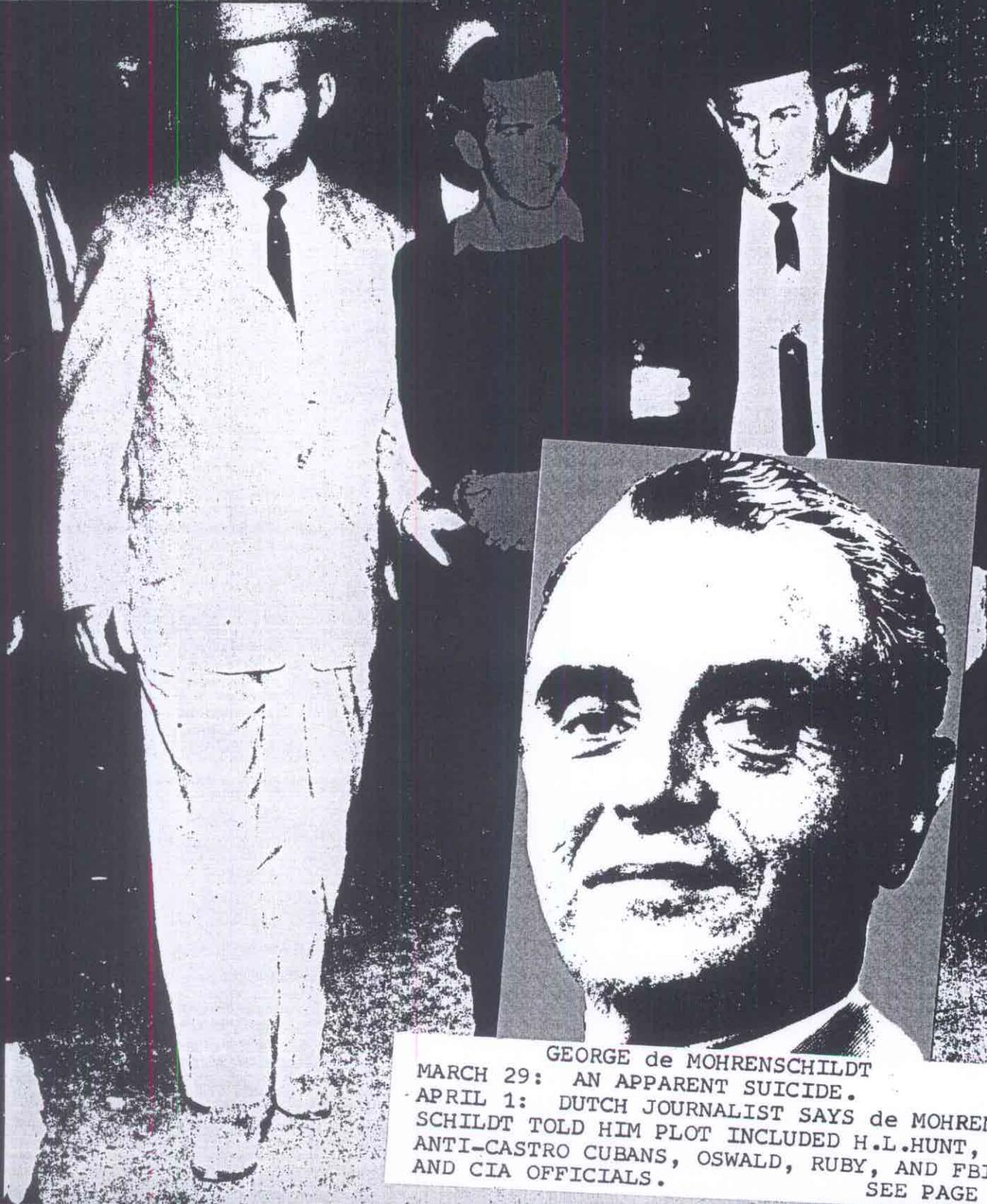


Seven Days

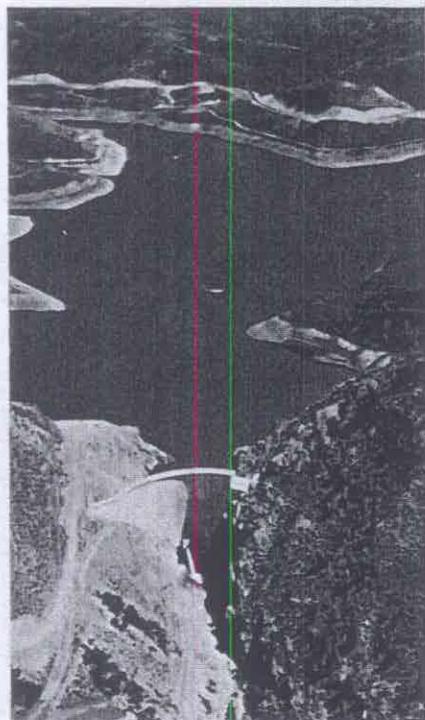
The man who said he was part of the JFK assassination team



