

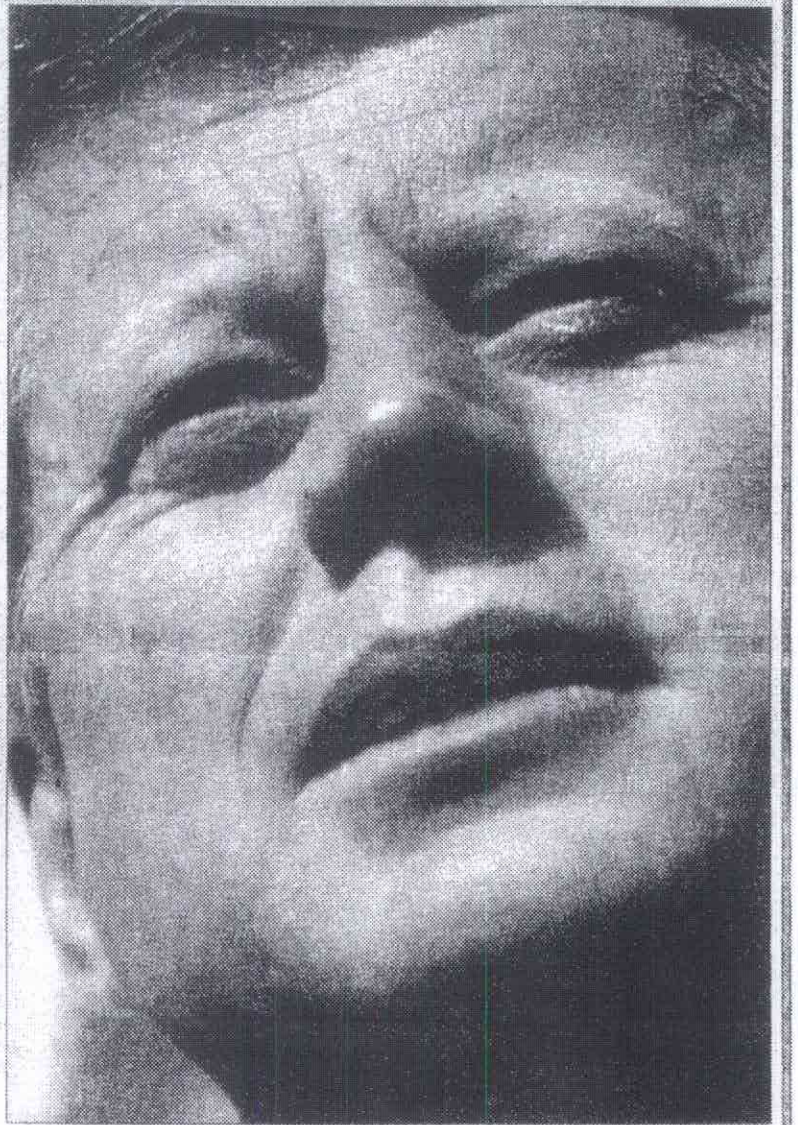
JFK

FILES

OSWALD SECRETS RELEASED



OSWALD AND KENNEDY: Presidential assassin Lee Harvey Oswald, in newly released photo, with wife Marina and daughter June Lee. Papers on JFK's slaying include new information about Oswald's travels before Nov. 22, 1963.



From Dallas to Congress

Chronology of the assassination of John F. Kennedy and succeeding events:

► **Nov. 22, 1963:** President fatally shot while riding in Dallas motorcade. Lee Harvey Oswald, ex-Marine and one-time Soviet citizen, is arrested.

► **Nov. 24, 1963:** Oswald fatally shot by Dallas nightclub owner Jack Ruby.

► **Nov. 25, 1963:** U.S. Chief Justice Earl Warren is named to head commission to investigate assassination.

► **September 1964:** Commission concludes Oswald, acting alone, shot Kennedy. Critics say panel didn't look far enough into possibility of broad conspiracy.

► **September 1976:** House of Representatives creates special committee to re-examine case.

► **December 1978:** House committee concludes Kennedy was probably conspiracy victim.

► **August 1992:** Congress passes law ordering release of Kennedy papers.

review documents still considered critical to U.S. security.

The review board was supposed to start Jan. 25, but President Clinton has not named any of its members.

The White House is reviewing possible names, says spokeswoman Lorraine Voles: "We're moving ahead in the process, we're just not ready to make an announcement."

Meanwhile, the files are full of Oswald vignettes.

All rumors appear to have been investigated:

► **FBI agents** spent weeks interviewing hundreds of Dallas dry cleaners, trying to identify a laundry tag on one of Oswald's sport jackets.

► **Oswald died** without returning an overdue book to the Dallas library: *The Shark and the Sardines*, attacking U.S. policies in Latin America.

