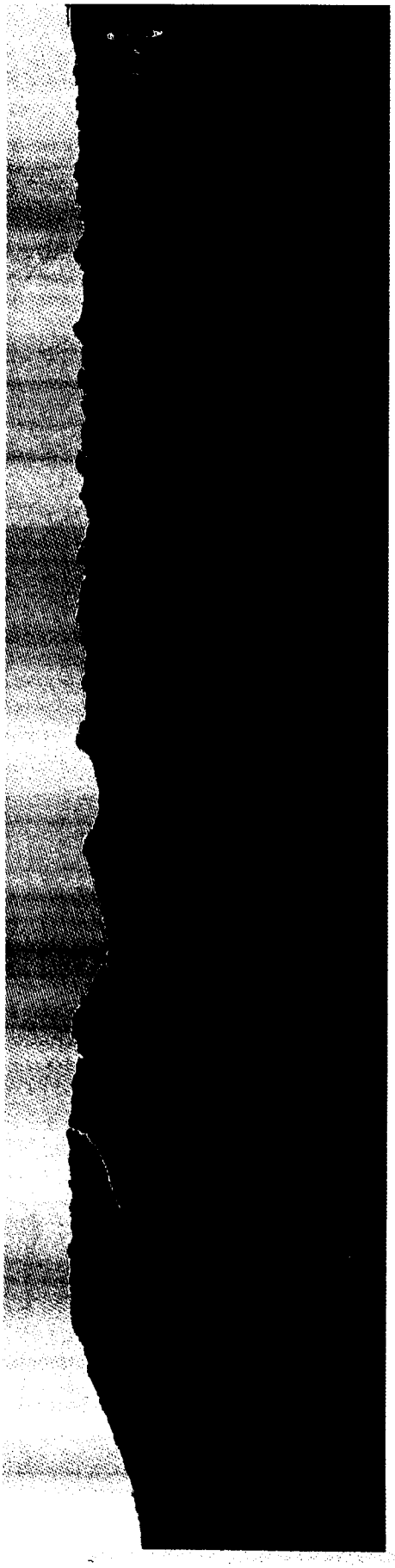

It is said that George De Mohrenschildt held the key to solving the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Hours before an investigator from the House of Representatives was to have questioned him, he was dead. It was known that De Mohrenschildt had worked for several intelligence agencies. He had played many roles. Was one of them controlling Lee Harvey Oswald?

THE MYSTERIOUS DEATH OF A KEY JFK WITNESS

AN INVESTIGATIVE REPORT BY MARK LANE

Until George De Mohrenschildt died in the spring of 1977 few Americans had ever heard of him. Among those intrigued by his career were students of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, for De Mohrenschildt had acted as if he were Oswald's control agent. Oswald responded to De Mohrenschildt's commands. Had it not been for De Mohrenschildt, Oswald probably would not have been employed at the Texas School Book Depository in Dallas on November 22, 1963.

De Mohrenschildt had been a spy for several countries, evidently rounding out his career with the Central Intelligence Agency. Clay Shaw, whose relationship with the CIA dates back to 1955, had been in contact with Oswald in New Orleans in the summer of 1963. When Oswald was moved to Dallas, De Mohrenschildt took over.

Although De Mohrenschildt appeared before the Warren Commission in 1964, the attorney for the Commission, purportedly investigating the death of the President, failed to ask De Mohrenschildt the kind of significant and probing questions that would induce the witness to provide important answers.

Twelve years later, in 1976, the House of Representatives established a Select Committee on Assassinations to investigate the murders of President Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This committee was formed because it was clear that thirteen years after the President's murder, the American public was still doubtful of the conclusions arrived at by the Warren Commission: that there was no conspiracy; that Lee Harvey Oswald had acted alone.

De Mohrenschildt was to be questioned by Gaeton Fonzi, an investigator for the House Select Committee, in Manalapan, Florida, during the evening of March 29, 1977. That meeting never took place. De Mohrenschildt was already dead from a gunshot wound inflicted several hours earlier.

Upon hearing of the death, Representative Richard Preyer, chairman of the Committee said, "He was a crucial witness for us, based upon the information he had." The news media focused briefly but intensely upon De Mohrenschildt and his possible role in the assassination.

Willem Oltmans, a Dutch journalist, had given information to the Committee shortly before De Mohrenschildt's death. He returned to Washington after the death to testify again. De Mohrenschildt's death had released Oltmans from his promise not to divulge certain information.