GEORGE de MOHRENSCHILDT
 MARCH 29: AN APPARENT SUICIDE.
 APRIL 1: DUTCH JOURNALIST SAYS de MOHRENSCHILDT TOLD HIM PLOT INCLUDED H.L.HUNT, ANTI-CASTRO CUBANS, OSWALD, RUBY, AND FBI AND CIA OFFICIALS.
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Alain Dejean / Sygma

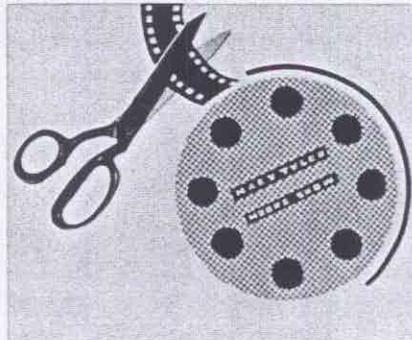


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AT HOME

STARTERS

Blows to labor

Congress and the Carter Administration have dealt labor two major blows.

In an action that made organized labor look not so organized, on March 23 the House rejected, 217 to 205, a bill to permit closing down a construction site even though a union's dispute is with only one subcontractor at the site. While business conducted a massive lobbying effort against the bill, labor was, in House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill's words, "careless."

Labor leaders were also stunned by the administration's proposal the next day that the minimum wage be set at \$2.50, with automatic annual increases in the future pegged to 50% of average manufacturing wages. The AFL-CIO had been pushing for a \$3 minimum wage this year and future increases amounting to 60% of manufacturing pay.

Still not enough

President Carter authorized the Pentagon on March 28 to consider upgrading 432,530 undesirable and general discharges given to Vietnam veterans, but proamnesty groups contend that this is still not enough. The Rev. Barry W. Lynn, a member of the steering committee on the National Council for Universal and Unconditional Amnesty, said the Carter program represents "a few slices of the loaf."

Tough-talking general

Gen. George S. Brown, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, objects to Congressional meddling in defense matters, but he encourages the government to meddle in the affairs of private citizens.

"Congress seems very much like the man who is kibitzing a chess game and occasionally reaches in and moves a piece and thereby screws it all up," Brown said in late March.

He reportedly also remarked: "If any citizen of this country is so concerned about his presence in a meeting being noted, I'd say we ought to read his mail and we ought to know what the hell he has done."

After the drug companies

Attorneys for 184 women argued in a Detroit court last week that 16 drug manufacturers hold full liability for any cancer or other abnormalities the women have developed as a result of their mothers' use of diethylstilbestrol (DES) during pregnancy. The companies have moved to block the suit.

The drug, prescribed between 1947 and 1964 to prevent miscarriages, was banned in 1971 after vaginal abnormalities were found in women whose mothers had taken it.

For those who sniff them

Increases in abnormal vaginal bleeding in women and decline in sex-drive in men are reported among workers in the birth-control industry. Dr. Malcolm Harrington, who headed a year-long study of the problem for the Center for Disease Control, said he would urge the government to adopt interim occupational standards for estrogen in the air.

Feminist progress, sideways

The Houston city council voted to abolish the position of "women's advocate," held by Nikki Van Hightower, after a citizens' group charged that Van Hightower had advocated abortion and passage of the equal-rights amendments at a March 5 International Women's Day rally. Mayor Fred Hofheinz responded by appointing her to a job as an "affirmative-action" specialist.

Bloated bureaucrat

During his campaign, Jimmy Carter attacked the "bloated bureaucracy" in Washington and promised to cut the White House staff by 30%. It now happens that the Carter contingent is 30% larger than Ford's. Aides say the situation is "temporary."

Not so free speech

Pete Camarata, the only dissident to speak out against the leadership of the Teamsters at their national convention last June, was thrown

out of the union last week. Local 299 in Detroit charged Camarata with instigating a wildcat strike by haulers in that city last summer, although Camarata was in the hospital at the time.

