WHO STOLE JOHN KENNEDY'S BRAIN AND OTHER NEV

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AN INTERVIEW WITH MARK LANE BY CLAUDIA DREIFUS

1998 -

The dean of assassination critics: Mark Lane, 48, attorney, author of the bestselling Rush to Judgment. former New York State Assemblyman. former associate of New Orleans' District Attorney Jim Garrison. For a good part of the past eleven and a half years, ever since John Kennedy's brain was blown to oblivion in Dallas, Lane has been investigating the crime and traveling around the country in a one-man attempt to have the nation reconsider the official "facts" surrounding the assassination.

For Lane, the crusade began in late 1963, when he wrote a lawyer's brief raising some of the questions Lee Harvey Oswald's attorney might have raised had Oswald actually lived to see a trial. That brief brought him in contact with Marguerite Oswald, moth-er of the alleged assassin; Mrs. Oswald asked Lane to represent her son's interests before the Warren Commis-sion. But the Commission was most uninterested in having an independent advocate present at its deliberations. It rejected Lane, leaving him to conduct his private investigation that ended in Rush to Judgment. The book, a devastating dissection of the Warren Commission and its report, became an instant best-seller. After Rush to Judgment, the national mood grew forever cynical about the Commission's con-clusion: that Lee Harvey Oswald had been the Ione assassin in Dallas. Lane had sown the seeds of doubt. The country was really never the same.

This interviewer remembers Mark Lane from the time he was researching his book. Lane was commuting from New York to Dallas — frantically digging up clues, insistently interviewing witnesses to various aspects of the assassination. Mark Lane would return to New York in constant amazement at the enormity of the lies he'd uncovered. "Nothing is like what they say it is," he'd explain, shaking his head. "Nothing." Then, he'd return to Dallas and look some more.

There was just too much down there: witnesses to the death of Officer J.D. Tippit, who described Tippit's assailant as a physical type very different from Oswald: violent attacks on those witnesses who differed from the official assassination story: dozens of witnesses to the actual death of JFK who were saying that the shots came from the front of the motorcade; men with phony Secret. Service credentials who'd been detained near the railroad bridge above the murder site at Dealey Plaza, links between Ruby and Tippit

DUESTIONS ON THE ASSASSINATION OF THE PRESIDENT?

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atustrateo By Bill IMHOFF ----- who allegedly had never met.

In those days, despite the enormous success of his book, I suspect that Mark Lane never thought his voice would become more than a dissent from official history. But now the American public angered by Watergate, CIA revelations and an epidemic of assassinations of national leaders, is beginning to demand a more accurate accounting of the death of John Kennedy.

New evidence is beginning to surface. Former Commission supporters are beginning to express their doubts. To add to the outcry, Lane has joined with a group of distinguished scholars. lawyers, pathologists, former intelligence agents, and former career dip-Iomats, to form a Citizen's Commission of Inquiry. This Commission has been lobbying on Capitol Hill for a new investigation, and its efforts have borne much fruit: it now appears that two Congressional committees will be looking into this matter. The death of JFK, now more than a decade past, may well prove the Watergate of 1975.

PLAYGIRL: Eleven years ago, when you first began expressing doubts about the official view of the assassination, the national mood was somewhat different than it is now.

LANE: I'll say it was different. In 1964, when I spoke at a college campus, the first question asked was: "Don't you have faith in the integrity of Earl Warren? How can you doubt him and all those other fine civil servants on his Commission?" Now, when I speak on a campus and tell students that this was the first question asked, it brings down the house. People laugh. The difference between now and a decade ago is that people don't believe that just because the government has said something it must be true.

PLAYGIRL: We wonder if the national mood has changed that much. Some weeks ago, we had dinner with a prominent civil liberties attorney and he scoffed at the idea of reopening an investigation into JFK's death. "What's the point of opening all that up?" he asked. "It's the past." A lot of people agree with him. Yet, you've been going around the country in a one-man attempt to keep this issue alive. Why?

LANE: One must distinguish between professional liberals and the rest of the people. To me, the assassination of John F. Kennedy is a central event in understanding recent American history. John Kennedy, was, after all, the last American President elected by ballots in an election unimpaired by builtets. He was elected in 1960. Fifteen (continued on page 58)

ASSASSINATION (continued from page 51)

years ago. Then what happened?

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On November 22, 1963, "they," whoever "they" are, blew his head off in Dealey Plaza. Lyndon Johnson became President because of that assassination. In 1968, Robert Kennedy was making a strong run for the Presidency. He was assassinated. Before the 1972 election, polls indicated that Richard Nixon was running second to any Democrat because of the inroads that George Wallace had made into Nixon country. George Wallace was eliminated by an assassination attempt. Now, we have a President and a Vice President who have not been elected to their offices. Ford, as it happens, was a member of the Warren Commission — which issued the false report on the death of John F. Kennedy, the very incident that started us off on this cycle.

I think this issue is damned important. We're told that this is an electoral democracy, but do we live in a country where decisions are made by bullets?

PLAYGIRL: You called the Warren report false. That's a strong word.

