THIS IS NOT AMERICA

The assassination of President John F. Kennedy

Philip Coppens

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Even though some will agree with the conclusions reached in this book, this does not mean this book expresses their ideas or conclusions. In no way should they share the blame for the possible miscomings in this book; those are entirely mine (unfortunately).
PROLOGUE

“There must be somewhere… in this beautiful and generous land of France, an honest man who is courageous enough to search for and discover, the truth”

Dreyffus

Assassination researcher Greg Doyle recalled how he, in the late summer of 1988, stayed up late, “reading Best Evidence and being more frightened than any Stephen King novel could ever scare me”. For the Kennedy assassination, the saying that ‘truth is stranger than fiction’ is certainly apt; it is on occasion even more exciting than fiction. Perhaps that is why so many people are drawn into this “quagmire for historians”, as Arthur Schlesinger described the assassination. Joe Wershba of CBS compared the assassination with a poison in the bloodstream: once it grabbed hold of you, it never lets go.

Perhaps it was the mystery, the enigmatic facts that spurred my interest in the assassination. I can’t put forward one specific reason; some things just seem to happen and this just seems to have been one of those things.

In hindsight, perhaps what bothered me most was that some people reserved for themselves an illegitimate right to rape the truth and reconstruct it, falsify it, so as to make it fit in with their desires or whatever they hope to gain or accomplish by this. Isn’t rape purely performed out of a need to rape and a need to enjoy the use of power on other people? I think some simply wanted to cover up to test whether they still possessed all that power at their disposal they once had or, at least, thought they had. I’ve been told that being bothered by such events is not uncommon among penmen, whereas other people believe they will never learn the truth.

Towards the latter stages of writing this book, I had to pay my membership fee in some organization in America and because it is a rather small amount of money, I decided to simply put it in an envelope and mail it out. I remember that I grabbed a piece of paper from a stack of papers I no longer use and now try to re-use (my contribution to the safe-guarding of our environment) and put the ‘hard cash’ into it, so that it wouldn’t fall out when the envelope would be opened. As it turned out: one side of that paper was a copy of a newspaper article on Oswald’s exhumed body, when the director and founder of that organization thanked me for renewing my membership in his organization, he wrote, much to my surprise, “Also, thank you for the news clipping about Oswald’s body. Articles such as this one keep popping up here and there ad nauseam, but no one will ever know the truth about it”.

Perhaps we, those who love to write, are either very smart or very naive to think that the truth can still be learned; still, we set out to uncover it. As assassination researcher Paul Hoch said: “I simply seem to be able to work on something without looking forward to find a solution.”

This book is primarily the result of my search for the truth, a search that I feel has brought some solutions and certainly possible solutions. I hope I have not used my pen as a nuclear acid trying to poison anyone crossing my path, acting out my frustrations against those I do not like, for whatever reason that may be. I hope, as Harold Weisberg hopes with me, that this book is a book about facts, not theory, even though facts can lead to the formation of a theory; the other way round is impossible. I also hope that my conclusions will bear fruit in your mind and hope that I, at the very least, will have given you a pleasurable read.

What I consider to be the truth could perhaps turn out to be final truth about the assassination one
day; then again, it might be I didn’t even come close. At one stage, when there was the possibility to solve this crime once and for all, at that stage this possibility remained just that: a possibility; it turned out to be a road not taken. That road’s condition has degenerated over the years; perhaps we shouldn’t even call it a ‘trail’ any longer.

I have, most unfortunately, not the powers of state to investigate this crime and afterwards test or validate my theory. I only hope that this book will, along with all the others already written and still to be written, in some way change the present climate that hangs over this crime and Kennedy’s presidency: a stubborn desire by the nation’s leaders to cling to a theory that has collapsed and a feeling of helplessness among the general public.

I have tried to construct this theory as sound and detailed as possible; this means that certain rather extravagant claims are not discussed or have deserved (too?) little attention. Perhaps I should have taken W.H. Auden’s words that “the real is what will strike you as really absurd” or the questioning words “is your theory strange enough to come close to the truth?” more in mind. Then again, W.H. Auden might have been incorrect, just as I might have been. Then again, both W.H. Auden and my theory might prove correct.

I cannot and do not wish to change your perceptions or opinions, simply because I am unable to. The harder one tries to change opinions, the more one clings to one’s opinions. The only person that can embrace this theory is you and whether you, in the end, will embrace it, is totally up to you. Unlike some people, I believe you, as well as I, have the legitimate right to believe what we want to believe, whether we accept the truth or a cover story. The only ‘if’ is that I believe we need to be presented with all the facts and construct a likely scenario or a theory that represent the facts and not contradicts the facts, as some other theories and conclusions. That’s what I try to do. In the summer of 1963, Kennedy expressed his belief that “the highest duty of the writer is to remain true to himself and let the chips fall where they may. In serving his vision of the truth, the artist best serves his nation”. Beyond this, there is only ‘the American dream’ laid down in the Constitution: that everybody is free to form opinions. Anything short of this is a nightmare.
INTRODUCTION

“It’s a mystery wrapped inside a riddle, inside an enigma.”
David Ferrie in the film ‘JFK’

Many historians accept the notion that history began with the beginning of the script. Somehow, they feel that words are more accurate than recollected descriptions of past events. For historians, the words of John 1, ‘in the beginning there was a word and the word was with God and the word was God’ seem to sum up how we should look upon history. The myths of the ancients are only accepted as an example of how these people tried to grasp reality, tried to imagine how the world could function. And, of course, they always came short in grasping it. The idea that these people used myths as a means of recording past events seems beyond comprehension to modern historians. The often divine events which are stored in these myths is beyond comprehension to modern historians and therefore they disregard them, assuming and claiming these myths are just figments of the ancients’ imagination.

History, dictionaries explain, is the story of how something happened. History is the account of events, of what happened, i.e. of which the reality or occurrence is sure. Because of this, many people equal ‘history’ with ‘truth’, even though it seems many historians don’t. Truth means that a representation of an event is identical to what really happened. Ethically and philosophically, this implies that history should be the truth about past events. To many people, myths are no part of history since those who should protect the truthfulness of history, the historians, have ‘ruled’ so. Myths cannot be a part of history simply because historians believe the spoken word is much more inaccurate than the written one. Because of this assumption, people believe myths do not describe what happened; they are looked upon as a lie.

In some mischievous way, the notion that myths could be inaccurate has changed into the assumption that they are lies.

On November 22, 1963, at 12h30 CST, the 35th President of the United States of America, President John Fitzgerald Kennedy, was shot in Dealey Plaza, Dallas, Texas. Thirty minutes later, at 13h00, President Kennedy was officially declared dead by Dr. Kemp Clark at Parkland Memorial Hospital in Dallas.

At 13h50, a suspect in the killing of Dallas Police Patrolman J.D. Tippit was arrested. Officer Tippit had been killed while patrolling the residential Oak Cliff-area in Dallas around 13h10, even though ‘patrolling’ might not be the correct word: there seems to be no justified reason why he was where he was. The suspect in this crime was 24-year-old male Lee Harvey Oswald, who, when arrested inside the Texas Theatre in Dallas, possibly carried a weapon which he tried to use against the arresting officers of the Dallas Police Department.

The suspect, Lee Harvey Oswald, was, while in Police custody, also the subject of an enquiry by Captain John Will Fritz of the Dallas Police Department in connection with the assassination of President Kennedy. Captain Fritz was informed one Lee Harvey Oswald was already in police custody at that time.

Oswald worked in a building along the route of the presidential motorcade, in the immediate vicinity of the scene of the crime. At a roll-call, Oswald was one of those absent. Some witnesses in Dealey Plaza had informed Dallas Police officers of hearing shots coming from the Texas
School Book Depository, situated to the North of the Plaza. Around 13h15, an assassin’s nest was found on the sixth floor of this building, containing three spent rifle cartridges. Only a few minutes later, a rifle was found in the immediate vicinity of this nest. This rifle was identified as a 7.65 mm Mauser. Later that day, at Police Headquarters, this rifle was identified as a 6.5mm Manlicher-Carcano. That night, FBI agents in Chicago helped trace this rifle (the 6.5mm Manlicher-Carcano) to one A.J. Hidell, Post Office Box 2955, Dallas, Texas. This PO Box belonged to the suspect, Lee Harvey Oswald. The gun allegedly found on Oswald at the time of arrest was also traced to this Post Office Box.

On the evening of November 22, 1963, the suspect Lee Harvey Oswald was officially charged with killing DPD Patrolman J.D. Tippit. Possibly that same evening Lee Harvey Oswald might have been charged with the assassination of President Kennedy.

While being transferred from the Dallas Police Headquarters to the Dallas County Jail, the charged suspect in the assassination of J.D. Tippit and possibly the charged suspect in the assassination of President Kennedy was shot by Jack Ruby, nightclub owner in Dallas, Texas, in the basement of the Dallas Police Headquarters on November 24, 1963, at 11h21. At 13h07, the victim, Lee Harvey Oswald, died at Parkland Memorial Hospital, Dallas.

Vice President Lyndon Baines Johnson was sworn in as 36th President of the United States of America on board of Air Force One at Love Field Airport, Dallas, at 14h38, November 22, 1963. On November 29, 1963, President Johnson signed Executive Order No. 11130, establishing the President’s Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy, commonly referred to as the Warren Commission. This seven-member commission concluded that Lee Harvey Oswald, unaided, was the assassin in both crimes. Their Report was released on September 24, 1964. All Commission members signed the Report.

Because of continuing rumors and speculations, the U.S. House of Representatives passed, on September 17, 1976, House Resolution 222, thus establishing the House Select Committee on Assassinations. The Committee’s task was to reinvestigate the deaths of both President Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr. The investigators of the Kennedy assassination also needed to evaluate the Warren Commission’s conclusions. On July 17, 1979, the chairman of the HSCA, Repr. Louis Stokes (Ohio, Democrat), released the Committee’s final report. The report concluded that, even though the Warren Commission’s investigation showed numerous flaws, Lee Harvey Oswald was the assassin of J.D. Tippit and President Kennedy, thus confirming the conclusions reached by the Warren Commission.

Whereas the Warren Commission had concluded that only three shots were fired (one hitting Kennedy and Governor Connally, one killing Kennedy and one injuring bystander James Tague), the HSCA concluded four shots were fired. The fourth shot, the HSCA concluded, was shot from what was commonly known as the ‘grassy knoll’-area in Dealey Plaza. The HSCA concluded this shot missed the President, injuring nobody. The HSCA speculated that there might have been a conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy.

Later, other governmental agencies said there was nothing to these speculations and that Oswald, to them, was still the unaided assassin of Kennedy.

In 1968, District Attorney Jim Garrison from New Orleans, Louisiana, had charged Clay Shaw, director of the International Trade Mart in New Orleans, with complicity in the assassination of the President Kennedy. The jury, instructed to answer the question whether or not there had been
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a conspiracy to kill President Kennedy and, should this be the case, whether or not the accused, Clay Shaw, was an accomplice in this conspiracy, answered positively to the first question and negative to the second. This still stands as the only official verdict of a conspiracy in the assassination.

The description of the events relating to President Kennedy’s assassination as they are represented above, is about the only historical correct representation of the events, in light of the current atmosphere in which conspiracy theories of the ‘assassination buffs’ are not accepted as truth.

Many historians, however, say Oswald killed President Kennedy from the sixth floor with his rifle. Oswald acted alone. That is about all that seems to be needed to say about his death. If lucky, the author rearranges his text as to make a small paragraph of that statement.

This description fails in most ways to accurately represent or in trying to depict the actual events unfolding around this assassination. Yet few people and even less historians have looked deeper into this matter.

Instead of investigating, they have accepted the ‘fact’ Oswald killed President Kennedy.

Oswald didn’t have any reason to shoot him; in fact, historians, prior to the Kennedy assassination, had more or less come to the agreement all people who took a shot a President of the United States were ‘lone nuts’. To them, Oswald was just another example of their previously conceived theory; it only confirmed their opinions. Weren’t they a smart bunch of people?

Since the Warren Commission’s conclusions fit their opinions, these conclusions simply had to be correct. Instead of searching for the truth, journalists, those people who write about the most recent past, and historians accepted the Commission’s findings. Most probably, the reason for this blind faith was the idea that, since the Commission seemed to have searched for the truth and was able to reach a conclusion about the events, they had acted as true historians: separate facts from fiction and rumors; base your conclusions on facts, not on anything else.

President Johnson’s initial reaction when he received the Commission’s Report shows this point, even though Johnson did not intend it that way. ‘Uh... it’s heavy’. With over nine hundred pages, the Warren Report looked as if it had investigated every aspect of the assassination; there were 26 volumes, filled with documents still to come. With over 25,000 pages of writing, how could this possibly NOT be the truth? The old myth that words and truth were synonyms had won again.

Critics of the Warren Report pointed out the many and major weaknesses the Report contained. In fact, as will be discussed later, the Warren Report, i.e. the conclusions drawn from the Warren Commission Documents, i.e. the data regarding this assassination, contradicted the Warren Commission Documents. The critics, using the Warren Commission Documents plus documents never sent to the Commission but immediately filed into the National Archives or other semi-secret archives began to construct a somewhat, if not totally, different picture of the assassination. Instead of a lone nut killing the President, they saw a conspiracy. These ‘buffs’ knew Poul Anderson’s statement: “I have yet to see any problem, however complicated, which when you look at it in the right way, did not become still more complicated.” To the Warren Commission, it was an ‘open and shut case’, something you work on between putting the chicken in the oven and eating it.

Defenders of the Warren Report and historians argue that the lone nut-theory is difficult to accept for some people (read: buffs) since it makes you realize that history and events are shaped by
random events; that history is nothing more than some nuts and bolts put together in such a way that there is chaos, not order. Implied in this message is, of course, the message that the defenders of the Warren Report and historians, in their infinite wisdom, have been able to master this difficulty.

But what if, in fact, the events surrounding Dealey Plaza go deeper than what is reported as history? What if there was a conspiracy, going beyond a few lone nuts? Perhaps another question should be asked. Is it too difficult to believe that there was a conspiracy in President Kennedy’s death? Is it too difficult for those who always speak of ‘beautiful America’ that ‘beautiful America’ killed its own president?

Sure, these things have happened before, but in other countries, quite often with the help of certain government agencies of the United States. Coming to terms with the possible fact that your very own country, which you probably love (you at least say you do about twice a week), did the very same thing, is very difficult. Accepting this as an individual, as a group and as a nation, understanding its implications and fully realizing your government and country are just like any other ‘ordinary’ country, in fact worse than a few other countries, is extremely difficult, much more difficult than accepting a loner killed your President.

When a lone nut kills a President, the citizen can go to bed safely, possibly crying yourself asleep because of the loss of a president. Nobody could have prevented it happening, nobody in his right mind would aim at the President of the United States, leader of that great nation. When your president is killed by an organized group of people who planned it to the minute details, you either stay awake, afraid of going to bed because you realize that if they can get a president they can easily get you or you decide to ignore this ‘terrible’ thought and seek refuge into that nice myth of a deranged person killing a president.

History, however, has also learned that if you run away from events, they will come to haunt you, much stronger than they would have initially if you had dealt with the problem then, once and for all.

And it seems as if President Kennedy’s ghostly image hangs over this Earth until the truth will surface and will set people free.

Nixon, either afraid or disgusted with Kennedy, removed a plaque in the presidential bedroom which read that Kennedy had slept in that bedroom. No president wants Kennedy’s image to haunt him in his own bedroom. That means you go to bed and you are still forced to grasp at the message of his death; a message that is probably Kennedy’s ultimate legacy. Nixon, by removing the plaque, also took away the only item that might have made him think about the assassination. As he himself has said so often: “I don’t study the assassination because I feel there is nothing to learn from.” Perhaps he should have let the plaque stay, as an invitation to think about the assassination and about what statement was made when Kennedy died. Nixon, like so many others, failed to see that message.

Kennedy himself believed that “we seek a free flow of information... a nation that is afraid to let people judge the truth and falsehood in an open market is a nation afraid of its people”. 
PART ONE
GUilty BY SUSPICION

“the law is no more than an arbitrary construct
designed to protect the wealthy.”
“This is pernicious... The Law has real moral force
for each individual!! to dwell in society is not to
have the freedom to choose which laws to obey as
one might choose which bonnet to put on.”
“On the contrary... One chooses to obey or disobey
the Law simply on the calculus of self-interests
is it easier to obey this particular law or
can I profit from breaking it?”
“I felt a profound sense of excitement mingled
with feelings of dismay, for if this was right,
then everything was arbitrary and uncertain...”
Charles Palliser, THE QUINCUNX

In the American system of law, a man is innocent until proven otherwise. Or at least that’s the
tory. To determine whether a man is innocent or guilty of the crimes he has been charged with,
the defendant has the right to a trial, where a jury of twelve selected citizens has to decide
whether the evidence brought to the court’s attention during the trial is strong enough so that the
jury’s verdict reads guilty. The jury has to be convinced of the defendant’s guilt that (reasonable)
doubt whatsoever in the jury’s mind, be any reasonable doubt in the jury’s mind, theory, has to
pronounce the defendant not guilty.
Quite clearly, the probable defendant who was charged for the assassination of President
Kennedy and Patrolman J.D.Tippit would have been Lee Harvey Oswald. However, he died
before even a date for the start of the trial was set.
Therefore, Lee Oswald never got his day(s) in court; at least, should the charges against him not
have been dropped before the trial began. Though it may seem strange, the evidence against
Oswald is not as convincing as some believe. This would have surfaced if Oswald would have
had to stand trial and his attorney(s) wanted to counter the District Attorney’s conclusions.

Because of the impossibility to try Oswald before a court, other methods had to be used to judge
whether he was, in fact, the assassin. Of course, all this captioned as a ‘profound search for the
truth’ some influential people (meaning they could investigation) weren’t convinced of Oswald’s
there never would have been a Warren Commission. If there had been other suspects, the police,
aided by such organizations as the FBI and CIA, could have hunted these suspects down’ and
eventually bring them to trial, provided they themselves were not gunned down before that time.
I feel it necessary to evaluate the evidence against Oswald, but also to evaluate ALL the
evidence. Such an evaluation will enable us to draw conclusions on how the various
investigations were conducted and whether they in some way could be compared to an ‘honest
and fair’ trial.
“Facts do not cease to exist because they are ignored.”

Aldous Huxley

The initial search for the truth in the assassination was performed by the Warren Commission whose members unanimously decided Lee Harvey Oswald was the assassin of both President Kennedy and Patrolman J.D. Tippit. Though it may seem this Commission’s only motive was the truth, as Commission member Gerald Ford claimed, it did rule against the presence of an attorney representing Lee Oswald’s and his family’s interest. The motive for this ruling was ... that the Commission was out to seek the truth, not to blame Oswald of the crime simply because he was the major (and only) suspect. The Warren Commission’s truth turned out to inculpate Lee Oswald as the assassin in both crimes and it seems only logical that some people thought the Commission had done just that: blame Oswald because he had been everyone’s initial suspect.

The Warren Commission gave the impression that it had played both District Attorney and defense attorney, plus jury. But nowhere is it shown they played defense attorney. Therefore the jury’s verdict is simply based on the District Attorney’s reasoning, a reasoning which has to make the defendant look guilty because if this is not the case, the District Attorney shouldn’t even have brought that person to trial in the first place. Because of the lack of a defense attorney and of the simple fact that a commission is not the same as a jury trial, the Warren Commission’s conclusion has to receive a critical analysis. If they can stand the test, their verdict stands. If not...
**A. ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY AND WOUNDING OF GOVERNOR JOHN B. CONNALLY**

**Paraffin-test**

In order to have killed somebody with a fire-arm, you have to have fired that weapon in the general direction of that person. Therefore, the Dallas Police had to find out whether or not Oswald had fired a weapon on November 22, 1963.

To find out, Dallas Police administered a paraffin-test to Oswald’s hand and his right cheek. (They must have assumed Oswald was right-handed since they didn’t check his left cheek. This negligence could, of course, have been a fateful mistake.) The test proved positive for both hands and negative for the right cheek, even though chief of the Dallas FBI-bureau Gordon Shanklin wrongly ‘informed’ the press nitrates had been found on the right cheek. D.A. Henry Wade, receiving the results of the test, told the media that the paraffin-test had established Oswald had fired a gun.

Critics of the Warren Commission pointed out the simple logic that the tests proved Oswald didn’t shoot with a rifle because the test proved negative for the cheek. But experts disagreed with the simple logic. They claimed a revolver had space between the cylinders, which gave room for the gasses to escape, thus making Oswald test positive, i.e. concluding he had fired a gun that day. A rifle, however, had no such gap between the chamber and barrel because the cartridge sealed the chamber off, not allowing any gases to escape. This meant a cheek-test could prove negative even though the man had fired a rifle.

These conclusions seem to show Oswald did shoot at J.D.T-ippit with a revolver. Do they? They don’t since the paraffin-test only shows whether or not there are nitrates on the hands and cheek (or on any other part of the body for that matter). Though it is true gunpowder residue contains nitrates, tobacco, urine, cosmetics, paint and several other substances contain nitrates as well. Mere contact with any of these products can trigger a positive result, like Oswald had.

The Warren Commission concluded that a paraffin-test only indicated whether or not there were nitrates on the hands or cheek and that this didn’t show anything about whether or not someone had fired a weapon.

On the issue of the paraffin-test, we see that the Commission played the role of the jury correctly, not accepting a District Attorney’s reasoning, which would be that the test showed Oswald shot a gun. It would be interesting to find out how many people have been convicted because the jury believed that a positive paraffin-test proved the defendant had fired a weapon, whereas it only proves the defendant had been in contact with nitrates. However, Oswald’s guilt was not based on this misconception.

**The Rifle**

With inconclusive evidence on whether or not Oswald shot anyone that day, the next step is to find out if the rifle used in this crime showed any signs of Oswald handling it.

The Warren Commission had this to say about the search for fingerprints on the rifle: “A few minutes after the rifle was discovered on the sixth floor of the Depository Building it was examined by Lt. J.C. Day of the identification bureau of the Dallas Police. He lifted the rifle by the wooden stock after his examination convinced him the wood was too rough to take
fingerprint.” So the Warren Commission had bad luck since this was where the assassin, believed to be Oswald, would have held the rifle while firing it. John Carl Day then went on to inspect the knob of the bolt, but he discovered no prints on that part of the rifle. Then “he (Day) applied fingerprint powder to the side of the metal housing near the trigger, and noticed traces of two prints.”

According to Day, the “FBI ordered me not to make a comparison between the rifle print and Oswald’s print”.

Some time later, around 23h45, the rifle was handed over to FBI-agent Vincent Drain, who took it to Washington, to the FBI Laboratory, where Sebastian F. Latona, on the morning of November 23, examined the rifle. He found the areas where prints were visible protected by cellophane. Latona, however, concluded the prints were insufficient for identification and that they were of no value. He processed the complete weapon and found no identifiable prints. His boss, FBI-director J.E. Hoover therefore signed the statement that “no latent prints of value were developed on Oswald’s revolver, the cartridge cases, the unfired cartridge, the clip in the rifle or the INNER parts of the rifle.” (my emphasis)

However, the Warren Commission argues, Lt. Day DID lift a palm print from the rifle, found on the inner parts of the rifle. Day claimed the lifting was so complete that no trace of the print was left. A member of his lab, Rusty Livingstone, claims the lifting was complete, but also claims the print was not fresh, that it was an old one. This means that even though there might have been a print, there is no evidence Oswald handled the rifle that day, which says enough. Even so, there is no record of such a discovery on November 22. This ‘evidence’ was only released on November 26 and arrived at FBI headquarters on November 29.

Even though the Warren Commission said the lifting was so complete that no trace of the print was left, Lt. Day believed there were sufficient traces left on the rifle barrel. During his examination of the rifle, FBI-expert Latona didn’t see these traces. Lt. Day said he nevertheless ‘specifically pointed out the print to Agent Drain when I gave him the rifle.’ FBI-agent Drain denied this had happened and said the palm print had been faked.

The FBI, trying to clarify the matter, attempted to make Day certify a statement that he lifted the palm print, something Lt. Day declined to do. Though this might be a prime example of interdepartmental rivalry and dissatisfaction, it does seem rather strange Day would not officially state he HAD found the palm print.

Because of this unbinding commitment of someone who claimed he had lifted a palm print but who didn’t want to go on record as saying he had done just what he had been telling everyone he had done, the Warren Commission also doubted the legitimacy of the palm print. A memorandum from Rosen to Belmont at the FBI, dated August 28, 1964, states: “Rankin (the Commission’s Chief Council) advised ... there was a serious question in the minds of the Commission as to whether or not the palm print ... is a legitimate latent palm impression or whether it was obtained from some other source and that for this reason this matter needs to be resolved.” It seems only likely the FBI tried, once again, to get an official statement from Day.

There is ‘reasonable doubt’ about the legitimacy of this print when we look into the chain of possession of the evidence. The idea of ‘chain of evidence’ means that the whereabouts/possession of a piece of evidence has to be known at all times if this evidence wants to be admitted as evidence during a trial.

On the afternoon of November 24, hours after Oswald was killed in the basement of the Dallas
Police Department, the rifle was returned to Dallas. Two days later, the rifle was again returned to Washington. No plausible reason was given why the weapon should be taken back to Dallas. Is there a reason?

The corpse of Lee Oswald was taken to Miller Funeral Home after he was declared dead on November 24 and before he was buried on November 25. The Director of the Funeral Home, Paul Groody, stated that the FBI came to fingerprint Oswald’s corpse while it was in his Funeral Home. He even had to remove the ‘dirt’ from Oswald’s fingers afterwards. FBI agent Richard Harrison said he had personally driven an FBI agent AND the rifle to the Funeral Home. Harrison said he ‘understood that the agent intended to place Oswald’s palm print on the rifle FOR COMPARISON PURPOSES. Why this was done is unclear: Oswald was fingerprinted while in police-custody and these prints were in perfect order, thus eliminating the need to take new fingerprints.

After these new prints were taken, the rifle was returned to Washington and Lt. Day suddenly released his data of having found a palm print on the rifle as early as November 22. Three days later, the palm print arrived at the FBI in Washington and Latona identified this palm print as the right palm print of Lee Harvey Oswald. However, he was unable to determine the time elapsed since the placing of the print and the date of the lift. Perhaps this was just as well since there is a reasonable chance the print was placed only when the FBI fingerprinted Oswald’s corpse, not when the rifle was allegedly fired in Dealey Plaza.

Oswald’s defense attorney could have argued that the FBI-agent lifting the palm print ‘for comparison purposes’ from Oswald’s corpse, was, probably unconsciously, placing the palm print on the rifle which Lt. Day claimed to have lifted on November 22. Lt. Day, however, only released this information on November 26 and declined to certify he had lifted the palm print on November 22. Furthermore, to the FBI, there was nothing to compare with since no palm print was reported to the FBI (or to anyone else, for that matter) prior to November 26.

To put it in layman-terms: the Warren Commission claims there was indeed a palm print lifted from the rifle on November 22, but there is no evidence to back this conclusion. In fact, should we have to draw a conclusion as to when the palm print was lifted, the most sound explanation, perhaps even coming close to as being beyond reasonable doubt, is that the palm-print was lifted after the rifle had been pressed against Oswald’s corpse’s palm while lying in the Funeral Home. After the FBI had fingerprinted Oswald’s corpse, D.A. Wade, on Monday November 25, said: ‘Let’s see ... his fingerprints were found on the gun. Have I said that?’ He hadn’t said that: that was the first time he did. Wade also said that the strongest evidence against Oswald was the ‘fact’ that his prints were found on the rifle. That Monday evening, the Dallas Times Herald headlined: ‘OSWALD’S PRINTS REVEALED ON RIFLE KILLING KENNEDY.’ Clearly, this statement was blatantly false since, even though the Herald might have had inside information about Day having lifted a palm print from the rifle (should this indeed have happened), the FBI only received the palm print on November 29 and therefore couldn’t conclude (and didn’t conclude) the palm print was Oswald’s on November 25, the day the Herald carried the headline. Day had specifically said that the FBI had ordered him NOT to make a comparison. The press reported a rumor, not a fact.

Chief Curry said that if they could “GET” a print on the rifle, that would prove to him (and beyond doubt) Oswald was the assassin. It seems someone took the word “get” a bit too literally.

Because of the placement of the palm print, the Warren Commission had to conclude that Oswald
had handled the rifle when it was disassembled. To strengthen their conclusion, they said that palm prints were as unique as fingerprints. Some experts agree on this uniqueness; others disagree.

It will be clear however that the Warren Commission only played the role of the District Attorney (Wade) and completely neglected the role of the defense attorney. Most of the evidence for the defense was discovered much later, sometimes as long as fifteen years later. This only stresses the point that the search for the truth on this piece of evidence was poor and showed gross inefficiencies on the Commission’s part.

**What rifle?**

However, we have made an assumption that is not entirely correct if seriously want to investigate the Commission’s findings. It is an assumption that seems so evident the Commission acted as if it was a minor matter.

I have assumed that the rifle found on the scene of the crime is the same as the rifle examined by Lt. Day or/and FBI expert Latona. Just like the Commission did with the palm-print, I have neglected to investigate the evidentiary chain of the rifle, identified by the Warren Commission as a Manli-cher-Carcano 6.5mm.

The rifle on the sixth floor of the Depository Building was found by three officers, Weitzman, Boone and Craig. Capt. Fritz and Lt. Day were called and identified the weapon. This should mean that Weitzman, Boone and Craig only saw the rifle but didn’t handle it, whereas Fritz and Day did handle it. This means that the testimony by Fritz and Day is much more important because they did a more thorough investigation of the rifle.

Therefore, we will begin with the identification by Lt. J.C. Day. The Warren Report has this to say: “Lt. Day promptly noted that stamped on the rifle itself was the serial number C2766, as well as the markings ‘1940’, ‘MADE ITALY’ and ‘Cal. 65’. ‘Promptly’ is a rather vague description. Most people believe that it means that the rifle was identified at the Book Depository. However, Lt. Day was never asked whether he identified the rifle at that scene.

WBAP, a local radio-station, broadcasted the following on November 22: ‘Crime Lt. J.C. Day just came out of that building. Reported British 303 rifle with telescopic lens.’ Questioned by Commission Council Belin, Day was asked whether he ever described the rifle as anything but a 6.5 caliber with regard to the rifle itself. Day replied: ‘I didn’t describe the rifle to anyone other than police officers.’ Day states he didn’t report to the WBAP-journalist(s) that it was a British 303 rifle. But Day clearly didn’t answer Belin’s questions. Since the issue was not pursued, it is very possible Day DID describe the rifle as anything but a 6.5 caliber, but only to the other police officers, not the media. Day also claimed that driving back to the office with FBI-agent Odum, Odum radioed in the identity of the rifle. Mr. Odum never mentioned this and was not called before the Warren Commission. Once again, we see that a claim made by Lt. Day is uncorroborated.

The Commission failed to ask one important question: did Day identify the weapon at the Book Depository? It failed in forcing Day to answer the question whether he identified the rifle as something other than a Mannlicher-Carcano 6.5mm.

The Commission has this to say in the rumors and speculation-section of its report. Answering to the speculation that the name of the rifle appeared on the rifle and should therefore have been identified correctly (i.e. only as being a 6.5 Mannlicher-Carcano) on the spot, the Commission states there was no manufacturer’s name on the rifle. The only inscription on the rifle was ‘made
in Italy’. This does not corroborate the Commission statement, in the same Report, that there were other inscriptions on the rifle; in fact, the statements are at odds with each other. It seems nobody noticed this flaw before the Report was officially released.

The other person that identified the rifle as being a 6.5 mm Mannlicher-Carcano was Capt. Fritz, who, unlike Day, was not a member of the DPD Identification section. Before the Warren Commission, Boone, who found the weapon, said he had heard Capt. Fritz refer to the rifle as being a Mauser. Asked by Commission Council Ball about this, Fritz denied he did. Ball also asked Fritz whether he had heard any conversation about the rifle being a Mauser. Fritz answered: ‘I heard all kinds of reports about the rifle. They called it MOST EVERYTHING.’ (my emphasis). Clearly, Fritz had to answer yes or no, something which he failed to do. Implied, however, Fritz does seem to admit he heard about the rifle being a Mauser, among other identifications. Fritz, like Day, was quite eager not to answer possibly embarrassing questions.

The testimony by Fritz and Day surely has many inaccuracies. A full-proof identification of the rifle, on the scene, as being a 6.5 mm Mannlicher-Carcano has definitely not been proven beyond reasonable doubt, let alone ANY reasonable doubt.

What did Boone, Weitzman and Craig have to say about the rifle they had found?

The Report says: ‘the rifle Boone found, a 6.5 millimeter Mannlicher-Carcano.’ Deputy Eugene Boone, in his report on November 22, however, identified the rifle as a 7.65 mm German Mauser; ‘what appeared to be a 7.65mm Mauser with ‘a telescopic sight. The rifle had want (sic: i.e. what) appeared to be a brownish, black-stock and blue steel, metal parts”. Boone later said he used Mauser as a generic term. One wonders how he used 7.65mm. Asked to identify the Mannlicher-Carcano when appearing before the Warren Commission as the weapon he had found, he stated: “It LOOKS LIKE the same rifle. I have NO WAY of being POSITIVE.” (my emphasis) This is anything but a positive identification. A positive identification should read: “It is (in fact) the same rifle. I am (very) positive of that.” His use of words that it ‘looks like’ the same rifle, implies it resembles the weapon he found, but is not the same as the one he found. Why did Boone fail to positively identify the weapon? Boone said he couldn’t identify it “because it didn’t have his marks on it”. In order to mark a rifle, one has to touch it and the Commission gave the impression Boone saw but didn’t touch the weapon, at least not before Day did. Of course, not finding your initials on the rifle means the rifle shown to you could be not the same rifle you found; that the rifle was substituted.

Weitzman also claimed it was a Mauser. The Warren Report, in the speculation and rumors section, claimed that Weitzman had little more than a glimpse of it. The Report implied that little weight should be given to Weitzman’s statements. Weitzman stated about the rifle in a signed affidavit that “this rifle was a 7.65 Mauser bolt action equipped with a 4/18 scope, a thick leather brownish-black sling on it.” Most certainly, such a detailed description means Weitzman had a thorough look at the rifle, even though he still might have been mistaken about the identification of the rifle. This, however, is unlikely since Weitzman was known to be experienced in guns and had even worked in gun shops. Weitzman was not called before the Warren Commission and was (therefore) not asked to identify the rifle the Commission had as possibly the one he had found. At the very least, Weitzman DID have a good look at the rifle, contrary to the Report’s conclusion, and should have been called to testify.

Deputy Sheriff Roger Craig had this to say about him finding the rifle: ‘Boone and I found the rifle which I might add was a 7.65 Mauser, so stamped on the barrel.’ What Craig is implying here is obvious: it was easy to identify the weapon as a Mauser because it was stamped on the
rifle itself. You didn’t even have to know anything about weapons, you only had to be able to read and notice the inscription. It seems Craig somehow believed they wouldn’t ask him about what kind of rifle it was (since the Commission had a 6.5 Mannlicher-Carcano, not a 7.65 Mauser) and outsmarted the Commission, putting into evidence he had identified it as a Mauser and not, as the Commission probably hoped he would do, a Mannlicher-Carcano.

With no positive identification of the Mannlicher-Carcano as the rifle being found on the sixth floor of the Depository Building, there is, in fact, no basis for the allegation, made by the Commission, that the Mannlicher-Carcano is that weapon. There were, in fact, negative identifications of the Mannlicher-Carcano as the weapon found around the sniper’s nest in the TSBD.

Could a rifle (a German Mauser) be switched (with a Mannlicher-Carcano)? Dallas Police Chief Jesse Curry said that anyone wanting to substitute rifles ‘could have gotten away with it at the time’ (implied: nobody would have noticed the substitution). No special precautions were taken to isolate the weapon as historic evidence, he said.

The Warren Commission, if it had faced ALL available evidence, should have concluded there is reasonable doubt on this issue. The possibility exists that the Mannlicher-Carcano was NOT the rifle found on the sixth floor of the Depository Building. The Warren Commission, however, failed to conclude this. Even though D.A. Wade had no first-hand knowledge on the issue, even he stated, to the media, that he believed the rifle was identified as a Mauser. It would therefore have been interesting to see whether he would have used the Mannlicher-Carcano in his efforts to convince the jury of Oswald’s guilt, should Oswald’s case have been presented in court.

The Warren Commission arrived upon a conclusion, which, once again, was the conclusion of a District Attorney: trying to blame the defendant.

The Commission continued its quest, trying to find out whether the Mannlicher-Carcano had recently been fired, trying to link the Mannlicher-Carcano to Oswald, trying to link the cartridges that were found on the sixth floor of the Depository Building to the Mannlicher-Carcano and other attempts, like trying to determine how Oswald might have brought the Mannlicher-Carcano into the Depository Building. Interesting as some of these attempts might be as to discover the methods and verify the conclusions of the Commission (cf. appendix to this part), they don’t really add anything to the case against Oswald since the Mannlicher-Carcano does not seem to be the weapon used in the crime.

So far, there is no proof of Oswald’s guilt, even though the Commission used two of the three items discussed so far as proof of Oswald’s guilt.

The attempt to place Oswald on the sixth floor of the Book Depository at the time of the shooting has even turned into a side-issue. However, (falsely, because it is not based on any evidence) assuming that Oswald did fire the Mannlicher-Carcano, could turn out to be an interesting issue. There is still the possibility Oswald used the German Mauser (or any other weapon) to shoot at the President or/and Governor Connally. Therefore, an investigation into Oswald’s whereabouts at the time of the shooting has to be made. If Oswald can be placed at the sixth floor of the Depository Building, he might have helped someone in assassinating the President, perhaps he might even have aimed at the President himself.

**Oswald’s whereabouts**

The Warren Report could not only put (quite literally) Oswald on the sixth floor of the
Depository during the assassination, but it even had an eyewitness who testified Oswald was, in fact, the assassin he saw in the window on the sixth floor.
The Commission’s star witness was Howard Leslie Brennan, a 45 year old pipe-fitter who, on November 22, was working on a construction project behind the Book Depository. Commission member Gerald Ford, In an article in LIFE Magazine on October 2, 1964 said that Brennan was their most important witness. Brennan was “the only known person who actually saw Oswald fire his rifle at President Kennedy.”

However, this is not what the Commission proceedings and the evidence suggests. Commission member John McCloy asked Brennan whether he saw the rifle discharge, the recoil or the flash. Brennan’s answer was a simple ‘No’ (It is safe to assume Brennan answered truthfully; he had nothing to gain by denying). This means Brennan did NOT see Oswald fire his rifle at President Kennedy, contrary to what Ford wrote in LIFE and, more important, what the Report says. Since he didn’t see a last shot being fired, it is very difficult even impossible to explain how he possibly could have seen Oswald fire it.
The Warren Commission had established, with the help of a film taken by Abraham Zapruder (commonly known as the Zapruder film), the frames (on the film) where Kennedy and Connally were hit. The frame (correctly) established by the Commission to be that where Kennedy was hit by the last shot shows Brennan NOT looking up (to the sixth floor of the Depository), as the Commission concluded he did. This, of course, confirms Brennan’s statement that he didn’t see the last shot being fired. Because the Commission never thoroughly studied the Zapruder film, they, of course, failed to notice this.

Though logic makes the question obsolete, did Brennan really identify Oswald? During his Commission testimony, Brennan did identify Oswald as the man he had ‘seen’ In that window. Brennan, however, was also asked to identify Oswald in a police lineup on November 22, 1963, after Oswald had been arrested. The Report does not mention whether Brennan was able to Identify Oswald in that lineup, it only mentions that Brennan “saw” Oswald in a police lineup on November 22. Almost every reader would read this statement as that Brennan identified Oswald in that line-up. Did he? Brennan, after hanging around Dealey Plaza for a while, came home around 14h45 and soon afterwards, as he himself admitted, saw Oswald’s picture on the television. Later that day, Brennan was asked to identify Oswald. No records exist of Brennan ever having Identified Oswald during that police lineup, even though most other people who were asked could. This wasn’t that difficult since Oswald was the only one bruised and cut on the face, with dirty clothing and was dressed differently than the rest who were all neatly dressed police officers and, later on, teenagers. During some lineups, Oswald was openly protesting the procedures, quite clearly because he realized even the way he looked made it evident he was the one arrested while the others were just asked to stand in the lineup to make a lineup possible. Of course, his protests only made the inclination to identify the arrested man easier, even though he might not have been the man who they saw: after all, would the police arrest an innocent man and put him in a line-up as a suspect of a crime which he didn’t commit?
Still, Brennan couldn’t identify Oswald. Brennan would afterwards say that he was afraid “of reprisals from the Communists” if he would have identified Oswald in the police lineup. Be that as it may, the fact remains he did not identify Oswald in that police lineup, whatever reason he gave for it afterwards.
One month later, Brennan was again asked if he could identify Oswald as the man in the sixth floor window. He told the FBI he could. But Brennan’s foreman, Sandy Speaker, had this to say to assassination researchers: “They took (Brennan) off for about three weeks. I don’t know if
they were Secret Service or FBI, but they were federal people. He came back a nervous wreck and within a year his hair had turned snow white. He wouldn’t talk about (the assassination) after that. He was scared to death. They made him say what they wanted him to say.”

About two months after the assassination, Brennan again was not positive it was Oswald he had ‘seen’ in that window on the sixth floor. Before the Commission, he would answer McCloy’s question negatively.

The Warren Commission clearly based its conclusion on ‘facts’ that are really no facts at all; the conclusion was based on ideas that go against the available evidence.

But was Oswald on the sixth floor at the time of the shooting? There is no credible eyewitness, but perhaps a reconstruction of the events might shed light on this question. The Warren Commission said Oswald had been on the sixth floor as early as 11h55 and remained there until seconds after he fired his last and fatal shot. The Report explains that Charles Givens, after having gone down to have lunch, went back up to the sixth floor to take his cigarettes out of his jacket. On the sixth floor, he encountered Oswald. According to the Report, Givens asked Oswald: ‘Boy, are you going downstairs?’ Oswald allegedly replied: ‘No sir. When you get downstairs, close the gate to the elevator.’ The Report continues with the statement that after this episode, which happened around 11h55, ‘None of the Depository employees is known to have seen Oswald again until after the shooting.’ This means he had about 25 minutes (the motorcade was scheduled to arrive at about 12h20 but had a ten minute delay) to build his sniper’s nest and prepare his rifle, like the Warren Commission said he did.

Did Oswald remain on the sixth floor from 11h55 onwards?

Carolyn Arnold, a secretary at the Depository, said she had seen Oswald at about 12h25 (the FBI mistyped the time as 12hl5), ‘it may have been later’. She saw Oswald in the lunchroom on the second floor and she saw him sitting there alone, eating lunch. However, her FBI statement said she thought she caught a fleeing glimpse of Oswald standing in the first floor hallway. In 1978, Mrs. Arnold said the FBI had definitely misquoted her (once again). The FBI report, of course, downplayed the importance of Arnold’s sighting: it was ‘just a fleeing glimpse’.

Billy Shelley, foreman at the Depository and Oswald’s immediate supervisor, said he saw Oswald near the telephone on the first floor at about 12hl5. To the FBI it must have seemed as if Arnold’s and Shelley’s statement conflicted, whereas in reality they did not.

Eddie Piper, a colleague of Oswald, said he spoke to Oswald on the first floor at 12h00. Shelley’s and Piper’s statements were omitted from the Warren Report.

Oswald himself, while in police custody, said he was eating lunch on the first floor and had seen two fellow black employees, one he believed called ‘Junior’, the other whom he described as ‘short’, adding he could identify him if he was confronted with him, eating their lunch. Investigations turned out to corroborate Oswald’s claim of the two black employees being present at that moment. ‘Junior’ Jarman and Harold Norman (who is, in fact, ‘short’) were eating lunch at that very time in the lunchroom. It would need quite good guesswork or psychic abilities to pick just these two people out of the 75 people working at the Depository.

Oswald’s whereabouts were corroborated by Mrs. Arnold, Eddie Piper, Billy Shelley and, indirectly, by the two employees (they said they hadn’t seen Oswald; the key-issue is Oswald saw them and he couldn’t have seen them if he was on the sixth floor), whereas the Commission’s allegation on Oswald’s whereabouts are uncorroborated, except if you accept Brennan’s identification. The Commission’s allegations of Oswald whereabouts are clearly lies when you consider that Depository employees DID see Oswald after 11h55. They did not see
him on the sixth floor, but on the first floor. The employees that had worked on the sixth floor that day said Oswald, in fact, was left behind on the sixth floor around 11h55, as the Commission said, but that he asked them that, once down, they would send the elevator back up: clearly an indication that he wanted to go down himself. That he did go downstairs is corroborated by Depository employees who saw Oswald downstairs after 11h55.

12h15 or even 12h25, however, is not 12h30, the time of the shooting. However, 12h25 is past the announced time Kennedy would ride through Dealey Plaza. If Oswald would have shot Kennedy, he would have acted without any premeditation or would somehow have found the motivation to go through with his act. Even though the Commission’s conclusion is based on unsubstantiated ideas and are therefore wrong, it is still possible (however unlikely) Oswald raced up to the sixth floor and shot Kennedy.

James Altgens, photographer for Associated Press, was in Dealey Plaza at the time of the assassination and took some very interesting photos during the assassination. On the moment when the President was killed, Altgens took a photograph of the Depository’s front doorway. In the west corner of the doorway, there is a figure that clearly resembles Oswald. The FBI and the Commission were confronted by this fact as well (a journalist pointed out that the suspect might have been in that picture) and tried to find out who the man in the picture was. The Commission concluded it was Billy Nolan Love lady, a Depository employee since 1961, who had left the sixth floor, where he was laying plywood flooring, at 11h50 and had gone out some time later to watch the motorcade pass in front of the building. Appearing before the Commission, he identified the man in the picture as himself. In an FBI-report Love lady states he “was standing on the top step to the far right against the wall of the entranceway (to the Depository). I recall that William H. Shelley ... and Mrs. Sarah Stanton ... were standing next to me.” But Shelley’s statement reads: “… Lovelady ... was SEATED on the entrance steps just in front of me.” (my emphasis) The Commission, of course, didn’t learn about Shelley’s statement since the FBI didn’t pass his statements on to the Commission.

The photo does show a man sitting where Shelley said Lovelady was. This man, however, has never been officially identified. Nobody was asked who this man (if it wasn’t Lovelady) was. The most logical ‘suspect’ would be Lovelady but since the Commission had him standing in the west corner, it couldn’t have been him, the Commission decided. Without the slightest shadow of a doubt, Love lady’s and Oswald’s face bear striking resemblances when seen on this rather fuzzy photograph. My analysis of both man’s hairlines inclines to identify the man as Oswald rather than Lovelady. The circumstances also make it highly unlikely the man in the picture is Lovelady. That man’s clothing is identical to the clothing Oswald wore when he was arrested. According to the Commission, Oswald did not change his clothing when he was at his room around 13h00, except for his jacket. There are some reports that Oswald did change his clothing and, according to the people who witnessed Oswald’s interrogation in police custody, he himself admitted to have changed clothes. He allegedly said he had worn a long sleeved ‘reddish colored shirt’ at work. This red shirt was never retrieved from his possessions and, in fact, it is not known that Oswald ever had such a shirt at all.

Why such controversy on what Oswald said during his interrogations? Officially, there was no recording or note-taking when Oswald was interrogated in Captain Fritz’s office. This means that any statement made by Oswald during these interrogations would not be in court afterwards. Chief Curry said that “we were violating every principle of interrogation... it was just against all
principles of good interrogation practice”. Captain Fritz corroborated “no notes” were taken. Be that as it may, there are indications notes WERE taken. Postal Inspector Holmes quoted Oswald as saying: “You took notes, just read them for yourself if you want to refresh your memory.” And on occasions, Fritz admitted he HAD taken “rough notes”. Because of the controversy evolving around Fritz (cf. also identification of rifle), some rumored a tape recording existed and that Fritz had hidden it securely. Fritz said not to believe that rumor. What WAS learned, however, was that Fritz had received a telephone call from a fellow Texan shortly after the assassination: President Lyndon Johnson. No official record exists of this call, but speculating in the context of Johnson’s actions, it is likely Johnson asked him to disseminate only the evidence against Oswald, not the evidence that would make him look innocent.

But what clothing did Love lady wear? The FBI asked him, on February 29, 1964, to wear the same clothing as he wore on November 22, so that they could make photos and compare these with the Altgens photo, trying to identify the man in the west corner of the doorway. Love lady, however, told researcher afterwards that the shirt he wore during that photo session wasn’t the same as the one he wore on November 22. He told the FBI so. What kind of shirt did he wear then? A broad plaid, short-sleeved shirt, buttoned at the neck. The shirt in the Altgens photo is certainly not buttoned at the neck and it most likely isn’t broad plaid. Furthermore, the sleeves aren’t short but long. Coincidentally, ‘of course’, Oswald’s shirt, when arrested, was unbuttoned, just like the shirt the man wore in the photograph. Even the T-shirt of the man in the Altgens-photo is probably the same as the one Oswald was wearing when he was arrested (it is possible the V-shape in the T-shirt as seen on the photo is caused by the shadow of Oswald’s chin. Even if his chin casts a shadow, it is still possible the shirt was V-shaped.)

An interpretation based on Shelley’s statement means the sitting man in the photograph is Lovelady, leaving the man in the west corner unidentified. The FBI on November 22 believed that man might have been Oswald. By analyzing the circumstances, this identification is certainly not far-fetched; it seems the most reasonable and likely. The fact that the Commission did not identify this man as Oswald might be the Commission had, once again, reasoned that Oswald was on the sixth floor and therefore couldn’t have been the man in the west corner. Or it just wanted to frame Oswald as the assassin, purposely neglecting to state this man MIGHT be Oswald.

It is not an absolutely positive identification of Oswald. One reason is that Oswald allegedly said he was on the second floor eating lunch and that he wore different clothes at work than when he was arrested. We have no way of knowing whether Oswald’s statements were correctly reported while he was in police custody. Many find it strange that Oswald, interested in politics and looking up to President Kennedy, would not go out to see the President driving through Dealey Plaza. Oswald being in the corner of the front doorway would explain this enigma: Oswald did go to see the President. It really doesn’t matter, since all the evidence indicates Oswald was either on the second or first floor, but NOT on the sixth floor, as the Commission concluded.

**Oswald’s arraignment**

According to the Warren Commission, Oswald was arraigned for the murder of President Kennedy on November 23, 1963, at 1h35 in the morning. Oswald’s arraignment is ‘just’ a technical procedure: it is the formal summoning of a prisoner in a court of law to answer an
indictment. In layman’s terms: after the police have arrested a suspect, this suspect is brought in front of a judge for what might be termed the beginning of the legal procedures against this suspect. Though not earth-shaking, it is interesting because it more or less embodies the meaning of the Warren Commission and its Report: it wants to show that the Commission took over the legal procedures after Oswald was killed and ‘normal’ legal proceedings could no longer be carried out. The Commission didn’t want to be depicted as a Commission that went after an arrested man, depicting him as the assassin of President Kennedy, while he had never been charged/arraigned with that crime. Being arraigned means there is sufficient evidence to warrant further steps against this person and the Commission wanted to show the Dallas Police believed that was the case as well.

The evidence for Oswald’s arraignment for the murder of President Kennedy should therefore be considered a formality: just refer to the documents related to the arraignment. Unfortunately for the Commission, things were not that simple.

The Commission heard Captain Fritz of the Dallas Homicide Bureau, Dallas Police Chief Jesse Curry and Judge David Johnston, the man the Commission identified as the judge that was present during both (Oswald was arraigned for killing J.D. Tippit earlier that evening) arraignments, testify Lee Harvey Oswald was charged/arraigned for murdering Kennedy. Chief Curry said that, sometime after 1h30, Oswald was charged by Judge Johnston that he had “voluntarily and with malice aforethought killed John F. Kennedy by shooting him with a gun.” Curry went on to describe that Oswald’s reaction was typical. “I don’t know what you’re talking about. What’s the idea of this? What are you doing this for?” Judge Johnston said Oswald was “very conceited. He said, sarcastically, ‘I guess this is the trial’ and denied everything.”

In 1978, Assistant District Attorney William Alexander told an assassination researcher that ‘Oswald’s departure from the Depository, coupled with the “curtain rods”-story (a package Oswald allegedly brought with him to the Depository on the morning of November 22 and which contained the rifle, according to the authorities) and the Communist literature found among Oswald’s effects, was enough to justify the second charge.”

Unfortunately for the Commission, though, there is no transcript of this second arraignment. There is also no checkout slip for Oswald’s removal from his cell around 1h30 (there are checkout slips for Oswald’s other removals). And police detective J.B. Hicks, who was working in the very room Oswald was supposed to have been arraigned in, said it certainly didn’t happen before 2h30, when he finished his duty. The earliest possible time for Oswald’s arraignment must therefore be 2h30, an hour after the Commission said it happened; the Commission, of course, was never asked to explain this discrepancy, but it would be very difficult to explain why all these people would have been wrong in stating the hour.

Captain Fritz, of course, has already been identified as an incredible source. What’s more, Fritz claimed D.A. Henry Wade and Assistant D.A. Bill Alexander were present. Both denied they were. On Saturday and Sunday, neither he nor spokesman for the police Glen King said anything about this arraignment.

FBI-Dallas agent Hosty received, on November 25, 1963, the following information from Captain Fritz’s office: “No arraignment on the murder charges in connection with the death of President Kennedy was held inasmuch as such arraignment was not necessary in view of the previous charges filed against Oswald and for which he was arraigned.” Yet, before the Commission, Fritz would say Oswald WAS arraigned. The information Hosty received is corroborated by CD 1084A.11 (a document from the Warren Commission!), which also states there was no arraignment.
If it wasn’t necessary to arraign Oswald for this murder, why was it necessary for the Commission to misrepresent the facts; lie? Perhaps it is for that very reason already stated: to give the impression the Commission just continued where Judge Johnston had necessarily closed the case.

**Conclusion**

Every item the Commission used as hard evidence against Oswald is ‘controversial’, to use an understatement; the outcome is always: reasonable doubt, on occasions even coming close to proving beyond (any?) reasonable doubt the Commission is misrepresenting reality, i.e. the evidence. As Chief Curry would say in 1969: ‘We don’t have ANY proof that Oswald fired the rifle, and NEVER did. NOBODY’S yet been able to put him in that building with a gun in his hand.’ (my emphasis). Why Oswald was nevertheless blamed for the crime seems difficult to explain.

On what did the Commission conclude Oswald’s guilt of assassinating President Kennedy? “Fingerprint and palm print evidence establishes that Oswald handled two of the four cartons next to the window and also handled a paper bag which was found near the cartons.”

Oswald worked on the sixth floor and, clearly, must have touched cartons if he wanted to take out books out of these cartons or put books into these cartons. Even though the cartons were arranged so they formed a sniper’s nest, photographs taking in the immediate aftermath of the shooting by people in Dealey Plaza, show re-arrangement of the cartons after the last shot was fired. The Commission should have been able to prove that Oswald had touched the cartons in such a way that the evidence suggest the fingerprints and palm prints found show the manner in which he constructed the sniper’s nest. All the Commission found was that Oswald had touched the cartons, which could have happened before 11h55, using the Commission’s own timetable, or even before November 22.

The paper bag that was found near the cartons was established to be the paper bag Oswald had used to bring the rifle from Irving to the Depository Building in the morning of November 22. Even though the Mannlicher-Carcano was well-oiled, the paper bag did not show any oil. Troy Eugene West, who did a scientific examination of the bag stated nothing on the bag could be associated wuth a rifle. According to Linnie Handle and Buell Frazier’s testimony, Oswald said the paper bag he was carrying on the morning of November 22 contained curtain rods. Oswald, in custody, allegedly said the paper bag contained his lunch (a cheese sandwich and an apple). Detective Studebaker, Day’s assistant, said he had found a partial print on the paper bag which he had protected by placing tape over it. FBI expert Sebastian Latona never found this print or tape, which raises question on the chain of possession or the statement made by Detective Studebaker or on the credibility of the Identification Bureau, led by Lt. Day.

The most staggering fact however is a discovery of two versions of FBI document DL 89-43. On November 29, 1963, FBI Special Agent Vincent Drain dictated his report, which was typed on November 30, 1963. The first version states: ‘this paper was examined by the FBI laboratory and found to have the same observable characteristics as the brown paper bag... ’ The second version, found in the National Archives by researcher Gary Shaw, states: ‘this paper bag was examined by the FBI laboratory and found not to be identical.’ Only one version can be correct. The Commission did nothing, if it even knew of the two versions, to solve the problem and it was not until 1984 that assassination researcher Edgar Tatro received a reply from the FBI. He was informed that the two versions were the result of a revision of the evidence. As Edgar Tatro
commented: one wonders how much of the evidence was revised. An even more sinister conclusion could be drawn from these versions: that the FBI simply made two versions of every report, one positive, one negative. It is speculation, but the FBI caused this speculation itself. What’s more: there is no evidence that the paper bag was ever found in the Book Depository. It doesn’t show in any of the photographs and there is even a photograph on which a rectangle was printed, the text explaining the triangle was the location where the bag had been found. The rectangle, however, was void of any bag. Day wrote on the bag: “Found next to the 6th floor window gun fired from. May have been used to carry gun.”

On December 4, an undeliverable package addressed to Oswald, retrieved from a dead-letter section in a Dallas post office. It was wrongly addressed to 601 W. Nassaus Street. The package probably arrived before November 22, assuming people would not toss aside anything which was addressed to a Lee Oswald after that date. The package contained a brown paper bag. The Report does not mention this incident and it was never investigated. Who had sent it and the reason why it was sent are unknown. The only logical solution seems to be either someone was pulling a joke on Oswald or someone was trying to get a paper bag into Oswald’s possessions.

Obviously, there is, once again, reasonable doubt concerning this aspect of the evidence.

On what other grounds did the Commission base its conclusion?

‘Oswald was seen in the vicinity of the southeast corner of the sixth floor approximately 35 minutes before the assassination and no one could be found who saw Oswald anywhere else in the building until after the shooting. An eyewitness to the shooting immediately provided a description of the man in the window which was similar to Oswald’s actual appearance. ‘There was such a description broadcast on the police radio, but the officer said that he didn’t remember the man who had given this information to him. It were hectic times for the police immediately after the assassination, but, nevertheless, this is (gross) negligence. The Commission believed this man was Howard Brennan, the man who had ‘seen’ Oswald fire the last shot. However, an analysis of the various testimonies, make this highly unlikely. Brennan probably did not talk to the police until shortly after 12h55, whereas the police broadcast occurred around 12h45. Even if he talked to the police before that time, it still means Brennan’s or other people’s statements are erroneous on some issues, causing doubt whether there might be more errors in the statement. Of course, supposing the man wasn’t Brennan, the man who did give ‘Oswald’s’ description has never been found.

‘This witness identified Oswald in a lineup as the man most nearly resembling the man he saw and later identified Oswald as the man he observed.’ Brennan did identify him before the Commission; he DID NOT officially identify Oswald in the lineup, even though he himself said he had.

‘Oswald’s known actions in the building immediately after the assassination are consistent with him having been at the southeast corner window of the sixth floor at 12:30 p.m.’ Oswald was observed by Roy Truly and police officer Marion L. Baker as being on the second floor, 90 to 120 seconds after the last shot. The Commission believed that the only possible way Oswald could have entered the room he was seen in, was if he had come from the sixth floor. A study of the Depository Building’s plans, however, show that Oswald could also have come from the first floor, where various witnesses have stated to have seen Oswald around 12h15 and were a photograph probably shows him at 12h30, the time of the shooting.
‘On the basis of these findings the Commission has concluded that Oswald, at the time of the assassination, was present at the window from which the shots were fired.’ It is a small miracle how the presence of a paper bag can be the basis of a conclusion Oswald was there when the shots were fired. The only possible conclusion, assuming the bag does bear Oswald’s fingerprints and palm print, can be that Oswald touched that paper bag. It does not even prove that Oswald made the paper bag or that he touched it on the sixth floor of the Depository. And the Commission never wondered whether there weren’t too few prints on the paper bag if Oswald really had to make a paper bag with some tape and some paper, something which needs extensive and repeated touching of the paper.

Even though their decision is based on such findings, these findings are either incorrect or based on poor research, paving the way for controversy.