Gap is greater

New statistics from the Labor Department contradict the widely held view that the relative economic position of women has improved in the last quarter century.

"Women who worked at year-round full-time jobs in 1974 earned only 57 cents for every dollar earned by men," the department reports. In 1974, the \$11,835 earned by men was 75% more than the \$6,772 earned by women." In 1955, the gap was 56%.



Phillip Agee.

Agee can return

The Justice Department has closed its investigation of Philip Agee, former CIA employee whose book, *Inside the Company: CIA Diary*, was a revealing critique of the CIA's projects and techniques in Latin America. Agee is free to return from England without facing prosecution.

Benjamin R. Civiletti, the new head of the Criminal Division of the Justice Department, made the decision. His predecessor had earlier in-

Wide World

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Latina/Transnational Features Service

formed Agee that he might be
charged for disclosure of classified
material.

Agee, who has been living in Eng-
land since 1972, is undecided about
whether he would like to come back
to live in the U.S., but he would like
to lecture here and "take part in the
debate over the future role of intel-
ligence agencies." He is currently
working on a second book, also
critical of the CIA.

Meanwhile, the CIA was "upset"
at the Justice Department's de-
cision, and director Stansfield
Turner is weighing measures to curb
such disclosures, including a pos-
sible campaign for new laws.

Anita again

Anita Bryant, who has led a fight
against a gay-rights law in Miami
(see *Seven Days*, March 28, 1977),
will now launch a national cam-
paign aimed primarily against a
similar bill before Congress. Bryant
criticized the White House staff for
meeting on March 26 with 10 repre-
sentatives of the National Gay Task
Force.

South African coal—another fuel import

For the next ten years, at least
part of Florida's electricity will be
fueled by South African coal.

Starting next month, the Gulf
Coast Electric Company, a Florida
utility, will import 500,000 tons of
South African coal the first year and
800,000 tons a year for the following
nine years for production of elec-
tricity in three plants. Gulf has
signed a contract with the Transvaal
Coal Owners Association of Jo-
hannesburg, the first and only such
contract in the U.S.

Coal is the one abundant fuel
left in this country, so why the
trade? South African coal is cheap
and low in sulfur, and Florida's
sulfur-dioxide emission restrictions
are among the strictest.

Although recent U.S. policies on
trade with the apartheid nation for-
bid the sale of arms and military-
related products, there has been no
ban on U.S. purchases. According
to the State Department, last year
the U.S. enjoyed a \$433 million trade
surplus with South Africa.

& AROUND THE WORLD

ASIA

The people vs. the drought

China. The worst drought since
the founding of the People's Repub-
lic in 1949 is endangering crops in
much of the heavily populated area
of the country. Tientsin, only 70
miles from Peking, has not had any
rain or snow in nearly a year. Ac-
cording to Chinese radio broad-
casts, hundreds of millions of pea-
sants, officials, and soldiers are
working feverishly to save bumper
rice and wheat crops and to develop
new water sources.

No forced sterilization

India. The Janata Party, which has
assumed power following its victory
at the polls, issued an economic
manifesto claiming its intention to
"break the vicious cycle of the poor
getting poorer while the rich become
richer." Its program sounds suspi-
ciously like that of Indira Gandhi's
after the 1971 elections: full employ-
ment, agrarian reform, and a mini-
mum wage. The major policy dif-
ferences are on birth control, where
the Janata Party promises an end to
the unpopular forced sterilizations,
and foreign policy, where it says the

new policy will be true nonalign-
ment—an implicit attack on Indira
Gandhi's tilt toward the Soviet
Union.

Although they have doubts that
these promises will be fulfilled and
"reserved the right to criticize and
even oppose measures and actions
of the government," the indepen-
dent Communist Party of India-
Marxist (CPM), the Revolutionary
Socialist Party, and the leftist All-
India Forward Bloc offered their
support. All three were allied with
the Janata Party in some parts of
India.

The Maoist Communist Party of
India (Marxist-Leninist) has not of-
fered the government support, criti-
cal or otherwise. On March 30 police
reported the capture of eight of its
members in the central Indian city of
Nagpur, including a leader they had
sought for nine years.

