

and godson, charges that the gangster organized JFK's assassination at the behest of his CIA handlers. But the book's credibility has been questioned by organized crime experts. The question of Giancana's involvement in the murder remains unresolved.) After Giancana was hit, an FBI bug on Trafficante picked up a remarkable piece of conversation. "Now only two people are alive who know who killed Kennedy," Trafficante was heard to say. "And they aren't talking."

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hile the consensus among credible assassination researchers is that the Mafia probably played a key role in the murder of JFK, there is still lively debate over whether the mobsters were joined in their plot by CIA agents and paramilitary Cuban exiles specifically, some of the same men with whom they had conspired

against Castro. Anthony Summers sees the hand of U.S. intelligence at work, particularly in Oswald's trips to the Cuban and Soviet embassies in Mexico City, which Summers suggests may have been faked to further implicate him. Summers finds a statement made by David Phillips, who was the CIA's chief of Cuban operations in Mexico City at the time of the Kennedy assassination, particularly eye-opening. Not long before his death of cancer in 1988, Phillips told private detective Kevin Walsh, who had worked as an investigator for the House Assassinations Committee, "My private opinion is that JFK was done in by a conspiracy, likely including rogue American intelligence people." In Summers' view, "this is a remarkable statement — I mean, this was not some conspiracy nut, or someone trying to sell a book. This was a man who, before he retired, rose to become the chief of the CIA's Western Hemisphere division."

Summers is no Oliver Stone — he keeps his imagination firmly in check. He does not think the conspiracy reached to the top levels of the CIA, much less to the Pentagon and the military-industrial complex. "There is as much evidence that JFK was shot because of his Vietnam policy as that he was done in by a jealous mistress with a bow and arrow," says Summers. "In fact, I would be rather more inclined to the jealous mistress theory." But his suspicions do fall heavily on a few individual agents, in particular, William King Harvey, the man in charge of the CIA-Mafia operation.

Harvey was not the Ivy League type that filled the top ranks of the CIA, but rather a beefy, hard-drinking man known to pack a loaded pistol in his office, and even to cradle it in his lap to make the proper impression on a visitor. His derring-do was legendary in the agency, and when he was placed in charge of the anti-Castro operation, he predictably took it over the edge. In the midst of the Cuba missile crisis in 1962, while the world held its breath as Kennedy and Khrushchev fingered their nuclear triggers, Harvey took it upon himself to dispatch several secret raids on Cuba - an insanely provocative act under the circumstances. Here was a man who seemed to be capable of anything. Robert Kennedy, whom he despised ("with a purple passion," according to a CIA colleague) along with the president for not going all the way against Castro, banished Harvey to the CIA's Rome station after this mad stunt. But he was spotted in the summer of 1963, back in the Florida Everglades, with his Cuban comrades-in-arms and his Mafia co-conspirators. Harvey, who died of a heart attack in 1976, is beyond the reach of investigators, but Summers feels that the actions of this man, who epitomizes the term "rogue agent," bear historical scrutiny.

Robert Blakey, however, dismisses talk of possible CIA involvement as groundless speculation. "There's no proof," he says. "William Harvey? Where's the times, dates and places where he did anything wrong?" As for the Oswald sightings in Mexico City, "Yes, there was more than one person down there, but Oswald was one of them. He filled out the visa application in the Cuban embassy. I

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think the purpose of the trip was to incriminate the Castro gover ment, but that's consistent with the mob's goals."

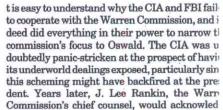
As Blakey suggests, the Mafia longed to reclaim the extreme lucrative gambling and narcotics interests that it lost after t Cuban revolution. In fact, so great was its desire to reconqu Havana that when JFK began to de-escalate his war against Cast after the harrowing missile crisis, the mob had one more compelli reason to murder the president. "The SOB is dead," Trafficante said to have rejoiced while dining with his lawyer, Ragano, on t evening of Nov. 22, 1963. "We'll get back into Cuba now."

Blakey contends that the CIA, as an institution, was friendly Jack Kennedy. "Institutions are made up of individuals," he says, "a most of the CIA were Irish Catholics. The same was true of the ran of the FBI. They may have been conservative, but they loved Ja Kennedy. Now, you can theorize about a few rogue elephants li William Harvey, but if they were up to something, it would have l come known to the people above them, and then you're talking abo the institution as a whole being involved, and that's preposterous."

Journalist Dan Moldea, who has investigated organized crin for nearly 20 years, agrees with Blakey. He rejects Oliver Stoncontention that the Mafia could not have pulled off a hit this am tious. In fact, he argues, organized crime would have been mo adept at this sort of crime than U.S. intelligence. "It came off t well to be an intelligence operation," he says. "No one talked. If had been a government plot, it would have leaked."

Perhaps there was no CIA participation in the plot to k Kennedy, even on the wild fringe of the agency. There is certain less evidence of it than there is of Mafia culpability. But at the ve least, the spy agency's Murder Inc.-type partnership with the m to kill Castro might have emboldened the underworld to carry o its domestic assassination plan. Furthermore, this criminal a clandestine pact would come back to haunt the agency when it w later called upon to help solve the president's murder.

John Kennedy endorsed this deal with the devil. Trained by I father to win at all costs, he crawled into the underworld to accorplish a nasty piece of business, to eliminate the bearded irritant the south. But in doing so, Kennedy again became one of the And, as Blakey has noted, the Mafia traditionally kills only its ow



that if the commission had known about the unholy alliance l tween the CIA and the Mafia, "I am sure there would have be quite a serious upheaval." In all likelihood, the uproar would ha echoed throughout the grieving nation. As historian Micha Beschloss has observed, if the American people had learned of th secret operation in the final weeks of 1963, when their emotion were still raw, "there would have been serious demands, Kennedy had threatened after the Bay of Pigs, to shatter the agen into a thousand pieces and scatter it to the winds." Then, too, the fe that Oswald apparently had a background in U.S. intelligen would not have helped the agency's reputation. "Imagine the pu lic's reaction if they had learned that American intelligence had ve likely recruited this guy into their top-secret program to infiltra the Soviet Union - a guy who later turned out to be loony enough shoot the president," says Jonathan Kwitny, a former investigati journalist for the Wall Street Journal whose 1989 PBS documenta on the assassination remains the best TV report on the subject.

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