

Afterword: the search for "Maurice Bishop" (1)

David Phillips, the former CIA officer considered by the Select Committee on Assassinations as a possible candidate for the true identity behind the cover name "Maurice Bishop" - (2)- reacted strongly when this book was published in the summer of 1980. He contacted top executives in newspapers and television, making himself available to counter passages in Conspiracy concerning him. As a result, I took part in discussions with Phillips on prominent television programs.

In the course of these approaches to the press, Phillips contacted the editor of the Washington Post. Subsequently, when a reporter - (3)- was assigned to the story, Phillips revealed the real identity of former CIA officers whose identities were protected by pseudonyms in Assassinations Committee reports and in my book. Phillips observed that "Cross", the case officer who believed Phillips had indeed used the name "Bishop", was a heavy drinker, implying that he was prone to getting his facts wrong. - (4)- Shortly afterwards, when a Post reporter visited "Cross" at home, he found that Phillips had been on the phone to him only a short time earlier. Whatever had passed between them, "Cross" stood by his assertion that the name "Bishop" had been used in the Miami CIA office, and that he believed it was used to refer to Phillips.

"Cross" admits that he was formerly a heavy drinker, but - as noted earlier - has shown that his recall of names and details other than "Bishop" is accurate. In a further conversation, with this author, in 1981, "Cross" seemed upset by the interest his statements have caused, and complained the Assassinations Committee gave it "undue emphasis". He agreed, however, that he has been correctly quoted. A subsequent check with congressional investigators revealed that "Cross" originally linked the name "Bishop" with that of Phillips promptly and spontaneously.

The Washington Post reporter was also able to talk to Phillips' former Miami assistant "Doug Gupton". - (5) - He said, much as he had said to the Committee "I never used the name "Bishop" to my recollection". Finally the reporter visited "B.H." - (6) - the former CIA covert operative who told the Committee he had met "Bishop" in the past, but whose testimony prompted a skeptical reaction from the Committee investigator.

"B.H." a short, dark man of Cuban origin, is belligerent - not least about the way the CIA has been treated in recent years. He told the Committee that Phillips was a "personal friend", an officer he worked closely on a "day-to-day" basis on Cuban operations between 1960 and 1964. Interviewed by the Washington Post in 1980, B.H. stated that after Phillips testified to the Committee, but before he himself was formally interviewed, he discussed the Committee inquiry with Phillips. In his Committee interview "B.H." was asked simply whether he had known anybody named Maurice Bishop. After replying that he had, "B.H." responded to Committee questioning, "Mr Bishop was in the organisation but I had no personal day-to-day open relationship with him. Phillips, yes; Bishop, no. I knew them both."

"B.H." appeared in his replies to be stressing that he remembered "Bishop" as being somebody other than Phillips. There are notable discrepancies between what "B.H." told the Committee and what he said to the Post. He told the Committee he encountered "Bishop" "two or three times". He told the

Post he met him only once. He told the Committee that he encountered "Bishop" between 1960 and 1964. In his Post interview, he said it was probably after 1964 - after the time most relevant to the Veciana allegations. "B.H." told the Committee he worked closely with Phillips between 1960 and 1964. In the conversation with the Post, he claimed that he did not work with Phillips until after 1964. "B.H." accounts for these differences by claiming that his comments were "wrongly recorded".

The Assassinations Committee investigator of the "Bishop" case suspects that the "B.H." scenario may be a red herring, designed to confuse the trail. Such justifiable suspicions might have been resolved had the Committee management given the "Bishop" case the attention it deserved. Sadly it did not. While Phillips did testify, the Committee failed to take testimony on oath from "Cross", "B.H." or "Gupton". "Cross" who told two investigators he believed "Bishop" was Phillips, was not even subjected to formal interview. There were no systematic interrogations of relevant CIA officers who might have further confirmed the use of the name "Bishop". The Committee failed to follow up a key lead provided by Veciana - the identity of a prominent Cuban who may have originally proposed Veciana to "Bishop" as a promising candidate for CIA recruitment. - (7)- The Cuban's name was known to the Committee, and is known to the author. Other leads received cursory treatment.

