



SUN
MAGAZINE
BALTIMORE, MD NOVEMBER 21, 1982

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THE SUN MAGAZINE, NOVEMBER 21, 1982

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Photo of President John F. Kennedy and wife Jacqueline by the Associated Press—November 22, 1963.

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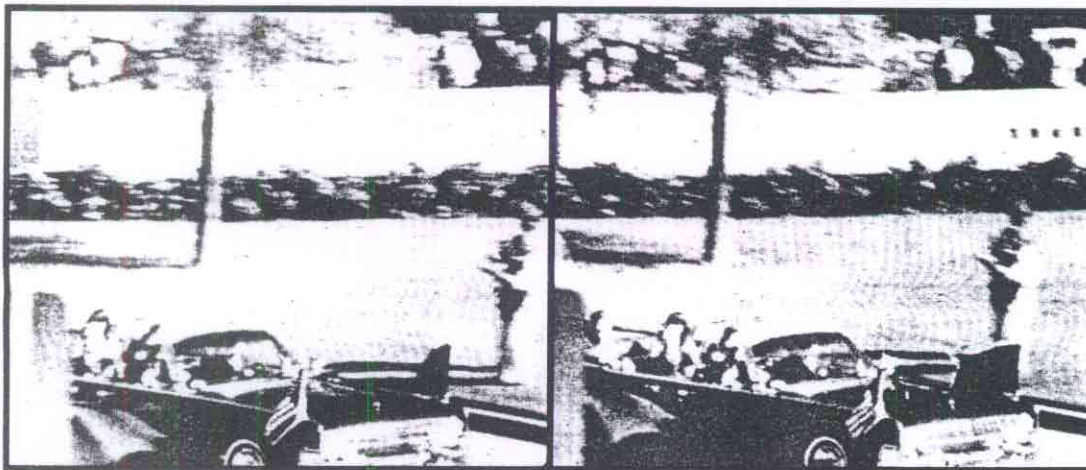
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THAT DAY IN DALLAS



After 19 Years, Doubts Still Mount Over



By HENRY SCARUPA

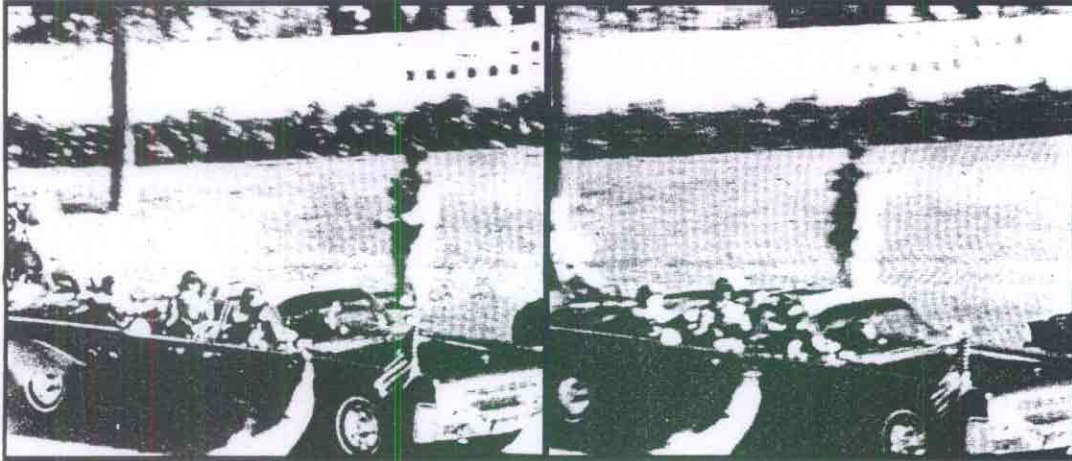
**"At some point
someone in Congress
should ask a very
simple question: If the
FBI has nothing to
hide about its
investigation of the
most subversive of
all crimes—the
assassination of the
president—why in
the hell does it hide
so much?"**

—Harold Weisberg

NINETEEN years after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, doubts surrounding his death appear burned into the American psyche. One set of answers gives rise to another set of questions. Theories are spun; books written. For at least a few people the mystery of the president's violent end has become such a compelling force it has altered their lives. Their moral outrage has fed the American public a steady stream of theories, ideas and information on the Dallas tragedy, often wrested from the government.

