Prologue

“Smoking Guns” in the Death of JFK

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smoking gun [Colloq.] any conclusive evidence that proves guilt or fault.
—Webster’s New World Dictionary

During an interview shortly before a professional conference on “The Death of JFK” that would be held on the Twin Cities campus of The University of Minnesota on 14–16 May 1998, Federal Judge John R. Tunheim, who had served as Chair of the Assassination Records Review Board (ARRB), reported that no “smoking guns” had been discovered in the course of its efforts to declassify assassination records that had been secreted away for 50 years. The ARRB had come into existence as an effect of the passage of “The JFK Act” by Congress during the resurgence of interest in the assassination following the 1991 release of the Oliver Stone film, JFK.

The JFK Act had been passed over the intense opposition of President George Bush, a former Director of the CIA, perhaps in part because JFK implies that the CIA, the FBI, and the Pentagon played important roles in planning, executing, and covering up the death of our 35th president. Indeed, even after its passage, President Bush refused to appoint any members to the board, which had to await action by his successor, President Bill Clinton. As its own Final Report (ARRB 1998, p. xxiii) explains, this delay consumed the first 18 months of the existence of the ARRB, which began with a three-year mandate that later would be extended to four, during which it managed to declassify more than 60,000 records.

The ARRB

My concern, however, was less historical and more immediate. As the organizer and moderator of the Twin Cities conference, I had invited more than a dozen of the most accomplished students of JFK’s assassination to serve as speakers and as commentators in an effort to broaden and deepen our understanding of this event by taking into account new findings, especially those of the ARRB.
Murder in Dealey Plaza

It was my considered opinion—one I knew to be shared by virtually every other invited speaker, including Douglas Horne, Senior Military Analyst for the ARRB itself—that many records released by the ARRB not only substantiate previous conclusions about conspiracy and cover-up but clearly qualify as “smoking guns.”

Judge Tunheim, whom I knew personally, was scheduled to speak at the opening banquet Friday evening, which meant his talk would be the very first presentation of the conference. I resolved to introduce him with a list of findings that, in my judgment, were on the order of “smoking guns,” and drafted some notes as guidelines for my introduction. I thereby hoped to induce him to confront these issues directly. As luck would have it, he arrived nearly 45 minutes late, which made it impossible for me to present my list of discoveries and still keep the meeting on schedule. Although the opportunity was lost, I also resolved to pursue this issue in the belief that the American people should know at least as much as the Chair of the ARRB about its own findings. This book is meant to serve that purpose.

The Warren Report

John F. Kennedy, the 35th President of the United States, was murdered during a motorcade as it passed through Dealey Plaza in Dallas on 22 November 1963. The official government account of the crime, known as The Warren Report after its Chair, Chief Justice of the United States, Earl Warren—but technically entitled, The Report of the President’s Commission on the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy (1964)—held that JFK was killed by a lone, demented assassin named Lee Harvey Oswald, who fired three shots with a high-velocity rifle from a sixth floor window of the nearby Texas School Book Depository, scoring two hits and one miss, which struck a distant concrete curb, ricocheted and slightly injured bystander James Tague. (A photograph of the injury may be found in Robert Groden, The Killing of a President, 1993, p. 41.)

The presumptive shots that hit, however, wreaked considerable damage. The first is alleged to have entered the President’s back at the base of his neck, traversed his neck without impacting any bony structure, exited his throat at the level of his tie, entered the back of Texas Governor John Connally (riding in a jump seat in front of him), shattering a rib, exiting his chest, impacting his right wrist, and deflecting into his left thigh. The bullet supposed to have performed these remarkable feats, moreover, is alleged to have been recovered virtually undamaged from a stretcher at Parkland Hospital, where President Kennedy and Governor Connally were rushed for treatment, and has come to be known as “the magic bullet.” The other struck JFK in the back of his head and killed him.