The only possible conclusion the Commission could have drawn on the evidence it had, was that there was no firm evidence to place Oswald on the sixth floor, let alone in the assassin’s window, and that, in fact, the available evidence suggests Oswald was NOT in that window. The Commission’s conclusions should have been that, because of this, Oswald was probably NOT the assassin of President Kennedy. Even if he were, the Commission lacked the proof to show Oswald’s guilt.

Curry, on the weekend of the assassination, said he didn’t “wish to reveal” the evidence against Oswald. “It might jeopardize our case.” Captain Fritz said he was “convinced beyond a doubt that Oswald killed the President”. One only feels sorry for those whose case ever fell in the hands of Captain Fritz. A reporter asked Wade whether Oswald, considered to be guilty as hell, had given a motive for his crime. “No”, said Wade, “the murderer is arrogant. So arrogant he said he didn’t do it”. It seems nobody realized or simply didn’t want to see Oswald didn’t give a motive for his crime because he didn’t commit the crime. On November 23, Oswald told his brother Robert: “don’t believe the so-called evidence against me”. Robert, unfortunately, did believe it.
APPENDIX: OSWALD AND THE MANNLICHER-CARCANO

According to the Commission, Oswald owned a Mannlicher-Carcano, the very rifle used in the assassination of President Kennedy. As already seen above, there is reasonable doubt to wonder whether this is in fact the rifle found on the sixth floor of the Depository. Nevertheless, a brief excursion into the Mannlicher-Carcano might prove interesting to understand the way the Warren Commission investigated and to know whether Oswald did or did not own this rifle.

The central theme the Commission tried to prove was that Oswald killed the President. Whether he had loaned the weapon or not was of secondary importance. However, if he had used a weapon, the owner of the weapon would automatically have become a suspect as well. The Commission established Oswald owned the rifle. But even if he owned the rifle, they also had to prove he had possession of the rifle. It is, for example, possible Oswald ordered a rifle but somehow never took possession of it.

The Commission ‘discovered’ that Oswald had ordered the rifle via mail on March 12, 1963. He had ordered the Mannlicher-Carcano from Klein’s Sporting Goods in Chicago, a firm that was targeted by Senator Thomas J. Dodd’s Committee two months earlier. He paid with a postal money order, purchased at Ervay Street post office, ‘early morning of March 12’, as the Commission described it. The exact hour of the postmark is 10h30 AM. At that time, however, Oswald was at work. Oswald’s timesheet shows he began work at 8h00. This means Oswald had to have gone by the local post office shortly before 8h00. The office, however, would have been found closed at that time. Some defenders of the Report have claimed Oswald falsified his timesheet, meaning he did not report to work at 8h00. However, the times on Oswald’s timesheet had to correspond with a clock register. This means that Oswald would have falsified his timesheet. One wonders whether he would do this for simply going to the post office. Of course, such criticism is not based on the evidence (there is no evidence Oswald ever falsified the timesheets), but on a desire to show it was Oswald who ordered the rifle, not someone else, as the evidence DOES suggest.

But there is an even bigger problem. The order was in name of one A. Hidell, PO Box 2915, Dallas, Texas. Oswald admitted, while in custody, to have used PO Box 2915, but he denied to have purchased the rifle. Interestingly, the post office record listed the address of A. Hidell as 3519 Fairmore, which is an address not linked to Oswald. The Dallas Police Department, after the assassination, transcribed these records, listing the address as 3519 Fairmount, which IS linked to Oswald: it is the address of Gary and Alexandra Taylor, the daughter of George de Mohrenschildt, Oswald’s best friend.

Because of this ‘alias’, as the Commission would come to describe the name A.J. Hidell, the Commission had to identify A. Hidell as Lee Harvey Oswald at the time of the purchasing of the money order and not circumstantially, like concluding he did use that alias somewhere in August 1963.

The Commission concluded that, on Oswald’s application form for a post office box, he had listed the name of A. Hidell as a person allowed to receive mail in that box. Postal Inspector Harry D. Holmes said he couldn’t show part 3 of the application form (persons entitled to receive mail) to the Commission because it had been, as it was normal procedure, destroyed when the box was closed in May of 1963. The Commission, perhaps ignorant of postal rules or for any other reason, failed to discover that the postal regulations state that part 3 had to be retained for two years, until May 1965.

Even though the Commission didn’t see what they should have seen, the fact is that there is, once
again, something wrong with the evidence. Part 3 should have been retained and been shown to the Commission; part 3 should have shown the listing of the name ‘A. Hidell’. If A. Hidell was not on part 3 of the application, Inspector Holmes still believed Oswald might have been able to receive the package. He said it was customary that, when a package was received, a notice was placed in the box, regardless whether the name on the package was listed or not. That person could go to the window and show that notice, where he would be given the package, without his identification being requested since it was believed the name who carried the notice had a rightful access to the box and therefore was allowed to receive the package. Fair enough. But it is a side-issue. Section 846.53 of the postal regulations, effective March 1963, required to retain it for four years: ‘delivery receipts for firearms, and statements by shippers of firearms.’ (Forms 2162, 1508) Form 2162, which should show that Oswald/Hidell picked up the rifle he ordered, however, is not included in the evidence presented by the Commission. Clearly, this form should only have been destroyed in March-April, 1967; it is even doubtful whether the existence of such regulation ever reached the Commission. Inspector Holmes probably didn’t inform them of this regulation, assuming he himself knew or respected that regulation.

Since Klein’s microfilm records show the rifle was shipped and didn’t show it was returned, the obvious conclusion would be that the rifle was picked up. Because of the illegal absence of a) part 3 of the application form and b) the delivery receipt for Oswald’s Mannlicher-Carcano, the Commission, once again, based its conclusions on no evidence. There is simply no evidence Oswald picked up that rifle.

Klein’s records further indicated that the order was a coupon clipped from the February 1963 issue of the American Rifleman magazine. When researcher Mark Lane investigated this statement, he discovered that the February issue of the American Rifleman did not contain an order coupon from Klein’s Sporting Goods for such a Mannlicher-Carcano. The February-issue listed the weapon as a “36”, number C20-T750, whereas the rifle allegedly found in the TSBD was a “40.2”. The only coupon he discovered was in the November-issue of Field and Stream, listing the length as “40”, order number C20-750. Because of this discrepancy, the Commission didn’t print the original coupon but a substitute that didn’t list “36” but “40”... the Commission altered evidence!

Furthermore, because the original order and envelope were only available on microfilm, the House Select Committee in 1979 was unable to identify the writing and signature as that of Oswald’s. The rest of the evidence suggests this is very fortunate for the Committee and the Commission’s case against Oswald... it is a strong possibility the writing is NOT that of Oswald’s.

The Commission, however, did say that the handwriting-analysis showed that the handwriting on the application form was the same as the handwriting on other documents, “known” to be written by Oswald.

The key word is ‘analysis’. Analyzing is a process of mind and therefore subject to all kinds of psychological moods (e.g. a willingness to prove something is correct will incline that person to conclude it is correct, centering his attention to proving it and will try to downplay the importance of the facts that don’t fit into his theory. The belief that Oswald was or was not the assassin will also influence that conclusion.)

Furthermore, handwritings change with the various psychological moods a person has; therefore it is difficult to identify handwriting as belonging to ‘person X’ because there are always minor
differences. Experts in faking handwriting master the major outlines of Person X’s handwriting. The expert’s faked handwriting differs only in minor details from the handwriting of ‘person X’. Person X’s handwriting will differ on these details as well. Even though handwriting-analysis is still used as a way of establishing whether or not that person wrote those sentences, it should, like the paraffin-test, be taken with a grain of salt. Furthermore, the analysis has to use a ‘standard’, writing which is undoubtedly by Person X. If this standard cannot be linked to Person X beyond reasonable doubt, the whole analysis is worthless.

Though it is not really linked with issue at hand, it would be interesting to find out if there existed a person named ‘A. Hidell’. The Commission concluded that it had found not a single reference to a ‘Hidell’. However, its own documents (VI’1.318) show a statement by John R. Heindel, who served with Oswald in the Marines (and he was living in New Orleans at the time), saying he was often nicknamed ‘Hidell’. The Commission’s conclusion should have been that it did find a reference; but the Commission didn’t find, probable because it didn’t search (thorough enough).

Backyard photos

The Commission, trying to prove Oswald had possession of the rifle (in the absence of form 2162), used the backyard photos, showing Oswald with the rifle (and his revolver) posing in front of the camera, in the backyard of his home. The Commission concluded that the photo was taken in late March, probably March 31, by Marina, Oswald’s wife, with a handheld Imperial Reflex Camera, in the late afternoon. The Dallas Police Department informed the Warren Commission that it had found two prints and one negative while searching the Paine’s home (where Marina was living at that time) on November 23, during their second search of the premises. Even though the print was officially only found on Saturday, Robert Hester and his wife, Patricia, asked by the FBI and Secret Service to help with the photographic material of the assassination, stated that they saw an FBI-agent with a color transparency of one of these pictures Friday night. The picture didn’t show a figure (Oswald or someone else). The Commission needed help to prove its case and turned to Marina Oswald, Oswald’s wife, who would never have testified should Oswald have gone on trial. The Commission, using the motto of searching for the truth, thought Marina could shed extra light on the person Oswald was and his activities. They therefore decided to question her. The fact that her testimony proved to corroborate the Commission’s ‘suspicion’ of Oswald’s guilt is of secondary importance (cf. appendix II for details). If the Commission had to resort to witnesses such as Oswald’s wife to proof Oswald’s guilt, it only shows how weak their case was without that testimony.

In fact, the Commission had decided that Lee and Marina had had a quarrel on the evening of November 21 and that Lee felt his marriage was over. The Commission said that, emotionally unstable because of this, Oswald decided, on impulse, to shoot at President Kennedy. The Commission never stopped to think whether, if Oswald’s marriage was really over, Marina might still be upset about Oswald and would therefore give incriminating evidence against, perhaps out of revenge, if Lee was the one who ended the relationship. If so, one wonders whether all the evidence she gave was correct and whether she didn’t spice the evidence or even invented evidence, trying to get Oswald out of her life.

It is highly unlikely Marina and Lee’s marriage broke off on November 21, but, since the Commission decided it did, they should have been extremely careful with Marina’s testimony.
They were not.

Because the Commission used Marina, one could use Marina’s statement to disprove some of the Commission’s conclusions. Marina, when asked, stated that she took only one picture. Later, she would change her testimony and say she had taken two. In 1978, she would say she couldn’t remember.

Still, a third photo (showing Oswald carrying the rifle in his left hand, the literature in his right hand) was discovered among the possession of Roscoe White, who, on November 22, was a police officer in Dallas. He had told his wife, Geneva, that one day this picture would be very valuable. In fact, the existence of this picture only surfaced in 1976.

There even existed a fourth! On the evening of November 22, Marina showed a picture to Marguerite Oswald, Lee’s mother. On Marguerite’s urging, they decided to burn the photograph and flush it down the toilet, believing it might be incriminating evidence. This picture allegedly showed Oswald holding a rifle above his head with both hands.

Since Marina and Marguerite both talked about the existence of such a photo, it might persuasively be argued that there should be no controversy over the photo(s).

The Warren Commission’s appointed experts concluded that the backyard photographs (CE133) were genuine. Throughout the years, controversy would follow. Top photographic experts in Canada and Britain have concluded that the photos are faked. The United States experts, appointed by various agencies, have stated the photos are genuine and counter the ‘foreign’ experts with the fact that they (the foreigners) have not studied the original photographs but copies.

As some critics have pointed out, these ‘domestic’ experts should better have explained or countered the ‘foreigners’ arguments on which they based their conclusion instead of downgrading their investigation because of the use of copies. As already stated above, interpretation is primarily an act of judgment. Critics have argued that United States’ government employed experts will be more inclined to deny that the photos are fake because this would mean there is evidence of a conspiracy, something which would go against the conclusion of the Warren Commission and therefore of the government’s point of view. Private citizens of the United States who have studied the backyard photos (such as Jack White) are more inclined to agree with the foreign experts, concluding that the photographs are faked.

Most interesting is that these experts based their conclusion on copies of the photos are not as correct as copies from the originals. Remember that the Commission, wanting to compare the handwriting on the mail order for Oswald’s weapon, relied on enlarged photographs from a microfilm-archive; the order coupon had been photographed and filed on microfilm by Klein’s Sporting Goods. The handwriting analysis is, therefore, not really as sound as the Commission would want us to believe and, in fact, tells the public: it says the photographs were good enough to make the analysis. Who says the photos used by the critics were bad photographs, not allowing a scientifically sound conclusion?

The critics’ analysis points out that, when you use the different photos as transparencies, nothing matches except Oswald’s face, which is something that, even through sheer logic, is very improbable, if not wholly impossible. These critics also say that the foliage on the trees does not coincide with what is the normal state of the foliage in late March. The latest techniques, using computers, indicate that it is possible to see the original face behind Oswald’s (the man was photographed and Oswald’s face was cut from another photograph and put on top of the original
face, i.e. superimposed). They also indicate that the photo was taken around 9h10 AM and not in the late afternoon, as the Commission concluded. CE133-A shows no ring on ‘Oswald’s’ left hand, while CE133-B does show such a ring. Marina said she took the pictures one after another, making it highly unlikely Oswald would take off this ring for the next picture or would think of putting his ring on, assuming he had it on him and it was not lying around somewhere else, which would mean he had to go search for it, making the rapid succession of taking pictures impossible.

Whether good or bad, the critics’ analysis is still ‘just’ an analysis. The most important evidence against the genuineness of these photos is the statement made by Marina Oswald, twenty-eight years (sic) after the assassination. When assassination researcher Larry Howard asked her where she stood when she took the picture, she said that that was the first time anyone had asked her that question. She said Lee had put her with her back against the stairs. Since these stairs are visible in the photographs, it is impossible that the photo(s?) Marina took of Oswald are the same as those allegedly ‘found’ in Ruth’s home on November 23, 1963. Marina said that CE133 “aren’t the pictures I took”. It might be that the picture Marina possessed (the police, while searching the home on November 22, failed to find this photograph, which was ‘hidden’ inside a baby-book of Marina’s and Lee’s daughter, June Lee Oswald) would not have been incriminating evidence against Oswald, but would have been used by Oswald’s attorney, trying to prove the authorities tried to frame Oswald, showing them the original photograph Marina took.

A staff member of the Militant, a magazine Oswald subscribed to, said he remembered receiving a photograph of Oswald posing with his rifle and gun in April 1963. He tore it up and threw it away.

Captain Fritz stated that Oswald, while in custody at the police station, said “the picture was not his, that the face was his face, but that this picture had been made by someone superimposing his face ... that he had never seen the picture before ... in time, he would be able to show that it was not his picture and that it had been made by someone else.” Oswald also stated he had never “used” (did he mean fire?) a gun after he had left the Marines, except on one occasion (probably while he was living in Minsk, where he was probably member of a hunting team).

It seems likely Oswald HAD a rifle and gun in the spring of 1963, but that it isn’t the Mannlicher-Carcano. Marina, totally inexperienced with weapons, was unable to identify the Mannlicher-Carcano as the weapon her husband had had. FBI expert Shaneyfelt said he couldn’t state the photo in the photograph was identical to the Mannlicher-Carcano in the Commission’s possessions; they looked alike, like all guns did.

We don’t know whether the rifle was Oswald’s or whether he just loaned it for a time. Between April and November, Oswald moved to and from various homes, often having possessions on different addresses than where he lived. Oswald’s Mannlicher-Carcano, should he have possessed one, might have been stolen, he might have left it behind somewhere along the way, deciding he no longer wanted to have a weapon or he might returned the loaned rifle to its owner when left town. He might have lied about possessing a rifle, knowing this would incriminate him. The point is that the Commission could, once again, not prove that Oswald had owned the Mannlicher-Carcano, had possessed the rifle and still possessed it on November 22 beyond reasonable doubt.

Philosophically, one might wonder why the rifles were probably switched at all when the Mannlicher-Carcano could not be tied to Oswald beyond reasonable doubt. The answer might be
that someone felt they had a better chance of linking that rifle to Oswald than a 7.65m Mauser. This would mean that Oswald was set up as a patsy. Another explanation might be that someone did not want to have this Mauser linked to him and therefore substituted that rifle with a Mannlicher-Carcano, a weapon he knew would not be linked to him.

The controversy around every aspect in the evidence against Oswald as the assassin of President Kennedy shouldn’t have existed if Oswald’s guilt was as clear as the Commission concluded it was, if it was an ‘open and shut’ case. Oswald’s guilt is not as clear as the Commission said it was and the reason for this might be simple or extremely complicated. It is clear that the Commission, if it would have investigated and deliberated the issues thoroughly and wisely, should never have concluded Oswald was the (sole) assassin’. In the years following the release of the Warren Report, people continued to ask the government to reinvestigate the assassination. The government always (in those cases it did respond) responded they were of the opinion that there was no new evidence which would make it necessary/worthwhile to reinvestigate. However, the reason to reinvestigate should have been that, because the old ‘evidence’ (Oswald’s guilt) was no evidence at all, the case was never solved. The reason is that the assassin (whom, the Commission believed, stood in a window on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository) was not identified beyond reasonable doubt.
B. THE MEDICAL EVIDENCE

Even though an analysis of the Warren Commission doesn’t have to start with one certain particular item, the Warren Commission could not start groping for the truth wherever it wanted to.

The law uses the term ‘Best Evidence’, which means that lawyers will search for the most credible, the least disputed, evidence. Because this evidence is ‘the best’, it will probably/should influence the trial and verdict in an important way, a more important one than any other piece of evidence. The Warren Commission not necessarily had to establish such “best evidence”, but because most of its members and aides were lawyers, it is hardly surprising they did use one piece of evidence as the best evidence. Not a single piece of evidence could be disputed by anybody because of the absence of any ‘defense’. Nevertheless, the Commission still used one piece of evidence as the root of their investigation; a piece of evidence that, if it could withstand the attacks of the Warren Report critics, wouldn’t change the Commission’s opinions or the validity of the Report (even though it was quite possible they were wrong on other items, like Oswald’s identification as the assassin).

What was the best evidence in the assassination of President Kennedy? The Commission felt that had to be the President’s body. If you have to decide how the bullets struck the President (from in front, from behind,...), the best way to find out is by analyzing the President’s body and, more particularly, its wounds. Those wounds were seen by some witnesses in Dealey Plaza, by doctors and nurses in Parkland Memorial in Dallas, where the President was declared dead at 13h00, and during his autopsy in Bethesda Naval Hospital in Washington.

The autopsy is considered the best occasion to relax (as much as that is possible with a dead body in front of you), carefully analyze the body and especially the wounds (in this case bullet wounds), write your observations down and sometimes analyze what you have seen, should the wounds not speak for themselves. These written notes will result in the official autopsy report. The Commission accepted the autopsy report as the best evidence.

The autopsy report concluded two shots had hit the President from the back and above; one shot to the head, one through the back, emerging through the throat, ‘above and behind’ the President corresponded with the ‘known’ position of Oswald, as confirmed by Brennan’s testimony. Though Brennan was the only one who could identify Oswald officially, others in Dealey Plaza also thought the shots were fired from the Depository. Others, however, thought the shots were fired from a ‘grassy knoll’, slightly in front of the President. When all the witnesses’ testimony is linked to their position in Dealey Plaza, we discover that those witnesses standing in front of the Depository or along Houston Street believed the shots came from the Depository, whereas those witnesses in front of the grassy knoll or around the railroads thought the shot came from that grassy knoll. The Commission, using the autopsy report as best evidence, discarded the testimony that a shot originated from the grassy knoll; it accepted those who believed a shot came from the Depository.

From Connally’s wounds we learn that one shot hit Connally in the back; this shot probably originated from inside the Depository, though not from the sniper’s nest. That wound was elliptic and defenders of the Report have often argued that such a wound could only be caused by a spinning bullet that either hit a leaf on a tree or had already passed through Kennedy’s body. This
is, however unfortunate for those defenders, wrong: The bullet entered from above and Connally was sitting upright. If the wound is elliptic, it only proves the shot came from above (or possibly from below, should the bullet pass upwards in the body) and was not shot from the same height as the target.

The large head wound was described identical both in Dallas ("occipito-parietal, bones springing outward from the scalp") and at Bethesda ("chiefly parietal"). From right after the assassination, these two wounds were believed to have been caused by two separate bullets.

The third wound was initially believed to have been caused by a third bullet. According to the autopsy report, there was a wound in Kennedy’s back, a wound not seen in Dallas. The Commission simply explained this discrepancy away: the Dallas doctors did not turn over the body and therefore hadn’t seen the wound on the back; they were busy trying to save the President’s life, which meant, according to the Commission, they had inaccurate and quick glances of the wounds, unlike the autopsy doctors. The Dallas doctors were fully trained doctors, experienced with gunshot wounds and all the statements by the Dallas doctors corroborated each other. If they all had inaccurate glances, they would probably have described the wounds somewhat differently, perhaps even very differently. Yet they all described the wounds in a similar way, suggesting they did have a good look of the wounds. The Commission assertion that the body was not turned over was flatly wrong: nurse Doris Nelson was ordered to wash the body before putting it inside the coffin. Nelson washed the body and didn’t notice this backwound. Because nobody at Parkland saw the wound, it was a controversial wound. Secret Service agent Glenn Bennett, sitting in the right rear seat of the follow-up car, seemed to solve the ‘mystery’ and stated that he actually “saw the shot hit the President about four inches down from the right shoulder”. Photos and film show Bennett looking into another direction, not towards President Kennedy, thus making Bennett a liar.

Strange as it may seem, the President’s clothing DID corroborate Bennett’s ‘observations’. Pierre Finck, the only member of the autopsy who was also a member of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, asked to examine the President’s clothing during the autopsy, a normal procedure. His request was denied. This should give doubt to the validity of this ‘evidence’. Kellerman said he saw Kennedy “appearing to be reaching” to his shoulder/back, where this bullet allegedly had struck. Greer ‘corroborated’ this movement. The Zapruder-film, however, doesn’t show any such movement by Kennedy. If it hadn’t been for this film, Kellerman, Greer and Bennett, all ‘credible’ witnesses, would have served as witnesses who saw the President was hit in the back and saw the President react to the shot; in reality, nothing of this kind happened.

After midnight, Kellerman brought Clinton Hill, the most credible witness because he had reacted to the shots and jumped onto the presidential limousine, into the morgue and showed him this back-wound. Asked why he showed the body to Hill, Kellerman replied “more witnesses”. Of course, Hill corroborated that there was such a back-wound because there actually was one... at that time.

There are even bigger problems with this back wound. The autopsy doctors, as did Kellerman and Greer, described this backwound as very shallow, even though the autopsy report mentioned that the wound’s path was traced to the throatwound. There was a long debate about how it was possible the bullet had only penetrated the body about half an inch. Kellerman, during this discussion, apparently acted on information from an unnamed Navy officer and phoned his chief, James Rowley. Kellerman was reportedly informed a bullet had been retrieved in Parkland
Memorial... from Kennedy’s stretcher. This bullet would become the famous CE399, the bullet in pristine condition, originally assumed to have penetrated Kennedy’s body only one inch. Kellerman informed Humes of the retrieved bullet and Humes’ suspicions about the peculiar appearances of the backwound faded: the bullet had simply fallen out of the wound; it had gone nowhere inside the body.

According to Kellerman, it was Finck who had probed the wound, trying to determine where the bullet had gone to. According to the Sibert and O’Neill, the FBI-agents, it was Humes.

Officially, the photographs and X-rays taken at the autopsy were never released. Via via, however, some photographs and X-rays, apparently the ones from the National Archives, have been ‘leaked’. Earl Warren was the only Commission member who ever saw these photographs and X-rays. He never studied them, nor did anyone else; Warren simply wanted to make sure such material did exist. Chief Justice Earl Warren thought them too shocking to make them ‘public’, not even showing them to the other Commission members.

This material is thus quite irrelevant to a discussion of the evaluation of the medical evidence of the Commission since it never studied these photographs. What’s more: the photos and X-rays would be inadmissible in court because they were not authenticated as being photographs and X-rays of Kennedy. When some photographs did pass into researcher’s hands, these people were in fact most astonished to see that they didn’t show points of references that would identify the body as that of President Kennedy, even though that was obvious on some of these photos. Some photographs didn’t look anything like the witnesses who had seen the body said the body looked like, not those seeing it at Parkland, nor those at Bethesda. Photographic analysis has strongly hinted some are faked; analysis has shown that the X-rays are incompatible with the photographs. The X-rays show the right side of Kennedy’s head totally missing, which is not at all visible on the photographs. If these X-rays truly come from Kennedy’s autopsy-report, it means these X-rays were inserted into that report: it is impossible they are from Kennedy: they are at odds with what all the witnesses saw, with the autopsy report and with the photographic evidence, however altered that may be.

When Floyd Riebe, photographer at the autopsy, was shown the pictures he allegedly took during the autopsy, he said that these pictures were forged; they weren’t his. Jerrol Custer, taking X-rays at the autopsy, also said the X-rays weren’t his. As already discussed, experts said that the proper procedures weren’t followed when the photographs were taken: there were no references, almost nothing indicated these pictures were from the President’s body; they could have been taken from another body as well.

Researchers were also a bit surprised to learn that there were much more photographs taken than there were photographs given into evidence at the Archives. Secret Service agent James Fox, the person leaked a set of photographs to assassination researchers, says that most material was burned two weeks after the autopsy, around the time when a supplemental autopsy report was written and just before the FBI concluded its lone assassin-theory. Robert Bouck, who received the autopsy photographs and X-rays from Roy Kellerman, allegedly burnt them on December 6 or 7, perhaps also fearing they might conflict with the Z-film in the issue of Life the next day.

Instead of using the photographs, the Warren Commission relied on drawings, made with the assistance of the autopsy doctors. Dr. Humes and Dr. Boswell used H.A. Rydberg, a Navy medical illustrator, to draw what would become Warren Commission Exhibits 385, 386 and 388. They showed the wounds as described in the autopsy report.
There is one photograph of someone’s back, believed to be Kennedy’s. It has two small wounds, one on the shoulder, where Bennett said he saw a bullet strike, one lower, beneath the shoulder-blade. The lower one shows no signs of blood; it looks like a ‘dent’ in thick skin. It is quite low and it would be almost impossible a bullet could hit the President that low: that part was pushed against the back of his seat. The upper wound was originally identified as the shot wound, even though the Commission would move that wound’s position around, in its efforts to link this wound to the throatwound. The photograph shows a very shallow wound, shows some blood, but certainly doesn’t look like any bullet-wound. It looks like a round, sharp object was pushed onto his skin. I am not the only one who thinks the wound looked ‘un-bullet-like’.

Sibert and O’Neill’s report contains evidence of typographical alterations. There is one sentence that reads: ‘Dr. Humes stated that the pattern was clear that the one bullet had entered the President’s back.” It seems the sentence originally read “unclear” instead of “clear”; that the report was changed, probably by someone who wanted consistency between their report and Humes’ altered autopsy-report. The FBI report also said “Humes located an opening which APPEARED TO BE A BULLET HOLE, (my emphasis)”

The autopsy report, however, does not say that the backwound was shallow and that the bullet had fallen out when the body was in Parkland Memorial. Doctors in Parkland Memorial witnessed a small and neat wound, 1/4 inches across, in the throat. Everybody described this wound as an entry-wound. They ‘obscured’ this wound when they performed a tracheotomy over it. The Dallas doctors thought that it was possible Kennedy was hit from the Depository, provided he had turned around, facing that Depository. They didn’t know he hadn’t. Because of the tracheotomy-incision, the autopsy doctors didn’t probe that wound: they believed it was just an incision and Burkley did not give permission to probe that wound. If there was a bullet inside that wound, the autopsy doctors wouldn’t retrieve it. When the chest cavity was opened, a bruise on top of the right lung was noticed but Humes was told not to probe that wound either. It would have been a logical solution, if Humes had known there was a throatwound, to say that a bullet penetrated the throat and settled in the lung.

Dr. Humes only learned from this wound after he had contacted Dr. Kemp Clark in Dallas on the morning of November 23, when the autopsy was finished and there was no possibility whatsoever to probe the throatwound, the President’s body being in the White House. Confronted with the fact that Humes’ autopsy had a major flaw: he had failed to notice the throatwound and hadn’t analyzed it. Humes was forced to change his autopsy report, but how? He linked the back-wound with the throat-wound, thus “erasing” his initial error of not having probed the throat-wound. Identifying the throatwound as an exit-wound (contrary to the observations of those who had seen that wound) meant that Humes was not to blame for not finding the bullet: it had simply passed. The dilemma, of course, was how that bullet found In Parkland on Friday could have been found on that stretcher if the bullet had not fallen from the backwound but had exited the body through the throatwound, falling who knows where.

Darrell Tomlinson, who found the bullet, said that the bullet came from the stretcher of a young boy, a boy and a stretcher that had nothing to do with the assassination. Yet, this bullet was identified as a bullet fired by Oswald. O.P. Wright marked the bullet he had received from Tomlinson, but appearing before the Commission, he couldn’t find his marks on CE399, which he was fairly sure he had made. Both Tomlinson and Wright declined to identify CE399 as the bullet they found. Once again, there is cause for suspicion over the evidentiary chain.
People who were present during the autopsy and saw the open chest cavity say that it is impossible for a bullet to have passed through the body. This is confirmed by Humes’ statement that the back wound wasn’t even an Inch deep. Humes had been forced to cover up his error and had to change the autopsy report, identifying a pristine bullet as the bullet who caused the damage to the back and the throat; that it was contrary to the observations of those who had seen the throat-wound and identified it as an entrance wound... well, Humes had a reputation to protect. Humes, working on the autopsy report when Oswald was shot said “we interrupted our work to try and figure out what that meant to us”. Humes probably realized it meant a great relief.

A wound in the back of the President, along with Connally’s back wound, were the only real indications that shots had been fired from the back. The throat and head wound gave the impression as having been fired from the front. Without the Zapruder-film, the Commission could have concluded that the President was facing the Book Depository when the first shot, hitting Kennedy in the throat, was fired. This was the speculation by most Dallas doctors.

In the background of all this, the Commission had also made the assumption (based on their ‘logic’ but not supported by any evidence) that conditions at Bethesda Naval Hospital were far better. The autopsy doctors had to work in a crowded auditorium; they even asked to clear the auditorium of those people who didn’t belong there, without any result. Most importantly: the autopsy doctors were not in charge at the autopsy. In 1969, Dr. Pierre Finck admitted in court that some unidentified General, in his opinion from the Army, was in charge of the autopsy.

Officially, there were five civilians were present, including two FBI-agents, Sibert and O’Neill, who had been ordered to attend the autopsy. James Jenkins, on duty at Bethesda that day and therefore assisting in the autopsy, remembers there were “many more” than five civilian-clothed persons present. When talking about the chain of command, Jenkins said that Humes, officially in charge, was “a super military type of person... concerned with his next promotion and his career in general.” Humes immediate superior was Captain John H. Stover, whose supervisor was Calvin Galloway, the Commanding Officer of the Medical Center. Then there was the Surgeon General of the Navy, Edward C Kenney. “And then you’re either at the Joint Chiefs of Staff or orders from the White House”, interviewer David Lifton said. “I didn’t say that; you did”, Jenkins replied. Jenkins believed that Humes had been directed to write the autopsy report. Admiral Burkley, Kennedy’s personal physician, was, according to some, directing the show.

On November 26, 1963, Captain John H. Stover, Commanding Officer of the US Naval Medical School at Bethesda, had ordered ‘to discuss with no one events connected with your official duties on the evening of 22 November-23 November 1963’, i.e. the autopsy of President Kennedy. When researchers finally interviewed some of these people, they were told Admiral Burkley prohibited a thorough probing of the tracheotomy-wound and cut short the debate on what exactly could have caused that small backwound. Nothing could be read about these problems during the autopsy in the autopsy report.

Dr. Charles Wilber had this to say about the autopsy report: “The complete autopsy report as written by the pathologists was altered during its route through military channels. Certain sections were removed. Admiral George Burkley, who was President Kennedy’s personal physician, admitted that he doctored the autopsy report ... the report that indicated whether any bullets were still in Kennedy’s body, was burned by Doctor Humes.” This means that the autopsy
The report was not only changed to erase Humes’ error of not seeing the throat-wound, it also means that the report could be altered on many other points as well; most probably, the changes had to do with where the wounds were located and other items of seemingly less importance, though important if this report wanted to appear ‘right’.

**Chain of possession**

Is it possible there were, once again, problems with the chain of possession of the evidence? As the Oswald-evidence indicates: this negligence to investigate is the downfall of the Commission’s evidence against Oswald. There is also doubt about the stretcher-bullet, identified by the finder of the bullet (the only one who could know) as coming from a young boy’s stretcher, identified some time later as coming from Kennedy’s stretcher and identified by the Commission, as we shall see, as coming from Connally’s stretcher. And what about the chain of possession of Kennedy’s dead body, starting in Dallas and ending with the dead president lying on a table in Bethesda Hospital. After all: more than seven hours passed in between.

The thought alone seemed preposterous: what would anyone do with the dead president’s body? Even if there was a conspiracy, practically everybody on the Commission, unless he should know more about such a conspiracy, believed Oswald was still the assassin. This meant that the body would not be stolen, simply because there seemed to be no reason for such an act. They knew a sniper’s nest was found on the sixth floor of the Depository Building, that a weapon was found which apparently belonged to Oswald. The Commission had no apparent reason whatsoever to doubt there was something wrong with the chain of possession of the body. When the Commission read the autopsy report, its findings corroborated what had been known.

Was there reason to doubt? After the President was declared dead, his body was placed in a coffin; everything was prepared to fly back to Washington, leave the city as quickly as possible; get out of this ‘madhouse’, which was how various people felt Parkland Memorial Hospital had become after the President was brought in. Earl Rose, Dallas County Medical Examiner, however, had different opinions. In his interpretation of the law of the state of Texas, the President was murdered. To him, a murder meant that the body had to undergo an autopsy in Dallas before it was allowed to leave the county, i.e. could be shipped to Washington. Carrying the body, before an autopsy was conducted, across the state line was a crime and Earl Rose wanted everything done by the book.

The Presidential party, lead by Roy Kellerman, head of the White House detail of the Secret Service for this trip, were rolling the coffin towards a waiting ambulance and bumped into Earl Rose in a corridor at Parkland. After some initial words were tossed to the other one’s head, Kellerman said: “My friend, my name is Roy Kellerman. I am Special Agent in charge of the White House detail of the Secret Service. We are taking President Kennedy back to the capital.” Rose replied: “You are not taking the body anywhere. There’s a law here. We’re going to enforce it ... You can’t lose the chain of evidence.” The squabbling continued and Dr. Kemp Clark, the man who had pronounced the President dead, told hospital administrator Jack Price that he thought force should be used to overcome the problem. “It may come down to pinning him down and sitting on him. I would be delighted to be among the sitters.” Justice of the Peace Theran Ward, however, believed the federal government had a right to take Kennedy away to a military hospital because Kennedy was also Commander in Chief. He authorized the removal of the body. According to Rose, the chain of evidence was broken; according to Ward it was not and the
Aubrey Rike, the man who put the body in the casket, said he had wrapped the head in sheets only. While unwrapping the head in Bethesda, two large towels were found around the head. Clearly, someone had to have had access to body, had unwrapped the sheet, put two towels around the bleeding head wound and put another/the same sheet over the towels. At Bethesda, the coffin was lined with creamy white colored rubberized or plasticized material, Rike said he had only put a half sheet, taken from a cabinet, around the pillow. More or less similar material as seen in Bethesda was brought to him, but he did not use it.

Humes, trying to remove the brain from the cerebral cavity, was stunned when the brain suddenly fell in his hands, without the stem being cut by him or one of those assisting him. There was a discussion about whether or not the brain stem was severed. He even asked people in the gallery whether surgery was performed at Parkland, an impression heightened by what seemed to be surgical cuts in the area of the head wound, even though Humes might have mistaken lacerations for cuts. As with any other discussion, this one was also cut off by Adm. George Burkley.

At Parkland, six doctors saw the cerebellum on the table, falling out of the head during the tracheotomy. At Bethesda, it was described as being ‘intact’. The Dallas doctors described more damage to the brain than the witnesses at Bethesda. In Bethesda, it was reported that the damage to the brain didn’t match the damage to the skull and that it ‘looked’ female, i.e. a small brain. O’Connor, however, says the whole was too small to remove it. However, the brain could have been cut up, taken out, and a smaller brain inserted. The tracheotomy as seen in Bethesda has very jagged edges, whereas Parkland doctor Charles Crenshaw states the tracheotomy wound closed after the removal of the tube.

The coffin in which Kennedy was placed in Dallas was bronze-colored and had one screw on the back, an ‘air-lock sealing screw’, which drained all the air from the coffin, tightening and sealing it. At Bethesda the coffin was described as being a plain gray metal casket, which had aluminum head screws, which were undone on the right side of the coffin. It is obvious the locking systems are not the same.

Dennis David was Chief of the day for the Medical School on November 22, 1963. He was in charge of about eight sailors who were to unload the casket at Bethesda. David informed researcher David Lifton there were two ambulances at Bethesda, another fact not mentioned in the Warren Commission documents. The first entered with the body through the back gate, the second was empty. David said Dr. Thornton Boswell, present at the autopsy, knew about this because he said that the body was in the first ambulance. The first ambulance was a black Cadillac, a hearse rather than an ambulance, and came from Jones Bridge Road, the back entrance. Fifteen to twenty minutes later, a Navy ambulance arrived from Wisconsin Avenue, the front entrance, escorted by the Military District of Washington-casket team. This team that had lost track of the ambulance entering through the front gate and had encountered two ambulances; they were informed that one had acted as a decoy should there have been problems with the press or other people who had gathered in front of Bethesda. The gray metal casket was taken from the black hearse. No such mention of a black hearse was mentioned anywhere in the official records. Officially, the body came in a Navy ambulance through the front entrance; the body wasn’t in any gray metal casket.

From this and similar evidence, one HAD to conclude that something had happened to the body
on its way to Bethesda.
David Lifton was the first to construct such a theory. Simplified, it says that the President’s body
was taken from its coffin and placed somewhere else. An empty coffin was transported to
Bethesda by ambulance. Kennedy’s body was then brought to Bethesda via a different route.
Lifton discovered that within ninety seconds after the landing of Air Force One, a helicopter took
off in the immediate vicinity of Air Force One. Rereading transcripts from AFO, he discovered
that the initial plan was to have an autopsy at Walter Reed Hospital, which was also a military
facility, owned by the Army instead of the Navy. Interestingly, the shortest route from Walter
Reed to Bethesda would be by entering the Bethesda facility via the back entrance, via Jones
Bridge Road. If the body was taken to Walter Reed, it is most likely most participants in this
transfer would have believed that they were really taking the body to the autopsy or had made a
mistake in bringing it to Walter Reed.
The only piece missing in this puzzle is that nobody actually has come forward and said he saw
the President’s body being removed from the casket and put somewhere else. It is extremely
unlikely someone will believe those who would do such a thing would wait until nobody saw
them. The man/men who had to ‘snatch’ the body away (person ‘X’) knew and probably saw
(supposing he was present) that nobody would be willing to leave the body alone for a long time.
The worst thing that could happen is that some people tried to touch the dead President; nobody
wanted that kind of hysteria. This means that the best candidate for ‘X’ is somehow who was
with the body (practically) the whole time. He only had to be patient and wait for the moment
when he was alone (however briefly that might be) to perform the switch/transfer of the body.
This is the core of the problem: the only person(s) who could come forward and inform the
public of having witnessed this ‘bodysnatch’ are exactly the people (or single person) who have
(has) performed it.
This scenario is something most people, especially those involved in the actual transfer, didn’t
think about. Most of these people said that at no time was the coffin left unattended. These
people obviously felt the ‘snatchers’ had to be outside-agents, people who waited until the coffin
was unattended and then switched the body.

If it were inside agents, the only people most likely to have snatched the body were Secret
Service agents William Greer and Roy Kellerman, General Godfrey McHugh and Admiral
George Burkle, all of them possible candidates.
Greer and Kellerman were the basis of the HSCA’s conclusion that the Secret Service
“maintained constant vigilance over the body”. Greer, as we will see in chapter 8, didn’t
accelerate until Kennedy was hit in the head. Greer hit the brakes when the shooting began,
turning the president into a sitting duck for his hunters. Kellerman yelled the limousine had to
pull out of the motorcade. Either Kellerman or Greer knew the way to Parkland Memorial; yet,
neither of them supposedly knew that route.
Next to Greer in the presidential limousine was Roy Kellerman, who was acting as chief of the
Secret Service on this trip. He became the hero of the early critics because he had ‘attacked’ the
Commission, arguing that more than three shots had been fired. Both he and Greer, however, told
FBI agent Francis O’Neill “emphatically, specifically and irrevocably... that three and only three
shots were fired”.
If there was a planned ‘bodytheft’, taking the body to Washington (i.e. away from Rose’s knife,
delaying the autopsy) was an essential step. The man arguing with Rose was Kellerman. At
Bethesda, it was Kellerman who kept FBI agents Sibert and O’Neill out of the morgue for a few
minutes. Sibert and O’Neill realized they had to be on their toes and decided that Sibert would go where Greer went; O’Neill would follow Kellerman. Greer and Kellerman were interrogated by Sibert and O’Neill on November 26/7; The FBI agents treated Greer as a suspect, listing his physical description.

If Kennedy’s body was stolen and was subjected to a quick analysis, perhaps even ‘adding’ a wound in Kennedy’s back, this means someone, not necessarily any of the above listed persons or for the reason of altering (adding to) the wounds, broke the official chain of possession.

The message is, once again, that the Commission failed to investigate the chain of possession of the body, hiding behind Oswald’s ‘insanity’. From the different appearances of the body and the casket in Dallas and at Bethesda, it is almost necessary to conclude that the chain of possession of the body is broken. If there is serious doubt about the validity of the best evidence, this could have been cause to make the autopsy-report inadmissible in a court of law.

The Zapruder film

The Commission had several films and photos at its disposal. The ‘crème de la crème’ was a film taken by Abraham Zapruder. Because this film was the best one available, the Commission rightly decided to use it for its interpretation of the events as they unfolded in Dealey Plaza.

Abraham Zapruder was a ladies’ dress manufacturer, with offices at 501 Elm Street. Zapruder had just bought a new Bell and Howell 8 mm. camera with telephoto lens and his secretary. Lillian Rogers, said he should go and film the motorcade. Zapruder would shoot twenty-two seconds of film of one of the major events in recent history. And he realized it. When he talked to the Secret Service later that day, he told them he would be glad to give them a copy; he planned to sell the original for an ‘as high a price as possible’. The official record has it that he sold this original film to LIFE for USD 25,000, which he gave to Firemen’s and Policemen’s Benevolence, who, he suggested, would give the money to Mrs. Tippit, wife of the killed policeman. When people, especially assassination researchers, requested copies of that contract, they learnt that the price was not USD 25,000 but USD 150,000. The USD 125,000 would be paid over a period of five years.

With the help of the Zapruder film, the Commission could establish the sequence and timing of the shots and link this information with the information coming from the autopsy report and Connally’s medical records.

The Zapruder-film could also clear up a few of the myths and assumptions surrounding the shooting. Was Kennedy’s throat exposed to the sniper’s nest? The Dallas doctors believed so; the autopsy report had been altered so as to account for the throatwound and Humes had constructed the report so that it ‘showed’ Kennedy did not face the Depository. Life, the ‘proud’ possessor of the film, however, reported on December 6 “the 8mm. Zapruder film shows the President turning his body far around to the right as he waves to someone in the crowd. His throat is exposed toward the sniper’s nest-just before he clutches it.” This is an outright lie; the Zapruder-film shows no such thing. Life simply parroted the assumption made by the Dallas doctors.

The Commission should not have relied on the Zapruder-film because it doesn’t show the first hit; there is a sign blocking Zapruder’s view of the President. The Commission sometimes gave the impression as if the Zapruder-film was the only available evidence, but on this particular item it also had a series of photos. One of these photos was taken by Major Philip Will is who was standing across the street from Zapruder; his view of the limousine wasn’t obscured by the street sign. The Commission did use this photo, but in a cropped version, making the picture lose most,
if not all, of its importance. When assassination researchers studied the original, un-cropped photograph, they saw what Will is had been trying to tell Wesley Liebeler, staff member of the Commission, all along: that the President was hit BEFORE frame 210, the frame that corresponds with the earliest moment Kennedy can be seen from the sniper’s nest. In fact, he was hit at the time coinciding with frame 189-191 of the Zapruder-film. The film does blur on that moment, as Zapruder jiggles the camera, reacting to the sounds of the shots.

This means that the first hit didn’t come from the sixth floor of the Depository. The view was obstructed by a large Texas oak. It seems highly bizarre someone would shoot at the President when he can’t see him and yet somehow hits the President. Also note that this shot was said to strike the President in the back, exit his body through the neck. Note that the Dallas doctors, the only doctors to see this wound because a tracheotomy was performed over this wound, said this throat wound was an entry-wound, no exit-wound as the autopsy doctors would conclude it was.

The Zapruder-film, provided the Commission would have used it if this scenario unfolded, would have forced the Commission to accept the first shot came from in front of the President, forcing the Commission to accept the throat wound as an entry-wound, as everyone knowledgeable had said. But Humes’ alterations had not only saved his reputation; they also possibly saved the Commission’s ‘single assassin’-theory.

Then there was Connally’s backwound, caused by a shot fired between the President’s throat wound (according to the Commission: backwound) and the President’s headwound. The Commission, using the Mannlicher-Carcano as the weapon with which was fired, learnt that it took 2.3 seconds in between shots could be fired. If the film showed Connally was hit within 2.3 seconds, say 1.9 seconds, after Kennedy was hit in the throat, sorry: ‘back’, it meant that someone other than ‘Oswald’ had fired one of those shots. And the film showed just that: Connally was shot before 2.3 seconds had been timed after Kennedy was shot, at frame 210. He was shot around frame 232-8, but the Commission moved it up to frame 225 or 226, extending Kennedy’s ‘hit-zone’ between frame 210 and frame 225, when he re-emerges in view of Zapruder's film. Kennedy was shot around frame 190, which meant there was at least 2.3 seconds between the shots, but the Commission could-’n’t use frame 190 simply because it was impossible Oswald fired a shot then, obstructed as his view was by a Texas Oak.

If the Commission wanted to show Oswald was the lone assassin, it had to show Kennedy’s throat-, sorry, ‘back’-wound and Connally’s backwound were caused by one single bullet. The Dallas doctors’ testimony, testifying the throat wound was an entrance-wound, made this impossible; the best evidence (Hurries’ altered autopsy report), however, did allow for such a scenario. Diagramming the path of this bullet, it had to change course in midair, but that was the least of the Commission’s worries: there was the pristine condition of the bullet, CE399. Originally described as having fallen of Kennedy’s stretcher, even though it was not found on Kennedy’s stretcher, this bullet had already been forced, by Humes’ alterations to the autopsy report, to go through Kennedy’s body, exiting through Kennedy’s throat. The Commission now forced that bullet to pass through Connally’s back, chest, wrist and thigh as well ... ending up on Connally’s stretcher, in pristine condition.

Evidence can withstand some alteration, but CE399, though pristine, was unable to withstand so much alteration, first at the hands of Humes, now by the Commission’s hand, especially assistant counsel Arlen Specter and member Gerald Ford.

CE399 was not identified as the one found in Parkland, but they nevertheless assumed it to be the same, even though there were indications to the contrary. Its original weight was believed to be
168 grams. When ‘found’, it weighted 158 grains, a loss of .75 to 1.5 percent. According to the FBI, the bullet weighed 160-1 grains, dropping to 158.6 grains.

And here is where the Single Bullet-Theory, as Specter’s possible solution to the dilemma came to be known, ended its relationship with reality, though it didn’t stop the Commission in its ‘findings’, i.e. inventions. Dr. Charles Gregory, states that X-rays from Connally’s wrist before and even after the operation show more fragments than that are missing grains from CE399. Plus, there is also a large bullet fragment in Connally’s chest, which was not taken out during that operation: Connally’s body contains more grains of ‘CE399’ than that are grains missing from CE399, which forces anyone who doesn’t want to contradict reality that CE399 is NOT the bullet that caused Connally’s injuries; it also causes serious doubt about the rest of the Single Bullet-theory, should it not have lost all credibility when confronted with this evidence.

Specter commented on ‘his’ theory: “I don’t think the people are going to believe this-this year, next year or a hundred years from now. This thing will be challenged today, tomorrow and forever”. The maker understood his creation was ridiculous.

A third shot, the second shot that hit the President, was established as having been fired at the moment when the Zapruder film exposed frame 313 to the events in Dealey Plaza (the numbering was done afterwards to facilitate identification of the various frames). This shot hit the President in the head and killed the President.

Appearing before the Commission, the doctors had interpreted the President’s position as bending forward when he was struck in the head and had used this interpretation in their drawings, which show the President bending forward. This drawing, however, was not identical to what actually was seen on the Zapruder.

Kennedy’s head and body was slightly tilted towards Jackie, sitting to his left. When he gets shot, he moves towards the back of the seat, towards Jackie, following a theoretical bullet-path coming from the grassy knoll. If the bullet comes from behind and especially above, Kennedy would move towards the left, down, into Jackie’s lap. The Zapruder-film shows that Jackie has to pull him down into her lap, after he was thrown backwards and to his left, towards Jackie. Kennedy’s head movement thus ends the speculation about whether he was hit from in front or from the back. The wound itself didn’t clear up this issue since shots of either origin could have caused that damage. It is Kennedy’s head-movement that shows where the shot originated from. At the very least, the drawing presented before the Commission was at odds with Kennedy’s head position as witnessed on the Zapruder-film.

Dan Rather, the only journalist to see the film on November 22, however, said that the President moved FORWARD. It is hard to believe anyone could be mistaken on the movement of the President; then again, Life had seen the President facing the Depository.

Didn’t the Commission realize all this? Didn’t they realize that drawing didn’t correspond with the truth?

There is no evidence to suggest that the Commission members even saw the Zapruder-film, even though it seems some of them did see the film. What they all did see were the individual frames. As these were presented in the Warren Commission Volumes, frame 313 and 314 were switched, giving a false impression of the President’s movements. When asked to explain this ‘error’, FBI director J. Edgar Hoover said it was a simple human error. But the central theme was: how could a shot from behind the President cause the President to fall towards the origin of
the shots, whereas it would be normal that President Kennedy ‘followed’ the bullet’s path, i.e. move forward, as Rather erroneously described what he saw on the Zapruder-film. The Commission argued that ‘speculation’ away with the ‘fact’ that the President’s backbrace caused this rather ‘eccentric’ reaction. In later years, Governor Connally would go as far as to say that any physicist would say the President’s reaction was ‘normal’; unfortunately for the Commission and Connally, it is not. But bother with facts when they had already invented a Single Bullet-Theory, totally at odds with the facts?

Officially, the Zapruder-film was developed in Dallas in the afternoon of November 22, 1963. Zapruder had three extra copies made, two of which were given to the Secret Service, who, on November 23, 1963, gave one copy to the FBI. The original and a third copy were sold to LIFE on November 23, 1963, for USD 150,000 and not USD 25,000 as everybody believed.

Having paid such an enormous amount of money for this film, everybody would expect that LIFE would print the frames showing the President and Connally being hit as soon as possible, even Secret Service agent Bouck believed it. LIFE was a magazine, which made it impossible to show the Zapruder-film as a film, but it would be safe to suggest TV-networks would want to loan the Zapruder-film for airing it on TV, perhaps a few days after LIFE had printed these frames in its edition, thus giving the ‘scoop’ to LIFE. But nothing of this kind happened; the film was safely stored in a New York vault, right until the mid-seventies when the Zapruder-film was finally aired. LIFE didn’t print the most important frames, showing the hits, but instead ‘documentary’ frames that were interesting as historical documents, but not important documents in the quest for the truth.

When people did get to see the film and started analyzing it, they discovered there were major problems with this film. Frames 155 and 156 were non-existing, even though the U.S. government and Time-Life Inc. denied a splice existed. Strangely, though, it seemed that on frame 157, the President was aware of a first shot. As we shall see, there was speculation that the first shot missed. The Warren Commission only printed from frame 171, so nobody knew about this reaction until years later. Should a shot have been fired, it was most probably not fired by Oswald since he would have shot without aiming or even seeing the President; perhaps that’s the explanation the Commission started printing at a later frame.

Frame 207 was also tampered with and splice, while frame 208 and 212 were removed. Note that frame 210 was the first frame the Commission established as being the moment Oswald could see the President again, having emerged from under a tree that obscured the view from the sixth floor of the Depository.

Researchers wanted to know why all these ‘problems’ existed and LIFE replied that the Zapruder film was handled by a junior clerk, who, in his inexperience, had made these ‘minor’ mistakes. Researchers couldn’t quite understand how LIFE could possibly have ordered a junior clerk to work on a film that had cost LIFE USD 150,000 and, what’s even more, was important evidence and historic footage. And their suspicions seem to have been correct.

In 1976, researcher Paul Hoch received CIA item nr. 450, a total of 9 pages. It was an analysis of the Zapruder-film by the CIA for the Secret Service at the National Photo Interpretation Center (NPIC). The NPIC (En-Pick) is located on the corner of M and First Street and was established in 1961 to act as a center for both the military, i.e. the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) and the civilian authorities, i.e. the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). On these pages, the following notation was found:
The ‘easy’ solution was that this document was about the copy the Secret Service had in its possession. Because the Secret Service had no facilities to do such an analysis, it was assumed they sent their copy over to the CIA for analysis.

But there was a puzzle. If this was a copy of the Zapruder film, the sequence should have been printing, followed by processing; not processing and printing. Processing, followed by printing was done when they worked with an original film; ‘print test’ meant that the exposure was checked, something done when working with an original and not with a copy. The problem was evident: officially, the Secret Service never had the original, yet CIA item nr. 450 indicated the Secret Service did have this original. The next question was WHEN the Secret Service could have had this original.

LIFE bought the original film from Zapruder on November 23, 1963; there was no evidence to suggest that the film left from LIFE’S possession and went to the Secret Service after that. Zapruder, in the official version, had held possession of the original film right until LIFE bought it from him on November 23, 1963; it never left Dallas before November 23, 1963. Researchers wondered why the Secret Service so violently protested Earl Rose and would act like a pussy-cat with Zapruder. Was it possible a deal was made in which the Secret Service took hold of the film for about 18 hours (enough time to fly the film to Washington, make the analysis at NPIC and return it to Zapruder in Dallas), but didn’t tell nobody about it, thus making the ‘Zapruder-deal’ (selling it to the highest bidder) possible. Zapruder and the Secret Service knew that the film would lose much of its value if it became public knowledge the film had been in the hands of the Secret Service before LIFE bought it; this couldn’t be considered exclusive.

Officially, Sorrels left for DPD headquarters before the film was developed. But two employees at Eastman-Kodak lab say that “Sorrels stayed with the film until development and viewed it with them in the facility”. General Philip Willas says that “Sorrels viewed both the Zapruder film and their photos. He obtained negatives and kept them for a month.” The early FBI version says that the film was developed at Jamieson Film Co. on Bryan Street. If Sorrels officially said he had left before the film was developed, he couldn’t have possibly taken the film with him.

The Rockefeller Commission, in the seventies investigating the activities of the CIA, became interested in this aspect as well and asked the CIA for an answer to this problem. The CIA told the Commission that the “Secret Service did bring A COPY of the film to the CIA Director John McCone LATE IN 1963. NPIC conducted an analysis LATE THAT SAME EVENING” (emphasis mine). The CIA further stated that agents of the Secret Service were present during the analysis and “took the film away with them that night”. It is highly unlikely this was ‘a copy’, it is likely it was ‘the original’. That original was given to Herbert Orth, chief of the LIFE photographic lab. He said that the film didn’t leave his custody after he had received it. The CIA, however, was (too) vague on when this all happened. ‘late 1963’ could mean November 22, but also December 31. Researchers did wonder why the NPIC and the Secret Service was in such a rush to analyze that film. The CIA-response stated that the

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The CIA however, was (too) vague on when this all happened. ‘late 1963’ could mean November 22, but also December 31. Researchers did wonder why the NPIC and the Secret Service was in such a rush to analyze that film. The CIA-response stated that the
film was brought late in the evening. Instead of beginning the analysis the following morning, during normal working hours and with a clear mind, the NPIC worked on the analysis until the early hours of morning, or using the CIA’s wording, “that night”, i.e. seven hours later. Could the suspicions of researchers be true? It took six hours to fly to and from Washington. Add seven hours for analysis at NPIC, plus a few extra hours lost in moving the film from airport to the headquarters of the Secret Service, perhaps to John McCone and to NPIC: all this could be done in eighteen hours, enabling Zapruder to sell the original to LIFE on November 23, 1963. Unless the people at NPIC handled a copy as an original, which is most unlikely, it seems the most logical solution.

This COULD account for certain ‘problems’, such as missing frames, with the Zapruder film, even though there are greater problems with the film than a few ‘missing’ frames, even though this is destruction of evidence. This, once again, could mean that the evidentiary chain of the film was broken; that the official version does not reflect the real ‘travels’ of the film. The Commission, ‘of course’, didn’t check the chain of possession.

The most likely alterations, however, are visible when one compares frames 314 to 316 with frames 317 and 318. The possible alterations are clearest on video, not that much on film, which was the usual means of projection in ‘the early days’.

Frames 314, 315 and 316 show a ‘blob’, similar to an injury, even though it could be argued (with success) this blob is painted in, thus obscuring the actual sight of the wounds. These frames do not show a large ‘flap’, which looks more like a pink plastic plate. Suddenly, frames 317 and 318 do show that ‘flap’, even though there is hardly any movement of the President’s head between frame 316 and 317. If the flap is real and not painted in, it should show in frame 316; it doesn’t. If it were a genuine flap, it is an enormous flap by any means, possible even bigger than the actual wound, with extremely smooth edges (linear). When looking at the wound on frame 315 and 317, we see that the wound has doubled in size, even though the head’s size itself has not changed. Interestingly, this ‘flap’ and ‘blob’ covers the entire head-area in front of Kennedy’s ear, like a giant visor.

Summary

Because of the complexity of the material, a summary seems to be no unnecessary luxury.

In Dallas, doctor saw a small throat wound and a large(r) head-wound on the President’s body. Immediately upon arrival at Parkland, a tracheotomy was performed over the throat-wound. Except for the doctors, nobody knew it existed. With one bullet injuring Connally, one hitting Kennedy in the throat and one in his head, we get a total of three bullets. Three bullets were found in the sniper’s nest.

But to anyone except the doctors, there was only evidence of two shots: one for Connally and in Kennedy’s head.

Suddenly, at Bethesda, there is evidence of three shots: one in Connally, one in Kennedy’s head and one in Kennedy’s back. Nobody at Bethesda knows of the throatwound (yet). The backwound is very shallow and an almost pristine bullet is recovered at Parkland. Humes realizes that this bullet (CE399) is probably the one that caused the back-wound. The plotters, in fact, have planted an almost pristine bullet, a sign the bullet did not penetrate into the body.

But the next day, Humes learns of the throatwound. This means four wounds and only three bullets, plus what might be considered (gross) negligence on his part. Humes, in his autopsy-report, links the backwound to the throatwound, thus causing CE399 to go through the
President’s body. Humes perhaps also thinks that a bullet is more likely to penetrate the body instead of making only a wound of an inch deep.
The Warren Commission, realizing one assassin couldn’t have fired Shot One, missing or hitting the President in the back and Shot Two, missing or hitting Connally, are forced, because of Humes illegal assumption that CE399 traveled through the body, an assumption based on the existence of the throatwound, to conclude these shots are, in fact, just one shot. This means that CE399 is assumed to have traveled through Connally’s body as well.
With enough evidence available, it is evident that the backwound was ‘added’ later. For the conspirators, CE399 only had to ‘skim’ the body. But because of the throatwound (or, at least, the fact that it wasn’t noticed by those who altered the body) and the Zapruder-film, Humes and the Warren Commission were forced to come up with the Single Bullet Theory.
C. THE KILLING OF J D TIPPIT

The killing of J.D. Tippit is quite essential to theory the Warren Commission put forward in its report. For one, it proves the capacity that Oswald could kill. It also proves that Oswald was in such a state of mind that he could kill somebody on November 22, 1963. That’s why assistant counsel David Belin said that the Tippit-killing was the Rosetta Stone to the Kennedy assassination. After all: why would Oswald kill Tippit if he hadn’t killed Kennedy? This means that if one could prove that Oswald killed Tippit, it could also ‘prove’ that Oswald killed Kennedy, even though the evidence in the latter case would be virtually non-existent or very circumstantial. As we have seen, the evidence is just that, even though the Commission thought and concluded nothing was wrong with the evidence. It would also corroborate the Police’s actions when they arrested Oswald for the murder of Tippit. It would be rather a peculiar fact if the suspected murderer of Tippit turned out NOT to have killed that officer, but DID kill the President. This, of course, would give cause for rumors and rumors were something the Commission didn’t want to hear of.

