

# Assassination scholar raps attacks on JFK's character

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After nearly two decades, some people think the American public is no closer to a conclusion in the death of President John F. Kennedy than it was on Nov. 22, 1963.

These critics claim there is a concerted effort to forever conceal the identities of those responsible for Kennedy's death. They wonder if Americans will continue to accept the murky conclusions that were handed down by the House Select Committee on Assassinations last year.

Seventeen years after the slaying in Dallas, there is doubt as to whether Lee Harvey Oswald actually fired the shots that killed the president. But even more dramatic than the assassination itself is the recent campaign to discredit Kennedy's character.

On Nov. 16, Parade magazine carried a front-page Kennedy story that was distributed to the supplement's 130 subscribing daily and Sunday newspapers. Adapted from G. Robert Blakey's and Richard N. Billings' "The Plot to Kill the President," the article was authored by both men who clearly attempt to link Kennedy with organized crime.

Blakey served as chief counsel of the House Select Committee on Assassinations.

To illustrate their contention, the authors attempt to lend credence to the rumor that Sam Giancana, a reputed underworld figure, had arranged a romantic liaison between Kennedy and Judith Campbell, an actress associated with Giancana, through entertainer Frank Sinatra in 1960.

The authors then asked readers to conclude that because Kennedy had an alleged affair with Campbell, he was on the take from the

mob.

"From the mob's point of view, Kennedy had been compromised," they wrote. "He had crossed the line."

The article angered many Kennedy admirers, including a Bangor author, Harrison Edward Livingstone, who has been researching the murder for 15 years in association with others.

"My gut reaction was revulsion," Livingstone said. "It was a scurrilous article filled with innuendo and fabrication. It falsified the results of the assassination committee's work. In addition there has never been one iota of evidence to support accusations that the president was unfaithful to his wife."

Livingstone, who also holds

a law degree, denounced Blakey and charged that the former chief counsel was a tool of America's power elite. He said that anyone who would quote Miss Campbell as a knowledgeable source is obviously attempting to obstruct the true evidence.

"This guy is into professional propaganda and disinformation," he said. "His conduct is unprofessional and unacceptable. He's supposed to be an attorney, but he is primarily concerned with promoting the point of view that contradicts the actual evidence in the case. You can't help but question his findings. He's part of a team that is spearheading an assault on the truth."

After years of investigation that included interviews with the doctors who treated Kennedy as he lay dying, Livingstone is convinced that the liberal president's murder was engineered by the government's conservative core.

"There are daily acts of political violence in this country that the public has learned to accept," Livingstone said. "This was just one of those acts."

Livingstone said that the issue of Kennedy's assassination is very much alive, despite efforts to bury the memory of the president and the occasional articles that he said are engineered to portray the president negatively.

"This is because every investigation has been co-opted by the opposition, who are diffusing the facts to prevent the whole story from coming out," he said.

Is there a chance that evidence will finally be admitted that could indict members of the country's conservative elite?

"Well, they've been able to keep it officially buried for 17 years," Livingstone said. "But we have the evidence to show who killed the president and why. It remains to be seen whether we can present the evidence under the Reagan administration."