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## THE DEFENESTRATION OF HENRY COTT

or They Kill Their Own  
or Take It From Here

(This is not a roman a clef. It is a true story in which some real names are disguised and a few incidents conjectured. It comes from hundreds of the thousands of once-secret official CIA records in the author's possession. There is no single fictional character in this summary.)

How could the Central Intelligence Agency kill one of its top scientists on his job - with all his colleagues around - and leave no trace of murder?

It required 23 years for George Waldron, an aging investigative reporter, to figure out what had really happened to his neighbor, top microbiologist Henry Cott.

Both lived near Fort Detrick, an Army Chemical Warfare post. It was inside the city of Frederick, Maryland. As Army installations go, it was a small one. It was also unique in the work in which it was engaged only an hour's drive from Washington.

The superpatriots of the ultrasecret intelligence agency were horrified when Cott expressed moral revulsion at peacetime killing and the mass mind-control potential of the work on which he was engaged. He was in a dual role: overtly an Army scientist; covertly an intelligence operative.

The ultrasecret endeavor was virtually unknown within the Agency. Its identity was first hidden in even the "Top Secret" internal records as "the Schwab project." As it grew in size, it became "Bluebird" and "Artichoke," and then, until most of the records were destroyed in 1973 during The Watergate, by a series of cryptonyms, MKULTRA, MKDELTA, MKSEARCH and MKNAOMI.

The work for which Cott had been recruited was developing and perfecting

defoliants and herbicides. During the early days of the cold war so soon after World War II, he could see this as part of a nation's defense. If the whole world did not go up in an atomic holocaust, you starve your enemy out.

In three years Cott helped produce the chemical agents that, sprayed from an airplane, could wipe out entire forests and sterilize farmland for years. In these three years he became the expert in air-dispersal of chemical agents.

His government was grateful. He was put in for a promotion. He was asked to become supervisor of a new project. He was introduced to it by a man who spoke his own scientific jargon, a Ph.D. from the Pentagon itself. Roger Hiller had Army Chemical Warfare credentials to prove it. This was Cott's own branch.

"We're afraid the Russians can make zombies out of our diplomats with LSD," The Man from the Pentagon told him in those days when word of the mind-bender had not yet reached the city streets. "We have to prepare defenses."

Cott saw immediately how this could cripple the country he loved, how his own children could become serfs of a foreign master. He took the new assignment willingly, happy to be able to serve his country and freedom again.

How do you defend against a chemical so potent almost invisible quantities dropped in a drink are crippling?

While Cott was working on this, another problem was postulated: suppose they put it in an aerosol? That way it could not be traced to a diplomatic function, which would create a scandal.

Before long Cott was able to spray LSD from a lipstick-size aerosol bomb.

He was then asked to develop more potent chemical agents, to see if the potential enemy might have developed them.

Thus there came into being the real mind-bender, B-2.

Thus also Cott came to realize that with all his work put together he had come close to perfecting an entirely new system of invisible war, a means of pinpointing individual assassinations that could also be used to destroy the minds of



innocent people anywhere and everywhere. War or no war, it was already an invisible means of waging an aggressive war.

When he discussed his moral qualms with the small cell of intelligence operatives within his own Chemical Warfare lab, they pook-pooked his fears. Our people never do such things.

The uninhibited, outgoing Cott was not satisfied. Yet his work was so secret he could not discuss it with his wife or pastor - with anyone other than the handful of friends with whom he worked. He did, several times. Without any peace coming to his mind.

Every month or so the small band drove 25 miles further into the mountains to a small but luxurious camp at Deep Creek Lake, there to relax and talk in peace and security. At the end of sumptuous dinners, there were Cuban cigars and Cointreau with the coffee.

Twenty minutes after Cott's last such dinner, just before Thanksgiving, The Man from the Pentagon told them they had been given LSD in the Cointreau. It was an experiment to learn how the better minds react. Two of them whose drinks had not been doctored would tape-record and observe. They were again working on protecting our ambassadors.

Somehow Cott alone did not come out from under the influences of the drug. He remained troubled, disoriented and apprehensive. His fear gradually turned to paranoia. His conscience bothered him. He came to believe he was stealing from the government by taking his monthly Army partial-disability allowance from a minor wartime injury. Cott and his wife accepted the offer of The Man from the Pentagon to take him to a first-rate psychiatrist.

Ten days later Cott plunged through a closed 15th-floor window of a posh New York hotel.

Suicide, the police called it, for all their suspicions about the man with the

Pentagon credentials because of his unresponsiveness under normal questioning.

