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ROSS CRYSTAL: November 22nd, 1963, the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Controversy still surrounds that assassination. The Warren Committee Report, volumes and volumes of findings, and yet it still is not complete.

Here is a man who has been working on the assassination for some time now, has a new book. His name is Anthony Summers. He is an investigative reporter for the BBC.

In your new book, Mr. Summers, you come out with things that you believe are new. What are you saying that is new in the case?

ANTHONY SUMMERS: I think it's not so much what I say. I think one has to look at what Congress Assassinations Committee said in its report last year, because it marks a whole new point at which we have to look at the assassination. And I say "we." I mean -- that means the people in law enforcement, in the media, and, indeed, in the public. We have to take the blinkers off.

The Assassinations Committee said that there was probably a conspiracy to assassinate the President. When they said "probably," they were bowing to the fact that the scientists said -- and they used the best scientists in the country, I believe -- said that there was a 95 percent probability that there were two gunmen at work in Dealey Plaza.

Now, you won't get the scientists to say that it's definite that if you drop an apple it will hit the ground. They'll never say 100%. What the main scientific adviser to the committee in this area said was that if he were a lawyer, he would say that it was beyond a reasonable doubt that there

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there were two gunmen.

That was the basis of the Assassinations Committee's conclusion. It's a new fact. And once you have two gunmen in Dealey Plaza, then you have to look at everything else anew.

CRYSTAL: Okay. And that's what you did. That's what you did. What did you find that was anew?

SUMMERS: The most extraordinary thing I found was that when I went down the road to do a film documentary, which was shown here and on the BBC, I expected that in umpteen living rooms across the country I'd be the last of many reporters to have been there. I found, to my surprise, that I wasn't, and that in one or two cases I was there even before officialdom. I found this surprising and, in the end, rather disquieting. And that's what led me on to do the book.

What I've done, I hope, is to do the first reporting job which involves not only the paper chase, the look through the archives, but also going down the road, using the shoe leather, in the places where important evidence was and, in some cases, still is, important witnesses. I mean Dallas, New Orleans, New Mexico, and, in my case, Cuba.

CRYSTAL: Cuba. Talk about your case.

SUMMERS: Well, I went to Cuba because, as you know, there is a major element of interest in the fact that Oswald's public posture was that of a pro-Castro leftist.

CRYSTAL: Uh-huh.

SUMMERS: Now, there are curious apparent inconsistencies and anomalies in that evidence. They concern not least his leafletting in the summer of 1963 in New Orleans, where he spent the months before the assassination. On one occasion, he handed out leaflets bearing the rubber stamp of an address which, far from being a headquarters of a left-wing Castro organization, had important connections with anti-Castro operatives, some of them with links to U.S. intelligence. That was a problem.

There was also the area of Mexico City. Oswald was there before the assassination. He -- we know he was there. But a person calling himself Oswald went to the Cuban and Soviet embassies there and was looking for a visa to go to Cuba.

CRYSTAL: Uh-huh.

SUMMERS: In the couple of days, and, indeed, in the hours after the assassination, a mass of information about this Oswald connection with the Cuban Communists, or alleged Oswald

connection with the Cuban Communists, came to Washington, and, indeed, across the desk of LBJ, the new President. There are indications that it may not have been the real Oswald who actually went to the embassy.

CRYSTAL: What are the indications who that person may have been?

SUMMERS: I don't know and I haven't tried to say in my book. I've avoided speculation in the book.

What I've done, going back to your original question about what I've done, is to lay the evidence, as it is today, end-to-end, based on the fact that we now know, and it's a fact, that there was a conspiracy, in that there were two gunmen in Dealey Plaza; and that we have to, therefore, open our eyes to all the other evidence all over again.

CRYSTAL: What you also have done in the book is to name a person who may have been a link to Lee Harvey Oswald.

SUMMERS: Maurice Bishop.

CRYSTAL: Maurice Bishop. Tell us about him.

SUMMERS: Yes. A witness whom I think comes up with some very disquieting evidence is Antonio Vesiano (?), who in 1963 was the civilian leader of a thing called Alpha 66, which was then a very well-known anti-guerrilla exile group running raids against the Cuban coastline, mostly out of Florida.

