

9/26/90

Mr. Marty Crane
63 Federal Road
Barrister, R.I. 02806

Dear Mr. Crane,

Thanks for your offer but neither my work nor my personal interest go to
Rather and what I regard as peripheral, when relevant.

In what you sent me there is a rather extensive disregard for reality.

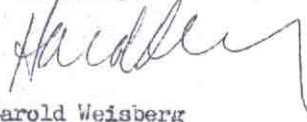
Some of the books referred to as serious and dependable are overt fakes, like
Farewell America, which was a disinformation by the French CIA, SDECE.

I cite this as one example.

Because of my age and health I'm not going to enter into any correspondence on
this and I am inclined to believe you won't believe me anyway, but I tell you this
because you should be discriminating and have some understanding of what is real and
what isn't.

Otherwise, the end product is disinformation and that deceives and misleads
the people.

Sincerely,



Harold Weisberg

9-21-90

Dear Mr. Weisberg -

I am Marty Crane, a.k.a. Monte Evans, a.k.a. Marty Craven. We corresponded briefly in 1979 after I mailed you a copy of The Carlos Confessions (David Philips followed suit with The Carlos Contract; he had his wife's ex-husband Tom Akern, CIA man involved with Lee Oswald, shadowing me in Rehoboth Beach for years.) You didn't like Carlos, but I had the CIA in fits with my accurate information, particularly regarding my Cabell-Darwin thesis.

Here's a copy of my new Dan Kather article. If you're interested in the entire book, send me Post Mortem + I'll send you The Kather Narrative (see page 11.) Even if you're not interested, please accept my gratitude for your immense efforts on the truth's behalf.

Sincerely,
Marty Crane
63 Federal Rd
Barrington, RI 02806
401-246-0296

P.S. Enclosed find excerpts from Kather that mention you.
(I have Oswald in New Orleans + the entire Whitewash series.)

FOREWORD

This narrative makes frequent mention of a loosely-knit community referring to itself as "serious researchers" of the John F. Kennedy Assassination. Their unifying bond is a firm belief that a domestic conspiracy emanating from extremely powerful forces in this country was responsible for the murder of President Kennedy in 1963, and that a supervening "cover-up" conspiracy has clouded the true circumstances of that murder for more than a quarter-century since. These "serious researchers" might be vaguely defined as anyone appreciative of the work done by the following individuals: Colonel L. Fletcher Prouty, Dr. Jerry Rose, Jim Marrs, Edgar Tatro, Mary Ferrell, Sylvia Barber, Peter Dale Scott, Robert Groden, Harry Livingstone, Allard Lowenstein, John Davis, Josiah Thompson, Gaston Fomzi, Penn Jones, Harold Weisberg, Jim Garrison, David Lifton, David Schein, Anthony Summers, Joachim Joesten, Vincent Salandria, Bernard Fensterwald, George O'Toole, Henry Hurt, Bob Katz, Carl Oglesby, Richard Popkin, Robert Sam Anson, Seth Kantor, Mark Lane, Harvey Yazijian, Tom Miller, William Turner, Jerry Pelicoff, Gary Shaw, Larry Harris, Fred Newcomb, Dick Russell, Dr. Philip Melanson, Richard Sprague, Gary Mack, Jack White, Paul Hoch, David Wrong, "Thomas Buchanan," "James Hepburn," "Sergei Losev," "Vitaly Petrusienko," & "Martin Craven."

Persons unfamiliar with the above might find this narrative's unbridled acceptance of assassination-and-cover-up conspiracies perplexing, but it is the very acceptance of those twin conspiracies that is the surest mark of a "serious researcher," however much the Gerald Fords, Dan Rathers and David Belins might dispute that point. Obviously, this wasn't written with any respect whatsoever for that opposing school of thought, which is rudely dismissed in these pages as "the Oswald-alone myth." But it would be remiss to not at least acknowledge that there is an opposing school of thought. One that is a dramatic minority among the American people, true, and, at least in the cases of Ford, Rather and Belin, one comprising of people whom the JFK assassination cover-up has proven lucratively rewarding to; but an opposing school of thought nevertheless. It must also be conceded that the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Central Intelligence Agency and the United States Secret Service have each refused to acknowledge the massive evidence of conspiracy in JFK's murder; but, when we recall that numerous members of those agencies are major suspects in the crime, that reticence shouldn't surprise.