Twenty-three years later it appeared more like the old spook "termination with extreme prejudice," by ~~defen~~stration, the same way James Forrestal, first Secretary of Defense, died in a fall from the tower of the Bethesda Navy Hospital in suburban Washington.

George Waldron had come to know Cott's first-born about five years after the scientist flattened into another Manhattan statistic on the concrete sidewalk. Bob Cott was then a bright high-school kid who had come to photograph the tame fish in George's pond. George's isolated home was on the opposite side of the mountain on which Diane Cott, not without hardship, was raising her fatherless trio.

She had only the small sum coming from what the CIA held to be an employment-connected death. She did not know that, had it not been for one of Cott's colleagues, she would not have received this pittance, either. The CIA was not about to admit killing its own. Inside Cott's small CIA Special Operations Group it was not known that Cott had been killed. But the Deep Creek Lake party knew he had been slipped LSD. On this basis, that the administration of the drug caused death and that it was job-related, Victor Madison insisted on a service-connected pension for the widow and children they all knew and liked. With one revolt requiring the murder, Allen Dulles did not risk a second revolt. The pension was processed through the Army.

Ten years after the photographing of the fish, Bob, then a schoolteacher, phoned to ask George to speak to his class of 12-year-olds.

In his youth George had been in intelligence, recruited by an editor for whom he had done investigative reporting. George was not a spook in World War II. He was an analyst, one of the silent types who do the real work of real intelligence, carefully gathering and fitting together all the little pieces of available



information, giving them meaning so no soluble puzzle remains unsolved.

He was also a troubleshooter to whom all sorts of odd jobs were bounced by the various disparate components that make up an intelligence service. This came from what he had done on the assignment that awaited him after his security was cleared.

In house it was known as "The Paris Case." It was not known elsewhere except in parts of the Army's Adjutant General's Office and the Military Police.

There had been these four brave young Americans of French-Canadian ancestry, Army enlisted men who spoke French and who had volunteered for an extraordinarily dangerous parachute drop behind Nazi lines in France. Paris was the name of the sergeant who was squad leader. The case was code-named after him, not the city. The four had been involved in a fight with the Washington military police who were thoroughly beaten up by those with commando training. The MP's, who started the fracas, then framed the Paris team who were in Washington awaiting transportation.

The frame-up survived through court-martial and all appeals in the channels of military justice. But General William ("Wild Bill") Donovan, then intelligence commander, a man with an intense loyalty to those under him, believed his men had been framed. In George's past there had been an elaborate political frame-up that showed up in the security check. George had beaten his own bum rap, Donovan's investigators and lawyers had failed. So, he had The Paris Case awaiting George.

Six weeks later the four were freed, their records cleansed of the injustice, and the MP commander, a former big-city cop, was a suicide.

This and his own similar experience taught George how dangerous to freedom an excess of police zeal can be, especially when wedded to a sincerely-held, unquestioning faith in higher authority and genuine but inflexible concepts of right and wrong and governmental needs and obligations. The result can be authoritarianism. The tradition of asking no questions, of blind obligation to

higher authority characterizes intelligence work. In it authoritarianism is inherent. There is an acceptance of ignorance if there is no "need to know." There is compartmentalization, which further limits who can know and the possibility of correcting error. There are "cut-offs" for detachment and "deniability," which immunizes higher authority. Even the president cannot and does not know what goes on unless he is told.

Allen Dulles, once chiefest spook of them all, personified this in some of George's work in his later years when his investigating and writing turned to exposing these hazards to free and democratic society. As a member of the Warren Commission, Dulles had actually told his fellow members, in deep secrecy, that perjury is the spook way of life - and that it is necessary, right and proper. An agent would lie even to his own superior if that were necessary. Perceiving this same necessity, that superior would accept what he knew to be a lie and pass it upward.

George's work made him an expert in the improper domestic activities of those agencies that turned from their proper and necessary functions, turned against their own people, chiefly but not exclusively the FBI and the CIA, where paranoia became patriotism.

George had lost direct contact with those with whom he had served in intelligence, but some old-timers who had stayed out in the cold remembered what he had done for Paris and that crew. Every so often there was a reminder, a Xerox in the mail.

The first had its explanation hidden in a fake return address, 1915 Luke Street, Rockville, Maryland. There is no Luke Street in Rockville. But in the Book of Luke, 19:15 is where Jesus spoke of the very stones crying out.

A stone did cry out with each anonymous mailing, in anguish and anger over the spook excesses turned inward, the erosion of freedom by the dedicated wrong.