No one person has been more tireless in pursuing the facts of the case than Harold Weisberg of Frederick. A former political analyst for the wartime OSS, he became suspicious at once of the torrent of prejudicial information coming out against Lee Harvey Oswald within hours of the deed. He was not surprised at Oswald's death at the hands of Jack Ruby, only at its suddenness. When the Warren Commission report came out in 1964, Mr. Weisberg went to work, mastering the encyclopedic details, ferreting out inconsistencies, pointing out shortcomings. He has labored at his self-appointed mission ever since.

These pictures of the assassination of President Kennedy were released in 1966 by Life magazine as it called for a new investigation of the death.



Encountering gaps in the Oswald story, he took on the role of investigator (he once served as Senate investigator for the old LaFollette civil liberties committee), paying his own way to Dallas and New Orleans. In 1967 he testified before a New Orleans grand jury in the Jim Garrison probe of the assassination. Along the way he encountered the late Senator Richard B. Russell of Georgia, a member of the Warren Commission. The two men exchanged their serious doubts about the official government line, and Mr. Russell reportedly urged him to disprove it.

Mr. Weisberg has tried to do just that, in six books beginning with "Whitewash I" in 1968 and ending with "Post Mortem" in 1975. Because publishers balked at handling the controversial material, he published and marketed all but one of the books himself.



Harold Weisberg

Walter M. McCordell
The Sun

In thousands of printed pages, Mr. Weisberg has charged a massive coverup, complete with official lies, deliberately overlooked facts, falsified evidence, misleading data and

suppressed proof. Some key areas which have been purposely blurred, to his thinking, are Oswald's relationship with the FBI and U.S. intelligence, and ballistic and medical evidence relating to Kennedy's death.

As informed as anyone on the subject, Mr. Weisberg has never fingered a suspect. He has his ideas though and privately levels his suspicion at what he terms the intelligence-military-industrial complex. "The dedicated wrong," he once said to a reporter, "they're more dangerous than people who are deliberately dishonest. For them all illegalities are right and proper...."

From the first he has vigorously exercised his right under the Freedom of Information Act to pry documents relating to the case from the government. To date he has acquired more than 300,000 pages. The card index alone to the FBI's Dallas field

investigation measures 40 linear feet. Mr. Weisberg has gone through virtually every item in his possession, clipping notes to each.

The rows of filing cabinets extending across his basement give no clue to the battles he has waged to acquire their contents. The effort has only partially succeeded, and Mr. Weisberg is currently involved in litigation to obtain other material. As far back as 1966 he asked the FBI for the results of all the spectrographic tests of the ballistic evidence. The request was ignored. He asked again. No response.

Finally he filed an action in federal district court. The court threw out the case. He took it to the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, where a three-judge panel ruled 2-to-1 in Mr. Weisberg's favor. Undeterred, the Justice Department asked for a review by the

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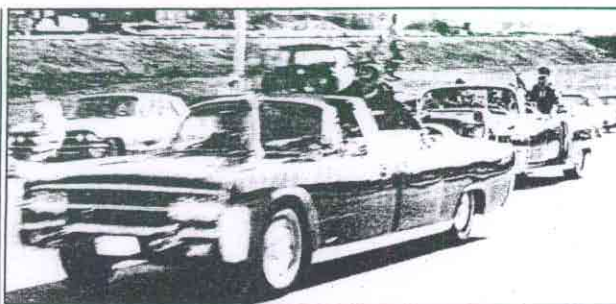


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Associated Press

Limousine carrying the fatally wounded President Kennedy speeds for the hospital. It is followed by a car containing bodyguards, one holding a machinegun.