Marcos gives Muslims crumbs

Philippines. Libyan mediation has
persuaded President Ferdinand
Marcos to grant autonomy to the re-
bellious Muslim region of his repub-
lic, but the degree of that autonomy
appears small. Furthermore, the
thirteen provinces in the proposed

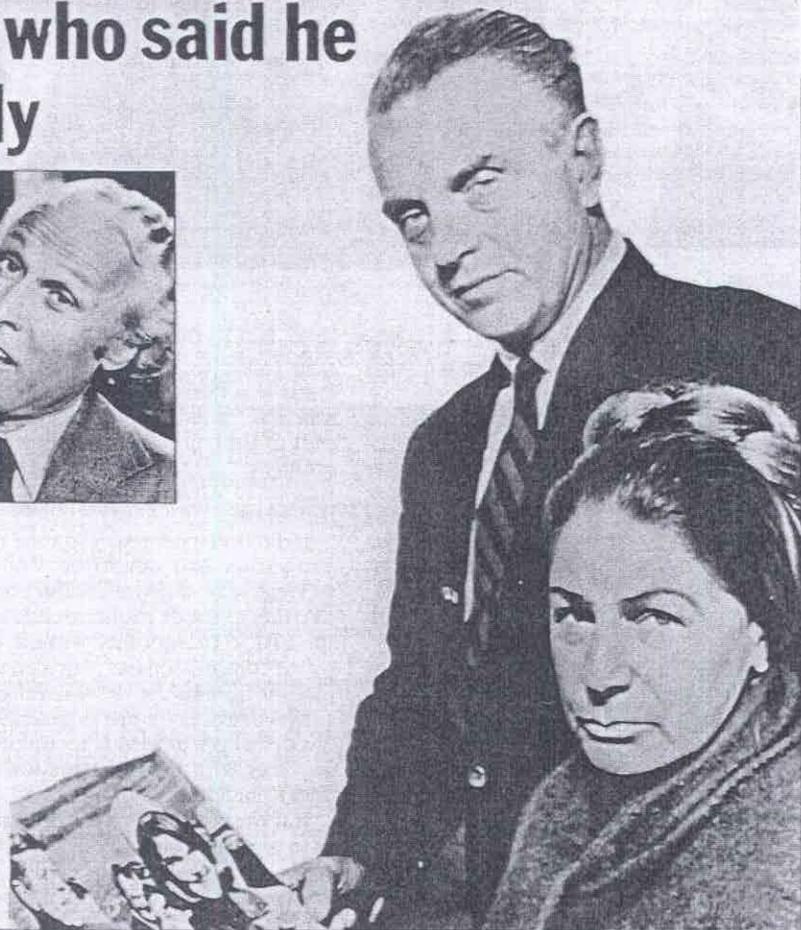
GEORGE de MOHRENSCHILDT

The freelance spy who said he helped kill Kennedy

by Mike Shuster

A Dutch journalist has told the House assassinations committee that a key witness who recently committed suicide was part of the plot to kill John Kennedy and that others involved included the late Texas oil millionaire H.L. Hunt, a group of anti-Castro Cuban exiles, Lee Harvey Oswald, Jack Ruby, and officials of the FBI and CIA. The story may be a new break in the long struggle to uncover the truth behind the assassination.

Although the journalist, Willem Oltmans, did not give reporters details of his April 1 testimony, he did appear on ABC-TV's "Good Morning America" show earlier in the day. He said that one of the conspirators, George de Mohrenschildt, had told him of the plot shortly before his death March 29. De Mohrenschildt, an acquaintance of Oltmans for nearly a decade, apparently killed himself at the



George and Jeanne de Mohrenschildt in 1974. He shot himself last month after learning the House committee on assassinations wanted him to testify. They are holding a photo of the Kennedys. Inset: Dutch journalist Willem Oltmans.

home of his daughter in Palm Beach, Florida, just as the House committee was getting ready to question him.

By all accounts a well-respected TV newsman in Holland who has been investigating the Kennedy killing for years, Oltmans told a nationwide audience that de Mohrenschildt admitted to being the middleman in the conspiracy. "Mr. de Mohrenschildt indicated to me very strongly," Oltmans said, "that his ties upwards were towards H.L. Hunt and downstairs to Lee Harvey Oswald."

De Mohrenschildt has written a book containing these allegations, Oltmans said, which pinpoints CIA and FBI officials who "are connected" to the plot, but he said the manuscript was in the posses-

sion of a Dallas lawyer.

"He was a crucial witness for us, based on the new information he had," said Rep. Richard Preyer (D-NC), a member of the House assassination committee. "He was intimately involved with Oswald."

De Mohrenschildt and his former wife Jeanne were interviewed at length in 1964 by the Warren Commission which dwelt at some length on his association with Oswald.