A stone did cry out with each anonymous mailing, in anguish and anger over the spook excesses turned inward, the erosion of freedom by the dedicated wrong.

One morning there was a large package bearing the return address of a book club of which George was not a member. It held not a printed book but the makings of one, 300 pages of a report by the Inspector General of the CIA. The Inspector General is supposed to be the internal watchdog.

Almost half of the Inspector General's report dealt with the defenestration of Henry Cott. All of it was about experiments in behavior control - mind-bending.

The pages were written in bureaucratese, a form of English developed over the years to hide part of what it says and to avoid saying what is officially embarrassing without the avoidance being readily apparent. Memos are written with such ellipsis and indirection that within days nobody can say with certainty what was really meant. One that once reached George was a directive from the Attorney General to an Assistant Attorney General. It ordered a massive "internal investigation" (English equivalent: cover-up) without ever stating the subject of the investigation, hiding it further by assigning the need to "recent testimony." What testimony? Where? By whom? Dozens of thousands of courts have testimony every day, as do the Congress and administrative bodies.

Records are created to have a meaning inside spookdom that can be denied outside it should copies ever leak. After the passing of a few weeks, nobody would admit recalling what "testimony" was referred to. (Actually, it was a delayed confession of the sins of J. Edgar Hoover by the FBI's Number 3 man. Delayed, incomplete and deliberately misleading, the deception and misdirection were obscured by the sensation.)

Only those with personal knowledge can fully comprehend the bureaucratese that is used for covering up. Sometimes those with prior experience can make out much.

While much remained unclear, these leaked CIA pages in the book-club wrapper

left no doubt that Henry Cott had been CIA and had been killed by his own.

He worked in a dual role. He was employed in his cover job with the Army Chemical Warfare Service. He also had been a witting part of a small CIA "Special Operations Group" inside the Chemical Warfare Service in which all the military scientists were also CIA operatives. It was a perfect natural cover: scientists pursuing their science in the open in an agency of scientific research while working clandestinely for the Agency.

Henry Cott's dedication and his patriotic intentions were clear through the clouding of language. Madison's daring insistence that the family be provided for was straight and plain. This clarity in expression and record-keeping was essential to the justification of line-of-duty ruling in the death.

It also was clear, from the need to be able to explain the monthly payments to Cott's survivors, that LSD had been dropped into his Cointreau without his prior knowledge.

What is not clear and what no questions were asked about is how he continued hallucinating for more than ten days on a single dose. That just does not happen.

Nor was it clear why there was the long delay in killing him. The elaborate cover that was being worked out during this period was hidden well.

There was no mystery about what had happened. Cott really had plunged to his death through the closed window. He had not been pushed out of an open window. His smashed corpse held bits of glass. The medical examiner did retrieve them at the autopsy.

There had not been a day during which Cott and his escort, The Man from the Pentagon, had not been seen together in public. At the theater, in the better restaurants, in taxicabs and at their hotel - all over New York.

Each time Cott's condition worsened he was seen by the doctor not publicly known as the CIA's man. The doctor had records, Cott's room held the dated prescriptions.



(The doctor, G nther Liebergott, who called himself a psychiatrist and practiced psychiatry, was not trained as a psychiatrist. Actually, he was an allergist experienced in reactions to hallucinogens. New York law does not require specialized psychiatric training for a licensed doctor to practice it.)

But how was Cott driven to destroy himself?

If the clue was in these pages, it escaped George.

He knew there would be no punishment for the murder, an official murder, an official assassination; that no case would ever go to court on it. Who prosecutes the prosecutor? But he felt impelled to solve the crime itself. It was more than a compulsion to live a whodunit or accept an intellectual challenge. When the government goes around killing citizens in peacetime; when the spooks can and do kill on whim and with impunity; no one is safe and the system of society itself is jeopardized. It was more ghoulish to him because Cott was a moral, talented man with rare skills that, employed constructively, might have led to the curing of killing diseases. It was more bizarre because Cott's patriotism had directed him into bending science to the destruction of a land foreign to him.

(Twenty years after Cott's death Fort Detrick was converted to peaceful medicine. It became the federal center for research into the causes and possible cure of cancer.)