Oltmans revealed that De Mohrenschildt, whom he had known for ten years, had told him that there had been a conspiracy to assassinate Kennedy and that he had played a part in the conspiracy. He also told him that Oswald had acted "at my guidance and at my instructions." De Mohrenschildt said that CIA and FBI personnel were involved as well.

Oltmans also stated that De Mohrenschildt was "petrified" that he would "be killed or disappear like other witnesses who were connected with the Kennedy assassination."

Within days, a posthumous effort to discredit De Mohrenschildt was begun, with the assertion that he had spent some time as a mental patient in the Parkland Memorial Hospital in Dallas. At the same time, the *New York Times* began the effort to discredit Oltmans. In a front-page story the *Times* quoted an

De Mohrenschildt was attending a party when a radio broadcast the news.... He paled and then blurted out, 'Could it have been Oswald?'... He had begun to talk about Oswald's connection more than one hour before the rest of the world was to hear the name.

anonymous "FBI spokesman" who said that De Mohrenschildt had "been interviewed extensively by the FBI and testified before the Warren Commission, and all of his information was not pertinent to the assassination." The unnamed FBI source was further quoted: "All of the information coming from Mr. Oltmans about Mr. De Mohrenschildt is all new to us and probably to reality."

It was hardly logical for the FBI to offer a blanket clearance to De Mohrenschildt. Agents of the FBI had arrested him during World War II and charged him with being a Nazi spy.

De Mohrenschildt's background was described by the media as having been "colorful." According to a recently declassified FBI document, De Mohrenschildt conducted himself as if he were a Nazi. For a time he had greeted his friends regularly with a hearty "Heil Hitler." He lectured to a club which had many Jewish members about the fine qualities he had found in Heinrich Himmler. He spoke of the excellent treatment that the French had received in the Nazi Occupation during World War II. He predicted that the United States would be defeated by the Nazis.

During the summer of 1941, De Mohrenschildt stayed at the home of Patricia Devel in Washington, D.C. Miss Devel was observed by FBI agents in the company of Grace Dineen, who subsequently admitted that she had been a German spy during World War II, and had been convicted of conspiracy to commit espionage, and sentenced to twelve years in a federal penitentiary. The year after her conviction, Dineen implicated Miss Devel as being "terribly anti-American" just before the United States entered the war.

In 1944, one of De Mohrenschildt's associates, Konstantin Maydell, was charged by the Federal Government with being a "dangerous enemy alien" involved in pro-Nazi activities. De Mohrenschildt had worked in partnership with Maydell producing propaganda films. One of the Maydell propaganda films was produced in support of the Fascist regime of Generalissimo Franco in Spain.

The FBI also was concerned at the time about De Mohrenschildt's relationship with Pierre Fraiss. The FBI had determined that Fraiss was the head of French intelligence within the United States from 1941 to 1945. De Mohrenschildt worked for Fraiss in intelligence activities within the United States. He functioned through the Information and Economics Department of the French Intelligence Unit. This unit had organized Polish residents of the United States to gather intelligence about foreign oil shipments and reserves in Texas and other states.

The "FBI spokesman" relied upon by the *New York Times* was quite correct in believing that De Mohrenschildt's testimony before the Warren Commission did not prove that he had been involved in the assassination. However, the FBI also knew that De Mohrenschildt had committed perjury before the Commission.

George De Mohrenschildt may have been just as involved in the Kennedy assassination as the man on the right.

De Mohrenschildt was gently questioned by Warren Commission counsel Albert Jenner when he appeared before the Commission in 1964. At that time, De Mohrenschildt, who had been arrested as a Nazy spy and certified without doubt as having been a French spy for four years, denied that he had ever been "in any respect whatsoever an agent." The colloquy follows:

Jenner: So this venture in Ghana had no political aspects whatsoever?
De Mohrenschildt: No.
Jenner: It was entirely and exclusively for business, as you have explained?
De Mohrenschildt: A hundred percent business.
Jenner: Except that you were working for the International Cooperation Administration when you were in Yugoslavia first, that had no Political implications whatsoever?
De Mohrenschildt: No; it was purely business.
Jenner: And your second venture in Yugoslavia for the Cardwell Tool Corporation, that was strictly business?
De Mohrenschildt: Yes.
Jenner: No politics involved?
De Mohrenschildt: No.
Jenner: Have you ever been in any respect whatsoever an agent?
De Mohrenschildt: Never have.
Jenner: Representing——
De Mohrenschildt: Never, never.
Jenner: Any government?
De Mohrenschildt: You can repeat it three times.
Jenner: Any government?
De Mohrenschildt: No. I could take what you call the Fifth Amendment, but frankly, I don't need to.
Jenner: I should say to you, Mr. De Mohrenschildt, that any time you think that your privacy is being unduly penetrated or that you feel that your constitutional rights might be invaded or you feel uncomfortable, you are free to express yourself.
De Mohrenschildt: You are more than welcome. I have never been an agent of any government, never been in the pay of any government, except the American Government, the ICA. And except being in the Polish Army—five dollars a month.