The HSCA

Indeed, these findings were reaffirmed and refined by the House Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA) during its re-investigation of 1977–78 in its report of 1979, with the exception that—on the basis of disputed acoustical evidence, which it never adequately explored—it concluded that a fourth shot had been fired from “the grassy knoll,” which made it probable that the President, after all, had been assassinated by a conspiracy, possibly one of small scale, a matter that the HSCA did not pursue. But, in relation to the major findings of the Warren Commis-
tion, the HSCA reaffirmed them. For the official government account of the death of JFK to be true, therefore, at least the following three conjectures—“hypotheses,” let us call them, to avoid begging the question by taking for granted what needs to be established on independent grounds—have to be true:

(H1) JFK was hit at the base of the back of his neck by a bullet that traversed his neck without hitting any bony structures and exited his throat at the level of his tie;

(H2) JFK was hit in the back of his head by a bullet fired from the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository, as its diagrams display, causing his death and,

(H3) these bullets were fired by a sole assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, using a high-powered rifle, which was identified as a 6.5 mm Italian Mannlicher-Carcano.

As a point of deductive logic, if any of these hypotheses is false, then any account that entails them cannot be true. Yet it is surprisingly easy to show that all three are false.

Smoking Gun #1: (H1) is an anatomical impossibility, because the bullet would have had to impact bony structures.

Consider, for example, hypothesis (H1). David W. Mantik, M.D., Ph.D., who holds a Ph.D. in physics and is also board-certified in radiation oncology, has studied X-rays of the President’s chest. He has used the cross-section of a body whose upper chest and neck dimensions were the same as those of JFK and performed a simple experiment. Taking the specific locations specified by the HSCA for the point of entry at the base of the neck and the point of exit at the throat, he has drawn a straight line to represent the trajectory that any bullet would have to have taken from that point of entry to that point of exit. Any such trajectory would intersect cervical vertebrae. A CAT scan demonstrating Mantik’s experiment has been published in a splendid study of some of the most basic evidence in this case by Stewart Galanor, *Cover-Up* (1998). Here is a visual representation of such a bullet’s trajectory:

![Mantik drew a line through a CAT scan](image-url)
It would have been anatomically impossible for a bullet to have taken the trajectory specified by the official account. Hypothesis (H1) is not just false but cannot possibly be true. (Mantik's study may be found in *Assassination Science* 1998, pp. 157–58.)

**Smoking Gun #2:** *The head shot trajectory is inconsistent with the position of his head at the time of the shot, falsifying (H2).*

Consider (H2), the hypothesis that a bullet fired from the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository entered the back of his head and killed him. The building in question was horizontally located to the President's rear, while the sixth floor of that building was vertically considerably above the President's head. Therefore, any such bullet must have entered the President's head from above and behind. That much is indisputable. No photographs of the President's injuries were published at the time, but *The Warren Report* (1964) did provide drawings (copies of which may be found in *Assassination Science* 1998, p. 438). The drawings of the head wound therefore appear to show a trajectory from above and behind, as the official account requires.

Stewart Galanor, *Cover-Up* (1998), however, has juxtaposed the official drawing with frame 312 of the Zapruder film, which the Warren Commission itself regarded as the moment before the fatal head shot incident to frame 313, with the following result:

![The WC Drawing](image1.png) ![Zapruder Frame 312](image2.png)

When the President's head is properly positioned, the Commission's own drawing displays an upward rather than a downward trajectory. If the official drawing of the injury to the head is correct, then the conjecture that the President was hit from above and behind cannot be true; and if the President was hit from above and behind, the official drawing of the injury must be false. Hypothesis (H2) cannot possibly be true.
Smoking Gun #3: The weapon, which was not even a rifle, could not have fired the bullets that killed the President, falsifying (H3).

Consider (H3), finally, which maintains that the bullets that hit their target were fired by Lee Harvey Oswald using a high-powered rifle, which The Warren Report (1964) also identified as a 6.5 mm Mannlicher-Carcano. As other authors, including Harold Weisberg, Whitewash (1965), Peter Model and Robert Groden, JFK: The Case for Conspiracy (1976), and Robert Groden and Harrison E. Livingstone, High Treason (1989) have also observed, the Mannlicher-Carcano that Oswald is supposed to have used is a 6.5 mm weapon, but it is not high velocity. Its muzzle velocity of approximately 2,000 fps means that it qualifies as a medium-to-low velocity weapon. [Editor's note: Indeed, strictly speaking, the Mannlicher-Carcano is not a rifle but a carbine.]