► **A House assassination committee report** released for the first time says Oswald may have had a mistress while in Mexico — a woman who worked as a secretary at the Cuban embassy.

Among those scrutinizing the files at the National Archives Monday was Notre Dame law professor G. Robert Blakey, who was counsel to the House committee. He says about 95% of the committee's files have now been made public.

"Two percent should be kept secret and another 3% should come out. Until the president appoints the panel, the American people aren't getting the material they're entitled to," says Blakey.

Some who support the notion that Oswald was Kennedy's sole killer say assassination buffs will never be satisfied.



By Tim Dillon, USA TODAY
SOAKING UP HISTORY: Tom Pettit, an NBC reporter who was in the Dallas Police garage when Jack Ruby shot Lee Harvey Oswald, goes through newly released data at the National Archives.

"If every document was made available tomorrow and proved there was no conspiracy, (JFK director) Oliver Stone and other conspiracy die-hards still would not believe," says Gerald Posner, author of *Case Closed*, a new book that says Oswald operated alone.

Still, questions about the assassination pile up.

A CBS News/*New York Times* poll in 1992 found 75% thought there was an official cover-up; in 1966, a Gallup poll found 50% thought more than one assassin was involved.

Why the skepticism?

The first misstep may have come within the first two weeks after the assassination, when the Warren Commission, named by President Johnson to quell rumors about the assassination, first convened.

At its first secret meeting — previously withheld minutes were released Monday — chairman and Supreme Court chief justice Earl Warren said he saw no need to hire investigators. "I don't see any reason why we should duplicate the facilities of the FBI or the Secret Service," he was quoted as saying.

The commission was on the road to being viewed as an apologist for government investigators.

But nothing released Monday changes the bottom line, insists former commission lawyer David Belin: "The more that's released the more the record will prove that the assassination sensationalists have been spinning a web of deceit."

Contributing: Robert Davis, Dennis Cauchon and Sam Vincent Meddis

COVER STORY

Files fill gaps, buffs clamor for still more

Brother wrote
of Oswald's
eyes: 'There
was no guilt,
no shame,
no nothing.'

By Tony Mauro
USA TODAY

From the yellowing pages of thousands of government files released Monday, the haunting face of JFK assassin Lee Harvey Oswald appears in shadowy glimpses.

There is the confident face of Oswald the defector, seen in a 1959 snapshot from Soviet Minsk found among his per-

sonal effects. Another photo shows Oswald the father smiling as wife Marina holds baby daughter June.

And there is the innocent face of Oswald, described by his brother Robert who visited him in jail soon after his arrest for killing John F. Kennedy in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963.

"All the time we were talking, I searched his eyes for any

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sign of guilt," Robert Oswald wrote in his diary, released Monday. "There was no guilt, no shame, no nothing."

The full picture of Lee Harvey Oswald — and of the assassination itself — may never emerge, even 30 years after.

But the 900,000 pages made public Monday make a tantalizing start at filling gaps that have nagged at — and fascinated — Americans long before the movie *JFK* created a public demand for their release.

Included in the documents are new details about Oswald's visit to Mexico City less than a month before the assassination, his suicide attempt in the former Soviet Union, and his KGB connections during his three years there.

One Soviet defector quoted in the files, Peter Deryabin, argued the assassination was instigated by the KGB to relieve internal pressures on then-Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev.

Another defector quoted in the papers, Yuri Nosenko, claimed the KGB knew little of Oswald — and cared less.

"Oswald was not regarded

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COVER STORY

Oswald vignettes abound

by the KGB as being completely normal mentally, nor was he considered to be very intelligent," said Nosenko, who interviewed Oswald after the ex-Marine sought to defect in Moscow.

Debate over Nosenko's credibility created strife within the CIA for years.

Former CIA official Vincent Cannistraro discounts Deryabin's credibility as well. "He had no inside information," Cannistraro says. "All he was doing was speculating."

Rejected as a defector, Oswald slashed his wrists, but was rescued and given a job at a radio factory in Minsk. He returned to the United States in 1962, and turned up in Mexico City before the assassination, visiting the Soviet and Cuban consulates.

Dozens of assassination buffs, historians and journalists swarmed over the files at the National Archives Monday, looking for revelations amid the retreads — many of the documents have been made public in some form before.

Still, Kennedy experts and theorists thirst for more.

"The things we really wanted to zero-in on are not here," says Dan Alicorn of the Assassination Archives and Research Center.

Missing: files that some say might shed light on alleged links between the CIA, the Mafia and proposed assassinations of foreign leaders.

James Lesar, also with the assassination archive group, claims as many as 2 million more assassination documents have yet to be released.

"Chances are the records that have been withheld are much more important," says Lesar.

The 1992 law that forced government agencies — including presidential libraries and congressional committees — to open their files, also created a five-member panel to