Well, maybe I made a mistake. Maybe I am working for the Haitian Government now. It is a contract. But it has no political affiliations.
Jenner: Subject to that.
De Mohrenschildt: Again, no political angle to it.

However, a CIA memorandum for J. Lee Rankin, General Counsel of the Warren Commission, released on October 1, 1976 reveals that De Mohrenschildt was known to the CIA as a result of his sojourn to Yugoslavia in 1957 on behalf of the International Cooperation Agency (ICA)" and that the "CIA Headquarters" sent the "Dallas representative who called on the De Mohrenschildt's in the early part of 1957." The CIA report continues:

In the course of several meetings the CIA representative obtained foreign intelligence which was promptly disseminated to other federal agencies in ten separate reports. The Dallas representatives continued informal, occasional contact with the De Mohrenschildt's until the autumn of 1961.

De Mohrenschildt said that he had been given a cover story about Oswald, that he had checked out the story, and that he had moved Oswald around without having full knowledge of the use to which Oswald would be put.

De Mohrenschildt's debriefings by the CIA in 1957, the substance of which found its way into several widely disseminated CIA reports, flowed from De Mohrenschildt's service in Yugoslavia. He entered that country under the cover of an employment contract with the ICA which served regularly as a CIA front in Eastern Europe. The CIA provided consultant status to De Mohrenschildt, finding it an excellent cover. He obviously exceeded his authority, however, for he was fired on by Yugoslavian troops who, seeing him photographing and sketching military installations, believed that he was involved in espionage activities.

A branch of the U.S. Government had conducted an investigation of De Mohrenschildt before the ICA entered into a contract with him. That investigative report remains classified today, as does much of the intelligence data about De Mohrenschildt.

De Mohrenschildt's career was consistent only in respect to his continuing contact with various spy organizations. Arrested as a German spy by the FBI for photographing and sketching the actions of the Coast Guard at Aranas Pass, Texas, he left the country and entered Mexico. Nine months later, he was expelled from Mexico by General Maximo Comacho, who suspected De Mohrenschildt of acts of espionage against the Mexican Government. From his work for French intelligence in Texas, for the CIA in Yugoslavia, and his excellent working relationship with the FBI in Texas, De Mohrenschildt emerged as a man for all causes and all seasons.

In 1960, De Mohrenschildt and his wife disappeared. They emerged a year later in Guatemala City at the time the CIA was organizing the Bay of Pigs invasion. Shortly thereafter, De Mohrenschildt reported to the American Embassy in Panama.

Gary Taylor, George De Mohrenschildt's son-in-law, testified before the Warren Commission on March 29, 1964. He, too, was questioned by Jenner. Taylor said:

"Well, the only thing that occurred to me was that—and I guess it was from the beginning—that if there was any assistance or plotters in the assassination that it was, in my opinion, most probably the De Mohrenschildt's."

Taylor offered as one reason for that belief De Mohrenschildt's close proximity to the Bay of Pigs invasion. He said that although De Mohrenschildt claimed to have walked through all of South America, ". . . further information indicated to me that their trip extended only to the portion of South America where the Cuban refugees were being trained to invade Cuba, and that this trip coincided, and that they were in the area while all this training was going on. And so, from that—from these observations——"

Yet before Taylor could complete the sentence, Jenner interrupted to suggest the answer in a question: "Do you conclude that they were attempting to spy on that invasion preparation?" But Jenner knew that De Mohrenschildt had worked for the CIA and that he had reported back to the American Ambassador in Panama after leaving Guatemala City at the time of the invasion, his question could have had no effect other than to take Taylor away from his point. In fact, each time Taylor attempted to explain why he thought De Mohrenschildt was involved in the assassination, Jenner changed the subject:

If Lee Harvey Oswald was a 'patsy,' who set him up? The FBI? The CIA? The Cubans?

Taylor: . . . they went to Guatemala where the invasion troops were being trained, or they were in Guatemala when they were supposed to be on a walking trip, and had taken up residence in the unoccupied home of some acquaintances there and—unbeknowing to anyone—and when these acquaintances returned——

Jenner: This was the trip during which you were married to their daughter?