LANE: The Warren Commission began with the preconception: that Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone assassin. There was a great deal of evidence to the contrary, but it was dismissed, ignored, or distorted by the Commission.

From the beginning, the Commission set up six panels and decreed that all evidence would come through them: PHOTO COURTESY OF UP What did Lee Harvey Oswald do on November 22? (2) Lee Harvey Oswald's background. (3) Lee Harvey Oswald in the USSR and in the Marine Corps.
How did Ruby kill Oswald? (5) What was Ruby's background? (6) What precautions were taken and what precautions should have been taken?

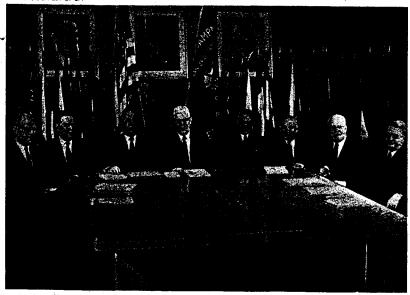
I suggested a seventh panel: Who killed John Kennedy? If three people walked into Earl Warren's office and said they were part of a conspiracy, there was no panel to send them to.

Given that kind of bias, all evidence that was contrary to the Commission's preconceptions was ignored. I'll give you one example, but there are dozens. A few weeks before November 22. a man who said he was Lee Harvey Oswald walked into a Lincoln-Mercury dealer in Dallas and took a red Comet Caliente out for a test drive. He drove that car at one hundred miles an hour and just terrified the salesman. A while later, this man returned to the showroom and said he wanted to buy the car on credit. When terms could not be arranged, he said, "Oh well then, I'll just have to go back to Russia. Maybe I'll come back in a few weeks. I'll have a lot of money then."

Oswald had been to Russia. The man told the salesman that his name was Lee Harvey Oswald.

The Warren Commission concluded that Lee Harvey Oswald didn't know how to drive. They added that this episode was not relevant since the real Oswald was not involved.

Was someone using Oswald's name and background leaving behind a trail



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PHOTOGRAPHY BY FRED W. MCDARRAH

Mark Lane, dean of assassination critics, who has been investigating the JFK assassination: "Nothing is like what they say it is. Nothing."

that would inexorably lead to Lee Harvey Oswald? We have never found out because the Commission said that the man who drove the red Caliente was not Oswald. "Case closed."

But now, quite recently, a document written by J. Edgar Hoover was declassified and released by the National Archives. Remember that all material in the Archives was, theoretically, given to the Warren Commission. This document says that as early as 1960 someone was going around posing as Lee Harvey Oswald.

David Slawson, a lawyer for the Commission - he helped to write the "Rumors and Speculation" section of the Report, he's one of the men who dismissed the idea of a second Oswald - he's now calling for an investigation because of this previously suppressed document. Slawson says the Commission never saw it and that the FBI withheld important evidence. Slawson may be right about that. But he and the rest of the Commission had sufficient evidence that someone was impersonating Oswald. I suspect that had Slawson in 1964, been given that particular document, he would have ignored it then too. They had evidence of at least four major incidents like the one with the red Caliente. They were all ignored.

PLAYGIRL: You worked with New Orleans' DA Jim Garrison on his investigation of the Kennedy assassination. How exactly did that investigation come about?

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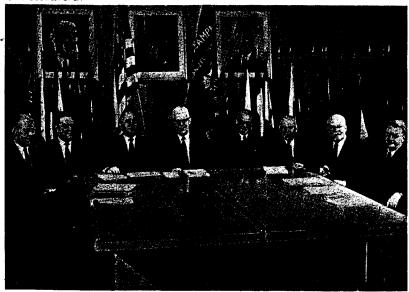
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LANE: Garrison arrested a man named David Ferrie shortly after the assassination. Ferrie, a former pilot for the CIA during the Bay of Pigs, was seen hanging around a phone booth on November 22 in Texas, having driven there from New Orleans. According to Garrison, Ferrie was the backup escape plan for Kennedy's killers: if Plan I didn't work to get them out of Dallas, Ferrie was to fly them out.

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Various informants told Garrison of Ferrie's strange behavior on November 22. After questioning Ferrie, Garrison turned him over to the FBI. The FBI released him. Garrison, himself a former special agent of the FBI, decided that if the Bureau released him, there must be nothing there.

Then, in August 1966, *Rush to Judgment* was published. Garrison read it and discovered that the information there, particularly with regard to the Dallas aspect of the case, dovetailed

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with his New Orleans investigation. He reopened his investigation.

PLAYGIRL: Wasn't David Ferrie a rather strange individual?

LANE: Yes, he was — a strange man. Ferrie had developed a new religion. He had an altar in his house. He experimented on himself with various serums for curing cancer even though he didn't have the disease. He did all this when he wasn't flying airplanes for Eastern Airlines.

Because of experiments, his hair had fallen off every part of his body. So to compensate for his hairlessness, Ferrie wore wigs and pieces he made for himself out of red monkey hair. One other thing: Ferrie's house was filled with white mice that ran along the floor.

PLAYGIRL: He died shortly before Shaw's trial, didn't he?