De Mohrenschildt, who was Russian-born and had emigrated to the U.S. in the late 1920s, was a member of a small but politically powerful and wealthy group of "white" Russians living in the Dallas-Ft. Worth area. Oswald had apparently defected to the Soviet Union after serving in

UPI



Lee Harvey Oswald is led from jail by Dallas police.

the Marines in 1959. After his return to the U.S. in 1962, he had close contact with this community.

De Mohrenschildt's testimony before the commission linked Oswald to the attempted assassination of ultra-conservative General Edwin Walker in Dallas seven months before the Kennedy killing. Jeanne de Mohrenschildt told the commission that when she and her husband visited the Oswalds shortly after the Walker incident, she told her husband there was a rifle with a telescopic sight in a closet.

"George, of course, with his sense of humor—Walker was shot at a few days ago within that time—said, did you take a pot shot at Walker by any chance?" she testified. "Oswald sort of shriveled . . . made a peculiar face, changed the expression on his face, and remarked that he did target-shooting."

Press accounts have used the report of the commission to provide information on de Mohrenschildt's life. The commission said it had conducted "extensive investigations into the background of both de Mohrenschildts." It said he was born in the Russian Ukraine in 1911 and fled Russia with his parents in 1921 during the civil war that followed the revolution. He spent a year and a half in the Polish cavalry and studied in Belgium before coming to the U.S.

Naturalized a U.S. citizen in 1949, de Mohrenschildt had several years before entering the University of Texas to study petroleum geology and engineering. After receiving his master's degree in 1945, "he has since become active as a petroleum geologist throughout the world," the commission said.

Interestingly, the commission mentioned an unusual 8-month walking tour the de Mohrenschildts made in 1961 from the U.S.-Mexican border to Panama. "By happenstance," the commission reported, "they were in Guatemala City at the time

of the Bay of Pigs invasion." The commission failed to note that the invasion of Cuba was based in Guatemala, but it did add that "a lengthy film and complete report of the trip was made to the U.S. Government." The commission failed to ask why or to whom de Mohrenschildt made this report.

It did find it necessary to state that its investigation had developed "no signs of subversive or disloyal conduct on the part of either of the de Mohrenschildts. Neither the FBI, CIA, nor any witness contacted by the commission has provided any information linking the de Mohrenschildts to subversive or extremist organizations. Nor has there been any evidence linking them in any way with the assassination of President Kennedy."

But the conclusions of the commission, as in so many other cases, overlooked evidence presented before it. The FBI had compiled a considerable dossier on de Mohrenschildt over a period of 20 years. One of the most striking items is his connection with German spies in the U.S. just before the U.S. entered World War II.

The FBI suspected de Mohrenschildt of being a Nazi agent as a result of his admitted contact with Constantine Maydell, who was head of German military intelligence in the U.S.—known as Abwehr II. Although de Mohrenschildt admitted working with Maydell on a film about Poland, he told the FBI at the time that Maydell wasn't a spy. The Warren Commission was in possession of this information but failed to press de Mohrenschildt about it.

Instead, it questioned him about his connections with French intelligence during the 1940s, which de Mohrenschildt admitted were substantial. "This is the main thing that the press reports about him are leaving out," said Peter Dale Scott, author and editor of several books and articles on U.S. intelligence and the

Kennedy assassination. "De Mohrenschildt admitted working with foreign intelligence people, especially German. Then he went on to do similar work, but privately, for U.S. oil companies over the next 20 years."

Scott has researched evidence given to the Warren Commission which it decided not to include in its final conclusions, and he feels there is much more crucial material that is being ignored by the press.

De Mohrenschildt's Central American hike was not the only time he spoke with government officials about his travels abroad. After his return from a trip to Yugoslavia in 1957 as a U.S. consultant to the Yugoslavian oil industry, he had several meetings with the CIA's local representative in Dallas, according to a recently released CIA document. It said de Mohrenschildt provided considerable intelligence on Yugoslavia.

The CIA document does not name the agent who debriefed de Mohrenschildt, but it is also known that he spoke about his trip with a man named J. Walton Moore. Moore had an office in a government building in Dallas but was only listed as an "employee, U.S. government."

Seven years later, de Mohrenschildt told the Warren Commission that after first meeting the Oswalds, he had consulted a few friends about whether he should "help" Lee and Marina. One of those he "may have" talked to was Moore, whom he thought was an FBI agent. Later the FBI denied to de Mohrenschildt that Moore worked with the Bureau.

The same CIA document says de Mohrenschildt was in contact with the local CIA agent up to 1961, but apparently the commission made no attempt to investigate whom Moore worked for or the content of his conversation with de Mohrenschildt.

