now, do you still feel the pain?

Mr. BRADLEE: (Voiceover) Sure. I feel it for the country. You know, that was a promising time. People walked with their head held a little higher.

Mr. BOND: (Voiceover) The sad irony in dying young. You were frozen. And then that frozen image expands as people look back on you. It's happened to a certain extent with every figure who was struck down in the prime of life...

(End of excerpts)

Mr. BOND: ...with Martin Luther King, with John F. Kennedy, with Robert Kennedy, with Malcolm X. Who's to say what these men might have become? And we invest in them all our hopes and dreams for what we wanted them to be. And I think that's happened with--with John F. Kennedy.

Mr. POWERS: Being in the White House with President Kennedy was like dying and going to heaven to me. I--I called him Jack for 14 years, then it was Mr. President for two years and 10 months and two days. You know, and I lost the best friend I ever had.

(File footage of JFK)

Mr. POWERS: (Voiceover) And today and tomorrow, we shall miss him. And we will never know for sure how different the world might have been had fate enabled him to complete his second term.

(End of excerpts)

(Theme music)

(Announcements)

(Theme music)

RATHER: Today, had he lived, John Kennedy would be 76 years old. Ironically, the shattering event that cut short his life may have increased his stature. In martyrdom, he may be remembered longer and praised more than if he had served out his presidency.

There isn't a reporter in the world, including this one, who wouldn't love to uncover something, anything, that would decisively reverse or positively confirm the current weight of the evidence in this case. But despite years of trying, we at CBS News have not done that; neither has anyone else. Accuracy and fairness dictate that we say so, whatever popular opinion may be.

As a nation and as individuals, it is worth reminding ourselves that many facts are known, many questions have been answered beyond a reasonable doubt. The Warren Commission did make mistakes, but it also got a lot right. Despite all of the attacks, the commission's main conclusions have so far passed the test of time.

There is no proof and very little if any credible evidence of any conspiracy. And the facts, including much hard physical evidence, do indicate one man was the assassin: Lee Harvey Oswald. Any contrary conclusions are speculation, based less on fact than imagination, often by people who divine things the ear cannot hear and the eyes cannot see.

For CBS Reports, I'm Dan Rather. Good night.