From all the documents and personal knowledge about Cott the cover-up was transparent. Beginning after he was freaked out, there were reports alleging psychiatric problems, delusions and suicidal tendencies. These were bracketed with truth about his outstanding professional career, his dedication and fine character. Also included were real investigative reports by CIA investigators who, naturally enough, concluded it was a suicide. Superficially, these were done cleverly. Actually, what appeared to be clever could not be overlooked. That Liebergott was not a trained psychiatrist is explicit as is the New York police suspicion of The Man from the Pentagon. The logical official belief that he was

protecting the Agency by not disclosing his connection with it explained his unsatisfactory responses before he claimed it in a personal statement and official interviews. It was too risky to try to hide the police suspicions. Instead, they were given an acceptable explanation made a part of the coverdop.

Yet there remained provocative oddities more than 20 years after the tragedy. One of the actual CIA investigators signed himself "James McC." James McCord, formerly both FBI and CIA, was a Watergate burglar.

There were many - countless - projects in behavior control and modification. Each separate cryptonym represented a series. A January 17, 1975, memo said of MKULTRA only that it "dealt with drug or counter-drug research and development."

This toying with the mind is linked to men who did figure in other assassinations.

The work was done under TSD, Technical Services Division, later OTS, Office of Technical Services. This is the part that provided Watergater E. Howard Hunt with cover identifications and secret technical assistance. Until June 1973 it was headed by Dr. Sidney Gottlieb. The other men whose names appear range from "Shef" (for Sheffield) Edwards, honcho on the attempts against Castro's life in the 1960s, to Richard Helms, whose career began with "dirty works" described euphemistically as "Operations" and "Plans." Helms was DCI, or Director, Central Intelligence, when Hunt received the illicit CIA help and when most of the behavior-modification records were destroyed on his personal order.

What was destroyed and what remained hidden may never be known, but the author of the January 17, 1975, "MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD" on "SUBJECT: MKULTRA", the CIA "Officer" who signed himself only "102702," concluded with these words:

"Over my stated objections the MKULTRA files were destroyed by order of the DCI (Mr. Helms) shortly before his departure from office."

The records of destruction were included in the "book club" package.



"Per instructions of Dr. Gottlieb" is written across the face sheet. Appended are four sheets of lists of MKULTRA projects only. None of the others is listed as destroyed. Of the total of 152 subprojects under this single mind-bending intelligence-agency adventure, 40 are not recorded as destroyed.

The package contained no destruct-records on the other five cryptonymed and code-named series of grim games with the human mind. When there were 152 numbered under only one of the six, George shuddered in horror at the thought of what could have happened to so many people.

Once these MKULTRA records were memory-holed, Helms and Gottlieb decamped. Whatever their motives, incriminations to be found by successors were fewer.

There happened to be no real danger from any successor DCIs. William Colby, a career spook from the dirty-works end, followed Helms. Colby then was forced out when Congress nibbled around the edges of other scandals, police-state treatment of Americans in the United States. He added a macabre touch by undertaking a public defense of the CIA's misdeeds. He barnstormed the lecture and TV talk-show circuits on "Constitutional Intelligence in America," the title of a book he was writing. George could not recall any provision of the Constitution that sanctions twisting minds, torture and assassinations.

If all these records of official horrors remained and leaked after the destruction, what could there not have been in what was destroyed and what had not been leaked? What a harvest of thorns of human suffering!

In the Cott murder the outlines of a solution were visible. The motive had to be and was limited. The fact available and simple analysis eliminated the possibility of a personal assassination. Too many people were involved. It was what the KGB calls a "liquid affair," a liquidation; a "dismissal with extreme prejudice," the Viet Nam phrase - an official order. It therefore had to be for an official reason. This meant and had to mean that on some official level Cott was not trusted because he knew dangerous secrets the exposure of which, in official belief, was

more dangerous to officialdom than getting caught in a peacetime domestic assassination, an official crime for which there is no proven precedent.

Before long the solution did come, in another anonymous mailing - a page from a mail-order catalogue. It was headed "PSYCHOLOGY - PSYCHO-ACOUSTICS." It advertised what in 23 years had become commonplace, devices for pleasing the mind with color projecting and varying gadgets synchronized with sound.

The Edmunds Scientific Co. encouraged customers to "EXPLORE THE MANY WONDERS OF THE HUMAN MIND" with a "Behavioral Science Lab from 'Psychology Today'." With this one could "Gain insight into human behavior - how we perceive, learn, forget, think. Study stimulus control ... train insects to respond to certain stimuli ..."

There was a device by which one could "Create Optical Illusions with Whirling Disks." One would "see colors in black and white," colors not there, and "see objects that aren't there."

Packaged in the size of a thick book and selling for \$69.95 is an "electronic sound conditioner." It is plugged with these words: "Sound Put You To Sleep? Surf & Rain In Your Bedroom? Noise Blocks out Noise? White Sound?"