Scott and other Warren Commission critics say it is important to investigate this and de Mohrenschildt's other contacts with the intelligence community. They point to his ties with other anti-Communist Russians in Dallas and to their ties, mostly through oil company work, with governments throughout the world.

De Mohrenschildt was a member of the St. Nicholas Parish Church, a local Dallas parish of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia. "This was no ordinary parish, though," Scott points out. "This one screened all its parishioners for their political views. The bulk of its members were oil engineers and exploration geologists. They were wealthy and well-connected, an extremely close-knit group which is important in the highly competitive world of oil exploration."

The Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia is a CIA beneficiary. The Church received considerable funds from the Catherwood Foundation of Philadelphia, and according to a *Ramparts Magazine* study in the late sixties, this foundation

was a foundation for CIA money.

In addition, one of St. Nicholas's original patrons testified that the local parish received government funds through the Tolstoy Foundation to help in settling Russian exiles in the area. This foundation also was a conduit for CIA funds and has been involved overtly in intelligence activities.

Almost immediately after his return from the Soviet Union in the spring of 1962, Oswald made contact with leaders of this parish on his own. Until the Oswald family moved to New Orleans a year later, the members of this parish held an "almost unnatural interest" in them, according to Scott. Despite extreme differences in economic status (the Russian community was completely aristocratic; Oswald had little money and worked at various (odd) jobs. Parishioners, especially de Mohrenschildt and his wife, gave the Oswalds money for clothes, dentists' bills, and toys for their child. They also constantly drove the Oswalds where they needed to go. "Marina had a hundred dresses given to her," Jeanne de Mohrenschildt told the Warren Commission.

Scott can only speculate on the interest the Russian community had in the Oswalds. He and other critics think Marina, who was the niece of at least one Soviet intelligence officer, was their real target.

Press reports about de Mohrenschildt say that at the time of his death he was a French professor at Bishop College in Dallas, but they have neglected to describe his occupational history before the Kennedy killing.

With his skills as a petroleum geologist and what appear to be his considerable connections in the intelligence community, both governmental and private, de Mohrenschildt traveled throughout the world, in the pay of various oil exploration and drilling companies. He worked for Pantapac in Venezuela, the oil company owned by the Buckley family (which includes conservative columnist William F. and former New York Senator James). When an employee of Pantapac and several other wealthy individuals formed the Cuban-Venezuelan Oil Voting Trust to begin oil exploration in Cuba, he traveled there in 1957.

His trek through Central America may not have been all that recreational for another reason. It is likely that he hiked through the southern Mexican states that were known to be rich in oil. On his return to Texas, he was personally met by a vice president of the Brown and Root Construction Company. Brown and Root was part of the Halliburton international oil drilling complex, which had interests in Mexico.

De Mohrenschildt was especially well connected to the Mexican government during the 1950s. He knew the president, Miguel Aleman, personally. Critics of the Warren Commission think he acted as a



The late billionaire, H.L. Hunt.

kind of private intelligence operative for his employers, using his connections to gain favors for them.

There is little hard information on de Mohrenschildt's activities after the Ken-

edy assassination. Press reports have stressed his psychological problems. He entered mental hospitals several times in recent years.

A spokesperson for the family of H.L. Hunt was quick to point to his history of psychological problems. "In fact Mr. de Mohrenschildt ever claimed to have had any relationship with H.L. Hunt," the spokesperson told the *New York Times*, "those claims must be viewed accordingly."

Critics like Scott are worried that despite recent headlines, the House Assassination Committee still won't answer the important questions about this mysterious acquaintance of the alleged "lone assassin." "The press ignores this information about him," says Scott. "But there's a clear line of investigation here. That's what the committee should be doing now." □

Kennedy: "The Spirit of Moscow"

"Any allegations by Willem Oltmans that H.L. Hunt was involved with Mr. de Mohrenschildt or Oswald in any way are figments of a strained and distorted imagination," a spokesperson for the Hunt estate said after recent allegations that Hunt conspired to kill John Kennedy. "It is ludicrous to state that H.L. Hunt had anything to do with the assassination."

Although there is yet no hard evidence to link the killing to Hunt, whose life is shrouded in about as much mystery as the assassination, there is some basis for interesting speculation.

Hunt, who died in 1974 at the age of 85, never granted an interview until the mid-1950s, after he had amassed one of the greatest private fortunes in the country. He was the largest independent petroleum producer in the U.S. as well as owner of vast tracts of timberland, citrus groves, pecan farms, canning and food processing plants, and drug manufacturing laboratories.