The Committee never tried to trace a vital witness whose name was provided by Veciana months before the Committee wound up its inquiry. Veciana had spoken, from the start, of a go-between whom he had used during his association with "Bishop".....

The person who helped arrange meetings between "Bishop" and Veciana is a woman, a prim grandmother in her fifties, who works as a minor functionary in a U.S. government administrative department. She has requested anonymity, and will be identified here only as "Fabiola", a Cuban exile who left Havana in autumn 1961. She worked, until that year, as Veciana's secretary at the Banco Financiero, and was there at the time Veciana claims he was recruited by a "Bishop". While she says Veciana never mentioned a CIA contact, Fabiola recalls details which fit his story. She recalls a time when Veciana started going to "language courses" in the evenings. Veciana, in his earliest interviews, spoke of attending nightly US intelligence briefings in an office building which houses, on the first floor, the Berlitz School of Language. - (8)- Fabiola says she did become aware that Veciana was involved in subversive activities. He once produced a huge sum of half a million dollars, which he asked her to safeguard until he retrieved it. Veciana has always said he worked with "Bishop" on a "program that resulted in the destabilisation of the Cuban currency". In Cuba, Fabiola decided not to ask awkward questions. Politically, she sympathized with him, and later - in exile - collaborated actively when Veciana became leader of Alpha 66. - (9) -

He asked her to act as an answering service for him when he was traveling, and in the months to come Fabiola became familiar with the name of a caller from the mainland United States. The name was "Bishop". When I interviewed Fabiola I threw out a number of names, including that of "Bishop". "Bishop" was the only name to which she responded, and it stirred in her the memory of another name. "Bishop" is firmly linked in Fabiola's mind with a second per-

son - "Prewett". For her, the two names are so definitely associated that at first she had difficulty remembering which was which. Fabiola says both individuals telephoned over the same period, and she understood they were associated with one another. She believed both "Bishop" and "Prewett" were connected with an American news publication, based on the East Coast. Finally she recalls that "Prewett" was female.

A check of American press directories turned up Virginia Prewett - (10) - a Washington journalist who has specialized in Latin American affairs all her life. She has written extensively about the struggle between Fidel Castro, whom she characterized as a "betrayor", and the Cuban exiles, whom she describes as "patriots". In summer 1963 Prewett attended a conference on Cuba co-sponsored by Freedom House and the Citizen's Committee for a Free Cuba. Her report on the conference, later inserted in the Congressional Record, began by quoting a call by Freedom House "to remove both Fidel Castro and the Soviet presence from Cuba without delay."

For many years Prewett wrote for the North American Newspaper Alliance (NANA), a syndication organization founded by Prewett's friend Ernest Cuneo, also a veteran of the CIA's forerunner, the Office of Strategic Services, who arranged for Prewett to work for NANA. In 1963 NANA was severely criticized in a Senate Committee Report, for syndicating pro-Chiang Kai-shek propaganda written by a paid American lobbyist.

In spring 1963, seven months before the Kennedy assassination, Prewett was assailing the administration for its opposition to the raids mounted against Cuba by Antonio Veciana's Alpha 66 guerillas. On April 2, in the Washington Daily News, Prewett lambasted a Kennedy spokesman who had "called the daring and gallant Alpha 66 raids on Cuba irresponsible acts". Prewett called this "an all-time low in pronouncement of US foreign policy", and mocked the notion that "unless we stop the Alpha 66 raids against Communist Cuba, there'll be nuclear conflict." Three weeks later, after President Kennedy ordered strong measures against would-be exile raiders, Prewett rushed to support the exile leadership and berated the Kennedy White House for assuming it had "carte blanche to create a foreign policy outside the nation's popular consent." These Prewett articles were read into the Congressional Record.

The Alpha 66 raids, which so embarrassed President Kennedy and which pleased Virginia Prewett, were the very attacks which - according to Alpha 66 leader Veciana - were carried out on specific instructions from CIA officer "Maurice Bishop". As Veciana tells it, "Bishop's" intention was to cause further trouble between Kennedy and Russia - within months of the Missile Crisis which had brought the world to the brink of nuclear war. His purpose was "to put Kennedy against the wall in order to force him to make decisions that will remove Castro's regime."