Taylor: Yes.

Jenner: You are basing this information on communications from them, conversations with your wife, conversations that occurred after they returned?

Taylor: Yes; and to clarify it on the last point here, about them being in Guatemala, in conversations with Nancy Tilton.

Jenner: Yes; I asked you about her. Who is Nancy Tilton?

Apologists for the Warren Commission state that the record does not reveal that De Mohrenschildt played a part in the conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy. If the printed record is barren, it is due primarily to the inept questioning of De Mohrenschildt—the fact that Jenner almost urged him to refrain from answering difficult questions and never confronted him with obvious contradictions. Jenner knew that De Mohrenschildt had been a spy, yet he failed to ask him directly about his various acts of espionage which occurred in Dallas, before the assassination. When others sought to tell the Warren Commission about De Mohrenschildt, Jenner directed the conversation elsewhere. When a friend of the De Mohrenschildt's, Mrs. Igor Voshinin, testified that she and her husband refrained from asking De Mohrenschildt about his trips to Cuba, Ghana, Yugoslavia, and various other countries, "because George repeatedly hinted that he was doing some service for the State Department," Jenner changed the subject.

Paul Raigorodsky, an acquaintance of the De Mohrenschildt's, testified about De Mohrenschildt's mysterious trips to Houston, Texas. Just as Raigorodsky approached the relevant point, Jenner ordered the stenographer to cease recording the statement:

Jenner: Do you know of any business interests of De Mohrenschildt's in Houston?

Raigorodsky: In Houston?

Jenner: Yes; in the last five years, let's say?

Raigorodsky: Yes; he told me that he was going to see Herman and George Brown—they are brothers.

Jenner: What business are they in?

Raigorodsky: Well, again, don't put this down.

Jenner: Off the record.

(Discussion between Messrs. Jenner and Davis and the witness, Mr.

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KEY JFK WITNESS

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Raigorodsky, off the record.)

In Marguerite Oswald's testimony, she recounted her frustration at not being able to talk to FBI agents about her son when she first arrived in Dallas after Kennedy's assassination. She was eventually escorted into a room and questioned by two local FBI agents named Brown, who were brothers. She did not want to talk to local FBI agents, but demanded to see agents from Washington because she wanted to tell them that she thought Lee was a U.S. intelligence agent. The Brown brothers told her that, "We are from Washington, we work with Washington . . .we work through Washington."

De Mohrenschildt sought out Lee Harvey Oswald and visited him in Fort Worth, Texas. Two weeks later, in September 1962, De Mohrenschildt went to the apartment occupied by Lee and Marina Oswald and told Lee that he was moving Marina and their daughter away. Lee was upset, but resigned himself to De Mohrenschildt's decision. De Mohrenschildt then secured a job for Oswald with a lithography company in Dallas. De Mohrenschildt helped Oswald to move into the Dallas YMCA. De Mohrenschildt had previously moved Marina and her daughter June to the home of a friend. Then she was moved to a house in Irving, Texas, occupied by Ruth Paine. Through De Mohrenschildt's contacts, Oswald was given a job in the Texas School Book Depository.

Several months before the assassination, De Mohrenschildt moved to Haiti. He organized the Haitian Holding Company, a shell organization in Haiti which at that time served as a CIA farm or holding facility, used to detail or hold former agents who were in possession of potentially explosive information, and to reward them with lucrative contracts. De Mohrenschildt entered into a contract with the Haitian Government to make a geological survey of Haiti. The Government of Haiti agreed to pay him $285,000 for the survey, and to give him a concession of sisal hemp in Haiti for ten years with the option to extend it for ten more years. In May 1963, De Mohrenschildt went to Haiti, stopping off in Washington, D.C., to secure official approval and last-minute instructions from the U.S. Government.

De Mohrenschildt lived in Port Au Prince, the capital, and received his mail at the American Embassy there. At the time of the assassination, he was attending a party when a radio broadcast the news. According to those present with him at the party, De Mohrenschildt paled and then blurted out, "Could it have been Oswald? Was he involved?" As he became the center of attention at the party, he continued to speak. "The FBI in Dallas and the FBI in Fort Worth told me he was harmless."

In the moments just after the announcement of the assault on the President, no mention of Oswald was made. De Mohrenschildt had begun to talk about Oswald's possible connection to the assassination more than one hour before the rest of the world was to hear his name broadcast.

In a letter that De Mohrenschildt wrote two weeks after the assassination to an executive in Dallas, he described his reaction at the party and again insisted that he had been told by the FBI that Oswald was nothing but a "harmless lunatic."