The 6.5 mm Mannlicher-Carcano, which is not a high-velocity weapon.

The death certificates, The Warren Report articles in JAMA, and other sources state that the President was killed by wounds inflicted by high-velocity missiles. (Some are reprinted in Assassination Science (1998).) The Mannlicher-Carcano is the only weapon that Oswald is alleged to have used to kill the President, but the Mannlicher-Carcano is not a high-velocity weapon; consequently, Lee Oswald could not have fired the bullets that killed the President. Thus, hypothesis (H3) cannot be true. This discovery is especially important, because the extensive damage sustained by JFK’s skull and brain could not possibly have been inflicted by a weapon of this kind. The major trauma the President endured had to have been inflicted by one or more high-velocity weapons.

The Death of Deception

The hypotheses under consideration, (H1), (H2), and (H3), therefore, are not merely false but are provably false. Moreover, these hypotheses are by no means peripheral to the official account but the core of its conclusions. If (H1), (H2), and (H3) are false, then The Warren Report (1964) cannot be salvaged, even in spite of the best efforts of the Gerald Posners of the world. [Editor’s note: Some problems encountered by his popular attempt to revive it have been dissected in...
Among the central findings of *The Warren Report* (1964), therefore, the only one that appears to be true is the least important, namely: that bystander James Tague was hit by a bullet fragment that ricocheted from a distant curb and caused him minor injury.

There are many more, which may be found in this and other studies of the death of JFK. Since Bertrand Russell raised 16 "questions" about the investigation during 1964—even while it was still in progress—it seems appropriate to contrast what we know now with what Russell knew then by offering 16 “smoking guns” that complement his work. In some instances, these smoking guns overlap with Russell’s questions, but discerning readers ought to have no difficulty discovering others in the course of study of this book. I have found that every access route to this subject—whether by means of the medical evidence, the physical evidence, the eyewitness evidence, the Dallas police, *The Warren Report*, the FBI, the CIA, the Pentagon, the Secret Service, or any other avenue of approach—leads to the same conclusions we have reached here and in *Assassination Science* (1998).

**Other “Smoking Guns”**

**Smoking Gun #4:** *The bullets, which were standard copper-jacketed World War II-vintage military ammunition, could not have caused the explosive damage.*

The ammunition that Oswald is alleged to have used was standard full-metal jacketed military ammunition, one round of which was supposed to have been found on a stretcher at Parkland Hospital, a photograph of which appears as Commission Exhibit 399 (elsewhere in this volume). This kind of ammunition conforms to Geneva Convention standards for humane conduct of warfare and is not intended to maim but, absent its impact with hard bodily features, to pass through a body. It does not explode. The lateral cranial X-ray of the President’s head (the image of his head taken from the side), however, displays a pattern of metallic debris as effects of the impact of an exploding bullet, which could not have been caused by ammunition of the kind Oswald was alleged to have used, thereby exonerating him.

![Lateral Cranial X-ray](image1.png) ![Axis of Metallic Debris](image2.png)
Smoking Gun #5: The axis of metallic debris is inconsistent with a shot from behind but consistent with a shot that entered the area of the right temple.

The axis of debris appears to be consistent with a shot entering the area of the right temple rather than the back of the head. Studies of this issue are found in Joseph N. Riley, Ph.D., “The Head Wounds of John F. Kennedy: One Bullet Cannot Account for the Injuries,” The Third Decade (March 1993), pp. 1–15, and in Mantik’s research on the X-rays published in Assassination Science (1998), in his comments on the recent deposition of James J. Humes, M.D., for the ARRB (Appendix G), and in his new study of the medical evidence. In the autopsy report, Humes had described this metallic trail as beginning low on the right rear of the skull. The actual trail, however, lies more than 4 inches higher, much closer to the top of the skull than to the bottom.

