

1999

JFK/Deep Politics Quarterly

Vol. IV #2 January, 1999

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Connally Redux
commentary from *Newsweek*

The "Rediscovered" Connally Diaries: Oswald, Yes; Magic Bullet, No.

file

In its November 23, 1998 edition, *Newsweek* featured excerpts from the "lost" diary of Nellie Connally, the sole surviving individual from the presidential limousine of November 22, 1963. "I will fight anybody that argues with me about those three shots," the article begins, "I do know what happened in that car...fight me if you want to."

Michael Beschloss interviewed Mrs. Connally, and she was refreshing her memory from a "diary" she "scribbled out on yellow legal pages a few weeks after the assassination," which she re-discovered after John Connally's death in 1993. The diary maintains the lone assassin ("a scrambled egg brain with 15 bucks" to describe Oswald), but is as ever adamant that there was no magic bullet.

The standard Connally story is told, but by Mrs. Connally. She heard a noise from the back, saw JFK leaning forward, and then saw her husband react to a second, separate bullet. Then a third shot filled the vehicle with "something falling all over me. My sensation was buckshot.... My eyes saw bloody matter in tiny bits all over the car."

The article points out the point-counterpoint political events that were mirrored in the car's occupants, as it was Connally, as Johnson's campaign manager in 1960, who circulated the rumor of Kennedy's Addison's Disease with the suggestion that he would not survive an elected term. The irony there

ground.

And that is where we account for the mob, the CIA, the exiles, the right wing, the oil people--they were all ready to sign on to use JFK as a martyr to further their own interests; and if historians were inclined to write the history of the 1960s as a time when American anger over the killing of their beloved President led to the reawakening of America, the dusting off of the Monroe Doctrine, and the end of communism in this hemisphere, then let the sun shine on JFK. Because in the meantime, the CIA would have been saved, the mob would have been back in business, right wing political agendas would have been validated, the exiles would have returned to their homeland, and President Lyndon B. Johnson and F.B.I. Director for life J. Edgar Hoover would have continued in positions of power, not disgrace or prison.

Much of that DID happen because of events of 1963. What did not happen was the removal of Cuba as the line in the sand, because Oswald/Hidell did not get executed, and the planners of the four phases were shocked at America's grief because they could only view JFK through their own eyes.

Which puzzle does your data fit? Whatever the answer is, save the piece, because there is a question to match it.

When you have an answer, you are in business. Go find the question.

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The Confessions of Ruth Paine

by Steve Jones

is obvious.

Personal notes abound. JFK apparently was not happy when told that Jackie's presence would be needed to help him win votes; the trip was changed from a fundraising event to a political visit, as JFK's liberalism was not playing well in Texas; the timing was set so that JFK could be back in Washington in order to celebrate John, Jr.'s third birthday. As we know, John-John would celebrate his birthday with a poignant, bittersweet salute to his father that will forever be etched in America's collective memory.

Two final thoughts: the diary tells us, "Quickly there was a second shot...I reached over and pulled [John] to me and tried to get us both down in the car. Then came a third shot...John was bleeding badly all over the front of his shirt. he was not moving in my arms. I thought my husband was dead..." Yet the Zapruder film (see related article on *that*), clearly shows that John Connally goes hurtling forward within 10-15 frames of the head shot. It is far too fast to be a reaction, from an individual going into shock, to either hearing the Z-313 shot, or to react to the cranial detritus that resulted. Yet there is the Governor, looking at the sky at one moment, as his wife describes in the diary, and then instantly hurled forward.

WHY? HOW?

The article concludes with Mrs. Connally's thoughts and reminiscences on seeing her husband in bandages and tubes at Parkland Hospital on Saturday. He asked her about JFK, and she told him that the President was dead. "His [Connally's] response was, 'I knew.'" Those two words will probably--and perhaps should--generate two conspiracy books.

As some readers of the *JFK/Deep Politics Quarterly* may be aware, Carol Hewett, Barbara Lamonica, and I have been conducting research on Ruth and Michael Paine, arguably two of the most significant yet overlooked individuals in the tapestry of people, places, and events that continue to swirl around the vortex that we know as the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. I would like to share with the *Quarterly's* readers some thoughts that Ruth Paine revealed to a close personal friend of hers. This friend subsequently discussed these thoughts with me, but sought from me a promise [being kept] never to reveal her identity in order to protect her privacy.

In the spring of 1997 Jim Douglass, a researcher and Christian peace worker, put me in contact with Ruth's friend in the hopes that she might be willing to give me some valuable insights into the life of Ruth Paine, once a central figure in the lives of Lee and Marina Oswald, and, by extension, their children. When I traveled to the friend's home and knocked on her door, she greeted me by saying that we should go somewhere else to talk because she feared that her home might be subject to electronic surveillance. When we did finally sit down to talk, she apologized for seeming paranoid, but quickly gave me reason to believe that her fears were not unfounded. She explained to me that she had been a Christian peace worker during the turbulent Reagan-Bush years when the United States government was heavily funding the Contras in their efforts to overthrow the populist

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