When Willem Oltmans, the Dutch journalist who had befriended De Mohrenschildt, went public with his information about him during March of 1977, the press reacted as if Oltmans had invented De Mohrenschildt. For students of the Kennedy assassination case, however, De Mohrenschildt had always been an intriguing subject. Some have long felt that De Mohrenschildt was used by an intelligence organization to set Oswald in place and then was sent off to a secure but out-of-the-way future.

During February 1969, George De Mohrenschildt asked Oltmans, "How would you feel if someday it were discovered that I *did* actively organize the Kennedy assassination?"

During the fall semester of 1976, I supervised two directed-study programs undertaken by three law students, Kathy Meyer, David Seay, and Randall Smith at the Columbus School of Law at the Catholic University of America, where I was teaching. Each project dealt with a study of George De Mohrenschildt, his intelligence ties, and his relationship with Oswald.

When Sprague was appointed general counsel to the Select Committee, the first document that I sent to him was a memorandum I had prepared about De Mohrenschildt. I also enclosed the two excellent studies that had been prepared by the law students.

The Oltmans revelations comprised the first important corroboration of the known evidence that originated from De Mohrenschildt himself. When Oltmans arrived in Washington, we met at his hotel. He was tired but willing to talk. He felt confident that the information he had would be fairly received. I tried to warn him gently that the effort to discredit each person who tried to focus upon the truth in the case had been so consistent that a similar effort would no doubt be launched against him and carried widely by the national media. I suggested that the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and CBS-TV might well take the lead in the effort as they had in the past in the campaigns launched against Jim Garrison, Dick Sprague, and others. He assured me that his credentials as the author of six books, a noted international journalist, a foreign editor of Holland's leading newspaper, the head of a UPI desk, and as a respected United Nations correspondent, to say nothing of his Yale education, made him impervious to a personal attack. Our conversation was interrupted by a telephone call from his office in Amsterdam. An aide informed him that a CBS-TV crew had sought out a rival Dutch journalist and had elicited from him statements that placed Oltmans in an undesirable light. CBS-TV ran the interview the next day and the *New York Times* published a story under a headline which read: "Dutch Journalist in Kennedy Case is 'Half Showman,' Colleague Says." The story asserted that a rival journalist, Peter d'Hamacourt, had said that "nobody takes him [Oltmans] seriously." The article, written by Wendall Rawls, Jr. reported that:

> Mr. d'Hamacourt, who is widely regarded as one of the best-known investigative reporters in the Netherlands, said Mr. Oltmans' work consisted of "a lot of guessing stories" and added that "you don't know where his facts end and his imagination begins."

Perhaps the same can be said, and with considerably more accuracy, of Mr. Rawls. At a recent press conference I attended in Amsterdam, I asked the more than sixty reporters who were assembled there representing almost all of the news media in the Netherlands, who among them had ever heard of Peter d'Hamacourt. Only two responded affirmatively. They were journalists who worked for the same newspaper he does. When I asked how many present would refer to Mr. d'Hamacourt as "one of the best-known investigative reporters in the Netherlands," many of the journalists laughed. In discrediting Oltmans, Rawls added in his *New York Times* story that Oltmans:

> works under some unspecified arrangement for N.O.A. [sic] Television, a small group of television and radio stations in the Netherlands.

There is no N.O.A. Television in the Netherlands. Oltmans works for N.O.S. Television. According to the Director of N.O.S., Oltmans is a "valued and trusted journalist." He told me that Oltmans "has reported many stories for us many years. We have never known

him to make an inaccurate statement in all those years."

I visited the N.O.S. complex and discovered that rather than being a "small group of television and radio stations" it was the only national network in the Netherlands, that it dominates the air waves as if it were CBS and NBC combined.

An examination into the *New York Times* story poses serious questions about Rawls, but tends to resolve many of the questions he so unfairly raised about Oltmans.

However, since Oltmans had interviewed De Mohrenschildt, both briefly on video tape in the Netherlands and on audio tape for many hours in the United States, the area of concern should not have been Oltmans' reputation, but rather De Mohrenschildt's answers.

Oltmans told me that when De Mohrenschildt realized that the truth about the assassination would probably be revealed, he became frantic. De Mohrenschildt began to make limited admissions to Oltmans, telling him that he had played a part in the assassination and that his "contact downward was to Oswald." In intelligence jargon when a vertical structure is established with each operative having a contact below him who reports to him and accepts orders from him, and a contact above him to whom he reports and from whom he accepts orders, the former is the "downward" contact, and latter the "upward" contact. De Mohrenschildt said that he had been given a cover story about Oswald, that he had checked out the story, and that he had moved Oswald around without having full knowledge of the use to which Oswald would be put.