LANE: Garrison had questioned Ferrie again. He told Ferrie to go home and spend some time on his own to think about what he was going to do. However, shortly after that, Ferrie was found in his apartment. Dead. The coroner said it was a natural death. However, investigators found two dif-

Playgirl

ferent typed and unsigned suicide notes.

I talked to the investigator for Garrison who found Ferrie's body and asked him to describe the scene. The investigator said: "I opened the door. I heard this squeaking sound and saw a carpet of white mice everywhere. On the bed was David Ferrie, stretched out nude. No hair on his head. One red monkey eyebrow slanted and a toupee in hand."

PLAYGIRL: How did Garrison come to Clay Shaw, the man he ultimately prosecuted for conspiracy to kill JFK?

LANE: Shaw was a very distinguished businessman who, according to Garrison, had CIA connections. Garrison's conclusion was that the CIA had played a part in the assassination. There was strong evidence linking Shaw to Ferrie and Oswald. Garrison said that there was an effort to place Lee Harvey Oswald in a mental institution in Louisiana as an employee. The way to get Oswald that job in the ordinary course of events, Garrison said, was to register him as a voter within the parish. So Oswald was driven to Clinton before November 22 for that purpose by Shaw in a borrowed black Cadillac. Ferrie was in the vehicle also.

But as it happened, just that day, CORE was conducting a voter registration drive in Clinton. On one side of the street were the black civil rights demonstrators. On the other side were the sheriff and the white citizens council. And in the middle of this scene, Clay Shaw and his passengers drove up in the Cadillac. Many people looked into that car. Soon Lee Harvey Oswald's face was to be seen on national television. I've already described Ferrie. He was a man that few would forget. And Shaw? He was quite distinctivelooking also: six feet four inches tall, high cheekbones, white hair. People looked in the car and saw the occupants. Some of them did not forget whom they saw. After the assassination and the arrest of Oswald, there was considerable talk in Clinton about his previous visit to the town.

PLAYGIRL: And what happened at the Shaw trial?

LANE: Nine witnesses, representatives — ranging from the Clinton sheriff's office to CORE — came forward to testify that they had seen Clay Shaw with Oswald that day.

PLAYGIRL: Didn't Shaw say that he never had met Oswald?

LANE: Yes. After he was indicted he issued a statement: "I've never heard of this Harvey Lee Oswald." That established Clay Shaw as one of the few who didn't know that Oswald's first name was Lee.

(continued on page 80)

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PLAYGIRL: So where did Garrison lose his case?

LANE: Garrison's problem was twofold. He had to convince a jury that there actually was a conspiracy to kill John Kennedy. Second, he had to show the jury that Shaw was, beyond a reasonable doubt, involved in the conspiracy.

I interviewed most of the jurors after the trial and they felt that Garrison had succeeded in proving that there was a conspiracy. Some of them said, though, that Jim Garrison's major failure was his inability to prove motive on the part of Shaw: Garrison had not, in their view, succeeded in tying Shaw to the CIA. If he had done that, he might have proved motive.

PLAYGIRL: I wonder if Garrison had managed to make an airtight connection between the assassination and the CIA, if people would have believed him back in 1969. When Jim Garrison first announced that the CIA was party to a conspiracy, most people thought he'd flipped out. Even those cynical about the Warren Commission felt that the real culprits were probably Texas oil millionaires. That was a popular theory.

LANE: I remember when Garrison called his first press conference to announce the findings of his investigation.

Garrison said, "I know who killed John Kennedy."

A reporter said a quiet "who?" They weren't very excited about it. Garrison said, "There was a con-

Garrison said, "There was a conspiracy that included people high up in the government, the CIA, and anti-Castro Cubans based in Miami."

Later that evening on network news, one of the commentators laughed at this "most unlikely" of conspiracies. But several years later, after Watergate was exposed, the unlikely conspiracy appeared less unlikely. Who was involved in Watergate? "People high up in the government, the CIA, and anti-Castro Cubans based in Miami."

PLAYGIRL: Let's get back to Clay Shaw. What happened to him after his acquittal?

LANE: Garrison indicted him for perjury in denying that he knew Oswald. Shaw's lawyers went into the federal district court. Jim Garrison was prosecuting in state court. The Federal judge issued an injunction forever prohibiting Garrison from trying Clay Shaw. This was an unprecedented act by the judiciary as far as we can tell. A federal injunction barred a state prosecutor from prosecuting in a state court 80 under these circumstances. And that was the end of it. Jim Garrison was forever barred from raising this question again.

After that, a well-orchestrated national campaign began to remove Jim Garrison from office. Eventually it succeeded. Clay Shaw died very recently.

PLAYGIRL: But I understand some new facts have emerged on all this.