Because their polarized point of view is not elaborately attacked in this narrative - it not being the author's intent to persuade anyone of conspiracy but to recount the unique career of a newsman intimately connected to the in-

famous crime while detailing links between Dallas and the shootings of Robert Kennedy, Martin Luther King, George Wallace, John Lennon and Ronald Reagan - it might smack of incompleteness to some readers. So, for the benefit of those anxious to learn more about John Kennedy's execution, the following books are recommended:

Crossfire, Carroll & Graf Press, 1969, by Marrs; High Treason, Conservatory Press, 1989, by Groden & Livingstone; On The Trail Of The Assassins, Sheridan Square Press, 1985, and A Heritage Of Stone, Putnam, 1970, by Garrison; The Assassinations: Dallas & Beyond, Vintage, 1976, edited by Scott, Hoch & Russell Stetler; Whitewash, Bell, 1966, Oswald In New Orleans, Canyon Press, 1967, and Post Mortem, self-published 1974, by Weisberg; Cover-Up: The Governmental Conspiracy To Conceal The Facts About The Public Execution Of John Kennedy, self-published by Shaw & Harris, 1976; Six Seconds In Dallas, Berkley, 1967, by Thompson; Forgive My Grief, vol. I-III, 1966-67, self-published by Jones; Conspiracy, McGraw-Hill, 1980, by Summers; Who Was Jack Ruby?, Everest, 1973, by Kantor; Farewell America, Frontiers, 1968, by "Hepburn"; Crime & Cover-Up, Westworks, 1977, by Scott; Best Evidence, MacMillan, 1980, by Lifton; Government by Gunplay, Signet, 1976, edited by Yazijian; Accessories After The Fact, Vintage, 1967, by Meagher; Contract On America, Shapolsky, 1988, by Scheim; Mafia Kingfish, McGraw-Hill, 1989, by Davis; Oswald: Assassin Or Fall Guy?, Marzani & Munsell, 1964, by Joesten; Reasonable Doubt, Henry Holt, 1985, by Hurt; The Assassination Tapes, Penthouse, 1975, by O'Toole; They've Killed The President!, Bantam, 1975, by Anson; Coincidence Or Conspiracy?, Kensington, 1977, "directed" by Fensterwald; The Second Oswald, Avon, 1968, by Popkin; and The Plot To Kill The President, New York Times Books, 1981, by G. Robert Blakely and Richard N. Billings. (The latter work presents extremely persuasive evidence that Organized Crime participated in the assassination, but it is severely flawed by its dubiously absolving the CIA of complicity and the authors' naive belief that Oswald actually shot JFK.)

Perhaps the best of the many thousands of magazine articles published on the case appeared in Washingtonian, November 1980. Who Killed JFK? was written by Gaston Fonzi, a staff member of the United States House of Representatives Assassinations Committee that concluded conspiracies were responsible for the deaths of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King, findings unfamiliar to most Americans given the mass media's indifference or outright hostility to Congressional affirmation of those successful murder plots.

A wealth of information can be obtained from a now-defunct monthly, The Continuing Inquiry, published by Penn Jones from 1976 thru 1985. Write: RT3, Box 356, Waxahachie TX 75165.

of one another, who described a black, balding man with a rifle in that window and a man wearing a brown suit jacket and horn-rimmed glasses standing next to him were either unsubpoened or given secret shrift.

Second, the outright distortion of testimony by the Warren Commission staffers. Numerous witnesses insisted that what they had told the Commission was not what the Commission published. Among this group was a United States Senator, Ralph Yarborough, and other credible people who said the Warren Commission had altered their testimony. Also, Senator Russell was stunned to find no mention of his dissent anywhere in the Report, his opinion being hinted at in only the most nebulous way.

It was as a result of this shock that Russell, Chairman of the United States Senate's Armed Services Committee, gave his discreet approval to a small group of servicemen to continue their independent efforts to find the truth of the assassination (this operation was headquartered in Hawaii.) He also encouraged a competent Senate researcher, Harold Weisberg, to pursue his own investigation as well (Weisberg, author of Whitewash and Oswald In New Orleans, is perhaps the champion "serious researcher.")

Third, and finally, we must note the Warren Commission's refusal to bring a pleading Jack Ruby to Washington.* Ruby's head had already been broken once in the Dallas jail (the police said he banged it against a wall in a suicide attempt) and he begged the three men interrogating him in that jail, Earl Warren, Gerald Ford and Leon Jaworski, to "get me to Washington." Insisting he couldn't tell the truth in Dallas, Ruby made it obvious he was ready to confess his part in the conspiracy to silence Oswald, and probably in the conspiracy that killed Kennedy as well. But

*See The Yankee & Cowboy War, by Carl Oglesby, SA&McN Press, 1976, pp. 116-32 for an excellent account of this bizarre incident.

