

Zeroing in on JFK's murder

A spooky feeling slid over me yesterday as I flipped between the U.S. presidential impeachment inquiry, live all over the dial, and a video of the gripping *The Murder Of JFK: A Revisionist History*.

This two-part documentary, airing this Sunday and next at 10 p.m. on Newsworld's *The Passionate Eye Showcase*, will thrill the conspiracy theorists who fervently and tenaciously believe that Lee Harvey Oswald either didn't assassinate President John F. Kennedy 35 years ago or that he didn't do it alone.

The public fascination with the event never ceases. Thousands of books have been written about it. Cyberspace hums with paranoid and not-so-paranoid scenarios of who fired the gun(s) and why.

Not that this ambitious and challenging film reveals exactly who did shoot Kennedy in Dallas' Dealey Plaza, but it certainly builds a solid case for why he was killed.

Or, more likely, executed. Unlike Oliver Stone's controversial 1992 thriller *JFK* however, *The Murder Of JFK* zeroes in on the Cold War, anti-communist hysteria and Kennedy's anti-nuke policies. While Stone posited that Kennedy's

Television

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death was due to the military-industrial complex' displeasure at his reluctance to step up U.S. involvement in Vietnam, *The Murder Of JFK* pinpoints Cuba.

Calling the assassination "the pivotal event of the Cold War," this three-hour film constructs a context for the tragedy, starting with a history of Fulgencio Batista's corrupt Cuba before Fidel Castro. Havana was the political and criminal party capital of the world. When Castro's revolutionary forces took over, eventually nationalizing American-owned interests, the "radical right-wing" in the U.S. demanded action.

Those hawkish forces, many of whom show up in newsteel and TV

footage here, used to get a sympathetic hearing from the previous administration under Eisenhower. But when the Kennedy boys took over the Oval Office, it was obvious that they would not drop bombs when diplomacy would do.

The Murder Of JFK relates this with speeches, archival footage, phone tapes, a digitally remastered version of the Zapruder film, clips from the astonishingly prescient *Seven Days In May* (whose making, says director John Frankenheimer, was encouraged by Kennedy), all set to anti-war ditties from 1960s folkie Phil Ochs.

We see the young, charismatic and undeclared-Communist Castro interviewed by a fawning Ed Sullivan and on *Meet The Press*. We learn how an erroneous report on the assassination by then-local reporter Dan Rather served to undermine public confidence in the Warren Commission's finding that Oswald acted alone and that a single "magic bullet" passed through Kennedy's neck as well as Texas Governor John Connally's chest and leg.

The first half of *The Murder Of JFK* races by, all the way up to the

assassination, recalled in moving detail by a tearful Connally.

The chilling second part, which deals with the Warren Commission, FBI and CIA cover-ups, the Mafia as well as an analysis of the right's might, is dense and heavy-going TV. (I recommend you tape it so that, if you lose track, you can re-wind and retrace the case.)

For conspiracy believers, it's a must.

For the rest of us, especially those who remember with black-and-white clarity the events of that fateful November weekend in 1963, as well as air raid drills and bomb shelter-building tips, *The Murder Of JFK* answers questions we were too young to ask back then. We knew something was very wrong about the killing of Kennedy. But exactly what that was, aside from the death of a charismatic leader, we were never entirely sure.

This astonishing documentary puts not only that event in perspective, it also accounts for what came later in the 1960s. As for what's happening in Washington right now, *The Murder Of JFK* offers a lesson on how the right wing continues to fly all too high.

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Hello, Harold:

I hope the holidays are treating you & your wife well. Here's a review of our JFK documentary, which was broadcast last month in Canada, France & Germany. We're still looking for a US broadcaster.

To Harold & Family:

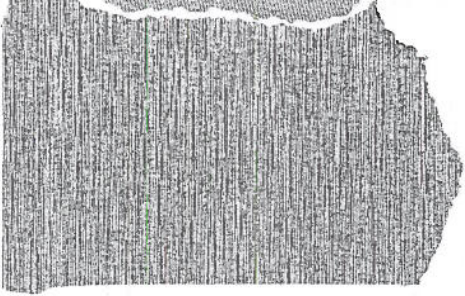
May the peace
and joy of the season
be yours
through the New Year

From your friends at

MPI Media Group



Best wishes,
Marty Callaghan



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