Confronted with this discrepancy, Humes concedes that the autopsy report is wrong by some 10 cm. Humes here faced an impossible paradox, which he could not honestly resolve. If he had described the trail correctly and simultaneously reported the low entry wound to the back of the head, then the only reasonable conclusion would have been two shots to the head—one from behind and one from in front—which, in turn, would have implied the existence of at least two gunmen. Humes had no choice but literally to move the trail of metallic debris downward by more than four inches (10 cm), which is precisely what he did. As Mantik explains, it took more than three decades for Humes to be asked to confront this important paradox, which falsifies the lone gunman theory.

Smoking Gun #6: The official autopsy report was contradicted by more than 40 eyewitness reports and was inconsistent with HSCA diagrams and photographs.

Gary Aguilar, M.D., has collated the testimony of more than 40 eyewitnesses, spectators in Dealey Plaza, physicians and nurses at Parkland Hospital, Navy medical technicians and FBI agents at Bethesda Naval Hospital, who report a massive blow-out to the back of the head. Several physicians have diagrammed this blow-out as it was observed at Parkland, which had the general character of the wound depicted below. David Lifton, Best Evidence (1980), however, has diagrammed what the wound resembled based upon the official autopsy report from Bethesda. These may be labeled as “the heel” and “the footprint” due to their size and relationship. When the HSCA reinvestigated the crime in 1978–79, its diagrams and photographs now depicted a small entry wound, which is sometimes referred to as “the red spot”:
Smoking Gun #7: These eyewitness reports were rejected on the basis of the X-rays, which have been fabricated in at least two different ways.

As Mantik has discovered through the employment of optical densitometry studies, the lateral cranial X-ray has been fabricated by imposing a patch over a massive defect to the back of the head, which corresponds to the eyewitness reports describing (what is called here) “the heel” shot. In effecting this deception, the perpetrators used material that was much too dense to be normal skull material, which enabled Mantik to discover what had been done. It turns out that, although not common knowledge at the time, instructions that could be followed to create composites were available in contemporary radiology publications. He has replicated these results in the radiology darkroom, as he explains here and in earlier studies in *Assassination Science* (1998).

Lateral Cranial X-ray  The Patch (“Area P”)

The anterior-posterior (front-to-rear) autopsy X-ray, moreover, has been fabricated by imposing a 6.5 mm metal object not present on the original, which Mantik has established on the basis of additional optical densitometry studies published in *Assassination Science* (1998). All three of the military pathologists who conducted the autopsy at Bethesda have now confirmed to the ARRB that they did not see this metallic object on the X-ray, no doubt because it was added after the autopsy was finished. The addition of this metallic object appears to have been done to implicate a 6.5 mm weapon, such as the Mannlicher-Carcano, in the assassination of President Kennedy. The conspirators made mistakes due to their lack of familiarity with this weapon, however, since it is not a high-velocity rifle and could not have inflicted the damage that caused the President’s death.

Smoking Gun #8: Diagrams and photos of a brain in the National Archives are of the brain of someone other than JFK.

Robert B. Livingston, M.D., a world authority on the human brain, has concluded that credible reports of damage to the cerebrum and especially to the cerebellum—numerous and consistent from the physicians at Parkland, as Aguilar has explained—are incompatible with the diagrams and photographs that are alleged to be of the brain of President Kennedy. As he summarizes his findings, Livingston, who is also an expert on wound ballistics, states, “A conclusion is
obligatorily forced that the photographs and drawings of the brain in the National Archives are those of some brain other than that of John Fitzgerald Kennedy” (Assassination Science 1998, p. 164). This stunning inference has been confirmed by new evidence released by the ARRB, which establishes the occurrence of two distinct post-autopsy brain examinations involving two distinct brains, as Douglas Horne, who was the Senior Analyst for Military Records of the ARRB, explains in a contribution to this volume.