Jefferson Davis Tippit joined the Dallas Police Department in July 1952. His duty was to patrol district No. 78, in the Oak Cliff-area, during daylight hours. This meant that he rode alone in police car No. 10, which was assigned to him. For the rest, not much is known about this policeman who never received a promotion or an official reprimand in his career, even though he had been honored for his services a few years earlier; almost everything we do know about him is because assassination researchers tried to find out more about this man. The Warren Commission was not interested in finding out more about this man. They should have, because a thorough investigation into a murder-case also involves an investigation of whether there are other people, besides Oswald, who might have had a (better) motive for killing Tippit. Assassination researcher Larry Harris was interested, if at some time not obsessed, in all these aspects of this man and his death, an interest that even made him decide to get a job as letter carrier in the area to find out what the neighbors were telling about all that had happened.

The Warren Report had this to say about his killing: “At about 1:16 pm, a Dallas police officer, J. D. Tippit, was shot less than one mile from Oswald’s rooming house.” The Commission had positive identification of the killer by two eyewitnesses; firearms identification experts established the identity of the murder weapon; they knew who owned the murder weapon; they knew who owned a zipper jacket that was found along the path of flight taken by the gunman from the scene of the shooting to the place of arrest. What this all comes down to is that Oswald shot, killed, J.D. Tippit, ran from the scene of the crime, ejecting cartridge cases along the way and reloading his revolver, throwing away his jacket and running into the Texas Theatre, a movie theatre, where he eventually was arrested. Or, at least, that’s what the Commission said.

The first ‘fact’ the Commission established was the time of the shooting. It concluded it happened at 13h16. Oswald, according to Earlene Roberts, the landlady, had left his rooming house at about 13h03-4 and she saw Oswald standing at the bus stop at that time. The bus was northbound, while Tippit’s killing was to the South. Why Oswald suddenly changed his mind and didn’t take a bus but went instead on foot to the south was never explained by the Commission. They concluded it would take Oswald about twelve minutes to get to the place where Tippit was killed, 501 E. Jefferson. However, this time was not the result of the Warren Commission’s re-enactment. It took 17 minutes and 45 seconds during the Commission’s ‘test run’; it took twelve minutes in the Secret Service’s re-enactment. Assassination researchers have
been able to do it between eleven and twelve minutes. The Commission said that, because nobody saw Oswald “running” along the route (in fact, nobody saw Oswald even walking along that route), he had walked that route; a strange twist of logic, but not uncommon for this Commission.

Even though establishing the time the shooting occurred seems to be an ‘open and shut’ issue, in this case, it certainly is not.

Helen Markham was on her way to catch the 13h12 bus for work when she saw what had happened. Before the Warren Commission, she said that she ‘couldn’t be afraid to bet it wasn’t six or seven minutes after one.’ It should be noted that Helen Markham was behaving hysterical throughout everything and that her testimony is not as sound as it should be (see later). Nevertheless, Jack Ray Tatum, also present on the scene of the crime, said that Helen Markham first didn’t want to stay there because she was afraid to miss the bus. Even though Mrs. Markham testified she had seen everything happening and arrived immediately at the scene of the crime, other witnesses testified they didn’t see her there until some minutes later. This could mean that the killing took place a few minutes before 13h08-12, when Helen Markham was on her way to catch her bus to work.

T. F. Bowley was the man who reported, using the radio in Tippit’s car, that a policeman had been shot at 501 E. Jefferson, even though the Commission credited Domingo Benavides with reporting the crime; another mistake by the Commission. This occurred sixteen minutes after one o’clock, the time the Commission established as being the time the shooting occurred. Bowley was never asked to appear before the Commission, but Bowley did tell everyone who wanted to listen that he saw Tippit lying next to the car. He looked at his watch, which showed it was 1:10 pm. Of course, his watch could have erred slightly, but probably not by six minutes. This means that the killing occurred just before 13h10.

Domingo Benavides, also a witness, said that, after he heard the shots, he hid in his truck for a few minutes, afraid the murderer would open fire on anyone that would approach him or Tippit’s body. After a few minutes, he went over to Tippit’s body and tried to call in the shooting, but got no answer. At 13h08, the Dallas Police radio logs do list a call from Tippit’s car, but this was never put through to the Dispatcher. It is possible Tippit made this call very shortly before he was killed; there is the possibility this was Benavides’ try to report the crime. After Benavides had tried, Bowley tried to get through and he succeeded in reporting the shooting.

Everybody who could know the time of the shooting, said it was around 13h08-13h10. The Commission should therefore have concluded the shooting occurred at this moment and not at 13h16, when the shooting was reported.

In the ‘speculation’-section of the Report, replying to the ‘speculation’ that Mrs. Markham put the time of the assassination at 13h06, thus making it impossible for Oswald to get there (according to the Commission’s sense of logic), the Commission said the time of the shooting was 13h15-6, based upon the call to Police headquarters. Obviously, the Commission never substantiated why the call would coincide with/immediately follow the actual moment of the shooting.

The Commission concluded against the available evidence, which is certainly not a sign of a good investigation.

The Secret Service, quoting from the radio logs, established the time of the shooting at 13h28. Their basis was the announcement through the radio that Tippit had died. Even before that, about 13h22, Tippit was put in an ambulance and rushed to Methodist Hospital, where he was declared death on arrival. This was transmitted at 13h28 via the police radio. The Dallas Police Homicide
Report, typed at 17h00 that same day, also (erroneously) listed the time of the shooting as 13h30.

Even though the evidence suggests Oswald had only about three to four minutes to get to the scene of the crime, he still could have got there, perhaps by car. No-one came forward who said he had driven Oswald in his car to that area, but that shouldn’t be surprising because this man knew he could be accused of complicity in killing a police man and aiding an assassin (killing the President) in his escape. The FBI or the Police should have tried to find out, but, even if they did, nobody was found that had seen Oswald between the bus stop close to his rooming house and 501 E. Jefferson, where he allegedly killed J.D. Tippit.

The Warren Report continues: “(Tippit)... stopped a man who matched the description... (and) called him to his car. He approached the car and apparently exchanged words with Tippit through the RIGHT FRONT or vent WINDOW. Tippit got out and started to walk around the front of the car. As Tippit reached the left front wheel the man pulled out a revolver and fired several shots. Four bullets hit Tippit and killed him instantly.” (emphasis mine)

Pictures taken at the scene of the crime show that this right front window was closed. Witness Virginia Davis and policeman W.E. Barnes corroborated this. The scenario as it was offered to the public, does not say Tippit or someone else AFTER the shooting closed this window. There seems to be no logical reason to close it.

This scenario, however, was offered to the Commission by Helen Markham. As already said, Mrs. Markham was behaving hysterically. She claimed to have talked about twenty minutes to the dying Tippit, who, she felt, knew she was there. She said she was the only person present at that time. The autopsy doctors concluded Tippit had died immediately. The fact is that the Commission, for the second time, did not believe Mrs. Markham’s testimony and relied on the doctors’ verdict. Other (eye)witnesses like William Scoggins, Ted Galloway and Emory Austin said they only saw Mrs. Markham arrive after some time had elapsed. This means that three witnesses testified Mrs. Markham was not the first on the scene of the crime and probably didn’t see the actual shooting happening. Yet, the Commission chose to believe Mrs. Markham on that issue, even though they didn’t believe other allegations made by her.

Accepting Mrs. Markham’s testimony, means that it didn’t accept other testimony. Frank Wright was living in the vicinity of the shooting and, upon hearing the shots, looked to see what was happening. He was never called before the Commission, perhaps for obvious reasons, but told assassination researchers that there was a man in front of the car, looking toward the man on the ground. This man wore a long coat (nothing like the zipper-jacket Oswald allegedly had on), which ended just above his hands. “I didn’t see a gun.” This man ran around the passenger’s side and ran as fast as he could go, GOT INTO HIS CAR, which was a little gray old coupe, made about 1950-1, maybe a Plymouth. It was parked on the same side of the street as the police car, but, as seen from Mr. Wright’s point of view, beyond it. There was another man in this old gray coupe. Frank Wright said it took off away from him. When the police came, nobody showed any interest in what he had to say. He added “I’ve seen what came out on television and in the newspapers, but I know that’s what happened.”

Even though Frank Wright saw only one man, the ‘speculation’-section of the Report ‘argues’ that another witness, an unidentified woman, said two people were involved in the assassination. The Commission said that the only woman was Helen Markham; the FBI never interviewed any other woman.

This means that if the FBI didn’t interview such a woman, such a woman officially doesn’t exist.
Apart from anything else, this shows that the Commission, officially, had nothing but the deepest respect for the FBI and its investigative qualities, something which, as we have seen, shouldn’t have been accepted a priori.

There was such a woman, Acquila Clemons, who said that two men were involved. Mrs. Clemons was in her house and saw two men. One of them had a gun and was kind of chunky, kind of heavy, dressed in khaki-clothes with a white shirt. The other one, described as thin and rather tall, was standing at the other side of the street and was told, through arm-movements, to ‘go on’. Both of them ran away in opposite directions, Clemons was visited by the FBI, but they said they wouldn’t take statements from her because of her ‘poor health’. Mrs. Clemons was diabetic, which is, of course, an illness, but doesn’t prevent people from giving statements to the FBI. Clemons said that on November 24 a man came to her house and warned her not to talk about what she had seen.

But from what side had the gunman entered the scene of the crime? According to the Commission, from the East, Oswald had to be walking to East because that was where his rooming-house was. Markham ‘corroborated’ the Commission. William Scoggins said that Tippit “got out of his car and evidently said something to a man who was walking WEST on 10th” (my emphasis). Jim Burt, a soldier on leave, said that the gunman was walking WEST. He walked in front of his house, saw him talk to Tippit and running away after the killing. The Secret Service, FBI and Assistant District Attorney William Alexander believed the man was walking WEST. The Homicide Report by Captain C.E. Talbert also stated the man was walking West. That Report also said that ‘Tippitt’ and his murderer talked through a closed window.

Even though the Commission concluded four shots were fired, most witnesses (Markham, Benavides) heard only three. Jim Leavelle, ordered by the Dallas Police to investigate the Tippit-killing, said three shots were fired: one hit Tippit in the hand, one in his chest, one in his stomach. The Homicide Report by Talbert also stated three shots were fired: one in the right temple, one in the right side of his chest and one in the center of his stomach. If both reports are correct about the locations of the shots, it WOULD mean Tippit was hit by four bullets.

The Warren Commission didn’t print Tippit’s autopsy report or even his death certificate. The autopsy report was not made available until three weeks later, on December 10, to the Secret Service. Dr. Earl Rose said that three shots had penetrated Tippit’s body, one bullet had probably hit a button because it hadn’t penetrated Tippit’s body. Dr. Earl Rose also gave the three bullets to the Secret Service. Special Agent Edward E. Moore of the Secret Service-Dallas, upon receipt of the autopsy report, said that three bullets had hit the chest and one bullet had hit the head. Obviously, Rose’s reports doesn’t match the Warren Report, which relied on Moore’s statement. Eddie Kinsley, an ambulance attendant, said there was ‘an extraneous bullet’, which corroborates Rose’s report. The Warren Commission, obviously without checking, failed to notice the difference.

According to the Warren Commission, three bullets were from Winchester-Western, one bullet was from Remington-Peters. The FBI couldn’t link the slugs allegedly (i.e. according to the Commission/Secret Service) removed from Tippit’s body during the autopsy to Oswald’s revolver. The reason given by the FBI is incorrect, according to other experts.

Two of the cartridges allegedly recovered from the scene of the crime were from Winchester and Western, two were from Remington-Peters. Of course, this meant, following the Commission’s reasoning, that the second Remington-Peters cartridge wasn’t linked to a bullet and that the cartridge from one Winchester-Western wasn’t recovered.
Sergeant Gerald Hill, inspecting the scene of the Tippit-shooting, radioed that the “suspect is armed with an automatic .38 rather than a pistol”. He concluded this from the way the cartridges were found around the scene of the crime and because he could see the ejector scratches on the shells. An automatic ejects the spent shells. With a revolver, like Oswald allegedly used in the killing, the user has to eject the cartridge cases himself.

Policeman J.M. Poe received two cartridge cases from Benavides. He said he marked them ‘JMP’ before turning them over to the DPD Crime Lab, headed by Lt. Day. Policeman Barnes, receiving them from Poe, marked them ‘B’. On June 12, 1964, Poe was asked, by the FBI, to identify the cases he was shown as the ones he had found. He was unable to locate his marks, he could not “positively identify any of these cartridges as being the same ones he received from Benavides”. In front of the Warren Commission, he stated: “I want to say these two are mine, but I couldn’t swear to it.” W.E. Barnes of the DPD Crime Lab was also unable to find his marks, B, oh the same cases. Once again, the chain of possession of evidence could not be established. The FBI was able to link the cases the Commission used as exhibits to Oswald’s gun, but that seems to be an echo of what happened to the cartridges found on the sixth floor of the Depository. Lt. Day was unable to find his markings on those cases, even though these cases were linked to the Mannlicher-Carcano. The evidence suggests a Mauser was found on the sixth floor; the evidence suggests an automatic .38, not a revolver, was used in the Tippit-killing.

Benavides and the Davis sisters, who, later on that day, recovered also two cases, were also unable to identify the cases that were ballistically linked to Oswald’s revolver as the ones they had found on November 22. The police list of evidence showed no mention of these cartridges.

The Report says “the gunman started back toward Patton Avenue, ejecting the empty cartridge cases before reloading with fresh bullets”. Nobody saw ‘the gunman’ reloading anything. The Commission, having concluded Oswald’s revolver was used in the Tippit-killing, also knew empty cartridge cases had been found. Because Oswald’s revolver was, logically, a revolver, Oswald had ejected them. Fine reasoning, were it not that everybody at the scene of the crime thought it was an automatic .38. Because Oswald’s revolver was fully loaded at his arrest, the Commission reasoned he had to have reloaded his weapon.

Oswald, according to the Report, had taken his revolver from his rooming house, put in his jacket or some pocket, killed Tippit and, upon his arrest, tried to shoot at one of the arresting officers. Yet, Hoover stated in a memo that no fingerprints of Oswald were found on the revolver. This means that either Oswald never touched that revolver (and he therefore couldn’t have done any of the three things the Commission said he did with it on November 22) or that someone wiped the revolver clean of fingerprints. In search of incriminating evidence against a suspect, it seems hard to believe anyone would clean the revolver.

Could Oswald’s revolver be linked to Oswald? According to the Commission, it could. They concluded it was ordered from Records of Seaport Traders, Inc. in California, another firm targeted by the Dodd Committee, under the ‘alias’ A.J. Hidell, aged 28. This revolver ejected all cartridges simultaneously, suggesting Benavides should have been able to find them all four, all together, whereas the Davis-sisters found them at some distance from the other two. Apparently the Commission didn’t know there are various ways in which a revolver dispenses of its cartridges.

The date on the order was January 27, the return address PO Box 2915, Dallas, TX. In ink, ‘1 box of ammunition’ and ‘1 holster’ was added. A line was drawn through these items, suggesting
‘Hidell’ had changed his mind and didn’t want these after all. The name of the witness to attest the person ordering the revolver is “a U.S. citizen and not convicted” was ‘D.F.Drittal’. Of course, the Commission believed Oswald had invented the name of this witness. It was shipped on March 20, 1963 (the same day as the rifle), while the invoice was prepared on March 13. According to the Commission, Marina identified the revolver as Oswald’s, as she did with a holster, found at Oswald’s residence at Beckley Avenue. No records were ever brought to the Commission’s attention that Oswald had picked up the revolver from his post office box. Perhaps it should be speculated that someone ordered this revolver and mailed it to Oswald’s post office box, liked someone seems to have done with a paper bag.

Oswald, in custody, allegedly admitted owning the revolver. He allegedly said that “you know how boys do when they have a gun. They just carry it.” Oswald allegedly said he had bought the revolver in Forth Worth. George de Mohrenschildt would later say Oswald owned a .22 Beretta. The Commission, of course, said Oswald lied about this and that he had ordered it from California.

At a press conference, Oswald denied having killed Tippit. George O’Toole, using a voice-stress analyzer (Psychological Stress Evaluator), concluded Oswald told the truth when he said he hadn’t killed ANYONE (neither Kennedy nor Tippit) that day.

The revolver was never tested on whether or not it had been fired recently. It is crime against owning a revolver or carrying one, like Oswald did. His rifle was never linked to the bullets, but was linked to the cartridge cases. The evidence suggests these were not the cases retrieved from the scene of the crime. Nothing of the ‘real’ evidence has been linked to Oswald.

The Commission, at this stage hadn’t identified the gunman as Oswald. Even though nothing of the ‘hard’ evidence linked Oswald to the assassination, it is still possible Oswald was identified as the gunman and could therefore have been the assassin, however remote this possibility may seem.

The Commission also said that of the twelve people to have seen the gunman, five identified Oswald on November 22, a sixth on November 23. Three others identified Oswald from photographs, two persons said they thought the man resembled Oswald and one person said he was too far away to say whether the gunman was Oswald or someone else.

William Scoggins identified Oswald on November 23. Oswald’s picture had been on every TV-channel and in every newspaper and Scoggins said he had seen his picture in the newspaper before identifying Oswald in the line-up. Oswald was asked to identify himself by name and where he worked. At that time, the Depository was already considered to be the place from where the assassin shot and this was broadcasted on TV and radio. Oswald, of course, had bruises and protested heavily against the procedures. All the others in the line-up didn’t work at the Depository and weren’t called Oswald. As another witness would say: you could pick Oswald from that line-up just by listening to them. Yet, the Commission, ‘of course’, concluded it was “satisfied that the lineups were conducted fairly”.

Scoggins, however, also said that he didn’t witness the shooting. His view of the fleeing killer was obscured because he ducked behind his cab as the man came by. This means Scoggins was asked to identify a man he didn’t see. That he chose ‘the correct one’ (the only man arrested in those line-ups was Oswald) says more about the lineups than about the identification. Scoggins heard the killer say ‘poor dumb cop’ or ‘poor damned cop’ when the killer walked passed his cab. Apparently nobody wondered whether Scoggins could link that voice with Oswald.

Domingo Benavides, thought by the Commission to have reported the crime, said that he thought
he couldn’t identify the assassin. He wasn’t taken to a lineup because of this. Benavides was the closest witness to the killing, yet he officially said he couldn’t identify the gunman. In February 1964, his brother Edward, closely resembling his brother Domingo, was shot to death by an unknown assassin. Domingo believed that it was a case of mistaken identities and that the assassin wanted to kill him or badly injure him instead. The case was never solved. Domingo said that his life had been threatened. He believed they wanted to force him to identify Oswald. If he would have, he would have been the star witness. Benavides did not succumb to lying, even if his road to stardom lay open for him.

Helen Markham had, according to the Commission, also identified Oswald in a line-up. Because of her hysterical behavior, she was administered ammonia before she was taken to the lineup at 16h30 on November 22. The Report ‘admits’ that “even in the absence of Mrs. Markham’s testimony, there is ample evidence to identify Oswald as the killer of Tippit”. It is doubtful such ‘ample’ evidence exists, but what is perhaps even worse is the fact that the Report implies she identified Oswald. She did, but she had this to say when questioned by Assistant Counsel Ball: she said she couldn’t identify Oswald during the lineup. She did, of course, but she was acting hysterically, once again. After telling Mr. Ball six (sic) times she hadn’t recognized anyone in the lineups, Ball asked: “was there a number two in there?” Markham replied: “number two is the one I picked... When I saw this man I wasn’t sure, but I had cold chills just run all over me.”

What she is actually saying (and what the Commission should have concluded) is that she thought number two looked a bit like the killer, but she wasn’t sure. She decided to identify him as the killer because she felt he was a very nasty man who, given the fact he did somewhat resemble the killer, could have done it. Of course, her feeling that that could be the man who had done it was ‘translated’ as a positive identification of Oswald as the man she had seen. Afterwards, Joseph Ball said that Mrs. Markham’s testimony was “full of mistakes”, she was “an utter screwball” and “utterly unreliable”. Her son William said that his mother lied often, even to her family. William was arrested some time later and died when he “tried to escape” through an ‘unbarred jail window’.

All the other ‘known (to the Commission)’ witnesses didn’t witness the actual shooting, but saw what they believed to be the gunman along the path of flight he took, according to the Commission. Based upon Frank Wright’s version, the gunman left the scene of the crime by car. A possible accomplice, according to Acquila Clemons, ran away into the other direction. This means that the man seen by all these people is most probably not the actual gunman but an accomplice, standing on the other side of the street.

Barbara Jeanette Davis and Virginia Davis were taken to a lineup on November 22 and identified number two (Oswald) as the man they saw flee the scene of the crime. Barbara had seen Oswald’s picture in a newspaper. She said “she was PRETTY SURE it was the same man I saw. When they made him turn sideways, I was POSITIVE that was the one I seen (sic).” (my emphasis) Her sister Virginia said she had seen nothing of Oswald and identified Oswald; “I would say that was him for sure”. Nevertheless, they had also said the “killer didn’t look like he was over 20”, that he “wore a black coat” (Oswald didn’t) and on occasion they said they “wouldn’t say for sure” Oswald was the man they saw leaving the scene of the crime.

Interestingly, the Davis sisters shared a phone-number with Leona Miller, who was an acquaintance of Ruby. Ruby and Miller apparently met each other in a synagogue later that day. Both Barbara and Virginia were unable to identify the cartridges they were shown as the ones they had found.
William Arthur Smith didn’t talk to the police until several days later. At that time, Oswald was dead and world-famous as the assassin. He identified Oswald from a photograph. He was not asked to identify the gunman from a series of photos showing different persons; he was asked whether the man on that picture was the man he had seen fleeing. Before the Warren Commission, he said he had seen Oswald on TV and thought it was him.

Ted Callaway (who believed he heard five shots) and Sam Guinyard (heard three shots) identified Oswald on November 22 during those same lineups as the man they saw running. Callaway said that “Fritz told them before the lineup that they wanted to wrap up the case on Oswald”.

On Patton Avenue, four people saw the fleeing man. They were not interrogated by the FBI until two months after the killing occurred, by which time the mind have played all kinds of tricks on these people.

L.J. Lewis said he was too far away to identify anybody as the man he saw running.

Pat Patterson identified the man in the picture (Oswald) he was shown as the man he saw running. Again, he was not asked to identify Oswald’s photo from a set of pictures. What is very upsetting, though, is that nowhere can these pictures be found among the Commission’s evidence. So how does anybody know the photographs were accurate photographs of Oswald taken on November 22, 1963 and not some photos taken perhaps a year earlier, if not childhood photographs? Who says it were even photographs of Oswald? We have only the Commission’s and the FBI’s ‘good’ reputation to believe it were accurate photographs.

Harold Russell also identified Oswald from this picture. In February 1967, Russell himself would be killed by a policeman in a bar brawl.

Warren Reynolds, according to the Commission, identified Oswald from the photograph he was shown. However, this is a very edited version of the circumstances. Warren Reynolds, together with Ted Callaway, chased the gunman, but lost track of him. This meant that he got a better look of the gunman than all the others who only saw this man in a glimpse. On January 21, when first asked by the FBI, he failed to identify the fleeing gunman as Oswald. He even said that the fleeing man was NOT Oswald. Two days later, on January 23 at 21h15, he was shot in the head (temple) with a .22 in the place where he worked. The bullet went right through the head, but Reynolds survived. Three weeks after his release from the hospital, somebody tried to kidnap his daughter. Recovering, he identified Oswald as the man he saw fleeing. Needless to add he believed him being shot at and him not identifying Oswald were deeply intertwined. A suspect, Darrell Wayne Garner, would be arrested, but was released when Betty Mooney MacDonald (who also used the alias Nancy Jane Mooney) came forward and provided an alibi for Garner. One week later (February 13, 1964), MacDonald, who had worked as a stripper for Jack Ruby, was arrested. One hour after being jailed, she was found hanged to death on her trousers (sic) in her jail cell. Her death was ruled a suicide. In January 1970, Garner himself died of a drug overdose.

Perhaps the other witnesses had more common sense or experience in life and identified the man right away. Perhaps they truly believed the man was Oswald.

Acquila Clemons or Frank Wright were never asked to appear before the Commission or to identify Oswald. They simply didn’t exist.
A jacket
The Commission still had other ‘hard evidence’ to identify the fleeing gunman as Oswald. On what the Commission decided as being the path Oswald took, a jacket was recovered. It was a light colored zipper jacket. According to Marina, Oswald’s wife, Lee had only two jackets: a blue one, found at the Depository, and a gray one, entered into the evidence as CE 162.
Mrs. Markham and Benavides said the jacket they saw the gunman wearing was dark. Barbara Davis and Scoggins didn’t identify the jacket. Two other witnesses described the jacket as white. The fact that a dark and a white jacket was described is possible if two persons were involved.
The Report credited Westbrook with finding a light colored jacket lying under the rear of one of the cars. Westbrook, however, said he ‘didn’t find it—it was pointed out to me by ... some officer ... ’ DPD radio logs show a jacket found was found by No. 279 (the identity of this policeman apparently unknown to the Dallas Police (sic)) at about 13h25. Westbrook arrived at the parking lot on the 400 E. Jefferson, where the jacket was found, at about 13h40. Because the identity of the finder, ‘Mr. 279’ is unknown, the chain of possession of the jacket is broken.
Though the Report never says so, the jacket bore a laundry mark ‘30 030’ and a dry cleaning tag ‘B 9738’. Marina said she never took any clothing to a laundry or dry cleaners. No other piece of clothing in Oswald’s possession bore a laundry mark or dry cleaning tag. The FBI went to 424 laundries and dry cleaners in the Dallas-Forth Worth area and to 293 in New Orleans. On April 29, 1964, J. Edgar Hoover, director of the FBI, said that the search had turned out negative. Instead of searching for B 9738, the FBI had searched for 30 030. Normally, such a tag begins with the first letter of the name of the man. Oswald or even Hidell doesn’t begin with the letter B. The chances of finding 30 030 were much smaller than B 9738. The chances of finding B 9738 as belonging to Oswald were practically nil. The jacket was medium-size, whereas Oswald had a small. The designer’s label showed ‘created in California’. He said it was sold exclusively on the West Coast and in one store in Philadelphia. Nobody ever put Oswald (after his return from the Soviet Union) in any of these places.

Oswald’s Whereabouts
The facts are that there are eyewitnesses that identified a man they saw fleeing from the scene of the Tippit-killing as Lee Harvey Oswald, no matter how doubtful the circumstances are under which these ‘statements’ were made. Therefore, it should be investigated where Oswald was; whether he COULD have been where they said he was.
According to the Commission, Oswald was where they believed he was: killing Tippit. The reason, of course, was that they hadn’t asked anyone else where Oswald might have been at that time, 13h05-15.
Investigating the circumstances of Oswald’s arrest (of which there is more later), assassination researcher Jim Marrs talked to the concession stand operator of the Texas Theatre, where Oswald was arrested. Burroughs, in 1987, said he “saw someone slipping in at 1:35 PM. Oswald entered the theatre shortly after 1 PM.” At about 13h15, the man later arrested (Oswald) came to his concession stand and bought some popcorn. This was corroborated by Jack Davis, one of only about twenty people inside the 900-seat theatre. He said Oswald was sitting next to him, which was strange because there were so many empty seats. Some time later, Oswald moved around and Davis lost track of him, until the lights went on and Oswald was arrested.
According to the Commission, the man slipping into the theatre at around 13h35 was Oswald. Burroughs and Davis officially didn’t exist to the Warren Commission.
Since it is quite impossible to be at two places at the same time, unless you, like the Commission with the magic bullet-theory, call in the help of paranormal sciences, Oswald was at the Texas Theatre and NOT fleeing from the scene of the Tippit-shooting. This means that the witnesses who identified Oswald as the man they saw flee (taking their identification at face value) probably saw a man that closely resembled Oswald. Such a man did live in Dallas (though I don’t automatically implicate it was this man whom they saw; I only want to show reasonable doubt). Frank Ellsworth was an undercover agent of the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Department and had been checking out one John Thomas Masen, who owned a gun shop, which, incidentally, sold the very same ammunition which was in the Commission’s possession as the ammunition used to shoot Kennedy. When Ellsworth saw the suspect, Oswald, he thought he had just turned loose the assassin of the President, Masen. According to Ellsworth and some other officials, Oswald and Masen could have been identical twins. Nobody thought anything about this at the time; perhaps they should have, if only to show they did a detailed inquiry into the murders.

To ‘highlight’ the Commission’s and the DPD’s investigation of the crime, assistant counsel David Belin asked W.E. Barnes if there “were there any notes on there that you saw that had been made on his clipboard”. Tippit’s car had a clipboard and it was believed it might contain vital clues as to the exact circumstances of his death. Barnes answered he “couldn’t tell you (Belin) what was on the clipboard. We never read his clipboard.” Apparently, nobody thought about trying to find out if that clipboard could still be found somewhere and, if so, to inform the Commission what was on it.

**APPENDIX: OSWALD’S MOVEMENTS FROM THE DEPOSITORY TO HIS ROOMING HOUSE**

Though not factually related to the Tippit-killing, the movements of Oswald between the time he left the Depository and his rooming house, were inserted into the chapter of Report dealing with the Tippit-slaying. It is not relevant to the Tippit-killing, but in its final form, it did substantiate the Commission’s results. The Commission put Oswald at the Tippit-scene and this meant that they had to find out why Oswald was walking there; where could he possibly go to? The Commission never addressed the issue, but Oswald did end up in the Texas Theatre and that could have been the place Oswald was heading for, the Commission believed. However, should Oswald have been going to the Texas Theatre, he did not take the shortest and quickest route. The way in which the Commission reconstructed Oswald’s movements between 12h30 and 13h00, when he entered his rooming house, coincided with this ‘erratic’ way of getting where he wanted to get. According to the Commission, he walked some distance to a bus-stop, got on the bus, got off the bus, took a cab that took him past his rooming house, got out and went back to his rooming house on foot. All these movements were substantiated by the testimony of a bus driver, Cecil McWatters, a bus passenger, Mary Bledsoe, and a taxicab driver, William Whaley; or so they said.

When Oswald was searched after his arrest, the police allegedly found a bus-transfer on him, punched, showing Oswald took a bus on the Lakewood-Marsalis-route. The card showed it was used on Friday, November 22, 1963. The authorities traced this to a bus driven by Cecil J. McWatters. McWatters was taken to a lineup and identified Oswald, number 2, as the man who had entered
his bus that afternoon. However, McWatters said he had not identified Oswald in the lineup, even though police records said he had. Testifying before the Warren Commission, however, McWatters said that he wasn’t thinking about Oswald when he identified ‘number two’ (he apparently failed to state he hadn’t identified Oswald) as the man on his bus, but that he had Milton Jones on his mind as the man who entered his bus. Jones was contacted by the authorities and he confirmed to them that he had had an argument with a woman on that bus, like McWatters had said he had. McWatters said he was unable to identify Oswald (2H283). The Commission had to decide it couldn’t rely on McWatters; but, they claimed, another woman passenger, Mary Bledsoe, had identified Oswald as a man being on that bus.

Mary Bledsoe, by one of those cosmic coincidences, had also rented a room to Oswald the month before, in October, for a couple of days. Mary Bledsoe kept her records on a calendar; when asked to show the calendar of October, it was discovered that month was the only month missing from her calendar, thus failing to prove Oswald did in fact rent a room there. Why this page was missing was never explained. After five days, she asked Oswald to leave. The reason why was never given; she just didn’t like him; he was a ‘bad’ person, even though she wasn’t asked what ‘bad’ exactly meant to her and in this case. What’s more, she knew David Ferrie, a man that would become the chief suspect of Jim Garrison; a man Garrison believed as having been involved in the conspiracy to kill Kennedy and frame Oswald as the assassin. She also knew Jack Ruby, the man who would kill Oswald. The Commission, of course, never looked into this possibility at all; why would they doubt the integrity of a woman that had suffered a stroke and was all alone? That she hated Oswald and perhaps wanted to inculpate him apparently never crossed the Commission’s mind either. If it did, there is no evidence of it.

Bledsoe said that when Oswald got on the bus, “I didn’t look at him. I didn’t want to know even know I even seen him... ”. This could mean she identified Oswald, even though she hadn’t seen him. What she probably wanted to say was that she only saw a fleeting glimpse of Oswald, but, afraid or angry, didn’t want to look at him. As already seen in the escape of the gunman from the Tippit-scene, it is possible to identify a man as Oswald, even though it wasn’t Oswald at all (because he was somewhere else).

Asked to identify the shirt Oswald wore, she was only shown one shirt. She said that before being shown that shirt, she had never seen it before! It’s a small wonder how she could identify a shirt as being worn by Oswald that day when she had never seen that shirt before. Perhaps she meant that nobody (from the authorities) had shown her that shirt before, asking her whether that was the shirt Oswald had worn. Even though she never looked at Oswald, apart from that very brief glimpse, she allegedly did see a hole in his shirt, exactly where there was a hole in the shirt. The good part, though, is that Joseph Ball asked her “before you go into that, I notice you have been reading from some notes before you”. If reading from notes is not considered to be suspicious behavior enough to cast doubts over the entire testimony, making it appear as if she didn’t know what she had to say, she, in fact, corroborated these suspicions. “Well, because I forget WHAT I HAVE TO SAY.” (my emphasis) When she was asked when these notes were made, she didn’t answer the question. How she knew what questions would be asked, that question was never even asked.

The government agencies, after having contacted Milton Jones, failed to report or ask him whether he had seen Oswald on that bus or not or whether Mary Bledsoe was there as well.

Concluding Oswald had taken that bus, the Commission could also conclude William Whaley
had driven Oswald in his taxicab. Whaley was taken to a police lineup on November 23 and had this to say about that lineup: “You could have picked him out without identifying him by just listening to him because he was bawling out the policemen, telling them it wasn’t right to put him in line with these teenagers and all of that and they asked me which one and I told them ... he showed no respect for the policemen, he told them what he thought about them. They knew what they were doing and they were trying to railroad him and he wanted his lawyer”.

Whaley would further say that there were six people in the lineup (there were four). He didn’t remember where he delivered Oswald; according to his testimony, he unloaded him at three different locations. One version has him dropping Oswald off at ‘the intersection of Neeches and Beckley’. Neeches and Beckley run parallel to each other and, of course, do not intersect. He was asked to identify the jacket that Oswald wore; this was a catch-question because Oswald didn’t wear ANY jacket at that time (one was at the Depository, he put the other one on at his rooming house some minutes later). The Report said he identified the blue OR the gray one. In his testimony, one can read he identified BOTH, meaning he apparently had seen Oswald wearing them on top of each other. Whaley had said that Oswald was number two in the lineup he witnessed. The numbers were from left to right and clearly visible; each man in the lineup had a number that was clearly visible to the man trying to identify the ‘suspect’. The Commission, however, said that Oswald was number three. Trying to explain this problem (this really meant that he didn’t identify Oswald but the man next to him), he said that he had counted from the right to the left, ignoring the numbers that were put there to aid identification (why make it easy when it can be done in a more difficult way?). This could mean, of course, he identified number 5, since he believed there were six people in that lineup. Assuming the Commission was right, Whaley changed his affidavit, saying he identified number three as the man he had driven. The Commission, however, was wrong: Oswald was, in fact, number two, using the numbers the police had given to the men in the lineup. Whaley had furthermore signed his statement before having been taken to the line-up.

The Commission unintentionally showed Whaley was easily led by the Commission. As we have seen: he was apparently not the only one.

Whaley’s identity as the man who drove that taxi, however, is not an ‘open and shut’ issue. Henry Wade said that man was “Darryl Click”. The mistake was explained as Wade having misunderstood “Oak Cliff” as the name of the cabdriver. On November 27, Click became Whaley. Another cabdriver, Charles Kimerlin, however, would later say he was the man who took Oswald to his boardinghouse.

William Whaley, on a rainy day in December 1965, died in a freak car accident, in a head-on collision with a couple in their eighties. He was the first cab-driver in Dallas to die on duty since 1937.

Without a shadow of a doubt, Whaley’s testimony shouldn’t have been termed ‘credible’ at all. It is a disgrace to even call it ‘testimony’.

It seems (and is) incredible, but according to Captain Will Fritz, himself an incredible witness, Oswald did admit taking a bus and a cab-drive. So why doubt the veracity of these people’s claims, uh?

The Commission had thus established as most credible/best witnesses: a former landlady of Oswald who hated him, knew people believed/known to be involved in the assassination (Jack Ruby), someone who might possibly willingly and knowingly frame Oswald, who read her statements from a slip of paper when appearing before the Commission.
This was nothing extra-ordinary because the Commission had credited the ‘best witness’ status to Howard Brennan, a man prone to exaggerate and a nervous wreck because of him being ‘kidnapped’ by the authorities, and Helen Markham, a hysterical woman who gave statements that the Commission concluded were false. It discredited statements by other people in Dealey Plaza who had seen two people in the sixth window (but not Oswald) and officially never heard of statements by Acquila Clemons and Frank Wright, who had seen two people at the Tippit-killing, none of which was Oswald.

To make the ‘evidence’ as it was given by Bledsoe and Whaley credible, they had, of course, to discredit other testimony. Perhaps fortunately, it was only one man, whose testimony, unfortunately, was corroborated. Deputy Sheriff Roger D. Craig said that, about fifteen minutes after the shooting, he saw a man, coming from the Depository, getting into a light colored Rambler. He continued: “I went to City Hall and identified the subject they had in custody as being the same person I saw running down this hill and get into the station wagon and leave the scene”. He said that a dark completed white male drove the Nash Rambler. Craig stated that Oswald, when confronted with the fact Craig had seen him entering “the car”, had said that the “station wagon” belonged to Ruth Paine, but that she shouldn’t be involved in this (Marina and the children were lodging in with Ruth Paine). According to Craig, Oswald said that “now everyone will know who I am”. Under normal circumstances, Craig’s statements would be considered as being the ‘best witness’ evidence’, simply because he was a policeman and the other ‘witnesses’ were ‘just’ ordinary citizens, not trained in such matters.

The Commission, however, concluded that Craig was not in the office when he ‘allegedly’ identified Oswald as the man who he saw getting into the station wagon. It said that “Craig may have seen a person ... , but the Commission concluded that this man was not Oswald, because of the OVERWHELMING (sic) evidence that Oswald was far away from the building by that time” (my emphasis). Captain Fritz was, of course, used to substantiate the Commission’s claims. Assassination researchers discovered a photo in which Craig is shown as being inside Fritz’s office. The Commission said he was not. They discovered a photograph which corroborated Craig’s position where he said he had been and two photographs of a Nash Rambler station wagon moving west. With this evidence, the Commission had to say it was possible Craig had seen all this. But it couldn’t be Oswald: the Commission, in its superior, almost infinite, wisdom, had, based on ‘OVERWHELMING’ evidence, located Oswald somewhere else. In reality, they had not a single piece of genuine evidence, not even to the ‘fact’ Oswald left the Depository at 12h33. No-one saw Oswald leave; the only man that came close to seeing Oswald leave the Depository was Craig; but he couldn’t possibly have seen Oswald. Perhaps he saw the ‘real’ Oswald and not the ‘Commission’s Oswald’.

When Chief Curry was asked how Oswald got to Oak Cliff, he answered “we have heard that he was picked up by a Black in a car”.
D. THE DEATH OF LEE HARVEY OSWALD

After having evaluated the deaths of President Kennedy and Patrolman J.D. Tippit, it is almost impossible to imagine that Oswald could be considered as the murderer in both crimes. Yet, Oswald was arrested and charged with murdering Tippit and allegedly even charged with murdering President Kennedy, even though there are doubts about that arraignment ever taking place. That Oswald, however, was charged seems more impossible still when considering there were witnesses available who would certainly have told the police, if they wanted to listen, Oswald was at the Texas Theatre at the time of the Tippit killing and other witnesses who would say Oswald was certainly not the only man involved in the Tippit murder, should he be involved at all.

A picture that Oswald was ‘the assassin’ had developed, especially helped by the media that quite often reported statements that were plainly false, even though the media is not to blame for spreading this disinformation against Oswald. The media, in its effort to find out what was going on, embraced every single statement, no matter who made it. THIS was the IT: every single newspaper of the whole world wanted to know what was going on in Dallas; who had killed Kennedy; how; were there suspects? Too many questions and too few answers, simply because the police and other investigative branches of whatever branch of government had not yet had enough time to untangle the web of what was really going on. It were men like Henry Wade, Jesse Curry and Captain Fritz that disinformed the press about Oswald; the press simply reported the disinformation, even though I think it is fair to assume the press themselves believed or wanted to believe the disinformation. Or perhaps they themselves were drowning in work, thus being unable to fairly tax all these statements.

Because of the nature of the crime, a lot of police officers suspected that the killing of Tippit and the assassination of President Kennedy were related crimes: it was not an every day event that a Dallas police officer was killed (the last policeman killed in Dallas was killed in the early 1950s) and the coincidence with the assassination of a President, an event that took place even more rarely, if not to say almost never.

When a man was arrested for the crime of killing this police-officer, J.D. Tippit, it was no miracle that these officers tied both events together. After all, Oswald did work in the Depository, where a rifle was found.

Naively, one could say that the evidence would indicate that they were connected, was really very fortunate: the police could easily have arrested a man that had nothing to do with either of the crimes. Of course, some people were arrested and later released; but there was no more evidence against Oswald than against these people. This is why so many have suspected Oswald was, in fact, framed. As we will see: he was. After an evaluation of the evidence, it is easy to see that, because the chain of possession was broken every time, a lot of ‘evidence’ was ‘inserted’ as the ‘real evidence’, thus tying Oswald to the crimes. This is what people call ‘framing somebody’. And Oswald probably realized he was being framed because he was accused of crimes he didn’t commit; he wasn’t even on the sixth floor and not around the scene of the Tippit-shooting.

But the suspicion was that Oswald had done just what some people said he had done and most Americans probably believed he killed Kennedy. Even if they didn’t believe he acted alone, most
Americans thought he was the assassin. And Oswald’s appearance, as we’ve already witnessed, gave a lot of people ‘the creeps’, thus strengthening their belief Oswald could have done it/did it. Perhaps not totally convinced, the police did suspect Oswald was the assassin and they had to do something with him. There was no legal need to transfer Oswald to another jail. Yet, they couldn’t keep him in their headquarters forever and knew that sooner or later he would be transferred; they probably preferred sooner sooner because then they would be rid of all these hectic situations.

Death in a basement

The Report says that “the killing of Lee Harvey Oswald in the basement of police headquarters in the midst of more than seventy police officers gave rise to immediate speculation that one or more members of the police department provided Jack Ruby (the murderer of Oswald) assistance which had enabled him to enter the basement and approach within a few feet of the ACCUSED Presidential assassin” (my emphasis).

“Whether there is evidence that Jack Ruby received assistance from Dallas policemen or others in gaining access to the basement ... An affirmative answer would require that the evidence be evaluated for possible connection with the assassination itself. While the Commission FOUND NO EVIDENCE that Ruby received assistance from ANY person in entering ‘the basement, his means of entry is significant in evaluating the adequacy of the precautions taken to protect Oswald. (my emphasis)” Note however that “although more than a hundred policemen and newsmen were present in the basement ... none has been FOUND who definitely observed Jack Ruby’s entrance into the basement. After CONSIDERING ALL THE EVIDENCE, the Commission has concluded that Ruby entered the basement via the Main Street ramp, and no more than three minutes before the shooting of Oswald, (my emphasis)”

For Curry, Ruby got in the basement by “an act of God”; perhaps he remembered the verse in Exodus that “he that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death”. So what could there be left to say? Jack Ruby, at 11h17, four minutes before the murder, was at the Western Union office, 350 feet from the top of the ramp he allegedly used to enter the basement, where he was seen to depart in the direction of the police building, where, four minutes later, he would kill Oswald. Oswald was rushed to Parkland Memorial, where he died on the operating table, two days and seven minutes after President Kennedy, the man he allegedly shot. Oswald did not regain consciousness after having lost it a few minutes after Ruby shot him. The world, everyone believed, would never know the full truth and what had motivated Oswald to do such a horrible crime. Whether he had really done it or not was no longer of any interest to the general public. No longer did the papers report on the evidence, they concentrated on the murder of the ‘accused’ assassin by a Dallas citizen, Jack Ruby. The public wanted to know who Ruby was and tomorrow, they would want to know how the funeral of the slain President was like. Newspapers had only a limited amount of reporters and therefore some reporters had to be given different assignments, i.e. report on Ruby and Oswald’s death and not on the evidence. If there was a conspiracy, the conspirators probably understood that would happen; who would care about stuffy tests in a stuffy lab somewhere in stuffy Washington? There were emotions, passions, tragedies: ‘ACCUSED ASSASSIN KILLED IN DALLAS’.

The Secret Service agents ‘protecting’ Marina and Marguerite Oswald (Oswald’s wife and mother) learned of the death of their family member but did not inform them until they were out of Dallas; apparently it never crossed their mind to drive to Parkland Memorial, hoping to get there before Oswald might possibly die, so that he could see his family around him should that
happen.

Oswald’s original transfer was scheduled to take place at 10h30 that morning, but Fritz’s decided to interrogate Oswald once more, again without any official note-taking. At that time, the Commission said. Jack Ruby was still at home. For many years, the defenders of the Warren Report argued that, because Ruby did not know about the delay of the transfer, it had to be a spontaneous act on Ruby’s part. Ruby himself had this to say about that: “... who else could have timed it so perfectly by seconds. If it were timed that way, then someone in the police department is guilty of giving the information as to when Oswald was coming down.” What Ruby was saying was clear: if I killed Oswald on purpose, some police officer told me the time they would bring him down. But, of course, the Commission concluded not a single officer did. Was there a possibility someone informed him? Of course. But was it a likely possibility?

Looking at the videotapes of Oswald’s death, researchers saw that Jack Ruby was apparently hiding behind policeman William Harrison. Lt. Jack Revill, investigating the circumstances, asked Harrison to take a polygraph test, even though Harrison had flatly stated he didn’t have any contact with Ruby on November 24, a friend of eleven years. Revill said Harrison reacted as if he was a suspect and perhaps Harrison thought that they were going to blame him, even if he didn’t shield Ruby. The results of the polygraph examination were inconclusive, owing to the fact that Harrison took tranquilizers before the test, trying to keep his composure.

Trying to find out what happened, Revill discovered Harrison was some time away from his colleagues at crucial times. What was more: he had the possibility to phone anyone, including, of course, his friend Jack Ruby. On his coffee break, Harrison and Louis Miller went to the Deluxe Diner. Miller said that Harrison received a phone-call from ‘an unknown person’. Some tried to defend Harrison, saying this was someone from the police, trying to reach them with new information about the transfer. But such officer wouldn’t be described as ‘unknown’; after all, he was a colleague. Assistant Counsel Burt Griffin said that “Harrison was somewhat slow in revealing the coffee break... e had to be prodded to talk about the telephone call he received there.” Later, around 11h00, immediately prior to the transfer, Harrison was late in joining his unit. Coming from the sub-basement, he encountered four telephones on his way; No-one could provide him with an alibi. It is hard to imagine Harrison would ever admit having phoned Ruby or having been in contact with him that day. The Commission, of course, never accused him. Harrison died some years ago.

**Entering the basement**

According to the Commission, it was the “Dallas Police Department (that) conducted an extensive investigation that revealed no information indicating the complicity between any police officer and Jack Ruby.”

The Commission agreed that a serious evaluation should occur whether or not the safety measures inside Police headquarters were sufficient enough. They obviously weren’t, even though Morton W. Newman, a reporter, said he had to show his identification twice before he was able to get into the basement.

The Commission relied on the Police Department to draw the conclusion no-one aided Ruby. In
front of the whole world, the image of the Dallas Police had received an enormous blow. Would it be any wonder they wanted to give the impression it wasn’t their fault? What would it look like if it turned out that one of their officers helped Ruby get into the basement, shooting Oswald? It seems that either the Commission never thought about it or, more likely, didn’t want to think about it.

Assistant Counsel Burt Griffin, investigating Jack Ruby for the Commission, had this to say: “I always thought all along about the Dallas police that anything that would get them into trouble or embarrass them, THEY WOULD LIE TO US ABOUT. NO question about it” (my emphasis). Who could really blame them for that? It is human. If the Commission wanted to find evidence of possible help involving Ruby’s entrance, they should have investigated the Dallas police themselves.

Did they? Leon Hubert was one of two assistant counsels that were assigned to investigate. Hubert had been an assistant D.A. in New Orleans and had a reputation of being “soft on Marcello”, who headed the local organized crime-scene. Burt Griffin, Hubert’s partner, called one police officer a ‘damned liar’ to that officer’s face. Griffin was so sure that Sergeant Patrick T. Dean was lying about Ruby telling him he entered via the ramp and that Ruby had told him (or another officer) he had shot Oswald on impulse, he broke off in the middle of the questioning, going off the record, and ordered the stenographer out of the room. He told Dean he didn’t believe him and asked him to reconsider his testimony. Griffin wrote a memo to Rankin, the chief counsel, explaining that “I believe it likely Ruby came in by another entrance to a point where Dean could have stopped him and that Dean... is trying to conceal his dereliction of duty”. Dean complained about Griffin’s accusation to D.A. Wade and the story also leaked to the press. D.A. Wade called President Johnson at his ranch in Texas, informing him about the “trouble” they had with Griffin. The Commission, probably acting upon orders of Johnson, recalled Griffin from Dallas and the real investigation of the Dallas Police came to a stop. The Commission eventually relied on Dean’s statements.

What had Dean exactly been telling Griffin and everyone else? In his report of November 25, he said that Ruby had stated to him “in the presence of Mr. Sorrels that he (Ruby) had entered the basement through the ramp entering on Main Street.” Sorrels, head of the Secret Service in Dallas, said Ruby had “said no such thing.” Yet, Dean’s statement was apparently corroborated by no less than three police officers: Archer, Chardy and McMillan. However, they only told this version of the events a week after the murder had happened. Dean was administered a lie-detector test by Paul Bentley and tested “inconclusive”. He was too nervous that day. “That particular day I was nervous and hypertensive, so I flunked it. Or rather it was inconclusive.” Why was he that nervous? Did he perhaps fear the test? Everyone has failed to turn up the written record of that test; the results can’t be found and we have to take Dean’s word for it. FBI agent Ray Hall, in his report, wrote Ruby “did not wish to say how he got into the basement or at what time he entered”.

In preparation for his trial, Ruby, on December 21, one month after the murder, said he came in via the ramp, just as a police car was coming out. Of course, Ruby and his attorneys knew that they should depict Ruby as a man who acted without premeditation and without help, since this would also mean he acted with premeditation: it is their task to depict their client as innocent as possibly can. The District Attorney argued Ruby did act premeditated, but skipped any innuendo about a conspiracy or help from within the Police Department.
The entrance to this ramp was guarded by Roy Vaughn and N.J. Daniels. The Commission recorded that Daniels had said that he had seen a man walking down the ramp, but didn’t think it was Ruby. However, in private conversations with Vaughn on November 24, Daniels said he had seen NO-ONE walking down that ramp. One week later, when Archer, Chardy and McMillan also claimed to have heard Ruby say this minutes after the shooting, he changed his story and said he did see someone walking down that ramp. Seven people in the immediate vicinity of that ramp stated they saw NO-ONE coming down that ramp.

Yet, the Commission concluded: “Despite Vaughn’s denial, the Commission has FOUND no CREDIBLE evidence to support any other entry route” (my emphasis).

Roy Vaughn, of course, realized what that meant. Officially, he hadn’t done his duty to the fullest and therefore made it possible that the world would never know the entire truth and motive of Oswald, to put it dramatically.

He and his attorney James Niell started legal proceedings, trying to clear his name. Vaughn was told by Chief Byrd to go and see City Attorney Alex Bickley. Bickley asked him not to go to court because “the truth might come out about how Ruby got into the basement. Several police officers, following Red Davis who was the first to, gave affidavits that Charles Batchelor, Assistant Chief of Police and in charge of the presidential motorcade AND Oswald’s transfer, brought Ruby into the basement via the elevator. A few years later, Gordon Shanklin, FBI SAC-Dallas wrote to Hoover regarding Curry’s replacement by Batchelor; he said Batchelor was “not involved in any of the controversy arising over the assassination”. Chief Batchelor transferred Jack Revill, the man who had investigated this angle of the controversy, to a “less critical” area in the personnel bureau.

Daniels was administered a polygraph test and failed it on the question whether he saw someone enter the basement via the ramp. Niell, Vaughn’s attorney, believes someone pressured Daniel to lie. “One police officer, starting to search the basement of police headquarters before Oswald’s transfer, was told by Batchelor not to.”

Ruby, scribbling on a note to his attorney during his trial, said that Tom Howard, his attorney, had told him to say he had come in via the ramp. Ruby suggested that perhaps he should stop lying and tell the truth about how he really entered the basement.

The Commission believed the criminal and everything he told them. If only it had shown the same compassion for Oswald ...

**Stalker**

Even though the Commission didn’t find any evidence of help in entering the basement, it could still be that Ruby framed Oswald; i.e. tried to kill or injure Oswald in a premeditated way. This wouldn’t automatically mean that he acted as part of a conspiracy; it only meant that he wanted to kill Oswald on prior occasions. And so the Commission did something that some people could call an investigation.

The accurate timing of Ruby’s entrance is rather difficult to present to a jury: Ruby’s defense would say that it proved he acted spontaneously. So the District Attorney, if he really wanted to, should have made the jury realize that, given the strong possibility someone updated Ruby on the hour of the transfer, this was not the time Ruby had wanted to kill or injure Oswald that weekend.

On November 22, the Commission concluded. Ruby was at the offices of the Dallas Morning
News when the shooting occurred. However, as one reporter would say, Ruby was missed for about twenty to twenty-five minutes, around the time of the assassination. Pictures even show Ruby in Dealey Plaza. One was even used by the Commission, but the version the Commission used was ‘accidentally’ cropped where Ruby was standing. Witnesses in Dealey Plaza said they saw Ruby as well. But, according to the Commission, he wasn’t.

After leaving the offices of the Dallas Morning News, the Commission had him go to his nightclub, where he phoned his sister at 14h05. However, Seth Kantor, a White House correspondent who had lived in Dallas and knew Ruby, saw him in Parkland Memorial Hospital, at the time the President was there. His statement was corroborated by newsman Roy Stamps and Wilma Tice. The Commission, in their ‘divine knowledge’, concluded these three people were all mistaken. George J. Applin, Jr., patron in the Texas Theatre, gave information that, at the moment when Oswald was arrested, a man was sitting in the back of his theatre. He was just staring at what was happening in front of him. This man was not moving, even though a shot could hit him at any moment and Applin had even asked him to move away. Applin was not asked by the Commission, so he did not identify this man. In 1979, he did say he felt save now to say that this man was Jack Ruby. Some might suggest this man just sought publicity so many years after the facts. But imagine the publicity he would have got in 1963 or 1964 if he would have offered such a statement! There were only twenty people in the Texas Theatre and one of them just happened to be Jack Ruby!

At 14h05, he was back at his club, phoning his sister, Eileen Kaminsky, in Chicago. Various witnesses saw Ruby at the police headquarters at 16h00 and, with intervals, saw him there until 19h00, when probably left to go to his apartment, which he reached at 21h00.

At 23h00, Oswald was back at the police headquarters, carrying about a dozen of sandwiches for the hungry police officers. He was seen and stopped by a police officer when he tried to enter Fritz’s office. Inside that office Fritz and other officials were interrogating a suspect: Lee Oswald.

Just after midnight, Oswald was lead into a crowded room where a press-conference was held to show the police’s ‘catch’. One of the attendants was Jack Ruby, who, according to Tony Record, insisted on standing on the table, even though he didn’t have a camera. Pictures taken during this press conference clearly show Jack Ruby. When District Attorney Henry Wade said Oswald was a member of the Free Cuba Committee, Ruby corrected ‘Henry’, saying “Henry, that’s the Fair Play for Cuba Committee”. Ruby said he had heard that information on the radio earlier on. The Free Cuba Committee is violently AGAINST Cuba and their ‘communist’ regime; the FPCC tries to change the attitude of the American people, trying to achieve an understanding that Cuba isn’t that great threat and enemy others promote it to be.

On November 23, around noon, reporters were enquiring when Oswald would be transferred. 16h00, that same day, was put forward as a strong possibility. And, at that time, Ruby was inside police headquarters. However, Oswald would not be transferred and Curry put the time of the transfer at 10h00, the next morning.

In the night of November 23-24, the police and other government agencies received threats concerning Oswald’s life. Billy R. Grammer, on duty that night, received such a threat. He said the man detailed the plans of the transfer, such as a decoy vehicle, information that couldn’t be obtained without the help of police officers or other government agents. Though he recognized the voice, he couldn’t put a name on it. When he heard it was Ruby that had shot Oswald, he
realized the caller had been Ruby, whom he had known personally.

On November 24, Ruby officially stayed at his apartment until around 11h00. But that, once again, was a story concocted by the Commission and Ruby’s defense attorneys. Just after 8h00, three television technicians, Warren Richey, Ira Walker and John Smith, saw Ruby in front of the police building. The Commission relied on a phone-conversation, made by Elmora Pitts, Ruby’s cleaning lady, who telephoned, as usual, to know whether she had to clean up Ruby’s apartment that day. She identified herself and asked whether she needed to clean the apartment, but the man in Ruby’s apartment didn’t know and recognize her. Finally, he said it was okay. Mrs. Pitts said she was frightened by the man who didn’t seem to know her. Adding this to the testimony of the three television-technicians, the Commission, since this was the only evidence available, had to conclude Ruby was not home; he was in front of the police building. Instead, the Commission used a distorted and cropped version of Mrs. Pitt’s testimony, thus ‘concluding’ Ruby was, ‘in fact’, home.

At 9h30, a church-minister, Ray Rushing, rode with Ruby in the police-elevator. He said Ruby was going to the floor where Oswald was held in custody. Rushing was not asked to appear before the Commission.

At 10h00, he was seen enquiring whether Oswald had been brought down yet. At 10h30, he was home and he received a call from one of his strippers who needed money. This money order was used to establish the time of Ruby being in the Post Office building at 11h17, just a few minutes before the transfer of Oswald.

If this isn’t enough evidence to conclude he acted with premeditation, there is the story of Tom Howard, Ruby’s first attorney. Because of client-attorney privileges, he could probably not have testified at Ruby’s trial. But the Commission was, of course, searching for the truth and wasn’t hindered by these things.

When Oswald stepped into the basement from the elevator, Tom Howard, as witnessed by Detective H.L. McGee, said “that’s all I wanted to see”. George Senator, Ruby’s roommate, would call attorney Jim Martin shortly afterwards. He called Martin to represent Ruby, even though, at the time he made the call, he didn’t know it was Ruby who had shot Oswald.

Oswald’s wounds

Earl Ruby, Jack’s brother, would later also say that Ruby acted spontaneously, without premeditation. He said that Ruby only aimed to injure, not kill. “He aimed at Oswald’s side, not wanting to cause major injuries.” Of course, you can conspire to just injure Oswald, not killing him; but that is not really the issue. Jim Leave lie, the man who was arm-cuffed to Oswald had this to say about the murder: “Ruby was aiming dead center at Oswald. I had a grip on top of Oswald’s trousers. When I saw Ruby (he recognized him and saw the gun in his hand-P.C.), I tried to jerk Oswald aside to get him out of the way. I succeeded in turning him. The bullet hit him in the side rather than straight into the stomach.” This means that Ruby, in fact, aimed to kill. L.C. Graves, cuffed to Oswald’s left hand, said he “pried his finger off the trigger. He was still trying to work it (fire it-P.C.). Empty the gun into Oswald, I expect, if he could.” L.C. Graves belief was corroborated by the murderer, Jack Ruby, himself. He said: “Well, I intended to shoot him three times.” It seems reasonable to assume three wounds in Oswald’s abdomen would probably have killed him, not merely injured him.
Even though Ruby fired only one shot, in the lower abdomen, the bullet ruptured two mains arteries carrying blood to the heart. It also tore through the spleen, liver, pancreas and Oswald’s right kidney. Oswald remained conscious for a few minutes after being shot. The police gave Oswald mouth to mouth resuscitation, ‘trying’ to save his life. What they were really doing was killing him. A man with abdominal wounds is not helped if somebody is pushing on his abdomen as hard as he can.