Now, Antonio Vesiano alleges that he had a U.S. intelligence case officer -- and he's no more specific than that. He says, "U.S. intelligence." That that U.S. intelligence case officer, during 1963, in those tinderbox days in the wake of the missile crisis, was trying to provoke further trouble between the United States and the Soviet Union by getting Alpha 66 to do raids against the Cuban coastline, against Soviet installations and ships. A very dangerous thing, if he's telling the truth.

Specifically in connection with the assassination, Vesiano alleges that he saw Maurice Bishop, which was the cover name for his intelligence case officer, with the alleged assassin, Lee Oswald. And that after the assassination -- and I find this perhaps even more troubling.

CRYSTAL: Who was the cover name for?

SUMMERS: The cover name was Maurice Bishop.

CRYSTAL: The cover name.

SUMMERS: For a man whose identity has not yet been established.

CRYSTAL: There are segments of that book that pertain to a former head of the CIA Western Hemisphere...

SUMMERS: I report in my book that Congress's Assassinations Committee publicly considered in its report last year and in its volumes the possibility that Bishop was identical with David Phillips, a former CIA head of Western Hemisphere, who at that time was working in Mexico City and was involved with anti-Castro operations. But I certainly don't say that David Phillips was Maurice Bishop. I report the fact that the Assassinations Committee said this was a possibility.

CRYSTAL: The Assassinations Committee say it's a possibility.

SUMMERS: No, they considered the possibility, that they considered the possibility in their report. And they ended their report on this in a long footnote about this issue. They said that they suspected that the main witness in this area, Vesiano, was lying when he said that Bishop was not the retired officer, as they refer to him in their report. And for his part, the retired officer aroused suspicion then he said that he didn't know Vesiano. And it seems that the committee felt that it would be likely that in his role in anti-Castro affairs, that Mr. Phillips would have known the leader of a very well-known, publicly well-known, and certainly well-known to intelligence agencies, exile leader.

CRYSTAL: David Atlee Phillips is here. He will join us in just a moment when Panorama continues.

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CRYSTAL: Back on Panorama right now, as we discuss some new evidence, some new controversy, certainly, surrounding the assassination of President John Kennedy.

Here is David Atlee Phillips, former head of the CIA Western Hemisphere Division.

Mr. Phillips, you've been sitting in the studio. You've heard -- certainly no surprise today. You've read the book. You've heard what Mr. Summers has said, and, more pointedly, what has been listed, as he says, by the congressional committee. I want to let you react right now.

DAVID PHILLIPS: All right. This is a town of newspaper, as you know, Ross, a town of journalists. And I'd like to discuss this matter with Mr. Summers in the context of journa-

istic responsibility and ethics.

I find it absolutely incredible that a reputable publishing house shall have allowed one of its writers to publish a book about me, which comes up with very serious charges indeed, and that the author of that book never seeks me out to interview me. I think it's an absolute basic tenet of journalism.

Both Mr. Summers and I are journalists. He's been with the BBC for a long time. He's written two books. I was a newspaper editor for five years. I'm a magazine writer. I've written three books in three years. I simply can't understand how that can happen.

Now, there are two other points. There are two absolutely vital elements in this story which Mr. Summers doesn't tell in his book. He said that he's drawn on the House Assassinations Committee report. There's the final report and the appendices. I certainly find it very strange that Mr. Summers has not discussed the origin of this story being told by this Cuban exile named Veslano, the circumstances or the timing of it. Because he first came up with this story two weeks after he left the Atlanta penitentiary, where he had been serving a sentence for drug conspiracy. He told the first Senate Investigator that he talked to in 1976 that he thought the intelligence community had something to do with his being there, that he was framed. He told one of his associates -- and I'm quoting now from the House Assassinations Committee report, from the appendix. He told one of his associates, a former minister of the government in Cuba, he said, "The CIA framed me."

If Mr. Summers had put this in his book, it would have given an entirely new perspective, because it provides another possible motivation for what is this highly implausible story told by Mr. Veslano.

CRYSTAL: You had a third point?

SUMMERS: Can I come in on that?

CRYSTAL: You may. I'd like to get the first point, why you did not seek him out.

SUMMERS: First of all, what I'd like to come before that -- he said that my book was about him. My book is not about him. Mr. Phillips features solely in the context that I've already explained, in which I report what the Assassinations Committee volumes and report have said about him. It is a very small section. I believe you've seen the book. It is a small feature in the book.