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DAN RATHER IN DALLAS*

by
Monte Evans

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Though Rather has been consistent in his claim to have been by the on-ramp, his report of his activities immediately after the murder has been anything but. In March 1964, he told John Mayo the following, which Mayo published in his book: "I had a cab waiting to rush the film to KRLD studios...[after the shooting] I jumped into my cab and went straight to the KRLD studios."³

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

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

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

If Dan Rather did proceed through Dealey Plaza on foot---it depends on which version of his you subscribe to---he was entering an area where scores of people were flooding, in the hot pursuit of at least one sniper (and possibly two) who had fired from behind the picket fence straddling the grassy knoll. (And where police officers with drawn guns encountered suspicious persons who eluded arrest by flashing bogus Secret Service credentials. No Secret Service agents were assigned to the knoll---suspicious in itself---and none left the motorcade to pursue the gunmen.)⁵ Yet this trained, observant reporter somehow failed to notice the surging wave of witnesses spilling into the parking lots behind the fence, though this was happening right in front of him. Nor did he notice the two men⁶ fleeing frantically through that parking lot immediately after the shots were fired.

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

Obviously, Rather had to know that the camera truck was in the rear of the motorcade; there is no doubting it. Yet, in his autobiography, he offers this statement: "In those days the truck often traveled well back in the motorcade; because of Dallas, it now usually travels in front."⁸ That is absolutely false. The camera truck had always been in position to film the President, before and after Dallas. November 22, 1963 was the suspicious exception to that rule.

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

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

Rather's autobiographical narrative continues:

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I only knew that a tumultuous few minutes had passed since my four-block run from behind the grassy knoll. On the United Press International news wire the first words of a bulletin dictated by Merriman Smith had clattered to the rest of the world: DALLAS, NOV. 22 (UPI)-THREE SHOTS WERE FIRED AT PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S MOTORCADE TODAY IN DOWNTOWN DALLAS. The time was 12:34 P.M.¹¹

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The official announcement was made to the press at 1:33 P.M., Dallas time, by Malcolm Kilduff, the assistant press secretary. More than half an hour had passed since CBS radio reported the death of the President. It does not

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take much imagination to know what was going through my head most of that time. I knew if the story was wrong I would be seeking another line of work. Rightfully so. I also knew I wasn't wrong.¹⁵ (Italics added)

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

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

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

We started a search for anybody and everybody who might have been there carrying an eight-millimeter camera. [KRLD station manager] Eddie Barker's people began calling all over Dallas. And slowly we picked up a trail. Someone had seen a man standing at a certain spot. Someone else thought he was in the retail clothing business (wholesale, it turned out.) We ran our leads through the FBI and the Dallas police. Finally, we had a name: Abraham Zapruder.¹⁷

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

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

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

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

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

Now we run up against some very serious problems.

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

[After discovering numerous discrepancies] I then began exploring the possibility that the Zapruder film itself had been altered sometime before it became Warren Commission evidence in 1964, perhaps even before it went to Life [magazine, which purchased it from Zapruder] on November 23, 1963...But alteration of the film required a film laboratory with the sophisticated apparatus normally used by Hollywood to create special effects. Was the original Zapruder film at some point taken to such a laboratory? Officially, the film went only from Zapruder to Kodak in Dallas; then to the Jamison Film Co. in Dallas, where three prints were made...then back to Zapruder, and then to the vault at Life. I suspected it had taken a secret detour, but I could find no direct evidence to prove that.

Then, in 1976, among records released by CIA under the Freedom of Information Act, Paul Hoch found CIA item 450, a group of documents indicating that the Zapruder film was at the CIA's National Photo Interpretation Center (NPIC), possibly on Friday night, November 22, 1963, and certainly within days of the assassination. NPIC is one of the most sophisticated photo labs in the world.²³ (Italics added.)