Detective Billy Combest, seemingly convinced Oswald was the killer, said that, sitting on his hands and knees beside Oswald, he asked Oswald “if he would like to make any confessions, any statement in connection with the assassination of the President... Several times he responded to me by shaking his head in a definite matter” by the time Oswald was put into an ambulance, it was clear to anybody there wouldn’t be any trial for the ‘accused’ assassin of the President.

**Ruby’s polygraph test**

On July 18, 1964, Jack Ruby was administered a polygraph test. Even in 1988, in his second book on the assassination. Assistant Counsel David Belin still used the polygraph examination as ‘evidence’ of the fact that Ruby did not know and did not kill Oswald with premeditation, as part of a conspiracy. Ruby did, in fact, pass this test, but J. Edgar Hoover, director of the FBI, the investigative arm of the Commission, had this to say about that test: “… the polygraph, ‘lie detector’, is not in fact such a device ... In view of the serious questions raised as to Ruby’s mental condition, NO significance should be placed on the polygraph examination and it should be considered NONCONCLUSIVE as the charts cannot be relied upon” (my emphasis). Hoover was always opposed to the use of a lie detector test as a means of obtaining evidence; this case would be no exception.

Ruby was too agitated when he took the test, making it inconclusive from the word ‘let’s begin, shall we’. Even when you are very relaxed, polygraph tests can often mislead.

Even in the eighties, the CIA relied on polygraph, with one most fatal result. A CIA trainee, on his way to the American Embassy in Moscow, with full knowledge of EVERYTHING that the CIA was doing in Moscow, the most sensitive posting one could get, failed a polygraph examination. Subsequently, the CIA decided to get rid of him. Knowing he hadn’t lied, the man began to sell his secrets, something that would result in a defection to the Soviet Union. There, he found out that the Soviets realized the inaccuracies of the polygraph tests and they didn’t rely on it. His defection resulted in a TOTAL exposure of everything the CIA was doing from Moscow, putting the Moscow station in a state of deep sleep. And all this because of an inaccuracy in the polygraph examination.

The Commission, however, saw that these test confirmed their conclusion. So, even though the test was really inconclusive, they had ‘no reason’ to doubt Ruby’s veracity. After all, the test didn’t contradict any of their results. Assuming non-conclusive meant the same as neutral, they, of course, didn’t stop to think about why Ruby was so nervous for this test. What could he possibly be nervous about or fear when he had been telling the truth?

**Acquaintances**

The question whether Oswald and Ruby knew each other was, of course, a very important one to answer.
The Commission’s Report says that “... numerous specific allegations that Oswald was seen in the company of Ruby prior to November 22, often at Ruby’s Carousel Club. ALL SUCH ALLEGATIONS have been investigated, but the Commission FOUND NONE which merits credence” (my emphasis). What the Commission is really saying is that it only looked into those allegations that were made; they themselves didn’t try to investigate that area. And, of course, they should have.

Is there any evidence that they didn’t investigate this themselves?
Raymond Krystinik was a colleague of Michael Paine, Ruth Paine’s estranged husband (at that time), who went to a meeting of the American Civil Liberties Union in October, 1963. At the meeting, Michael Paine introduced Krystinik to Lee Oswald. After talking to Oswald and Michael Paine, Krystinik and his wife decided to go to a nightclub; they chose Ruby’s Carousel Club. In his FBI testimony, it says that his ‘best recollection’ was that Oswald didn’t accompany them. They ‘probably’ didn’t meet Jack Ruby. This is certainly a vague description of an important event, especially when you know that the Krystiniks didn’t drink or smoke and went to the Carousel Club for the very first time. With a clear head, on a special occasion, they still could only recall with ‘best recollection’ and ‘probably’.

On March 24, 1964, Griffin and Liebeler questioned Krystinik. With a massive amount of time being spent on the meeting itself and Oswald’s political belief that he explained after the meeting, there was, ‘of course’, no time left to ask him whether they went to Ruby’s club afterwards. And, of course, they couldn’t ask if Oswald went with them.

Perhaps the Commission believed that everyone would come forward with information about Ruby and Oswald being seen together. If they did, these people could predict their testimony would be discredited anyway. So why offer it?
E. THE INVESTIGATION

Throughout most of the text, the Warren Commission was normally referred to as ‘the Commission’, as a whole rather than naming the members. Should the Commission’s results have been satisfactory, every-one in the Commission should have shared his piece of the triumph, even if some should have worked harder than others or some even tried to boycott the end result.

But the Commission’s investigation failed on almost every, if not every, aspect of the task that they had to perform. To understand why they didn’t perform their task and not to find the ‘main culprit’ for the many, badly investigated areas, an analysis of the Commission itself is necessary, whereas otherwise an analysis of the evidence would have sufficed.

The Commission

Most politicians knew that their voters wanted to see the assassination of their President investigated. There were initiatives for possible investigations by the State of Texas, Congress and Senate. President Johnson decided to appoint a Presidential Commission to investigate the assassination of President Kennedy and talked other people out of investigating the assassination, at least until his Commission had finished their job.

The President’s Commission was, as its title suggests, a Presidential Commission. This meant that it had to represent it findings to the President, Lyndon B. Johnson, successor to the ‘throne’ of President Kennedy. This, more importantly, also meant that the President had absolute power over this Commission. If its conclusions didn’t satisfy him, he could send them back, rewriting the report or re-investigating the whole case. This also meant that the President could compose the Commission in any way he wanted to.

Initially, Johnson considered to appoint only Texans on the Commission. However, Johnson’s advisors approached him and told him the public would think this looked like a cover-up. After all, Johnson was a Texan and the President died in Texas. Of course, Johnson did have a point: If there were any people that had a right to investigate, it were the Texans, exactly because the President died in Texas.

His advisors, however, felt he had to appoint men of impeccable reputation; honorable men. The most honorable man would normally be the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and Johnson approached Earl Warren, asking him to preside over the Commission. Reluctantly, Warren accepted to head the Presidential Committee to investigate the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Johnson told him this was “an occasion on which actual conditions had to override general principles”, meaning that there were more important things about this Commission than a fair search for the truth.

Earl Warren, born in 1891, had become Chief Justice under Eisenhower’s administration. Eisenhower later commented appointing Warren to the Supreme Court was one of his “biggest mistakes”. He had been a friend of President Truman, even though he decided to run as Vice-President to Thomas Dewey in 1948, against Truman. In one of the biggest electoral surprises, even more than Kennedy’s election victory over Nixon, Dewey lost and Truman was elected President. In 1952, he, supported by Nixon, had Presidential aspirations of his own; Nixon, however, broke his promise and ran as Vice Presidential candidate with Dwight Eisenhower.
Warren would refer to Nixon as ‘a bad man’ in later years. Trying to calm his conscience and Warren’s anger, Nixon tried to get Warren the first vacancy available in the Supreme Court; instead of becoming head of the executive branch of government, Warren became head of the legislative branch of government. Warren later commented about Oswald’s guilt that he “could have gotten a conviction in two days and never heard about it again”.

Deputy Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach, practically leading the Justice Department after Attorney General Robert Kennedy lost all interest in his job when his brother died, and Abe Fortas, the man who stopped an investigation in 1948 trying to determine whether Johnson had stolen the election as Congressman, gave the President a list of people they felt should serve on the Commission, besides the Chief Justice.

Johnson appointed Congressmen Hale Boggs and Gerald Ford, to the Commission. Ford was recommended to Johnson by Nixon. Apart from Johnson, who, many people believed, benefited most from the assassination and was therefore involved, Nixon was also a suspect. After all, Nixon had been the one that had lost the elections to President Kennedy in 1960 and it was believed that Kennedy stole the elections. It seemed Nixon hadn’t pressed for an in-depth investigation because he himself might have some skeletons in his presidential race. And hadn’t Nixon been in Dallas that day when the President died? Even though Nixon might not be involved at all, he would certainly like to know what took place behind the Commission’s closed doors.

From the Senate, Johnson appointed John Sherman Cooper and Richard Russell. Russell, when he was asked about Kennedy’s legislation on civil rights said that to him, “the President’s legislative proposals are clearly destructive of the American system and the constitutional rights of American citizens. I shall oppose them with every means and resource at my command”. It’s fair to assume he didn’t mean killing Kennedy, but it does show Russell hadn’t been Kennedy’s friend.

Two ‘honorable men’ from outside the government were added: John J. McCloy had been President of the World Bank and had practically been in charge of anything the Western world had in Germany just after the end of World War II, when the ‘liberating’ armies divided Germany amongst them. McCloy commented he had entered the Commission “thinking there must have been a conspiracy. I never saw a case that I thought was more completely proven. I just don’t have any doubt about it.” The other ‘honorable man’ was Allen Dulles, a World War II-veteran as well, completed the list of seven men. The man who had been fired by Kennedy personally, after the invasion of Cuba in April 1961 failed to install a new government in Cuba, was now appointed to investigate that man’s death. He was the only member readily accepted to serve on the Commission.

For the few government officials who knew how Dulles handled the investigation of Bay of Pigs-fiasco (as the invasion of Cuba become known), this must have been a most ominous appointment. In front of Attorney General Robert Kennedy, he called upon ‘witnesses’ and ‘participants’ in the invasion; most of these people only repeated what Dulles wanted the Attorney General to understand: Cuba could not be lost; the fight for a Free Cuba had to continue. Dulles made ‘participants’ testify, even though most of these ‘participants’ hadn’t even seen the shores of the Bay of Pigs through binoculars. But, unfortunately, too few knew what had happened then. Fletcher Prouty, who had worked with Dulles said “Allen Dulles had the special knack of being able to move forward in adversity. He could shed problems and move into the next series of ventures while the Government, the public and the newspapermen were sifting though the ashes... He was confident in this ability because he knew how to make secrecy work
for him”. For most people, however, Dulles was a respectable man, former Director of Central Intelligence. With his seventy years, he had a right to be a member of a Commission whose average age was 62 years.

The Investigation

President Johnson had made it clear to the members, though certainly not to anyone outside the Commission, that he didn’t want to be presented with the conclusion that either the Cuban or Soviet government were behind this assassination. Quite rightly, he feared that this would lead the nation into a war that would cost America forty million, or even more, lives. No-one’s death could have such a result; not even the President’s. That’s why he told Warren that the actual condition had to override principles.

Of course, the Commission could, if it wanted, have investigated this area, performing the investigation under ‘above top secret’ or even higher; the Commission, in investigating any aspect of the assassination, worked under the ‘secret’-classification. Apart from being not able to conclude that ‘Communists’ were behind the conspiracy, the Commission could conclude whatever it wanted to conclude. The general public, of course, hoped that that conclusion was based on the evidence.

However, behind the scenes, that was not what was developing. On November 23, just one day after the assassination, when the FBI not even knew about the alleged ‘palm print’, Hoover sent a report to the new President, detailing the ‘evidence’ of Oswald’s LONE guilt. The next day, Hoover stated that “the thing I am concerned about, and so is Katzenbach, is having something issued so we can convince the public that OSWALD IS THE REAL ASSASSIN. Mr. Katzenbach thinks that the President might appoint a Presidential Commission of three outstanding citizens to make a determination.” Commission member McCloy felt that the Commission should “show the world that America is not a banana-republic, where a government can be changed by conspiracy.”

One Commission member, John J. McCloy, didn’t want to conclude there was a conspiracy; Hoover, head of the investigative branch, the FBI, of the Commission, believed he had to convince the American public Oswald did it. Whether Oswald actually did it or not, whether he was guilty or innocent, of course, didn’t really matter. What was more: everyone in Washington knew Hoover hated both Kennedys; what was even worse: there were rumors Oswald was an FBI-agent.

Gerald Ford, it is believed, reported everything that happened inside the Commission to Hoover. It is difficult to understand why Ford attended so many hearings, while he had a very busy schedule of his own. Washington insiders also knew that if the CIA needed to push something through Congress, Ford was the man who would try to gather votes on the floor or corridors of the Congress. It seems Hoover, Nixon and the CIA wanted to hear whether they were going to be blamed by the Commission.

Allen Dulles had been fired by Kennedy and had co-operated, as head of the CIA, with the Mafia in trying to get Castro out of Cuba. Everyone knew that the Kennedy brothers major battle in foreign policies was with Cuba and with the Mafia in domestic policies. And as if this hadn’t been enough, there were serious doubts whether Oswald’s defection to the Soviet Union was genuine. After all, when he returned, he applied for a new passport, stating he wanted to travel to Cuba and the Soviet Union. He received his passport within twenty-four hours after application, impossible within the help of someone “in high places”. It could be Oswald acted on orders from
the CIA, should he have killed Kennedy!

But there still were Russell, Cooper, Boggs and, in extremis, Warren, left to search for the truth. Unfortunately though, Russell, Cooper and Boggs almost never attended the Commission’s meetings. They had accepted, like all others, the unpleasant job of investigating the President’s death, without much enthusiasm. But, not unlike the others, Russell, Cooper and Boggs had very busy schedules to maintain, apart from attending the Commission’s meetings and hearings; unlike the others, they put more effort in their other activities. Perhaps they even felt they were wasting their time, knowing that the end-result would be: Oswald did it alone.

Warren felt that there was no need to hire investigators of their own or obtain subpoena powers. McCloy, though, felt that he had “a feeling we have another obligation than the mere evaluation of the reports (as sent to us by the Secret Service, FBI and CIA-P.C.)... There is a potential culpability here on the part of the Secret Service and even the FBI, and these reports... may have some self-serving aspects in them.” So even if McCloy didn’t want to conclude there was a conspiracy, he on the surface did want to investigate whether there was a conspiracy.

In the end, though, the Commission relied on the ‘superb’ powers of the FBI to investigate, even though it used material from other agencies as well. The Commission did get, with Senate Joint Resolution 137, the right to subpoena people to appear before the Commission.

Counsel to the Commission

The seven honorable men had now to decide who they would appoint as General Counsel to the Commission. This man would be in charge of the actual investigation, carried out by assistant counsels and staff members. Dulles believed it wouldn’t be wise to use a Texan; perhaps he had Waggoner Carr in mind, a man who wanted to investigate the assassination himself. Earl Warren proposed to appoint Warren Olney III, former head of the FBI Criminal Division. However, Olney was an outspoken Hoover-critic and because the General Counsel was also the liaison to the FBI, appointing Olney would certainly not be beneficial for the Warren Commission, unless it didn’t use the FBI as investigative body.

Finally, on December 8, 1963, J. Lee Rankin was appointed General Counsel to the Commission. He had the help of fourteen assistant counsels and twelve staff members.

These assistant counsels and staff members would be the ‘working boys’ of the Commission: they were to go out in the field and prepare everything, like analyzing the evidence they received from the other government agencies and interviewing the various witnesses or experts.

Under Rankin’s guidance, six areas of specific investigation were proposed. Each area would be investigated by two assistant councils.

The first area was ‘Basic Facts about the assassination’. This is quite a meaningless term; after all, on some level nothing and everything is basic. In charge of this area were Francis W.H. Adams and Arlen Specter. In March, 1964, before the actual investigation began, Adams resigned, unable to ‘fulfill my responsibility’. He was not replaced; Specter would tackle this area by himself; he would go on to become the sole father of the single bullet-theory.

The second area was ‘the identity of the assassin’. In charge were David Belin and Joseph Ball. In retrospect, these are two ‘investigators’ who failed most: they should have investigated, together with Specter, the chain of possession of the evidence. All three were lawyers, familiar with the ‘chain of possession’-principle. They should have found out that it was broken; they
should have tried to find out where the Mauser had gone to; they should have found out who the real assassins were. Assassins, because, at a later stage, the investigation of J.D. Tippit was added to this area of investigation. The Tippit-assassination is the poorest researched area of the entire investigation, probably because it was added later on in the ‘investigation’ and Belin and Ball weren’t really interested in it; it was ‘just’ a policeman, they were asked to investigate the assassination of the President.

The third area was the background of Lee Harvey Oswald. These people did a very thorough investigation, analyzing the pubic hair of Oswald (perhaps they thought he raped Kennedy?) and Marguerite Oswald’s tax and house payment receipts, even going back to the time Oswald was born. What they could learn from all this is rather difficult to comprehend, I believe. Yet, they failed to investigate to the fullest whether Oswald was an FBI or CIA-agent; they shouldn’t be held solely responsible for this; the Commission itself was fully aware it could never untangled this web unless the CIA and FBI cooperated fully, perhaps admitting he worked for them. But, of course, nobody wanted to come forward with the information that the assassin (nobody used the word ‘accused’ any longer) of the President had been employed by a government agency (just) prior to or perhaps even at the time of the assassination. The fact that an entire area of the investigation was taken up by investigating Oswald’s background clearly shows the Commission’s emphasis on Oswald as the assassin.

The fourth area, investigated by William T. Coleman, Jr. and David Slawson, dealt with ‘possible’ conspiratorial relationships. Perhaps these two men could have made something of THE investigation of the assassination, should they have worked in a more open-minded environment, with an FBI that wasn’t trying to frame Oswald as the real assassin but an FBI that wanted to investigate EVERY aspect of the assassinations as they took place on Dallas. If the FBI wanted to, it could have. A lot of criticism was directed at the FBI and Hoover because he moved in just hours after the assassination, making the investigation an FBI-operation, even though they didn’t have a right to take this investigation out of the hands of the Texas authorities. The FBI, with fully-trained investigators all over the country, could have achieved results that all Texas authorities combined couldn’t have achieved. The problem is that Hoover, director of ‘his’ FBI, didn’t want an investigation; he only wanted to make the public accept Oswald was the real assassin.

The fifth area of investigation centered on Oswald’s death by the hands of Jack Ruby. Investigated by Burt Griffin and Leon Hubert, this is the area that came closest to what others would call an investigation. They REALLY questioned witnesses (cf. Sergeant Dean), but were countered in their efforts. Griffin would resign before Ruby was interrogated in early June, 1964, even though he asked to be there when that interrogation occurred. He was not asked to go to Dallas. Hubert was also left in Washington; instead, Specter and Ball went along to Dallas. Eventually, Ruby’s mother’s dental records would be published in the Commission volumes. As some researchers would comment: these had no relevancy even if Ruby bit Oswald to death. Later on, a sixth area, the Presidential protection was added. Samuel A. Stern, supervised by Lee Rankin himself, investigated this area.

### Depositions and testimony

The Commission had to decide who to subpoena before the actual Commission and who would just be asked to give a deposition before an assistant counsel. This is where the real nature of the beast is seen for the first time.
Witnesses such as Brennan, Callaway (who identified a fleeing gunman as Oswald), Combest (trying to get a confession from a dying Oswald), Cecil McWatters (the bus driver) and Robert Lee Oswald (who believed in Oswald’s lone guilt) were asked to appear before the Commission. Batchelor (believed to have brought in Ruby into the basement), Benavides (closest witness to the shooting of Tippit), Lee Bowers (who saw gunmen on the grassy knoll), Roger Craig (who saw Oswald get into a car and identified the rifle as a Mauser), Seth Kantor (who encountered Ruby in Parkland Memorial), Billy Lovelady (the man, according to the Commission, In the west corner of the front entrance of the Depository), John Edward Pic (Oswald’s half brother) and even Abraham Zapruder were not asked to appear before the Commission; they only took a deposition. In fact, the prime witnesses, those who took photographs or film-footage, were never asked to appear before the Commission. Lt. George Butler, In charge of Oswald’s transfer, Marvin Robinson (who corroborated Craig’s claim of seeing Oswald enter a car). Ray Rushing (riding with Ruby In the elevator at police headquarters), all people involved in the autopsy (from Sibert, O’Neill, Dennis David to Lt. William Pitzer who possibly filmed the autopsy) were not even asked to make a deposition. These people had the best and most vital information about what really happened; excluding them meant that the Commission excluded every chance of reaching the cold facts about what really occurred. The Commission felt more comfortable around the testimonies of Brennan and Markham, even though their testimony cracked right in front of the honorable men.

Various witnesses would later state their words had been altered. Nancy Powell, a.k.a. Tammie True, a stripper for Jack Ruby, went to the FBI, complaining “that she did not feel that her testimony had been recorded accurately in the deposition ... the deposition as written was not acceptable to her, particularly in the area where she was questioned relative to Jack Ruby and to any part that Ruby may have played in the assassination.” Of course, that was exactly the area she was asked to testify about.

Sam Holland, who also said he saw an assassin on the grassy knoll, tried to correct his testimony which had “a lot of errors in it”. Roger D. Craig, Officer of the Year in 1960, said: “combine the (harassment at his work) with the run-in I had with Dave Belin, junior counsel... , who questioned me in April, 1964, and who changed my testimony fourteen (sic) times when he sent it to Washington... ”

**Writing the Report**

The Commission decided on April 30 that it couldn’t complete its work before June 1, the date that was originally put forward. Troubled with the fact that if Oswald was the real assassin, he didn’t have a motive, the Commission realized they had to drift in psychological swamps, trying to find enough pure water to prepare a motive or to declare him mentally unstable. Decided to go for the latter, a biography was needed of Oswald. To use the Commission’s own wording: “some of it will be necessary to show why it is reasonable to assume that he did what the Commission concludes that he did do”. Only one month in its ‘investigation’, the Commission realized to the fullest what they would have to conclude.

Warren wondered who should write the Report and consulted the Department of Defense. Dr.
Rudolph August Winnaker, a German born OSS-veteran who was Chief of the Historical Division of the Pentagon, offered to lend one of their historians. He recommended Alfred Goldberg (Air Force) and Cohely (Army).

Putting forward mid-July as the end of their date, Norman Redlich and staff member Alfred Goldberg, both writing the Report, said they couldn’t do it before mid-July. And August 1 was also too soon; it would be somewhere in September.

On September 6, assistant counsel Liebeler wrote “these conclusions will never be accepted by critical persons, anyway”.

On September 18, 1964, the Commission convened one last time. It seems there was a discussion over the Report and the conclusion it reached. In the end, though, everyone signed, even though Richard Russell didn’t want to sign before the Single Bullet-theory became just that: the Commission, at first, had wanted it to present the Single Bullet-theory as a fact; Russell, using a bit of logic, realized that minutes after the Report would be presented, everyone would laugh at that the Commission. Even though the Commission probably didn’t like to change it into a theory, Russell probably saved the Commission’s neck.

Six days later, on September 24, 1964, the Report was presented to the President, Lyndon Johnson; on September 28, it was made public.

Walter Cronkite from CBS said to “have faith” in the Report, as if it was something akin the Bible. The New York Times wrote, the day before the release, that “The Commission analyzed every issue in exhaustive, almost archaeological detail... The facts, exhaustively gathered, independently checked and consistently set forth, destroy the basis for conspiracy theories that have grown weed-like in this country and abroad”. The only logical commentary seems to be that the NYT was talking about another Report, not the Warren Report.

The Commission, knowing that many of its ‘conclusions’ were almost ridiculous and not substantiated ANY piece of evidence, did think about that.

Dulles, discussing this with Albert Jenner, said: “but nobody reads. Don’t believe the people read in this country. There will be a few professors who will read the record... ”

Jenner: “And a few newspaper reporters who will read parts of it.”

Dulles: “The public will read very little.”

For a man who had lead all American Intelligence agencies for so many years, for a man of such brilliance, this was probably the worst mistake he made in the latter parts of his life. Even though as e to ft eC o m m i s s i o n ’ st w e n t y - s i xv o l u m e sc o s ts e v e n t y - s i xd o l l a r s, s o m ep e o p le b o u g h tas e t , wanting to find out more about the President’s death. Perhaps the assassination of President Kennedy made America read. If only for that, his death was not a total disaster.

Critics to the Report

Not only private researchers like Mark Lane, Harold Weisberg or Sylvia Meagher, but also government officials would step forward and attack the Commission’s findings.

Informally, McCloy, when acting as a Commission-member, had questioned “why ... the FBI report came out with something which isn’t consistent with the autopsy... ?” McCloy said that “I think you’d have to read very carefully what the Commission said, and I as a member of the Warren Commission helped to participate in the drafting of the language... We said that the Commission FOUND no evidence of a conspiracy, foreign or domestic. These words were very carefully drafted”, (my emphasis) What he meant was that the Commission might have been
confronted with such evidence, but that it never found any such evidence; of course, that was practically impossible because the Commission didn’t search for any such evidence. It is difficult to find when you don’t search.

Richard Russell, a member of the Commission himself, was the first member to publicly question the Commission’s conclusions. In 1970, he told reporters that a criminal conspiracy had resulted in Kennedy’s death.

Russell, who only heard six witnesses testify, said he had “never believed Oswald planned that altogether by himself... the fact that when he was at Minsk and that was the principal center for educating Cuban students. There were 600 or 700 there. He was very close to some of them... and the trip that he made to Mexico City... ” Russell did hint a conspiracy and cover-up, but he failed to say Oswald was NOT the gunman.

Hale Boggs, also a member, on April 1, 1971, attacked J. Edgar Hoover, still director of the FBI, comparing his Bureau’s tactics with those of the Soviet Union and of Hitler’s Gestapo. In reality, though, the FBI’s tactics, solely set forward by Hoover himself, were far worse than the tactics of these two combined. It is believed that Boggs would have been the major force behind a re-investigation of Kennedy’s death. But circumstances, alas, prevented such an effort: on October 12, 1972, Boggs vanished over Alaska, on board of a military flight. No trace of Boggs or the plane were found, despite massive searches.

In 1975, Senator Richard Schweiker, officially said that both the CIA AND FBI DELIBERATELY LIED to the Commission about significant assassination issues. His claims were supported by Waggoner Carr, whose investigation of the assassination never materialized after the Report was published.

Probably the wisest and most sensible thing any-one said about the Commission’s findings came from the man who had appointed the Commission himself. Receiving the Report from Chief Justice Earl Warren, he commented: ‘uh... it’s heavy’.

David Belin, however, wrote in a letter to a researcher dated June 1990 that “I would not take the time to do this to someone who resorts to name-calling and uses words such &s ‘weasel’-particularly when that person himself is obviously ignorant of the BEDROCK OF INFORMATION WHICH CONCLUSIVELY SHOWS THAT OSWALD KILLED PRESIDENT KENNEDY AND OFFICER TIPPIT” (my emphasis). With assistant counsels such as Belin, it is no wonder the truth was never learned.
F. CONCLUSIONS

It may seem surprising that the Commission never found anything wrong with the evidentiary chain of possession. There is a valid reason for this, even though the reason isn’t valid in this case.

In court, the intent to kill has to be shown before a jury can find a person guilty of the crime(s) he is charged with; without this intent, there is no motive. If, however, the accused is “insane” or “temporary insane” or “mentally retarded” or “mentally instable”, the need to prove intent is eliminated because, the Law dictates, such a person doesn’t need a motive to commit a crime: he is insane and these people, the Law believes, act in all kinds of ways, without a motive, without an intent to kill; they just do it. However, the court can still show he has committed the crime. In this case though, a break in the evidentiary chains of possession will be ignored by the court. The court’s verdict will be “not guilty by reason of insanity”, even if he did kill that man. The Law cannot blame an insane man for the crimes he did; he simply didn’t know better.

Perhaps this explains why 313 pages of the Report and its appendices are biographical whereas ‘the evidence’ accounts for less than ten percent of the Report. If Oswald’s background can show that Oswald was insane (e.g. because his marriage had broken down the night before) or at least had known periods of mental instability, then there was no legal need to investigate the chain of possession of the evidence, should the D.A. (in this case the Commission) indeed decide that person was insane at the time he (allegedly) committed the crime.

We have often drawn parallels with what would have happened in a court of law and we now see that the Commission, in fact, worked as a court of law, even though this still means the Commission neglected certain codes.

The Commission considered itself to be investigating whether Oswald was guilty. It started, like we did, with looking into Oswald’s guilt, without looking into the evidentiary chain because the Commission believed Oswald was insane. What the Commission did was totally correct, PROVIDED they had to consider whether Oswald was the assassin.

However, the Commission was NOT asked to investigate whether Oswald was guilty or not, they had to investigate the assassination. This meant that they had to investigate the evidence and, as a part of this, its chain of possession. Having sifted the good from the bad evidence, they then should have asked themselves whether enough facts were known or whether they needed more facts. If there was enough evidence, they would have known who was responsible for the crime. If they didn’t know it, then there wasn’t enough evidence yet.

The Commission, instead of investigating the assassination, as they were asked to do, wondered whether Oswald was guilty. In the latter case, they reached a satisfactory answer, even though, as we shall see, it is difficult to believe Oswald was insane at that time, even though he, like everyone else, must have had spells in which he seemed to lose grip with reality (e.g. he, at some stage in their marriage, beat Marina). Oswald might have been “temporarily insane”, but not more than any other human being.

The Commission failed and because of their failure to investigate the crime instead of wondering whether Oswald did it, they failed to see that the evidence had been tampered with. This means that there was a, possibly directed, cover-up, perhaps even a conspiracy. It certainly shows that
Oswald was NOT the assassin. The ‘honorable men’ and their ‘fine young’ junior council either did not realize they had to investigate the assassination or did not WANT to investigate it. Whatever their motive: they failed in their task, therefore, they failed in their findings. It is almost unbelievable these ‘honorable men’ were so naive as NOT to say that something was wrong; that there was a conspiracy. They simply lacked the courage or desire to try and prove there was a conspiracy and instead chased Oswald and wondered about his guilt.

Even the most naive probably realized that the act of killing Oswald by a man with organized-crime connections (something the Commission probably realized but, once again, did not wish to investigate to the fullest) was something very odd. Most people believed that Ruby ‘silenced’ Oswald; that Oswald might have talked about who really was behind the assassination. Like Oswald, Ruby was looked upon as “temporary insane”, even though he wasn’t considered to be insane by the state of Texas, during his trial. Describing Ruby as insane, they paved the way for their own unsubstantiated theory about Oswald’s killing.

If the Commission, as they were ordered to do, would have investigated the chain of possession of ANY/EVERY piece of evidence, it would have stumbled upon a conspiracy automatically. All criticism is obsolete compared to just this one, tiny aspect of the legal profession: establishing a chain of possession. The Commission skipped that aspect by re-interpreting their duty: they weren’t investigating the assassination, they were deliberating Oswald’s guilt.

Johnson, of course, should have told the Commission they hadn’t performed their duty and should have taken whatever measures he thought fit. Because he didn’t and he accepted their conclusions, he, as ‘supreme deity’ of the Commission, is responsible and should be blamed for the Commission’s failure, even though Johnson apparently didn’t see their failure. He was probably all too happy they hadn’t found out about the Cuban exiles, Mafia and CIA working together to invade Cuba, which they hadn’t found out more about possible KGB, CIA or FBI connections to Oswald. Johnson, in the middle of an election campaign, was probably happy they had finally finished a Report: he was rid of another problem and could concentrate on his election campaign.

Johnson consented with the Commission in framing an innocent man and, perhaps worse than sending him into death, should this be possible, stigmatized his name for his mother, brother, half-brother, wife and two daughters; perhaps even for another few generations. As so many lawyers say: ‘guilty is for the jury to decide; justice is for God’. Only a God could decide whether Oswald was guilty of anything; ‘they’ killed him before he could stand trial. What was worse: a Commission ‘concluded’ he had killed him while the evidence indicated he had not. Some might consider this a crime against humanity; it is certainly something that can often be seen in ‘banana-republics’.

On a more personal level, in Oswald’s case, death was perhaps better than the life he and his family would have to go through provided he had not been assassinated himself. Even though Lee Oswald was innocent of the crime, it seems he would have been declared insane and branded for the rest of his life. Even though the rules of Justice are fine, it doesn’t mean the machine works properly.

Fortunately, not all people felt Lee was guilty. In 1964, Warren predicted that a conspiracy industry would continue to thrive, pouring forth a seemingly endless river of unsubstantiated allegations and inferences more concerned with commerce than truth—or good taste. It seems
Warren knew all to well what he had done, but didn’t have the desire to lay the blame on himself. Instead, he ridiculed other people who, unlike him, at least made an effort to investigate. Warren, blaming an innocent man, was certainly not example of the truth or good taste.

Others would say that “the only people who doubted the Report are crackpots”. These people have a blind faith in their government and still adhere a belief that the U.S. government can’t do anything bad. Perhaps they aren’t crackpots, but they most definitely are extremely naive... and wrong. With the situation as it is, it is common sense to doubt the Report. Burt Griffin commented that the critics performed a public service; if anything like this happened again, he believed, “it certainly never ought to be investigated this way”.

CHAPTER TWO

THE LOUISIANA vs. SHAW TRIAL

‘Which is the side that I must go withal? I am with both; each army had a haid
And in their rage, I having hold of both,
They will asunder and dismember me.’
Shakespeare, KING JOHN

When the public realized how poor the results of the Warren Report were, most people still accepted those conclusions, probably because most people realized they could do nothing about it. The majority of the people simply realized that they had to learn to live with it; they were in no way positioned to attack what were the most influential men in the United States, including the President.

Some people tried to uncover the truth and oppose the Commission’s conclusions, pointing out that there was something wrong with the evidence, that it couldn’t have happened the way the Commission said it had happened. Edward Epstein was a graduate student at Cornell who wanted to end his academic education by writing about the Commission. Assistant Counsel Wesley Liebeler allowed him to go through his documents at his farm in Newfane, Vermont. Epstein left the farm with material that was still classified. Epstein concluded the Commission had made mistake but was nevertheless correct when it said Oswald was the assassin.

Mark Lane was a New York attorney who wrote an article on the assassination which he tried to publish immediately after the assassination. Since it was critical, only the National Guardian wanted to publish it on December 19, 1963. One Shirley Martin mailed a copy of the article to both Marina and Marguerite Oswald. Marguerite contacted Mark Lane and asked him to represent the interests of her dead son before the Commission. The Commission did not allow Lane to do that; in fact. Lane went to work as something of a private investigator and became extremely critical of the Commission. The Commission and other authorities treated Lane as if he had killed the President, among other things, tapping his phones and bugging his office. Lewis F. Powell, Jr., President-elect of the American Bar Association even wrote a letter to Counsel Rankin, trying to put pressure on Lane and removing him from the New York Bar. Powell said Lane “is certainly bringing serious discredit to the legal processes of his country”. Let’s hope Mr. Powell truly believed Lane was truly wrong about his objections. In his book, Rush To Judgment, which appeared in August of 1966 and became both a bestseller in hardcover and paperback, Lane argued that Oswald was framed by the Commission.

Harold Weisberg got himself a copy of the 26 volumes and started to evaluate the Commission’s actions. He realized the Report had serious deficiencies. His book, Whitewash, went on a fourteen-month journey of trying to find a publisher in nine countries, landing with 63 publishers in the U.S. and eleven publishers abroad. Finally, in December of 1966, Weisberg resorted to self-publishing.

But still, these were no researchers who were positioned on those places in society in which they COULD take on these powerful men. Perhaps they could only dream of toppling the statues of
these ‘honorable men’, but in reality they did shake and in some cases wobbled... but not enough to fall. One of the men who could try to topple those statues was a District Attorney from New Orleans, Jim Garrison.

Jim Garrison

Born Earling Carothers Garrison, Garrison soon decided to adopt ‘Jim’ as his name. Among friends, he was known as the ‘Jolly Green Giant’.

Born in Iowa in on November 21, 1921, he grew up in New Orleans. During the war, he had been a combat flyer, whereupon he studied law and had entered the FBI. Bored by the job, he became assistant D.A. from 1954 till 1958. It could be, however, Garrison was not bored but couldn’t stand the ‘FBI-atmosphere’. According to Tom Bethell, a Garrison researcher, “Garrison, when I knew him was amusing, charming and well-read, but also dangerous, because he had a cavalier irresponsible attitude toward power”.

When elected District Attorney in 1962, he started his career by making vice raids on Bourbon Street ‘enterprises’. But it seemed to many that Garrison didn’t have a record in prosecuting the real organized crime in New Orleans, led by Carlos Marcello. Between 1965 and 1969, Garrison won 7 cases and lost 84 cases against the Marcello-clan, which is, in fact, a rather extraordinary record and would give rise to such rumors and speculations. It was rumored that during his vice-raids in Bourbon Street, Marcello’s clubs and bars were not targeted. Garrison even proclaimed organized crime didn’t exist in New Orleans; it seemed a strange echo of Hoover’s, his former boss, allegations organized crime didn’t exist in America. All this lead some to believe Garrison was in Marcello’s pocket. When a reporter asked Garrison whether he hadn’t realized each of his original key witnesses had some relation with Marcello, Garrison said he had, that he had looked into Marcello early on but that that “trail didn’t lead anywhere ... could find no leads to pursue ... thus dropped it”. Though officially unknown to Garrison, Marcello did put a contract on Kennedy’s head in early 1963.

Rumors would go around town and the world that the Shaw-trial was nothing but a smokescreen to draw the attention away from Carlos Marcello, who might have had a serious hand in the assassination. Others said that the whole trial was staged to get James Hoffa, President of the Teamsters and a good friend of Marcello, out of jail. On March 7, 1967, seven days after Shaw’s arrest, Hoffa had surrendered to the FBI after the Supreme Court had turned down his appeal. The only dissenting vote came from Chief Justice Earl Warren, who felt the “methods of the Justice Department were an affront to the quality and fairness of federal law enforcement”.

Walter Sheridan, the former head of Robert Kennedy’s special unit that targeted organized crime and a man deeply involved in Garrison’s investigation, was one of those who believed in the ‘Partin-smokescreen’.

The only problem standing between a Hoffa in jail and a free Hoffa was one witness, Edward Partin. On March 15, Irving Davidson, a Washington lobbyist and friend of Marcello, arranged it that Partin was subpoenaed by a grand jury for involvement in the Kennedy assassination, thus hoping Partin would be an incredible witness and Hoffa would be set free. According to Sheridan, Marcello tried to influence Garrison in making Partin a player in his cast. On June 23, 1967, Partin was, in fact, ‘included’ in the cast. WJBO-radio in Baton Rouge said that Partin had been seen with Ruby and Oswald, discussing the assassination of Kennedy. After there had been
It seems Marcello and others simply used the local D.A. and his investigation in trying to achieve what they wanted: Hoffa’s freedom. That Garrison deliberately set out to hunt people like Shaw and Ferrie just to wreck Partin’s credibility seems a rather farfetched theory and seems to be contrary to the evidence.

In early 1967, Gordon Novel approached Garrison, providing him with information on Ferrie and the anti-Castro Cubans. Joseph Rault, who was on the plane with Garrison when Garrison’s interest in the Kennedy assassination reawakened, and Willard Robertson had told Garrison, whose investigation they financially supported, that Novel could be of help to him. Novel, who was also an acquaintance of Garrison and an FBI-informant, relayed to FBI Director Hoover on March 28, that “Novel stated that Garrison plans to indict Carlos Marcello in the Kennedy assassination conspiracy because Garrison believes Marcello is tied up in some way with Jack Ruby.” Novel believed the evidence were some Bourbon Street nightclubs and a stripper called ‘Jada’. Jada, whose real name was Janet Confato, was a stripper in both Ruby’s Carousel club and the Sho-Bar of Peter Marcello, a family-member of Carlos Marcello. In June, Ruby had travelled to New Orleans, with the motive that he wanted to hire Jada for his Carousel Club. Ruby had received this ‘tip’ via Clee Dugas, the night-manager of the 500 Club, whose boss, Frank Caracci, was a friend of Ruby. Garrison, however, suspected Novel was a CIA-plant and subpoenaed him. Novel fled to Ohio, where Governor James Rhodes refused to extradite him. While searching Novel’s apartment, checks from the Double Check Corporation, a CIA-front based in Miami, were found.

On June 10, a memo to Hoover contained information from Bob Hamm, a talk-show host, who said that “District Attorney Garrison believes that organized crime was responsible for the assassination. The reason being that organized crime wanted the assassination to appear as though it had been done at the instigation of Castro... ” Even though it seems that people tried to turn everybody’s attention into the direction of Castro, Garrison didn’t fall for that story. It seems reasonable to say that Garrison had more evidence against Shaw than he had against any member of organized crime. Perhaps Garrison planned to arrest members of Mafia after Shaw was convicted.

Hoffa, shortly before his disappearance in the mid-seventies, said “Jim Garrison is a smart man... goddammed smart attorney... anybody who thinks he’s a kook is a kook himself”. Garrison’s prime suspect was, among other things, a Mafia-linked man: David William Ferrie.
A. DAVID FERRIE

David Ferrie was a most remarkable man; both in the way he appeared and the way he was. Because of a remarkable disease, known as alopecia, Ferrie had lost all the hairs on his body. Since most people weren’t ‘fond’ of a man with such an appearance, Ferrie made himself wigs and false eyebrows. Unfortunately, in trying to make himself to appear normal, these attributes only worsened his appearance. Because of this disease, the most intelligent Ferrie developed an interest in medicine and kept several hundred mice in his apartment, mice which he used for cancer research, a hobby he shared with one Mary Sherman. Both quite often used the title ‘Dr.’ in front of their names.

As a teenager, Ferrie wanted to become a priest and enter a monastery, but he was not accepted as a novice because of his homosexuality. Later on, he would become a bishop in rather obscure churches such as the Orthodox Old Catholic Church of North America, an organization which was affiliated with the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia. Unable to follow his calling, Ferrie became a pilot and was employed by Eastern Airlines. He was suspended in 1961 and dismissed in September 1963, after he had been arrested for sodomizing a young boy. Because of his excellent skills as a pilot, it was rumored he had flown raids on Cuba since 1959, a job he had received from Cuban exile Eladio del Valle. The U.S. Border Patrol stated that he was the pilot who flew the plane in which Carlos Marcello, don of the New Orleans-mafia, re-entered the United States from Guatemala in May 1961, after Robert Kennedy had done everything (including breaking the law) to get Marcello extradited from the United States. Marcello ranked high on Kennedy’s list of most wanted organized crimes figure, along with his friend Santos Trafficante of Tampa, Florida and Sam Giancana from Chicago. On April 20, 1961, in the immediate aftermath of the Bay of Pigs in which Ferrie apparently played a most important and therefore most secret role in, he admitted he had ‘severely criticized’ Kennedy, saying he “ought to be shot”. He said anyone could hide in the bushes and shoot the President.

November, 1963

After Marcello had returned to the United States, Robert Kennedy and his organized crime-unit in the Justice Department kept going after Marcello. One of these steps in Kennedy’s hunt occurred on November 22, 1963, the very day that Kennedy was shot, when Marcello was standing trial in a New Orleans-courtroom. Helping him with his defense was David Ferrie. At noon, Carlos Marcello, the defendant, said he had seen Ferrie inside the courthouse. FBI-agent Regis Kennedy, who had been assigned by Hoover to watch every movement Marcello made but who was also suspected of having switched alliances, entering the Marcello’s camp, corroborated Marcello’s claim. Marcello’s lawyer, however, Wray Gill, said Ferrie was at his office in the Marquette Building. At 12h15, Gill had called his secretary, asking for Ferrie, but she said he had “just left”. Obviously, one scenario was wrong; somebody was either mistaken or lying... or both were lying.

After Marcello was acquitted Ferrie apparently left for Texas at 21h00, taking along two friends,
Alvin Beauboeuf and Melvin Coffey. Coffey had once served in Ferrie’s Civil Air Patrol and had recently started working at Cape Canaveral, with NASA. They arrived in Houston at around 4h30 and checked into the Alamotel, a motel owned by Carlos Marcello. From the motel he placed four calls to New Orleans. One of these calls, shortly after noon, was a collect-call to Marcello’s office in the ‘Town and Country’. Ferrie claimed he wanted to talk to Marcello’s attorney Gill, but Gill never came over to this office on Saturdays and that day was no exception. That same evening, a group including Eugene Brading and Morgan Brown apparently arrived in Houston from Dallas, where Brading had been arrested for acting suspiciously around Dealey Plaza. Because he was using the alias ‘Jim Braden’, police let him go, not identifying him as a man who had been arrested thirty-five times before a police-officer arrested him in front of the Dal-Tex building, next to the School Book Depository. Though nobody in this group may actually have shot Kennedy himself, all are suspects in the assassination.

Later that day, Ferrie and his friends left for the Winterland Ice Skate Rink. Before leaving for Houston, Ferrie had informed with the proprietor, Chuck Rolland, whether they would be open that Saturday. Ferrie and his two friends didn’t skate but sat next to a phone boot for two hours, when he finally did receive a call. Obviously, he had told at least someone he would be there, even though Ferrie said that he didn’t know whether they were going to hunt or skate or anything else while in Houston. This rink was quite often used as a communications-drop by Charles Rogers, who was also arrested in Dealey Plaza. Ferrie and Rogers had met each other via the Civil Air Patrol-units as Rogers had lead the Houston-unit and Ferrie the New Orleans-unit. Rogers seems to have been a CIA-agent since 1956 and is the main suspect as the man who fatal-ly shot Kennedy from the grassy knoll.

After that call came through, they went to another rink in Houston, the Belair. They then left for Galveston, a hundred miles away from Houston, arriving there at the Driftwood Motel around 22h30. Some time later, Breck Wall, an AGVA-man from Dallas and, more importantly, friend of Ruby arrived there as well. Ruby tried to call Wall from 23h00 onwards at the number of a Thomas J. McKenna but only succeeded in getting Wall on the line at 23h44. The following morning, Jack Ruby would kill Oswald.

Ferrie checked out of the Driftwood at 10h00, the following morning. He stopped at a gas-station and saw Ruby killing Oswald on the television screen. Some time later, Ferrie phoned his roommate Layton Martens, who told Ferrie he was named as a suspect in the assassination.

C. Wray Gill had supposedly tried to phone the day before and had come around to Ferrie’s apartment. He told Martens that Ferrie’s library-card had been found on Oswald when he was arrested. Gill told Martens he was willing to act as Ferrie’s attorney when he returned. Martens informed Ferrie of the situation and probably told Ferrie D.A. Garrison had their home watched. The existence of such a library-card found on Oswald at the time of his arrest has officially never been corroborated. Fact is that the Secret Service did ask Ferrie whether he loaned his card to Oswald and that Marina, on November 24, was asked whether she knew a ‘David Farry’ (sic). She said she did not.

On November 25, Ferrie, back in New Orleans, went to Garrison’s office, accompanied by Wray Gill. Probably that same evening, he went over to Oswald’s former neighbor, Mrs. Doris Eames, and landlady, Jesse Garner, enquiring about such a library-card. Both claimed Ferrie looked insane.
But it was not a library-card found in the possession of the supposed assassin that had made him a suspect. On November 22, one Jack Martin, an employee of private detective Guy Banister, had a brawl with his boss. Banister had hit Martin with a .357 Magnum, so hard that Martin had to be taken to hospital. Banister was a man who, retired from the FBI after a dispute with Hoover, had settled in New Orleans and had started a detective agency a few years later after having served as head of the New Orleans police. He was fired when he, once again, had shown his violent temper. He had befriended Ferrie, probably through a mutual friend, Sergio Archacha Smith and Ferrie did some jobs for Banister’s agency. Banister himself, in August 1963, would befriend one Lee Harvey Oswald, who had ‘rented’ some office space for the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, a Committee that was pro-Castro. Martin recalled what happened that day:

“(Bannister’s) former gracious mood seemed somewhat changed after we had closed his door. Be that as it may, we outlined the fact in detail, how during our years in associate tenure, we had complied and kept records of all events we had either been involved in, exposed to, or heard about, bar nothing... Until then, there had been no secret... that Banister, David Ferrie and Lee Harvey Oswald may have known or been acquainted with one another. We reminded him of this, together with the fact that he often mentioned, ‘Someday someone is going to poke a rifle out of a window,’ when speaking of unpopular politicians at times.”

“Bannister and Mrs. Roberts had just been celebrating President’s Kennedy death. (We wanted to make a phone call) to blow the whistle on both he and Ferrie, concerning the assassination... Banister warned us this might place our family in grave danger as well as ourselves... With this ultimatum, we turned to leave the office. However, no sooner had we opened it with our back to him in order to speak with Mrs. Roberts about our papers, when by complete surprise, we were suddenly knocked to the floor from a blow on the head! Laying there stunned, we hazily saw Banister there standing over us with a drawn pistol in his hand, and in the act of striking us a second time. We rolled, quickly rising to our knees, but it was too late, we were hit again and again. We kept yelling, shouting out that our records would still stand, that he’d never get away with this, and just as suddenly, the blows stopped. He shoved some bills in our pocket, telling us to get to a hospital or a doctor, and we ran from the office... Running around the corner to a bar, Bill or someone else asked us what had happened. Our immediate reply to this was, ‘The dirty Nazi bastards did it to him in Texas and tried to do it to me here!’

An angry Martin had then phoned Herman Kohlman at the D.A.’s office, saying Ferrie would fly to Matamoros, Mexico with two of the assassins. Raymond Broshears, a friend of Ferrie, more or less corroborated this. He said a drunk Ferrie had once bragged to him he had gone to Houston because he was meeting two of the assassins there. These men, Cuban exiles, were to arrive in a single-engine airplane, flown by one of the assassins, one whose name was “Carlos”. In Houston, Ferrie would take over as pilot of a four-engine plane and take them to South America. From there, they would go to South Africa, where they would be safe from prosecution as there was no extradition agreement between South Africa and the United States. But, claimed Ferrie, they never showed up.

Martin also correctly claimed Ferrie knew the suspect Lee Harvey Oswald. They had met when Oswald ‘served’ in Ferrie’s Civil Air Patrol-unit in New Orleans, even though Ferrie would deny remembering Oswald. Martin also hinted that Ferrie was in Dallas at the time of the assassination. Gene Barnes, an NBC cameraman working in Dallas on November 22, also claimed Ferrie was in Dallas at that moment. Martin, almost having his skull beaten in, was also aware of Ferrie’s violent temper and asked that his name was not disclosed. The authorities, through Garrison’s office, wanted Ferrie for questioning because of Martin’s
allegations and not because of the library-card, as Ferrie believed.

Ferrie went to Garrison upon his arrival in New Orleans and after an interrogation, Garrison turned him over to the FBI. Before FBI-agent Ernest Wall, Ferrie claimed he wasn’t involved in the assassination and didn’t know Oswald. FBI-agents, however, did initially doubt Ferrie’s denials and questioned Edward Voebel, a friend of Oswald, who told the FBI Ferrie had known Oswald in 1955 when all three of them were in the same Civil Air Patrol-unit. Ferrie then told the Secret Service the same story but added Martin was known as a man who furnished false leads. Ferrie had either realized or was informed that Martin was the source of allegations against him. Ferrie was released and the Secret Service contacted Martin, who by now was aware Ferrie knew he had inculpated him, on November 29. Martin said that he suffered from ‘telephonitis’; whenever he was on a drinking-bout, he made wild accusations. Apparently, nobody realized Martin was in hospital when he made these accusations. It seems Martin was scared enough to ridicule himself.

February, 1967

It seems Garrison’s interest in the case was renewed during a conversation on an airplane with Louisiana Senator Russell Long and oilman Joseph Rault, Jr. when Long said the Commission was deadly wrong. According to Garrison, he took it for granted, “like most Americans, ... that our government had fully investigated President Kennedy’s assassination and had found it to be indeed the result of a random act by a man acting alone”. Walter Sheridan believed that it was Long who induced Garrison to believe that the CIA or the Cuban government was involved in this assassination. Long was known to have received ‘royal’ contributions from Marcello in his political campaigns.

Whatever the reason or motivation for bringing up the subject or Garrison’s interest, Garrison embarked upon a secret investigation into the assassination. Only those he trusted were informed and co-operated in this probe. On December 15, 1966, Garrison brought Ferrie, after three years, once again in for questioning. And Ferrie apparently realized what might happen.

On February 17, 1967, the New Orleans States-Item reported that ‘their’ D.A. Jim Garrison was investigating the assassination of the former President. Nobody seemed to know whether there were any suspects, the article hinted that already USD 8,000 had been spent and wondered whether there were really any results to show for all that money spent.

David Ferrie felt he might be an unnamed suspect. That very day, he called a reporter with the New Orleans States-Item, David Snyder, informing him Garrison would allege Ferrie was the getaway-pilot for the assassins. Ferrie said such allegations were “groundless”.

Garrison felt he had both to defend his investigation and to counter the allegations he hadn’t uncovered a single thing. A rather naive Garrison felt he could do this best by claiming he “had solved the case” and that he would arrest every man involved, at least those who were still alive.

Ferrie had phoned Lou Ivon, an aide to Garrison, and ‘informed’ him he (Ferrie) was now a “dead man”; he requested an received protective custody. Four days later, he was released from custody for no apparent reason.

That same day, February 21, 1967, having become the most likely target in a global news story, Ferrie talked to George Lardner, Jr., reporter for the Washington Post, at his appart-ment from
midnight till four o’clock in the morning... Lardner claims.
Later that day, at 11h00, Ferrie’s dead body was found nude in his apartment. Two undated and
typed notes were found, one addressed to a former lover named Al, the other to the world: “when
you receive this I will be quite dead (sic), so no answer will be possible”.

Everybody suspected Ferrie had committed suicide, which would have been an acceptable
explanation considering the enormous stress he was living under, being under the (correct)
assumption he was going to be charged for complicity in the assassination of President Kennedy.
Others, however, believe Ferrie was absolutely not the type of person to commit suicide under
any circumstances. In fact, the coroner, Nicholas Chetta, ruled there was no sign of a suicide or a
murder; he identified the cause as ‘natural’, a brain hemorrhage, linking it to the stress Ferrie was
under. At Ferrie’s apartment, drugs (Proloid) were found that increased the metabolism. If Ferrie,
a man who was known to suffer from hypertension, took these pills that night, it is probable he
died as a result of taking them, making it an accidental death, a suicide or... murder.
Chetta had originally established the time of death at midnight. Faced with the knowledge
Lardner had talked to Ferrie until 4h00, Chetta decided to simply move the time of death forward
to 4h00, the “latest time possible” for Ferrie to die. Chetta’s successor showed photographs of
Ferrie’s mouth, lower lip and gums, all showing contusions. This means it is possible someone
forced his mouth shut, forcing him to swallow something, perhaps the Proloid pills, perhaps via a
tube. Aaron Kohn believed coroners in New Orleans had always been corrupt and claimed Chetta
was no exception.
Lou Ivon, Chief Investigator for Garrison, claimed that Ferrie, a few hours before his death,
‘confessed’ Oswald; Shaw, Ruby had all been CIA.
Garrison commented (not directly about this death): “All I know is that witnesses with vital
evidence in the case are certainly bad insurance risks.” In fact, Ferrie’s best female friend, Mary
Sherman, was also found dead in bed soon after Ferrie had died. She had been shot in bed, after
which the bed had been put on fire.

Another Strange Death - Eladio del Valle

On February 23, 1967, at 1h34, within hours of Ferrie’s death, J.W. Hammon of the Miami
Police found the body of one of his friends, Eladio del Valle, on the floor in the back of his
flaming red 1966 Cadillac. In 1959, del Valle, a Cuban Congressman under Batista’s regime who
had emigrated to the United States and had befriended an old acquaintance of his Cuban days,
Florida Mafia-don Santos Trafficante, had asked Ferrie to fly raids on Cuba, earning USD 1,500
for each raid, del Valle had been shot in the heart after which his skull had been split open with a
machete.

del Valle, apart from being a personal friend of Ferrie, was also on the list of people Garrison
wanted to interrogate. On February 19, one of Garrison’s aide located del Valle in a Miami bar.
del Valle allegedly pointed out one of the conspirators, one ‘Manuel Garcia Gonzales’, from a
photograph which shows Oswald leaf letting FPCC-pamphlets in the streets of New Orleans. It
could be del Valle was the ‘mystery person’ Ferrie and Clay Shaw went to pick up in Montreal in
the early sixties, an event witnessed by Jules Rico Kimble, who furnished this information to
Garrison.
del Valle was “lured into the home of a woman friend for a game of bacarat”, where three killers
jumped on him and killed him. A neighbor saw the “woman leaving with table lamps and a
The Cuban Retaliation theory

All of these events coincided, more or less, with the ‘Castro-did-it’-allegations which were reported in the newspaper around that same time. Perhaps because the Report’s conclusions were invalidated by the public, some people apparently felt they should offer a more realistic scenario.

The story was that Kennedy had been killed by Cubans in retaliation for the CIA-plots against Castro. At that time, these CIA-plots were still more or less a well-kept secret. So it seemed that this story had everything to be credible.

The ‘source’ was John Rosselli, the highest ranking assistant of Sam Giancana, the man who controlled the Mafia (Outfit) in Chicago. Rosselli was under deportation order at that time and might have been willing to ‘save his ass’ by floating this theory. Surely the U.S. Government wouldn’t deport a man who could shed light on the murder of a President? Via Edward P. Morgan, Rosselli’s lawyer, with the assistance of the FBI and the Republican party (Lyndon Johnson, a Democrat, was President), this story reached the papers.

The original story was that the last sniper team sent to Havana was caught and tortured. They had given details of their mission and the ‘fact’ they were CIA-operators (people employed by the CIA, but who are used for one mission and then return to ‘normal’ life until (if) the CIA wants to use them again). Castro had reacted by sending a team of marksmen into the United States; their mission: kill Kennedy. Rosselli said he had known these people and that they were hiding in New Jersey.

Rosselli was asked to tell his story directly to Jack Anderson. Rosselli now ‘informed’ Anderson that this CIA—team had been brainwashed, whereupon they themselves were sent back to the United States to kill Kennedy, acting on orders from Castro. Rosselli said that these people were members from Trafficante’s Mafia-group. This, of course, served as the perfect cover if Santos Trafficante, leader of the Tampa, Florida-Mafia, would ever be suspected of having anything to do with the assassination. In September 1962, Trafficante had told friends (in a conversation picked up by the FBI-bugs) Kennedy was going to be hit. Jack Anderson, either always having believed ‘Castro did it’ or starting to accept that theory now, came to believe Trafficante was even co-operating with Castro, that the two were involved in some drug-scheme and that Trafficante warned Castro of the CIA plots, thus causing all plots to fail. Trafficante, however, never knew the details of these plots; he just knew they were going on. People who know Trafficante, know that he hated Castro, particularly because Castro had imprisoned him in Havana.

This theory also put the spotlight on Trafficante and not Giancana, Rosselli’s boss. Sam Giancana was rumored to have supported Kennedy’s presidential campaign and was not at all pleased when he found out Attorney General Robert Kennedy had put him on the top of the list of most wanted organized crime-figures.

Anderson, having talked to Morgan, went to his boss, Drew Pearson, who was a good friend of Earl Warren. Pearson decided to talk to Warren, who, on January 31, 1967, talked to James Rowley, still head of the Secret Service. Rowley, on February 13, turned the information over to the FBI who decided that no investigation of this story would take place, even though Castro, in a speech on September 7, 1963, had threatened with retaliation if ‘they’ persisted in plotting his death.
Nothing seemed to come of this, until... Garrison’s investigation became public knowledge on February 17. Suddenly, on March 3, the ‘Cuban-retaliation’-story appeared in the columns by Pearson and Anderson. President Johnson ordered the FBI to investigate the story and asked the CIA to give him a briefing. Richard Helms, DCI, asked his Inspector General to compile a report. This report was classified as secret. The conclusion, however, was that these allegations were not true. At the bottom of the report, somebody had written, in ink, ‘should we try to silence those who are talking or might later?’ The man who was talking, of course, was Rosselli. But nothing would happen (yet) to Rosselli. Ramsey Clark said this story was “CIA disinformation”. In 1979, the House Select Committee on Assassinations speculated that Garrison, in March 1967, talked to Rosselli in Las Vegas. The CIA’s Inspector General, the man who had ‘discovered’ that such a meeting had taken place, found such a meeting ‘particularly disturbing’. Some have suggested this proves Garrison’s Mafia-ties. One wonders whether Garrison might have learned Rosselli was the source of the ‘retaliation-theory’ and that Garrison wanted to find out whether Rosselli knew more. Garrison, however, said such a meeting never took place.
B. CLAY SHAW

With Ferrie dead, Garrison could either stop the whole show or continue his investigation. Only of a few wise men could perhaps resist and make that wise decision to stop the whole show. But Garrison, having attained international fame, couldn’t just stop without getting scourged by the entire press corps even more. And he had a good reason not to stop.