Now, he also says that he's been a journalist all his

life. The fact is that Mr. Phillips has for the greater part of his career -- I do know that you have been involved with newspapers in the distant past and have been writer. But that basically, we're talking here to a senior intelligence officer. And I think that should be...

PHILLIPS: Oh, sure. Certainly. Twenty-five years.

SUMMERS: Yes.

PHILLIPS: Sure.

SUMMERS: And next, the matter of not interviewing Mr. Phillips. Mr. Phillips' name surfaced in this connection, specifically in connection with the Bishop affair, last year when the report came out. And I, at that stage, had reached the -- virtually the end of my writing. I analyzed the work of the committee, and have used many portions of the committee's work in my book, not only this.

Now, I also had access, as all journalists, to sources on the committee. And I was also aware, from the committee's report, of what Mr. Phillips has to say on this issue, which is basically that he's not Mr. Bishop. I note that and I've reported it. And I have not in any way claimed in the book, indeed, that Mr. Phillips is Mr. Bishop. And if Mr. Phillips had not asked to appear on this program and others, I doubt that it would now have been brought to the sort of attention that it has.

Now...

CRYSTAL: One second.

Do you at least concede that he did not do the book about you?

PHILLIPS: I certainly do not buy that argument for one minute.

CRYSTAL: Well, you are only mentioned in there.

PHILLIPS: I beg your pardon.

CRYSTAL: You're mentioned in there four, five, six, seven times, but you're not the center of the book.

PHILLIPS: About 70 times. My photograph is there. This is the book that has...

SUMMERS: Not 70 times. No way.

PHILLIPS: Many, many times. On the jacket of the book

it has the theory, and the theory is that renegade CIA officers were manipulating Lee Harvey Oswald. My photograph is in the book, and underneath the photograph, next to a drawing, is the question mark -- is a question, "Heart of the matter?" It certainly is a great deal about -- in the index, it's cross-indexed: "Phillips. See Bishop." Bishop. See Phillips."

CRYSTAL: So you do feel the book is about you.

PHILLIPS: Oh, there's no question about it.

Ross, let me tell you. In the promotional material sent out by the publishers, it says the most serious accusations in the book concern a C -- a specific CIA officer.

And I find that certainly very, very damaging.

SUMMERS: May I come in on that? McGraw-Hill picked this up -- they're my publishers. They picked this up when Mr. Phillips said something very similar on the Today program.

It doesn't say at all that the most serious specific accusation is against a specific CIA officer, referring to Mr. Phillips. That reference is in there in a different way. And it's quite clear from the context of the book that it refers to Maurice Bishop.

PHILLIPS: Mr. Crystal.

SUMMERS: Which, as I've said, is a cover name.

PHILLIPS: May I ask you to read that, from the McGraw-Hill promotion material?

CRYSTAL: It is promotional material. "The most serious accusations made in "The Conspiracy" concern a specific CIA officer alleged to have been in contact with Oswald before the assassination." A question follows. "How strong is the evidence against him?" Now...

SUMMERS: If you read the book, you will see that that refers to a man, cover name Maurice Bishop, whose identity I do not pretend to know.

CRYSTAL: What Mr. Summers is saying is he is reporting, reporting what he found in a congressional investigation, in a congressional report.

SUMMERS: It's in the public...

PHILLIPS: No. He's reporting...

SUMMERS: It's in the public domain, Mr. Phillips. And the only name -- since you've asked to appear to discuss this. The only name raised in public by the Assassinations Committee as a possible candidate for the role of Mr. Bishop -- and, incidentally, ass that is indicated with Mr. Bishop is that he had contact with Lee Oswald; not, as you have suggested, involvement in the assassination -- is your own.

PHILLIPS: We're talking now about the credibility of this Cuban named Vesiano.

CRYSTAL: Uh-huh.

PHILLIPS: There was a composite drawing, based on his description of what Maurice Bishop looked like, released to the international media. According to the House committee report, no one said that I was Maurice Bishop.

Now, let me give you another reason that I think that Mr. Summers...

SUMMERS: That is not so.

Could I come in there?

CRYSTAL: One at a time.

PHILLIPS: Mr. Summers has made the statement that one of the things that is really disquieting for him is that this Maurice Bishop, allegedly, tried to persuade Vesiano to talk to a cousin, a relative of his who was in the Cuban intelligence service; to fabricate information. In other words, to pin the guilt on Fidel Castro.

CRYSTAL: Uh-huh.