**Smoking Gun #9:** Those who took and processed the autopsy photographs claim that parts of the photographic record have been altered, created, or destroyed

As a consequence of depositions by the ARRB, we now also have extensive additional evidence that autopsy photographs have been altered, created, or destroyed. One of the fascinating discoveries that has emerged from its efforts are eyewitness reports from John Stringer, the official autopsy photographer, that the photographs of the brain shown in the official set are not those that he took at the time; from Robert Knudsen, White House photographer, who has reported having in his possession—at one and the same time—photographs that displayed a major blow-out to the President’s head and others that did not; and from Saundra Spencer, who processed the originals, who explains that she knows they are not the same because they do not have the same physical features as other photographs she processed using the same film, some of which she still possesses. The importance of these and related discoveries for understanding the medical evidence in this case is explored in studies by Aguilar and by Mantik elsewhere in this volume.

**Smoking Gun #10:** The Zapruder film, among others, has been extensively edited using highly sophisticated techniques

Since The Warren Report (1964) published many of the frames of the Zapruder film and placed heavy reliance upon its authenticity in arriving at its conclusions about how many shots were fired and the time it took to fire them, if the photographic evidence is flawed, then the Commission’s conclusions are equally in doubt. And, indeed, there are many reasons to question the authenticity of the Zapruder film as well as much of the other photographic evidence. In his major study of the assassination of JFK, Bloody Treason (1997), Noel Twyman reports consulting with Roderick Ryan, a leading technical expert on motion picture film. Twyman had been puzzled by the discovery of numerous anomalies in the film, including blurred stationary background figures but sharp focus of the limousine in frame 302 versus the sharp focus of both in frame 303:
When Twyman asked Ryan how this could be explained, he stated, "the limousine is moving in 302 and standing still in 303" (Twyman 1997, p. 150). And when Twyman asked him about the mysterious "blob" that seems to shift around from frame to frame immediately after the fatal head shot at frame 313, Ryan told him "it looked as if the blobs had been painted in" (Twyman 1997, p. 151). [Editor's note: The cover highlights "the blob" and Jackie's face, which also seems to be painted in.] Ryan's opinions are all the more important insofar as they corroborate conclusions about film alteration that had been drawn independently by Jack White and by David Mantik, initially in Part IV of Assassination Science (1998) and now in Part V of the current volume. Dr. Ryan received an Oscar for his technical contributions to the motion picture industry during the April 2000 Academy Awards.

Among the most remarkable discoveries of the ARRB, moreover, was locating two persons who worked on processing a home movie of the assassination at the National Photographic Interpretation Center (NPIC) run by the CIA the weekend of the murder. This movie, which appears to have been the "out-of-camera" original of the Zapruder film, was studied by Homer McMahon, who was in charge of the color laboratory at the time. He has reported that, after viewing it at least 10 times, he had concluded that JFK was hit 6 or 8 times from at least three directions, a conclusion subsequently dismissed by Secret Service Agent William Smith, who declared that McMahon had to be mistaken because only three shots had been fired from above and behind, an opinion he had reached without studying the film at NPIC, a stunning episode recorded in a series of interviews conducted for the ARRB by Douglas Horne and published here.

**Smoking Gun #11:** The official conclusion contradicts widely-broadcast reports on radio and television about two shots fired from the front.

Descriptions of two wounds—of a small wound to the throat as well as a massive blow-out to the back of the head caused by an entry wound to the right temple—were widely broadcast that afternoon. If you look at television coverage from that day, you will find that, at 1:35 PM, NBC reports both a shot to the throat and a shot through the right temple, findings attributed to Admiral George Burkley, the President's personal physician. At 1:45 PM, another network reports a shot through the head and a shot to the throat. Chet Huntley reports a shot through the right temple. Robert MacNeil says it is unclear to him how the President could have been shot through the throat and temple if the assassin was firing from above and behind. Frank McGee calls it "incongruous."