DAY IN DALLAS

Continued from Page 7

full Court of Appeals. This time Mr. Weisberg lost. He next took the case on up to the U.S. Supreme Court, losing once more.

In 1974 an amended FOI Act was passed over President Ford's veto, making it easier for citizens to obtain information from the FBI and CIA. The next morning James Lesar, Mr. Weisberg's lawyer, was first in line in district court to file a new case. In the interval Mr. Weisberg learned the FBI had also carried out neutron activation tests and added that to his shopping list. Sixteen years after the initial request, the case is still pending.

Mr. Weisberg cites other instances in which the FBI denied him material which it freely gave to others. He claims this was done to impede his work and out of vindictiveness for his incessant criticism of the federal law agency and J. Edgar Hoover, its late chief. In response he has escalated his tactics by attempting to show the FBI's bad faith in its dealings with him. In recent months he has written three book-length affidavits attempting to document this claim.

"At some point," Mr. Weisberg says, "someone in Congress should ask a very simple question: If the FBI has nothing to hide about its investigation of the most subversive of all crimes—the assassination of a president—why in the hell does it hide so much?"

Handicapped by a circulatory ailment, Mr. Weisberg, who is 70, has had to limit the

hours a day he spends at his task. "I have plans for more books," he declares, "but I can't get to the writing. I'm completely tied up in litigation. Looks like they have succeeded in slowing me down."

One day while going over some photos in *Life* magazine, [Howard Donahue] suddenly saw the missing piece of the puzzle flash in his mind. He resisted the impulse at first, trying to prove to himself it couldn't have happened that way. To no avail.

HOWARD C.H. Donahue is a firearms expert and owner of a Towson gun shop. An experienced marksman with all types of weapons (he fires at least 10,000 rounds a year), he was asked by CBS in 1967 to take part in test-firing a 6.5-mm. Mannlicher-Carcano rifle, similar to the one allegedly used by Oswald. Doubt had been raised in many quarters that the assassin could have accurately squeezed off three rounds in 6.5 seconds. Firing from a 60-foot wooden tower duplicating the Dealey Plaza setting, Mr. Donahue managed to get off three shots in 5.2 seconds.

That assignment so intrigued him he spent the next

10 years studying and pondering the details of the assassination mainly from the perspective of a gun and ballistics expert. Unlike most critics of the Warren Report, he found no great fault with the conclusions. He could easily accept the notion of Oswald as the lone assassin, but not the ballistics data.

He was troubled by the inconsistencies in the behavior of the two bullets that struck the president. The first, the so-called magic bullet, had remained intact after penetrating both Mr. Kennedy and Governor Connolly. The second disintegrated completely on inflicting the president's head wound.

The study of autopsy data, including a 1968 report by a new panel of medical experts, suggested to him the fatal bullet had come from left-rear. In no way could it have originated on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository. Immersing himself in the details of Kennedy's final moment, he sought to get as full a picture of the event as possible. One day while going over some photos in *Life* magazine, he suddenly saw the missing piece of the puzzle flash in his mind. He resisted the impulse at first, trying to prove to himself it couldn't have happened that way. To no avail. He couldn't shake off the idea that the shot that ended Kennedy's life was fired accidentally by a Secret Service man in the follow-up car.

The critical photo pictured one of the president's bodyguards, AR-15 rifle in hand, seconds after the assassina-

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Howard Donahue holds a rifle like the one Oswald used.