PHILLIPS: And, now, Mr. Summers says he's working on the congressional material. But he doesn't include in the book this congressional material, which he had in his possession.

CRYSTAL: Mr. Summers.

PHILLIPS: I have to tell you what it is.

The committee went to Cuba and they talked to the Cuban intelligence officer. He was in Mexico at the time that I was there. I had written a book, published some years before, in which I sort of gloated about the fact that I had outwitted some Cubans, and that sort of thing. They went down there, and here was this Cuban intelligence officer with the most incredibly marvelous chance to get Dave Phillips and to get the CIA. But that Cuban intelligence officer was an honest man.



You know what he said when asked about Vesiano's story? He said Vesiano, quote, is a person who cannot be believed, unquote. And then he had some remarks about his psychiatric condition, that he had gone to a psychiatrist from the time he was 15 until he 16, that he had personality problems.

SUMMERS: I think it's time, with all these points, that I caught up with them, if I may, for a moment.

CRYSTAL: Okay. Indeed.

SUMMERS: What the Assassinations Committee indeed did was to report this. And I mention it in a footnote in the book, I believe, and maybe in the text. And I'd have to check.

PHILLIPS: It's not in the text.

SUMMERS: But what I do say about that is that it's quite clear that the Assassinations Committee checked with not only Vesiano's doctors, all his family, and so on. There's no question of psychiatric trouble.

Now, a senior intelligence officer in Castro Cuban intelligence is obviously certain to pour as much dirt as possible, to smear a man who has long been leading an anti-Castro group in this country.

And I must just say that one former associate has said of Vesiano, "Vesiano was the straightest, absolutely trustworthy, most honest person I ever met. I would trust him explicitly."

Now, we have one side...

CRYSTAL: What associate was that?

SUMMERS: This was an associate in the anti-Castro movement.

Now, I should say that you had the smear and the praise coming from each side. But I have, in fact, talked to Mr. Vesiano on several occasions. And I must say that, as a journalist who has to go back, for example, to the editor and say, "I believe this man," or, "I do not believe this man," on the question of a contact with an intelligence officer, I do believe Vesiano.

Now, there's one further thing to say on that, which is that the House committee did point out, contrary to what Mr. Phillips indicated just now, that they did trace a former CIA case officer in Miami, whose code name they gave, who said that he believed that David Phillips did use the pseudonym, cover name, if you like, Maurice Bishop, and that they believe that another CIA officer used the name Knight.

CRYSTAL: Okay. We've been talking about film. In the last segment we mentioned some film. We're going to show that film.

SUMMERS: Oh. This is an interview with Vesiano which I did some while ago. And this is -- it's a long interview, but this is the basic allegation that he makes about seeing his case officer with Lee Oswald before the assassination.

CRYSTAL: Okay. And let's take a look at it right now.

SUMMERS: Before the Kennedy assassination, did you meet Lee Harvey Oswald?

VESIANO [translated]: Yes. I had encountered Lee Harvey Oswald in Dallas at the end of August or in the first days of September in 1963, a few weeks before the President was assassinated. I was asked to go to Dallas at the request of my contact with the intelligence service in this country, Maurice Bishop. We fixed a meeting downtown in Dallas in a bank or an insurance company building. I don't remember which it was. And Maurice came with a young man. He seemed to be very quiet, very strange, a preoccupied person.

Shortly afterwards, I recognized him from his photographs in the newspapers. He was without any doubt the Kennedy assassin Lee Harvey Oswald. I have no doubt that the person with Maurice Bishop was Lee Harvey Oswald, because I have been trained to identify individuals I met by noting their physical characteristics.

SUMMERS: Do you think that later in 1963, that Maurice Bishop was sufficiently against Kennedy to be a physical threat to him?

VESIANO [translated]: Look, Maurice was at odds with Kennedy. He believed that Kennedy was a man without experience, surrounded by unqualified advisers, and that they were leading his country into trouble. Following the Bay of Pigs fiasco and after the missile crisis, Bishop considered it was a tremendous mistake for the United States to make the agreement which Kennedy concluded with Khrushchev.

It has been suggested here that there was a conspiracy against Kennedy. Maurice Bishop had many opportunities to take part in such a conspiracy because he was an operative whose professional business regularly involved dirty-work activities. And he believed that the best thing for this country was to depose Kennedy and his advisers.