LANE: Yes. Victor Marchetti, the coauthor of The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence, and the former executive assistant to the Deputy Director of the CIA, recently told our Citizens Commission that he was present at a top level CIA meeting in 1969 chaired by Richard Helms, then Director of the CIA. A dozen of Helms' leading deputies were there, as were three or four staffers. Marchetti took minutes at the meeting. Helms asked about the Clay Shaw trial. He asked, "Are you giving them all the help they need?" It was revealed at the meeting that Shaw was CIA, had been or still was a contact agent of the agency. It was also said that Shaw's connection with the CIA must remain secret. Later Marchetti was told that Dave Ferrie was CIA, was involved in the Bay of Pigs operation, and that that information also should be denied to the jury trying Clay Shaw.

PLAYGIRL: What kind of help do you think was given to Clay Shaw?

PHOTO COURTESY OF UPI



"The Warren Commission began with the preconception that Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone assassin. There was a great deal of evidence to the contrary, but it was dismissed, ignored, or distorted by the Commission." There were people within the CIA— E. Howard Hunt, for instance, who thought of John Kennedy as a foreign leader, a man whose concepts were alien to them.

LANE: I don't know. Did the CIA whisper into the ear of the federal judge a request to issue that injunction? Did they advise the judge that the national interest required it?

A relevant committee of Congress can call Marchetti and ask him to repeat his statement. Then, Richard Helms and his former deputies present at those meetings should also be called and asked to respond to Marchetti.

PLAYGIRL: Are there other repentant intelligence agents coming forward with information now?

LANE: There's a CIA covert operator whom I spoke with recently in Washington. I know this man only by the name Charlie. But John Marks, formerly of the State Department and the co-author of *The CIA* and the Cult of Intelligence, knows him and vouched for his authenticity.

This man ran a country in Latin America for the CIA. According to him the CIA computer was punched shortly after the arrest of Oswald and out came a twenty-eight page printout. Not bad for a loner who had no contacts.

PLAYGIRL: Wait a second. If the CIA is charged with doing intelligence work, it is perfectly legitimate for them to have information on Oswald. After all, Oswald did defect to the Soviet Union. He was one of the only Americans of his time to do so.

LANE: The point is this: I wrote to the National Archives, the depository of all evidence given to the Warren Commission. The <u>Director</u> of the National Archives informed me that the twentyeight-page document was not there, that it had never been there. That means, the material was never given to the Warren Commission.

PLAYGIRL: And what does that prove?

LANE: It proves that important information was suppressed. The Com-



mission had a special panel to study Oswald's background and another on his activities in the Soviet Union. I think the printout was withheld because its contents were inconsistent with what the CIA wanted the Commission to believe. Was Lee Harvey Oswald working for an agency of the U.S. government at the time of the assassination? Perhaps the answer can be found in the twenty-eight pages. In any event, the document did not contain the kind of information the CIA wanted to share with Earl Warren and his friends.

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PLAYGIRL: There have been a lot of recent headlines about super secret CIA involvement in assassinations of foreign political leaders. If the CIA was knocking off people they didn't like abroad, it makes some agency critics think that perhaps they were also taking out contracts on Americans. After all, why should the agency discriminate? What do you think?

LANE: There were people within the CIA — E. Howard Hunt, for instance, who thought of John Kennedy as a foreign leader, a man whose concepts were alien to them. Hunt has made that very plain in novels and public statements. He's said he thought Kennedy betrayed the Cubans by selling out to Fidel Castro.

If one wants an insight into CIA think-

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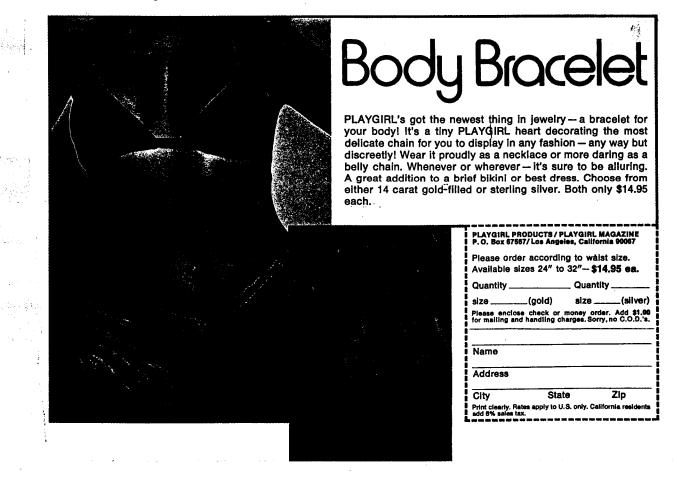
ing, one should look into one of the most important documents to emerge during the Watergate trial. A Watergate prosecutor described it as the bombshell document. It had been concealed by William Bittman, a former Justice Department lawyer, who later represented Hunt. The memo from Hunt to Nixon charged that Nixon was "deficient in living up to his commitments" which "were and are" as Hunt put it, "(1) Financial Support. (2) Legal defense fees. (3) Pardons. (4) Rehabilitation."

Hunt pointed out that "loyalty is a two-way street" and then said "the Watergate bugging is only one of a number of illegal conspiracies engaged in by one or more of the defendants at the behest of senior White House officials. These as yet undisclosed crimes can be proved." Hunt said, "The defendants have followed all instructions meticulously, keeping their part of the bargain by maintaining silence." Isn't it now clear that some agency or person with the authority to do so should question Mr. Hunt about those still secret "illegal conspiracies." So far Mr. Ford's Attorney General and U.S. Attorney's office have shown no interest in meeting their obligations to do so. Perhaps a Senate or House committee will ask the relevant questions now.