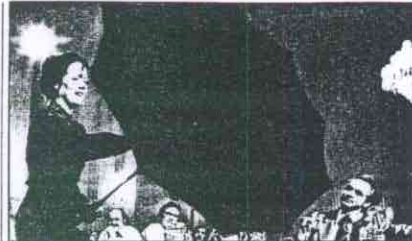
DAY IN DALLAS

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tion. Along with this Mr. Donahue read an eyewitness account describing a Secret Service man in the second car starting to rise to his feet, when the motion of the vehicle's speedup caused him to fall over backwards. In that instant, Mr. Donahue theorized, the man's finger pulled the trigger by reflex, discharging the weapon. It took no great detective work to identify the agent.

That theory was first publicized in the *Sun Magazine* in May 1977. At one point a *Sun* papers reporter and Mrs. Donahue attempted to contact the suspect—let's call him Agent X—by letter and tape-recorded message. The man, now retired and living in a Washington suburb, never replied.

Mr. Donahue, meanwhile, enrolled in a master's program in forensic science at George Washington University, intent on increasing his skills in the area. About this time he became familiar with Dr. John Lattimer's analysis of the Kennedy medical data. A New York urologist, Dr. Lattimer concluded Kennedy's neck wound, caused by the first hit, probably would have been fatal. Inflicting more damage than initially thought, the bullet knocked off the right transverse process from one of the cervical vertebrae. Coupled with this, Kennedy's longterm cortisone



Louie Steven Witt, right, the "umbrella man" who appeared at Select Assassination Committee hearings.

treatment drastically reduced his body's ability to fight off infection and heal itself. Bacteria-laden air from his esophagus and trachea most likely would have entered the wound path, leading to infection and probably death. In light of this finding the second bullet became much less critical, to Mr. Donahue's thinking. The government now had less need than ever for a coverup.

During the period 1977-1979 the Select Assassinations Committee was in business, created by the House of Representatives to investigate anew the Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr., assassinations. By now the inadequacies of the Warren Commission report were taken for granted by much of the public. Mr. Donahue felt the time to act was ripe. With the help of Representative Clarence Long of Maryland, he arranged a meeting with Gary Cornwell, the committee's deputy chief

counsel. Mr. Cornwell listened politely but was noncommittal.

Later in an hour-long informal session, Mr. Donahue shared his ideas with a three-man SAC team. One investigator in particular, Jack Moriarity, seemed interested and urged Mr. Donahue to go to Agent X's home and confront him in person. The Towson gun dealer was tempted. Several times on the way to committee hearings in Washington, he drove past the retired agent's home but could never bring himself to face him. In the back of his mind was the fear he might provoke a violent reaction.

Sitting through days of committee hearings, Mr. Donahue was dismayed at what he heard. The SAC considered at great length the role of organized crime in Kennedy's death and spent at least an hour on a theory of an umbrella man with a con-

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The Sun / Paul Hutchins



Associated Press



United Press International

Howard Donahue test-fires rifle. Center, the School Book Depository site; right, a police sharpshooter fires from window Oswald used



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Jack Ruby moves in and guns down Lee Harvey Oswald at the Dallas City Jail.

* Dallas Times-Herald

DAY IN DALLAS

Continued from Page 13

cealed weapon in his device. Somehow it never found even a few minutes for him.

For all his efforts Mr. Donahue was disappointed other media did not pick up on his theory. He is making one more try to publicize the idea by turning it into a fictional account, a novel in progress. Historically the press has not been particularly enterprising in going after assassination facts which run counter to the official story. In a few exceptions intriguing pieces have been written, but failed to gain wide currency or inspire much followup. The *Dallas Morning News*, for example published a story in November, 1978, on the Bronson film. Charles Bronson, an amateur photographer, took pictures of Dealey Plaza six minutes before the assassination. They show two shadowy figures moving on the sixth floor of the

"We don't know what happened, but we do know that Oswald had intelligence connections. Everywhere you look with him, there are the fingerprints of intelligence."

—Senator Schweiker

Texas Book Depository Building. Both are dressed differently from Oswald. The film was rejected by the FBI because it was not "sufficiently clear for identification purposes." In another example *Boston Globe* reporter Ben Bradlee, Jr., in June, 1981, wrote a long piece dealing with the discrepancies in the description of Kennedy's gaping head wound between the offi-

cial drawings and the recollection of doctors and nurses at Dallas's Parkland Hospital. Eight of the 14 people interviewed said they disagreed with the official account.