Malcolm Perry, M.D., who performed a tracheostomy in a vain attempt to save the life of the mortally injured President, was so certain that a small wound to the throat at the location of the tracheostomy had been fired from in front that—when told that the assassin had been above and behind the limousine—he concluded that JFK must have stood and turned to wave to spectators who were behind him. During a press conference held at Parkland that afternoon, he stated three times that the wound to the throat had been a wound of entry, not a wound of exit. Through deceptive use of a series of hypothetical questions—that assumed the bullet entered at the base of the neck, transited the neck without hitting any bony structures, and exited at the base of the throat—the author of "the single bullet theory," Arlen Specter, was able to obfuscate these observations in support of the official account, in which the trajectories of these wounds were reversed.
Smoking Gun #1: The (fabricated) X-rays, (altered) autopsy photographs, and even the (edited) Zapruder film were improperly used to discredit eyewitness reports.

An important point of which most Americans are generally unaware is that legal procedure permits photographs and motion pictures to be used as evidence in courts of law only when a foundation for their introduction has been established by eyewitness testimony, as Milicent Cranor has observed. According to McCormick on Evidence, 3rd edition (1984), Section 214, for example, concerning photographs, movies, and sound recordings:

The principle upon which photographs are most commonly admitted into evidence is the same as that underlying the admission of illustrative drawings, maps, and diagrams. Under this theory, a photograph is viewed merely as a graphic portrayal of oral testimony, and becomes admissible only when a witness has testified that it is a correct and accurate representation of the relevant facts personally observed by the witness.

The practice of the Warren Commission and apologists for its findings appears to be the exact opposite, where photographs and films—including X-rays—have been used to discount the testimony of eyewitnesses, which is not only the better evidence but is actually required to lay a foundation for the admissibility of evidence of those kinds.

Some defenders of the official account have maintained that the Warren Commission inquiry was not a legal proceeding but merely an advisory body offering its findings and its recommendations to the President, which is technically correct. The precise legal status of The Warren Report (1964) is therefore open to doubt. But how could the interests of the American people—in truth, justice, and fairness—possibly be served by failing to adhere to clear and established principles for the admissibility of evidence? Alas, the question has only to be asked for the answer to be all too obvious. As Harold Weisberg and Bertrand Russell already understood, the Commission was not created to advance the interests of truth, justice, and fairness, but to convince the American people that a lone gunman had assassinated the 35th President of the United States, that the matter had been thoroughly investigated, and that there had been no conspiracy or cover-up.

Smoking Gun #13: The motorcade route was changed at the last minute and yet the assassination occurred on the part that had been changed.

Think about it. As Chief of Police Jesse Curry confirmed in his JFK Assassination File (1969), which I discuss elsewhere in this volume, it was not until 18 November 1963 that the final motorcade route was settled at a meeting between representatives of the Police Department and the Secret Service, when it was agreed that the motorcade would take a right off Main Street onto Houston and a very sharp left onto Elm en route to the Trade Mart, where JFK was scheduled to present a luncheon speech. At the turn from Houston onto Elm, remarkably, the motorcade was considered over and local security was no longer provided. This appears to be such a transparent pretext for disavowing responsibility for the President’s security by the Dallas Police as to be indicative of what is known in the law as “consciousness of guilt” in failing to take or in taking measures that ordinarily would or would not be taken—save for knowledge of the circumstances of a crime.
Indeed, the revised motorcade route was never published in the newspapers, which raises a fascinating question, namely: How did the alleged assassin even know that the President would pass by the Texas School Book Depository in order for him to shoot him? In an interesting study, "The Mathematical Improbability of the Kennedy Assassination," *The Dealey Plaza Echo* (November 1999), pp. 2–6, Ed Dorsch, Jr., has calculated that the probability of Oswald and JFK coming within 100 yards of each other at random during his Presidency is approximately 1 in 1 hundred billion! This suggests an encounter by the two was almost certainly no accident, yet Oswald had no reason to know he would only have to show up for work to have the chance to shoot JFK—and his wife even said that he had overslept! A more plausible explanation is that their proximity was not a matter of chance but was coordinated by plans about which Oswald had no knowledge and over which he had no control.