Perry Raymond Russo

When Perry Raymond Russo had heard about Garrison’s investigation and Ferrie’s death, he had come forward and gave, on February 25, information to one of Garrison’s assistants, Andrew Sciambra. Russo had written to Garrison, but the letter got lost. Russo decided to talk to the press, claiming, what he wanted to tell Garrison, that in the summer of 1963 he had heard Ferrie, who was a friend of his, say that it would be easy to kill the President. Russo said that one Clay Bertrand had been present as well, even though he seemed not so fired up about Kennedy as Ferrie. One Leon Oswald was also present, even though Russo was unable to identify Leon as Lee. Garrison learned about this new witness and sent Sciambra over to interview Russo.

Unknown to anyone, “Bertrand” was very familiar to Garrison. Garrison had come upon the name Clay Shaw in a very peculiar way; a route that began immediately after the assassination in Dallas four years earlier.

Dean Andrews, a New Orleans-lawyer who had, in the summer of 1963, who claimed to have assisted Oswald with some minor legal work about his discharge from the Marines, claimed he had received a phone-call on November 23 from one ‘Clay Bertrand’, who requested Andrews to become Oswald’s lawyer. Andrews, in hospital with pneumonia, was stampeded by federal authorities. In all his interviews, he slightly changed the circumstances and characters, introducing the suspicion, one that Andrews welcomed himself, he might be inventing the whole thing.

Garrison’s staff, however, came upon people who could identify ‘Clay Bertrand’ as Clay Shaw. Bertrand was allegedly a name he used while moving into the homosexual circles, even though nobody seemed to know a ‘Bertrand’ in those circles. Because of this identification, Shaw, on December 23, 1966, was summoned to appear before Garrison. But that was all Garrison had on Shaw. When Richard Billings, reporter with LIFE Magazine, asked Garrison whether he knew who Bertrand was, Garrison told him “his real name is Clay Shaw, but I don’t think he’s too important.” But then, of course, nobody knew the name Perry Russo yet.

Sciambra wondered whether Russo was able to identify Leon Oswald as Lee Oswald, but Russo couldn’t, at least not until someone drew whiskers on some photograph of him. Sciambra also felt that Russo’s story needed corroboration as it inculpated Clay Shaw. One of the people who could corroborate Russo’s claims was his married lover, one Lillie Mae McMains, who had accompanied him to this party. She and her husband had, however, fled to Iowa, trying to escape from Garrison’s reach. Without his lover to make a statement, Nicholas Chetta, Ferrie’s coroner, administered sodium pentothal to Russo on February 27, two days after their first meeting. This effort to obtain corroboration would eventually wound Garrison’s image for the next thirty years because of brilliant deception by one of the members of the media.

But before this deception started, Garrison arrested his next suspect: Clay Shaw.
Clay Shaw

Clay Shaw had been awarded the International Order of Merit from the City of New Orleans only seventeen months before this arrest. He was well-known throughout New Orleans as managing director of the International Trade Mart, a position he held from 1946 till 1965. That such a ‘respectable’ was wanted for this conspiracy seemed almost incredible.

Shaw, while director of the Trade Mart, also made quite a fortune as a real-estate developer. In his free-time, he was a writer and a patron of the arts. One of his play, about life on a submarine, was made into a film. Because of this hobby, he was a good friend of Tennessee Williams.

Shaw admitted that, during the World War II, he had been with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), acting as liaison to Winston Churchill. We only have Shaw’s word for this. What is known is that Shaw had numerous lunches with Winston Churchill during the war. Perhaps the OSS decided to enlist Shaw after Shaw had been become friendly with Churchill.

Shaw had been introduced to Churchill by Sir Michael Duff. Sir Michael was a well-known bisexual and was the great love of Shaw. Shaw, who was a homosexual like Ferrie, Garrison’s first suspect, had known two great loves in his life: the first was Sir Michael, the other one was William Formyduval, with whom he lived when arrested.

Researchers speculate Sir Michael introduced Shaw to Peter Montgomery. Fact is that Montgomery developed a relationship with Shaw, perhaps a sexual one as well. Montgomery, always having had an avid interest in espionage, joined the Intelligence Corps at the start of the war. What was not known until Montgomery’s death was that he and Anthony Blunt had been lovers. What was more: it was Montgomery’s and Blunt’s greatest love. Anthony Blunt was one of the ‘Magnificent Five’, the most renowned Soviet moles inside British Intelligence. An unanswered question was whether Shaw knew Blunt as well and whether Shaw knew of Blunt’s espionage activities. Blunt, on his part, said Montgomery never knew about his activities.

Wolfgang zu Rutlitz, another of Blunt’s lover during the Second World War, WAS a Soviet spy. All these people were stunned to learn such a man of such high standings, who did nothing but visit the most wealthy and well-known, was arrested for conspiring to kill his President.

Pandemonium

On March 2, the day after Shaw’s arrest, Acting Attorney General Ramsey Clark said that the FBI had investigated “Shaw just after the assassination”. The FBI had found nothing incriminating. First, the FBI had refused any comment, but informants told the New York Times that there wasn’t any information on such an investigation. A Justice Department official then told that same New York Times that the FBI did investigate a Clay Bertrand and that Clay Bertrand and Clay Shaw were the same man. By June, however, Attorney General Clark said his original statement had been “erroneous”; The FBI had concluded that Bertrand was not identified as a real person and that Bertrand wasn’t Shaw.

A few days after Shaw’s arrest, Garrison had been forced to present his case before a three-judge panel, who believed Garrison had sufficient grounds to put Shaw on trial. Garrison, besides Russo, had another witness, a heroin-addict named Vernon Bundy, who said he had seen Shaw and Oswald together at the lake-front. He was too far away to hear what they were talking about, but he did see Shaw giving money to Oswald. On March 22, Shaw was
formally indicted. Shaw said that “Mr. Garrison told a journalist that I’d never come to trial, I’d commit suicide first. And I’ve heard it said by those who are aware of such things that I wouldn’t come to trial because I’d be assassinated”.

What makes the Garrison-case so interesting that it is actually more referred to as the Garrison-case than as the Shaw-case. The media tried everything not to blame the suspect, but the D.A. Hugh Aynesworth wrote in Newsweek of May 15, 1967, there was a conspiracy, “... a plot of Garrison’s own making”. Though everyone is entitled to opinions, Aynesworth told another reporter he was “not saying there wasn’t a conspiracy (in the Kennedy assassination)... I just refuse to accept it and that’s my life’s work”. At least he had a goal in life.

On June 19, 1967, Walter Sheridan produced an NEC-‘investigation’ into Garrison’s case. NEC said that a Garrison witness had lied under oath and Frank McGee claimed two witnesses had failed polygraph tests. Garrison decided to call these people before a grand jury, saying that, if true, he would resign as D.A. One was convicted for perjury, two were held in contempt of court, Sheridan skipped town and Phelan, the master plotter, failed to arrive. With NEC violently attacking Garrison, it seemed Garrison’s allegations might have been correct that the military-industrial complex was behind the assassination: NEC’s parent company was Radio Corporation of America, one of the biggest Defense contractors.

Though Aynesworth and Sheridan did their utmost best to try and inculpate Garrison of every possibly crime except murder, everyone eventually realized they were doing just that: trying to make look Garrison bad. Sheridan and Phelan realized that Garrison had Russo as his most vital witness. They asked Russo four times whether he didn’t want to ridicule and demolish Garrison. Russo, however, framed Sheridan, meeting Sheridan when he had been wired by Garrison’s office; Garrison, on July 7, 1967, had Sheridan charged. On July 18, Sheridan ‘surrendered’ himself, but was helped by Robert Kennedy who defended Sheridan. Eight months later, Sheridan left NEC, joining Robert Kennedy’s presidential campaign.

Realizing Russo would not switch camps, Phelan realized Shaw’s only chance to leave the courtroom as a free man was directly linked to Russo’s credibility. ‘Journalist’ Phelan not only realized this, he also wanted to see Shaw leave the courtroom as a free man and created brilliant deception, even deceiving most of the most knowledgeable researcher for years to come.

Phelan claimed Russo had never said anything about a Bertrand under hypnosis. He claimed that Russo didn’t believe Sciambra when he told Russo he had identified one Bertrand as being present at the meeting. Russo even saying he had never even heard of that name. Two days later, Russo was hypnotized by Dr. Edmond Fatter. Phelan claimed Dr. Fatter introduced so many leading questions that a whole new story emerged from this session: it was ‘established’ that Russo had met one Clem Bertrand (identified as Clay Shaw) and one Leon Oswald (identified as Lee Harvey Oswald) in the company of David Ferrie at a party in September 1963. Fatter also offered to Russo that he had heard them talk about details of an assassination plot. As if this wasn’t enough, Fatter also talked about a ‘Brett Wall’, which should probably have been Breck Wall, Ruby’s associate who had lodged in the same motel as Ferrie in Houston on the night of November 22, 1963. Russo was then taken to a room where he could see Bertrand who he had seen on February 28 and he obviously recognized him as Clay Bertrand. Garrison then arrested Shaw.

In early March, Phelan said he talked to Garrison and Garrison, who knew Phelan from ‘the old days’, before Garrison became a media-event, told him his chief witness was one Perry
Raymond Russo, a twenty-five year old insurance salesman from Baton Rouge. Phelan claimed Garrison gave him both the transcripts of the February 25-interview and the stenographic record of the hypnotic session of March 1. In ‘brilliant’ journalistic work, Phelan claimed he found out what had really happened: he said he didn’t find anything about such a party in the original interview with Sciambra, but that he did find such a story in the transcripts of the hypnotic session. Phelan ‘saw’ that it was the hypnotist and not Russo who had introduced such a story about these people talking about the assassination. Phelan said he then contacted Sciambra, who said the story was in the February 25-interview. Phelan, however, had copied this interview before returning it to Garrison. Phelan now tried to give the impression Sciambra was left to explain the omission, of course, assuming he was correct and that those transcripts did not say anything about that story. Phelan claimed Sciambra told him he had forgotten to write it down, an explanation that sounded hollow since this was the major revelation of the interview. Of course, Sciambra had not said any such thing to Phelan, but that didn’t bother Phelan, who continued to put words into Sciambra’s mouth, claiming Sciambra said he had certainly told Garrison of such an event. Phelan claimed he then contacted Russo, who, ‘of course’, said Sciambra was wrong and that he had told Sciambra of this event in the first meeting AFTER the hypnotic session. Phelan believed Garrison was unaware that there were two parts to this story. The only truth to this story is that Phelan had contacted Sciambra and Russo, who told him that ‘Phelan’s scenario’ was not the truth. Phelan, of course, simply discarded the fact that Russo had talked to the media about his meeting before Sciambra even learned of Russo’s existence... but why be bothered by facts?
C. THE TRIAL

It took almost two years, until January 21, 1969, before the trial eventually began. Shaw’s defense realized they could only gain by trying to postpone the trial, knowing that time was on their hand as the public would be bombarded with bombardsments on Garrison, whereas the suspect would be considered to be an innocent man. Shaw’s lawyer even filed a petition to overturn Shaw’s indictment on the ground that the Warren Report was “legally valid, accurate, binding and controlling upon all courts in the United States”.

With a case that had attracted so much media attention, it was very difficult to find jurors. The very first prospect was a man named John Kennedy, who wasn’t called upon for obvious reasons. Eventually, the twelve jurors sat dawn for the trial, only to learn that the presiding judge, Judge Edward A. Haggerty, Jr., felt they wouldn’t work deep into the night; he felt the Mardi Gras, New Orleans’ famous carnival was, ‘of course’, much more important than the trial of a possible conspirator in the assassination of a former president.

On the very first day of trial, Garrison put six people on the stand who all testified that they had seen Ferrie, Oswald and Shaw at their town, Clinton, in August 1963.

At the end of August or the beginning of September 1963, the Congress for Racial Equality (CORE) held a registration drive in Clinton. In nearby Jackson, a barber, Eduard McGehee, was sure he had given a haircut to Oswald, who said he wanted to apply for a job at the Louisiana State Hospital. McGehee thought it was best that he went to see a states official, Reeves Morgan. Morgan said he had also seen Oswald and, like McGehee, said it would be best that Oswald registered as a voter.

Oswald did go to the voter registration, where Marshall John Manchester went over to the black Cadillac. The driver said he belonged to the International Trade Mart. People in Clinton would recognize this man as Clay Shaw. In the passenger-seat was a man they identified as David Ferrie. The registrar Henry Earl Palmer also saw the car and its three occupants. Palmer said Oswald showed him his U.S. Navy Identity Card as his identification. Palmer, however, turned Oswald down because he couldn’t furnish any proof that he lived in the area. Two men who worked for CORE also identified Oswald.

Shaw’s defense countered that the man identified as Shaw was in reality Guy Banister. Somehow this seems unlikely since the registrar knew Banister.

Why Oswald would ever have gone to Clinton is never explained. It is known that a white CORE worker was arrested there on August 2, after accompanying two blacks to register. On Augustus 20, an injunction was placed against CORE activities until late October, but this injunction was soon lifted. The marshal 1 originally believed the people in the black car were FBI agents who wanted to create an incident.

Tom Bethell had worked with Garrison, but said he believed “Garrison’s investigation might have been harmless enough if only he had not charged an innocent man. Clay Shaw”. Bethell decided to ‘right that wrong’ and “before the trial, I took it upon myself to give one of Shaw’s lawyers a memo listing the names and addresses of the witnesses who were to testify against Shaw.” Garrison discovered this betrayal and fully realized this was sufficient to ask for a mistrial, an opportunity that he didn’t pursue. Bethell realized that his act “enabled the defense to discover (just in time) the accountant’s odd background and to bring it out at the trial...” That accountant was one a witness, Charles I. Spiesel, from New York City. Questioned by Garrison’s
staff, he told the jury that he had visited his daughter in New Orleans in the summer of 1963. While attending a party hosted by Shaw, he had met Ferrie at the bar. He said Ferrie and Shaw planned to kill Kennedy. When Shaw’s lawyers had a go at this man, they forced him into admitting he believed he had been hypnotized by at least sixty people, that he felt he was watched and followed constantly and that he even fingerprinted his daughter when he met her, fearing she might be an agent. Obviously, such witnesses didn’t do much good for Garrison’s case.

Then came what Garrison expected to be the ‘moment supreme’, even though the damage had been done: Russo’s testimony. Russo’s allegations were, as could be predicted, countered by Phelan’s testimony that the details of an assassination plot were not from Russo but from a hypnotist. Russo, who had always felt that he was ‘just’ another witness, hadn’t realized he was the star witness, the man on who Garrison had put almost all his stakes.

Garrison could have had another witness for Russo story because, it seems it was corroborated by his girlfriend, Sandra Moffet. The Governor of Nebraska, however, did not extradite her. Garrison did have credible witnesses who could identify Shaw as Bertrand, the man who had phoned Andrews to represent Oswald after his arrest. Apart from a postman who said he had brought mail for a Mr. Bertrand to Shaw, without Shaw returning this mail to him, and a hostess of the VIP lounge at New Orleans airport who said she had seen Shaw signing as Bertrand. Garrison’s team, however, relied on the original arrest sheets and testimony of the man who booked Shaw, Aloysius Habighorst. Habighorst said he had typed the name ‘Clay Bertrand’ under the heading ‘aliases’ after Shaw had told him that name. Shaw’s defense said that Shaw’s rights had been violated when Shaw was booked and that therefore this arrest sheet was not admissible as evidence. Judge Haggerty, however, had a personal feud with two men named Habighorst and it seems Haggerty was linked to these men. Haggerty, ruling on whether or not the evidence was admissible, said he didn’t believe Habighorst was a credible witness anyway. Garrison’s team immediately filed for a mistrial, which was promptly denied by Haggerty, apparently claiming that the jurors weren’t present anyway. Habighorst was not allowed to testify and when Shaw was put on the witness-stand by his defense, he claimed he hadn’t said any such thing.

Garrison realized his trial was going down the drain and turned his attention away from New Orleans, towards Dallas, trying to link the events of both cities together. He began to call upon witnesses who had been discredited or not heard by the Warren Commission and he attacked those witnesses of whom the Warren Commission felt they were telling nothing but the truth.

As a highlight, Garrison was able to show the famous Zapruder-film, which had been inside a highly secured vault. Time-Life was not willing to show this film-footage to anyone and Garrison was a part of that ‘anyone’. Garrison eventually did get the tape, but only after he had taken this matter to the U.S. Supreme Court who ruled in Garrison’s favor. But everything was to no avail.

On March 1, 1969, exactly two years after his arrest, the jury acquitted Shaw. Interestingly, the two alternate jurors found Shaw guilty. Haggerty himself would later claim Shaw was lying when he was testifying.

The New Orleans States-Item, the newspaper that had started all the trouble for Garrison by making his investigation public before Garrison was ready to, wrote “Garrison perverted the law rather than prosecuted it”. The New York Times felt it was a “prosecution of an innocent man...one of the most disgraceful chapters in the history of American jurisprudence”.

Garrison’s emphasis on Dallas, though, did have results. All jurors did say that they believed a conspiracy was behind the assassination.

Two days later, a disappointed Garrison charged Shaw with perjury when he testified he didn’t know Ferrie. As already said: Judge Haggerty himself thought Shaw had been lying. The press, always having proclaimed Shaw was an innocent man, felt it was now that Garrison showed his true nature: he couldn’t stop going after this poor and innocent man.
D. AFTERMATH

When the jurors were asked why they hadn’t convicted Shaw, they said they felt Garrison hadn’t given enough evidence that Shaw was a CIA-agent. He had talked about Shaw being a CIA-agent outside the courtroom, but didn’t use this aspect of Shaw’s career inside the courtroom because Garrison had little if no proof to substantiate his allegations; he either had a gut-feeling about it or was simply using such allegations in trying to nail down Shaw.

In the following years, more evidence of Shaw’s relationship to the CIA would be developed. Victor Marchetti, a CIA-drop-out, said that at the time of the trial, the CIA was very interested and even concerned when it came to Shaw. If Garrison would gather evidence Shaw was a CIA-agent, this could possibly embarrass the CIA. They also discovered that in his early years as director of the Trade Mart, Shaw had gone to East-Germany, Czechoslovakia, Peru, Argentina and Nicaragua as a CIA-operative. The CIA disclosed that between 1949 and 1956, Shaw had had thirty meetings with a CIA-officer. According to the CIA, all contact with Shaw ceased to exist after 1956.

Garrison under attack

Pershing Gervais, who had assisted Garrison in his investigation, said Garrison had received USD 150,000 in pay-offs. He had, on Ferrie’s request, maintained a liaison to Ferrie, informing him on how the investigation was going. Ferrie, being the main target, was obviously interested in what Garrison was learning.

Pershing Gervais claimed there were tape-recordings. Garrison had to defend himself in a trial. When Gervais was questioned by Garrison’s lawyer, Gervais admitted he had told a TV-reporter he had been forced by the Justice Department to lie and incriminate Garrison. Gervais said it was a “total, complete political frame-up” against Garrison.

Cabell?

The Washington Times, on September 13, 1973, reported that “... Jim Garrison as late as March 1971, was preparing to accuse another person of conspiring to assassinate President John F. Kennedy. Garrison’s intended defendant this time was the late Air Force General Charles Cabell, former Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.”

Charles Cabell, whose brother Earl was mayor of Dallas when the assassination happened, had been fired by Kennedy after the Bay of Pigs-fiasco, together with DCI Allen Dulles and Richard Bissell. Just after this resignation, Cabell had spoken in New Orleans; on this occasion, he was introduced by Clay Shaw, who apparently still had ties to the CIA at that time, even though the CIA said they had stopped using Shaw in 1956. Cabell had been in New Orleans in November 1963, at a time when he was working for Howard Hughes, the man who had co-operated with General Cabell in the Bay of Pigs-planning, together with former CIA-member Robert Maheu, Hughes’ assistant and liaison to Rosselli in the coordination of the CIA-Mafia plots against Castro’s Cuba. Cabell had become a good friend of Maheu, while Maheu had become a good friend of Rosselli, assistant to Chicago’s Mafia (known as the Outfit) leader Sam Giancana.

Garrison himself said that the press, once again, had misquoted him. Perhaps he might have indicted Cabell, but Garrison believed there was not enough information to do such a thing. He
said that he had wanted to convey the notion to that reporter that the Warren Commission should have talked to men like Cabell and not to Oswald’s baby-sitter when he was three years old.

**Shaw’s death**

Even Shaw’s own death, on August 14, 1974, seemed rather bizarre. “Before Shaw was reported dead, a neighbor observed an ambulance pulling up in front of the Shaw home. Then two ambulance attendants carried a stretcher with a figure on it covered by a sheet INTO the house. The two men then quickly left with an empty stretcher and a few hours later Shaw was reported ‘found dead in his home alone’. (emphasis mine)”

Events went so fast that even the coroner couldn’t investigate the body; it had already been embalmed and buried in Kentwood, where Shaw was born. The death certificate was signed by Dr. Hugh Betson, who identified the cause of death as “lung cancer”.

Trying to prove his innocence, Shaw had lost his house and over USD 200,000. After Oliver Stone read Garrison’s second book on the Shaw trial, he approached Garrison and made a film about the entire trial. Though Garrison was unable to convict Shaw, the film was able to show Garrison less distorted than the press had depicted him in the late sixties. Less than a year after the film’s release, Garrison died himself. Garrison felt that “one victory like this (the film) is enough for any lifetime.” He had always felt that “as long as the men who shot John Kennedy... are walking on the streets of America, I will continue this investigation... I owe that not only to Jack Kennedy but to my country”.
CHAPTER THREE

THE HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS

“For God’s sake, if you have any respect for the dollars of the taxpayers, let’s vote this resolution down.”
Representative B.F. Sisk

In December, 1963, slightly more than fifty percent of the American people believed there was a conspiracy behind the death of President Kennedy and that the Commission had been a cover-up, especially of Oswald’s relationships to various government agencies, domestic and possibly abroad (such as KGB).
Coupled with the disillusionment over the VietNam-war and the Watergate scandal, a scandal that cost America another President, the man that had been Kennedy’s opponent in the 1960-elections, there was more and more criticism.

Even though Garrison had aroused major national and international publicity with his probe, it was not the ‘real stuff’, the real ‘vindication’ of the public against the ‘establishment’, something they perhaps adored or at least could live with in 1963, but which they now hated or at least were displeased with.

The polls now showed that almost seventy-five percent of the American public believed Kennedy was killed as the result of a conspiracy. The government no longer had that ‘aura’ of ‘to serve the people’, if it had that aura in the first place. If it had, it’s light was fading. The people had attacked the President on his ‘policy’ on VietNam; Nixon, his successor, had to step down when he realized he no longer could keep telling the public he was not aware of what had happened in the Watergate Building. And the public now thought the time was come to ask what had happened in Dealey Plaza.

The CIA, which barely had lived for twenty-five years, came under immense scrutiny; both its foreign and (illegal) domestic activities were reviewed. Investigating the domestic activities, the investigating Committees didn’t fail in trying to probe into the Kennedy assassination.

The FBI, after the death of Hoover, could, should it wish to, start over, trying to purify the FBI by trying to forget who Hoover ever was.

The CIA and FBI had both played major roles in the Warren Commission’s ‘investigation’ and with the new knowledge that was acquired, it was felt a re-evaluation of the Commission, its Report had to take place. Was there any basis to the claims of the various ‘conspiracy theorists’ who wrote books and books on how bad the Commission had acted? There was a call for a new investigation.
A. THE BIRTH OF A COMMITTEE

Every woman expects her second child to be delivered in an easier way than her first. The second governmental investigation of the assassination of President Kennedy, however, like so many things about this assassination, didn’t fit into preconceived ideas about anything.

Whereas the Warren Commission was quickly established, within days of the assassination, the only real problem lay in finally getting started. Everybody was ready, but it somehow didn’t start. The House Select Committee on Assassinations encountered the same problem: it couldn’t start an actual investigation. But the reason for this was that, at times, there wasn’t even a Committee to investigate.

On April 15, 1975, Robert Groden, a private assassination researcher who had centered all his interests on the photographic evidence, was asked to show the Zapruder-film to the Virginia Congressional Delegation. At that time, not too many had seen that historic piece of footage; it was no small wonder that politicians were interested to see how one of their colleagues had so brutally and famously been murdered.

Interested by what he had seen. Representative Thomas Downing introduced resolution 432 on April 30, requesting a Congressional investigation of the assassination of President Kennedy.

Fellow Congressman Henry B. Gonzalez had already introduced a more or less similar resolution. Resolution 204, requesting an investigation of the murders of John and Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr., plus the attempted murder of Governor Wallace, while running for the Presidency against Nixon in 1972. Wallace had to pull out of the race because of his injuries.

These resolutions were, as was the normal procedure around Washington, being upheld by some Committees for over a year. To speed up matters, these two resolutions were molded into one, Resolution 1540, supported by Gonzalez, Downing and Walter Fauntroy.

Thomas ‘Tip’ O’Neill tried everything to stop this resolution. He ordered Richard Boiling, a Representative from Missouri who also opposed the resolution, to let that resolution pass the Rules Committee. As some other persons felt it to be their duty, he vouched for the Warren Commission and its conclusions. But it was to no avail: the resolution was introduced on September 14, 1976 and passed on a 280-65 vote in the House. A twelve member committee was established, investigating the assassination of President John F. Kennedy and Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Thomas ‘Tip’ O’Neill put Representative Thomas Downing in the seat of the Chairman of this Committee, knowing that Downing’s tenure would automatically end in December 1976, when his career as a Congressman would end. At that time, everyone believed Congress would reconstitute the Committee, presided by Representative Henry Gonzalez of Texas.

Chairman Downing

The first problem the Committee had to solve was finding a Chief Counsel and Staff Director. The first man to be asked was Mark Lane, who had been Marguerite Oswald’s attorney and had recently started the Citizen’s Commission of Inquiry. Downing then felt Bernard Fensterwald, Jr., might be the man to lead the inquiry. Fensterwald had been interested in the assassination for quite some time, had founded the Committee To Investigate Assassinations and knew, like Lane, what areas needed to be probed. He, however, had been an attorney for James Earl Ray, the man
who was charged with killing Martin Luther King, and, because the Committee had to investigate this assassination as well, this could turn out to be a bad decision. Fensterwald’s appointment was also opposed by Henry Gonzalez, who had expected he would be the Chairman and not Downing. However, Gonzalez didn’t have a splendid reputation. In the end, Fensterwald declined, after being told by a representative of the CIA they would hand him ‘his head on a platter’ should he become Chief Counsel.

Downing did rely on Fensterwald’s advice and he and Mark Lane felt that Richard Sprague, a prosecutor from Philadelphia, might be the perfect man for the job. He was a tough and aggressive character, but, unfortunately, knew nothing of the assassination. He believed ‘in keeping an open mind in gathering and sifting the evidence. We don’t want biased people connected with the investigation.’ Of course, Sprague failed to see the difference between informed and biased; but he obviously wanted the job.

Sprague told Lane he had worked for Arlen Specter, after he had ‘retired’ from the Warren Commission. Lane told Specter he didn’t see “that as a problem at all. In one week, you’re going to be up to your hips in evidence of conspiracy.”

Downing and Gonzalez settled for Sprague as their man. It was felt that with Sprague as Chief Counsel and Staff Director, the results of the investigations would be very interesting; many believed this could turn out to be a true investigation, not something that gave that impression. At his first press-conference, Sprague said that he would call upon EVERYBODY to testify before the Committee. He more or less immediately called upon Garrison and informed the former D.A. that he would start and continue where Garrison had ended his investigation.

Sprague requested a budget of USD 6.5 million, something which caused an enormous stir. He also wanted a staff of about two hundred people. The Warren Commission had a staff of only 83 people, but they used 150 FBI-agents as well; quite an unwise decision, in retrospect. Advised he should lower his budget and ask for more if he needed to, Sprague said he wouldn’t play the game according to Washingtonian customs. He asked for the full amount immediately.

**Acting Chairman Gonzalez**

On January 2, 1977, David Burnham from the New York Times tried to create a scandal; and succeeded. Burnham tried to break the good reputation of Sprague, ‘investigating’ his past as a prosecutor in Philadelphia. Burnham, as nuclear energy reporter for the Times, was the man who had had a secret appointment with Karen Silkwood, who died, apparently murdered, on the way to that interview, with vital documents which she wanted to see published.

Burnham received help from Washington Post reporter George Lardner, Jr., the man who was with David Ferrie the night he died, who joined the hunt. Both of them were, perhaps not surprising when confronted with these ‘deaths’, well-connected with the world of Intelligence.

This attack wouldn’t normally have had any effect, were it not that the Committee needed to be reconstituted EVERY year. If it wasn’t reconstituted, there simply wasn’t any Committee any longer.

If the attack in the New York Times wanted to end this Committee’s existence (could there be any other reason?), it seemed to succeed. On January 4, an attempt to reconstitute the HSCA through a unanimous-consent vote (the easiest way) failed. This meant that several Committees had to conclude whether or not the HSCA would be reconstituted. Everybody knew this would
take weeks.

Awaiting reconstitution, ‘acting’ Chairman Gonzalez told the Committee it had USD 150,000 dollars per month to work with until the Committee was reconstituted. But Gonzalez was wrong; actually, only 84,000 dollars per month were allowed and he asked to explain why his Committee was running over budget. Gonzalez, dissatisfied with Sprague because he didn’t want to delegate his privileges, explained the deficit by pointing the finger at Sprague, saying he had appointed new staffers on January 1, without Gonzalez’s knowledge.

On February 6, Gonzalez and Sprague were, once again, at each other’s throat. Gonzalez, wanting to be the Supreme Deity within the Committee, wanted control and power over the staff, a privilege that Sprague had received upon his appointment. As everybody could expect, Sprague didn’t think of giving it up. Sprague wanted the Committee to be run by the staffers and not by the Congressmen (like the Warren Commission) and forbade the staff to give interviews. He, however, was interviewed daily and became a media personality.

Two days later, Gonzalez ‘ordered’ Sprague to fire all staff members hired on January 1. Sprague, however, denied he hadn’t told Gonzalez of these new appointments and, therefore, refused to fire them. Sprague was backed by the eleven other Committee members, who were turning against their ‘new’ Chairman.

Gonzalez then tried to fire Sprague, but Sprague barricaded himself in his office, backed, once again, by the other eleven Committee members, who had told Sprague to disregard Gonzalez’s letter.

Gonzalez used other ploys against ‘his’ Committee as well, such as asking Attorney General Griffin Bell NOT to give the Committee access to the FBI files. This was probably a unicum in history: a Chairman asking someone NOT to give any information to his Committee.

With Gonzalez still furious over his failure to get rid of Sprague, Preyer, the head of the Subcommittee investigating the murder of President Kennedy, tried to fight back. The next day, Preyer lead a delegation of the other ten Committee members, asking Speaker Tip O’Neill to remove Gonzalez as Chairman. Preyer’s commented Gonzalez had “gone mad.” O’Neill, however, denied the power to remove Gonzalez. Trying to hang on, Gonzalez called Sprague a ‘rattlesnake’ and an ‘unconscionable scoundrel’ in front of the press who obviously loved all this drama.

On March 6, 1977, Gonzalez had stated that the Committee never investigated anything in a meaningful way. He claimed it was “a put-up job and a hideous farce that was never intended to work ... There’s something very strange going on in this country- strange and frightening.”

Everyone understood that the Committee would not be reconstituted if Gonzalez was to be the chairman in that reconstituted Committee. This meant Sprague would stay on and Gonzalez would go out. And Gonzalez did quit.

Chairman Stokes

Congressman Louis Stokes became Chairman of the Committee. That a black man was a Congressman would have been unthinkable in Kennedy’s time; Louis Stokes’ career was made possible through the civil rights bill that was introduced by President Kennedy. This could be a good omen.
Stokes told his Committee it had to come up with something ‘special’ if it wanted to be reconstituted: it should give the aura of being actively engaged in investigating. Again, an echo of the Warren Commission could be heard.

Gonzalez was out and Sprague was still Chief Counsel; it seemed that with the new reconstitution probably safe, the Committee could finally start investigating. But that’s not the way things work in Washington; people realized that a Congressman had still more privileges in this city than ‘just’ a Chief Counsel. If the Committee wanted reconstitution, Sprague should also leave. Hours before Congress would vote, Sprague was asked to leave. He did.

On March 30, 1977, the House voted in favor of a continuation of the Committee, offering it a budget of USD 2.5 million per year. One of the Congressman who asked for the discontinuation of the Committee was Henry Gonzalez. Everyone realized Gonzalez wanted this Committee to serve as his way to fame and glory. If he wasn’t any part of it, well ... then the Committee was no longer of any use.

The new Chief Counsel and Staff Director would be Robert Blakey. Blakey was linked to Cornell University and a veteran of the Organized Crime and Racketeering Section of the Department of Justice. When President Kennedy was killed, Blakey had just been with his brother, Robert Kennedy.

Upon being appointed Chief Counsel and Staff Director, Blakey held a press-conference, informing everyone this would be the last press-conference held by anyone working on the Committee. The Committee’s hearings would be conducted in secret, like the Warren Commission’s. Everybody working for the Committee would have to sign a ‘Nondisclosure Agreement’, which meant that they had to keep absolutely silent about what they had done and learned, even after the Committee would be dissolved: anyone who broke this agreement would be prosecuted and would have to, at the very least, i.e. if found innocent, cough up the costs of that trial. The only one not asked to sign such an agreement was Richard Billings, who would co-author Blakey’s book.

Everybody, even the private assassination researchers, lost interest in the Committee. With the knowledge of the Warren Commission in their mind, they realized they could prepare to attack the Committee’s conclusions, which would, in all likelihood, not be the true answers to the questions that had languished for so many years.

Blakey’s theory was that the Commission had reasoned wrongly: he said they had started with Kennedy’s assassination and saw Oswald’s murder as something that just happened. He, however, would use Oswald’s death, by the hand of Jack Ruby, as the ‘Rosetta-stone’ and would work from that point towards explaining Kennedy’s assassination. Apparently, evaluating the evidence was something this lawyer, like some of his colleagues, had never thought about.

Robert Tannenbaum also realized what had happened. He told Mark Lane: “It became clear that the intelligence organizations were not going to give us that information (about Oswald’s relationship with them-P.C.), and it became clear that Congress was not going to take on the FBI and CIA in order to get that information, and so I knew that it was hopeless.”

Those who did follow the investigation saw that it was lead by Robert Blakey and Committee member Richardson Preyer. Preyer and Sam Devine, along with fellow Congressman John Anderson had always been against this Committee. Yet, they got on the Committee. Even blind eyes could see there should be something sinister in this: in the best case, they didn’t do a thing; in the worst case, they tried to put the Committee out of action.
Blakey wanted to press the investigation in the direction of ‘Castro killed JFK’. This, of course, was what the certain CIA-elements had wanted for the past thirteen years, if only to take the possible blame off its own back. If Castro did it, the CIA was on the offense, willingly providing information from its archives to the Committee, whereas it could be on the defense, where it would reluctantly have to pass on information about issues they didn’t like to talk about. Blakey didn’t make a secret of his alliance with the CIA: “I’ve worked with the CIA for twenty years. Would they lie to me?” If nothing else, in light of the recent revelations about the CIA brought on the surface via other Committees, Blakey was very naive. Blakey even gave the DCI the authority to withhold any information to the Committee which the CIA thought unfit to hand over.

Even though anyone remotely connected with the Committee under Blakey’s command had to sign an oath of secrecy, some did break that oath and told researchers that NOT A SINGLE document was subpoenaed from the FBI, CIA or any other government agencies, such as the Secret Service. Furthermore, all new staffers were screened by both the FBI and CIA. Blakey said, from the beginning, he would give the Report to the CIA before releasing it to the public, thus making it possible for the CIA to object to certain information given in the Report or, more importantly, to any conclusions drawn in the Report. Cliff Fenton even said, though not directly to anyone outside the Committee, that he even found a CIA man in New Orleans who was willing to testify before the Committee that he had attended meetings in New Orleans on which the plans for assassination were discussed. This witness’ statement (if not this witness) were buried by the Committee.

Alvin B. Lewis, Jr., who was an Acting Chief Counsel of the Committee, also realized where it would all end. With all the trouble about reconstitution and the problems with between the various Congressmen, he predicted: “what they are going to put out is a document that is safe and politically acceptable to the Congress.” Some realized that with the new Committee ready to investigate, the results were already known: it would be another fraud, even if, as WAS the Committee’s wish, they would say a conspiracy was behind the assassination.
**B. THE INVESTIGATION**

If there was any real investigation, it certainly was in one particular area: Cuba as the assassin of Kennedy. From the very start, the newspapers reported this ‘new’ angle, even though it had existed for about ten years. There could be very interesting things to learn: there was ‘evidence’ that Oswald was a Cuban agent.

**The Cuban diversion, act two**

At the end of 1975, Thomas Downing expressed his belief that a foreign conspiracy, supported by a domestic cover-up led to the assassination of President Kennedy. This was exactly the scenario Rosselli had told nine years earlier. It also coincided with the belief that Johnson was right when he more or less forbade the Commission to conclude the Soviet Union or Cuba did ‘it’; it meant the Warren Commission did cover up Oswald’s relations to the various Intelligence agencies.

On August 3, 1976, Downing distributed a 79-page packet by Robert Morrow, detailing that Right-wing Cuban exiles killed Kennedy, as a retaliation for the failed invasion of Cuba in 1961. It was believed Kennedy destroyed any hope of a successful coup by not giving the go-ahead to air-support. Cubans were being slaughtered on the beaches of the Bay of Pigs, awaiting air-support, which never came. When Kennedy took responsibility for the disaster, it only strengthened their belief Kennedy was the man who destroyed (or at least postponed) their hopes of returning to their homeland. This, of course, was exactly the opposite from the Cuban retaliation theory: here it simply meant foreigners, though not Castroites/communists, killed the President. But it still meant it wasn’t a domestic conspiracy-. Cubans, wherever they lived, where Cubans, not American citizens.

This theory was closely knitted with a belief expressed by Senator Schweiker. In May, 1976, he told journalists that the key to the assassination was Oswald’s links to anti-Castro and pro-Castro Cubans. Since Oswald wasn’t the assassin, his theory was, of course, full of wholes. Schweiker believed it was a retaliation of Castro for all the attacks the CIA launched against him during the Kennedy-tenure. He referred to the fact that Johnson allegedly believed it had been Castro. However, this is nothing more than rumors; no substantiated report has ever shown President Johnson seriously believed this. He, of course, must have thought about the possibility, but whether he believed it was a big question mark. Johnson implicitly forbade the Commission to conclude the Soviet Union or Cuba killed Kennedy because he know what possible consequences it would/might have. He considered it, in light of Oswald’s background, a possibility they were involved. And if they were, they had to cover up. Schweiker, however, apparently that that BECAUSE the Commission covered something up, it meant they were involved.

At the end of September, 1976, newspapers reported of the existence of a tape, on which two telephone-conversations were recorded. It was Oswald phoning the Soviet and Cuban Embassy in Mexico City, in September, 1963, they reported. In November, the Associated Press reported that Oswald discussed the murder of President Kennedy on these tapes. The AP claimed this was received from an informant with access to a memorandum written by FBI-Director Hoover. Hoover, of course, was dead and couldn’t comment. On November 16, 1976, the Justice Department said no such memorandum existed. The following day, DCI George Bush backed
this statement. No such memorandum existed, but, the Committee believed, such a story should be checked into. Jack Anderson from the Washington Post had the same information. His informants (disinformants in this case) were Frank Sturgis, the convicted Watergate-burglar criminal and Johnny Rosselli, an important Mafia-member, having served under Sam Giancana, the acting head of the Chicago Mafia.

The Committee flew to Mexico City, talking to Sylvia Duran, who worked at the Cuban Embassy in September 1963. The translator of the CIA who allegedly translated the phone-call and David Atlee Phillips, head of the CIA-station in Mexico City were also heard.

**Acoustics evidence**

The Committee learned of other existing though not yet used evidence: there was a Dictabelt recording, a tape on which all conversations of the Dallas Police Department at the time of the assassination could be heard, was in the private possessions of a retired officer of the Dallas Police, Paul McCaghren. Even though the validity of the chain of possession seems to ebb away when confronted with this, on the surface, nothing seemed wrong with the fact that the tape had been in the hands of a citizen. When in the early 1970s, the Chief and two Assistant Chiefs of police asked an outside agency (a private firm) to go through the files of the Intelligence Division, this man decided he had to rescue this tapes, along with other material, because he felt these people were up to no good.

The problem with the chain of possession was situated immediately after the assassination. James C. Bowles, in charge of the communications, said that government agents had taken the recordings with them to a recording studio in Oklahoma. A few days later, they had brought the tape back. When the tapes were checked, it was indeed discovered that there was a 60 hertz-hum tone, indicating the tape was not an original recording but a copy.

The Committee concluded that on the recording of the Dallas Police Department communications of channel 1, four gunshots were heard. The Committee had relied on the firm of Bolt, Beranek and Newman, the same firm that had examined the Watergate tapes in 1973, for the analysis of this evidence. In May of 1978, this firm had, led by Dr. James Barger, concluded that “six sequences of impulses that COULD have been caused by a noise such as gunfire...” (my emphasis). BB&N’s report was almost suppressed.

In August 1979, BB&N test-fired in Dealey Plaza and recorded these shots, which were compared with the ‘noises’ on the recordings of the DPD communications. It was established that four shots could be heard, the third coming from the grassy knoll-area. The Committee then hired Mark Weiss and Ernest Aschkenasy for further analysis of the third shot. Their conclusion was that this shot was fired in the direction of the limousine (which seemed a logical choice), at the time of the fatal head shot. When Robert Groden, Weiss and Aschkenasy informed Blakey that the fatal head wound came from a grassy knoll assassin, Blakey ordered these men not to say this to the Congressmen.

The Committee, sticking to the idea that there was nothing wrong with the autopsy, decided that the assassin on the grassy knoll had missed. This man was never identified; the man in the Book Depository was, ‘of course’, Oswald, even though the Committee didn’t rely on Brennan’s identification. This meant that they concluded Oswald was the assassin, even though they had nobody who had identified him as the man in that window. The Committee had not a single witness who could put Oswald on the sixth floor, but nevertheless they put him up there...
 weren’t the first.

The Committee said that the echoes of the shots were recorded through the open microphone of motorcyclist H.B. McLain, who said that it hadn’t been his microphone, even though the HSCA said it was his. James C. Bowles, in charge of the radio division at that time, said it wasn’t McLain’s microphone, but someone else’s; there were two likely candidates: one was too seriously ill at that time to give his name to the HSCA, the other was Sgt. Leslie Beilharz who at first thought Bowles was hallucinating, but, later, said it was possible it was his mike that was stuck; he couldn’t remember any news coming from his radio during the time of the shooting. Beilharz was not in Dealey Plaza but on the intersection of Stemmons and Industrial Boulevard and if it WAS his microphone, the sounds couldn’t, have been echoes of shots.

The National Science Foundation gave a USD 23,360 grant to the National Academy of Sciences, which on May 14, 1982, declared that the conclusions drawn by the HSCA were invalid, that no such gunshots were heard on these recordings. The Panel, chaired by Professor Norman Ramsey, had based their conclusion on the timing between the recordings of channel 1 (a continuous recording) and channel 2 (a voice-activated recording, i.e. not-continuous). Still, the Panel said it didn’t rule on a knoll shot or a conspiracy.

Because Blakey’s Rosetta stone was Jack Ruby ‘silencing Oswald’, the Committee, of course, looked into the direction of the Mafia. In fact, throughout all these troublesome times, strange things happened to people who were going to be of primary interest to this Committee, either because they were directly involved or were, if there was a Mafia conspiracy, those men most likely to give the orders to kill Kennedy.

Strange deaths – George de Mohrenschildt

When Oswald had returned from the Soviet Union, he became rather close to George de Mohrenschildt, a man who was well-known in the highest circles, even having played with Jacqueline Bouvier before she even learned who John Kennedy was. A lot of researchers didn’t understand why this man, the son of a Czarist colonel who fled Russia after the Communist revolution in 1917 (and therefore a staunch anti-Communist), would befriend a man with a reputation of being a staunch Communist. Perhaps it was because Oswald had stayed in Minsk, the place where de Mohrenschildt was born; de Mohrenschildt had a dead son who would have been Oswald’s age. Like de Mohrenschildt, Oswald was an ‘out of place-character’, according to de Mohrenschildt “ahead of his time”, a bit of a hippy.

He had remained Oswald’s best friend for about six months, until de Mohrenschildt left for Haiti. In Haiti, he heard Oswald was accused of being the assassin. Even though he knew Oswald very well, he was only asked to make a deposition before the Warren Commission, possibly because it was known that de Mohrenschildt had connections to the various Intelligence agencies and is even suspected of having been involved in the failed coup in Haiti that summer.

Because of his interesting relationship with Oswald, the Committee also wanted to find George de Mohrenschildt, a man who, once again, had trouble with his wife and, once again, was roaming all over the world.

In March, 1977, Willem Oltmans, a Dutch journalist and longtime acquaintance of de Mohrenschildt, caught up with him. Oltmans had long suspected de Mohrenschildt might know
more about the assassination than was believed and therefore asked de Mohrenschildt to come to
Europe and appear on Dutch television, telling his story. Oltmans also informed the Committee’s
sole researcher in Miami, Gaeton Fonzi, where he could find de Mohrenschildt.
However, on March 29, the day before the House would vote whether or not to reconstitute the
Committee, he was found dead in his room.

That morning, de Mohrenschildt had talked to Edward Jay Epstein, an author writing a book
about Oswald for Reader’s Digest. Epstein met de Mohrenschildt at The Breakers, one of the
most exclusive hotels in Miami, informed, by Reader’s Digest, to give him USD 4,000 for the
interviews.
The morning session ended at 13h00; Epstein asked de Mohrenschildt to return at 15h00.
However, de Mohrenschildt didn’t return. At 14h45, Alexandra, de Mohrenschildt’s daughter,
found him in his room in Manalapan, where both were house-guests of Mrs. C.E. Tilton, a sister
of one of George’s ex-wives.
de Mohrenschildt was found in his chair by the bed, his rifle lying in a pool of blood at his feet.
People who saw the scene of photos of the scene were stunned by how much blood was splashed
in the room; ‘as if someone with a bucket had splashed it around’. It is well-known that people
who kill somebody in a bloody way and then put the victim in another room or house often forget
to put blood around the victim’s body, thus enabling the authorities to deduce the victim must
have died somewhere else. If de Mohrenschildt was murdered, his murderer(s) didn’t forget.
The following day, an autopsy was performed. On April 7, after a three hour-inquest, his death
was ruled a suicide.

de Mohrenschildt had had nervous breakdowns in the past. In the spring of 1976, the previous
year, de Mohrenschildt and his wife Jean was living in Dallas, when George’s chronic bronchitis
was bothering him again. Someone they knew referred them to see a newly arrived doctor in
Dallas, a Dr. Charles Mendoza. Mendoza’s treatment seemed to work because George’s
bronchitis improved. But, alas, de Mohrenschildt showed signs of a nervous breakdown, even
becoming paranoid. Jean decided to accompany her husband to Mendoza, harboring suspicions
against him, and found out that Mendoza was giving George injections and costly drug
prescriptions. Mendoza became very angry when Jean asked him what he was giving her
husband. Seemingly confirming her suspicions, George stopped his treatment in late summer,
following Jean’s wishes.

Researchers, after de Mohrenschildt’s death, found out that Mendoza left Dallas in December
1976, shortly after George stopped his treatment. The forwarding address he left was non-
existent, which, in itself, seems strange enough to put a question mark behind this whole episode:
in the spring of 1976, rumors of an upcoming inquiry into the death of Kennedy could be heard
from all Washingtonian buildings.

Having stopped using Mendoza as his physician, George, helped by Jean, completed a
manuscript on Oswald, entitled ‘I’M A PATSY! I’M A PATSY!’. In it, he describes Oswald as
an obsessed assassin, totally against everything he had ever said about Oswald. Normally,
George described Oswald as a man who was slightly ahead of his time.
The night he finished his manuscript, he took an overdose of tranquilizers. Shortly after this
suicide-attempt, Jean decided to bring George to Parkland Memorial Hospital, where he was
given electroshock therapy, a not altogether ‘enjoyable’ experience.

In early 1977, Oltmans caught up with de Mohrenschildt and took him to Europe. But in
Brussels, de Mohrenschildt didn’t show up. In mid-March, Oltmans found him in Manalapan. Epstein also found out where he was and showed him an article in the Dallas Morning News, dated March 20, 1977, detailing de Mohrenschildt’s previous commitment in Parkland Memorial. George became visibly upset and to some this strengthened the case for the ruling ’suicide’.

But somehow, researchers, felt, this was all too clean. And they discovered that at the inquest, similar ‘problems’ arose.

It was concluded that no fingerprints were found on the rifle, apart from a few smudges. This meant that the rifle had been wiped, which seemed strange. The police officer, however, said there weren’t any fingerprints because of the massive amount of blood on the weapon. At the inquiry, there was some difficulty in interpreting this, but eventually they seemed to accept (or resigned themselves to accept because of the lack of a better explanation) the officer’s ‘verdict’.

Researchers also wondered how the rifle could have fallen in such a position when de Mohrenschildt had somehow killed himself. The police officer did give an explanation, but nobody seemed to understand how it could still end up like that with that explanation.

There was more: the exact timing was ruled as 14h21, based upon a tape-recording of a soap-series on television. However, pictures taken at the scene of the crime showed no such tape-recorder. There was certainly one woman, possibly two, in the kitchen, directly under de Mohrenschildt’s room. NOBODY in the house had heard the shot, but did hear Alexandra screaming when she found her father. Strangely, one of these two women, without (according to official records) seeing de Mohrenschildt dead in his room, said it was a suicide; they were not afraid someone could be sneeking in or around the house. It is, of course, possible they believed de Mohrenschildt took an overdose or used another weapon.

There was even more: nobody knew how de Mohrenschildt got home that noon! Since he didn’t have a car, someone had to have brought him over. And why did he come home? It was a thirty to forty-five minute drive from The Breakers to Manalapan; and he still had to return, if he had not planned to commit suicide. It seems that it is very possible the ruling ‘suicide’ was done because it was a good possibility and there was really no hard evidence (of course, when you don’t search for it, you won’t find any) to say it was murder. So could there be more to it?

When researchers contacted Oltmans, he simply told them ‘George was murdered’. But why? Jean said that, if George was murdered, it was Oltmans’ fault: he had attracted too much attention on de Mohrenschildt. On April 26, just three days before his suicide/murder, the National Enquirer ran an exclusive piece of information. George had told his roommate at Parkland Memorial, Clifford Wilson, that he and Oswald had been watching the Dallas motorcade passing in front of them in downtown Dallas. Lee had run off and George hadn’t seen him since. Even though this is staggering, world-shocking news to some, it only showed George’s state of mind: George, at the time of the shooting, was attending a social event at the Bulgarian Embassy in Haiti.

In the light of the new investigation being voted the next day, the fact that George was very close to Oswald, the suspected assassin, and could know more about the assassination, ... Jean, his former wife, said her husband was killed and that they would kill her too (‘they’ didn’t). She said that they “always said the Cubans did it. The Cuban refugee’s did”.

**Strange deaths – Charles Nicoletti**

On the very day de Mohrenschildt was found dead in his room, Charles Nicoletti was also found
dead. 
Nicoletti had been a protégé of Al Capone, the ‘godfather’ of the Chicago Mafia in the twenties, 
who was finally convicted on tax-evasion charges. Nicoletti had become the senior hit man of the 
Chicago mob. When he was given a contract, nobody doubted the victim would be dead. 
Nicoletti’s death, however, was, without any doubt, a murder. He was found in a Chicago 
parking lot, seated in his car, with three bullets in the back of the head. His foot had blocked the 
accelerator, overheating the car and starting the fire. 
It is, of course, not unlikely such a man would die violently; he, after all, had killed quite a few 
opple people himself. What made his death so interesting was that just the day before, word had gone 
out that the Committee was trying to contact him. He had also been involved in the CIA-efforts 
to kill President Fidel Castro of Cuba. In October 1963, Nicoletti took over the position of 
Johnny Rosselli, another senior aide to the Chicago Mafia, heading the Mafia-part of the ‘Mafia- 
CIA venture’ in trying to murder Castro. Sam Giancana, acting chief of the Chicago Mafia, felt a 
lot of heat coming from the CIA, who felt that the assassination of Castro was going nowhere 
under Rosselli’s command. The best hitman the Mafia had should be expected to do better, 
Giancana thought; Rosselli was ‘fired’. 
Nicoletti seemed to be involved in the assassination of President Kennedy as well. ‘Cindy’, a 
stripper for Jack Ruby, had told Robert L. Russell, a convicted felon, she had helped Rosselli and 
a hit man, Nicoletti, on November 22, 1963. She told Russell she had driven both of them to the 
grassy knoll, where Nicoletti had fired two shots at President Kennedy. Nicoletti handed the gun 
to Rosselli and got lost in the crowd; Rosselli, with the rifle, was driven from the scene by Cindy. 
Interestingly, the FBI, who had an around-the-clock surveillance on Rosselli because of the 
efforts by the Justice Department, lead by Robert Kennedy, to ‘nail’ him as a member of Mafia, 
lost all track of Rosselli on November 19, three days before the assassination. They re-
established their surveillance on Rosselli on November 29, a week after the assassination, when 
they discovered Rosselli’s whereabouts. This meant that Rosselli might have been in Dallas and 
that ‘Cindy’s’ allegations might be correct. Chauncy Holt has also claimed he dropped off 
Nicoletti at the Adolphus Hotel before he himself drove on to Dealey Plaza. 
Nicoletti’s involvement in the assassination, whether actually on the grassy knoll or at the 
communications center in the Adolphus Hotel, seems to be a logical reason why Nicoletti ‘just’ 
happened to be found dead a day after a Committee, investigating that assassination, was trying 
to contact him.

Strange deaths – Johnny Rosselli and Sam Giancana

With Nicoletti dead, the only other man who could have shed light on these allegations was, of 
course, Johnny Rosselli. Rosselli, however, had been dead for over eight months. Like Nicoletti’s 
death, his death was a violent one.

Johnny Rosselli, 71 years old, had ‘disappeared’ on July 28, 1976 and in mob circles 
‘disappeared’ meant you were dead and your body would never be found, unless by accident. 
And on August 7, 1976, such an accident did take place. A fisherman saw a floating drum on 
Dumfounding Bay, Miami. Inside was a body; the body of Johnny Rosselli. The Bade County 
Medical Examiner concluded Rosselli was shot in the stomach; the bullet had then been removed 
with a knife. His torso had been split open from the chest to his navel. His legs had been sawed 
off at the thighs, probably with a handsaw. The probable cause of death was asphyxiation.
The drum had been anchored, but had somehow broken loose. The gasses developing inside the body had made the drum float. Within a day or two, the drum would have gone to the bottom again, for good.

Police never speculated about who might have been the killer(s) and why the aging Rosselli was murdered. Even though there was a suspect, Sam Cagnina, an aide to Santo Trafficante, the Florida don of the Mafia, nothing ever came of this investigation. Off the record, though, there have been hints about who was behind his murder.

Rosselli’s death was perhaps not such an oddity: eleven months earlier, on June 19, 1975, his former boss Sam Giancana had been found dead in his home; murdered. At that time, Giancana had been under police surveillance, ready to appear before an investigative Committee that would inquire about his co-operation with the CIA in trying to ‘free’ Cuba from Castro’s ‘Communist’ regime.

Giancana was shot seven times with a .22 sawed-off pistol, by an old friend of him. One shot hit Giancana in the back of the head; six shots were fired in the face. It was believed Giancana’s death was just another ‘gangland’ murder; and, in fact, the situation in Chicago was such that it could very well be ‘just’ that. But the six shots in the face were all fired around his mouth, indicating the message was that the shots had prohibited him from talking; he was to appear before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, asked to answer question about his role in the CIA/Mafia-anti-Cuba schemes.

Charles Crimaldi, a contract killer from the Chicago Mafia, would say that “all Sam was going to say was, ‘I did a contract for Santos—period.’” Santos Trafficante was the don of the Tampa, Florida-mafia. The gun WAS traced to Miami, where Santos, covering all parts of Florida, also had major influences on what went on. Even though Crimaldi believes Giancana wouldn’t talk at all, Giancana, never taking these CIA-plots against Castro too seriously, did talk to friends about these attempts when they were taking place in utter secrecy. So why not tell about them now, in times when it would be very expedient for him to talk about them? There was a very big risk should Giancana testify. Crimaldi said Giancana was ‘unpredictable’ and that meant no risks could be taken. It was either Giancana or...

Giancana, Rosselli, Trafficante and possibly Hoffa were the only people outside the CIA who really knew about what had happened during the attacks against Cuba and its President, Fidel Castro. It was clear that the CIA would never say anything. The Mob, with its code of ‘omerta’ (vow of silence), could be considered as being able to keep a secret at well. There was just one small problem: other government agencies were hunting the Mafia and it was believed that some of them could be forced into telling certain, if not all, interesting ‘items’ that could harm other people; in this case: the CIA.

Sam Giancana, who had always been considered to be a scoundrel, could crack before a Committee. He was killed before he appeared before Baker’s Committee.

Santo Trafficante had made himself scarce, leaving for his villa in Costa Rica, thus crawling away from the Church Committee that would surely ask questions about his relationship to the CIA. The only witness would be Rosselli.

It was a small wonder why Rosselli wanted to testify at all. It was rumored that Rosselli, whose real name was Filippo Sacco, an Italian immigrant, feared a deportation, back to Sicily, in the near future. The INS, however, would later admit they had little hope of ever ousting Rosselli.
Somehow, there seemed to be a more sinister reason.

In the spring of 1975, William King Harvey, the CIA-man in charge of the CIA/Mafia efforts against Castro, appeared before the Church Committee, which was investigating the activities of the CIA. Surprisingly, he talked almost candidly about what he knew had happened. Harvey, known for his heavy drinking and always carrying a gun, said he had left his gun at home. But he did have a device which would erase the tape recording of his testimony. The device was a cigarette case and everybody present laughed; when President Kennedy wanted the ‘James Bond, 007’ of the CIA, they, quite rightly, had sent Harvey to the White House to meet the President.

When Rosselli appeared before the Church Committee, people, seeing Rosselli performance, were stunned: ‘Rosselli’s testimony was a highlight of the secret investigation. All the senators on the Committee were both disturbed and fascinated by Rosselli’s involvement in the CIA plot, and determined to understand where it all led.’ Perhaps Rosselli was talking because William Harvey, after another heart-attack, had died on June 9, 1976, after open heart-surgery. Perhaps Rosselli felt he wouldn’t hurt nobody with his testimony; after all. Harvey, the CIA-man, was dead.

“John gave a fully detailed description. Everything that had gone on in 1961 and 1962, everything from that era, and everyone of those guys were mesmerized by John. He was hypnotic.”

Confronted with this, it seemed Rosselli had broken the code of omerta, which might have lead to his death. Joseph Auippa was the successor as Chicago don to Sam Giancana, Rosselli’s boss for so many years. Auippa told associates he was there when the contract on Rosselli was given to Santo Trafficante. Trafficante had to make sure Rosselli’s body would never be found. Auippa: “Trafficante had the job, and he messed it up.”

So it seems Rosselli was killed for breaking the code of omerta. But, when analyzing what Rosselli exactly had divulged, another conclusion had to be drawn: Rosselli had not divulged anything; he had merely corroborated facts that were already known to the Committee’s investigators. Reviewing Rosselli’s last few months, it was found he was very close to Trafficante throughout his appearances before the Church Committee, probably confiding in him. Trafficante wanted Rosselli to get into business with him, but Rosselli, probably wanting to retire for good, had declined so far. Rosselli had not even said Trafficante’s name once: he always referred to him as ‘Mr.X’. Trafficante, or any other member of the Mafia, didn’t seem to really press Rosselli’s death.