In the company of a Washington Post reporter, I talked to Virginia Prewett in 1980. She agreed that she had contact with Alpha 66 in the early sixties, and accepted that Alpha 66 was "probably" backed by the CIA - even if its leaders were not formally told so. Prewett made it clear she was once familiar with the work of the group's leader, Veciana, and asked, "Where is he now?" Later in the interview, however, she said she had never met Veciana. Veciana, for his part, says he did know Prewett, and refers to her as "Virginia". He asserts he met her at her hotel in Puerto Rico more than once, and "probably in Washington."

When the name "Bishop" was first raised with Prewett, in the context of the CIA and Cuba, she said, "Well, you had to move around people like that." When the name came up again, she said, "I didn't per-

sonally know him," and later, in response to a direct question, she said she did not know "Bishop." Prewett also said she had never met Phillips. Phillips - asked about Prewett - contradicts her. He says he once knew Prewett quite well, specifically recalling meetings in the Dominican Republic.

Contacted by this author in early 1981, Phillips was asked whether he stood by his denial that he was "Maurice Bishop", or indeed knew a "Bishop", a denial formally recorded in the Assassinations Committee Report. - (11) - Phillips repeated that he neither was "Bishop", nor "connected in any way", and said that any such intimation was "an outrageous accusation." As for Veciana, the source of the "Bishop" allegation, he also repeated to this author that "Bishop" was not Phillips.

(1) 'Afterword' is taken from the American paperback edition of Anthony Summers' Conspiracy (1980). It wasn't included in the British (Fontana) edition. When Summers finished the book he continued to follow up certain leads, particularly those connected with "Maurice Bishop" and Oswald in Mexico City.

This new information was to appear in a series of articles, "The conspiracy that nearly led to holocaust" for The Observer. Unfortunately, owing to continuing legal difficulties with David Phillips, they were never officially published. Much of the material appears now in Afterword and the following notes (which are the responsibility of The Lobster).

Our thanks to Anthony Summers for permission to reprint Afterword.

(2) "Maurice Bishop" is the intelligence officer anti-Castro leader Antonio Veciana claims met with Lee Harvey Oswald in Dallas in late August or the first days of September. (See Conspiracy pp352-361)

The fullest treatment on the possibility that "Bishop" is ex-CIA officer David Atlee Phillips is Gaeton Fonzi's "Who Killed John F. Kennedy" in the Washingtonian magazine (November 1980): Much of this area remains controversial and depends to a large extent on your opinion of Veciana himself. However, the evidence continues to mount against Phillips - though there is no more evidence that "Bishop" met Oswald. In recent years other leads on "Bishop"/Phillips have appeared:

(a) Louis Arguelles, who teaches at the Arizona State University, states in "The US National Security State: the CIA and the Cuban Emigre Terrorism" (in Race and Class, XVII 4 1982) that she had a personal interview (in August 1980) with a Cuban ex-CIA operative who knew Phillips/"Bishop". Arguelles has written a book, The Cubans in the US: Displacement and Terror (Holt, Rinehart and Winston).

(b) In 1983 Jim Hougan, author of Spooks and Secret Agenda, spoke with ex-CIA man Frank Terpil. He told Hougan that he knew Phillips but only under the cover name "Bishop". Terpil says he met "Bishop" (who, he insists, is Phillips) in Miami in 1967/68 while in the company of journalist Hal Hendrix. (On Hendrix see Conspiracy pp134/5. We understand that the House Select Committee on Assassinations confirmed that Hendrix was a CIA contract agent.)

Terpil says he was living with Hendrix's daughter at this time. He checked "Bishop's" name with the file of cover names at the CIA's Office of Security in Miami. Obviously Terpil is not everyone's idea of a reliable informant.

(c) A number of Phillips' colleagues, other than those mentioned in Afterword, have indicated that the Phillips/"Bishop" identity "holds water." They include the Naval Attache in Cuba.

(3) The reporter mentioned here was David Leigh of

The Observer who was on a year's sabbatical with the Washington Post. He came to the conclusion that Phillips was probably "Bishop" following his contacts with the CIA agents involved in the Post inquiry. He didn't enjoy the experience, though. It all became "heavy" and he was glad to get back to the "normality" of England. Unfortunately he didn't keep his notes.