**Smoking Gun #14:** *Secret Service policies for the protection of the President were massively violated during the motorcade in Dallas.*

More than a dozen Secret Service policies for the protection of the President seem to have been violated during the motorcade in Dallas, including no protective military presence; no coverage of open windows; motorcycles out of position; agents not riding on the Presidential limousine; vehicles in improper sequence; utilization of an improper route, which included a turn of more than 90°; limousine slowed nearly to a halt at the corner of Houston and Elm; the limousine came to a halt after bullets began to be fired; agents were virtually unresponsive; brains and blood were washed from the limousine at Parkland, even before the President had been pronounced dead; the limousine was stripped down and being rebuilt already Monday, the day of the formal state funeral; a substitute windshield was later produced as evidence; and so on—discoveries that are strengthened and extended by Vincent Palamara and Douglas Weldon, J.D., in this book. As an illustration, consider the sequence of vehicles. As the accompanying diagram displays (see Richard E. Sprague, *Computers and Automation* May 1970, pp. 48–49), the Presidential limousine was the lead vehicle in the motorcade, followed by the Secret Service "Queen Mary," the Vice-President’s limousine, the Vice-President’s security, then the Mayor, some dignitaries, Press...
Car #1, Press Car #2, and so on, which is completely absurd. A proper motorcade would have the lower-ranking dignitaries early on, then those in between, and finally the highest official, who would naturally be surrounded by the press, who were there, after all, to cover a political event! In this case, however, everything was wrong—even though, as Richard Trask, *Pictures of the Pain* (1994), p. 45, has observed, the vehicles were identified with numerals, where the Mayor’s car, for example, was marked with a number “1” on its windshield. Indeed, the President’s personal physician, Admiral Burkley, was in the very last car!

This had to be deliberate, it had to be wrong, and everyone involved with security had to know that it was wrong. In this regard, one of the most remarkable paragraphs in the *Final Report of the Assassination Records Review Board* (1998) is the following:

> Congress passed the JFK Act of 1992. One month later, the Secret Service began its compliance efforts. However, in January 1995, the Secret Service destroyed presidential protection survey reports for some of President Kennedy’s trips in the fall of 1963. The Review Board learned of the destruction approximately one week after the Secret Service destroyed them, when the Board was drafting its request for additional information. The Board believed that the Secret Service files on the President’s travel in the weeks preceding his murder would be relevant.

*From the ARRB Final Report (1998), p. 149*

Here again we appear to be confronted with one more indication of consciousness of guilt, which we must add to other indications of Secret Service complicity in the death of JFK.

**Smoking Gun #15:** *Neither the Mafia nor pro- or anti-Castro Cubans nor the KGB could have done any of these things—much less Lee Oswald, who was either incarcerated or already dead.*

The complicity of medical officers of the United States Navy, agents of the Secret Service, the President’s personal physician, and other representatives of the Pentagon, the FBI, and the CIA provides powerful evidence that can serve as a premise in the appraisal of alternative theories about the assassination of JFK. Neither the Mafia, pro- or anti-Castro Cubans, or the KGB could have fabricated autopsy X-rays; substituted the brain of someone else for the brain of JFK; created, altered, or destroyed autopsy photographs; or subjected motion pictures, such as the Zapruder film, to extensive editing using highly sophisticated techniques. Nor could any of these things have been done by the alleged assassin, Lee Oswald, who was either incarcerated or already dead.
The only theories that are remotely plausible, given these evidentiary findings, are those that implicate various elements of the government. It was a crime of such monstrous proportions and immense consequences that the clearly most reasonable explanation is that elements of the government covered up the crime because those same elements of the government committed the crime. For the CIA to have brought these effects about on its own, moreover, would have required medical officers of the U.S. Navy, agents of the Secret Service, and the President's personal physician, among many others, to have been working for or otherwise under its control. While the CIA has repeatedly demonstrated its abilities in bringing about changes in governments around the world—and no doubt elements of the CIA were involved in planning and covering up this crime—it looks as though it could not have done this one on its own.