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

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

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

Rather can probably be believed when he says he only saw the movie when Zapruder's lawyer showed it to him in the lawyer's office on November 23rd; had he seen it earlier, he would have certainly reported its contents to television viewers. Also, it stands to reason that Rather didn't personally take the film to the Kodak lab or Jamison Film because, as he readily admits in his autobiography, he was ready to show it on the air without Zapruder's permission and damn the consequences. (When Rather realized he might lose out on the bidding for the movie to Life, he said to himself: If I have to, I'll just knock [the 59-year old Zapruder] down, grab the film, run back to the station, show it one time and then let him sue us. He makes this startling admission in his autobiography, and even adds, "Later, someone at the network²⁵ suggested half-jokingly, but only by half, that I should have done just that." Only a fateful twist scuttled his assault-theft plans.)

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

After finally viewing the Zapruder film in the lawyer's office on November 23rd, Rather made his famous "honest mistake" that has haunted him for years. Rushing to the KRLD studios, he requested and was granted immediate air time to describe what he had seen. According to Rather, President Kennedy's head snapped "forward with

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considerable violence" upon receiving the fatal head shot.²⁶ This, as we now know, is totally at variance with the truth. Eventually a bootleg copy of the film made its way into the public domain. Time-Life failed to keep it under wraps as it had hoped after purchasing it from Zapruder,²⁷ and the American public saw that, contrary to what Rather had reported, the President's head had snapped backward (and leftward) after taking the shot. That, of course, was consistent with a fatal shot fired from the grassy knoll to the right-front, where the overwhelming majority of eyewitnesses placed the sniper. Rather's "mistaken" version, of course, aligned perfectly with the "one-rifle-from-behind" official cover story.

When confronted with his obvious error after the film finally reached the public in 1973, Rather simply claimed he had made an honest error because Zapruder's lawyer hadn't allowed him to take notes.²⁸ However, it is difficult for anyone seeing the film even once to forget the dramatic left-rearward reaction of the President's skull as it exploded in a pink halo of blood and brain. The sheer horror of it is startling and invariably leaves an indelible impact. Rather then tried to explain his "mistake" by making mention of the President's head's "double-movement," obviously referring to the forward movement of JFK's head from frames 312-to-313 of the film, a time span representing a mere one-eighteenth of a second, immediately before the much more obvious rearward thrust of the stricken President.²⁹ Though visible on a frame-by-frame perusal, at normal speed the forward snap is difficult for even a trained eye like Rather's to observe; and even if he could see the forward snap---which is extremely unlikely, given the conditions---it only makes his failure to notice the much more dramatic rearward slump even more inexplicable than it already is.³⁰

Whatever the case, there is no denying that Dan Rather glaringly mis-reported the contents of the Zapruder film. What makes this particularly disturbing is that he was the only broadcasting reporter allowed to view the film. Time-Life, an organization with extensive and intimate connections to the CIA, kept the film from the public for almost ten years before a "bootleg" copy found its way into the hands of assassination researchers. It is obvious that some people intended to conceal it from the American people forever, not allowing even reporters to see what it showed.³¹ Except, of course, for Dan Rather, who did not see fit to mention the single most basic picture on it, the horrifying backward thrust of John E. Kennedy after a bullet had obviously struck him from the front in the right temple.³²

Now we will examine why Dan Rather was in Dallas on that assassination weekend. Remember, he had moved from Dallas to New Orleans only a few weeks previously, having completed the transfer of the bureau to the latter city. According to Rather, CBS believed the President's scheduled speech at the Trade Mart would prove to be a major one, so the network quadrupled---yes,³³ quadrupled---its usual manpower for a Presidential visit to a heartland city. In fact, CBS had cameras standing by at the Trade Mart---where persistent rumors claim the assassination was originally intended to transpire---ready to feed live coverage to New York. CBS was thus in perfect position to be the first network to go national with the assassination story, and enjoyed a huge "beat" on its ABC and NBC competition.

Obviously, this was very fortunate for CBS which, according to Carl Bernstein, was, like Time-Life, not only intimately connected with the CIA but was also "unquestionably the CIA's most valuable broadcasting asset."³⁴ Perhaps the most interesting item to compare with the great CBS "luck" is the record "short-selling" spree that swamped the New York Stock Exchange on the morning of the assassination before the shots were fired. According to Lincoln Lawrence, the people who prompted that massive short-sell proved extremely fortunate, reaping some five hundred million 1963 dollars (worth at last two billion of their puny 1990 descendants) when the

market crashed upon news of the assassination, quite a bonanza for one morning's effort.