DISAGREEMENT often ran through the Select Assassinations Committee, according to Gaeton Fonzi. Mr. Fonzi probed aspects of the case first for the old Church Committee looking into intelligence activities, working under then Senator Richard Schweiker of Pennsylvania, and later for the Select Committee. In the November, 1980, issue of *The Washingtonian* he wrote an 80-page article disclosing SAC's inner workings. Mr. Fonzi became the first defector from the government's side in 17 years, the first insider willing to talk openly for the public's benefit.

He saw the first months of the investigation marred by controversy surrounding the person of Richard A. Sprague, SAC's chief counsel and director, a hardhitting Philadelphia prosecutor. Mr. Sprague wanted to

approach his job like any routine murder investigation—no restrictions, big budget, undercover equipment, and especially no political interference. House members bristled at his freewheeling ways.

Early on he locked horns with the CIA in asking for data on the agency's Mexico City activities at the time of Oswald's visit. He pushed hard, aware the CIA had used delaying tactics in its dealings with the Warren Commission. Finally the spy agency agreed to deliver—if Mr. Sprague would sign a secrecy agreement. He refused.

In a conversation with Mr. Fonzi after he was forced to resign, Mr. Sprague confided, "... when I look back at what happened, the problems began only after I ran up against the CIA. That's when my troubles really started."

His replacement, G. Robert Blakey, couldn't have been more different. A leading organized crime expert, he lost no time in appointing people with similar background to

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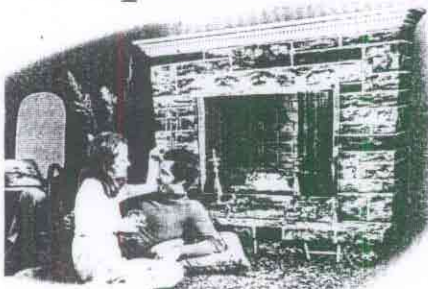
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DAY IN DALLAS

Continued from Page 31

key committee posts. Avoiding Mr. Sprague's mistake, he quickly established a cozy relationship with the CIA, consenting to the secrecy terms. He went even further, according to *New Times* magazine, agreeing to let the CIA review the final SAC report before it went to Congress and the nation.

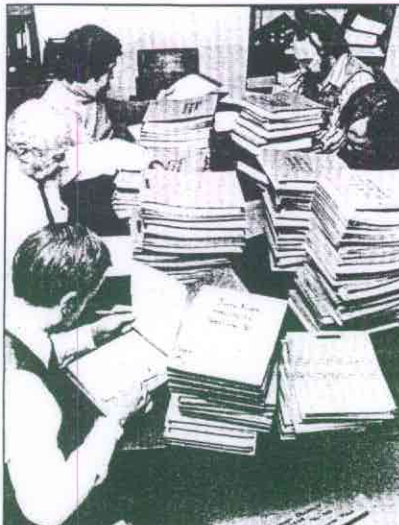
This was ominous news for Mr. Fonzi. For months he had been tracking down intelligence links to Oswald, mainly in Miami, center of anti-Castro intrigue. Once he felt the trail grow hot as he was about to meet with George de Mohrenschildt, a friend of Oswald's with ties to U.S. intelligence services. The Russian emigre reportedly had confessed to a Dutch journalist that he had been part of the Dallas conspiracy of oilmen and Cuban

exiles. Hours before the appointment with Mr. Fonzi, de Mohrenschildt put a shotgun to his mouth and pulled the trigger.

Gaeton Fonzi was reminded of Senator Schweiker's conclusion following his study of the Kennedy case. "We don't know what happened," he said, "but we do know that Oswald had intelligence connections. Everywhere you look with him, there are the fingerprints of intelligence."