On April 23, 1976, during Rosselli’s third appearance before the Church Committee, Senator Schweiker pressed Rosselli for knowledge about the Mafia and the CIA and their role in the assassination of President Kennedy. If Rosselli talked, he would break the code of omerta: there was nothing corroborate here: Schweiker was ready for ‘fresh’ information; he especially centered his attention on Trafficante and Jack Ruby. Rosselli, however, showed no real interest in all this and declined to go into the subject.

Rosselli, if ever to appear before another investigative Committee, could or could not divulge ‘interests of national security’: the Mafia-CIA co-operation against Castro’s Cuba during the Kennedy administration. For some reason, the CIA was scared to death when this subject came up in any context. Rosselli had been the liaison between the CIA and the Mafia and was highly appreciated by both throughout their efforts.
Even though Rosselli was ‘thrown out’ in October 1963, there were certainly no hard feelings anywhere: They, especially Sam Giancana it seems, wanted results and Rosselli, not particularly through negligence or mistakes on his part, had been unable to get results; perhaps fresh blood, that of Charles Nicoletti, could do the trick.

Rosselli had ‘proven’ his good status when he ‘divulged’ the biggest ‘secret’ of all in 1966: how Castro had turned a team of Trafficante-assassins and had ordered them to kill Kennedy. Many scholars suspected Rosselli’s performance before the Church Committee happened on orders from the CIA as well.

Whereas it was Trafficante who had been given the contract to kill Rosselli, it was not known who had ordered the contract. Nobody within the Mafia said anything, perhaps hinting nobody knew, or, perhaps more likely, was afraid to tell. Trafficante, because of his position as head of the Mafia around Tampa and the heavy concentration of Cuban exiles in Florida, had always been close to the CIA, who could always find a friend and helping hand in Trafficante.

On July 27, 1976, Rosselli received, once again, information that there had been threats against him. He was told the ‘Cubans are after you’. Rosselli, as he had done before, laughed at the ‘advice’.

On July 28, 1976, he was kidnapped and brutally murdered.

It seems that Trafficante, probably with a bit of help and directing of the CIA, realized he, and the CIA, would be much safer if Rosselli was dead; when he couldn’t testify about his first hand knowledge about the Mafia-CIA co-operation fifteen years earlier. The CIA and Trafficante probably established, like in the ‘good old days’, a joint venture, aimed at getting rid of a man who could seriously damage both of them. Rosselli was better off dead, they felt.

Rosselli’s death and his former boss’s death had, of course, much in common. Giancana was shot by a weapon commonly used by the intelligence agencies and was purchased in Miami, where Rosselli would be killed. And the people that could be most affected by what Giancana, like Rosselli, could say before the Committee were Trafficante and the CIA.

A rather incredible source said that Rosselli, before being killed, was tortured and that he revealed the role of Sam Giancana and Charles Nicoletti in the assassination. According to this source, Rosselli said Nicoletti was the assassin, while Rosselli was patrolling the parking lot. It is, of course, possible Rosselli obeyed the code of omerta to the last minute of his life (perhaps hoping a false confession would end his torment) and floated, once again, a false story. It wouldn’t have been his first.

**Strange disappearance – Jimmy Hoffa**

When Robert Kennedy was Chief Counsel of the Kefauver Committee, investigating Organized Crime, his major enemy had been James ‘Jimmy’ Riddle Hoffa, president of the Teamsters. Both were Irish (even though a lot people believed Hoffa was Italian) and very hot tempered. The young Robert Kennedy got so angry, the lightening also struck Hoffa and both became sworn enemies. When Robert Kennedy became Attorney General and set up a special section within the Justice Department that would concentrate on organized crime, this section was nicknamed ‘The Get Hoffa Squad’.

Because of his virulent hate for Robert Kennedy, it was easy to understand Hoffa, with all his organized crime’s contacts, could have played a role in the assassination of President Kennedy.
Even though ordering the flags to be raised to the top instead of letting the down on November 22, 1963, is no evidence he conspired against the President, it did indicate the feelings he ‘cherished’ for both Kennedys.

On July 30, 1975, one month after Giancana’s death and amidst all kinds of talk before various Committees, Hoffa disappeared -for good.

In the months to come, the Justice Department and FBI would establish ‘a most likely scenario’: a Detroit organized crime figure had telephoned Hoffa that morning, requesting a meeting between Hoffa and Anthony Provenzano, a Teamster official. It seemed he got into Provenzano’s car, drove away and was murdered and put somewhere into an incinerator. The story went that Russell Bufalino had authorized the killing. Russell’s brother William, however, wanted to explain to the grand jury who his brother really was, not what the jury made him out to be; the grand jury didn’t allow his testimony.

But Joe Franco, one of Hoffa’s most trusted aides for many years, apart from actually seeing what happened, knew the ‘official’ story didn’t wash. He waited twelve years with his side of the story; no government agency was really waiting for him to come forward earlier.

He had seen Hoffa standing on the parking lot of Manchu’s Red Fox restaurant. Knowing Hoffa very well, Franco believed Hoffa was waiting for some official documents that would end all restrictions against him imposed by the government. A black Ford LTD, four-door, with a black driver, approached Hoffa. Two white males, according to Franco either federal marshal Is or federal agents, but certainly Ivy Leaguers, showed their identification and talked briefly with Hoffa. Hoffa got in the car, which speeded towards the airport at Pontiac. Franco believes Hoffa was then dumped into one of the rather deep lakes in the neighborhood. If these men were FBI (which is only a possibility), it seems credible the Justice Department and FBI would not blame themselves.

Charles Crimaldi said, according to his biographer John Kidner, that James Hoffa’s body would never be found. “Hoffa is now a goddamn hub cap. His body was crushed and smelted.”

But why did Hoffa had to die?

Hoffa had actually been the first man who acted as liaison between the CIA and the Mafia for the co-operation against Castro and Cuba. He was in an ideal position because he himself was ‘officially’ not a member of the Mafia and was an American citizen, thus having the ‘right’ credentials to for the CIA. Crimaldi, this time corroborating what people suspected, says Hoffa was killed to protect the secrets of these plots.

Leo Moceri, a Ohio syndicate figure, said ‘Hoffa’s death was the same thing that happened to a man named Giancana’. Both were killed because of the Church Committee’s closed hearings, by the CIA. Moceri himself disappeared after giving this information. His car was found at a motel; a few days later his golf stick were found in a river.

According to Crimaldi, Hoffa, like Giancana, had become unpredictable and had to be taken care of.

Trafficante’s ‘testimony’

The Committee did discover there could be something to all this and, not being as blind as the Warren Commission, did ask Trafficante to appear before them, on March 16, 1977. He was not granted Immunity, even though it doesn’t seem they looked upon him as a suspect in eliminating
a few of their potential witnesses, the primary reason was his involvement in the various anti-Cuba-programs of the CIA. The Committee couldn’t call upon Rosselli or Giancana or Nicoletti, so Trafficante seemed to be the only one, outside the CIA, who could tell the Committee about the Mafia-involvement in this program.

‘Mr. Trafficante, will you tell us when and where were you born?’
‘At this time, I want to exercise my privilege and my constitutional right to take the Fifth Amendment.’

Trafficante knew that anything he would say would not all make him liable to government prosecution; it would also bring him close to is own death, having broken the code of omerta (silence). Trafficante’s use of the fifth amendment was nothing new and, calculating this would happen, the Committee gave Trafficante immunity from prosecution. This would mean that Trafficante had to answer, otherwise he would be imprisoned for a year, possibly more, until he spoke.

‘Mr. Trafficante, I believe at the point your interjected your motion, I had asked you to tell us when and where you were born.’
‘Tampa, Florida. November 15, 1914.’

Chairman Stokes continued to question Trafficante and, eventually, asked the questions for which Trafficante was called for.

‘Mr. Trafficante, when was the first time you were ever approached by any individual who was affiliated with or working for the Central Intelligence Agency?’
‘It was around either the latter part of 1960, or the first part of 1961.’
‘And can you tell us who was that person who first contacted you?’
‘Mr. John Rosselli.’ Rosselli, of course, was dead and was a member of the Mafia. Trafficante, so far, had not said anything new or anything about the CIA.
‘Can you tell us the substance of the conversation you had with him?’
‘Well, he told me that CIA and the United States Government was involved in eliminating Castro... and if Mr. Gener, if Mr. Macho Gener, if I knew about him, knew what kind of man he was. I told him I think he was a good man, introduced me to Mr. Maheu and then Mr. Giancana came into the picture... ’ Robert Maheu had been the liaison between the CIA and the outfit; whereas Hoffa was the Mafia’s man, Maheu was the CIA’s man. Maheu had, via Hoffa, been introduced to Giancana and Rosselli, who was then ‘appointed’ as the Mafia’s ‘executor’. This meant that Rosselli and Maheu became quite close. Unlike Rosselli, Maheu was alive.

‘Mr. Trafficante, I want to ask you a question that is very important to this committee, and that is, did you have any foreknowledge of the assassination of President Kennedy?’ Trafficante had allegedly told a friend/associate Kennedy was ‘going to be hit’. This information was known to the FBI, even before the assassination.
‘Absolutely not; no way. I have never made the statement that Kennedy was going to get hit... ’

‘Mr. Trafficante, do you know Carlos Marcello?’
‘Yes, Sir.’

‘What was your personal relationship with him?’ Stokes seemingly found it more interesting to talk about personal than professional relationships.
‘Just friendship. No business, never had no business dealings with him; no way, shape or form. I see him once in a while when I go to New Orleans. He’s come to Miami, I think, once to appear before a grand jury. I seen him there.’

Nothing of any interest was ever asked to Trafficante, one of the only men who could be
pressed to say what he knew. But nobody seemed to mind and Trafficante could return to his home.

The CIA would never talk. William Harvey, the man who had led most parts of these operations for the CIA, thus becoming quite close to Rosselli, had died in June 1976, because of complications of heart surgery. Perhaps people suspected Rosselli to talk now that Harvey, the man Rosselli believed was at the top of all this plotting, apart from President Kennedy, was dead; perhaps they felt Rosselli would, in his old days, tell the truth.

Allen Dulles had been dead for ten years. Who else might know? Richard Bissell had been involved in the operation, but, like Dulles, only in its initial stage, before he was fired by Kennedy for the Bay of Pigs’ failure.

The Committee also called upon Richard Helms, one of the CIA-liaison officers to the Warren Commission. Richard Helms, as head of the Directorate of Planning, could have been a suspect. But the Committee had much more interest in Helms as the liaison between the CIA and the Warren Commission, even though he did talk about AM/LASH (Roland Cube La), one man who WOULD be send to Cuba to kill Castro, but never tried because the program was called off on November 22, when Kennedy died. They also asked him about Yuri Nosenko, the Soviet defector who said Oswald was not a KGB-spy when he returned to the United States.

Richard Helms: ‘why single me out as the guy who should have told the Warren Commission?... I should have backed up a truck and taken all the documents down to the Commission.’

Unfortunately, it seemed those documents didn’t reach the Committee as well.

On January 11, 1978, the Committee listened to the testimony of Carlos Marcello, whom they had granted immunity, which meant he appeared as a witness. Like Trafficante, he portrayed himself as an example of innocence and the Committee didn’t seem to mind he did.

Strange break-in

Because all the media wanted to get a photograph of the dead president during the autopsy, Blakey found it wise to secure these photographs and X-rays very, very tightly. Even staff members needed a special permission to enter the special room, where the photographs were held in a safe.

One day in June, 1978, a staff member had taken some pictures out of the safe to his office. He closed the safe but did not lock it. When he returned, he discovered that the material inside the safe had been disturbed; one photo, showing the back of the President's head, had been ripped from its sleeve.

The break-in was covered up and only the FBI, CIA, Washington Police and Blakey knew about it. But in 1979, the seal broke as The Washington Post broke the story on June 18.

At the ‘scene of the break-in’ numerous fingerprints were found and it was believed the burglar had left in a hurry when he heard the staff member approaching.

These fingerprints were traced to Regis T. Blahut, the CIA liaison to the Committee. When it was discovered it was him, the CIA dismissed him after an “intensive internal investigation, saying he had acted out of ‘curiosity’. During the CIA’s inquiry, Blahut underwent three lie-detector-tests. At first, Blahut denied he had done it, which was labeled a lie and the evidence against him was overwhelming anyway. He told a reporter that there was an innocent explanation, even though he
declined to disclose it. He said that “there’s other things that are involved that are detrimental to
other things”, but again didn’t disclose details: “I signed an oath of secrecy with the CIA. I
cannot discuss it any further”. Assuming Blahut himself knew what he was trying to say, it seems
Blahut believed that the Kennedy assassination wasn’t just a crime without any links to anything
else (like the Warren Commission said it was), but that it did have all these links to other crimes
or events.

Asked during the test whether he had acted upon orders, he said no, and flunked again. One of
his bosses, Scott Breckenridge of the Inspector General’s office, was scheduled to take a lie
detector test as well, didn’t and retired soon afterwards. Coincidence?

Why did Blahut break into that safe? Researchers found it strange that the break-in occurred only
one week after Robert J. Groden had said, in a memo to Blakey, that the autopsy-photos could be
fake. Blahut was part of a CIA operation codenamed MH/CHILD. Interestingly, the Watergate-
burglars Howard Hunt-James McCord-Frank Sturgis were part of a CIA-operation codenamed
MH/BABY. Blahut’s former boss was, in fact, James McCord. Whatever Blahut tried to do is
still a mystery, but it is safe to assume curiosity had nothing to do with it.

The final report

On July 17, 1979, after two and a half years of existing, with only about six months of actually
investigating, having spent lots of money (USD 5.4 million to be precise), the Committee’s
chairman, Stokes, held a press-conference on which he officially released the findings of the
Committee. Having waited 18 months, the public learnt that the conclusion was that there was
‘probably’ a conspiracy, even though this was only the opinion of its Chief Counsel. This meant
it could have been; but, then again, it could not have been as well. Who was behind this
conspiracy was not mentioned anywhere. The reason, according to the Chairman, was that they
had run out of funds and out of time.

At the press-conference, Blakey said he believed (thus saying his idea might differ from the
Committee’s) organized crime was behind the murder of the President. “For historical purposes, I
think we now know the Mob killed Kennedy.” What Blakey meant was that, even though there
were others or more involved, the evidence suggested to him that the Mob killed Kennedy. It
would be, he figured, speculative to include others.

“Only when one looks at the evidence from the inside, from the kind of perspective
(assassination researchers) couldn’t get, does one learn that the Intelligence angle does not merit
such attention. Once I have a coherent theory of the assassination —that is, the Mob- the burden
of proof is on you to complicate that. The Mob didn’t need the American Intelligence community
to kill the President.”

What Blakey was saying was that, since the Mob could have done it alone, he didn’t look any
further than that. He even concluded: because the Mob could have done it, nobody else was
involved. If the public/assassination researchers wanted CIA or other intelligence officers’
complicity, they would have to look for that evidence themselves. An obvious question would be
why they needed a Committee to investigate the assassination when its Chief investigator told the
public they had to investigate themselves if they wanted to find out the possible full truth.

Blakey, the man who said the CIA would probably not lie to him because they had worked
together for twenty years, was obviously ‘impressed’ by the brutality of the Mob and felt that
they, quite rightly, were able to kill the President without ANY assistance from ANYONE else. But, as Chief Counsel, it was his duty to investigate EVERYTHING, not just those facts until he had found one suspect. His task was to find ALL suspects, even if it included Intelligence officers. Blakey, as on other issues, failed to do this. When the Commission paid USD 2,714 to a consultant for ‘methodology’, it seems they forgot to ask (or the consultant forgot to tell) what investigating was really all about.

Gaeton Fonzi, the man on the trail of the Cuban exiles in Miami, said “there is not one investigator —not one— who served on the Kennedy task force of the Assassination Committee who honestly feels he took part in an adequate investigation, let alone a ‘full and complete’ one”.

With a verdict of ‘probable conspiracy’, of course, Oswald no longer was a lone nut. This meant that Blakey, whomever or whatever his Rosetta-stone would be, should have looked at the evidentiary chain of possession. If he did, he failed to see Oswald was NOT the assassin; so his Committee branded Oswald, yet again, as the assassin, even though Oswald had won on sanity. Blakey’s prime suspects for those who commissioned the crime(s) were Santos Trafficante and Carlos Marcello. He said that “both hated the Kennedys... both had the motive, means and opportunity to have President assassinated... both had access to Oswald and Ruby”. After all the recent killings in gang-lands, Trafficante and Marcello were, in fact, about the only ones that remained alive.

On Wednesday, January 24, 1979, Representative Harold S. Sawyer submitted his letter of dissent to Representative Stokes. Sawyer, quite rightfully, “considered the acoustical evidence supporting the conspiracy theory to be less than satisfactory”. He believed Oswald acted alone, even though he believed the Commission erred on the head snap and the single bullet-theory. Sawyer said that he “could convict Oswald ten out of ten times”.

The Press

The Washington Post, however, reacting to the news that there was a probable conspiracy and two gunmen, looked as if it couldn’t snap out of the dream they had lived in for the past fifteen years. They wrote that “as many as three or four social outcasts, with no ties to any one organization, in some spontaneous way... (developed) a common determination to express their alienation in the killing of President Kennedy”. Apparently, these outcasts were social enough to meet each other or where directed by some higher, perhaps divine authority to find their way to Dealey Plaza where they all shot within seconds of each other.

The Justice Department

Blakey said ‘this will be the last investigation. After us, there ain’t gonna be no more.’ Of course, the critics were not satisfied and the Committee knew how to take the heat of its own back: they said the Justice Department was given the authority to act upon the Committee’s results. This meant that the Justice Department was asked to trace the killers of the President.

On March 28, 1988, the Justice Department, on initiative from Acting Assistant Thomas Boyd of the Office of Legislative Affairs, informed Peter Rodino, Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, that “no persuasive evidence can be identified to support the theory of a conspiracy... No further investigation appears to be warranted in either matter unless new information which is sufficient to support additional investigative activity becomes available.”
However, this memorandum was sent unsigned by Assistant Attorney General William Weld, head of the Criminal Division, who, as was known, would resign the next day.

In short, this meant that the Warren Commission’s conclusion that Oswald was the lone and unaided assassin was the official line, even though the HSCA had concluded otherwise. The Justice Department apparently based these conclusions on the conclusions made by the Ramsey Panel which investigated the validity of the Dictabelt recordings. Whereas the government always said that the critics used poor copies of photographs, this panel used poor copies of the Dictabelt. The Panel used a third or fourth generation copy they had received from Captain Bowles of the Dallas Police Department. James Barger, in charge of the HSCA-analysis of the tape, had used the ‘original’ (what was actually the first copy) tape. It seems the government had accepted the same kind of evidence which they had previously discarded and ridiculed.
PART TWO
THE WAY THEY WEREN’T

‘Evidence is like a glass prism. It changes when you look at it from other directions.

An analysis of the evidence against Oswald has shown that Oswald most definitely was not the assassin the Warren Commission.

An analysis of the Jack Ruby’s life and walks around the time of the assassination(s) has shown that Ruby was not the man the Commission made him out to be.

What would an analysis of Oswald’s life show? Was Oswald really such a loner? Was his marriage collapsing? Perhaps so. Johnson commented on him in 1969: “He was quite a mysterious fellow and he did have a connection that bore an examination.” The only people who seemingly believed so were the Commission members themselves. They probably didn’t either, but circumstances forced them to: they HAD to ‘officially believe’ that because it was their key to being able to ‘state for fact’ Oswald was the lone (nut) assassin of the President.

Neither the Commission or the Committee wanted to find any evidence linking Oswald or Ruby to the CIA, FBI or any other government agency. This meant that their pet theories (‘a lone nut’ and ‘a probably conspiracy/the Mob did it’) would have been washed away by the flood of that evidence. And, of course, neither the CIA and the FBI, in an act which is often described as Cover Your Ass, wanted to give out information that would link them with these two assassins.

Because nobody ever asked for it and no-one is willing to give it, it is no small wonder that such question can only be answered with a lot of speculation or circumstantial evidence.

Aspect of Oswald’s and Ruby’s life clearly show that these men were much more and more important than everybody seemed to be willing to acknowledge. According to researcher Philip Melanson, “we can begin to comprehend a great deal more about the assassination of President John F Kennedy, about the sources of violence that threaten(ed) our political system, and about the nature of covert power and politics when we know the truth about Lee Harvey Oswald”.

The Commission turned Oswald into a lame duck-husband. All the evidence, however, suggests Oswald was a most courageous man. Oswald defected to the Soviet Union and branded himself a defender of Castro’s regime. To Hoover, someone who was an extreme leftist was insane, a nut; to society, those who defected were somehow incapable of adapting in society. Not too many people seem to realize the courage it takes to defect. It may not be ‘honorable’, but it is courageous: it is leaving everything behind and going to a country you know nothing about and which language you can hardly speak. It is even possible Oswald did it for his country, which probably should make it honorable. It is possible Oswald branded himself ‘Castroite’, as a service to his country... he believed.

In the late summer of 1963, Oswald apparently made contact with both Cuban and Soviet governments and the Commission didn’t want to look into those aspects of his life, afraid as they were that he might have been controlled by these Communist governments.

Even though everything about Oswald’s life seems to be told by the Commission, these are exactly the issues that they tried to skip; they realized that they might stumble upon a piece of evidence that could force them, should they somehow be unable to disregard it, to change their
preconceived theory.  
This is the information that learns whether Oswald was just any ordinary guy picked out of a theatre and blamed for the assassination or a man who was chosen to be picked out of a theatre and whose ‘career-plan’ carefully been chosen as to be one that corresponded to any ‘normal’ lone nut or ‘crazy’ communist (to most both were identical) who killed Kennedy because he was he crazy, i.e. a communist.
CHAPTER FOUR

ALEK OSWALDOVICH

When Oswald, a few hours after his arrest, was asked why he believed he had been arrested if he was, as he proclaimed himself, an innocent person, he answered it had to do with his stay in the Soviet Union, a move that had earned him a reputation as a communist. It seems that Oswald realized that in anti-Communist Dallas, the Police might have arrested him just because, in good Cold War-tradition, they suspected a Communist, at least a Communist-sympathizer, of having assassinated the President. Who else would do such a thing? Either you were communist, mentally ill or involved in a conspiracy. And on the surface, Oswald seemed to be a Communist sympathizer.

On November 22, J. Edgar Hoover ‘helped’ the plotters by falsely alleging Oswald had made several trips to Cuba and that, upon his return, he had been questioned about why he had gone to Cuba. Oswald apparently answered that it was none of ‘our’ business when questioned about those trips. Oswald never made any trips to Cuba and was thus never questioned every time he returned from Cuba. A man who did just that and was asked about it was his nemesis, Jack Ruby. Perhaps not strangely, Hoover, since 1922, was a reserve Lt. Col. in the Army’s Military Intelligence Division.

The next day, a cable from the Criminal Intelligence Section of the DPD went to the Fourth Army Command, Texas, passed it to the U.S. Strike Command at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida: “Don Stringfellow. Intelligence Section, DPD, notified the 112th Intelligence Group... Oswald had defected to Cuba in 1959 and is a card carrying member of the Communist Party”. The cable promised that more ‘information’ on Oswald would follow. Oswald neither defected to Cuba, nor did he carry a Communist Party-card. In 1961, the Strike Command was especially established to initiate “rapid deployment”, The Strike Command went on red alert.

The CIA, unauthorized to operate on U.S.-soil, nevertheless co-operated with the various police departments throughout the United States, via their Criminal Intelligence Section (CIS). The Dallas CIS had about twenty members, headed by a Lieutenant, Jack Revill. This Section was responsible for investigating potential threats to the President for the Secret Service. Since August 1963, the DPD also had a LEIU-unit, a system by which the local police department get almost immediately all the information on suspected subversives when they move to Dallas. This system includes the FBI, Army, Navy and U.S. Air Force Intelligence.

Oswald, like his older half-brother John Pic and older brother Robert longed to become a ‘military man’ from his early teens. Unable to wait until he had turned seventeen, he lied about his age and tried to enlist in the Marines. But they found out about his bluff and Oswald tried again to join the Marines about a year later, at the required minimum age of seventeen. During his training at Keesler Air Force Base, Oswald took weekend-passes ‘to New Orleans to see his mother’, even though his mother lived in Texas. His relatives in New Orleans, an uncle and aunt, said Oswald didn’t visit them either. Oswald’s whereabouts during these weekends are still unaccounted for.
After having completed his training, he was assigned to MACS-1, Marine Air Control Squadron (codename: Coffee Mill), at Atsugi Air Force Base, Japan. Atsugi was a base for the U2-spy plane whose missions were led by the CIA. Like so many others, Oswald was interested in the most unusual plane and was one of those lucky people who had the opportunity to get to know it better: his squadron kept their gear in the U2’s hangar.

Official documents list Oswald’s clearance as “Confidential”, but the minimum security clearance for working in the radar bubble, as he did, was “Secret”. Either Oswald’s file wrongly listed his clearance-level, or he had another, accurate file (which seems improbable) or someone forged his documents after it was learned he was the main suspect in assassination and the Commission asked for all of Oswald’s documents.

Staying abroad, Oswald seems to have lost his ‘virginity’ when he dated a Japanese girl in Yokohama, even though some periods of Oswald life, like his stay in New York, are too fuzzy to know what he did and did not do. A boy who wanders across New York might come upon unexpected situations, even in the fifties.

Oswald, once again, began using weekend-passes and went to Tokyo. He started a relationship, possibly sexual, with a hostess of the Queen Bee, one of the most chique bars in Tokyo, where all the U2-pilots had fun and were entertained. A girl cost between sixty and one hundred dollar; Oswald made only 85 dollar a month, yet he was able to bring along his girl to the base. After a brief stay in the Philippines and a (too) hasty return to Atsugi, Oswald apparently dated an Eurasian girl, described as being ‘half-Russian’.

According to his friend and fellow Marine David Bucknell, Oswald has told him one of these girls (perhaps the hostess in the Queen Bee) had asked him whether he could pass on secret information to her, read: the KGB. Oswald apparently had informed a civilian, probably a CIA officer, of this approach. The man had told him to go along: he would pass on false information.

This appears to have been the source of Oswald’s sudden wealth. All ‘encounters’ at the Queen Bee were probably paid by the CIA, probably with a little bonus on top of that.

Oswald was not the only ‘family-mystery’ in Japan. While stationed at Atsugi, his cousin, Marilyn Murret, whom he knew very well as Oswald had stayed with his uncle for quite some time during his adolescence, was also living in Japan. According to the FBI, she was “linked in some manner with the apparatus of Professor Harold Isaacs”, who was a research associate at the Center for International Studies at MIT, a center “endowed to a great extent by the U.S. Government”, read CIA.

In late 1958, Oswald was transferred to El Toro Air Station in California, where Oswald suddenly became a Russophile. Only one man, Kerry Thornley, whom the Commission happily believed, said Oswald was more than just interested; that he was a Marxist; the others apparently thought Oswald only wanted to be funny. Thornley would write a book whose main character was Oswald, even before Oswald gained notoriety after the assassination. It seems he knew a friend of Clay Shaw, John Spencer. He would comment that “if everything is over, perhaps I’ll piss on Kennedy’s grave. RIP”.

As a part of his sudden love for Russia, he also began to study the language. Failing a proficiency test in Russian in February 1959, he met with a friend’s aunt, Rosaleen Quint, who was studying for a Russian State Department exam. Quint thought “Oswald’s Russian (was) better than mine”. Taking a second test some time later, Oswald passed.
In September 1959, Oswald left the Marines, stating his mother had injured herself and needed to be looked after. A jar had fallen on her toe, but this certainly did not mean her son had to leave the Marines to take care of her. Oswald allegedly told Bucknell he was “going to Russia on an Intelligence assignment and would return in 1961 as a hero”. Later, Oswald would write that he agreed “with former President Truman when he said that ‘the Marine Corps should be abolished’.

Oswald dropped in to see his mother, but then left for New Orleans where he boarded a boat for France. He had arranged a one year enrollment in a tiny college, the Albert Schweitzer College in Churwalden, a suburb of Chur, Switzerland; which only took about thirty students in all. However, Oswald, arriving in Le Havre, chose to go to London, not to Switzerland. In London, Oswald wanted to go to Finland. Oswald's passport was stamped in London on October 10, when there wasn’t a commercial flight to Helsinki that would have enabled him to check in his hotel in Helsinki at the time he did. How he got in Helsinki is still unknown. The Commission sidestepped the issue and wrongly listed Oswald’s departure from London as October 9. From Helsinki, he possibly went to Stockholm because it seems he was unable to get an entry visa into the Soviet Union from the Helsinki Embassy. Back in Helsinki, Oswald boarded the train for Moscow.

Joan Hallett, the receptionist at the U.S. Embassy and wife of Oliver Hallett, who would be working in the White House at the moment of the assassination, was the first official who met the new Soviet defector Oswald when he threw his passport on her desk. Oswald was brought to Consul Richard Snyder, who had arrived four months before Oswald. Snyder stalled Oswald’s defection and only put his passport in his drawer and didn’t start the procedures Oswald had wanted. Lee Oswald was the only Marine known to defect to a Communist country during peacetime.

People have always doubted whether Oswald’s defection was ‘real’ or whether it was staged; that he was really a CIA-agent who for some reason defected to the Soviet Union. Oswald’s U.S. Health, Education and Welfare Department records in Dallas commented on Oswald’s Soviet trip that it was “with State Department approval to work as a radar technician”. In November 1959, the Navy considered Oswald’s case to an ‘Intelligence Matter’. In a letter to Connally in 1962 about his dishonorable discharge when he defected to the Soviet Union, Oswald said about his defection that he had “and always had the full sanction of the U.S. Embassy... and hence the U.S. Government”.

It is not clear whether, upon his defection, El Toro changed codes or not, radio and radar frequencies and aircraft call numbers. There was, however, no damage assessment, which was a standard procedure and would normally have preceded such changes in codes and numbers. If these procedures weren’t taken, it would only heighten the suspicion Oswald’s defection was fake.

Oswald, after his arrest, had in his possessions a Minox camera, serial number 27259, which was “not a valid number”. Oswald’s camera was not commercially available, raising doubts as to how Oswald attained that camera. Listed originally as item 375, this item was later identified as a ‘Minox light meter’. It is, however, impossible that Oswald had a Minox light meter because Minox didn’t sell light meters then.

Victor Marchetti, a CIA dropout, said that in 1959 ONI was running a program which contained
about 36 to 40 men who would appear to be disenchanted, poor American youths who wanted to see Communism. They were trained at various naval installations, but the program was run from Nag’s Head, North Carolina. Marchetti says some of these youths lasted only a few weeks; the others were sent to the Soviet Union or another Eastern European country. The ONI hoped they would be doubled by the KGB or GRU.

There was something of an exodus to the Soviet Union around that time. Between 1945 and 1959 only two enlisted men had ever defected; in the eighteen months before 1960, five Army men in West Germany (Sgt. Jones, Sgt. Ernie Fletcher, Sgt. Joseph Dutkonicz, Bruce F. Davis and Specialist 5th Class Vladimir Sloboda), two NSA agents (William H. Martin and B. Ferguson Mitchell) and three civilians plus Oswald defected. The first civilian was Maurice Halperin, an OSS-veteran who had headed its Latin-American division. Halperin had been suspected of being a Soviet agent and had had a run-in with Arthur Schlessinger, Jr. during his OSS-days. Halperin moved to Mexico in 1958, then to Moscow and then to Havana. Halperin denied he had defected; he had simply ‘moved’.

Ex Air Force major Libero Ricciardrelli also defected. The third was Robert E. Webster. Robert Edward Webster had also defected in front of Snyder’s bureau. There was even another defector that fall, Nicholas Petrulli, who, however, changed his mind rapidly and returned to the U.S. There might have been yet another, earlier, defection, even though it is possible this is a mistake by the CIA. In 1976, a CIA memo stated that another Marine was living in the Soviet Union in 1958 and 1959, in Minsk. He was described as being the only U.S. citizen in Minsk at that time and was said to be a friend of one ‘Igor’, an army technician. He had departed the Soviet Union in 1961 and was debriefed in Copenhagen.

Oswald diary notes in the entry of October 31, 1959 that John McVikar had taken over Snyder’s place as head consul. This, however, would only happen shortly AFTER Oswald re-defected, in 1962. One might speculate whether Oswald, if not a simple error, wanted to divert the attention from Snyder.

Snyder’s file was red-flagged and was segregated from the others, because of a DCI statement (possibly Dulles’) about a matter of cover for Snyder, though it is entirely possible the flagging occurred after the assassination. All inquiries about Snyder had to pass through the Deputy Director of Operations.

Snyder had entered the CIA on November 8, 1949, being assigned to OPC, which was a section of the State Department, handling police coordination. Ordered to go to Tokyo, he never got there; instead, he worked in Heidelberg from March 1950 till September 26, 1950, when he resigned to work for the U.S. High Commissioner’s office in Germany. At that time, future Warren Commission member John McCloy was that High Commissioner.

Once back in the States, Oswald might have used the alias Alek J. Hidell. Philip Agee was a CIA agent who entered the Company in 1960 and served in the Western Hemisphere-division. Oswald, on his return from the Soviet Union, would meet a lot of people involved in this division’s plotting against Castro’s Cuban regime. Agee’s pseudonym was ‘Jeremy S. Hodapp’. Researchers have wondered whether there might be a connection between Hodapp, H-vowel-D-vowel-double P, and Hidell, H-vowel-D-vowel-double L. If these pseudonyms were given in an alphabetical order, it could well be the case: Oswald, assuming he was a CIA-agent, would have entered the CIA a few months before Agee did.
On November 22, CIS had given out false information. At 17hl5, the CIS Assistant Chief, Don Stringfellow, phoned Army Intelligence, claiming Oswald had confessed to both murders, of Kennedy and ‘Tibbets’. Earlier on, at 15hl5, just 15 minutes after Oswald’s photo had appeared on television, Lt. Col. Robert E. Jones, 112th Army Intelligence Group, phoned FBI San Antonio, saying he believed Oswald was arrested with a Selective Service card in name of Alex Hidell. His ‘source’ was ‘the media’, who at that time did NOT have ANY information about this ‘Hidell’. Jones said that Oswald had “traveled extensively inside Russia”. Oswald’s file listed his address as 605 Elsbeth Street, the address he had resided the previous spring.

Being the new kid in town, Oswald was interviewed for Radio Moscow by Lev Setyayev, even though it was apparently never broadcast. He was also interviewed by a few American journalists, one of them Aline Mosby, UPI, of whom Oswald wrote about in his diary. Oswald also talked with a NANA-reporter, Priscilla Johnson, but he didn’t write about her meeting and her article was never published... until November 23, 1963. That day, however, she somewhat altered and even added paragraphs to her article. There is a strange line in these additions: Oswald sat “alone in his hotel room”, “had no friends in Russia”, “He’d managed to buy an ice cream cone here, he told me proudly”, “I soon came to believe this boy was the stuff of which fanatics are made”. At the same time, the weather in Moscow was terrible, Oswald was seen exiting a theatre by Aline Mosby and Oswald had contact with Russians, primarily his Intourist guide, Rima Shirakova. All these ‘new sentiments’ Johnson felt for Oswald strangely coincide with the officially promoted government line that Oswald was a lone nut. Aline Mosby said that, even though she didn’t want to comment on the possibility herself, some journalists in the U.S. press corps (in Moscow) gossiped about their impression that Priscilla was a U.S. government agent, since NANA paid so little and since she did seem to have high level Washington connections.”

On October 21, Oswald apparently attempted to commit suicide. Rosa Agafonova, the hotel tourist office employee, was the one who found Oswald an called the ambulance. Oswald’s diary says this happened at 20h00, but Rosa says it occurred at 15h00; this corroborates the Soviet medical documents which listed Oswald’s admission in the hospital as 16h00. Rosa found Oswald when they were going to a 15h00 meeting at the Office of Visas and Registration. Everyone at the hotel was curious whether Oswald would be allowed to stay in the Soviet Union. Rosa would visit Oswald in the hospital.

The KGB apparently didn’t debrief Oswald because he was ‘unstable’, even though it is not known on what they based this decision, a decision apparently taken BEFORE he attempted to commit suicide. Oleg Kalugin, who worked as the KGB’s counter-intelligence chief and later defected, said he handled Oswald’s file and that Oswald was “viewed as a CIA agent”. It’s possible the ‘unstable’ was listed because it was more official than ‘possible CIA agent’. Either way, it seems the KGB didn’t want Oswald. In hindsight, this is not surprising: the KGB always doubted the loyalty of defectors and never actively put them to work for them. Kim Philby was practically stunned that, after his defection, he was not shown any important KGB-documents which he could help explain and assess. The Soviets only made their defectors comfortable, hoping they would not re-defect, thus causing embarrassment to the Soviet Union. Anastas Mikoyan, a high official inside the Politburo, however, felt that the KGB should rethink their decision to throw Oswald out and the KGB, as always, had to do what the Politburo asked.
Later, Mikoyan would meet Oswald’s future best friend, George de Mohrenschildt, in Mexico. In 1962, Mikoyan would meet George and Herman Brown from Houston; both knew Johnson quite well. On November 25, 1963, he was Khrushchev’s representative at Kennedy’s funeral.

Oswald, the unwanted subject, was taken out of ‘the danger zone’, Moscow, and put to work in the moral ‘rural’. Minsk, even though Oswald’s treatment remained ‘first class’. Oswald said that he ‘started work in Minsk in June 1960’, even though it was assumed he started work there about six months earlier. After the assassination, a Soviet citizen entered the British Embassy in Moscow, informing the staff that he had seen Oswald in Gorky with KGB officers in April or May of 1960. Gorky houses the famous Marx-Engels Institute, a KGB spy school. It is, of course, possible the KGB, forced by Mikoyan to deal with Oswald at home, were giving Oswald ‘the grand tour’ of the Soviet Union.

When Francis Gary Powers’ U2 was blown out of the sky on May 1, 1960, he was surprised his KGB interrogators were so knowledgeable about his plane, even showing him his actual flight path. Powers said he was asked whether he had ever been at Atsugi, but he denied he had been there, even though Oswald’s squad commander recalls Powers did visit Atsugi. In a letter to his brother Robert in February 1962, Oswald wrote “Powers seemed to be a nice bright American type fellow when I saw him in Moscow”. The only possible date he could have seen him there was in 1960, when his diary says he was in Minsk. Back in the States, Oswald would tell he had seen a big May Day celebration in Moscow, which could only have been that of 1960. Perhaps Oswald WAS grateful for the KGB’s hospitality and, perhaps unknowingly, helped them when Power’s plane was downed.

The man who was in charge of Gary Powers’ trial matters who Richard Snyder. It would be a small wonder if the CIA would give this major disaster in the hands of an ordinary State Department official.

In Minsk, Oswald was the ‘piece de resistance’ and, with a payment higher than his boss, was a part of the local jet-set. He was also under KGB surveillance.

Oswald’s KGB-file, codenaming him “Desperate” and later, “Codfish”, said that bugs had been placed in Oswald’s apartment. Throughout the two years, fourteen KGB-officers had spied on Oswald. One of these was a fellow employee, Pavel Golovachev, who was also Lee’s closest friend, according to Marina. Pavel, the son of the Red Air Force General and a Hero of the Soviet Union, said he met one Alexander Kostikov until May 1962. Before leaving for the U.S., Pavel confessed his spying to Oswald. Another ‘spy’ was Lee’s neighbor, Maya Gertzovich and her husband Simon, a young couple. According to her, Lee protected her from something; Maya is not mentioned in his diary. One weekend, the KGB asked them to vacate their apartment. It is likely some bugs or active surveillance were placed on Oswald.

Oswald also had a Hungarian friend, Alfred Kovacs, who was, strangely, referred to as a Cuban in one of his letters. His whereabouts or fate are unknown.

Oswald dated a local girl, Ella German, for about nine months, from the time of his arrival in Minsk in May/June 1960 till February 1961. Oswald’s diary says the relationship broke off on January 1, but according to Ella, it only stopped in February. Oswald did ask her to marry him on New Year’s Day, but Ella told him she was “afraid to marry a foreigner”. Ella says she lied to him, that she really wasn’t in love with him. Just before proposing, Oswald told Ella he would never again return to the United States, but did tell her he wanted to move to Czechoslovakia. On
January 4, 1961, three days after proposing, Oswald was offered Soviet citizenship, but said he would only accept if Ella wanted to marry him. Oswald, however, probably didn’t mean what he was telling his ‘sweetheart’. Oswald’s first known contact with the U.S. Embassy about him going back to the States was undated but postmarked February 5, 1961, which could mean Oswald only decided to go back to the States after Ella told him she would not marry him. But that letter contains a reference to a letter of “December 1960”, which never reached the Embassy because it was intercepted by the KGB and put in Oswald’s file, nr. 31451. Oswald was planning a return and apparently didn’t love Ella that much so that he wouldn’t lie to her.

Ella, interestingly, said Oswald received packages of tinted with two brands of slavery. But no rational man can take the attitude of ‘a curse on both your houses’. There are two world systems, one twisted beyond recognition by its misuse, the other decadent and dying in its final evolution. A truly democratic system would combine the better qualities of the two upon the American foundation, opposed to both system as they are now.” The Communist Party in America, however, was not viewed by Oswald as the means to install such a form of government. “The Communist movement in the U.S., personalized by the Communist Party USA, has turned itself into a “valuable gold coin” of the Kremlin. It has failed to denounce any actions of the Soviet Government when similar actions on the part of the US Government bring pious protest”.

Oswald gave as examples the Cuban vs. the Hungarian invasion, the Black lynching vs. the genocide under Stalin. Oswald thought that “the emplacement of a separate, democratic, pure communist society is our goal, but one... without regard to the twisting apart of Marxist Communism by other powers”, implying the Russian “Communist” rule.

The Oswalads seem to have been continually harassed by the FBI. Lee seemingly thought they were after him, even though the FBI often talked to Marina. Lee told the FBI that they had to talk to him; they had to leave his alone. In 1962, Kennedy had ended the restrictions for Soviet citizens to travel inside America, a decision most unpopular with FBI director Hoover who thought Kennedy was giving ‘the free run’ to all Soviet agents inside America.

The KGB Resident in the Soviet Embassy in the United States had been Grigori D. Kalmykov, who was expelled in 1962 and replaced by Col. Aleksandr M. Fomin, who used the cover of counselor. One of Fomin’s senior aides was Vitali Gerasimov, who would come to know Marina because of her letters to the Embassy.

Marina also received letters from one Ella Soboleva in Leningrad. Soboleva’s return address, when run through the CIA’s computer, listed one Igor Pavel Sobolev (probably either Ella’s father or perhaps her brother), who was a senior officer of the First Division and who had been stationed in Vienna. This information regarding possible KGB-ties to Marina, however, have to be taken with a grain of salt. The information came from the CIA and was never substantiated. The source of this information was one James Jesus Angleton, who, as we shall see, tried to depict Marina and Lee as KGB-spies.

Interestingly, seven letters were cut out of one of Marina’s Russian’s novel, Gloza Kotorye Sprashivayut (Questioning Eyes), on page 151/152.

The Warren Commission asked the CIA to investigate the possibility Oswald was a spy, most likely implying a Soviet spy. The CIA simply used Oswald’s diary to analyze his movements. This diary, of course, protected the identities of Johnson and Snyder.

William F. Buckley, who thought that Warren should be impeached, said, on April 7, 1964:
“What can Mr. Warren have had in mind when he uttered those resonant words a month ago, that in our lifetime we shall not know some of the things the Commission has learned...? A friend in the CIA told me Oswald was a Soviet agent, even though he was not given orders to kill Kennedy”. Warren, he said, knew this.

Others thought Oswald was substituted for a look-alike Soviet agent.
In 1960, FBI director J. Edgar Hoover stated in a memo that it was possible that an imposter was using Oswald’s birth certificate. What did this mean?
When Oswald left for the Soviet Union, it was believed he had taken his birth certificate with him. If he had given this to the Soviet authorities, voluntarily or by force, it meant that the Soviet Union could use this birth certificate and send someone else, impersonating Oswald, to wherever they wanted to.
When Oswald wanted to return to the United States, the American authorities, of course, were well aware that the Soviets might be up to this trick; they had done it before and would do it in the future. So why couldn’t they do it with Oswald? The American authorities and everybody else, it seemed, were convinced that Oswald was the same man who had entered the Soviet Union a few years ago.

But, in death, having become an instant celebrity, all these problems, as could be expected of course, turned up once again. What if the man who ‘of course’ had killed Kennedy had been a Soviet imposter; read: KGB-assassin? The implications were astonishing.
Michael Eddowes, a London attorney involved in the Profumo-affair, was convinced Oswald was a KGB-agent. But, against the background of other such substitutions by the KGB, it is clear Oswald’s substitution would have been entirely different.
The KGB NEVER sent a man using false papers to the country he was born in. This meant that the KGB would never send him back to the United States, certainly not to Texas, most certainly not to the Dallas-Fort Worth-area, where his mother lived and absolutely not to his mother. Suppose his mother found out that that man wasn’t Oswald at all? The KGB could obviously not run ANY risk. If their man was identified as a KGB-substitute by Marguerite or another family member, the image of the Soviet Union and the KGB would be shattered to pieces. The possible intelligence they could get via this man would not weigh against that. If anything, the Soviets played it safe.
The KGB WOULD have sent him to some other country in Europe or somewhere else. In this case, the possibility of him being uncovered as a KGB-substitute were minimal. He could only be caught in line of him doing active intelligence gathering for the Soviet Union or by sheer luck. Nevertheless, this hasn’t stopped former CIA agents, especially those close to Angleton, from spreading the rumor that Oswald as a KGB substitute or agent. I can only hope, for the sake of the CIA and American intelligence, that they know the KGB doesn’t enlist defectors and that the KGB doesn’t send KGB-substitutes back to their ‘mother’.
CHAPTER FIVE

VIVA FIDELI KILL CASTRO!

In April 1963, K.S. Turner, a resident of New Orleans, met one Jose Rivera at a medical convention in Atlantic City. Rivera worked as a science administrator at the National Institute of Health at Bethesda. Having studied at Loyola University (where he apparently left under suspicious circumstances), he knew New Orleans well. He also seemed to knew his way around Dallas. ‘Colonel Rivera’ had served some time at an Army base and was well acquainted with LSD and hypnosis. At that time, the only supplier of LSD was the CIA, who were testing the drug since 1953 in a covert program, MK/ULTRA.

Talking about President Kennedy, Rivera remarked ‘I wonder what Jackie will do when her husband dies’.

“What?”

“Oh.oh. I meant the baby. She might lose the baby.”

Changing the subject, Rivera asked Turner whether he wanted him to help with some joke. Phone “Oswald. Tell him to kill the chief. We’re just playing a little joke on him.” Then, Rivera started talking about ‘it’ happening.

“It will be on the fifth floor. There’ll be some men up there... Oswald is not what he seems. We’re going to send him to the library to read about great assassinations in history. After it’s over, he’ll call Abt to defend him. After it’s over, they’ll kill him. They’ll say his best friend killed him.” Though Oswald’s library card does not list any book on ‘great assassinations’, it is possibly he loaned these books on Ferrie’s card, which Oswald apparently still possessed at the time of his arrest. Ferrie and Oswald also allegedly experienced with LSD and hypnosis, subjects Rivera seemed well acquainted with.

“When does the Shriners circus come to New Orleans? Oh, I remember, in November. It will happen after the Shriners Circus comes to New Orleans.”

Rivera then gave Turner an address on Magazine Street and asked whether he could phone and ask Oswald whether he knew one Rivera with the N1H. When Turner phoned, Oswald was called to the phone and said “No. I don’t.”

After his return from the Soviet Union, Oswald had settled in Dallas and had befriended, through his wife Marina, some members of the local Russian émigrés community. Chiefly among those were George de Mohrenschildt and his wife Jeane.

When they left for Haiti in the spring of 1963, apparently to play some role in the failed coup there, Oswald moved to New Orleans and moved in with his uncle Charles and Liliane Murret. Perhaps by sheer coincidence, Oswald’s move occurred on April 24, the day after Kennedy’s visit to Dallas was announced.

Oswald suddenly seemed to develop an avid interest in the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, an organization that was both on the ‘harassment list’ of the FBI and most likely of the CIA as well. Oswald’s FPCC-days had started shortly before leaving Dallas: he walked on Main Street with a placard “HANDS OF CUBA! VIVA FIDELI!”. The next day, he wrote a letter to Vincent Ted
Lee, president of the FPCC, who advised Oswald not to provoke “unnecessary incidents which frighten away prospective supporters”. That was exactly what Oswald was going to do in one of the most anti-Communist cities: New Orleans. 
FBI-agent Warren DeBrueys’ task was to report on political groups and he apparently had to watch over Oswald’s actions. But according to Nina Garner, FBI-agent Milton Kaack interviewed her within three weeks after Oswald’s arrival in New Orleans, contrary to the official version which said that surveillance on Oswald hadn’t started then. She saw the FBI men sitting in a parked car at night and watch Oswald and the house from round the corner by the drugstore. Both DeBrueys and Milton Kaack never gave any affidavit to the Warren Commission. Whether this surveillance was because of Oswald and/or Marina being a possible KGB-spy or because of Oswald’s FPCC-activities is still unclear.

On June 5, it was certain that Kennedy would come to Dallas. That day, Jack Ruby had a twenty-eight minute phone-call to Frank Caracci, a New Orleans night club manager, probably announcing his trip to New Orleans: Ruby left that very day. 
In New Orleans, Ruby talked to Harold Tannenbaum, an associate of Marcello, who managed the Old French Opera House. They had contacted each other for the first time on May 15, 1963. At his ‘restaurant’, the famous ‘Jada’ (real name: Janet Conforto) was performing. Ruby said the purpose of going to New Orleans was to watch the performance of Jada, but he probably learned about Jada only while he was in New Orleans. Contrary to what Ruby proclaimed, it seems Jada was NOT the purpose of his trip. It is possible Ruby was in Havana and stopped over in New Orleans. From June 5 till June 8, nobody heard anything about Ruby, which was very strange as Ruby could almost always be contacted and stayed in touch. In July and early August, Ruby would phone Tannenbaum again and on September 6, Tannenbaum even came to Dallas. They may have talked about Jada, who was eventually fired by Ruby for being “too raw”. 
The nation’s major Mafia-figures held, almost coinciding with Ruby’s trip to New Orleans, on June 8 a meeting at Love Field Airport in Dallas. The next day, they continued their ‘get together’ at Howard Johnson’s restaurant, at the Forth Worth Turnpike in Arlington. The next day, Ruby phoned that very restaurant.

Meanwhile, in New Orleans, Oswald had ordered a thousand copies of an FPCC-leaflet at Jones Printing Co., five hundred application forms for a New Orleans chapter of the FPCC and three hundred membership cards with Mailer’s Service Co. 
Having picked up his cards at the printer’s, Oswald wrote to ‘The Worker’, the magazine of the American Communist Party, giving two honorary membership-cards to Gus Hall and B. Davis. Oswald did exactly the same things an FBI-undercover agent was asked to do: link the FPCC with the Communist Party. Oswald’s FPCC-chapter in New Orleans didn’t exist because it did not have the backing of the FPCC. But on paper it would have seemed that way. The undercover agent then contacted the Communist Party, linking both groups. This was exactly the kind of information Hoover needed to defend his policy against the FPCC: he had information, however incorrect in reality, that the FPCC had ties to the Communist Party and everybody knew that the Communist Party was ‘dangerous’.
Adrian Alba, an auto mechanic, remembered that in early summer of 1963, an FBI-agent flew in from Washington and got a green Studebaker from Alba’s carpool. Soon afterwards, he saw Oswald, who often visited his garage, receive a white envelope from this man; a few days later, there was a second meeting between Oswald and this unidentified FBI-agent, according to Alba.
On June 16, Oswald picketed at a dock in the city’s port, passing leaflets to Marines who left the U.S.S. Wasp. The authorities asked Oswald to stop and leave the dock, which he did.

Suddenly, Oswald began to read a tremendous amount of books, twenty-seven in all (some claim thirty-four), ranging from James Bond to Aldous Huxley, from Science Fiction to two books on Kennedy; none of the books he checked out were on Cuba. One of these books was Huxley’s THE DOOR OF PERCEPTION. According to Edward Gill in, assistant D.A. in New Orleans, Oswald came to his office in the summer of 1963 and asked if a certain drug, LSD, was legal. He referred to Huxley’s book.

In 1963, not many people were interested in LSD, simply because it was only available at the CIA and top universities where the drug was tested. One place where the CIA tested this drug was at Atsugi, where Oswald had been stationed. The CIA feared that the Russians used LSD as a brainwasher and they believed that somebody who had experimented with drugs with LSD would NOT freak out. According to a Marine in Oswald’s unit, two CIA officials gave him a variety of drugs and tried to recruit him for the CIA. Whether the whole unit was contacted (and Oswald), is not known. It could be that Oswald, if his defection was staged by the CIA, was given LSD as preparation for a KGB-interrogation, possibly with LSD, which might force Oswald (if inexperienced with LSD) to admit he was an agent or act as a double agent. There has never been any proof the Soviets used LSD.

Oswald, in the mean time, had found a job at Reilly Coffee Co. Its owner, William Reilly, was, perhaps unsurprisingly, a backer of the Free Cuba Committee, a subsidiary of the CRC. On the same day, Dante Marachini, a friend of Ferrie and Shaw, was also employed at Reilly’s. Oswald was able to rent an office for his FPCC-chapter in a block that was known for his anti-Cuban activities. According to Sam Newman, owner the Newman building, Oswald never rented any office space and he might be correct. Oswald was making USD 100 a month and the office cost USD 60 a month. It is far more likely someone rented the office for him or let him simply have it for a while.

544 Camp Street, though a different address, was the same building as 531 Lafayette Street, the address used by Guy Banister. Sergio Archacha Smith, Ferrie’s friend, described it as the “Grand Central Station” of the Cuban exiles. Smith had moved from Miami to New Orleans in August 1960, especially for the purpose of working for the Cuban exiles. Originally, he and Banister had offices in the Baiter Building, before moving, in early 1962, to the Newman ‘Grand Central’ Building. When Smith lost power within the CRC, Luis Rubel moved the offices of the CRC to his home address.

Banister had, back in 1954, founded the Anti-Communist League of the Caribbean, which helped to overthrow President Arbenz of Guatemala. The ACLC’s legal counsel was Maurice Gatlin, a friend of Banister and a member of the ‘Inter-American Confederation for the Defense of the Continent’, set up by E. Howard Hunt.

Back in 1959, Gatlin had been involved with Jack Ruby and Robert McKeown, talking them out of sending jeeps to Castro. In 1962, Gatlin had transported USD 200,000 to France. Apparently, this money was intended to finance an attempt to assassinate French President Charles de Gaulle while he was visiting Petit Clamart on August 22, 1962. Allegedly, a company called Permindex was involved in the financing of this attempt, carried out by Col. Bastin-Thirty, reportedly planned by Jean Souetre, who had cooperated with a Hungarian, Lazlo Varga.

Souetre apparently visited New Orleans in April and/or May 1963, meeting E. Howard Hunt and
Carlos Bringuier. With him were one Bailie or Baylie, an ex-captain in the OAS, and one OAS-member Torjmann. Torjmann, in March or April 1962, had met a CIA-agent “Witmarch” at the headquarters of the American Legion in Paris. Souetre possibly traveled to Dallas, where he had a friend, General Edwin Walker, the local ‘legend’ of the John Birch Society. The Cuban exiles in Miami were controlled by E. Howard Hunt; in New Orleans, this was, according to the CIA, a New Orleans attorney. The most likely candidate is probably Maurice Gatlin. Gatlin died in 1964 when he fell from a suite in the El Panama Hotel in Puerto Rico. His death was ruled a suicide.

Banister had written to Hoover that “the Bureau divorced itself from the field many years ago and has been living in a state of adultery ever since”. Not surprisingly, Banister quickly resigned before being transferred to Honolulu. In New Orleans, however, Jerry Milton Brooks still had to carry some of Banister’s files over to the local FBI-bureau, headed by Harry G. Maynard. Banister reportedly had the largest file system of anti-Communist Intelligence in the South. Some of Oswald’s leaflet carried 544 Camp Street as the FPCC’s address. It is Banister was very angry when he discovered Oswald had stamped that address on some of the handbills. Even though the FBI in 1964 found nothing wrong with this address, researchers discovered that this address was the same building as Banister and other extreme rightist-groups. Were it not for the address being stamped on these handbills, it would probably have remained a mystery and everybody would have believed Oswald’s FPCC-propaganda activities were sincere; the key to the Cuban exiles would probably never have been found out (even though Jack Martin, on November 22, did put some emphasis on this aspect).

According to Delphine Roberts, not only Banister’s secretary but also lovers, and Alien and Daniel Campbell, who also worked for Banister, Oswald was employed by Banister. Everything Oswald did, they say, was planned or approved by their boss. When Oswald asked for an application form, Delphine Roberts had the impression he and Banister had already met before. Banister reportedly told Roberts Oswald was “one of us”. Jack Martin even saw Oswald in Banister’s office. Dean Andrews also said that Oswald was paid for passing out leaflets. Roberts also said Oswald knew Ferrie.

Around the same time Oswald rented office-space, the owner, Sam Newman, was visited by a Latin male who wanted to rent office space to teach Spanish at night. This man was Ernesto Rodriguez, who said he knew Oswald, who had told Rodriguez he wanted to train Cuban exiles. Rodriguez had sent him over to Bringuier’s.

On July 31, 1963, the FBI raided the exiles’ training camp at Lake Pontchartrain. The camp was set up in 1962 by Gerry Hemming and Frank Sturgis at the request of New Orleans’ CRC. One of the instructors at the camp had been David Ferrie. The trainees were destined for the CIA-base of Manuel Artime in Guatemala, set up with the help of Somoza and one of the only Cuban exiles still trusted by the Kennedy brothers.

The owner of the land, William McLaney, said he had rented to one ‘Jose Juarez’. William had known Meyer Lansky, the Mafia wizard in Cuba, where he had been a fervent gambler. Michael McLaney, William’s brother and also a friend of both Lansky and Trafficante, had backed an attack scheduled for June 14 on a Shell oil refinery in Cuba. A tip to the FBI in Miami, however, had ended their plan.

Even though eleven men were arrested (amongst others Rich Lauchli, an arms purveyor, and Sam Benton), there were no charges. Harry Maynard, the man in charge of the raid, said that he would
not speculate whether these men were training to invade Cuba and whether any arrests were imminent. It might be that, because Lake Pontchartrain was one of the only bastions of Kennedy-backed anti-Castro activities, the Kennedy brothers wanted no charges and perhaps even ordered Hoover to end their investigation.

On August 5, Oswald went to see Bringuier, apparently the first time they ever met, offering him to train Cuban exiles. Bringuier was the New Orleans-head of the Directorio Revolucionario Estudiantil (CRC), a CIA-front established by E. Howard Hunt and Ross Crozier, an assistant of David A. Phillips, to help control the Cuban exiles. Bringuier was also a member of the Free Cuba Committee, another CIA-front. Guy Banister had helped in establishing both groups. The next day, Oswald returned, leaving a Marine manual in Bringuier’s shop. Apparently, Oswald did visit an anti-Castro training camp, reportedly accompanied by an employee of Tampa-Mafia don Santos Trafficante. His reported motive for coming was “to train with rifles”.

A few days later, Oswald, again, was leaf letting FPCC-leaflets and Bringuier, in plain view of every by-passer, accused Oswald of having double-crossed him. According to Bringuier, it was a friend, Celso Hernandez, who tipped him off. Another friend, Carlos Quiroga, had allegedly visited Oswald to check out his FPCC-chapter and felt there was nothing to that FPCC-chapter. David Lewis, an assistant of Banister, nevertheless claims he once saw Quiroga and ‘Leon Oswald’ together inside Banister’s office. Quiroga never talked him meeting Oswald except when he innocently visited him and wondered about the FPCC-chapter. Quiroga and Oswald had another encounter. It is known Quiroga was acquainted with both Archacha Smith and his friend, Ferrie. Quiroga said he always wondered where Ferrie got the amounts of money from, even after he had been fired. Lewis says that a few days after seeing ‘Leon’ and Carlos inside the office, he saw the two in the company of David Ferrie, Carlos and ‘Leon Oswald’s’ friend. Lewis believes Oswald, Ferrie, Banister, Quiroga and Arcacha Smith were all involved in the planning of the assassination.