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

When we recall: the photographs and newsreels of that remote spot reveal no trace of Rather; his two accounts of his movements in the first sixty seconds after the shooting contain glaring and irresolvable discrepancies; his apparent blindness to the obvious conspiratorial activity in the grassy knoll area where he was standing; his knowledge of the camera truck being out of its proper motorcade sequence; his haphazard account of the initial assassination coverage at KRLD that is replete with mis-statements and inaccuracies; his mysterious telephone conversations with people that convinced him to declare the President dead before that official announcement; his obvious lack of compassion for the slain President and his widow; his seemingly supernatural discovery of Abraham Zapruder's identity and his remarkable ability to pry cops and FBI agents from the assassination case to help him make that identification; his having "first possession" of the Zapruder film that we now know was tampered with soon afterward; his blatant failure to accurately report the explicit film's most significant feature after being the only broadcaster allowed to view it...when we recall all these peculiarities, we cannot but wonder exactly what was going on with the CBS New Orleans bureau chief in Dallas that tragic weekend. In a murder case that is internationally famous as a bewildering mystery, it is infinitely ironic that the one man most noted for denying any mystery exists is himself a cauldron of puzzling uncertainty. Indeed, Dan Rather is even a rival to his fellow Dallas-New Orleans resident, Lee Harvey Oswald himself, as the most enigmatic figure connected to the John F. Kennedy Assassination.

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

Footnotes

1. Dan Rather with Mickey Hershowitz, The Camera Never Blinks (New York: William Morrow, 1977), p. 115. References to this source cited hereafter in format: TCNB, p. 115.
2. Jim Marrs, Crossfire (New York: Carroll and Graf, 1989), p. 68.
3. John B. Mayo, Bulletin From Dallas: The President Is Dead (Exposition Press, 1967; reprinted in The Continuing Inquiry, January 22, 1981.
4. TCNB, p. 115, 116.
5. Numerous sources document the Secret Service imposters who escaped arrest in Dealey Plaza by flashing apparently bogus "credentials." See Anthony Summers Conspiracy (New York: McGraw Hill, 1981), p. 81; Henry Hurt, Reasonable Doubt (New York: Henry Holt, 1985), pp. 110-121; Sylvia Meagher, Accessories After the Fact (New York: Vintage, 1967), p. 26; Michael Canfield and Alan J. Weberman Coup D'Etat in America (The Third Press, 1975), pp. 56, 57.
6. Gary Shaw with Larry Harris, Cover-Up: The Governmental Conspiracy to Conceal The Facts About The Public Execution of John Kennedy (self published, 1976); and Marrs, Crossfire offer the best overview of what the Dealey Plaza witnesses saw.
7. TCNB, p. 115.
8. Warren Commission Hearings and Exhibits, vol. 3, page 535.

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9. TCNB, p. 115.
10. TCNB, p. 116.
11. TCNB, p. 116. 117.
12. William Manchester, Death of a President (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), p. 191
13. TCNB, p. 119. In TCNB, Rather incorrectly states the time of the CBS radio announcement as 12:16 P.M.---14 minutes before Kennedy was even shot. He compounds this error later by saying the official announcement came "more than half an hour" after the CBS announcement (it was 17 minutes after.) TCNB is replete with such glaring errors, particularly in the assassination sequences.
14. TCNB, p. 120.
15. TCNB, p. 120.
16. Manchester, Death of a President, p. 249. Father Huber reportedly said "He's dead all right," to a flock of reporters outside the hospital but he never made any statement about "administering the last rites" to anyone before 1:32, and neither he nor Father Thompson (the other priest present) ever acknowledged talking to Dan Rather on the telephone.
17. TCNB, p. 123.
18. As many as nine persons were arrested in or near Dealey Plaza soon after the shots, including major suspects Charles Harrelson, Jim Braden and Jack Lawrence. All were quietly released after Oswald's apprehension, no record of their detention surviving. See Robert Groden and Harrison Livingstone, High Treason (New York: Conservatory Press, 1989) and Marrs, Crossfire for the most updated reports on the Harrelson story. Shaw with Harris, Cover-Up offers an excellent account of the mysterious Jack Lawrence's arrest; numerous sources, including Peter Noyes, Legacy of Doubt (Pinnacle, 1973), cover the Braden arrest. These books also report on the arrests of other unknown persons in Dealey Plaza.
19. The Witnesses, edited by The New York Times, (Bantam, 1964), p. 47.
20. TCNB, 123, 124. An excellent account of Zapruder's contacts with authorities and the Z-film's peculiar travels was written by Philip Melanson and appeared in volume 1 no 1 of The Third Decade, but it fails to mention Dan Rather at all. Dr. Melanson advised this author that he was unaware Rather was even in Dallas that day, much less involved with the Z-film, but his account is an excellent one anyway.
21. See TCNB, p. 127, for Rather's false claim that only one Z-film frame was lost, and his dismissal of its importance.
22. Groden and Livingstone, High Treason, pp. 185-187, offers the best account of the missing six frames and what they might have revealed.
23. David Lifton, Best Evidence (New York: MacMillan, 1980), pp. 556-57.
24. David Belin, Final Disclosure (New York: MacMillan, 1988), pp. 182-183.
25. TCNB, p. 124.
26. The Continuing Inquiry, July 22, 1977, p. 2.
27. Robert Groden and F. Peter Model, JFK: The Case For Conspiracy (Manor Books 1975), p. 127.
28. TCNB, p. 125.
29. Groden and Model, JFK: The Case For Conspiracy offers perhaps the best analysis of the Zapruder film, though it is somewhat dated. More recent analyses can be found in Marrs, Crossfire and Groden and Livingstone, High Treason.
30. Evidence indicates frames 312 and 313 were switched, thus giving a brief impression of a shot from behind. This is very possible.
31. Groden and Model, JFK The Case For Conspiracy, p. 127.
32. Rather's Zapruder film narration was actually done twice because of yet another controversial Rather description. CBS insisted he re-do it and delete an offensive reference to Jacqueline Kennedy "fleeing" the death car. In actuality, she was reaching out for a piece of her husband's brain that had been blown