PLAYGIRL: There are some assassination critics who claim that E. Howard Hunt was in Dallas on November 22. There's a picture of a man in Dealey Plaza who looks a lot like Hunt. They point to that as evidence.

LANE: I have seen that picture and I do not believe that it is E. Howard Hunt. There's a slight facial similarity between the two men, but it's not striking. Those trying to prove that the man is Hunt have taken a photograph of Hunt in 1974 eleven years after the assassination — and compared it to the man in Dealey Plaza. I have looked at pictures of Hunt taken in 1963, and he looks young enough to be the son of this mystery man.

Still, I do have some questions about (continued from page 92)





Hunt, E. Howard Hunt was in charge of domestic intelligence for the CIA during 1963 and 1964. Domestic Intelligence. That means he was spying on you and me. Yet, he disappeared during August and September of 1963 and became the CIA station chief in Mexico City. Why did the man in charge of domestic intelligence leave the country in the middle of his job? That is when Lee Harvey Oswald was in Mexico City. That certainly doesn't mean that Hunt was involved in the assassination, and it doesn't mean that Oswald was. But it does raise some questions that Congress ought to put to Hunt.

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PLAYGIRL: What do you think of President Ford? He was a member of the Warren Commission. Now, at the very moment when the public is calling for a new investigation into the death of JFK, he is in a position to determine exactly what we will and what we will not learn.

LANE: Ford has just appointed the Rockefeller Commission to look into the many misdeeds of the CIA. Among other things, they say they are looking into CIA links with the assassination. For eleven years, we have had the full pressure of the federal government at work to prevent the truth from being known.

In 1963, when Congress said it was going to investigate the death of Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson immediately appointed a Presidential Commission to do the work instead. The Commission met in secret — unlike the Senate Watergate Committee — and the country never got a chance to judge the accuracy of their methods and conclusions or to see the witnesses testify.

In 1975, when Congress talked about investigating the CIA and the Kennedy assassination, Gerald Ford, Warren Commission veteran, appointed the Rockefeller Commission. Ford has even chosen as chief counsel for Rockefeller, one of the Warren Commission's lawyers, David Belin, who was the most obsessed with the preconception that Oswald acted alone. The same personnel; the same techniques. Very likely the same result: coverup.

PLAYGIRL: Explain to us exactly what role Gerald Ford played on the Warren Commission.

LANE: Ford and Earl Warren were the ¹ only two members of the Commission to talk with Jack Ruby. Ruby was, at the time, the last known survivor of the principals.

Ford and Warren entered the Dallas jail with Leon Jaworski. Remember Leon Jaworski? Richard Nixon's choice 92 for Watergate prosecutor. Jaworski was special Counsel to the Commission appointed by Lyndon Johnson. Ford, Warren, and Jaworski talked with Jack Ruby in a Dallas jail, and what unfolds is the most pathetic scenario to be found in all the twentysix volumes of the Warren Commission's proceedings. Jack Ruby kept demanding to be taken to Washington so that he could tell Warren everything he knew about a conspiracy. "I can't talk here," he said. He added, "Gentlemen, my life is in danger here."

After Ruby had pleaded for some time to be taken to Washington, out of the Dallas jail, where he could tell the whole truth, Congressman Ford asked, not a little redundantly, "Is there anything more you can tell us if you went back to Washington?" Ruby said that there was and added that his life was in danger, and "you are the only one that can save me. I think you can." Warren said, "Yes?" and Ruby continued "But by delaying minutes you lose the chance. And all I want to do is tell the truth, and that is all."

Ruby said a Dallas police officer had suggested to him that the murder of Oswald might be a good idea.

As Warren and Ford were preparing to leave without having asked a single relevant question, Ruby said, "Well you won't ever see me again, I tell you that." Ruby said that he was anxious to tell the Commission "why my act was committed, but it can't be said here." Warren, America's chief investigator, at that point offered instead of reassurances designed to elicit the facts, this admonition to Ruby: "I think I might have some reluctance if I was in your position, yes; I think I would. I think I would figure it out very carefully as to whether it would endanger me or not. If you think that anything that I am doing or anything that I am asking you is endangering you in any way, shape, or form, I want you to feel absolutely free to say that the interview is over.'

Ruby nonetheless succeeded in making a number of highly provocative statements. He explained that when he shot Oswald "there was no malice in me." Would this not suggest the logical question — if he did not hate Oswald, why did he kill him? The Commission failed to ask it. Although he was not asked whether he had received any assistance in entering the basement, Ruby said, "If it were timed that way, 1 then someone in the police department is guilty of giving the information as to when Lee Harvey Oswald was coming down."

Ruby was not asked about his relationship with the Dallas police department, but he stated, "I have always been very close to the police department" and "I felt we have one of the greatest police forces in the world here, and I have always been close to them, and I visited in the office."