(4) "Cross" is the pseudonym of Ross Crozier. Crozier worked on covert activities in Guatemala and Cuba in the 1950's and in Mexico in the early 1960's. He worked in Dallas for the Public Survey Corp. and the JM/Wave operation of the early sixties. He was also responsible for setting up the DRE anti-Castro group (Directoria Revolucionario Estudiantil). The DRE set up a branch in New Orleans, but, according to Crozier, it was not done by him. Head of the New Orleans branch was Carlos Bringuer. DRE received backing from Clare Boothe Luce.

(5) "Grupton" is William Kent, assistant to Phillips in psychological warfare. An employee of Kent's ran the anti-Castro propaganda station, Radio Swan.

(6) "B.H." is Barney Hidalgo, now living in retirement, working as a fireman, and breeding Japanese goldfish in his spare time.

(7) He is believed to be the Cuban banker and sugar king Julio Lobo who now lives in Spain. Lobo gave financial backing to Crozier's DRE. Veciana was trained in the offices of the Mao Bay Mining Corp by a 'Mr Melton'. Mao was a CIA front company, as, it is believed, was a subsidiary, the Freight Sulphur Company. Mao representatives attended a meeting with Earl Smith, then US Ambassador to Cuba, in early December 1958.

Businessmen used as contact and in intelligence activities were crucial to the CIA's efforts in Cuba. One of the pilots of the Mao Bay Mining Corp. was Pedro Diaz Lang, a close friend of Frank Sturgis.

"Bishop" also gave the name of Wayne S. Smith to Veciana in Cuba. Smith, born 16 August '32, speaks Portuguese, Russian and Spanish. He served in the Marine Corps 1947-52, studied in Paris in 1955, and served for the CIA in Havana and Washington in 1957.

(8) Veciana also received intelligence training at the Berlitz School of Languages which would appear to be used as a CIA cover.

Melvin Beck, a CIA officer in Cuba, attended language course at Berlitz whilst he was in Havana in the late 1950's, early 1960's. (See his Secret Confessions: the Myth of Cold War Counterintelligence, Sheridan Square Publications, NY 1984 pp 22/27)

More interesting is the fact that the recent Director of the Berlitz School in Madrid was none other than CIA officer Alberto Cesar Augusto Rodriguez Gallego, who from 1961-72 was responsible for the photographic surveillance of the Cuban Consulate in Mexico City. This includes the period of "Oswald's" visit. (On the Madrid item see Intelligence/Parapolitics (Paris) April 1985.)

Surveillance picture of visitors to the Cuban Consulate in Mexico City were taken by a pulse camera which was automatic. If, as Phillips says, it broke down on the day "Oswald" paid his visit it would not matter. It seems there was a back-up camera for such emergencies. As revealed in Lobster 6, Winston Scott, CIA station chief in Mexico City for a number of years, had a copy of the "Oswald" photo. It was a right-hand profile, taken from above when "Oswald" visited the Cuban Consulate. Scott apparently knew that Oswald was not 'Henry' and believed Oswald wanted 'help' as well as a visit from the Consulate.

In a long memorandum or manuscript Scott refers to "a photo of Oswald". Three CIA officers claim to have seen it whilst two others claim to have heard of

it. They are: Phillip Agee, Daniel Stanley Watson, Joseph B. Smith, Joseph Piccolo and Daniel Niescuir. According to one of them, it was Angleton who cleaned out Scott's safe, though other evidence has suggested it was an officer called Kirkpatrick.

CIA officer Ann Goodpastor is believed to have told an untruth to the HSCA about a picture taken at the Soviet Embassy on October 1 '63. She says delay until October 10th in informing headquarters was because of the unsuccessful efforts to identify the 'u identified man' - possibly a Russian sailor. The October 10th teletype was, in fact, doctored, according to evidence developed by the HSCA investigators.

Phillips also told untruths. He said that Herbert Manell's wife Barbara prepared the cable. Manell signed off on it. Phillips claimed it was delayed because of its 'Cuban content'. The HSCA developed information that there was no Cuban content. Phillips was not in Mexico City on October 10th.