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backward onto the trunk, itself more evidence of a shot from the front. Rather reluctantly omitted the reference, but "I wished I had not." Soon the "sick comic" Lenny Bruce would be cracking about Mrs. Kennedy "hauling ass" out of the car. What she was really doing was gathering her husband's brains for stuffing back in his skull. See TCNB, pp. 125, 126 for Rather's "offensive" narrative; see The Witnesses, p. 43, for Secret Service agent Clint Hill's opinion that he thought Mrs. Kennedy was reaching for a piece of the President's skull.

33. TCNB, p. 112.

34. See Carl Bernstein, "The CIA and the Media," Rolling Stone, October 20, 1977.

35. Groden and Livingstone, High Treason, p. 241. Lincoln Lawrence, Were We Controlled? (University Books, 1967).

*This article represents the first and fifth chapters of THE RATHER NARRATIVE: IS DAN RATHER THE JFK CONSPIRACY'S SAN ANDREAS FAULT? by longtime JFK researcher Monte Evans. The contents of this larger work are as follows:

<u>The Case.</u>	The John F. Kennedy assassination mystery
<u>The Star.</u>	The anchorman's recent controversy
<u>The Texan.</u>	Dan Rather's first thirty years
<u>The Conspiracy.</u>	The plot that killed JFK
<u>The Story.</u>	Dan Rather's involvement with the Dallas tragedy
<u>The Reports.</u>	The fraudulent Warren Report and several CBS broadcasts provide safety for JFK's murderers
<u>More Assassinations.</u>	The shootings of Martin Luther King, Robert F. Kennedy and George C. Wallace
<u>The White House Man.</u>	Rather helps destroy President Nixon
<u>The Contender.</u>	Rather prospers during the late 1970s
<u>The Anchorman.</u>	Rather takes over CBS News while ugly links between the shootings of Allard Lowenstein, John Lennon, Ronald Reagan and the "Son of Sam" victims are ignored
<u>Epilogue.</u>	Who is Dan Rather? America <u>must</u> find out!

THE RATHER NARRATIVE can be purchased in its entirety for \$15 from: Barbara Books, PO Box 160, Barrington, Rhode Island 02806.

The author wishes to dedicate this work to the inspirational memory of United States Senator Richard Brevard Russell, 1897-1971.

A VIDEO COMPENDIUM (PART TWO)

by
Jan Stevens*

Part One of this article (March 1990) looked at the 25th anniversary coverage as well as the films of Groden, Summers and Lifton. This time out, we look at what are perhaps the two most significant and well-produced documentaries, both made available in 1988.

KRON-TV (San Francisco): "JFK: An Unsolved Murder" November, 1988

Produced and written by Stanhope Gould, the KRON show presented certain critical viewpoints as espoused by David Lifton (who was a consultant), Josiah Thompson, Dr. Cyril Wecht, Robert Groden, Tony Summers and John Davis. The official version was presented here by David Belin (of course) and the House Select Committee's Dr. Michael Baden and counsel Andrew Purdie.