Mr. Fonzi encountered another promising lead through Antonio Veciana, a Cuban exile who headed Alpha 66, an anti-Castro guerrilla group based in Miami, which had been carrying out raids on the island. Mr. Veciana swore he had seen Oswald in Dallas two months before the assassination in the company of Maurice Bishop, a known intelligence operative. Even more damning, after the assassination Mr. Bishop asked Mr. Veciana to bribe his cousin, an intelligence officer in the Cuban embassy in Mexico City, to say he and his wife had met with Oswald. Mr. Bishop, an obvious *nom de guerre*, had been Mr. Veciana's CIA case officer for 13 years.

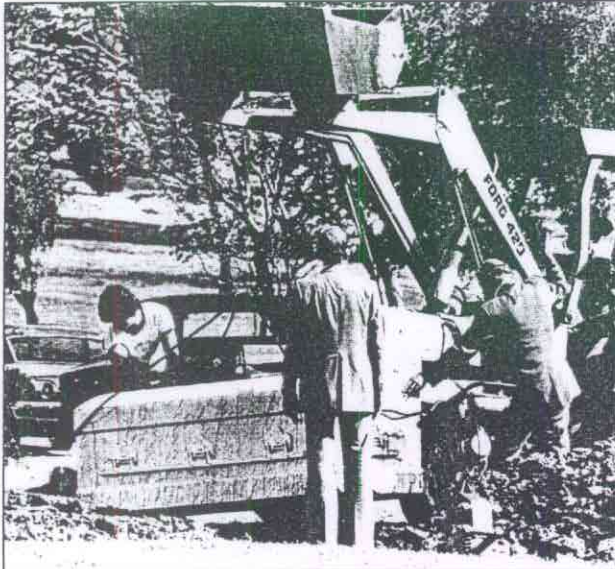
The CIA denied any knowledge of Maurice Bishop. A composite sketch of the elusive spymaster produced an uncanny likeness to that of David Atlee Phillips, senior CIA officer and onetime chief, Western Hemisphere Division. Mr. Phillips had been deeply immersed in anti-Castro activities and had taken part in



Reporters dig into masses of FBI reports gathered in the assassination probe.



Chief Justice Earl Warren delivers assassination investigation report to President Johnson.



Cemetery workers rebury Oswald's body after exhumation

Associated Press

planning for the Bay of Pigs invasion.

Going for broke, Mr. Fonzi brought the two men together. Although noticing a strong resemblance, Mr. Veciana at the end said Mr. Phillips was not the man. Mr. Phillips, now retired, gave no hint of recognition. Mr. Fonzi's suspicions still nagged. When Mr. Veciana was introduced, the name apparently meant nothing to Mr. Phillips. Yet how could a high-level CIA officer with extensive anti-Castro involvement not have recognized the name of a leading warrior in that clandestine war?

By mid-1978 time and money began to run out for the SAC. Investigators were told to limit their probe to issues that could be resolved in a few months. The main thrust became the pending report. Staff morale plummeted. One day the anti-Castro team, of which Mr. Fonzi was a part, came into the office wearing T-shirts with the words **REALITY IS IRRELEVANT**.

After spending \$5.4 million the Select Committee came out with a report in the summer of 1979, acknowledging there very likely had been a

conspiracy. It made the merest mention of the Veciana-Bishop relationship, restricting the account to 2 1/4 pages in a 686-page volume. It devoted the most space to con-

Mr. Summers aggressively pursues Oswald's intelligence links, theorizing he may have been a false defector sent to the Soviet Union to pick up information.

sideration of mob involvement, but stopped short of charging any conspiracy by organized crime. Privately Mr. Blakey never wavered in his belief in a crime connection.

"Most members of the committee's organized crime team never bought Blakey's theory," Mr. Fonzi wrote in *The Washingtonian* article. "But in order to create the impression that organized crime was involved, the committee

had to contradict its own staff's findings concerning the Central Intelligence Agency."