**Smoking Gun #16:** *Many individuals knew details about the assassination before and after the fact, all of whom viewed Lee Oswald as no more than a patsy.*

One of the more amusing events involved in assassination studies occurred when Liz Smith, a syndicated columnist, apprised her readers that, although she had always taken for granted that The Warren Report (1964) was right and that Oswald had been a lone assassin, after reading Noel Twyman, Bloody Treason (1997), she was no longer sure. This provoked an outraged response from Jack Valenti, the Hollywood Czar and former aide to LBJ, who proclaimed that there was a simple way to know for sure no conspiracy had been involved, namely: that, if there had been a conspiracy, someone would have talked—and no one has talked! The possibility of a small scale conspiracy or that most of the conspirators might have been eliminated right away to keep things quiet may have escaped him, but for a conspiracy of any magnitude—involving dozens and dozens, if not hundreds of people—what Valenti said may have seemed to be right. Of course, that presumes Valenti knew what he was talking about. On a single page of Bloody Treason (1997, p. 285), for example, Noel lists eight names of prominent persons who have talked, including Mafia Dons Carlos Marcello and Santos Trafficante, Jr.; right-wing extremist Joseph Milteer; mobster Johnny Roselli; high ranking CIA official David Atlee Phillips; his old boss, Lyndon Baines Johnson; CIA contract agent and professional anti-Communist Frank Sturgis; and Sam Giancanna, who confessed the complicity of the mob in collusion with the CIA to his brother, Chuck. If Valenti cared about the truth in a matter of this kind, then he might have wanted to read Twyman's book before he set out to trash it, or visited his local book store and picked up a copy of Double Cross (1992).

**Other Sources**

These are hardly the only persons to have talked about the assassination. Jim Hicks, for example, who bears a striking resemblance to someone photographed outside of the Cuban Embassy in Mexico City impersonating Lee Oswald, was photographed in Dealey Plaza with an antenna hanging out of his pocket and claims to have been a communications coordinator for the killing. Charles Harrelson, serving a life term for the assassination of a federal judge with a high-powered rifle, once confessed to having killed Kennedy, by which I take it he meant he had fired the fatal shot. Chauncey Holt, a counterfeiter who worked as
a contract agent for the CIA, has told me he was instructed to bring 15 sets of forged Secret Service credentials to Dealey Plaza, which he dutifully prepared, but that, in light of his extensive experience with the underworld, he thought it was not a mob hit but rather a military operation. I now suspect that Chauncey was correct. The role of the Pentagon in this affair certainly deserves further investigation.

And there are others. Perhaps the most interesting is Madeleine Duncan Brown, a former mistress of LBJ by whom she had a son, who was not LBJ’s only offspring out of wedlock but was his only son. Among the fascinating details she conveys in a book of their affair, *Texas in the Morning* (1997), is that Lyndon told her, at a social event the night before the murder at the home of oil baron Clint Murchison, that after tomorrow he would not have to put up with embarrassment from those Kennedy boys any longer. And that, during a New Year’s Eve rendezvous at The Driskill Hotel in Austin, when she confronted him with rumors (rampant in Dallas at the time) that he had been involved (since no one stood to gain more personally), he blew up at her and told her that the CIA and the oil boys had decided that Jack had to be taken out—which is about as close as we are going to get to the font.

**Then and Now**


In defense of Judge Tunheim, of course, the objection could be raised that he had his hands full with more than 60,000 records and might not have had any opportunity for reading other work on the assassination, even Stewart Galanor, *Cover-Up* (1998), a work of less than 200 pages that conclusively refutes Warren Commission and HSCA findings. Although he was Chair of the ARRB, it might be argued, he cannot be expected to have read everything ever written on this subject. And, indeed, that is not an unreasonable point to make for any American citizen. Let me therefore close with a recommendation. Start with Galanor’s *Cover-Up* (1998), as I have done here; then read the book you have in your hands; and finally turn to *Assassination Science* (1998). You are entitled to know what happened to your country on 22 November 1963. As Charles Drago has eloquently observed, anyone sincerely interested in this case who does not conclude that JFK was murdered as the result of a conspiracy is either unfamiliar with the evidence or cognitively impaired.
The Chairman, John R. Tunheim, and two members of the ARRB, Henry F. Graff and Kermit L. Hall, both of whom are former Army intelligence officers.