At the same time, Richard Case Nagell had infiltrated the Cuban exile movement. Nagell, a CIA-agent, had been stationed in Japan and, while there, had met Lee Harvey Oswald. Later, he was asked to act as a double-agent, playing ‘hanky-panky’ with the KGB. The KGB decided to use Nagell and, around the time of the missile crisis, asked him to infiltrate the Cuban exile community in Dallas. They also provided him with a photograph of the recently-re-defected Lee Oswald, asking to keep tabs on him as he might in some way embarrass the Soviet Union. It seems Oswald was just about to do that.

Bringuier rushed to where Oswald was leaf letting and went off like a madman against Oswald, accusing him of trying to infiltrate his group. Oswald ‘invited’ Bringuier to hit him, but the police intervened and arrested both.

Lt. Francis Martello felt Oswald “seemed to have (been) set up to create an incident”. Sgt. Horace Austin believed Oswald “appeared as though he is being used by these people”. Oswald had written about getting in a street-scuffle and being arrested in a letter to the FPCC four days before the scuffle occurred.

Still in jail, Oswald spoke to FBI-agent John Quigley on August 10. Quigley was the man who had reviewed Oswald’s Navy file upon his defection. Quigley also had to check political organizations in New Orleans and he knew about the FPCC being in New Orleans (via Oswald’s hand-outs). The FBI-office, having received an FPCC-pamphlet from one Jesse Core, filed it, noting “ck out” and “105-1095-129”. The anti-Castro training-camp, interestingly, had the same
number, 105-1095. Either Quigley made a terrible mistake or... he was dead right. Quigley said Oswald wanted an FBI-agent specifically for the “purpose of supplying to him information with regard to his activities with the FPCC in New Orleans”. If Oswald was an undercover agent, this was the perfect way of supplying Hoover with the information he needed. Oswald, who” carried card nr. 33, implying there were at least 32 other members of the FPCC-chapter, told Police Lt. Francis Martello there were thirty-five members. Quigley, contrary to official procedures, destroyed the notes of this conversation, possibly because it could have shown Oswald was doing an undercover job and Hoover wanted to protect the image of the FBI.

Delphine Robert’s daughter, who had rented office space in the same building, said she “got the impression Oswald was doing something to make people believe he was something he wasn’t. I’m sure Guy Banister knew what Oswald was doing”.

Two days later, when Oswald had to appear in court, Oswald sat in the middle of the seats for colored people. Bringuier realized Oswald wasn’t crazy; he was very smart.

Having faced the charges in court and having paid his fine, Oswald didn’t give up on his FPCC-activities. On August 16, Oswald went to the state employment office, offering two dollars for anyone who wanted to help him and found a student. Charles Steele, Jr., who was willing to. Oswald apparently told Steele he was allowed to go after the press had come by.

In fact, immediately after the assassination, the television pictures from this leafleting-session was about the only thing that was available about the accused assassin.

Picketing in front of Shaw’s International Trade Mart, his pro-Castro propaganda was filmed by the local TV-station WDSU, an affiliate of NEC. During his leaf letting, Clay Shaw entered the Trade Mart, where he worked. There is a photograph which shows Oswald and Shaw are looking at each other as Shaw is entering the Trade Mart. Most strangely, Oswald was passing out first printing-leaflets entitled “The Crime Against Cuba”, written by Corliss Lamont. The first printing, however, had been totally sold out when Oswald was still in the Soviet Union. In December 1961, the leaflet was already in its fourth printing. How Oswald ever got hold of first-printing copies is a mystery, even though it might be his distributor was the CIA, who had asked LaMont to mail them 45 copies of the first printing in 1961.

The next day, Oswald gave a radio-interview, eventually substituted by a debate with Bringuier and Edward Butler, director of Information Council of the Americas (INCA). Oswald said he was “a Marxist” and that “democracy, in my opinion, means the right to be a member of a minority and not be suppressed – a right that is lacking in the U.S.” Somehow, however, Bringuier and Butler had found out about Oswald’s defection to the Soviet Union and William Stuckey, the talk-show host, and Butler ambushed Oswald on this ‘interesting’ detail. What they were saying was that the FPCC in New Orleans had a Soviet defector, ‘a Commie’, among its members. Oswald, seemingly taken by surprise, muttered: “I was under the protection of the... uh... that is to say, I was NOT under the protection of the American government... but I was at all times considered an American citizen.” (my emphasis)

After this radio-interview, Oswald apparently felt he had ‘helped’ the FPCC enough and stopped all his activities ‘for’ the pro-Castro movement.

Nagell had now received orders to try and make Oswald realize he was being used. Nagell approached Oswald and told him what the KGB had told him: that the two people who had approached Oswald earlier, one named “Angel” and the other one named “Leopoldo”, had only imitated G2-agents, that they were in reality Cuban exiles who wanted to persuade Oswald to do
certain things that might falsely incriminate the Castro regime; that the anti-Castro Cuban exiles and not Castro would benefit from his actions. Unknown to Oswald, Nagell had also received orders from the KGB to kill Oswald if he didn’t want to accept he was being used. Nagell, having lost contact with his CIA-case officer, felt killing a man would go a bit far. He decided to stop following orders. It seems, however, he was able to persuade Oswald he was being used.

Oswald, in his short career as Castro-sympathizer, had apparently made other (anti-)Cuban connections as well. His address-book listed: 117 Camp, 107 Decatur and 1032 Canal. These addresses have no meaning, unless you switch them around, to 107 Camp Street and 117 Decatur.

107 Camp Street is the address of Ronnie Caire. Caire was in charge of the public relations for Archacha Smith’s Free Cuba Committee, who also rented office-space at 544 Camp Street. The Free Cuba Committee was founded by one Robert Caire. Among its members it had the likes of David Ferrie and Gordon Novel.

117 Decatur is the address of Orest Pena. Pena, a member of the CRC, says he knew and saw Oswald in his bar on August 7, the day before the fight. Pena said he also saw Oswald talking to FBI-agent DeBrueys. Pena was an informant of DeBrueys and says he was threatened with death by the FBI-agent about ten days before Pena was to appear before the Warren Commission. Researchers who have talked to Pena feel his not exactly lying, but masking the truth; it seems Pena may hold some deeper secret. In June, Oswald had applied for a new passport, something he received the very next day, which seems odd considering Oswald’s earlier defection. The same day he applied, Pena also applied for a passport. Interestingly, he would soon visit East Germany, but just for one single day. Pena has never given an adequate explanation for that trip. It was later rumored that his Habana Bar was used as a meeting place for the assassins.

The meaning of 1032 Canal is unknown. One wonders whether Angel and Leopoldo might have been Caire and Pena.

Oswald himself said that he “infiltrated the Cuban Student Directorate and then harassed them with information I gained including having the New Orleans city attorney general call them in and put a restraining order pending a hearing on some so-called bonds for the invasion they were selling”. Whether this ever happened, however, is still a mystery. Oswald’s role as Castro-sympathizer was certainly an act and possibly orchestrated by others. Who?
CHAPTER SIX

HE’S A PATSY! HE’S A PATSY!

‘If you can meet with triumph and disaster and treat those two imposters just the same.’
_Rudyard Kipling_

A. A MEXICAN SEJOURN

On October 1, 1963, a CIA memorandum stated that an ‘extremely sensitive source’ had informed them that an individual named Lee Henry Oswald had been seen inside the Soviet Embassy, inquiring as to any messages were left for him. The CIA believed that this man was Lee Harvey Oswald, the man who had defected to the Soviet Union in 1959. On November 22, this information had also landed on FBI Assistant Director William Sullivan’s desk, who took it to Hoover, who took it to the White House and the National Security Council. It was this information that forced President Johnson to cut off this kind of information, arguing all this (if true) would lead the country into another world war, costing the lives of forty million American citizens.

Having been in contact with a Soviet Embassy and inquiring as to any messages were left seemed very sinister. What they apparently didn’t know was that Oswald was asking whether there was any information about his visa-applications he had requested a few days before. Oswald gave the impression he wanted to go to the Soviet Union again, passing Cuba along the way.

On November 23, Hoover’s memo on this CIA memorandum read that the FBI agents had seen photographs and listened to recordings. These agents concluded this individual was NOT Oswald. Hoover (or some other person), however, made a mistake: the FBI-agents in Dallas never listened to recordings since they hadn’t received any. They did see transcripts from these recordings.

Marina was informed of her husband’s alleged visit to Mexico, but was incredulous. She said Lee “never mentioned it”. Throughout September 23 till October 3, Lee had been in contact with her, she said. She believed he had been in or around Houston.

In front of the Commission, however, she allegedly said that she had asked Oswald to bring a souvenir from Mexico. Oswald did give her a silver bracelet, which was, however, not sold in Mexico but in some 5 & 10-cent stores in and around Dallas.

On November 29, a Mexico City newspaper published the photograph showing Oswald around the embassy, apparently a photograph taken by the CIA surveillance cameras. The position from which the photo was taken, however, did not correspond with the CIA-hide out, even though it was near enough to be mistaken for it.

The CIA’s information to the Warren Commission informed them that Oswald had been in Mexico from September 26 until October 3. The ‘proof’ that he had been in the Cuban Embassy...
on September 27 came from the testimony by Silvia Tirado de Duran, a Mexican woman working in the embassy; the proof he had been inside the Soviet Embassy on October 1 came from their own observation.

Duran remembered Oswald entering the Embassy around noon, informing Duran that he was an American citizen who wanted a transit-visa for the Soviet Union. He stated it was ‘urgent’ and that he would leave in three days. To prove his ‘credentials’ as a friend of Cuba, he showed Duran all kinds of information on his FPCC-activities from the previous months. According to the CIA, Oswald showed Duran his Communist party card. However, Duran felt the card was not right as it looked unused. Oswald, in fact, was no member.

Oswald, however, had no photographs with him and Duran directed him to a shop nearby. Later on, it was discovered there were no photos taken from Oswald at that shop. When he returned two or three hours later, Duran accepted his visa application and told Oswald to call her in one week. Oswald, however, didn’t have that much time and, after the Embassy had already closed for the day, Oswald told Duran the Soviets were willing to grant him his visa. Duran checked with the Soviet Embassy herself, who confirmed Oswald had been there but that his visa could take as much as four months. Oswald flew into a rage and the consul, Eusebio Azcue, had to be called in to put him outside the building.

Duran described ‘Oswald’ as about thirty-five years, of medium height with blue or green eyes and dark blond hair, consul Azcue totally corroborated these observations, only adding that his face was deeply lined, that he had straight eyebrows, thin cheeks and a nose that was straight and pointed. All these features are at odds with Oswald’s.

The CIA said it had bugged phone conversations between the Cuban consulate and the Soviet Embassy, on which a man named Oswald can be heard talking to the Soviet officials. In the conversation with the guard, he identified himself as Lee Harvey Oswald. Sylvia Duran, said that Oswald NEVER talked with the Soviet officials; all the talking was done by her.

Somehow, however, the tape of this conversation was translated and typed by Mr. and Mrs. Tarasov. They told researchers that the CIA officials did not treat these transcripts in the normal procedure and that they took them with them as soon as they were finished typing. The tapes were destroyed after they had been transcribed.

The CIA also claimed it had a total of eight taped telephone conversations to the Soviet Embassy by Oswald. Two, on September 27, were in Spanish, several others were in broken Russian. Other information came from photographs of a man who, according to the CIA, had entered and left the embassy in a pattern coinciding with that of Oswald. The CIA, however, said this photograph was taken on September 22, at a time when Oswald was not even en route to Mexico City. If the date was no mistake, it seems quite impossible to link this man’s actions (and the resulting photograph) to Oswald’s movements. This photograph had reached the FBI on the morning of November 22 and had been refuted as a photograph of Oswald by the FBI-agents in Dallas who were asked whether that man had been Oswald, causing the suspicion that the photograph might have been taken on September 22.

This same photograph was shown to Marguerite Oswald, Lee’s mother, on November 23 by FBI agent Bardwell Odum, asking whether the man in the photograph was Oswald. Marguerite, like the FBI-agents, said that was not a picture of her son. When her son was shot by Jack Ruby, she said that the man in the photograph had been Jack Ruby. Unless a photograph of Ruby instead of the photograph provided by the CIA was mistakenly shown to Marguerite, the man in the
photograph was not Ruby. But it nevertheless forced the CIA into releasing the date the photograph was taken.

There was even more mystery when Oscar Crontreras told his story. He and three friends were in the university cafeteria when ‘Lee Harvey Oswald’ introduced himself as a painter who had left Texas because the FBI was bothering him and who felt that life in the U.S. was not for him. He wanted to go to Cuba but the consulate refused to give him a visa. Crontreras had a few very good friends inside this Consulate and, thinking about it, he found it most bizarre that Oswald would have told them about his problems by sheer luck. Crontreras felt Oswald knew about his friendly liaisons with the embassy-personnel.

Crontreras did talk to the Cuban officials, who told him to break off all contact with Oswald. Oswald, however, took no ‘no’ for an answer and spent the night at their place, complaining and asking help about his visa. Crontreras also described ‘Oswald’ as 5ft6. The ‘real’ Oswald was at least 5ft9. Soviet consul Pavel A. Yatskov said that the man visiting the Embassy was not Oswald either. In 1979, the HSCA asked Edwin Lopez to investigate Oswald’s Mexican journey. Breaking his nondisclosure agreement, he said he had come to believe Oswald was impersonated at the embassies.

On March 14, 1963, Mexico said it remained “a neutral ground for Castro Communist traffic and travel in the Americas”. Mexico had remained neutral during World War II, so this was not necessarily a stunning statement. The press reported that the Cuban Embassy in Mexico was the “open door through which Communist subversives entered Cuba”. The U.S. had prohibited U.S. citizens from entering Cuba, but during a four month period in 1962, 73 U.S. citizens had entered Cuba via Mexico City. Six days later, the press reported that Cubana Airlines would fly from Mexico City to Havana twice a week.

On July 18, the State Department issued special permits to allow writers to accept invitations for the July 26-cele-brations, but on September 10, the State Department had banned U.S. participation at the congress of the International Union of Architects, taking place in Havanna from September 29 until October 3. Would-be delegates would receive no passports.

Though Oswald was apparently impersonated inside the embassies, he still might have been wanted to go to Mexico or even Cuba or even the Soviet Union. In fact, the Commission was persuaded that he did go there because of some actions on his parts.

On September 17, 1963, Oswald visited the Mexican consulate in the Whitney Building in New Orleans, applying for a Mexican tourist visa. He stated he was a photographer, with business address 640 Rampart Street. Oswald’s tourist visa was valid for fifteen days, after which he had to return or reap-ply.

On September 23, an eight-month pregnant Marina and June Lee took off to live, once again, with Ruth Paine in Irving. Lee told Ruth he was going to Houston or Philadelphia to search for work.

Two days later, on September 25, Oswald reportedly cashed a check at Winn-Dixie store, 4303 Magazine Street. At 12h20, he boarded Greyhound bus 5120 to Houston, apparently on his way to Mexico City.

Oswald arrived in Houston late at night and had now some time to kill, until 6h00 the following morning. That evening though, something happened rather strangely inside the Lord’s Church in Houston. Two youngsters, who identified themselves as Charles and Lee, asked Elmer and
Mariette Gerhart, the minister and his wife, whether they knew a “Carlos”, who had told them to come to the Gerharts should he somehow not show up at the bus-station, from which both of them had walked. They were supposed to go from New Orleans to Mexico and were to meet Carlos at the Houston bus stop, but Carlos hadn’t shown up; they asked whether they could phone. When Lee eventually got through to Carlos, “Carlos” said he would meet them within ten minutes in front of the Church. The Gerharts identified the mysterious Carlos as the son of one their friends, Charles Rogers, CIA-agent and a friend of Ferrie. The Gerharts would identify Lee when they saw the accused assassin. Lee Harvey Oswald, on television.

After this rather strange encounter, he ‘officially’ boarded Continental Trailways bus 5133 to Laredo at 6h00 the next day. At the border crossing, the Mexican official Helio Tuexi Maydon did not list Oswald’s mode of entry. He thought he remembered Oswald entering as a passenger with Mr. and Mrs. Stephen and Elaine Brill from Miami.

On the U.S.-side of the border, William M. Kline, chief of the U.S. Customs Bureau investigations in Laredo, Texas, said “Oswald’s movements were watched at the request of a federal agency in Washington”. It seems the FBI was still on Oswald’s tail. Eugene Pugh, who was in charge of the Customs office, said “Oswald was checked by American immigration officials on entering and leaving Mexico”, which was not the usual procedure. He claimed U.S. Immigration had a folder on Oswald’s trip.

On this bus was a British couple from Liverpool, Bryan and Meryl McFarland, who listened to Oswald talking about him being a secretary for the FPCC, of going to Cuba and hoping to see Castro there. On this bus, in Monterrey, two Australian girls joined the travelers. These girls, Pamela Mumford and Patricia Winston, however, do not appear on the passenger-list which was sent to the National Archives. Ms. Mumford and Ms. Winston described Oswald as very talkative, especially about his background and saw him eat large meals, two items that were characteristic of the ‘real’ Oswald.

On this bus was an elder passenger (75 years old), another Brit, Albert Osborne, who described Oswald as twenty-nine years old, 5ft8, 150 lbs., thin blond hair and a dark complexion, possibly Mexican or Puerto Rican. Osborne ‘managed’ a school in Mexico which trained orphans in how to become assassins. His contact-address was in Laredo and this seems to be the most logical reason to explain how he met ‘Oswald’. It is doubtful that the Warren Commission ever knew about the man and that he had such a ‘school’, which only, once again, shows the profoundness of their investigation. Should they have known, they would have needed a pretty good excuse to explain this little incident away.

Arrived in Mexico City, a “Lee, Harvey Oswald” apparently got room 18 in the Hotel del Commercio on September 27, paying USD 1.28 per night. Oswald’s name was written in a different handwriting than the other guests. No plausible solution was given; the Commission claimed the guests had to write in their name themselves upon arrival, even though this wasn’t Oswald’s writing. The same problem arises the following day when “Lee Harvey Oswald”’s name is, once again, written in another handwriting than the rest of the guest-list, making it look very much as if his name was inserted later.

According to the staff, Oswald left the Hotel around 9h00, only to return around midnight. Another guest at the hotel said he saw ‘Oswald’ in the company of four Cubans from Florida. On October 2, Oswald officially left Mexico on Transportes del Norte bus 332, occupying seat nr. 12. Oswald had ticket number 13688, which was traced to Chihuahuenes, who said they
hadn’t handled it. Oswald apparently used an alias, O.K. Lee. Arturo Bosch, a Mexican official, took the passenger list of Fleche Roja, another bus-firm. This list did not contain names either but ticket numbers, making these numbers traceable. The baggage-list listed the name ‘Lee H. Oswald’. Bosch also took the passenger list of Transportes Frontera, where seat nr. 4 was listed to a ‘Oswald’.

On October 3, crossing the border at Nueva Laredo, Oswald was believed to have crossed the border by car, not by bus as officially believed, leaving for New Orleans and not for Dallas, where he did go.

If Oswald ever made it past Houston, the ‘Commission’-evidence still leaves much to be desired and shows its usual signs of alteration and fabrication. If all the people who believed they saw Oswald were simply not mistaken (it was still another two months before Oswald would gain notoriety), it seems someone impersonated him not only in the embassies but on ‘his’ trip to Mexico City.

Manuel Porros Rivera was a Costa Rican. On September 13, he had received his Mexican entry visa in the same building Oswald had. From New Orleans, he had travelled to Miami, where he met with anti-Castro Cubans. On September 28, he visited the Cuban Embassy at least once, hoping to receive a Cuban visa. Oswald also visited the Embassy that same day. Rivera was 5 ft 7, somewhat older than Oswald. Rivera left Mexico City by bus on October 3 for Dallas, the same mode, the same day and destination as Oswald.

### Cuban disinformation

Apart from impersonations and fakery, there were also lies, or, as the intelligence agencies like to call it, disinformation.

Antonio Veciana, the leading figure of Alpha 66, said that his case officer “Bishop solicited me to intercede with a cousin of mine who worked in the Cuban Embassy in Mexico to see if he, for money, would agree to say he saw Oswald in the Embassy”. In short: CIA-agent Bishop attempted to fabricate false evidence against Oswald, trying to bribe Guillermo Ruiz, a Cuban diplomat.

Other disinformation-attempts, however, succeeded. On November 25, Gilberto Alvarado, code-named ‘D’, said that he had seen Oswald inside the Cuban Embassy on September 17. Alvarado was a Nicaraguan intelligence officer, ordered to spy inside the Cuban Embassy. ‘D’ had seen Oswald receive USD 6,500 from two men who wanted to kill someone. Oswald, however, had told these men they “weren’t man enough. I can do it”.

This meeting, however, was impossible because at that very moment, Oswald was applying for his Mexican visa. Nevertheless, the CIA station in Mexico sent this information not only to CIA headquarters, as could be expected, but it was also sent to the FBI, the White House and the State Department, making fully sure this ‘important’ piece of information reached a wide an diverse audience.

A good friend of Alvarado was CIA-agent David Phillips, a man who was specialized in propaganda and ‘just’ happened to be in Mexico City. Some people who had worked with ‘Bishop’, Veciana’s case officer, said that ‘Bishop’ was Phillip’s code name. Other friends of Phillips have always stressed that Phillips was NOT Bishop. A drawing of Bishop, however, was shown to Phillip’s closest family, who identified that man as Phillips. Other clues and ‘coincidences’ also make this identification seem plausible.
‘D’s allegations did receive corroboration from one Pedro Gutierrez on December 2, who claimed he saw Oswald at the Cuban Embassy as well and saw a money-transfer taking place. Gutierrez says he saw ‘an American’ leaving the Cuban Embassy in the company of a tall Cuban and saw them getting into a car. After seeing Oswald on television, Gutierrez identified this American as Oswald.

On November 26, John Martino, a member of the Mafia who was involved in the CIA-efforts to invade Cuba and destroy Castro, also claimed that Oswald was paid by Castro. But Martino didn’t stop there. He also claimed Oswald made a phone call to the Cuban Intelligence Service in Cuba from a private residence in Miami (probably implying it was V.T. Lee’s home) and that Oswald sold marijuana and handled the exchange of Cuban pesos for US Dollar in Houston. His ‘source’ was Oscar Ortiz, who was, he said, a member of an anti-Castro group “too sensitive to name” (sic!). He claimed Ortiz was known in Washington and might be a double agent. The FBI claimed there was no such ‘Oscar Ortiz’ and nobody else has ever found such a person either. Similar allegations were made by Frank Sturgis, also a CIA/Mafia man, who also claimed Oswald phoned Cuban Intelligence and had met with representatives of the Cuban government in Mexico and New Orleans.

Clare Booth Luce, wife of the founder of TIME-LIFE, claimed that she received a ‘hot tip’ in the evening of November 22. Two Cuban exiles from New Orleans called her, saying Oswald had returned from Mexico with a substantial sum of money and was the hired gun of a Cuban assassination team. The callers knew Luce because she had financed their raids on Cuba (both callers were members of the Free Cuba Committee), apparently hoped Clare Booth Luce, who had always supported the invasion-attempts on Cuba, would make it possible this ‘information’ appeared in Time or Life. Luce, however, said the callers should give their information to the Secret Service or FBI. The strange thing, however, is that, officially, Oswald’s trip was only known to the intelligence agencies at that time. The two did go to the FBI, who told them to “shut up”. Soon afterwards, one was murdered, while the other one was deported.

On November 26, the CIA station in Mexico stated it had a “sensitive and reliable” source that backed “D”’s allegations. “D”, however, retracted his allegations and then retracted his retraction, saying he had hoped the American authorities would have made it possible for him to enter the United States.

Around December 1, the Secret Service intercepted a letter to Oswald, postmarked November 23, Havana, stating “Oswald had been paid by (Pedro) Charles around November 10 to carry out an unidentified mission which involved accurate shooting”. An identical letter was mailed to Robert Kennedy, identifying Charles as a Cuban (Castro) agent, who had given the money to Oswald in Miami in early 1963. The letter was signed by ‘Mario del Rosario Molina’. Both letters were typed on the same type-writer.

On November 22, the Student Revolutionary Directorate, a Cuban exile group, published an extra edition of their magazine TRINCHERA, claiming Oswald had been in Miami during the Cuban missile crisis (October 1962), handing out FPCC literature around Bayfront Park during an anti-Castro rally and again in March 1963, which would make it coincide with the information given in that letter. It also stated that, in October 1962, Oswald handed out FPCC-literature at an anti-Castro rally, thus causing a riot. The magazine believed Oswald was there to infiltrate exile
groups; the bottom-line being they believed he was a Castro-agent on a mission to infiltrate ‘the enemy’.

On September 6, 1964, Marina, for the first time, talked about Oswald’s trip to Mexico in an unscheduled appearance before the Commission. This appearance followed the revelations, that, after three FBI and Dallas police searches through all of her and Lee’s belongings, new ‘evidence’ was found. Around August 20, Marina had stumbled upon a Spanish-language magazine and a Mexico City TV guide, which, ‘by sheer luck’ contained the bus ticket Oswald apparently used.

One week before the release of the Warren Report, the CIA provided the Commission with information on Kostikov. The information mentioned that Kostikov was in Mexico City since 1961 and that he was connected with Department 13, the ‘wet affairs’ (assassinations) department. Kostikov was chief of the Western Hemisphere, meaning that he cleared or initiated all assassinations plans for the United States. The CIA informed the Commission Oswald knew him and referred to him, in an intercepted letter, as “Comrade Kostin”. The CIA also ‘knew’, based on recordings, that Oswald had specifically asked for “Kostin”.

On November 22, FBI Special Agent Hosty, in charge of Oswald’s file, had said he never saw anything about Kostikov or the true identity (a high KGB-officer) “of the man Oswald was in touch with”.

Even though the CIA couldn’t have known, Department 13 had either ceased to function or even ceased to exist. The department had been badly compromised by two defectors; two KGB-assassins who, instead of killing their target, went to the other side. The first defection occurred on February 18, 1954, when Nikolai Khokhlov asked for asylum. Bogdan Stashinsky’s defection in August 1961, however, was much worse. Stashinsky, after his defection, stood trial for two murders he had committed. Back in the Soviet Union, this public ridiculing of the Soviet Union resulted in the sacking of about seventeen KGB-officers. The Politburo and the KGB leadership decided to abandon assassinations, resorting to it on the rarest occasions. Oleg A. Lyalin, who defected in 1971, corroborated this information, which had been given by previous defectors. This meant that there was no longer a thirteenth department.

The CIA, however, could not have known Kostikov was a member of this department. Beginning his posting in Mexico in 1961, there was no longer a Thirteen Department, meaning the CIA had not a single piece of information from which to deduce he was in some way linked to this department, let alone be in charge of it. This simply meant that the CIA had ‘framed’ Kostikov, who could have been nothing more than a low level clerk inside the embassy, perhaps not even connected to the KGB.

In 1964, after the Warren Report was released, Elena Garro came forward with her testimony of having seen Oswald with two companions at a party at Sylvia Duran’s home. Garro was an artist who shared her house with June Cobb, who, in 1963, worked for Winston Scott, the CIA chief of Station. On November 22, 1963, she was sequestered at a hotel by one ‘Manual Calvillo’ who forbid her to give testimony. The CIA, requested to check out her allegations, discovered that hotel records at Hotel Vermont in San Luis Potosí did show she had been staying at that hotel for eight days. Calvillo was identified as a CIA-agent, whereas State Department-officials would identify Garro as a ‘professional anti-Communist’.

The reported host of that party, Silvia Duran, was also arrested by Mexican police following the assassination, on November 23. DCI John McCone stated that her arrest “is (an) extremely
serious matter”. The CIA, via David A. Phillips, ordered the police to place her in solitary confinement. Duran was told she had a sign her ‘testimony’ first before she would be allowed to go home. After she signed, she was released, only to be re-arrested on November 27. Once again, it was the CIA who had ordered her arrest and had informed the police they had to take responsibility for everything that could go wrong. Nobody, including Duran, knew her arrest had been on a direct request from the CIA. This ‘testimony’ was the only evidence received from Duran, who was never interviewed by the FBI or Warren Commission or anyone else.

Salvador Diaz Verson, Carlos Prio’s Chief of Military Intelligence from 1948 till 1952 and, in 1963, an agent run by David Phillips, told Dr. Angel Fernandez Varela, a CIA-disinformation agent also run by Phillips, that he had ‘heard’ Oswald had stayed at Duran’s home and had subsequently met with the Cuban Ambassador at a restaurant called Caballo Bayo, whereupon the Ambassador and Oswald went for a ride. He also rumored Oswald had had a sexual affair, with Duran.

On December 3, the CIA reported that “a sensitive source” (which means a CIA-agent or a man who works as an informant for the CIA) informed them that a Cubana Airlines-flight on November 22 was delayed. The flight was scheduled to take off from Mexico City at 18h00, flying to Havana. The ‘source’ claimed it was delayed until 23h00, after a private twin-engine plane had landed at 22h30 and its unidentified passenger came on board of the Cubana-flight, without going through Customs. The passenger sat in the cockpit, not with the ‘normal’ passengers. Investigations, however, showed the Cubana-flight took off before the private plane had landed. Once again, there was disinformation.

But the ‘disinformation’ was even more ‘sublime’. This passenger was ‘probably’ Miguel Casas Saez, a Cuban of either 21 or 27 years old, stocky built and of medium height (5ft5). A CIA report dated November 5 and 15, 1963, said he was an admirer of Raul Castro, spoke Russian and was possibly a member of G-2 (Cuban Intelligence).

The CIA claimed that Casas Saez entered the United States at Miami in early November, 1963 (coinciding with the timing of ‘Pedro Charles’ money-transfer), using the alias Angel Dominguez Martinez.

A CIA-source in Cuba claimed Casas Saez, together with two friends, had been in Dallas on November 22, returning to Cuba the very same day. According to the CIA, his aunt said ‘Miguelito’ managed to leave through the frontier at Laredo’ and that he was ‘very brave, very brave!’ The CIA, of course, identified Casas Saez as being “capable of anything”, therefore assigning one of its best man to investigate this claim. The CIA also said Casas Saez was poorly dressed before he left, but was now dressing well and had much money.

The CIA, in fact, even had a source who had seen that plane land at Havana airport. They claimed a “well-known Cuban scientist at Havana airfield” had seen, on the afternoon of November 22, a plane land at the far side of the field. Its two occupants, who he identified as “Cuban gangsters”, did not go through customs. Upon informing, the scientist was told the plane came from Dallas. Apparently, Casas Saez’s friends had taken an earlier plane home. The CIA, however, did admit this ‘scientist’ was an ‘untested’ source, implying he might be telling disinformation.

Winston Scott, CIA Chief of Station in Mexico, was not satisfied with this investigation and wrote a report himself. His report apparently contained one surveillance photograph of what appears to be the real Oswald. Three CIA officers claim to have seen this photograph, two others
claim to have heard of it.
Upon Scott’s death in 1969, ‘a high official’ of the CIA flew to Mexico City to retrieve all material from Scott’s safe. This official was most probably James Angleton himself, even though some believe it was Lyman Kirkpatrick, the CIA’s Inspector General who had reviewed the Bay of Pig-invasion. Since Kirkpatrick was a wheelchair user, it seems hard to believe people could mistake Angleton for him, even though few people knew what the famous Angleton really looked like, making it, of course, possible for him to fly to Mexico City himself.
Thomas Mann, the American Ambassador in Mexico, always believed Castro was behind the assassination. He believed the CIA was embarrassed about something and therefore had to cover up the ‘Duran-episode’. Mann believed Scott was furious that there was a cover-up and therefore wrote his personal report. Mann himself received instructions NOT to investigate. CIA officer Richard Helms believed the “Ambassador is pushing the case too hard... we could well create flap with Cubans which could have serious repercussions”.

Even though it is possible the CIA covered up something that lead to Castro, it seems the CIA was covering up the disinformation-trails that lead to Castro, trails that had most likely been laid out by one of their own agents, David Phillips and his ‘cohort’ of conspirators.
In 1967, Comer Clark, a British tabloid journalist, said he had received, from Fidel Castro himself, the information that Oswald had told two people in Cuban Embassy he was planning to kill President Kennedy. This meant that Castro had apparently admitted he knew of the assassination before it occurred and did nothing to stop it. When the information was investigated in 1976, it was discovered that most of this information came from a good friend of Comer Clark, Nina Gadd. She said that not Castro but she had been the source of information. In fact, Castro denied ever giving such an interview and said he would never give an interview outside a restaurant, like Clark said he had. Gadd said her source had been a friend who was the foreign minister of a Central American country, of which he was a member of the ruling family. Gadd refused to name the country, making her source of information impossible to check, only highlighting the possibility her source either doesn’t exist or is not what he is supposed to be.
The Washington Post commented that these “partial transcripts given to the Warren Commission... for unexplained reasons failed to include Oswald’s offer of information and his suggestion that the Russian would want to pay his way to the Soviet Union”. David Belin, responding to this ‘information’, said that “if the Warren Commission had known of Oswald’s conversations and other new information, it would have been less sure that the assassination was not part of a foreign conspiracy”. Belin, of course, never imagined to check the validity of this “information”; old and bad habits die hard.
B. TWO TIMES OSWALD

These ‘Oswald’ sightings in Mexico City marked the beginning of two months in which various people would claim to have seen a man assumed to be Oswald on occasions the ‘real’ Oswald couldn’t have been there.

Joe Burton, an FBI undercover said, had been told by Tampa’s FPCC Vincent Ted Lee, a former merchant seaman, that Oswald had visited Tampa ‘shortly’ before the assassination. Burton claimed Oswald met Gilberto Policarpo Lopez, a Cuban American who left the USA on November 23. This meeting apparently took place, Burton believed, on November 17, when Oswald’s whereabouts were in fact unaccounted for. Policarpo Lopez had fled Havana in 1960, emigrating to Florida, where he remained pro-Castro. His brother was with Castro’s troops and had even been to the Soviet Union for military training. At a meeting in Tampa on November 17, the day he reportedly met Oswald, he had expressed his desire to return to Cuba. Three days later, he was issued a Mexican tourist visa and, on November 23, he did cross the U.S. border at Nueva Laredo, like Casas Saez had apparently done the day before. Two days later, he was in Mexico City, on the very day ‘D’ told his story to the U.S. Embassy. On November 27, Lopez flew to Havana in a plane which had a crew of nine and one single passenger. By March 1964, the CIA claimed he was “involved” in the assassination.

On November 26, John Martino was interviewed on Miami radio WQAM and ‘informed’ that Oswald had been with the FPPC in Florida and had gone to Cuba via Mexico in September.

There was, however, disinformation of a more serious kind.

Robert McKeown, a mob-linked arms dealer and ‘friend’ of Ruby, said that Oswald and one ‘Hernandez’ had been planning a revolution in El Salvador and told him, either in late September or early October, that they could give USD 10,000 for four .300 Savage automatic rifles with telescopic sights. McKeown said he refused.

Manuel Artine’s representative in Nicaragua, Miguel de Leon, together with Sixto Mesa spreaded disinformation that tried to inculpate the Cubans. He said that Oswald had master-minded the plot. de Leon told the story to Fernando Penabaz, a friend of Oswald’s “friend”, Carlos Bringuier. Penabaz said he (or de Leon and Mesa) had seen Oswald talking to a Cuban intelligence agent in Nicaragua.

In early October (perhaps October 5 or 7), Mrs. Lovell Penn, a teacher living on a farm outside Dallas, heard gunfire coming from her cow pasture. She saw three men firing a rifle. She ordered them to leave. She felt that one of them was Oswald and she gave one of the empty cartridges to the police, who identified it as a bullet from a 6.5 mm Mannlicher-Carcano, but NOT from the rifle the police had in its possession.

On November 1, Morgan’s Gun Shop in Fort Worth, had a ‘rude and impertinent’ customer who boasted about his Marine-career. He wanted ammunition for his rifle. Three witnesses corroborated the manager in his description of the scene. That same day, ‘Oswald’ opened PO Box 6225 in Dallas. The card was signed by both Lee and Marina. Marina, however, was not in Dallas at that time (15h00); that day, FBI-agent James Hosty visited her at Ruth Paine’s house, enquiring about Lee’s whereabouts. A strange coincidence? Hosty says he believes Oswald was a KGB-agent and that “the public has been subjected to a double disinformation campaign. First by
the U.S. government that was afraid of starting World War III and then by the Soviet and Castro ‘apologists’ who felt they were saving detente and the peace process”. Either Lee faked his wife’s signature or someone else faked both Lee’s and Marina’s.

The next day (or November 3), ‘Oswald’ visited a furniture-store that had still an old sign of a gun shop above its door. ‘Oswald’ informed about the gun shop, but was informed it was an outdated sign. Oswald had arrived in a two-tone blue and white 1957 Ford automobile, accompanied by his wife and two children. ‘Oswald’ was described as talking a foreign language to his wife, who was identified by Edith Whitworth and Gertrude Hunter, both managing the Furniture Mart, as Marina. Marina denied ever having gone over there. The women said Marina was wearing a pink coat; she did have such a coat. They also said Oswald said the baby was two weeks old; the exact age of Rachel, who was born on October 20, two days after Oswald’s twenty-fourth birthday.

The women couldn’t remember what Oswald wanted, even though the FBI claimed Oswald wanted a part for a gun. The Report identified this ‘part’, without any evidence’, as a ‘firing pin’. According to author Joachim Joesten, the firing pin of the Mannlicher-Carcano WAS defective on November 22.

Between November 4 and 8, Dial Ryder, an employee at Irving Sport Shop, the shop to which he was referred to, and Charles W. Greener, his employer, worked on a rifle, making two holes for a telescopic sight. The order was for one ‘Oswald’. The DPD received this ‘information’ from an anonymous tip on November 24. Ryder denied making this phone call; perhaps ‘Oswald’ made the call?

The rifle was probably retrieved on either November 8 or 9. On November 9 or 10, ‘Oswald’ was seen at the Sports Drome Rifle Range, where he was shooting almost nothing but bull’s eyes. He talked to one Garland Slack who said Oswald had told him his neighbor (Buell Wesley Frazier) drove him to the Range. The following week, ‘Oswald’ shot at his neighbor’s, Garland G. Slack’s, target, with a 6.5 mm Italian carbine. On November 9, that same day, manager Hubert Morrow of the All Right Parking Systems at the Southland Hotel, had a job interview with Lee ‘Harvey’ Oswald, who also asked Morrow how high the Southland building was and whether it commanded a good view of Dallas.

The real Oswald was with his family at Paine’s residence in Irving, apparently working on a letter to the Soviet Embassy, referring to the usage of his ‘real name’ and his ‘visit’ in Mexico City and his meeting with one ‘Kostin’. The Warren Commission claimed Oswald arrived on November 8, hiking a ride with his colleague and neighbor Buell Frazier, but Marina said Oswald arrived at 9h00 on November 9. Who drove him?

On November 16, Dr. Homer Wood and his thirteen year old son identified Oswald as the man next to their booth at the Sports Drome Range. His son, Sterling, identified the rifle as a 6.5mm Italian rifle with a four-power scope and it emitted a “ball of fire” when it was fired. Wood’s son said the man left with a “man in a newer model car”. This ‘Oswald’ was also seen at the Range on November 20 and 21, at times Oswald was at work. William Ray Fuller says he saw a man who resembled Oswald sighting in a rifle on a makeshift range near Irving, a day or two before the assassination. ‘Oswald’ was accompanied by “a young boy in his late teens” (Frazier?). Between November 12 and 21, Oswald didn’t visit his wife in Irving.

Two days before the assassination, Wayne January, manager at the RedBird Airport, said two men and one woman asked whether they could rent an airplane for November 22 for going to
Mexico. January said they felt not right but did feel one of them strongly resembled Oswald.

Apart from the ‘rifle’-impersonations, Oswald was also impersonated on a few other occasions. On November 8, ‘Harvey Oswald’ was seen twice in Irving, once trying to cash a check with Leonard Hutchinson, a grocer, for USD 189, a substantial amount of money for Oswald. A barber, Clifton Shasteen, remembered giving a haircut to a man who later entered Hutchinson’s supermarket; the man said he was visiting his wife. Shasteen remembered seeing Oswald with a fourteen or fifteen-year old boy and also remembered a car with Marina in it. ‘Oswald’ made leftist remarks and said his shoes had been purchased in Mexico. The night manager of Central Western Union said that Oswald had picked up several money orders just four days earlier, on November 4.

In early November, Ed Brand, an automobile insurance salesman, was visited by one ‘O.H. Lee’ who inquired about an insurance but never returned. ‘Oswald’ did show interest in buying a car. Albert Buy Bogard was a salesman at Downtown Lincoln-Mercury in Dallas. Between 13h30 and 14h00 on (according to the FBI) November 9, a man came into the showroom, asking for a demonstration. The man wanted a two-door Caliente Mercury Comet. The man tested the car on Stemmons Freeway, driving recklessly, up to 85 mph. The prospective customer said he couldn’t buy the car yet, but he would have enough money within the next two to three weeks. When news of the assassination was broadcasted on the afternoon of November 22, Bogard was upset, producing a business card on which Oswald’s name was written on. Bogard wanted to stay clear of any controversy, but Jack Lawrence, against Bogard’s wishes, phoned the FBI between 18h00 and 20h00 that evening. One salesman at Downtown Lincoln-Mercury, however, said it was not November 9 but November 2. The chief salesman Eugene M. Wilson, reportedly remembered Oswald told them perhaps he had to go to the Soviet Union to buy a car and also said Oswald was ‘short’.

After passing a lie detector-test and appearing before the Commission, Bogard was apparently beaten up and decided to leave Dallas. On February 14, 1966, Valentine’s Day, Bogard was found dead in his car in Hallsville, Louisiana, apparently having committed suicide by connecting a hose to his exhaust, dying from asphyxiation. Friends described Bogard as extrovert and was about to marry for what could have been his third time.

The day before the assassination, at 10h30, Ralph Leon Yates, a refrigerator service man, picked up one ‘Lee Harvey Oswald’ near Beckley Street (where ‘O.K. Lee’ rented a room) and dropped him off at Houston and Elm Street, at the Book Depository. ‘Oswald’ carried a package in brown paper, which contained ‘curtain rods’ and talked about “F____” Kennedy whom they should shot from the top of a building or from a window, the Carousel Club and showed Yates a photo of a man with a rifle and a pistol in a holster. Yates’ claims were corroborated by Dempsey Jones.

A picture of this ‘second Oswald’ shows a man claiming to get money in the near future and hopes to by a car with that money, who practices with a rifle and shows his expertise with it. If this doesn’t show he intended and wanted and could kill the President,...

Taking a quick glance at this ‘evidence’ and taking it at face value could lead the mind to the conclusion there was a payment for a murder on a president by a man with excellent marksmanship, accompanied by a Cuban intelligence agent, if not on orders from G-2.
A man (or a Commission) putting all these pieces together could come up with just this: Cuban involvement. This conclusion could be strengthened by Oswald’s alleged visit to the Cuban Embassy and the ‘fact’ that somebody saw Oswald receive money from some Cubans... for the killing of the President. The Commission, in one of its brilliant reasoning, said these sightings could not be Oswald as Oswald was always known to be somewhere else at those times. The word ‘impersonation’ was apparently unknown to the Commission members.

If it hadn’t been for President Johnson’s indirect order not to come up with any foreign involvement (and FBI Director Hoover’s coaxing of the Warren Commission to come up with the lone assassin-theory), the Commission could have decided Oswald acted on orders of Castro. If President Johnson would have acted upon this ‘information’, this could have been resulted in an outright war with Cuba or, much more likely, an invasion of Cuba. The people who would benefit most of this action, should it succeed, would have been the anti-Castro Cubans and American CIA-agents and Mafia-employees, some (like David A. Phillips and John Marti-no), who spread this very disinformation.

On November 22, Papa Doc Duvalier claimed he had sent some of his zombies (in voodoo: people who were dead but somehow made live again) to Texas.

Castro followed all these events with a French journalist. Jean Daniel, who was interviewing him at that time. Castro told him they would try to blame it on him. Daniel wrote that “the Dallas police were now hot on the trail of the assassin. He is a Russian spy, says the news commentator. Five minutes later, correction: He is a spy married to a Russian. Fidel said, “There didn’t I tell you? It’ll be my turn next.” But not yet. The next word was: the assassin is a Marxist deserter. Then the word came through that the assassin was a young man who was a member of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, that he was an admirer of Fidel Castro. Fidel declared, “If they had had proof, they would have said he was an agent, an accomplice, a hired killer. In saying simply that he is an admirer, this is just to try and make an association in people’s minds between the name of Castro and the emotion awakened by the assassination. This is the publicity method, a propaganda device.”

An accomplice?

As mentioned: on one of the occasions ‘Oswald’ was practicing at the Sports Drome, ‘Oswald’ said one Buell Wesley Frazier had driven him to the range. Frazier was a next-door neighbor of Ruth Paine, where Marina was staying at that time. Frazier, a nineteen year old boy, had come to Dallas in mid September and had found a job at the Texas School Book Depository. Frazier’s sister, Linnie Mae Randle, was talking with her neighbor Ruth Paine and Ruth talked about Oswald looking for a job. Linnie Randle said that her brother had told her of a vacancy at the TSBD; Ruth decided to inform Lee he might find a job there; and he did. On occasion, Lee and Buell drove home together, whenever Lee wanted to visit his wife and children.

On Thursday, November 21, they drove to Irving together and in the morning of November 22, they would both drive to work. On that morning, both Buell and his sister apparently saw Oswald carrying a paper bag, containing curtain rods, Oswald told his mate.

After the assassination, Buell Frazier was, perhaps not surprisingly, arrested. After an interrogation, he was driven back to police headquarters and was asked whether they could administer a polygraph test. The test was allegedly performed by R.D. Lewis, who would later comment there was “no test”. Officially, however, it was stated Frazier had passed the test. Other
officers informed researchers the test was inconclusive, that Frazier was simply too frightened.

Suspicion

Even the Warren Commission’s staff wondered whether all these events, particularly using Oswald’s pro-Castro feelings as justification could be interpreted in the light of a conspiracy, with Oswald as the patsy. Staff counsel William Coleman and attorney David Slawson stated in a memo that “Oswald could have become known to the (anti-Castro) Cubans as being strongly pro-Castro. He made no secrets of his sympathies, and so the anti-Castro Cubans must have realized that law enforcement authorities were also aware of Oswald’s feelings and that, therefore, if he got into trouble, the public would also learn of them.” Though Coleman and Slawson, in their belief Oswald was the actual assassin, then explained how anti-Castro Cubans might have deceived Oswald, making him believe other pro-Castroites would help him escape whereas these people were really anti-Castro Cubans, they did come up with a very fine conclusion. “THE MOTIVE OF THIS WOULD OF COURSE BE THE EXPECTATION THAT AFTER THE PRESIDENT WAS KILLED OSWALD WOULD BE CAUGHT OR AT LEAST HIS IDENTITY ASCERTAINED, the law enforcement authorities and the public would then blame the assassination on the Castro government, and the call for its forceful overthrow would be irresistible. A ‘second Bay of Pigs invasion’ would begin, this time, hopefully, to end successfully”. As just seen, this is exactly what happened: Oswald either volunteered to act as or was set up as a pro-Castro sympathizer, who afterwards, in Mexico City and Dallas, was in contact with Cuban government officials and ‘trained’ to become an assassin. Oswald’s name did come to the police attention and, because of the Tippit murder, was arrested even before becoming a suspect in the Kennedy assassination. His pro-Castro sentiments did surface immediately, as did his defection to the Soviet Union of three years before. And there were people, probably President Johnson as well, who feared and suspected Castro might have influenced Oswald into his crime, even though he killed nobody, which means he was set up, possibly and probably by the anti-Castro Cubans would did hope that his arrest would result in such an invasion.

If Coleman and Slawson’s suspicion are correct, and they seem to be, it would mean the Kennedy assassination was more than an assassination to get rid of the President. It was also a political act that hoped to initiate a set of movements that would result in the installation of a new president and a new type of government in Cuba.
PART THREE

CONSPIRACY! CONSPIRACY!

Oswald did not kill anyone and seems to have been framed as the patsy. In the analysis of the evidence against him and his actions in the latter part of his short life, we have stumbled upon characters who might have been knowingly creating this false impression and therefore might probably have been involved in a conspiracy to frame Oswald, if not to assassinate President Kennedy.

If Oswald wasn’t the assassin or the sole assassin, then there must be other assassins in and around Dealey Plaza. An analysis of the events as unfolding in Dealey Plaza would therefore possibly teach us more about who the conspirators/assassins were and how the conspiracy worked.

If there is a conspiracy, it is possible Dallas was not the only city or site where they tried to assassinate Kennedy. They might have tried earlier and elsewhere, only succeeding in late November of 1963 when Kennedy drove through Dallas’ Dealey Plaza.

If we learn answers to all these ‘if’s, the answer to the question of whether there was a conspiracy in the assassination can be given, either positive or negative. Even should we be unable to find a motive for the conspirators (should we discover there was a conspiracy), then there would still be ground to state there was a conspiracy, motive unknown.
CHAPTER SEVEN

COUNTDOWN TO DALLAS-DAY

‘Those who persist, will eventually succeed.’

A. PLANNING THE DALLAS TRIP

In 1963, the Dallas FBI Bureau was manned by 75 agents. One of these agents was James Hosty, whose desk contained a file about one Lee Harvey Oswald. Even though Oswald killed nobody, the Warren Commission did portray him as a man who should have been watched and considered a risk for the president’s health, especially because Hosty knew Oswald was working in the Texas School Book Depository, a building located along the motorcade-route. The problem, however, is that Hosty was never officially informed what streets the motorcade would pass through. Hosty was only interested in the news it would pass Main Street, where he hoped, like so many Texans, he could get a view of the President. After all, that was why Kennedy came to Texas.

Originally, Kennedy had to go to Texas because he was asked to dedicate a hospital facility at Brooks Air Force Base in San Antonio, but everyone wanted to turn it into a political fund raiser in a state that might turn away from the Democrats in the not so distant 1964 presidential elections. Because of a political quarrel, Fort Worth was added to this scheme, also because one of the largest Defense contractors, General Dynamics, promised to vote for the Democratic ticket if they visited ‘their’ city. General Dynamics was working on the TFX, which was a 6.5 billion dollar contract with the government.

Some basic decisions about the trip were made on June 5, when Connally, Johnson and Kennedy met in the Cortez Hotel in El Paso, Texas, when Kennedy was returning from a speech at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. August 27, Johnson’s birthday, was put forward as a possible date, but those were the ‘dog days’ in Texas and nobody would come out to see Kennedy. The ‘triumvirate’ agreed Connally would come up with a plan. And he did: he proposed Kennedy would come down in the fall, that there would be one political dinner in Austin instead of the originally proposed four dinners in Houston, San Antonio, Fort Worth and Dallas. All the other visits would be non-political, but still public-relations.

On October 4, Connally called the White House about some details. Connally was now ‘officially’ the planner in Texas, whereas O’Donnell would play that role for the White House. A one day scheme was proposed but Connally told the White House there could be no motorcade if the president would be in Dallas for just one day. The visit was therefore lengthened. Connally’s major proposal was that the President should bring along his wife, Jacqueline. Three days later, after what appears to have fearsome resistance from Jacqueline, Salinger informed the press that Jackie would be accompanying her husband on the Texas-trip.

On October 24, Adlai Stevenson, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, was severely beaten up during his visit to Dallas. He, like others, warned the President that the atmosphere in Dallas was very unfriendly and hoped he would reconsider going down South.
Normally Jerry Behn would have been in charge of the Secret Service on the Texas-trip, but Roy Kellerman was asked to plan and lead the Secret Service detail on this trip. Bruno did make an initial inspection on October 30 and November 1 and got the distinct impression Connally wanted to humiliate Yarborough during Kennedy’s visit. The Governor and Senator were clearly not the best of friends and Connally, using his friendship with Johnson and his governorship, seemed to want to play up with Kennedy, thus humiliating Yarborough.

Trying to find a suitable site in Dallas to hold the luncheon, Bruno preferred the ballroom of the Sheraton-Dallas Hotel. Unfortunately, an organization had already booked that room and the staff informed them ‘politely’ the President simply had to find another place. Texas had learned to hate Johnson because he had joined Kennedy in 1960. Connally even had to ‘apologize’ to the Dallas leaders for Kennedy coming to their town.

Bruno also liked the aula of the Dallas Memorial which could hold up to 11,000 people. Connally, however, felt there would be too many ‘idiots’ among the guests, people who wanted to stage some sort of incident to humiliate Kennedy, and many other Dallas’ citizens wanted to protect the reputation of Dallas.

The choice was now limited to the Women’s Building at the Cotton Bowl, a markethall on Industrial Boulevard and the Trade Mart. The markethall would be holding a convention of the lemonade-fabricants, where Richard Nixon would make an appearance, so Bruno preferred the Women’s Building, only to meet a stern “no” from the locals. Connally believed the Women’s Building’s ceiling was too low to build striatons in the dining hall. He believed the Trade Mart was more to his liking, even though it had a series of low-slung catwalks above the lobby, which meant it would be impossible to secure the President’s visit there.

When Lawson visited Dallas some days later, there was still no decision on the lunch-venue. Lawson himself preferred the Women’s Building as well, but left the decision to the White House: he could live with both ideas.

On November 14, Police Chief Curry immediately realized Winston Lawson, an ex-Army Counter Intelligence agent, would be directing all of the planning. When Captain Lawrence of the Dallas Police Department said they normally had four motorcycles on either side of the limousine, immediately to the rear, Lawson said that would be “too many” and proposed two motorcycles on either side, along the rear fender. The Police also proposed a squad car of their Department behind the Vice-presidential limousine, but Lawson, again, did not agree; Curry, the day before the presidential arrival, protested against this decision, to no avail.

Back in the White House, O’Donnell compromised with Connally on the Trade Mart, but without the striations, as Connally had hoped for. With the site for the luncheon known, a motorcade-route could be planned.

On November 18, riding the planned motorcade route for the first time, Dallas Secret Service head Forrest Sorrels, a native Texan who celebrated his thirtieth year with the SS, decided he would include the Main-Houston-Elm Street turn as the “most direct route”; the Industrial Boulevard route was “no good” because it was full of winos and broken pavement, which might be used as ‘ammunition’ by rioters against the passing President.

Michael Tortina, chief inspector of the Secret Service, said that in every situation a motorcade has to slow down and make a sharp turn, the whole area had to be checked beforehand. Winston Lawson, Chief Curry and Sorrels found it impossible to check all 20,000 windows. Using some form of logic, they decided to check none. Apparently, during the ride along the motorcade route,
Lawson did ask what kind of building that Depository was. Curry and Sorrels apparently answered that it was just a depot for schoolbooks.

On November 22, Kenneth O’Donnell, in Houston with the President, was called by Sorrels about whether or not the bubble would be put on. Sorrels, acquainted with the local weather, thought the wind would drive away the clouds and O’Donnell said that if the rain stayed away, the bubble should not be put on. Some time later, O’Donnell said the rather prophetic words that “if anybody really wanted to shoot the President of the United States, it was not a very difficult job—all one had to do was get on a high building someday with a telescopic rifle, and there was nothing anybody could do to defend against such an attempt”. That someday would be today, even though O’Donnell would discover it was not a high building but a grassy knoll. Kennedy, on his part, said more or less the same, but he said that since nothing could be done to stop such an attempt, he wasn’t going to worry about it.
B. POSSIBLE PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS

The Secret Service receives dozens of threats against ‘their’ President every day. In 1963 alone, there were 2500 death threats against Kennedy, an average of eight threats a day. Some of these are obviously crank-threats or jokes, others appear to be more genuine, even though they quite often turn out to be cranks as well. As a former SS-agent said: crazy people maybe crazy, but they are not stupid, i.e. they don’t go through with it. One can seriously doubt whether a ‘real’ assassin would inform anyone of his intentions, least of all the Secret Service.

Earlier that year, one Richard P. Pavlick had tried to smash his dynamite-loaded car into Kennedy’s limousine and a North Carolina plumber, Doyle Alien Hicks, had even driven his pick up 446 miles to Washington, stopping in front of the White House and informing the Secret Service that “Communists are conquering the state”. Though he wasn’t the only one to think that thought, one hour later, Hicks did ram his truck into the White House gates and could only be stopped 25 ft. from the front door. Still, the Secret Service hadn’t opened and returned fire since two Puerto Rian nationalists shot at President Truman in 1950.

On November 22, 1963, somebody (or a group of people) did successfully shoot at the President. Some people, though not the Warren Commission, wondered whether it was a ‘first time lucky’ or whether there had been previous ‘real’ or planned attempts against President Kennedy’s life that fall.

Wisconsin

After the assassination, a box full of handwritten notes were taken from a Dallas apartment, probably the residence of a Dallas woman, ‘Mary’. Deputy Billy Preston and Constable Robie Love gave the box, which contained evidence linking Ruby and Oswald together, to D.A. Henry Wade, an act that was witnessed by Mike Callahan and Ben Cash.

Among the papers were Mexican news clippings, a photocopy of a “Daily Worker” press card for Jack Ruby, a receipt of a motel near New Orleans during 1963 with Ruby’s and Oswald’s names on it, calls to Mexico City, these numbers identified as the Soviet and Cuban embassies, papers on a landing-strip in Mexico City, notes on meetings with agents in Laredo and McAllen and a church brochure with markings on something about going to Cuba. Perhaps most interesting, there were also papers about a plan to assassinate Kennedy when he dedicated a lake or a dam in Wisconsin. Corroboration that such a plot might have existed comes from what appears to be Oswald’s signature on a restaurant registry in Hubertus, Wisconsin, on September 16, 1963. Kennedy did speak in Ash land, Wisconsin, on September 24, the first day of Oswald’s disappearance from New Orleans, even though the Commission said he only left New Orleans for ‘Mexico City’ on September 25.

Wade said it was possible he had received such a box, “but I know whatever they had didn’t amount to nothing”.

On September 20, 1963, one Richard Case Nagell entered an El Paso bank, tried to make it look as if he was really robbing it, ran out, only to wait outside for the police to arrive. Nagell claimed that in mid-1963, the CIA had suspicions a group of New Orleans CIA contract agents where hatching a plot to kill Kennedy. Nagell was asked to penetrate that group. Nagell discovered Oswald, Shaw, Banister and Ferrie were all Involved, but thought Oswald was simply being
used. Nagell learned the attempt was to take place in the last week of September, even though he thought it would happen in the Washington, B.C.-area. He did know that Oswald was somehow going to be used in this attempt. When Nagell tried to inform his case-officer of this plot, he learned that man had been reassigned. When a letter to Hoover went unanswered, he feared he was going to be branded by the authorities as one of the plotters and therefore felt it would be best if he either left the country or be in a situation which would prevent him from being named a suspect: in jail at the time of the assassination. Unfortunately for Nagell, the assassination attempt was postponed and his bank robbery was not considered to be a misdemeanor but a serious felony. He was eventually convicted to ten years.

Chicago

On November 2, 1963, President Kennedy was scheduled to visit Chicago for the Army-Air Force game at Soldiers Field. To be totally impartial, he was also scheduled to sit in each team’s camp for one half of the match.

Even though he himself had to appear impartial, the White House staff tried everything to give Chicago a good view of the President, probably not intending someone could thus more easily shoot at him. Scheduled to arrive at 11h00 at O’Hare, a motorcade was planned on the Northwest Expressway down to the Loop.

As in Dallas, the motorcade had to make a slow left-hand turn on the Jackson Street exit to reach the stadium. To make matters worse for the security people, about 45 groups would be crowding the area. With so many people planning to see the President, a few nuts would certainly try to do the same.

On Wednesday, October 30, 1963, the Secret Service learned of such a threat. The FBI had received information from their informant “Lee” that there an attempt to assassinate the President was planned when he was visiting Chicago. It was not the FBI’s jurisdiction, so they simply passed the information on to Secret Service agent Lawrence Stocks. “Lee” had told the FBI of a four-man conspiracy; four men who were rightwing fanatics carrying rifles with telescopic sights. “Lee” believed the attempt would occur at one of the Northwest Expressway overpasses.

The Chicago Secret Service consisted of only eight men. One of these was Abraham Bolden, the first black Secret Service agent. He would confirm such a threat was received by the Chicago Secret Service. Bolden said that a four-men team, one of them a Latin, was going to kill the President with high-powered rifles. Even though Myron Weinstein was called in from the Minneapolis office, it was a landlady who gave the Secret Service what they needed.