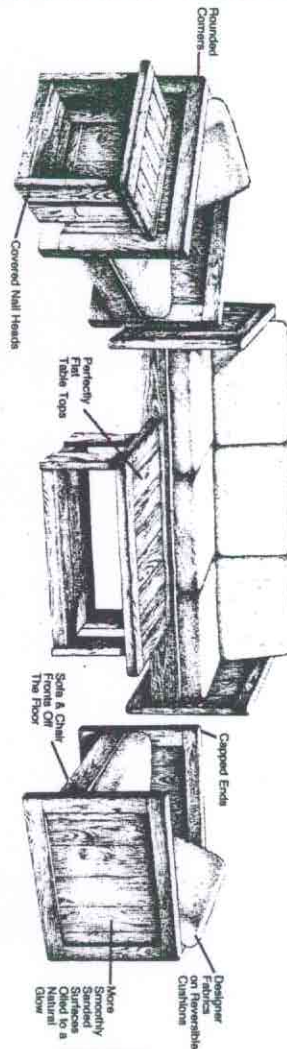
B RITISH writer Anthony Summers began looking at the details of the JFK assassination even while the SAC was carrying out its probe. Published in 1980, his book "Conspiracy" alleges a plot fomented by anti-Castro Cubans, a renegade element in the U.S. intelligence and mobsters. The catalyst bringing together these groups was the plot to kill Castro. The objective was a reversal of Kennedy's softening of U.S. policy toward Havana. Although Mr. Summers sees Oswald as having some sort of relationship with two and probably all three groups, he speculates the Dallas loner may not have fired a single shot. Having no real motive, he became the patsy, Mr. Summers feels.

Mr. Summers aggressively pursues Oswald's intelligence links, theorizing he may have been a false defector sent to the Soviet Union to pick up information. Citing former CIA officer Victor Marchetti as his source, he notes the Office of Naval Intelligence had just

Continued on Page 36

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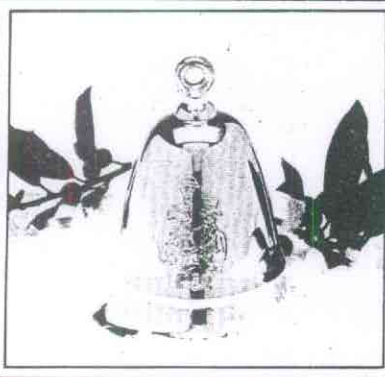
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President Kennedy's casket is moved from the presidential plane to a Navy ambulance.

DAY IN DALLAS

Continued from Page 33

such a program going at the time. Fueling the suspicion, in the 18 months leading up to 1960 a rash of U.S. defections to Russia took place involving military men and civilians with security sensitive backgrounds. For 14 years prior to that time there had been only two defections.

Investigators have found Oswald's undercover trail deliberately obliterated more than once. It began with the note Oswald left FBI agent James Hosty, destroyed within hours of his death, and included Oswald's army intelligence file, withheld from the Warren Commission and "routinely" destroyed some years later. Following the assassination, police found a Minox "spy camera" in Oswald's room. They turned over to the FBI the camera and Oswald's other possessions. Two months later the FBI asked to change one item on the manifest, Minox camera to Minox light meter.

Mr. Summers explored the Maurice Bishop angle as intently as Gaeton Fonzi had earlier. David Phillips learned of his interest and managed to confront the British writer

when he appeared on NBC's "Today" show prior to the book's publication. "Welcome to America, Mr. Summers," the former CIA officer hotly declared. "I accuse you of assassination... character assassination." He went on to charge the author had tried to implicate him in the plot. Mr. Summers, of course, had carefully avoided accusations.

David S. Lifton spins a sinister tale of the president's corpse surreptitiously slipped into a second casket.