Then he made a most dramatic disclosure. He said that approximately thirty-six hours before he shot Oswald to death, a Dallas police officer had suggested to him that the murder of Oswald might be a good idea. The officer who made this suggestion was one whom Ruby knew well because he was having an affair with one of Ruby's strippers.

Ruby said: " . . . I heard someone honk a horn very loudly, and I stopped. There was a police officer sitting in a car. He was sitting with this young lady that works in my club . . . and they were very much carried away. And I was carried away! And he had a few beers, and it is so bad about those places [being] open, and I was a great guy to close; and I remained with them --- did I tell you this part of it? . . . I didn't tell you this part because at the time I thought a lot of . . . [this] police officer, and either it slipped my mind in telling this, or it was more or less a reason for leaving it out, because I felt I didn't want to involve them in anything, because it was supposed to be a secret that he was going with this young lady. He had marital problems. I don't know if that is why I didn't tell you that. Anyway, I did leave it out . . . And they talked and they carried on, and they thought I was the greatest guy in the world, and he stated they should cut this guy [Oswald] inch by inch into ribbons and so on. Ruby added, "I spent an hour with the officer and his girlfriend.'

As Ruby began to tell of this incident, Joe Tonahill, his attorney, wrote out a note. It read, "This is the thing that started Jack in the shooting." A Dallas police officer was thus said by Ruby's lawyer to have motivated Ruby to kill Oswald. Tonahill's statement cannot be discounted as the rhetoric of a lawyer for the defense, for if Ruby had contemplated the murder of Oswald a day and a half beforehand, then any defense to the charge of murder with malice would be considerably weakened. However, Ruby was not asked one question by the Commission on this point.

Ruby's testimony was, for the most part, ignored by the Commission, as (continued on page 100)

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Web Section

1000

by the media. When discussed at all, the troubling implications were avoided by an indication of Ruby's disturbed mental state. I make no pretense at expertise in this area, but it does seem clear that a witness, even if disturbed, may offer invaluable evidence. Moreover, the most pertinent questions asked on June 7 appear to be those asked by Ruby. This might apply equally to his comment: "Now maybe certain people don't want to know the truth that may come out of me. Is that plausible?"

PLAYGIRL: Gerald Ford did some other singular things while a member of the Warren Commission . . .

LANE: Yes, he published a rather uninteresting book called *Portrait of the Assassin.* In the book, Ford did something no other member of the Commission did: he utilized secret data for his own personal benefit. The book, you see, was a simplified version of the Warren Report — sort of a children's version. Ford's publisher wasn't too enthusiastic about it until the then Congressman brought in a top secret document — a transcript of the secret meeting of the Commission held on

January 27, 1964. The publisher agreed it would make a dynamite first chapter and published it under the title, "The Commission Gets Its First Shock."

Indeed, the other Commissioners must have gotten their first shock when they saw what Jerry Ford had done. This was an interesting document. J. Lee Rankin, Commission Counsel, said that there was a dirty rumor they had to deal with. The "dirty rumor," according to Rankin, was that Lee Harvey Oswald was an employee of the FBI on November 22, 1963. But as the Ford transcript makes clear, this "dirty rumor" was a lot more than that: it was an allegation made by two highlevel Texas law enforcement officials, Henry Wade, District Attorney of Dallas, and Waggoner Carr, Attorney General of Texas. These two men gave to Rankin Oswald's secret FBI number, told him the salary he'd been paid and the fact that he was still on FBI payroll when he, Oswald, was killed on November 24, 1963.

PLAYGIRL: Did the Commission investigate this further?

LANE: According to General Ford's book, one member of the Commission said that if it were up to him, he'd just call up J. Edgar Hoover and ask him if the dirty rumor was true. Another Commission member said that they owed it



to the American people to call in all the witnesses and investigate the rumor. Ford's first chapter ends on that note: with the implication that the Warren Commission's responsibility to the American people was so strong that it would interrogate all relevant witnesses. He wrote, "Never has a crime been so thoroughly investigated."

What did they do? They called in J. Edgar Hoover. They, in essence, said, "John, we hate to ask you this question — but did Oswald work for you?"

"No!" said Hoover. That was the end of it.

PLAYGIRL: Has anyone looked into Ford's publication of classified material?

LANE: Yes. When Ford appeared before the Senate Rules Committee regarding his nomination as Vice President, he was asked if he had published anything in *Portrait of the, Assassin* which was classified. Ford responded: "I did not use in that book any material other than the material that was in the twentysix volumes of testimony and exhibits of the Warren Commission that were subsequently made public and sold to the public generally."

Later Congressman Don Edwards of California, a member of the House Judiciary Committee, called me and told me that Ford was soon to appear before that committee. He asked me about the matter. I went to the National Archives and discovered that the transcript, parts of which Ford had published, was still top secret. I gave that information to Congressman Edwards, and he questioned Ford: He said: "My understanding is that the transcript of the January 27, 1964, meeting from which you quoted is still classified in the Archives as Top Secret and, according to the personnel at the National Archives, is not available to the public now and never has been.