For another \$7.25 there is a phonograph record of "white sound," called "Heartbeat/Wind in the Trees," to "provide a most romantic mood for intimate encounters."

From the spookery to the bedroom, murder to love, with "this new science" of psychoacoustics that "involves the combination of sounds and thoughts ... you unconsciously anticipate and interact with" these sounds.

This triggered it.



Psychoacoustics and a drug.

George went back to the Inspector General's report, to one particular page describing one of the four operations identified by cryptonyms. There was ~~MA~~DELTA, ~~MA~~KULTRA, ~~MA~~KNAOMI and ~~MA~~KSEARCH. Sure enough, there was the single sentence he thought he recalled, with a single, fleeting mention of "psycho-acoustical stimuli." It was again official semantics. Read by the unwitting, it would be taken as a perceived threat from the Russians in the imaginary threat they presented to our ambassadors in their efforts to learn our secrets from the ambassadors.

Once more George combed the stack of those never-intended-to-be-seen internal memos. They, too, supported his analysis.

There were what was called a "Brief Description" of what was hoped ~~for~~ from these projects. It included: "... drugs for use in effecting psychological entry and control of the individual" and the companion "study of the effect of drugs on the vestibular function of the ear and the development of side effects which indicate the possibility of psychological entry and control."

This section of the roughly typed notes had a sort of summary, "the development and application of drugs which will aid in the establishment of psychological control."

For "field teams" there was even a lipstick aerosol dispenser similar to the commonly-available tear-gas fountain pens.

It was all there save for one essential missing link. With it the chain was complete. Search and research all these incredible official records as he would, George did not find the answer to how it was pulled off. How was Cott, the obedient, dedicated public servant, told to kill himself and by what method of self-destruction?

It had to have been a way that would keep The Man from the Pentagon in the clear - free of a murder rap, able to pass polygraph testing and certain not to point at the Agency.

But where to turn with this clue?

Once again the recent past returned.

Just before the package disguised as a book-club mailing was in George's box, he had had a cryptic call from a man with a distinctive deep bass voice, one with a unique and unpredictable hesitancy, occasional breaks and pauses that could not be connected with natural pauses for thought. This man called himself Joe. He spoke in ellipsis, as though trying to sound out George, yet not ever getting to what Joe was probing to learn.

Joe was friendly enough. Chatty, too, with seemingly pointless stories about his own past and a few mysteries in it he would like help in solving. For a period coinciding with the Korean war, Joe had been a nonperson. He had been in the military and the government claimed to have no record of it.

Joe professed no knowledge of George's books. His first call, however, did coincide with news-service stories on George's public release of officially-embarrassing documents that had been TOP SECRET. One in particular hurt the CIA. Its former Director, the late Allen Dulles, when a member of the Warren Commission and expecting perpetual secrecy, had told his fellow Commissioners that the highest and most dedicated expression of CIA patriotism is perjury, a felony as well as crippling of the workings of representative society. It made the President the creature of any intelligence agent, even if the Director of Central Intelligence were honest with presidents, as Dulles himself had not been with Eisenhower when the Russians shot down Francis Gary



Powers and his CIA U-2 spy plane and had not been with John Kennedy when he briefed JFK on the CIA's plan for the invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs. Both were fiascos, very dangerous and diplomatically hurtful to the country and the international reputations of both Presidents. Dulles responded to the incredulous Chief Justice's questions about perjury by telling him bluntly that only a "bad one" would tell his "chief" the truth when Agency embarrassment would result. At the end of that dialogue all these eminences had agreed that all the intelligence agencies use "terribly bad characters" and had actually laughed when the Senator who had been in charge of what is called "oversight" of the CIA had said it took men of "terribly bad character" to do "this kind of work."

It was right after Associated Press and United Press International syndicated long stories on George's press conference that Joe called for the first time. Then and thereafter the calls came on Sundays only, generally at dinnertime where George lived.

As the calls continued, George, in wondering why they were always on Sunday, had dismissed this as coincidence because it was a day most people do not work.

Now he connected the calls with a possible expectation by Joe that he would receive the Inspector General's report.

Could this man with the hesitating voice also have been a victim of the mind-bending experiments? Could he have been one of the human guinea-pigs in the CIA's behavior-modification experiments in their early stages or one of the operatives? Of course! Korea brought us the new word, "brainwashing." And that coincided with the time Joe was a nonperson, a part of this life of which he has no record, no proof.