Because all of his corporations were owned solely by himself or members of his family, there are no public records of any of his business dealings. Information about the extent of his economic and political power is largely secret.

An ultra-conservative but a registered Democrat, Hunt supported Lyndon Johnson for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1960. During Kennedy's campaign, it was disclosed that Hunt paid over \$10,000 for the printing and mailing of 200,000 copies of a sermon by the minister of the Baptist church he attended in Dallas. "The election of a Catholic as president would mean the end of religious liberty in America," the sermon stated.

Hunt became increasingly alarmed over what he termed the "leftward" trend of the Kennedy administration. In the week immediately preceding the assassination, the commentators of "Life Line," Hunt's ultra-right-wing radio show, daily warned their listeners that Kennedy was following a line ordered by Moscow and forcing American taxpayers to subsidize communism around the world.

It was a time, "Life Line" insisted, for "extreme patriotism," and its commentators predicted a day when U.S. citizens would no longer be allowed to own firearms. "No firearms are permitted the people [in communist countries]," "Life Line" stated in a Dallas broadcast the morning Kennedy was shot, "because they would then have the weapons with which to rise up against their oppressors."

The same morning, an ad, headlined "Welcome Mr. Kennedy to Dallas" and bordered in black like an announcement of mourning, appeared in the *Dallas Morning News*. The full-page message accused Kennedy, among other things, of selling food to communist soldiers who were killing Americans in Vietnam and hinted that he had reached a secret agreement with the Communist Party in the U.S. It denounced Kennedy as having "scrapped the Monroe Doctrine in favor of the 'Spirit of Moscow.'"

Although ostensibly a message from "The American Fact Finding Committee," it was later disclosed that the local coordinator of the John Birch Society and Nelson Bunker Hunt, one of H.L.'s sons, were the Committee's most prominent members.

—M.S.



The cruise missile: off and running on a new arms race

by John Antonides

When Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and Soviet Communist Party Leader Leonid Brezhnev sat down in Moscow to discuss a new strategic arms limitation treaty in late March, they quickly became deadlocked over a weapon that could have been fired from Western Europe and landed within 30 feet of their conference table.

That weapon, the cruise missile, has not only upset the latest attempts at arms control but is also threatening the future of effective arms limitation.

Smaller than an ICBM, cheaper than a B-1, able to deliver a nuclear warhead with great accuracy over long range, the cruise is a new missile that could turn the two-country arms race into a multinational affair. Currently, only the U.S. has the technology to develop the long-range cruise, but critics contend that, by the 1980s, nearly a dozen other countries will have the means to build their own.

"The damn thing could proliferate like crazy," says Gordon Adams, director of military research for the New York-based Council on Economic Priorities. "The emergence of the cruise missile is very

destabilizing, to say the least."

Military strategists have wished for a weapon like the cruise since the advent of radar. The Nazis used a predecessor, the V-1 "buzz bomb," against the British in their last World War II offensive. But it took recent advancements in microcircuitry, small jet engines, and lightweight warheads to produce a missile that could elude enemy radar, penetrate enemy defenses, and hit the target.

The most important technological advance is the missile's guidance system. An on-board computer has a "picture" of the terrain over which it is programmed to fly; at preset intervals it takes an electronic look around and makes any necessary course corrections. Since the cruise can fly at an altitude of less than 250 feet and can

striking within 10 yards of its destination.

Two main types of long-range cruise missiles are now under development in the U.S. The Navy, with the help of General Dynamics Corporation, is producing the submarine-launched cruise missile, or "Tomahawk," with a range of 2,300 miles. Less than 20 feet long and 2 feet in diameter, it can, with wings folded, be stored in a torpedo tube. By comparison, an ICBM of the same range might be 50 feet long and 6 feet in diameter.

Under Air Force direction, Boeing is developing the air-launched cruise missile, with a range of 800 miles. Twenty of these could be carried on a B-52.

The Pentagon is also interested in developing a ground-launched version of the Tomahawk, since sea-launched cruise



A Navy A-6 Intruder aircraft on a demonstration flight, carrying a Tomahawk (cruise missile) in launch-position under the wing.

be programmed to duck around hills, it is virtually undetectable. Some enthusiasts say its image on a radar screen is indistinguishable from that of a seagull.

