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LIZ SMITH



## The Mob and JFK

**'S**AM GIANCANA is buried in Chicago next to the father who used to tie him to a tree as a kid and beat him," goes a line in Giancana's "Biography" on A&E.

This week's "Godfathers" series has now offered up the history of the Chicago mob king. If and when A&E runs this one again, don't fail to watch. You'll never see a more perfect one-hour explanation of (1) the very squeaky narrow election of John Fitzgerald Kennedy, (2) the failure of the invading Cuban patriots at the Bay of Pigs, (3) the murder of the president in Dallas, (4) the assassination of brother Bobby Kennedy as he took the road to the White House, and (5) the germination of the whole outrageous tragedy when an arrogant, rich, bootlegger father set up his sons' fatal connection with the Mafia in the first place.

Do you perhaps think, as I do, that the famous Warren Commission findings on the JFK assassination were the blind leading the blind? You will after you see the Sam Giancana "Biography" It's all there — clear, if not exactly simple.

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IN JANUARY'S issue of Vanity Fair, I wrote the saga of how JFK used his young lover Judith Campbell to carry money and messages to Sam Giancana. Yet many naysayers still question Judith's veracity and scoff when she says that Kennedy felt she was a "safe" conduit to Sam. But A&E makes it all inescapably logical.

The Kennedys tapped the mob to assassinate Fidel Castro, promising to give the Mafia back its Cuban casinos when the Communist leader was eliminated. Giancana did everything to get Jack Kennedy elected by a mere 9,000 votes in Chicago. Then Giancana felt he had JFK in his pocket. The CIA (via Robert Maheu, who appears on the "Biography" special) made the government's offer to Chicago's Giancana, Vegas' Johnny Rosselli, and the underworld kingpins of Louisiana and Florida.

The president, uncertain of the



Newsday File Photo

John F. Kennedy  
A clear explanation

CIA, then used Judith Campbell, first to take money to the mob, and then to carry his own personal "kill Castro" messages to Giancana. The CIA helped Cuban exiles invade Cuba, promising them air cover. JFK, thinking the CIA incompetent, feeling they had goofed, called off the air support. The Cuban patriots died on Cuban beaches.

Bobby Kennedy, the attorney general, knew perfectly well that JFK was sending messages to Giancana via Judith. But he had hated the Mafia for years and despised the union king Jimmy Hoffa, whose Teamster money had built the casinos of Vegas for the mob. When Bobby went after Hoffa and the Mafia, he stirred up an embittered Giancana. Having the president "in his pocket" had not paid off. (Giancana's personal feelings for Judith may also have added to his hatred of the Kennedys.)

So the Mafia arranged for its New Orleans branch to set up the murder of the 35th president in Dallas. Members

of the Marcello crime family said openly that the president would be hit. One of them bragged they'd get "a nut" to do it for them. And Lee Harvey Oswald died saying he'd merely been a "patsy." Jack Ruby, who shot Oswald before he could talk, had connections to the Chicago mob and begged the Warren Commission to take him to Washington so he could speak. They refused. He died, and some think his death from "cancer" was something else.

Bobby Kennedy was shocked and guilty that his zeal had caused Jack's death. But then the mob arranged to finish off Bobby in Los Angeles — once they discovered he might make it to the White House. What the Mafia didn't need was an anti-mob fanatic as president!

And the rest is history, including Giancana's own death just before he was to testify for the Church committee. Johnny Rosselli also died after testifying and talking too much.

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IN MY Vanity Fair story, what could not be proved or verified was Judith Campbell Exner's assertion that about a year before JFK's death, she found herself pregnant with his child. She said that Giancana arranged for an abortion to be performed at Chicago's Grant Hospital. Exner has always thought and hoped that the release of Giancana's phone conversations and other tapes would prove this. But many still think she is just a sensation seeker, hoping to slime the memory of JFK.

ABC-TV has already proved that Exner did indeed have a pregnancy terminated at Grant Hospital on the dates she says she did. And now I hear that the Church committee has known for years, but kept it secret, that she had JFK's baby aborted to save herself and the president from total scandal back in 1962.

I expect to be able to prove that the committee sat on this information for years, refusing to let Judith Exner's assertions and unpleasant truths be confirmed. But it may take a little more time.



# NATION

## FBI: Oswald Was Not Well-Paid Soviet Agent

### Debunks conspiracy theory

By Michael Dorman  
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

A long-secret FBI report casts doubt on one of the persistent conspiracy theories in President John F. Kennedy's assassination, that Lee Harvey Oswald was a well-paid Soviet agent after, and perhaps even before, defecting to Moscow.

The FBI report said Oswald was so short of money in the Soviet Union that he once asked his mother, Marguerite Oswald, to mail him \$20 in cash. Before leaving the United States, Oswald had lent his mother \$100. From Moscow, in addition to requesting the \$20, he wrote that he was "short of cash and need the rest" of the \$100.

That seemed to support the Warren Commission conclusion that there was no evidence reflecting Oswald was a paid Soviet agent or that the Soviet Union was behind the assassination. The late Dean Rusk, Kennedy's secretary of state, testified before the commission in 1964 that he had seen no evidence indicating "that the Soviet Union was in any way involved in the removal of President Kennedy." The Warren Commission, appointed by President Lyndon B. Johnson to investigate the assassination, accepted Rusk's assessment. But conspiracy theorists have argued over the years that Oswald was an agent manipulated by Moscow.