Naming names can be dangerous in this business. Watergate figure E. Howard Hunt, also a former CIA employee, felt a 1978 article in *The Spotlight*, written by Victor Marchetti, had implicated him in the assassination. He filed suit charging libel and was awarded \$650,000 in damages by a federal jury. The case is being appealed.


IT ISN'T often Kennedy assassination theories are proven false once and for all, but this happened in the

instance of Michael Eddowes. In his book "The Oswald File" Mr. Eddowes claimed Oswald never returned from the Soviet Union, but rather a Russian KGB agent—an Oswald look-alike—was assigned to kill Kennedy. A year ago the body in Fort Worth's Rose Hill cemetery was exhumed and examined by pathologists who confirmed without doubt it was Lee Harvey Oswald. The author had nothing more to say.

THE MOST daring and lavishly conceived theory of all was set forth by David S. Lifton in "Best Evidence," a 747-page tome also published in 1980. A computer engineer for the aerospace industry, Mr. Lifton became so caught up with the assassination he chucked his job and spent the next 15 years delving into the mystery. He paid special attention to medical data. Along with this he interviewed hundreds of people who were close to events as they occurred, managing at a late date to find informants somehow missed by government and private investigators.

Mr. Lifton came up with three conspiracies: Kennedy's assassination, the alteration of his body to hide the fact he

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was shot from the front, and a coverup of the anatomical changes. The author spins a sinister tale of the president's corpse surreptitiously slipped into a second casket, probably while on Air Force One en route to Washington, and then spirited out the back, away from the crowd at Andrews Air Force Base, to a place where medical forgery could be committed. Mr. Lifton postulates two hearses as well as two caskets, with the decoy hearse stopping in front of the Bethesda Naval Hospital while the other pulled up in back.

Even more bizarre, he tells of a hospital technician reporting that Kennedy's brain was not in the skull when his body arrived in the morgue. Mr. Lifton speculates plotters had taken the brain to remove telltale bullet fragments coming from a weapon other than Oswald's. The brain was then wrapped in a sheet, passed off as a stillborn baby, and wheeled on a cart through the corridor to be rejoined to the body.

A conspiracy of such magnitude would have required numerous people in the top reaches of government, possibly even Lyndon Johnson himself. Although cramming his books with facts and minutiae, Mr. Lifton neglects to come up with a mastermind or a motive for the crime. Like most good mysteries his will have a sequel too. He is at work on another book reportedly focusing on a second gunman and due to come out next year on the 20th anniversary of the Dallas tragedy.

PLAINLY not everything brought out on the assassination is of equal worth. What is important is the unremitting effort by people to throw light on what has been called America's crime of the century. "Isn't it remarkable," Harold Weisberg says, that "although the government had a presidential commission with unlimited power and an agency like the FBI, everything new that's come out on the Kennedy assassination has been in spite of them... all through the diligent effort, under adverse conditions, of individual citizens who cared. Some were without means, some wealthy, some very wrong-headed, but all felt the responsibility of citizenship to do what they could."



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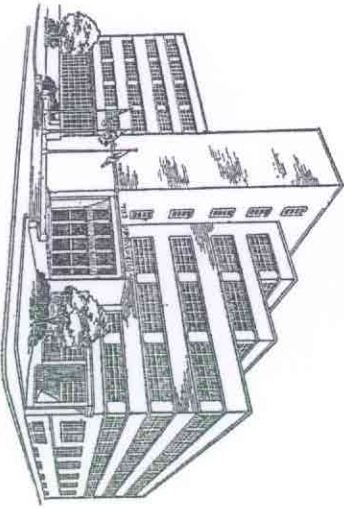
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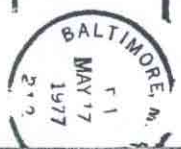
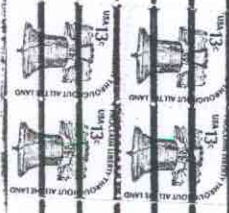
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