According to Oltmans, De Mohrenschildt was torn between wanting to get the whole story told and fear that he might be prosecuted if some of the facts were known. He said, "I do not want Alexandra [his daughter] to be known as the daughter of the assassin." He told Oltmans that "I might as well kill myself before that happens, so no one can ever prove what I did."

To relate the story of how he was used in the conspiracy, De Mohrenschildt began to write a book about his relationship with Oswald. He entitled it, *I'm a Patsy, I'm a Patsy*. Oswald had spoken those words in the Dallas Police and Courts Building shortly after his arrest on November 22, 1963, immediately after he was informed by a reporter that he was being charged with killing the President.

According to Oltmans, De Mohrenschildt was put in a mental ward, held there for six weeks, and given electroshock treatments soon after he began his work on the manuscript.

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KEY JFK WITNESS

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In December 1976, Oltmans arrived in Dallas and was informed by Mrs. De Mohrenschildt's lawyer that he could not see De Mohrenschildt. He returned to Dallas in February of 1977 and met De Mohrenschildt for lunch. Although others were present at the luncheon, De Mohrenschildt spoke to Oltmans in French and asked if Oltmans could help him tell the whole story about the assassination in a way which would keep him from going to jail. Oltmans agreed to help. De Mohrenschildt told Oltmans that he wanted to leave the country quickly since he was afraid that he might be killed if it were known that he was talking, or perhaps "even worse," he said, be sent back to the hospital for more electroshock treatments.

Oltmans and De Mohrenschildt flew to Amsterdam and there the video tape interviews were conducted. They visited Brussels together, and suddenly De Mohrenschildt disappeared. Oltmans never saw him again.

On March 11, 1977 Oltmans made a statement to the Select Committee. He told them that "De Mohrenschildt asked me not to hang him, but to give you some information in such a way that he will not go to prison." Oltmans said, "I did not want to betray George. I like him, and I gave my word." After De Mohrenschildt's death, Oltmans returned to Washington and testified before the Select Committee as to his full knowledge of the events.

That testimony has not been made public. I learned about it in my meetings with Oltmans. Oltmans has written a book which fully explains his relationship with De Mohrenschildt. The book has found a Dutch publisher, but as of this writing, American publishers seem reluctant to publish it.

Oltmans met De Mohrenschildt in March of 1967. De Mohrenschildt had defended himself against charges that he was involved in espionage in the United States and Yugoslavia by claiming that he was not sketching secret military installations in both countries, but that he was an artist painting seascapes and landscapes. Oltmans told me that in the ten years that he knew De Mohrenschildt and visited his home he had never seen any art supplies, brushes, an easel, or a painting done by De Mohrenschildt. He said that neither De Mohrenschildt nor his wife ever mentioned that he had an interest in painting or sketching.

De Mohrenschildt told Oltmans one day, "I am very much afraid of this investigation by Jim Garrison [at that time the New Orleans District Attorney] because I believe that he is on the right track."

According to Oltmans, De Mohrenschildt told him that, "When Oswald shouted "I am a patsy, I am a patsy," he spoke the absolute truth. He was a patsy."

During February 1969, George De Mohrenschildt asked Oltmans, "How would you feel if someday it were discovered that I *did* actively organize the Kennedy assassination?"

Three years later, De Mohrenschildt wrote a letter to Oltmans regarding the tape-recorded statements that he had made for him. He wrote, "Please under no conditions release the tapes to any Government commission."

Later that year, De Mohrenschildt told Oltmans that he would be rewarded by the financial interests in Dallas "if it became known that I had something to do with the assassination."

He added that he knew that anti-Castro Cubans actually "shot JFK for betraying them at the Bay of Pigs, and they had a perfect case."

Two years later, during September 1974, De Mohrenschildt began to talk to Oltmans about his fear for his life. He said he was afraid that he would be killed if he remained in the United States. He instructed Oltmans in a letter to make the tapes available "in case of my removal from the scene—by assassination or otherwise."

Later that year, De Mohrenschildt wrote to Oltmans that his relationship with the CIA continued: "I got one girl (a student at Bishop College) into the CIA because she was just the type—unscrupulous. She called me from D.C. during a French exam. I gave her the answers, and she passed."