Although the cruise missile's slow speed makes it vulnerable to surface-to-air missiles, it is cheap enough for production in quantity, and—so the military reasoning goes—it could overwhelm defenses by sheer numbers. With its highly accurate targeting system, a cruise that gets through will have a better than 50% chance of

missiles are handicapped by the lack of terrain to help their guidance systems.

In all their potential modes, several thousand cruise missiles could be produced at a cost of \$500,000 apiece. That's cheap—compared to the unit price of the controversial B-1 bomber, which has been put at about \$88 million per plane.

Launched from the air, sea, or ground—where they could be fixed or mobile, on trucks for instance—cruise missiles could become strategic weapons in their own

In a Vermont jury room

We had been in the jury room of a Vermont county court for hours, waiting for deals to be made and justice to be defined. In the courtroom itself the defendants were probably watching the important backs of the lawyers and the face of the judge. We waited as juries often do when secret information is being exchanged and the area of the case narrows. The idea that the jury's best verdict can be reached by what seems to be the smallest amount of information is amazing to me. My jurors agreed. We were all feeling left out, mocked by the rules of the game.

While we waited and talked, a woman taught me how to insert a red thumb in a blue mitten. She had knitted perhaps three hundred mittens. People asked each other where they worked. Two women worked in small textile factories sewing skirts, one woman worked in a furniture factory. Two women worked for welfare, one woman was an aide in the local hospital. One man trucked fuel; another drove for the college. One man leaned back in his chair and was silent.

When I finished my thumb I began to read the business section of *The New York Times*. "Right here on the third page," I said, "it says that people are getting interested in the small farmer."

The eleven other jurors and the two alternates laughed.

Mrs. Crile, the woman who'd taught me mitten thumbs, said she was a small farmer. Then she corrected herself; her husband was a small farmer. "You, too, are a small farmer," I said.

"Oh, I know what you mean," she said; "you're talking about women's lib, but you know, he won't let me in the barn. He's a loner you know. And he loves his cows. Milking time, he don't let anyone in. If the inspection man came, he'd keep him out with a hunting rifle. He says it turns the milk, strangers. He knows every cow. You know, they're different. There's some cows don't like their calves. Well, then you have to feed them yourself. But there's cows are adopters. You know, a calf is born, they don't let

Grace Paley is a teacher at Sarah Lawrence College and a writer. She has published two books of short stories.

anyone near. They adopted it. They don't like the mother near it."

"Well," I said, "this is what it says in the paper," and I quoted, "Merrill Lynch, Hubbard and the Continental Illinois National Bank and Trust Company have proposed an Agricultural Land Fund under which pension funds and tax exempt institutions could buy farms and get managers to run them. This would save the small farm, Mr. Mooney, the President of Merrill Lynch, etc., said."

Guffaws, this time, from everyone.

"Save it?" said Mr. Fuller, the silent man. He looked sick and left for the bathroom.

Mr. Vann said he'd like a little tax exemption himself; he couldn't run his farm except into the ground.

"Go on there, Vann," said Mrs. Griffith, "you needn't of said that. You didn't do that, you just got squeezed, the milk company squeezed you and you sold off bit by bit."

"And if I had another couple of bits, I'd sell them tomorrow."

"My granddad," the furniture worker said, "did that. He sold out eighteen years ago up towards Warren and he got maybe thirteen thousand for it; it was just sold, I read in the paper, for a hundred and eighty-seven thousand."

"You know I believe I knew your family," Mrs. Crile said. "That old farm wasn't too far from where ours was in those days. We rent now, you know."

The furniture worker continued. "And that old hill farm that he nearly killed himself on, there were a couple of owners, and the last one they say is the pilot of the Shah of Iran, I mean it, and he's made a condominium to ski off of. He gave the town two thousand dollars to help pay for the schools, and he's got no kids. No road repairs. He got a better road than the country road. Folks like that don't cost the town services."

"Ayup," said Mr. Fuller who'd been so quiet. "And when there's no oil and it's too expensive to roll all that food in from California and when there's a drought like there is now, try gettin' our farms back to planting. When they got those hills scattered every which way with them chalets, why the game is gone. What're you going to do? Lyman, you don't remember the Depression, but in our village no one starved. Vann, you remember, we went out, every nightfall we brought it home—something for the families, rabbit, deer, possum, what-all . . . no one starved. But now, where's the land, where's the game?"

In the courtroom the lawyers argued and cut the facts to their legal bone. Here in the jury room, the people were talking about their lives with all the information they had, which was not inconsiderable. □

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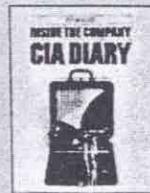


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