PHILLIPS: Well, we've just seen this rather dramatic scene of this man. And what is his credibility. That obviously

is what we want to know.

I do want to put it on the record quite clearly now that when the House Assassinations Committee, after some 18 months, I think, and several million dollars worth of investigation, put out their final report, in the final report, about two pages was devoted to Mr. Vesiano. And what they said was we find Mr. Vesiano's testimony -- Mr. Vesiano, we find him to be less than candid. We can't accept this story. And they gave four reasons. And we can find no corroboration of having -- his having seen Lee Harvey Oswald.

Now, I want to take up one thing that...

[Confusion of voices]

PHILLIPS: You brought up the point that there was this witness who identified me as Bishop.

SUMMERS: Yes.

PHILLIPS: And certainly a very important key witness. Correct?

SUMMERS: Yes.

PHILLIPS: Did you interview that man?

SUMMERS: Certainly not. The man is indicated by cover name in the Assassinations Committee report, in volumes. Therefore, I report him. I also report others who say that they didn't know a Maurice Bishop.

PHILLIPS: You know...

SUMMERS: I took both sides. And I think one must all the time say, "on the one hand, on the other."

Now, you have just said that the committee found Vesiano not credible. They didn't say that. They said they couldn't fully come -- reach a conclusion that he was wholly credible on his allegation about Bishop. But they said that from the files of agencies, it appears reasonable that an association similar to the Maurice Bishop story actually existed. The committee found it probable that some agency of the United States assigned a case officer to Vesiano, since he was a dominant figure in an extremely active anti-Castro organization, etcetera.

PHILLIPS: Yes. The committee said he was less than candid, said there were four reasons...

SUMMERS: They also said that you aroused their suspi-

cion, Mr. Phillips.

PHILLIPS: They aroused my suspicion. I must comment on that.

SUMMERS: ...have already quoted you on. I quoted it in full the first time.

PHILLIPS: The first -- the first time that someone said to me, "This is Mr. Vesiano. Do you recognize the name?" I said, "No."

Once again we go back to the business of this story. Mr. Vesiano hadn't exactly been in the news for the last couple of years. He was in the Atlanta penitentiary. Before that, for a long period of time, he was in Bolivia and he was traveling around. That group, Alpha 66, is one group which the CIA was not connected with. I was...

SUMMERS: That is by no means clear, from the investigation that's been carried out.

PHILLIPS: All right.

I certainly think that if I'm called out of a busy convention, as I was, and hit with the news that a man who's just been introduced to me as a chauffeur is really a staff investigator and wants to ask me questions -- and this is what happened in 1976 -- and has to ask them in Spanish, and they turned to me and said, "Do you know Mr. Vesiano?" I said, "No, I don't know Mr. Vesiano."

If that man's been in prison for two years and not active...

SUMMERS: Excuse me on that. You have, in fact, said to the committee in the past that when you were confronted with Mr. Vesiano, he was not introduced by name. You've just said that you were introduced by name. That's contrary to what you said...

PHILLIPS: At one point, I certainly was introduced to him by name. I don't remember when it was. But I know the circumstances of how I was introduced. He came to a convention that I was running and sat at the table, having been introduced as the driver.

SUMMERS: Fine.

CRYSTAL: Alpha 66. Did you just agree with that statement. You kind of intimated...

SUMMERS: That Alpha 66 had no...

CRYSTAL: Had no relationship with the CIA.

SUMMERS: No, I quoted what the committee has said. The committee found it probable that some agency of the United States assigned a case officer to Vesiano. They have not been specific. They did not identify Maurice Bishop.

CRYSTAL: That does not necessarily mean the CIA, then.

SUMMERS: It does not necessarily mean so. On the other hand, the fact that the CIA files are sparse on this matter is by no means conclusive. It is -- it was established by the Senate Intelligence Committee that, long ago, five years ago, that, just as in the FBI, there were no file files. The CIA did the same thing.

It's ridiculous to expect that the paper chase, the documentary chase through the files of a thing which is, after all -- the name used to be Secret Service -- that one should find everything written down there. I think Mr. Phillips would be the first to agree that that would be naive.

CRYSTAL: Mr. Phillips, had you had any, any contact whatsoever? Are you denying everything that has been printed?

PHILLIPS: Oh, my goodness, no. There's much -- much of the book is from public records.

CRYSTAL: I'm talking about the particular Maurice Bishop.