The man responsible for CIA surveillance operations in Mexico City was George F. Munroe, a fervent right-winger and ex-FBI agent. He was responsible for the wiring of the Soviet Embassy and Cuban Consulate. According to HSCA information there were also human contacts with two spies within the Cuban consulate, but no one inside the Russian Embassy. (See Lobster 6 for possible source in the Soviet Embassy)

There was plenty of audio and visual surveillance. Eight telephone conversations at the Soviet Embassy were tapped and eight transcripts made. Two conversations the 27th September '63 were in Spanish, several others in Russian. They were translated by Mr Tarasov and his wife but not sent to headquarters until October 10th. Before the assassination the CIA concluded that all related to "Oswald" but not reported to Washington. Only the Soviet Embassy was apparently tapped, not the Cuban Consulate.

(9) Alpha 66 is believed to have been run by Henric Heckshen and operated in Mexico City with "eight German-speaking Jewish representatives"

(10) Prewett, whose husband Henry was in the CIA, was a CIA asset handled by Phillips. She recently works for 'The Council for Internal Security'. Its board includes Robert Morris, a leading light of the old and the latest 'new right'. See forthcoming Lobster for more on Morris and the extreme right's connection to the JFK assassination.

Another journalist who worked for the CIA linked NAN was Prisceilla Johnson (now McMillan, author of Mari and Lee - see Lobster 7). In November 1959 she was the NANA representative in the Soviet Union and was asked by her "colleague" in the US embassy in Moscow John A. McVickar, to see the defector Oswald. McVickar, an assistant counsellor in the Consular section, is listed in the unreliable East German Who's Who in the CIA as a CIA officer:

John Anthony McVickar, born 22 May '24, speaks Russian, 1942-45 US Army. 1949 State Department - maybe not officially CIA until 1966.

Another of these "colleagues" was Mrs G. Stanley Brown. Could this be the wife of Gordon S. Brown?

Gordon S Brown, born 24 February '36, speaks Arabic, French. 1957-60 US Army, '61 State Department, CIA. Served Beirut, Baghdad, Cairo.

McVickar's immediate superior was Richard E. Snyder, long suspected of being an American intelligence operative, most likely CIA. He denies this but he had in fact previously served as an intelligence officer for the State Department. Of course the East German Who's Who may be wrong. But since the KGB are believed to have compiled it, then we can speculate that they assumed Oswald, whilst in Moscow was in contact with several CIA-linked American citizens. The American embassy would have been under con

stant surveillance of one sort or another.

(11) According to a colleague, Phillips was guilty of serious professional lapses during his period in the CIA, including the loss of top secret documents. He was obliged to resign not retire in 1975.

Even if Phillips is not 'Bishop', he deserves close investigation because of his activities in Mexico City and those of other CIA officers there during his period of duty.

In Mexico City there were five CIA disinformation agents, four of them run by Phillips: Dr Luis Conte Aguerro, Herman Portell-Villa, Angel Fernandez Varela, Nestor L. Carbonel and Eduardo Borrel Nouvarros. Phillips also had two other agents: Salvador Diaz Verson and Emilio Nunez Portuondo.

Diaz Verson had been Carlos Prio's Chief of Military Intelligence during Prio's Cuban Presidency 1948-1952. He was on the steering committee of the World Anti-Communist Congress for Freedom and Liberation (which became the WACL) which held its preparatory conference in Mexico City in March 1958. On November 20th 1963 Verson went to Mexico City to attend the International Federation of Journalists' convention. According to Philip Agee, this organisation works closely with the CIA.

Diaz Verson would later tell Dr. Angel Fernandez Varela (one of the CIA's disinformation agents) that while in Mexico City he had learned that the Mexican Federal Police had arrested a Mexican citizen, Sylvia Duran, an employee of the Cuban Consulate, because of her connection between Oswald and the Consulate. He further said that Oswald had stayed at the home of Duran and subsequently met with the Cuban Ambassador in Mexico City at a restaurant called Caballo Bavo, accompanied by Duran. The Federal Police reportedly had turned over the information concerning Oswald to the US authorities in Mexico City. (See Warren Commission CH XXVI 413)

Another Phillips disinformation exercise? One who may know is Raymond E. (Speedy) Gonzalez who was responsible for the CIA's deception operations in Mexico City. He now works in Washington.