Right after Joe's last call there had been still another anonymous

mailing. It was the entire page of classified ads from a small-town newspaper the name of which was on the top. One "blind" ad under "personals" was encircled. One word had been written in after the name of the paper. George typed out that ad, word for word, inserting the added word, and mailed it to the paper's classified advertising department.

Sure enough, that Sunday night the phone rang. It was that deep, uneven voice.

"Good evening, Mr. Waldron. Glad to hear from you. It took longer than I'd expected."

They chatted, as though by prearrangement, with occasional indirect references to what was on George's mind. The indirection left him uncertain. George feared that if his phone were tapped it could lead to the identification of Joe. Then he realized how childish this was. Joe had the world's easiest-to-identify voice. Therefore, Joe was not afraid. George could feel the flush of shame warming his face.

He abandoned indirection.

"It wasn't acid, was it?" he asked.

"Nope."

"E-Z?"

"Yup!"

"Did he invent it?"

"Probably. It came from there. It was invented where he worked and when he worked there."

George then told Joe of CIA interviews contained in the Inspector General's report. Cott had been picked up by the New York police wandering around throwing away his money and personal identifications. His boss told him to do this, Cott told the police. They had retrieved his driver's license, his Army Chemical Warfare identification, and had searched him. His pockets still held his hotel-room key, so the police



took him back to the hotel, where The Man from the Pentagon explained that Cott was ill. Cott was docile, as though in a trance. The story was believable. The police had been satisfied when they were told the psychiatrist would be phoned immediately and Cott was given his medicine and took it without protest.

"Was that a dry run?" George asked.

"I think so."

"Do you really believe Cott's explanation to the police, that his superior told him to throw his money and IDs away in Times Square?"

"Yes, I do. I'm certain."

"Clever."

"Indeed so!"

"It all fit with mental illness and he sure looked and acted it. Who in his right mind would wander around Times Square at two in the morning scattering his money and papers? And then say his boss told him to do it! It was more than a test. It was the perfect cover, too."

"Absolutely the best possible."

"He did hear voices, too, didn't he?"

"Certainly."

☞ "I found that ad for the gizmos interesting. It seems relevant."

"Right connection. It is."

"One psychoacoustical stimulus is the human voice."

"The best"

"Oh, man! What a deal! The perfect crime!"

"Well, I hope not quite. And do you know there have been others?"

"That tennis star?"

"For one."

"You?"

"Not 'perfect.'"

"You?"

"I'm still here."

"Glad you are! Let's get back to details. He did hear this voice?" Joe agreed. "Yet that voice was safely 250 miles away. Suppose it was taped?" Joe did. "That provided an alibi it turned out was never needed. And with the success of the dry run a second tape could be used. Was."

Joe said he saw it the same way.

"How was it transmitted or projected?" George asked. "And do you think it had to have been from close-by?"

"A matter of a short distance only, at least in those years. Transponders probably then. By now I presume the state of the art has advanced it much. My knowledge is limited to 23 years ago. Fortunately, I was able to get away from it. Remember the story I told you of my entering the Los Angeles FBI office through the back door late at night? I heard a voice telling me to do that. Well, that was not quite as brilliant a test. No cover at all. Daring and quite a test, but it made a record, an FBI and police record. They were a bit too brash with that. Not that many people who have no business being there are found in FBI offices after midnight."

"Do you think it is limited to line-of-sight?"

"I don't know. Then, possibly. Probably not now."

"The triumph of evil!"

"No, you have it wrong. Of patriotism."

There was no trace of bitterness in the voice. It surprised George that there was only a <sup>hint</sup> of exaggeration in Joe's intonation of "patriotism."



The road to an American Orwellian hell paved with Big Brother's good intentions.

All the pieces fit now.

And all along Joe had known! George angered when he thought of all the time he had spent contending with the incredible, all the hours straining the mind to comprehend all those little bits and pieces, all his frustrations, all the other work he could have done with that time.

"Why the hell didn't you just tell me instead of putting me through all of this?" he demanded.

Joe's simple and softly-spoken response was, "Would you have believed it?"

George had to admit that, in fact, if anyone had told him what he had finally figured out, without these secret papers and his own analysis of them, he would not have been willing to believe. It all would have seemed impossible, the ravings of a madman.

He then tried to learn more about Joe. Joe's rebuffing of the effort was blunt. He would say little. He did say, "I read the paper carefully every day," which told George he could communicate any time he wanted to. "I'm out of the cold now. While they are not making it hot, they keep it warm, as you'll learn. But I have an old buddy who can be hurt. I don't want that. The stupidity of that excessive daring in L.A. insures me. But me only."