"It is my further understanding that the disclosure of this information is covered by U.S. Code section 552, Freedom of Information Act exemptions, and that the unauthorized disclosure of Top Secret information is against the law and would be covered by the same statutes used to prosecute Dr. Ellsberg for allegedly releasing the Pentagon Papers to the news media.

"Would you comment on this apparent violation of the law or on the truthfulness of your testimony to the Senate?" Ford responded that he had made an "inadvertent error" in not telling the truth to the Senate Rules Committee and in publishing a Top Secret document.

In all fairness, I think that we can distinguish the acts of Ellsberg and the acts of Ford. Ellsberg released the Pentagon Papers at some risk in the **Plappfri** hope of avoiding further bloodshed in Southeast Asia. Ford released the transcript for personal benefit. Ellsberg told the truth about what he did from the outset. At the first opportunity to discuss the matter under oath, Ford made a false statement. And of course Ellsberg was indicted and faced years of imprisonment. Ford was confirmed as Vice President and then as President. Here is Ford's testimony before the Committee, pages 581-583. Why haven't we read of this illuminating event in the press?

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PLAYGIRL: In your opinion has Gerald Ford done anything recently to prevent information from reaching the public?

LANE: In the wake of Watergate, Congress passed the Freedom of Information Act. Before that law passed, if a government agency decided a document was classified, no ordinary American citizen could see it. That means that if the CIA decided to take E. Howard Hunt's laundry ticket and make it classified there was little that anyone could do. So Congress passed the Freedom of Information Act which

The brain was not buried with the President's body. It was removed during the autopsy and set in formula.

states, as the general rule, that we are entitled to public documents even if an agency says they are classified. There are reasonable exemptions: ongoing investigations, national security, etc. But under the new law the courts must decide if those exemptions are legitimate. As a result of the Freedom of Information Act, it is now possible to get information on the assassinations. Individuals can also get the secret government files that various government agencies have been keeping on them.

What did the newly appointed President Ford do about this law? He vetoed it. However, Congress then passed it over his veto.

PLAYGIRL: If the Freedom of Information Act had never passed, how many years would it have been till the National Archives declassified the materials?

LANE: Theoretically, we might never see some of the contents of the National Archives. When the acting Director of the Archives was asked that same question in 1964, he said we might get

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However, all that is changing because of the law that was passed over Ford's veto. I am working with the Citizen's Committee of Inquiry in Washington, D.C., and we are filing under the act to get the relevant documents. According to the Freedom of Information Act, I was supposed to receive the documents within ten days of my application. Two weeks after I applied, I got a call from the Counsel to the Director of the CIA. You see, one of the documents we'd like to see is that CIA printout on Oswald. The Counsel said: "We haven't had time to answer your request. Would you be satisfied with a pro forma 'rejection?'

I said, "I was hoping for a pro forma compliance with the statute, but perhaps you are so used to not obeying the law that you've gotten out of the habit."

In any event the Citizen's Commission will be going to court and we will get the documents. The law is very clear on this. We're going to see some documents from the CIA, the FBI and the National Archives about the death of John Kennedy that will astonish many people.

PLAYGIRL: What do you think you'll find in the National Archives material?

LANE: The paraffin casts of Oswald's hands and face, for one thing.

In 1963, they were given to General Dynamics so that they could be placed in a nuclear reactor for a neutron activation analysis, at the time the most sophisticated forensic device developed. The paraffin casts were subjected to radiation analysis. The results prove conclusively that Oswald either did or did not fire the weapon on November 22. Dr. Vincent Guinn who worked on that program, said that the test result was conclusive.

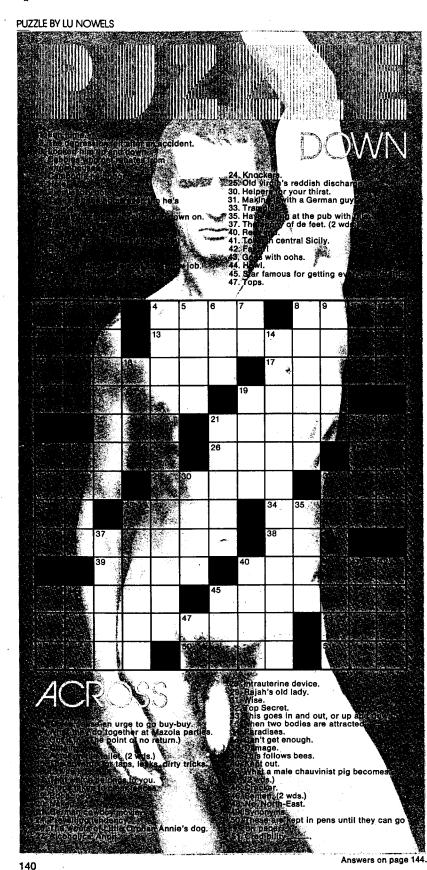
PLAYGIRL: How does it work?

LANE: They took a Mannlicher-Carcano, had eight people fire it, and then made paraffin tests of the hands and face of each of the eight people. In every case, the response was positive when a neutron activation analysis was made. So what did that same test show when the casts taken from Lee Harvey Oswald were tested? The latest information I have is that the test results were given to the FBI, but never to the Warren Commission.