PHILLIPS: No, I'm not. This is from the appendix. I'm pointing out that Mr. Summers has found it convenient to use things that suit him and not those things that don't suit him. I find that to be irresponsible journalism.

SUMMERS: I think that is not so. I think, also, that my publisher would have been quite wrong if they had not insisted that the book said, "on the one hand, on the other." And I must tell you that the people at my publishers, both in the editorial and legal level, went through the specific areas involving sensitive issues like this, through the volumes of the Assassinations Committee's report, just as much through my material.

PHILLIPS: Ah, so they -- all those people at the publishers approved that statement about the serious accusations against me.

SUMMERS: It does not say there is any serious accusation against you, Mr. Phillips. It refers to Maurice Bishop, an

unidentified cover name.

CRYSTAL: Okay. We're going to take a break. Dr. Robert Blakey, former chief counsel and director of the House Assassinations Committee, will join us when Panorama continues.

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CRYSTAL: My thanks to James [sic] Atlee Phillips for joining us.

Joining us now is Professor G. Robert Blakey, former chief counsel and staff director for the House Select Committee on Assassinations.

Professor, you have also been listening today in the studio. After so much input into the committee, and hearing this evidence being proposed, presented, how do you react?

G. ROBERT BLAKEY: Well, I must frankly agree with Tony. I think that the Maurice Bishop/Phillips aspect of this book is a very minor part, and that I did not read the final draft as indicating that Mr. Phillips was Mr. Bishop.

The essential points in Tony's book are, one, there was a conspiracy in Dealey Plaza, there were two shooters. And it is therefore fundamental for our society to reexamine the evidence. And I think on that, reasonable people should not disagree, if they look at the evidence.

And second, what Tony's done is he's come to grips with that evidence. And, as a matter of fact, I don't always agree with what he's said. But I have to say that he's a man of integrity and good faith and honesty.

And then a third point I think is very important is that we're beginning to learn the truth about what happened to President Kennedy, and that's important for historical reasons. But far more significant, there are outstanding issues of justice in this that the Department of Justice must respond to. And Tony does call for a reopening of that investigation to finish what was not finished in '64. And I think that's very important.

And this Phillips thing is really a sideshow to that. The crucial questions: There was a conspiracy. The Department of Justice, as the official agency of the United States Government, must respond to it. That's what's important here.

CRYSTAL: But it's not a sideshow for Mr. Phillips, if, in fact, that is him. It's not a sideshow for him either way.

BLAKEY: I don't think Mr. Phillips was accused of

anything in the book. In fact, he was considered by the committee as a possible person for being Maurice Bishop. And we decided, ultimately, that Vesiano's story, on a number of aspects, including the Lee Harvey Oswald sightings, was ultimately not -- could not be corroborated, and therefore could not be accepted.

But it was a minor part of what we did. And I think in focusing on that minor part, we lose sight of there was a conspiracy, the Department of Justice must respond.

CRYSTAL: Mr. Summers?

SUMMERS: Yeah. A small point on that. I don't think we should go on about what is indeed not a long part of my book. But the points that -- I differ with the committee on some of the points, that it found that Vesiano's stuff could not be corroborated. And, in fact, most of the point. Since this book went to press, I've been doing further work for the London newspaper The Observer on the Bishop area. And I have been able to take the case further, in terms of corroborating the fact that there was indeed a Bishop at that time, a Bishop.

CRYSTAL: A Bishop.

SUMMERS: A Bishop who was in touch with Vesiano over a lengthy period. Yes. And that he was involved with the U.S. anti-Castro affairs.

CRYSTAL: Professor, you say it should be reopened. And we think back to the congressional committee, we think back to the Warren Commission, and here we go again. Yet...

BLAKEY: No, it's not that. It's not something that's old. It's something that's current. This society, through its governmental agency, has told itself something about how its President died. And that is demonstrably no longer true. We are living, as a society, a lie. We are living it in 1980, however it may have originated in 1964. And it's terribly important for the soul of our society that we tell ourselves the truth.

The President has made the point that the lack of credibility between the American people and the American government can be marked as beginning its decline with the President's assassination, President Kennedy's assassination. If we are to restore credibility in our government, we have to go back to those points in times and begin telling ourselves the truth. That's a current issue and that's a terribly important thing.

And I think Tony is trying to come to grips with that truth. I've tried to come to grips with it. We don't agree with it. But I think the important thing is we're making an effort to

speak the truth, to understand the truth. That's one issue.