At the time De Mohrenschildt was teaching at Bishop College in Texas. He spoke French fluently. In February 1977, De Mohrenschildt said to Oltmans, "Willem, how would it look to the world if I came and said that I felt responsible for Oswald's behavior?" and then added, "Oswald followed my instructions. It was about the assassination." He pleaded with Oltmans not to reveal the information he had given to him. "I trust you," he wrote. "Don't hang me. Don't incriminate me."

De Mohrenschildt told Oltmans that in the manuscript he had written he mentioned "the names of the FBI and the CIA functionaries who were involved in the assassination." He added, "Obviously no one wants these names to be published."

Later, De Mohrenschildt said, "After I finished the manuscript I was given drugs and then sent to a psychiatric clinic." He said that his severe problems began after he finished his book. At that time he begged Oltmans to "bring me to safety. Take me away from Dallas, or I will be destroyed."

Oltmans invited De Mohrenschildt to

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KEY JFK WITNESS

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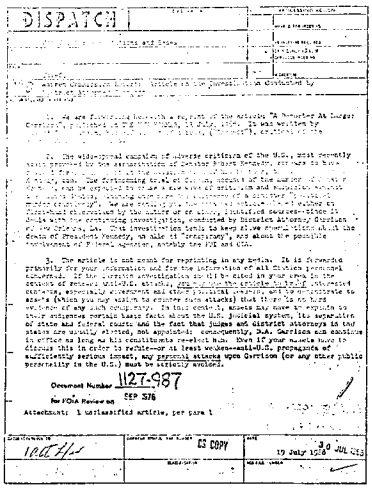
accompany him to Amsterdam. De Mohrenschildt was anxious to go, but hesitated because he said that "a man named Epstein called." Epstein had offered him a substantial sum of money to remain in the United States and meet for an interview.

De Mohrenschildt finally went to Amsterdam and then returned to the United States where he sat for the interview with Edward J. Epstein.

Epstein is a reporter who some years earlier had been involved in a campaign to clear the FBI of charges that it had used excessive violence, or conspired unlawfully to destroy the Black Panther Party. In fact, FBI documents reveal that the secret operation "COINTELPRO" was organized to do just that.

Although Epstein's assumptions were false and his conclusions invalid, the intelligence agencies made use of his work to counter charges that the FBI had violated citizens' rights.

In the July 13, 1968 issue of the *New Yorker* magazine there appears an article written by Epstein, where he attacks point by point Jim Garrison's assertions of the existence of a conspiracy to kill JFK, and the involvement of Clay Shaw. Epstein ridicules the character and evi-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dence-gathering methods of the then-District Attorney of New Orleans.

Within one week of publication of the article, the CIA had circulated Epstein's inaccurate charges to intelligence chiefs and stations throughout the world, directing them to demonstrate to interested parties that "there is no hard evidence of any such conspiracy." (Copy of the CIA report, number 1127-987 is reproduced.)

Epstein's flawed defense of the FBI and the use of his work by the CIA are relevant here, because Epstein was with George De Mohrenschildt just before De Mohrenschildt died, though clearly one cannot even consider the possibility that Epstein actually killed De Mohrenschildt.

In Florida, Epstein was quoted in the press, saying that he was involved in "a very big project that involves a lot of money." They met in Palm Beach on Tuesday morning, March 29, at Epstein's room in The Breakers Hotel.

At 1:00 PM De Mohrenschildt left and returned to his house in Manalapan where he had been staying with his daughter Alexandra and her friend since he left Oltmans in Europe. At 2:21 PM he was dead.

The press has widely reported that De Mohrenschildt had been notified by his daughter that while he was out, Gaeton Fonzi of the House Select Committee had called and would call back later that day. Reporters speculated that De Mohrenschildt, perhaps afraid of the confrontation with Fonzi, killed himself. Yet Alexandra said that her father did not seem upset by the message.

I attended the coroner's inquest held in Palm Beach. The woman with whom Alexandra lived had gone out to a bridge party leaving strict instructions that the maid was to tape-record her favorite television programs while she was gone. The maid activated the tape recorder, and it captured the sound of the program, as well as the shotgun blast that killed De Mohrenschildt. The various servants testified that an alarm system installed by the owner of the house caused a bell to ring rather quietly whenever an outside door or window was opened. The courtroom became silent as the tape recording was played. Just after a commercial against yellow wax buildup (does life imitate "Mary Hartman"?) a gentle bell was heard, and then the shotgun blast.