George could see that. It was the obverse of the defenestration of Frank Cott. Only by total disappearance could Joe be hurt and that was too tricky. Not impossible but extremely difficult. He had a new wife, a new life, but the same fingerprints. And the FBI and Los Angeles police had them, linked to the bizarre episode of the strange break-in that hot night in Los Angeles.

George was content with Joe's concern for his unnamed boyhood chum. It really made no difference and, besides, he had no choice.

There was an epilogue.

Three days later there was a package labeled "Natural Vitamins" in George's mail. He wondered what he would find as he peeled away layer after layer of newspaper. At the center was a plain white cardboard box smaller than a package of cigarettes - and much heavier.

It was an expensive, exceptionally well-made "room bug." Not the most modern but thoroughly tested and dependable, a type that was placed in the base of a phone where it drew its operating current from the phone lines. It was not only a telephone tap. It was a bug that picked up all the conversation in the room.

When George opened the hinged cover of the stout brass case to examine it, he saw a small piece of paper with the typed words, "came from mine."

Somebody had an interest in Joe. The Agency?

Surely after finding his phone tapped and that room wired for sound, Joe did not place all those calls from his own phone. That meant someone also knew about Joe because he had never used a pay phone. There was someone he trusted, at least one person, from whose phone Joe placed these calls.

Cott's death had to appear to be suicide.

People do jump through open windows. Like James Forrestal, the first Secretary of Defense, and a number of Mafia figures in police "custody." There also are those who do commit suicide.

Cott's lifeless body had to hold no clues pointing to murder for



the medical examiner to find. This meant he could not be drugged and thrown out the window. If he were thrown out in a fight, someone might hear the clamor. Traces of struggle would remain. It had to be assumed that the plunge would bring police and hotel employees to the room rapidly. There would be no time to clean up.

Nobody would ever believe there could be reason to doubt suicide when the victim dove through a closed window. So the programming called for Cott to go to the far side of the hotel room while The Man from the Pentagon was sound asleep and then run as fast as he could at the window and dive head-first through it.

Unless Cott's death appeared to be a real suicide, The Man from the Pentagon would be implicated in a murder investigation. This would involve the government. That dared not be risked. Any real investigation of The Man from the Pentagon would have shown him to be from Langley, from the CIA. Therefore, he, too, had to be kept detached, without knowledge of what was going on other than that he was babysitting a man he knew had been ODeD. It was safe for him to know that he was keeping Cott away from his regular job where his fellow scientists had been told Cott was ill. Cott's family knew it and had approved the treatment. Keeping Cott under medical care was a solid cover - the best. There was a real doctor whose orders were followed. He had arranged for hospitalization the next day. He had made plane reservations.

There was only one weakness. He knew that he had administered the hallucinogen two weeks earlier. But these mind-altering drugs were so unknown there was no reason to anticipate police questioning along that line. There would be no trace in the corpse so no vulnerability from it.

George knew that agents had been prepared to pass polygraph examinations. It took some work but it was done.

He dismissed the possibility that The Man from the Pentagon might have transmitted the command because that required getting rid of the equipment when there would be no time in which to do it. George favored instead the old spook standbys of deniability and detachment, limitation to "the need to know." For the same reasons he dismissed the possibility of a second operative present in the room, the one who could disappear with the equipment. This, too, introduced unnecessary weaknesses and vulnerabilities. Under the law it also meant conspiracy if the plan went awry. It was safer to have the agent transmitting the command nearby, without the awareness of The Man from the Pentagon.

The crime that could not be charged or proven was solved. Only a confession could lead to a criminal case. A confession was as likely as hearing shrimps whistle from the backs of cows jumping over green-cheese moons. The passing of 23 years had also eliminated any possibility of any official interest in the already forgotten statistic.

A few mysteries remained, minor but tantalizing. George placed another blind ad in the same paper. His phone rang that Sunday night. There was the same pleasant response to his "hello." He began with the question he thought had a better chance of being answered, why Sunday nights?

Joe laughed. "You are a talker. You use the phone much. It has taken an enormous amount of time to transcribe tapes that are of no interest to anyone else. They really don't care about your wife's conversation with her mother, her sisters and brothers and nieces and nephews and ladyfriends, either. But her talking is nothing to yours. Man, how you talk! So it was less costly in manpower to have an



operative listening, ready to turn a machine on if you said anything that interested them. For a long time it had to be a nonproductive tap.