PLAYGIRL: Why?

LANE: Possibly because the tests showed that Oswald had not even fired a weapon. Look, if the tests had shown that Oswald fired the Mannlicher, it would have constituted the only hard evidence against Oswald to show that he had fired a weapon that day, and in (continued on page 140)





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all probability the Warren Commission would have made a book jacket out of the results.

PLAYGIRL: What else are you looking for in the National Archives?

LANE: There's still another very important piece of evidence that is crucial to this case. It may be central to discovering the path of the bullet as it coursed through the President's brain. That evidence is John F. Kennedy's brain. The brain was not buried with his body. It was removed during the autopsy and set in a formula. That is a standard procedure. It is difficult to examine a brain at the time of death: it tends to crumble. The standard procedure is to fix it and then make incisions two weeks later. This was done. There is a report on this being done.

Dr. Cyril Wecht, coroner of Allegheny County, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and a leading forensic pathologist, did manage, after some effort, to get a look at some of the autopsy material. Wecht told me the autopsy was incredibly amateurish. He also said that very important slides, X-rays and photographs of the President's body, crucial documents in determining the direction the bullets came from, are missing. Photographs of the autopsy have disappeared. And incredible as this may sound, President Kennedy's brain is missing, too.

PLAYGIRL: His brain is missing? Where do you think it is?

LANE: I have no idea. It was given to the National Archives by the Kennedy family. It was stored there. It is a very important piece of evidence and now it's gone. Bourke Marshall, attorney for the Kennedy family, gave Wecht per-mission to examine it, but it is gone.

PLAYGIRL: Let's change the subject slightly from missing brains to violations of civil liberties. There's a lot of new information surfacing about Warren Commission critics being subjected to surveillance and worse.

LANE: Yes, so I've heard. More and more, it's becoming clear that there was an orchestrated campaign to isolate and destroy Commission critics. The documents that are coming out now because of the Freedom of Information Act lawsuits show that I, for instance, was placed under the most rigorous type of FBI surveillance for the period of the entire life of the Commission. Possibly for a long time after that, too.

There are literally hundreds of pages of FBI reports - about what planes I took, where I stayed, what I ate. who I was with, and things intended to be

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more derogatory than that. At the moment, most of it is classified. I can't even see it.

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When the late Congressman Hale Boggs began to have questions about the Commission (he was a Commission member), the FBI sent him a package of information on various Commission critics in an effort to quiet him. Included in this package, was information on my sexual habits. Boggs was outraged. "If that's how the FBI treats Warren Commission critics," he said, "I just can't believe anything the FBI says anymore."

PLAYGIRL: Do you see a battle developing between Congress and President Ford, as demands for a new investigation grow?

"If that's how the FBI treats Warren Commission critics Ljust can't believe anything the FSI says anymore."---The late Congressman Hale Boggs.

LANE: Yes. In 1964, I could only find one Congressman interested in this, Henry Gonzales of Texas. Now, there is a national petition drive with tens of thousands of signatures calling for a Congressional investigation into the death of the President and the resulting coverup. Now, there are three Congressional committees interested in this area. Some members of Congress are afraid to touch this issue, but they cannot ignore the demands of their constituents. And those voices are becoming more insistent all the time.

The other week, I was in Madison, Wisconsin, and that State's Attorney General demanded a Congressional investigation. So did the Mayor of Madison. This week three more Congressmen called for a Congressional investigation joining the five others who called for it last week and the thirty who have offered a bill with Congressman Gonzales authorizing such an investigation. Warren Commission critics are winning some very respectable allies these days. But one factor may arise when Congress finally does move forcefully. It may find the full power of the Executive - in terms of his control over governmental files - used to prevent a thorough investigation.

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PLAYGIRL: Do you think this investigation is going to be the next Watergate?

LANE: Watergate pales into insignificance alongside this subject. What is the significance of the assassination of John Kennedy and the official false response to it?

A decade ago, I wrote, "If the Commission covered itself with shame, it also reflected shame on the Federal Government. As long as we rely for information upon men blinded by the fear of what they might see, the precedent of the Warren Commission report will continue to imperil the life of the law."

Not since John Kennedy was killed, a decade of deceit ago, have we experienced a national election unimpaired by violence, by bullets. In 1964, Lyndon Johnson remained in office because

John Kennedy was assassinated. In 1968, when Robert Kennedy was making a strong showing in contending for the Democratic nomination, he was killed. In 1972 when the polls indicated that Governor Wallace might take sufficient votes away from Richard Nixon to defeat him, he was shot and eliminated from the election. Parenthetically, it is interesting to note that the White House, in the person of Charles Colson, ordered E. Howard Hunt to go to Milwaukee to break into the apartment of the man who had wounded Wallace.

In any event, the last time we had a national election which was not influenced by an assassination or an attempted assassination and in which the elected President was able to finish out his term was 1956. I think that twenty years is too long to wait between these events.



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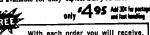
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