The FBI report on the case, based largely on agents' interviews with Oswald's mother and his brother Robert after his 1959 defection, has just been made public by the U.S. Assassination Records Review Board. The board is responsible for releasing documents on the 1963 Kennedy assassination that do not endanger national security. The FBI long opposed release of the report, on the ground that it would reveal bureau sources

and methods, but relented when the review board found no reason to keep the contents secret.

Marguerite Oswald told agents that after Lee Oswald's Marine Corps discharge in September, 1959, he visited her for three days in Fort Worth, Texas, and then left for New Orleans, ostensibly to work for an import-export firm. But a short time later, she said, she received a letter from him that said: "I have booked passage on a ship to Europe. I would of had to sooner or later, and I think it's best that I do now. Just remember above all else that my values are very different from Robert's or yours."

Oswald's mother, the report said, was "very much shocked" to learn he had gone to Moscow. She assumed he had financed the trip with \$1,600 he saved in the Marines. "She stated that he had never shown any proclivities for the ideologies of communism," the agents reported.

Responding to requests for money from Lee Oswald, his mother said, she tried several times to send him checks for \$20 or \$25 in Moscow, but they came back to her in the mail. One \$20 check, mailed Jan. 5, 1960, a year before Kennedy's inauguration as president, finally did get to Lee Oswald. But he sent it back with a curt note saying he "could not use the check, of course." Oswald urged his mother to mail him \$20 in cash. She did, but it came back in the mail.

"I hope you like Russia," Marguerite Oswald wrote Lee. "If you don't and want to come back, I believe it can be arranged." When Oswald returned to the United States in 1962, claiming he was disillusioned with the Soviet Union, he pleaded poverty and paid the transportation costs for himself and his wife, Marina, with a government loan arranged by the American embassy in Moscow.



UPI File Photo  
Lee Harvey Oswald shown in a photo taken in 1959



UPI File Photo  
Oswald's mother, Marguerite, in New York in 1964

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### Diplomatic Advice

As a retired U. S. diplomat with overseas service, I agree completely with Mayor Rudolph Giuliani in wanting the two Russian and Belarus diplomats declared persona non grata and, at the very least, told to go home ["These Diplomats Are Abusing Their Immunity," Jan. 10].

In American embassies and consulates overseas, our ambassadors and deputy chiefs of mission, or consuls general, constantly admonished American diplomats and staff to obey all traffic and parking regulations by the host country. Any infractions by American personnel would be dealt with severely by the ambassador or consul general on an in-house basis. It was inconceivable, in my days, that American personnel would confront their host country with an "in your face" attitude.

That is the way all foreign missions in New York City should handle their traffic and parking violations rather than claim diplomatic immunity.

Norbert Chwat  
Forest Hills

### Ditch JFK Conspiracy Theory

Liz Smith's column "The Mob and JFK" [Jan. 8] resurrects the old JFK conspiracy theory. By this time most Americans must be aware that the assassination of John F. Kennedy, as well as those of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, have all been heavily exploited for the almighty buck. Smith's column is no exception. She claims that the "Warren Commission findings on the JFK assassination were the blind leading the blind."



Kennedy

First of all, no one outside of the commission had access to more witnesses, depositions, and investigative materials on this matter. To understand the fallaciousness of the conspiracy theory, one need go no further than some of the Warren Commission's members. There were Rep. Gerald Ford (later President Ford) and Assistant Counsel Arlen Specter (later district attorney of Philadelphia and now senator from Pennsylvania), two men with wide reputations for honesty. Does anyone seriously believe that these two commission members would participate in a conspiracy cover-up? What would they have to gain by risking their reputations in that way?

Absent any evidence to the contrary, it is probably safe to assume the other commission members would have just as readily balked at covering up any evidence of a conspiracy. What remains is a number of media people and gossip columnists like Smith who want to keep the pot boiling. They should save their energy for investigating the much more mysterious death of Vincent Foster, counsel and close friend to President Bill Clinton.

Walter Audubon  
Bellerose

### An Actress' Decision

In Bill Reel's column criticizing Donna Hanover Giuliani's participation in the film "The People Vs. Larry Flynt," he writes, "The Giulianis owe the taxpayers an apology. They should have read the script and rejected the part" ["Donna Giuliani's Film Role Is Certainly No Model," Viewpoints, Jan. 10]. Well, they were not in the movie. She was in the movie. Giuliani is the mayor. Hanover is a newscaster-actress and, I am assuming, is a separate person from her



Giuliani

husband, makes her own decisions and chooses projects regardless of her husband's opinion. Reel also asks, "How could the mayor stand by and allow it?" Because *he doesn't control her*, that's how.

The idea that a wife should live in subservience to her husband's career and stifle her artistic urges in favor of his reputation is an idea that continues to oppress women. Reel's point of view is more sexist than Flynt's pornography. If Reel is so concerned about the rights of women, he should stop preaching about abstract moral standards and start looking at the daily struggles of women who are fighting to free themselves from the control of men.

Amanda Vogel  
Manhattan

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