A member of the coroner's jury asked what had caused the bell to ring. Later, a detective suggested that perhaps it had been caused by the maid leaving the house to sun herself just before De Mohrenschildt shot himself. Perhaps it had been, but the maid had not testified to that event, and she has refused to discuss it since.

The Columbo-like mystery had no Columbo-like conclusion. Someone may have entered or left the house just before De Mohrenschildt was killed. The inquest showed that De Mohrenschildt might have killed himself. But contrary to the inquest's conclusion, it did not prove that he did not kill himself.

My conversation with the state's attorney, David Bludworth, which took place in his office just after the inquest, raised another intriguing possibility. Bludworth was open and frank with me.

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KEY JFK WITNESS

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He said that he was reasonably satisfied that De Mohrenschildt had killed himself. He said the reason that De Mohrenschildt took his own life was of great interest to him, and that the Select Committee would have his full cooperation in determining the motive. I asked him what he meant and he said, "You know Epstein was with De Mohrenschildt. He paid him three thousand dollars for the interview and then let him go after a very short session. Why do you think that was?"

I said that I did not know.

"You know, I know what long distance calls are made from here and who Epstein called. And I questioned Epstein just after I came into this matter. Epstein said he had taken no notes and had no tape recordings of an interview with De Mohrenschildt. Of course I didn't believe that, not after he had paid all that money. When I questioned him closely, he finally told me why De Mohrenschildt left, drove home in a car Epstein had rented, and then he killed himself."

I asked Bludworth why De Mohrenschildt had left so precipitously.

He said, "Epstein admitted to me that he showed De Mohrenschildt a document which indicated that he might be taken back to the Parkland Hospital in Dallas and given more electroshock treatment."

Bludworth looked at me and said, "You know, De Mohrenschildt was deathly afraid of those treatments. They can wreck your mind. De Mohrenschildt was terrified of being sent back there. One hour later he was dead."

De Mohrenschildt's death in 1977 was another tragedy in the chain of events set into motion on November 22, 1963. It may be impossible to accurately assess De Mohrenschildt's part in the death of President Kennedy, since he was not asked the relevant questions by FBI agents or counsel for the Warren Commission. Yet it seems likely that De Mohrenschildt was assigned the important task of separating Lee from Marina Oswald, placing Oswald alone in Dallas while Marina lived elsewhere, and securing a job for him in a building on the presidential motorcade route. While those tasks were important, De Mohrenschildt's role was that of an agent in the field. His assignment left him but one rung from the bottom. The bottom rung was occupied by Lee Harvey Oswald, the proposed fall guy, the person to whom the evidence would irrevocably lead on November 22, 1963.

It seems likely that De Mohrenschildt was given a cover story to give to Oswald. Oswald would hardly have accepted his fate if he knew all the facts. It also seems likely, in view of De Mohrenschildt's conduct on November 22, 1963 in Haiti, and in the light of his subsequent statements to Oltmans, that De Mohrenschildt had been given another cover story. Had De Mohrenschildt known what Oswald had been set up for, he would hardly, upon learning that the President had been shot, have blurted out Oswald's name, declaring that Oswald had been considered harmless by the FBI.

The death of George De Mohrenschildt was a severe setback for those anxious to learn the truth about the assassination of President Kennedy.

EXPOSING THE GREAT AMERICAN MYTHS

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of world tanker tonnage, 50 percent of all refining capacity, 50 percent of marketing capacity, and 81 percent of the output of eleven principal oil-exporting countries. While the Arabs took all the blame during the great gasoline drought several years ago, we were seldom reminded that the largest oil producer in the world, Aramco of Saudi Arabia, is not owned by just a bunch of shieks. It is owned also by Standard of California, Texaco, Mobil, and Exxon. When Arabian oil prices go up, so do these companies' profits. (Standard of California recently listed 40 percent of its profits as coming from Aramco.)

There is another assumption that helps the concentration of economic power and the unremitting growth of the giant corporations. It is that:

Americans Want More Growth

Everybody seems to say it, but very few people bother to check it. One very recent check, however, was made by one of the major public opinion polling firms in the country, the Harris Survey. The results, as published in many American newspapers last May, should shake the assumptions to their foundations.

- By 66 percent to 22 percent, the public would choose "breaking up big things and getting back to more humanized living," as opposed to "developing bigger and more efficient ways of doing things."
- By 63 percent to 29 percent, a majority feels that the country would be better served if emphasis was put on "learning to appreciate human values more than material values," rather than "finding ways to create more jobs for producing more goods."
- By 79 percent to 17 percent, the public would place greater emphasis on "teaching people how to live more with basics" rather than on "reaching higher standards of living."

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