"It has to have been a direct patch at the switchboard. You live in the country. The odds are that you are on an automated exchange. These require no attendants. A direct patch would be detected only by a rare accident. Should this happen, by the time anyone reached the place they have the phone that is like an extension of yours, the occupants would be gone. But even this is not likely. The phone companies cooperate with what they are told are national security or law-enforcement needs.

"Why Sundays only? Why suppertime? Less traffic on your phone then, mostly your wife. Whether or not an operative has a local girl friend, he does eat. 'Round the clock coverage with no gaps could take six ops. That's too much. So from the odds alone it is the best time. Less risk for us both. My voice is a little unusual. No voice-alteration device can disguise it."

George wanted to know why Joe's voice had developed its strange characteristics.

Joe had been chuckling as he spoke. Now he did not. His voice turned hard, its pitch even deeper. It lowered in volume when after a pause Joe said, "You'll have to guess. If you haven't already."

George's guess was that it is the result of some strong emotional trauma. But there was no way he could get Joe to explain the unpredictable periods of hesitancy followed by often incomprehensible mumblings of an otherwise clear and strong voice.

George then turned to the remaining mystery that interested him most. "Who are you, really?"

Now Joe laughed again, heartily, before saying only, "Well, I'm

not Joe."

He then asked his first question, "You'll take it from here?"

"Of course!"

"Good. Thank you very much. Good luck and goodbye. Remember, I read the paper carefully. Every day."

The next day, while George was talking John Oldhouse, a reporter friend with a youth-oriented, California-based news-service, the phone suddenly went dead.

Equipment malfunctions are not uncommon. Normally soon after the interruption there is a dial tone again as the relays trip automatically. George cradled the handset on the hook and awaited the return of the call.

And waited.

After five minutes he tried to reach the operator to ~~reestablish~~ the connection from his end so he could finish the conversation and return to his own work. The phone was still dead. It remained inoperative for a quarter of an hour. Then it did ring, but while the San Francisco operator was clearly audible to him, he appeared to be inaudible to her. She broke the connection and tried it again. This time the connection was a good one.

"What happened?" John asked.

Had to be a dead short on my line," George replied. "The phone was totally dead for 15 minutes or more. The relays didn't release."

☐ "Mine, too," John said. "I finally used another of our lines. But we could not get through. Neither could the operator on your end."

When the conversation with John ended, George phoned repair service and asked that a man be sent to the automated exchange immediately to check his supposedly private line at the switchboard. There was an



argument that ended when the repair chief said it would be done, and immediately.

An hour and a half later Harriman, the repair chief, called with an apology. "We couldn't find a man who has a key," he explained. "But we know there was nobody there. However, we'll make a complete check in the morning."

➤ "Don't bother," George told him, not hiding his indignation. "There is no point in it if you have not already done it. Why in the hell did you promise you would send someone immediately and not do it? I'd have gone there. It is less than 10 minutes away for me. Can't find a key? What in the world would you do if there was a fire in the switchboard? The whole installation would be totaled before you could get in."

Harriman mumbled the same yarn about having no men with access at supertime, knowing it was a poor improvisation.

➤ The morning began with a call from the phone company's state director of security, no less. He, too, was apologetic. "We're having your line checked from the exchange to your home," he said.

"Why waste time?" George asked him. "You know it's just a show."

"No, no such thing," the man declared. "As a matter of fact, there were people at the exchange and we didn't know it. Western Electric people, doing some work for us."

"You'll now find nothing," George said. "Don't waste your time and don't play games."

There was a check, so perfunctory in George's home the surly man examined only the two of the five outlets. He finally claimed to have found the trouble, an extension cord not bought from the phone company.

It had been trouble-free for eight years and has been since. It worked perfectly when the man was calling it defective. He did not embarrass easily.

Picture of the phone company with an out-of-town crew in its locked mountainside automated exchange, its own service department having to admit them and remain with them, and not knowing its own man was there or the work was being done - after hours yet!

George's old friends in the phone company confirmed it was not and could not have been an equipment failure, that only a dead short would explain what happened and that there was little chance it could have been other than carelessness in removing the wires connecting another phone to the lines going to the Waldron home only.

Conclude with all the nice people leading normal lives 23 years after the assassination. Glimpses of graying schoolteachers before science classes; lawyers in offices or courts; doctors in laboratories, one managing an animal-breeding operation that supplies animals from mice to chimpanzees, for lab purposes; a psychiatrist in a private psychiatric hospital; an allergist in his office - all leading everyday lives, all going to church Sundays.

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This is the reality, only slightly romanticized for story purposes.

A variant departing from some of the reality would be to have the son rather than an investigative reporter as the investigator.