'Oswald' attended a party held by a relative of Sylvia Duran. 'Oswald' wore a black sweater and was accompanied by two companions one of whom was tall with short brown hair. It is rumoured that Duran and 'Oswald' were close and may have been having a sexual affair. The CIA had pre-assassination files on Duran, most of which have been withheld, including verbatim interviews. In 1979 Duran admitted that Oswald was probably not the man in the Mexican City Cuban Consulate. In 1963 the CIA headquarters in the U.S sent messages to the Mexico City Station saying that Americans were to be discouraged from talking to Duran.

In 1964, after the publication of the Warren Report, a Mexican woman, Elena Garro, came forward with the allegation that Oswald and two companions had attended a party at the home of a relative of Sylvia Duran. US intelligence agencies failed to investigate this allegation. In 1978 Garro said that she wanted to come forward with her story immediately after the assassination but was told not to and was sequestered in a hotel by one 'Manuel Calvillo'. (See Conspiracy p 585/6)

A State Department report in 1969 described her as a 'professional anti-communist' (HSCA 111 291). Former associates in Mexico City told Anthony Summers that they suspected her, on quite separate matters, of liaising with and acting on behalf of US intelligence - in the propaganda field. The HSCA found that its Garro inquiry was "inhibited by the refusal of the CIA to make available sources...on the allegation."

A State Department officer who tried to investigate the Garro matter in 1969 was later mistakenly dismissed and eventually committed suicide. (HSCA Report p124 111 285/293) He was Charles William Thomas who wrote a memo (25 July '69) to the Secretary of State concerning the Garro affair. He is listed in the unreliable East German Who's Who In the CIA. Born 20 June '22, spoke French, Spanish. 1943 US Navy; '51 studying in Paris; '52 StateDepartment; '57 alleged CIA. Postings in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Accra, Tangiers, Port-au-Prince and Mexico City, where he presumably heard the Garro story.

The HSCA discovered that Garro did stay at the Hotel Vermont in San Luis Potosi. She was held for eight days. This is confirmed by Hotel records. The person who took her to the hotel, Manuel Calvillo, it was determined was a CIA agent. He was unavailable for questioning by the HSCA. It was found that it was Garro who had tipped off the Mexican Police about Oswald's attendance at the party. A female friend of Garro who shared a house with her in 1967 was a CIA employee who had worked for Winston Scott in 1963. 'Miss Y' in the HSCA volumes is June Cobb.

A Mexican professor of philosophy involved in the Garro story was made Mexican Ambassador to East Germany in 1978. He was a personal friend of Duran and appears to have held seminars in her home. Which neatly dovetails with p 124 of the HSCA report: 'This, the Committee speculated, might explain why 'Oswald' contacted Contreras - after he had attended a meeting in the philosophy department.' (See Conspiracy p375, 582/3 for more on the Contreras episode.)

'Oswald', it would appear, was believed to be infiltrating left-wing groups in Mexico City. Melvin Beck's book (see above) gives evidence of such CIA counterintelligence efforts amongst students in Mexico City.

The American Ambassador in Mexico, Thomas Mann, had thought in 1963 that Castro was responsible for the JFK assassination. He had wished to have Nicaraguan Gilberto Alvarado sent to the US for questioning but the request was denied. He believed that the cover-up with regard to Duran was because US agencies were embarrassed about something. He also believed that Scott was furious about the cover-up. Mann further believed that Oswald had made two trips to Mexico City.

In the light of new evidence concerning Mexico City it might be worth re-considering the story of Richard Case Nagell who claimed to have been involved with Oswald just before he went to Mexico. (See Gallery March '81). Anthony Summers was informed that the Los Angeles Police Department carried out an investigation into Nagell's claims. Where they could be checked they apparently checked out.

Steve Dorril

From National Lampoon:
spotted by Wendell Maas.

**MY OTHER CAR
IS JIMMY HOFFA**