The other issue is the Justice Department simply must go out and, if it turns out this way, fail in finishing this case. They didn't finish it in '64. They must finish it now, even if they fail. The American people will tolerate failure. They will not tolerate a failure to make an effort.

CRYSTAL: Why is it taking as long as it's taking, if we're talking about evidence on the face?

BLAKEY: I think it's extremely difficult for people to admit they're wrong. And government agencies respond like people. They are moving, however slowly, to take a look at our acoustics study. And when they take a look at that acoustics study, they will themselves have opened their own Pandora's box and they will have to reopen the investigation. I am morally certain of that.

SUMMERS: You know, I think the best thing that I would hope my book would achieve would be to give that process a nudge. As you say -- and perhaps it's easier for me to say this than Professor Blakey -- the Justice Department is really moving extremely slowly. I would say it was dragging its feet. Six months after the committee reported, and much longer after the Justice Department knew what the report contained, the Justice Department wrote a letter of explanation about its tardiness to the former chairman of the committee, Congressman Stokes, in which it said, "Very sorry. We haven't got to it yet because we've been finding it difficult to get hold of the final report."

Now, you and I could have gone down the road -- and I did -- and buy -- bought the final report for a few dollars last July. So that was really nonsense. It's extraordinary that that letter was even penned.

CRYSTAL: But is that the only reason, to admit failure, as you say, Professor? Is that it?

BLAKEY: No. I think...

CRYSTAL: Are there other reasons?

BLAKEY: Well, you know, let's -- what I go back again is that you talk about the body politic and you can talk about the soul of the nation. And one must be honest with oneself. The failure to be honest with oneself is a form of insanity. And I think this society, in that sense, is sick. It's not telling itself the truth. Self-revelation, honesty is a first prerequisite.

Let me say -- you know, when we talk about David Phillips



and Lee Harvey Oswald and one sighting, one of the things that really seems to me the lack of perspective -- if you want to find out what happened in Dealey Plaza, look what happened in Dallas. The other important individual in this is not David Phillips and it's certainly not Maurice Bishop and it's certainly not Antonio Vesiano. It's Jack Ruby. Ask who shot Lee Harvey Oswald for the 48 hours of his death. Don't ask who was associated with Lee Harvey Oswald. Ask who was associated with Jack Ruby. And when you go into that, you will find out that the mark of organized crime is on that assassination. Not the assassination of John Kennedy, but the assassination of Lee Harvey Oswald.

And that's the area that we have to look into and explain to ourselves. And it's very difficult for me to believe that we should be spending our time worrying about David Phillips and his feeling about...

CRYSTAL: Well, now you bring up another -- another issue.

SUMMERS: I think there's some difference between us, probably, on the evidence in terms of which direction the assassination came from. I accept absolutely that there was an organized crime involvement in the assassination, and indeed in the murder of Oswald, which silenced him and he could no longer be questioned.

And I, however, think that -- from my work, at any rate. And I haven't had the privilege of seeing some of the documentation that Dr. Blakey saw under privilege. But it is my impression that at this stage, anyway, we can't ignore the indications, the vestigial indications and some of the harder evidence, that there was some contact between elements of U.S. intelligence and Lee Oswald during his adult life.

But that said, you know, I think the bottom line is that, as Dr. Blakey has said, once you have two gunmen in Dealey Plaza, that if in our society we still think it's right -- and I think that we do -- 40 years on to pursue Nazi war criminals, alleged Nazi war criminals in Latin America, if we think it's right that if one of us here is killed next week, and in five years time, 10 years time there is new evidence which suggests there's been a miscarriage of justice, hard evidence, then the district attorney has to reopen the case, let the chips fall where they may. There is no statute of limitations on murder.

CRYSTAL: A final comment, Professor.

BLAKEY: Let me say that it is terribly important that we begin rethinking this. And books like Tony's written now -- and the truth is that other books will be written because things

haven't been looked into. I've written one of my own. People have to think about this. And if the government won't do it, maybe I'll take a book like what Tony's written or the book that I'll be putting out in the fall to make them, through the agency of the American people, do what they ought to do.

CRYSTAL: The book is called "Conspiracy." It is by Anthony Summers. And it presents what may be the beginning, this beginning, of a lot of talk, new talk.

Gentlemen, thank you very much for joining us on Panorama.