On October 31, she phoned the Chicago police four men were renting rooms in her house; she had seen four rifles in one the of rooms. The Secret Service set up a twenty-four hour surveillance. Even though Stocks followed two of the team members, they realized they were under surveillance when Stocks followed their car into a one-way alley.

Maurice G. Martineau, the acting agent in charge, tried to make the best of the situation and ordered they had to be taken into custody. On November 1, Stocks and Robert Motto unsuccessfully tried to get information from the two men. The two other team members were still at large.

As if this wasn’t enough, an unknown source had informed the police that one Thomas Arthur
Vallee was planning to assassinate the President as well. Vallee was a thirty-year-old ex-Marine (like Oswald), with a record of extreme paranoid schizophrenia, even though this was diagnosed by military doctors. Born and raised in Chicago, he had been stationed at Camp Otsu in Japan, another U-2 base. After his Marine-days, he had joined the John Birch Society and had trained anti-Castro guerilla groups in and around Levittown, Long Island. Their target: assassinate Castro. Recently, he had found employment as an apprentice at IPP Litho-Plate at 625 West Jackson, which was locate along the motorcade-route. Working on the third floor, he had a commanding view of the exit ramp where Kennedy was likely to be hit.

The Secret Service asked the Chicago Police to do the surveillance on Vallee. Captain Robert Linsky selected Daniel Groth and Peter Schurla, both members of the Task Force-unit. At 9h00 on the morning of November 2, Groth and Schurla arrested Vallee, just to get him of the street when the president was due to arrive. ‘Officially’, Vallee was arrested when his white Ford Falcon made a left turn without the proper signal. On his front seat, they found a hunting knife; perhaps 750 rounds of ammunition were found in the trunk of the car (both men don’t remember). When Sgt. Lawrence Coffey and Sgt. James Madden searched Vallee’s apartment at Paulina and Wilson, they found an M-l, a carbine, a handgun and probably about 2500 rounds of ammunition. All of this ammunition was purchased in New York, perhaps during his days as a Cuban exiles trainer. The serial numbers, however, were never officially checked.

After having appeared before Judge Walter J. Kowalski’s Rackets Court, Vallee was taken to the 20th District where he was locked up. He was released in the evening of November 2. Years later, Vallee said he had been framed and that he never wanted to kill the President, even though he didn’t like him. He claimed the threat he had made was out of its context. Thinking about who might have framed him, Vallee said that the first information identified his middle name as ‘Patrick’, even though it was ‘Arthur’. He did, however, use the name ‘Patrick’ when he tried to enlist at an early age in the Marine Corps.

Unfortunately to the two assassins on the loose, Kennedy did not visit Chicago that day. On November 1, the president of VietNam, Diem, had been murdered. At 9h30, Pierre Salinger announced the visit would not be cancelled; a special communications centre would be constructed at Soldiers Field. Forty-five minutes later, however, people in Washington stressed they didn’t want the President to go to Chicago when two trained assassins were waiting for him. So the visit was cancelled: ‘Kennedy had to stay in Washington to follow the developments in Southeast Asia.’

After the assassination, the FBI visited Jose Mills, a Mexicana ticket agent who informed them that Flight 800, from Mexico City to Chicago on November 1, carried one M. Lee and R. Martin. He also told them that on November 12, one J. Oswalt made the same trip. Having set out to find a foreigner Lee Martin and one Wilfred Oswalt, they had found three people. But that’s all they found; no further efforts to locate these people were taken. Like in Wisconsin and Dallas, one ‘Oswald’ seems to have been around, if only in name. Like in the Dallas disinformation campaign, there was one Mr. Lee, a man who just happened to the President of the FPCC, an orgdnia-son to which Oswald belonged and whom he had linked with Communism.
Miami

On November 18, Kennedy visited Miami, the cradle of anti-Castro sentiment because of the massive amount of immigrants who had fled Castro’s Cuba.

On November 9, Miami police received information from ‘informant 88’, William A. Somersett, who had talked to his friend Joseph A. Milteer, an extreme rightist who was member of the Ku Klux Klan and the National States Rights Party (among others). Captain Charles Sapp, head of the Miami police Intelligence Bureau, listened to the tape of the conversation.

Milteer and Somersett had been talking about assassinating Kennedy, when Somersett asked “how the hell do you figure would be the best way to get him?”

“From an office building with a high-powered rifle... ”, Milteer replied.

“They are really going to kill him?”

“Oh, yeah. It’s in the works.”

“Boy, if that Kennedy gets shot, we have got to know where we are at. Because you know that will be a real shock.

“They wouldn’t leave any stone unturned there. No way. They will pick up somebody within hours afterwards... just to throw the public off.” Milteer referred to the use of a patsy. Even though there were no specifics as to where this attempt would take place. Captain Sapp informed the FBI and local Secret Service, telling them that he feared an attempt would take place on November 18. All agents were briefed on this attempt.

It seems that the Secret Service took this threat very seriously; they decided to cancel a motorcade, ‘fearing that there would be trouble with the anti-Castro Cubans’. It was decided that instead of the motorcade, Kennedy would be flown to and from the Americana Hotel, where he had to hold his speech. It is, however, obvious Milteer didn’t mention that such a plot would take place in Miami.

Reportedly, there was also a threat from the Cuban exile group Alpha 66 which would apparently try to ram Air Force One with a small plane. This might have been the real reason why a helicopter was used.

Apparently, a Cuban exile belonging to Alpha 66 said at a John Birch rally in October 1963 in Dallas that they are working on ‘it’, leaving no room for alternative interpretations of the ‘if.

“Get him out?... I wouldn’t even call him President. He stinks. We are waiting for Kennedy the twenty-second, buddy. We are going to see him, in one way or the other. We’re going to give him the works when he gets in Dallas.”

The Secret Service had information from their Miami bureau that there WAS a plot, but Milteer never hinted that that plot would be carried out in Miami. Apart from the possible Alpha 66-raid, there has not been found any evidence to back the claim by a Mafia-source who said that he was ordered by the Mafia to investigate which of their men were or could have been involved in the assassination and that he learned there were three plots before Dallas: Chicago, Miami and Houston.

Houston

Just a few days later, on November 21, President Kennedy started his Texas-trip. Landing in San Antonio, he then visited Houston, before going to Fort Worth, where he would leave for Dallas in the early morning of November 22.
Bruce Carlin, the husband of Carousel Club stripper Karen ‘Little Lynn’ Carlin to whom Ruby sent money just before shooting Oswald, said he and Jerry Bunker had gone to Houston on November 20 or 21, visiting the Motel Drug Service to provide them with ingredients. Whereas Bunker returned on November 20 at 21h42, he was apparently not accompanied by Carlin, who was in New Orleans on November 22.

Ruby also visited Houston on November 21. Mrs. Billy Chester Carr said Ruby phoned her on November 19 and on November 21, between 14h30 and 15h00. Ruby, in Houston that day between 14h30 and 19h15, passed Kennedy’s motorcade route and was seen near the Rice Hotel, where Kennedy was staying. By 22h00, he was back in Dallas, in the Egyptian Lounge where he met some old acquaintances.

Like so many others, Karen and her husband were harassed. Karen had to testify in March 1964 at Ruby’s trial. While waiting, a jail break occurred, the men pointing and waving weapons in front a very pregnant (a baby boy was born on April 23) Karen, who hysterically said “he’s after me”. In February, her grandmother had filed a “missing report” on her, even though her grandfather had always known where she was. Appearing before the Commission in August 1964, they said they wanted “a normal life”. In August 1964, one Teresa Norton (an alias of Karen) was said to have been killed. It appears, however, that Karen, like other witnesses, have gone under ‘deep cover’; some might have entered (however unlikely that might be) a witness protection program.

George Bush, a citizen of Houston, informed the authorities that one James Parrot wanted to kill the President in Houston. Both were active within the Republican party and apparently cherished hopes to become elected for Congress. Bush, in fact, would be elected the next year.

That evening, Kennedy’s Secret Service men visited “The Cellar”, an establishment owned by Pat Kirkwood, the son of W.C. who was a friend and had been a friend of Ruby. The news of this trip was spread nationally by Drew Pearson, who said they had stayed until 3h00. Even though “The Cellar” had no license to sell alcohol, some admitted the drinking, “two beers at most”. At least three agents guarding Kennedy’s suite took their coffee-break at The Cellar, leaving two Forth Worth firemen to guard Kennedy’s room. Reporters, checking out the story, found out that seventeen agents, who had to be up and ready at 7h00, were there till 3h30, some of them giggling the fire department was guarding Kennedy.

Ruby had provided some strippers for their entertainment which seemed to last until 5h30, not 3h30. The manager, Jimmy Hill, said “they were drinking pure Everclear. They were bombed”. He said that a call came from the White House, asking not to say anything about what had happened. Drew Pearson, rightly so, felt that he had to make it public knowledge these agents had not performed their duty.

Godfrey McHugh, on duty as the man who had the codes for the nuclear missiles, left his post with Kennedy and visited friends in his hometown.
C. ADVANCE WARNINGS

On September 4, 1963, Louis De Wit, a Belgian sailor, met what appeared to be a Russian sailor in a pub in the Belgian port of Antwerp. On a drinking bout, the sailor identified himself as Ivan Kutsharenko, a Russian officer from Kiev, even though De Wit could see five other passports, all carrying different names and nationalities. The sailor told De Wit he was leaving for the States the next day. Talking about VietNam and China and how Kennedy would handle that situation, Kutsharenko told him “there’ll be no Christmas 1963 for John Kennedy. By then, he’ll be dead and buried... Kennedy must go... Believe it or not. Everything is already set up, and there is even a plan to eliminate the killer”. De Wit, on November 20, decided to write to FBI-director Hoover, but the letter didn’t arrive in time.

In early November 1963, the NSA-station in Metz, France, received a message about the OAS. Army PFC Eugene B. Dinkin, 25 years old at the time, working as code clerk deciphering foreign broadcasts that were monitored by the NSA, ran, early in the morning, into the office of his superior, shouting “President Kennedy was to be killed in Dallas”. Because nobody listened, Dinkin went AWOL to Switzerland, where he repeated his story to the U.S. Consulate in Bern. Dinkin was soon to be arrested, sent to Walter Reed’s psychiatric ward for four months, followed by his Army discharge.

On November 10, Robert Morrow says he received a telephone conversation from Eladio del Valle. Morrow had been asked to buy rifles and transceiver for an unspecified job in July. These rifles had been picked up by Ferrie. Valle reportedly told Morrow “they are for Texas!... For the big one... In Dallas. A head of state, remember?... I found out about it last night. Kennedy’s going to get it in Dallas”.

A few days before the assassination. Rose Cheramie was thrown out of the Silver Slipper Lounge by the manager, Mac Manual, when she was getting high on drugs and was either injured because of this or because she was hit by a car when hitchhiking. Louisiana State Police Lieutenant Francis Fruge drove to Eunice, La. and took ‘Melba Christine Marcades’ (the real name of Rose Cheramie) to the State Hospital in Jackson, La. Cheramie said she had worked for Ruby and claimed that the two Italian men she had been driving with from Florida to Dallas were going to kill Kennedy, after dropping of heroin in the Oak Cliff section, then going to Galveston to pick up a shipment of drugs, finally picking up Cheramie’s child in Houston. One of the men she implicated was Sergio Archacha Smith, a member of the CRC and a friend of Ferrie, the other one one ‘Osanto’. Fruge, checking this story after Kennedy was killed, learned that the seaman and the ship which Cheramie had implicated as being involved in the drug deal did check out, as did her story she had been in the Lounge with two men, who were described by the owner as ‘pimps’. Cheramie had told the same story to Dr. Victor Weiss who had told it to Dr. Bowers. Fruge contacted Will Fritz, who flatly told him he was not interested.

On September 4, 1965, Cheramie was run over by a car near Big Sandy, Texas. Ruby’s ex-strip dancer who had also claimed Ruby and Oswald knew each other and were even good friends, was thrown from a car that drove over her head while the driver was “trying” to avoid her. Fruge
discovered that the driver had given a Tyler, Texas address that was non-existent.

That same day, November 20, two police men passing through Dealey Plaza saw several men standing behind the wooden fence who were aiming at mock targets over the fence. When the two officers ran to the fence, they ran to a nearby parked car and fled the scene.

KGB defector Yuri Nikolayevich Loginov said that the KGB knew Kennedy was going to be killed at least thirty-six hours before he was killed. Loginov listened in on some men and heard the word ‘Dallas’ several times.

On November 21, Maurice G. Martineau, still acting head of the Secret Service in Chicago, learned from his informant Thomas Mosley that a Cuban exile Homer Echevarria had been negotiating the sale of machine guns. He boasted his group would now have plenty of money and would make the buy “as soon as we take care of Kennedy”. Martineau passed this as urgent communique to his headquarters, requesting a top priority investigation.

That same day, Gregory Basila, a San Antonio pharmacist, was told by a Cuban that “Kennedy will be killed in Dallas tomorrow”.

Interestingly, it seems that evening Maude Shaw, nanny to Kennedy’s children, overheard Caroline tell her brother John they were going on a big adventure that evening and that they wouldn’t sleep at home and that they would have to behave nice.

Karyn Kupcinet, the daughter of a childhood friend of Ruby, apparently had foreknowledge of the assassination as well. She was overheard discussing the assassination by the operator. Karyn was found dead on November 24, 1963, the same day Ruby shot Oswald.

Twenty-five minutes before Kennedy was killed, an anonymous caller told the Cambridge Evening News that if it would contact the U.S. Embassy in London, it would get ‘big news’. Even though nobody at the paper seemed to know of this, the CIA, in the person of Angleton, investigated the rumor and hinted that the caller was someone from the Soviet Embassy. It seems Angleton had made up his mind who he wanted to be seen as the person or organization behind the assassination, even though it seemed nothing but a wild rumor.
CHAPTER EIGHT

ONE SUNN FRIDAY IN DALLAS

E.M. Dealey: “We need a horseman to lead our nation and many people in Texas and the South-West think you are more someone who rides Caroline’s little bike.”

J.F. Kennedy: “The people of Dallas will be happy once it is after noon.”

“William Pearson” was a man who could fly airplanes, was a CIA-agent and knew both David Ferrie and Johnny Rosselli. On the morning of November 20, 1963, he was taken from the Loxahatcee Road Prison in Florida to West Palm Beach Airport. He was asked to fly a 182 Cessna to Tampa, from where he would continue his ‘mission’. After having spent the night in the Congress Inn in Tampa, he met one Reinaldo Martinez and Enrico Martez at the airport. Both were drug pilots for Santos Trafficante, the latter also being one of his bodyguards. They flew to New Orleans’ Lakefront Airport inside a D 18 Beechcraft Twin, where they picked up “Dwayne Chesthower”, who was in his early thirties and blond. From New Orleans, they took off for Houston, where they spent the night. In the early morning hours of November 22, the two Latins, Chesthower, Martinez and Martez, along with Pearson and his co-pilot “Rojas” took off for Dallas inside a DC-3, registered to Regina Airways, which also contained crates and boxes that had been loaded into it in Houston. Pearson arrived at Garland Field Airport near Dallas at 9h00, whereupon his passenger unloaded and took off and he went to visit a friend who lived nearby. Around 14h00, Chesthower and Martez returned to the airport and Pearson and Rojas took off. They learnt of the assassination and Kennedy’s death via the radio. Whereas Pearson and Rojas were shocked, his two passengers showed no emotions at all; they seemed pleased. Arriving in Houston, Pearson spent a few days in that city, after which he left for New Orleans, where Pearson was put in jail for six hours when the Dallas FBI-office had caught up with him. But perhaps we run too far ahead of ourselves and the events.

On the morning of Friday, November 22, Dallas looked forward to the upcoming visit of the President. Kennedy was expected to lunch at the Trade Mart and final ‘touches’ were done inside the hall. Passer-by’s through Dealey Plaza also believed they were witnessing such preparations for the presidential arrival within the next few hours. Between 9h30 and 10h00, Julius Hardie, passing through the Plaza, saw three men on top of the triple underpass. He saw that two of these men were carrying long guns. Around 10h00, Lee Bowers, sitting in his tower besides the railroad yards behind the grassy knoll, saw that the police no longer allowed people onto the parking lot between the railroad lines and the School Book Depository. This parking-lot was leased by Deputy Sheriff B.D. Gossett. To get on the lot, you needed a key.

Shortly before 11h00, Julia Ann Mercer, employed by Automat Distributors, saw a green Ford pick-up truck with a Texas license plate standing still at the right side of Elm Street, in front of the grassy knoll. Behind the wheel was a heavy-built, middle-aged man, dressed in a green
jacket. After the assassination, she was shown several photographs; from these, she was able to identify the man. On the back of the photograph she read the name of the man she had just identified: Jack Ruby. In fact, Ruby did wear such a jacket that day. Ruby’s companion, a white male of about 28-33 years old wearing a grey colbert jacket, brown pants and a plaid shirt, took what looked like a rifle case out of the truck and walked up the grassy knoll. Mercer thought these people were Secret Service or police, especially because she saw three policemen standing on the railroad-overpass who didn’t react to what was happening below them; these policemen felt that that car simply had broken down.

Shortly before noon, Philip Hathaway and John Lawrence saw a tall man of about six foot five and 250 pounds moving on Akard Street towards Main Street. This man who was in his early thirties had blond hair in a crew cut and was wearing a gray business suit carried a rifle in a leather and cloth gun case. This could have been the same man seen by Ernest Jay Owens who saw a heavy-built man with a foreign rifle coming out of parking lot on Wood Street, near the Good-Lattimer Expressway. Ernest Jay Owens saw a man on Wood Street who came out of a parking lot with a foreign made rifle. The man was a white male and heavy-built and wore a dark-colored suit.

When all these preparations were taking place, Joseph Milteer, the man who said Kennedy was going to be shot from an office-building soon, telephoned his friend Somerset back in Miami at about 10h30 CST. He told Somerset he was in Dallas and that Kennedy was there as we 11. He told Somerset that Kennedy wouldn’t return to Miami.

Forming the motorcade at Love Field, the press pool station wagon, scheduled to be car number 6 in the motorcade, riding before the presidential limousine, was moved back, behind the Secret Service car, to the fourteenth position. At the same time, the presidential limousine was moved from the seventh position to the second. Like always, Kennedy sat slumped, as is evident on all photographs of the motorcade. Vice-President Johnson wanted Governor Connally to sit in his car. The most widely circulated story (and the truth) is that Johnson and Yarborough were not on friendly terms, yet they had to sit in the same car together in the motorcade. Johnson asked his life-long friend Governor Connally to sit in his car, moving Yarborough to Kennedy’s car.

Back in Dealey Plaza, Lee Bowers saw an unfamiliar car entering the parking-lot behind the grassy knoll-area in the north of Dealey Plaza at 12h10. Bowers thought it strange since most people were regulars who had a key.

It was a blue and white 1959 Oldsmobile station wagon with an out of state-license, covered with mud, driven by a middle-aged white man with partially gray hair. Bowers felt as if the man was looking for a way out; because there wasn’t one, he turned around, leaving the way he had entered.

The driver was Chauncy Marvin Holt, who, together with Joe Canty, Charles Nicoletti and Leo Moceri, had come from Pete Licavoli’s Grance Ranch in Arizona. Nicoletti and Moceri were dropped off at the Adolphus Hotel. Joe Canty, a pilot, was dropped off at RedBird Airport. Entering the parking lot (of which he had received a key from “David Palmer”, a CIA-agent who had told Holt what to do), Holt was under the impression that they were going to stage some protest rally when President Kennedy would pass through the Plaza. Holt, a master forger, had prepared fake Secret Service credentials, which he distributed upon his arrival in Dealey Plaza. The Secret Service insignia for the Texas trip (double white bars on a red background) were known three weeks in advance, even though it may be they were somehow changed when
arriving in Dallas. In distributing these fake credentials and handguns, he was helped by Homer Echeverria and Orlando Bosch. Echeverria had previously hinted Kennedy was going to be killed, a threat the Secret Service knew about. Orlando Bosch had fled Cuba and became an active member of Operation 40 and a friend of Frank Sturgis. He was known for his terrorist acts. Antonio Veciana had helped Echevarria and Bosch in getting these guns.

About five minutes later, a black 1957 Ford with Texas plates entered the lot. The driver held something to his mouth (apparently a walkie-talkie or phone) and drove with one hand, entering the parking-lot a bit further than the first car. After three to five minutes the car left.

But only a few minutes later, around 12h22, a third car. a white 1961 or 1962 Chevrolet four-door Impala with out—of-state licenses and also covered with mud entered the parking-lot. The driver was a white male with long blond hair, about twenty-five or thirty years old. This car seemed especially interested in the area just behind Bowers’ tower. After cruising the area for five minutes, this car parked in front of the Book Depository. At 12h15, a man had what appeared to be an epileptic seizure. Officer D.V. Harkness requested, at 12h18, an ambulance. Harkness said this man didn’t lose conscience. According to Mrs. Philip Will is, the man walked away even before the ambulance arrived. If correct, it means two men are lying. One of them is Aubrey Hike, the ambulance driver, who also said the man didn’t lose conscience, but that he did bring him to Parkland Hospital. When the President was brought in, he realized he wasn’t about to get treatment and left the hospital. No record was retrieved.

The victim is man number 2. On December 2, one Jerry B. Belknap paid USD 12.50 to Aubrey Hike, the fare for the ambulance ride. Belknap said he had been unconscious; he had become an epileptic after he was hit by a car.

In later years, Aubrey Rike remembered that in the three weeks before the assassination, he had received about six to eight false ambulance calls, all near Dealey Plaza. It took Rike about ten minutes to get there and, with a motorcade scheduled to arrive at 12h25, his arrival, with wailing sire-nes, might have been the perfect distraction for the assassins. His ambulance, 606, however, was not at the funeral home at 12h20, but at a car dealership at the corner of Harwood and Cedar Springs (along the motorcade route), one mile from Dealey Plaza.

At 12h30, the importance of everything these people in and around Dealey Plaza had witnessed dramatically changed. Someone was shooting at the motorcade.

On films and photographs taken during the assassination, we see that Bill Greer, the driver of the presidential limousine, brakes and looks towards Kennedy. Even though he himself said he didn’t get a view of the President, photographs show he could see the president and they suggest that he did see him.

What is more difficult to believe though, is that Greer keeps his foot on the brakes and keeps staring towards the President until the last shot has rung out. Jacqueline later commented that “if Greer had hit the gas before the third shot. Jack might still be alive”.

In the Secret Service car, riding just behind the presidential limousine, agent John Ready wanted to run to the Presidential limousine but was held by fellow agent Emory Roberts. The only agent who did react was Glint Hill, who was only added to the detail after Jacqueline had asked for him.

Whereas it was reported that Kennedy’s Secret Service agents didn’t react at all, it was claimed Johnson’s agents reacted immediately. They reported agent Rufus Youngblood ‘jumped’ on Johnson, forming a human shield between a possible assassin and the Vice-President.
Yarborough, riding in the same car, said nothing of that kind happened, that there was simply not enough place in the car for this. According to Yarborough, "both Johnson and Youngblood ducked down while Youngblood had a small walkie-talkie over the back car’s seat. He and Johnson put their ears to the device. It was turned down real low. I couldn’t hear to what they were listening". Both Hill and Youngblood were decorated. During the reconstructions, nobody could perform Hill’s dash to the limousine as fast as he done. But it was too late: President Kennedy was fatally shot.

Between 12h30 and 13h00, the Dow Jones went down 21.16 points, the biggest drop since 1929, and six million shares were traded. Nevertheless, it is estimated some 500 million in profits were made before the Stock Exchange closed exceptionally early at 14h00. Some of the stocks were sold before the drop. When the market reopened on November 26, the Exchange made a 21 billion advance, the biggest single-day rise. After a killing on Wall Street, there was an almost Messianic resurrection.

Commenting on the ‘success’ of the assassination, Milteer believed that “everything ran true to form... (there’s no need) to worry about Oswald getting caught, because he doesn’t know anything.”
A. THE THROAT WOUND

James Altgens, a professional photographer, took a picture of the President’s limousine at a time which seemed unimportant when he clicked the shutter, but which turned out to be most important when the film was developed as a result of it.

The picture shows President Kennedy reacting to a shot by clutching his hands around his throat. The doctors in Parkland Memorial stated that there was a neat and small ‘puncture’ wound located there and described it as an entrance-wound.

The Warren Commission did use Altgens’ photo, but in a heavily cropped version. The reason for this cropping is that the non-cropped version shows something that would have destroyed the Warren Commission’s scenario completely. The non-cropped version makes it possible to exactly time the moment that photograph was taken by counting the lines on the road, thus making it possible to link it to a certain frame on the Zapruder-film, the 187th frame (Z’87) to be precise. This shows that no assassin in the sniper’s nest could have hit President Kennedy because a tree obscured his view. Interestingly, Dulard’s photo, taken thirty seconds after the last shot, and Powell’s photo, two minutes after that shot, show a rearranging of the boxes that make up the sniper’s nest. According to the Warren Commission, nobody was present on the sixth floor during that time.

Because the shot entered the President’s throat, it meant it had to be fired from in front of him since Kennedy was looking in front of him, even though the Dallas doctors thought, assuming the Depository was identified as the sniper’s position, Kennedy had faced that building. The Zapruder-film clearly shows the president facing forwards. This means that the shot came from the direction of the grassy knoll area. People in front of the grassy knoll said that the first shot did come from behind them. Some of them ducked to the ground, afraid they were going to be hit because they were standing in the line of fire.

However, when we put this sniper’s position (standing behind the wall on the knoll) on an accurate map of Dealey Plaza, it is evident that it is almost impossible this man could hit the President. He would have to shoot through the ‘Stemmons-Freeway’-sign that is visible in the Zapruder-film and some people, the Chisms, who were standing on the sidewalk. It is possible that this assassin fired, but didn’t hit the President; that he hit the sign instead. This sign was dug up and disappeared that same afternoon. In photographs taken the following day, there is no sign of such a sign. James Hicks, in Dealey Plaza at the time of the shooting, said he saw a bullet-hole in it. Hicks was in a position to know: photographs taken in Dealey Plaza soon after the assassination show him handling a radio-transmitter. Questioned by Garrison, he confessed he was the radio coordinator in the assassination. He said that the communications center was set up in the Adolphus Hotel, just across the street from Ruby’s Carousel Club. This is the hotel where Holt dropped off Nicoletti and Moceri. According to Robert Morrow, that center was commanded by Manuel Rodriguez Quesada, local head of Alpha 66. After having testified to Garrison, Hicks was locked up in a military hospital for the insane for no apparent reason. Manuel Rodriguez was apparently killed in the fall of 1964 by a CIA mercenary named John O’Hare. Morrow suspects the conspirators feared Rodriguez might talk. As it turned out, Rodriguez did not talk, but Morrow did. He claims that on July 1, 1963, Tracy Barnes asked him to buy and alter four 7.35 Mannlicher-Carcano rifles purchased from Sunny’s Supply store in...
Baltimore so that they could easily be assembled and disassembled. Shortly afterwards, Eladio Del Valle asked whether Morrow could supply him with transceiver. These items were picked up by David Ferrie in the first week of August. Morrow thinks they were intended to be used in the assassination of Costa Rican president Juan Bosch, who was, however, eliminated before others could try to do the same. It is therefore possible Ferrie was left with three weapons and transceiver and might have decided to use these to assassinate President Kennedy. Morrow thinks that at least one of those rifles was used. It seems the transceivers were also used.

It is possible, if not likely, that Youngblood and Johnson were listening to these radio communications of the assassins. It’s totally absurd to imagine they were listening to a local radio-station in the middle of the shooting to find out what was happening; they couldn’t have been listening to the police’s communications as their channel was stuck. No other communications are known of.

But back to the shooting. At the time of the reconstruction, a new sign with totally different dimension was used, thus making the whole reconstruction implausible because this sign was a most essential ‘ingredient’ since it featured in the Zapruder-film and was thus used in most calculations concerning the position and timing. This was reason enough to replace the sign, bullet-hole or not: when you change the scenery, you change the conditions for the reconstructions, which are thus no reconstructions at all.

So who shot the President?
Photos taken at the time of the assassination show a rather peculiar episode just in front of the Stemmons-Freeway sign (apart from the bullet hitting Kennedy’s throat). A man, wearing a black suit, unfolds his umbrella when the limousine is approaching him. He pumps the umbrella two feet into the air, holding it with both hands on top of each other (like holding a baseball-bat or a tennis-racket when hitting a two-handed backhand) and, as soon as the final shot is heard, lowers the umbrella and folds it up again: exactly twenty-two seconds. Even though everyone is running in all directions at that moment, he sits down on the curb, where he is joined by what looks to be a Mexican or a Cuban with black hair, wearing a white shirt, a white jacket and black trousers. When ‘The Umbrella Man’ opens his umbrella, this ‘Latin’ standing at the other side of the road puts his right arm high in the air as if giving a sign. When he sits down next to our Umbrella Man, a photo shows him talking into a walkie-talkie, only heightening the suspicion that in some way he might have given a sign to begin the shooting in sign-language and possibly through a walkie-talkie as well. Sitting on the curb, The Umbrella Man looks one last time at the motorcade still passing under the railway underpass, stands up and walks towards the Depository Building. Our unidentified ‘Latin’ moves towards the underpass, passing people who are running onto the grassy knoll, simultaneously putting something (probably his walkie-talkie) into the back of his pants.

Researcher Robert Cutler came to believe that this umbrella man was the man who had fired the first shot that hit the President in the throat. He theorized that this umbrella concealed a weapon. Charles Senseney, a weaponry developer for the CIA at Fort Detrick, Maryland, came forward and said he had developed such an overhead flechette launcher. Fort Detrick was ‘famous’ (to the few who actually know) because it was also the headquarters of the CIA’s biological warfare program. Some of the poisons which the CIA tried to use against Castro were developed here. Senseney said that his dart-firing weapon was silent in operation and was fired through the webbing when the umbrella was open. In 1963, the CIA had received fifty of these umbrellas.
In August 1978, after this theory received media attention, researcher Penn Jones, Jr. (a friend of Cutler) was contacted by someone who informed him this Umbrella Man was a Dallas insurance salesman by the name of Louis Steven Witt. Researchers almost rushed to Witt’s house, but discovered Witt only wanted to acknowledge he had been in Dealey Plaza; nothing more. Witt was invited to appear before the HSCA and even brought with him his umbrella. Unfortunately for Witt, his umbrella had ten ribs, whereas that of the real Umbrella Man had only eight. It was also obvious that what Witt said he had done in no way corresponded with what photographs showed to be the actual movements of the Umbrella Man. Researchers felt that Witt had been coached into identifying himself as the Umbrella Man, as if someone was trying to give a normal explanation to this most remarkable event.

Cutler and others believe this Umbrella Man was Gordon Novel, the man who either co-operated with or infiltrated Garrison’s probe in 1967. Comparing photographs of the Umbrella Man with Novel has convinced many both are the same person. Novel has never denied these allegations, even though there is no further evidence than a very good comparison between the two persons. Gordon Novel’s background does link him with other suspects in the assassination. In early April, 1961, he and Ferrie raided an ammunition bunker in Houma, La., and stored the stolen weapons inside Banister’s office until they could be used for the Bay of Pigs invasion.

The FBI agents at the autopsy believed this wound could be made by an ice bullet which had some paralytic agent and melted. They came to this conclusion/idea because no remains of a normal bullet were discovered in that wound during the autopsy. It is, however, possible that the small dart was removed during a pre-autopsy investigation of the body. This could explain how the throat-wound that was small had ‘grown’ in seizure by the time the body was in Bethesda for the autopsy.
B. CONNALLY’S WOUNDS

Nobody could argue with the fact that Governor Connally’s wounds were fired from the Book Depository and this was very beneficial to the Warren Commission, even though Connally claimed he was shot at another moment than the Commission ‘knew’ he had been hit.

At around 12h25, both the electricity and the phones inside the Depository had gone out of order, until just after the assassin. It stretches the limits of ‘coincidence’ a bit too far when you consider this Depository was used as a sniper’s nest and the set-up for Oswald’s sniper’s nest.

Arnold Rowland saw two men on the sixth floor of the Depository. One was a man standing in the most western window of the sixth floor at 12h22. This man was in his early thirties, had black hair and wore a light colored shirt which had a polo underneath it and had dark trousers. The other man was a slender, balding Black, about 55 years old, wearing a colored plaid shirt, who stood in the ‘sniper’s nest’ until 12h25.

Robert Edwards and Ronald Fischer saw, just before they could see the motorcade, a man in the most western window of the fifth floor. Dressed in a light shirt and having light-brown hair, this man appeared to be hiding but nevertheless seemed to be watching something around the triple underpass.

Carolyn Walthers saw two men standing in that same window. One man, in a kneeling position, was the same man Edwards and Fischer saw; the other man, wearing a brun suit coat, was standing next to him.

Photographs by Tom Dillard, chief photographer of the Dallas Morning News, and Beers show that these windows were wide open. These window also has an unobstructed view to the ‘target’ on Elm Street.

The man in the kneeling position had a rifle and was, according to Mrs. Walthers, wearing a white shirt and had light brown or blond hair. The man standing next to him was apparently the same individual seen by Richard R. Carr who saw this man in the window next to the sniper’s nest. Carr said this man wore a hat and horn rimmed glasses.

Spectators on the third floor of the Book Depository had been pointing at a young man on street, wearing a plaid raincoat and horn-rimmed glasses. Police, following the indications of these people, arrested this man. The crowd around this man screamed they hoped he would die and “I hope you burn”.

James Worrell saw another man running out the back of the Depository. This man had dark hair, wore a dark shirt or jacket open down front and light-colored pants and had nothing in his hands. He ran towards Dealey Plaza and seems to have vanished into thin air.

After the assassination, Carr saw the man he had seen on the sixth floor and who might possibly have been shortly arrested, again, walking very fast on Houston Street towards Commerce Street, then to Records Street, where he got into a 1961 or 1962 Grey Rambler Station Wagon, which was parked just north of Commerce on Record Street. The driver of this car was a man that looked like a black person. This Rambler was seen again, though, with the same driver in it, by Roger Craig and Marvin Robinson. They saw this car on Elm Street, where a man looking exactly like Lee Harvey Oswald (and in all probability it was him) into this car. When confronted with Craig’s identification, Craig said Oswald said that ‘everyone would know now who I am’.
Getting into the same car with a man who stood next to a member of the ‘hit team’ is, in fact, highly suspicious. Roger Craig also identified the driver of the station wagon. Craig said that the Dallas Police seized a Latin from Elm Street and arrested him. According to Craig, they released him when this man tried to explain he didn’t speak any English. Normally, this would be cause to arrest such a man; apparently, the Dallas Police acted just the opposite that day. Craig described this ‘Latin driver’ as having short dark hair, with a white windbreaker-type jacket. This description matches that of the Umbrella’s man accomplice.

Nobody ever traced the whereabouts of Lee Harvey Oswald during the weekend prior to November 22. Harry Reynolds, living in Abilene, Texas, however, said that on November 17, Pedro Valeriano Gonzalez got a message from Lee Harvey Oswald. Gonzalez was the president of the Cuban Liberation Committee and thus knew Antonio de Varona from the CRC. The message read that Gonzalez, not home, had to call him urgently; he had listed two phone-numbers. Gonzalez immediately made a call from a phone-booth. That same day, Gonzalez visited Reynolds’ family. The newspaper headlined “Incident-Free Day urged for JFK-visit”, which seemed to excite Gonzalez very much, even though he was not supposed to have much knowledge of English. On November 24, Gonzalez wanted all photos and negatives Reynolds had taken of him. Gonzalez then moved to Los Angeles, where he disappeared in June of 1964. Even though his whereabouts are unknown, he hasn’t totally disappeared into eternity.
**C. THE HEAD WOUND**

As a result of being shot in the throat, was positioned more upright in his car and becomes an easier target to hit. Whether intentionally or accidentally any rifleman had now an easier target to aim at. Using the Zapruder-film, it is easy to identify the frame showing the fatal headwound as frame 314.

Just in front of the grassy knoll, on the steps, Emmet Hudson, the groundkeeper in Dealey Plaza, was sitting next to a man in his late twenties who had found a parking space in the lot behind the grassy knoll and had come down the steps to watch the motorcade pass. This young man threw himself on the ground and urged Hudson to do the same. Somebody was shooting from behind them the motorcade.

Dave Powers and Kenneth O’Donnell, who were sitting in the Secret Service car, told Tip O’Neill, Speaker of the House, that they were sure they heard two shots from behind the stockade fence on the grassy knoll. When O’Neill pointed out to them that wasn’t what they had told the Commission, O’Donnell said he was absolutely right. He said he had told the FBI what had happened, but they said it hadn’t happened like that. They said he had imagined that, so O’Donnell didn’t push the issue and made a deposition stating what they wanted to hear. O’Donnell said he didn’t want to cause more pain or troubles for the Kennedy family.

On the railroad overpass, there were thirteen railroad workers and two policemen. Eleven of them said at least one shot came from the grassy knoll; seven of them saw smoke on the grassy knoll. Not one of them was asked to appear before the Warren Commission. Patrolman Joe Marshall (also a suiting name) smelled gunpowder when he entered the grassy knoll-area. An NBC-photographer even had a frame of his film that showed this smoke hanging in front of the trees on the grassy knoll. Even though this is full-proof evidence something exploded on the grassy knoll, the Warren Commission tried to argue this evidence away, claiming ‘modern’ rifles didn’t cause smoke. Experts, however, say the Commission is, once again, blatantly wrong: deficient ammunition could cause white smoke, but, more likely, a recently oiled rifle could cause white smoke as well.

Normally, a motorcycle agent would have hindered this assassin’s possibility of hitting the President. Films, however, show that motorcycle agents who ride along the front of the presidential limousine, next to the driver, drop back to the rear of the limousine just as they turn on Elm Street, even though they could easily have remained along the front. Perhaps unwittingly or otherwise planned, they create an unobstructed view from the grassy knoll towards the president.

J.C. Price, standing on the other side of the Plaza, saw a man running towards one of the trains on the railways. He described the man as being about twenty-five years old with rather fair hair and wearing khaki pants and a white shirt. This man held something in his right hand. B.J. Martin, a policeman in the motorcade, also saw a shot from the grassy knoll and saw a man running from the Texas School Book Depository towards the railroad tracks. Jean Hill and Mary Moorman had played hookie from school to watch a policeman in the motorcade. Hill saw somebody running from the Book Depository towards the railroad tracks as well. Somebody who was standing behind the pergola in front of the Book Depository was Chauncy Holt. As Palmer had told him to, he now ran to an empty boxcar.
Sam Holland said that the third car along the back of the stockade fence was a station wagon with, on two spots, mud on the bumpers, “as if somebody had cleaned his feet”. Between the car and the fence, there were footprints in the mud, about four to five hundred of them, along the length of the car bumper. James Simmons felt the mud on the car looked as if someone had been standing on the bumper, looking over the stockade fence. He also saw mud on top of the fence.

Lee Bowers also saw two men behind the stockade fence as well. They were about ten to fifteen feet apart, but seemed to act as if they didn’t belong together. One was a middle-aged, heavy-set man with a white shirt and black trousers; the other one was about twenty-five years old, with a plaid shirt or jacket. At the eastern end of the lot, Bowers saw two other men, wearing uniforms. An officer, coming up the grassy knoll after the shots, ran to these men. Bowers saw that one of the men was still there; he had lost sight of the other man. Bowers couldn’t see the Chevrolet parked in front of the Book Depository because of a brick wall when the first shot rang out, but just after the last shot, he saw the Chevrolet Impala emerging from behind that wall.

Ed Hoffman saw two men behind the fence. Both of them ran in different directions. One man ducked down and stood back up again. Hoffman then saw smoke and saw the man turn and run to the other man with a rifle in his hand. This rifle-man was wearing a dark suit, a tie and overcoat. He disappeared in the crowd that was gathering in the railway yard. At the west end of the fence, he tossed the rifle to the other man, who took it apart near a switch box and put it into a soft brown bag and walked away into the railway yards. This man wore a light coverall and a railroad worker’s hat.

Patrolman Joe Smith had drawn his gun and entered the parking-lot area. He came upon a man who was standing by a car. When he saw Smith approaching, he showed him his Secret Service credentials.

DPD agent Malcolm Summers ran up the grassy Knoll as well but was stopped by a man in a topcoat who told him not to come up there; he might be shot. Summers was not shown any credentials but did see that the man seemed to conceal a rifle under his coat.

Patrolman Smith, at that time, had no reason to doubt the credentials of the man he encountered. Only later would the Secret Service officially go on record stating it had no men stationed on the grassy knoll-area. Smith realized that the man he encountered didn’t look like a Secret Service-agent at all. He had dirty fingernails, wore a sports shirts and sport pants. He looked just like an auto-mechanic.

After the fatal head shot rang out, Greer hit the accelerator, speeding towards Parkland Hospital. According to his testimony, corroborated by Sorrels and Lawson, the presidential limousine never passed Curry’s car, which was riding in front of them, on the way to the hospital. After all, Greer didn’t know his way to the hospital. Chief Curry, however, was very evasive on the subject. But a film taken by Jack Daniel shows how Greer, responsible for stopping the presidential limousine during the shooting, does pass Curry’s car. It seems Greer not only knew Kennedy was going to be killed, he also knew the way to the nearest hospital.

Whereas the phones had gone out of order shortly before the shooting in the Depository, immediately following the shooting other phones went dead as well. Two and a half minutes after the assassination, several telephones went dead in Washington. The reason was “overloaded phone lines”, even though at that time news of the shooting wasn’t public knowledge yet. It took the company one hour to restore service.

In Dallas, the press telephone in the motorcade went dead at 12h34, after Merriman Smith had
said “three shots” had been fired at the President. The only communication left was Dallas Police Channel 1, which also had gone dead between 12h29 and 12h33. It seems Kennedy’s death had a strange (and sympathizing) effect on the phone network.

When the limousine passed under the triple underpass, some people, unaware of what had happened, were still waving towards the approaching limousine. They were the first to greet the deceased president.
D. ERRANT BULLETS

Not every bullet however struck its target. Wayne and Edna Hartman and Richard Dudman saw a bullet striking the cement around a manhole. Policeman J.W. Foster, standing on top of the Underpass, saw a bullet strike the South- side of Elm Street. Deputy sheriff Buddy Walthers and officer Foster were ordered to guard the site. Walthers said that this was definitely where a bullet hit the cement. Though guarded, an unidentified man with sandy hair in a suit, believed to be an FBI-agent, came to Walthers and took the bullet up from the grass where it had landed and put it in his pocket. The slug was never recovered.

The angle of the mark pointed towards the County Records Building. On the top of that building could have been a crack shooter, Harry Weatherford, who had apparently been put there on orders from Sheriff Bill Decker. Officially, Weatherford and Walthers were stationed in front of that building. Contacted by a researcher who asked whether Weatherford had fired a bullet that day, he simply answered: “You little son of a bitch, I kill lots of people.”

Directly in this line of fire was another man, James T. Tague standing close to the Triple Underpass. Tague said he had parked his car on Commerce Street. After the shooting, “... Buddy Walthers... looked at me and he says, “You’ve got some blood on your face.” And I reached up and there were a couple of drops of blood on my cheek, and I recalled that during the shooting something had stung my face.” So it was quite likely a very small fragment of an errant bullet struck Tague’s face directly or that the fragment struck a piece of concrete, with this piece ‘stinging’ Tague’s face. Walthers, however, had this to say about Tague: “He had a car parked right here in Main Street... and he came to me and asked me, he said, “Are you looking to see where bullets may have struck?” And I said, “Yes”. He says, ‘I was standing over by the bank here, right there where my car is parked when those shots happened,” and he said, ‘I don’t know where they came from, or if they were shots, but something struck me in the face’... ” Walthers doesn’t mention anything about an injury. But Clyde Haygood did say that Tague “... did have a slight cut on his right cheek.” Whether it was an injury because of the shooting is an open question and it is doubtful it is.

Sheriff Decker also saw a bullet bouncing of the pavement. Motorcycle officers Starvis Ellis and James Chaney said as much, Chaney adding it was the first bullet that missed. Royce G. Shelton said the bullet missed the “left rear of the car”. A bullet-fragment might actually have hit the left rear tire of the limousine. Film footage taken at Parkland shows that someone is changing that tire, the trunk open and a jack standing behind the left rear bumper of the limousine.

Another long bullet mark was seen in the sidewalk on Elm Street near a lamp-post in front of Zapruder. Almost immediately after the shooting, a policeman parked his car over this mark, thus obscuring it from view. The mark points toward a manhole on the south end of the triple underpass. This manhole was soon paved over, even though the northern manhole was left unaltered.

Photographs show there was also a dent in the windshield of the limousine, between driver William Greer and Roy Kellerman. If this was a dent caused by a bullet, as it seems to be, the bullet was fired from the back, though no precise origin can be pinpointed. Immediately following the assassination, Johnson ordered the limousine to be repaired and a new windshield was put in. The windshield was not entered into evidence.
A zombie?

Luis Angel Castillo was a soldier with the Cuban army in the Segunda Organizacion Defensiva in Santiago, Cuba. One of the leaders in this camp was Karnovsky, a liaison officer between the Cubans and the Americans, amongst others James Smith, who had taken care of him as a civilian inside the United States and Cuba.

Castillo, arrested for trying to kill a high Philippine government official, Ferdinand Marcos, in 1967, told the NBI to give him a truth serum and put him under hypnosis. He said he had been programmed to assassinate a man who drove in an open car. He said he hadn’t known his name, but knew it was going to be in Dallas on November 22, 1963. Castillo said he didn’t remember how he entered Dallas and how he got out, but he was sure he wasn’t carrying a weapon when he entered Dallas. He said he had lived in the States under many aliases, such as Angelo Rodriguez, Razo Hernandez, Mario Rodriguez, Ignacio Gonzales Gradjeda and Antonio Eloriaga.

Castillo said that a ‘Mrs. Kreps’ with a heavy German accent gave him his first instructions in Dallas. She, together with many other, had trained him, first to become a spy with the Cuban Army in his unit, which was 24 km. from the Bay of Pigs, on orders of Col. Calma.

The FBI flew to Manilla, to interrogate Castillo under hypnosis, between April 3 and June 25, 1967. Directing their questions on Oswald, they failed to find a link. Nevertheless, they did question him on the time of the assassination, from where he shot, the names of those connected with him and who had hatched the plot. Confronted with photographs of certain people linked to Oswald and the assassination, he was able to identify a few, even though he sometimes knew them under different names. His interrogators learned there was more than one Castillo, but that he had multiple personalities. ‘Number 1’ was Antonio Eloriaga, who was trained to do espionage activities against the Americans. ‘Number 2’ was a rough-talking CIA-agent in trouble. ‘Number 3’ was Castillo who was programmed to commit suicide, as should have when he failed to kill Marcos. ‘Number 4’ was Manue’ Angel Ramirez, who was born in the Bronx, NY, a member of the Special Operations division of the CIA. Ramirez seemed to be his real name and seemed to describe what he had really done: delivering messages for Special Operations. Castillo said ‘daddy’ didn’t know anything about these zombie-situations. ‘Daddy’ was a pipe-smoking CIA-agent, who was his ‘real father’, whose initial were Alien D. Clearly, the only man fitting this description is Allen Dulles. Castillo said ‘daddy’ was the only man who could destroy the CIA.

His interrogators also discovered he carried a code on him, XBGUMIDUTYBX. He said he had got the paper from a Luis Mauricio, plus some money. The interrogator read XGB, UMTDUTY-BX, on which Castillo said ‘I have to commit suicide’. Many combinations triggered nothing, but X triggered ‘Mauricio’, BGU ‘I am myself’ and MI ‘kill’. In hypnosis, Castillo had no trouble to point a gun (unaware it was unloaded) at his own head and pull the trigger when he was ordered to do. When shown a picture of Marcos, given the dates June 12, 1967, 12h00; June 22, 1967; July 4, 1967 and January 1, 1968, he would pull the trigger as well. Castillo would then hit the ground and lay as if dead.

They also discovered he had met a man called ‘Lake’ who was a black-haired tall male, weighing 75 kg. with a hawk-nose. Asiatic eyes, a long face and” talked with a strange accent at the airport, accompanied by four to five others. The group included Americans and foreigners, at least one Spaniard. The group entered a building, going to the third floor, in a brownish looking room. There were crates in the room, a small brown table and typewriters and two windows who looked out onto a street. Lake opened a black case, which had a telescopic (put for 500 metres!)
rifle in it. Castillo, who was given the gun, thought it was Russian. Lake said he had to kill the
man on the back seat, next to a woman or another man. From a building on the opposite end of
the street, there would be two flashes, meaning Castillo had to shoot at the next car that entered
in his view. ‘Lake’ was not present when Kennedy was shot (he apparently went downstairs), but
on his return said he was killed. Castillo never fired the rifle. Lake and Castillo ran to a car in
which already two people were seated, sitting in the back-seat. After making the first corner, a
bold, slender and tall man entered the car, sitting on the front-seat. At a second stop, a few streets
further, another man entered the car, sitting next to Castillo. Castillo received an injection of
some sort which put him immediately to sleep. When he woke up, he was in a Chicago hotel
room with Mrs. Kreps. They then drove to Milwaukee in a blue car. In 1964, they had put him in
a rehabilitation center in Borden-town, New Jersey in connection with a burglary.
On his return to the United States in 1967, he was questioned by the FBI who concluded that
“Castillo had made up his story about the Kennedy assassination”. He had told them he had made
it all up in Manila.
E. AFTERMATH

Following the shooting, other strange things occurred as well. That afternoon, six Cabinet members flew in a military plane above the Pacific Ocean. Via teletype, Rusk and Salinger phoned the White House. They reached the Situation Room but were prohibited from authenticating themselves because the codebook (which has the codes that show that the caller is who he claims to be, i.e. a government official) was missing from the plane. The Situation Room received almost all of its information from DIA. Either George McBundy or Oliver Hal let, the man who had been stationed in Moscow when Oswald defected, sent a message from there to Air Force One, informing them there was “no conspiracy”; only one person had committed the crime. At 13h37, Sheriff Decker, Chief Curry and Assistant Chief Batchelor were on their way to Love Field. They claimed they were to “pick up the governor’s wife”, which was impossible: Nellie Connally sat next to her husband when he was shot. This ‘little lie’ was a cover so that they could safely meet with the new President, Lyndon Johnson, who feared ‘they’ could be after him as well.

When Johnson and the President’s body returned to Washington, the Bagman (who carries the codebook for the President) and Major General Chester Clifton were separated from Johnson and left behind at Love Field. Air Force One took off with a President who couldn’t act like one if he had wanted/needed to.

The SAC bomber over Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio, was ordered to open the locks with the cryptographic code book, possibly awaiting the identification code of President Kennedy. The bomber didn’t have that codebook on board. The only people who were in a position to authorize anything were the Joint Chief of Staff and the highest levels of the Defense Intelligence Agency.

The JCS put all U.S. commandos, worldwide, on alert, including the troops in the Washington-area. The DGI, Castro’s excellent working intelligence agency, ordered that everybody had to stay inside the Embassy and segregate and seal all DGI files.

When Johnson arrived at the White House, he phoned Khrushchev over the ‘red phone’, informing the Soviet Secretary General that he was not about to launch a nuclear strike against his country. The end of Kennedy’s presidency could possibly have ended with the end of Western and Soviet civilization.

Back in Dallas, at 12h35, Lillian Mooneyham saw a figure behind some cardboard boxes in the famous sniper’s nest. At a time when nobody was supposedly there, she saw this man standing back from the window, looking out.

Arrests

Most interesting is the fact that others beside Oswald were arrested that day. And it seems these others might have been more important arrests than his, if Oswald was not designated to be a patsy.
Eugene Hale Brading

Around the Dal-Tex Building, three people were apparently arrested. One was a young who had run into the Dal-Tex building in search of phone but left the building shortly afterwards, unable to use a phone.

The second person was also a young man who wore a black leather jacket and gloves. This man could have been Larry Florer who tried to phone but was also unable to because they all were being used.

A third man was arrested around 12h45 and booked as Jim Braden, forty-eight years old, living in California. An employee had told the police that Braden was inside the Dal-Tex building when the shooting occurred. But this man was much more interesting than his name would give away. Unfortunately, nobody realized it at the time of his arrest.

In 1951, Brading, aka James Bradley Lee, had worked with one James Dolan, a friend of Ruby, but also connected with both Marcello and Trafficante.

On September 10, 1963, Eugene Hale Brading had received a new driver’s license in the name of Jim Braden. Brading, known to have used four other aliases before, had been arrested thirty-five times; it seemed that being arrested on November 22 wasn’t cause enough to make that day special to him. Brading was connected to Denver-Mafia figures Eugen and Clyde Smaldone.

Three days later, when the first news of Kennedy’s visit to Dallas was made public, Brading informed his parole officer, Sam Bennett, he would go to Texas. From September 13 till September 23, he traveled to Houston.

Brading’s next visit to Texas was in November, when he arrived into Dallas the day before on a special private flight from California. Upon arrival, Brading had checked into the Cabana Hotel, sharing room 301 with Morgan Brown. At 12h00, he had gone to Roger Carroll, the chief parole officer in Dallas. He said that he had a meeting with Lamar Hunt. Lamar Hunt was visited (apart from Connie Trammel who had brought Ruby with her) by three business-relatives (Roger Bauman, Morgan Brown and Duane Nowlin) and quite possibly this group had a fourth member: ‘Jim Braden’.

That evening, Jack Ruby ‘honored’ the Cabana with a visit. Around midnight. Ruby went to see Lawrence Meyers, who had come in from Chicago, accompanied by Jean West. (On September 24, when Oswald left New Orleans, Ferrie called the same Jean West.) Later that evening, Meyers tried to call West as well, which was perhaps not that surprising since they were going out together.

Photographs show that Brading was in Dealey Plaza minutes after the assassination. In 1967, the National Archives listed as missing: two records on the arrest on Jim Braden and a photograph of an arrestee near the Dal Tex building.

Brading had apparently left for Houston that Friday, but his probation papers there have November 26 as the first day.

Three tramps

Lee Bowers, shortly after the shooting, saw three tramps slipping into a box car. Bowers stopped the train and waited for the police to apprehend them. Chauncy Holt, one of the tramps, said that the original plan was that they would jump off the train at the highway junction, where Morgan Brown, Brading’s roommate, would pick them up and drive them to the RedBird Airport.

Inside the boxcar, Holt, coming from behind the pergola in front of the Depository Building, not
only discovered it was loaded with explosives, he also met two other person whom he had met before in his life: one was Charles Rogers, aka Carlos Rojas aka Richard Montoya, who had joined the CIA in 1956; the other was Charles Harrelson, a Mafia-linked assassin.

Charles Frederick Rogers, a member of Mensa, had known both Ferrie and Oswald. On June 23, 1965, his parents, Fred (81) and Edwina (72) were found murdered in their home, their bodies dismembered and decapitated in the refrigerator. The only suspect was their son, who escaped out the back when the police entered the house. Fred Rogers had been a bookie for Marcello’s gambling network and his uncle had been the best friend of Harrelson. His mother acted as his telephone answering machine and grew suspicious of both his job, his friends and believed he had been in Dallas on November 22 and was involved in the assassination.

On November 23, Ferrie used the same ice rink Rogers quite often used for getting and making phone calls. The forty-one-year-old Rogers would apparently fly to Houston himself, whereupon Ferrie would fly him to South America. Rogers might have been the assassin on the knoll, even though Holt thinks it very unlikely as Rogers was inside the boxcar pretty soon after the shooting.

Harrelson’s ‘idol’ was Russell D. Mathews, a mobster and a friend of Ruby. Harrelson was on probation in California for an armed robbery. On September 1, 1980, Harrelson shot Judge John Wood in Van Horn, Texas. When the police went to arrest him, he held them off for six hours. During this time, he confessed to killing John Wood. He also confessed to having played a role in the assassination of President Kennedy. Even though he was high on cocaine, cocaine does not inspire a person to lie, it ‘only’ loosens inhibitions and gives you a feeling of invincibility. Interviewed by Chuck Cook, a reporter from the Dallas Morning News, Harrelson said that “Listen, if and when I get out of here and feel free to talk, I will have something that will be the biggest story you ever heard... November 22, 1963, You remember that?” Harrelson, however, is serving a life sentence.

Holt had met one Bob Zwick, who had brought him to mobster Peter Licavoli. Holt then changed jobs and worked as an accountant for Meyer Lansky in Havana, where he met Lansky’s friend, Santos Trafficante. As could be expected, Holt ended up plotting against Castro. His checks for his Cuban activities were paid by DoubleChek Corporation, a CIA front company. Its president was Alex Carlson, the man who had to visit the widows of the dead Bay of Pigs invaders and was also a friend of Ferrie. (Gordon Novel, the suspected Umbrella Man, was ‘employed’ by DoubleChek as well.)

Around 14h00, D.V. Harkness and Billy Bass ‘arrested’ all three of them, with Officers Bass and Wise leading them away from the boxcar. Upon their arrest, they showed these officers their fake IDs, identifying them as undercover agents of the ATF (Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms). Harkness, at the rear of the TSBD, had also encountered several well-armed men, dressed in suits, who claimed to belong to the Secret Service. The tramps were taken to the Sheriff’s office, where they were interviewed by Harold Elkins. Gordon Shanklin released them, without any paperwork everybody believed they were undercover agents.

Around these boxcars, about five other persons were arrested. These were three ‘real’ tramps, Gus W. Abrams (53), Harold Doyle (32), John Forrester Gedney (38), who were, arrested by W.S. Chambers immediately following the shooting. These tramps tried to catch a train, when they heard shots, upon which the police arrested them within the next few minutes. Booked at 16h00, they were held jailed until November 26.
This Is Not America

Holt, upon his release, had missed Morgan Brown. Brown, probably sensing something was wrong, perhaps even knowing Holt had been ‘arrested’, had checked out of the Cabana at 14h01. At the Cabana Hotel, Holt was scheduled to meet Nicoletti and Moceri, but they weren’t there either, perhaps also alarmed by his arrest. Holt got a ride from Eugene Brading, who had been released around the same time. At RedBird, Holt flew back to Licavoli’s Grace Ranch.

Rogers and Harrelson also sped to RedBird, but saw what they interpreted as federal agents. Wayne January, the manager, had called the authorities, saying three men had arrived that morning at the airport and one bore a striking resemblance to Oswald. Rogers turned around and later that evening, he probably phoned Ferrie, saying he couldn’t make it to Houston. By then, the police had called off their manhunt and it was safer for Rogers, a Houstonian, to stay in the area instead of trying to slip the country.

Braden, after his release, gave Chauncey Marvin Holt a lift to the airport after Holt failed to meet Morgan Brown when the tramps were arrested, staying in the same suite as Braden. Brown had suddenly left the hotel at 14h00.

Later that day, authorities checked airfields in Northern Texas for a “Chuck Rogers”, who was wanted for questioning. It is possible this was Charles Rogers, one of these ‘tramps’.

But there were other arrests as well. A Catholic priest witnessed the arrest of a young man in front of the Texas School Book Depository. This man was wearing a three-piece suit and gloves. Being taken to the Sheriff’s office, he heard one of the arresting officers say “Well, we’ve got one of them”. No record of this arrest has been found.

Roger Craig saw a woman in her early thirties trying to drive her car out of the parking lot. Craig arrested her and handed her over to deputy sheriff L.L. Lewis. Lewis, however, lost her!

Sometime later, Craig himself met a bogus Secret Service in a gray suit in front of the Book Depository. Craig said he was only interested in the Nash Rambler he had seen.

Donald Wayne House

At 13h35, a Mrs. Cunningham phoned the police, saying that a green-and-white 1957 Ford, license number DT-4857, had been involved in the assassination. Ten minutes later, the car was stopped, and its driver, Donald Wayne House, was arrested. House said he had a day-off from work because of the rain and decided to travel to an Army buddy of his, one Randall Hunsaker, who lived in a Dallas-suburb, Mesquite. Even though that was a hundred-mile drive, House didn’t phone ahead, informing whether Hunsaker would be home. When House arrived in Dallas, he found out that Hunsaker, in fact, wasn’t home. He tried to head to Fort Worth but decided to stay in Dallas, parking his car in Commerce Street, wanting to catch a glimpse of the President. Seemingly unaware the President was shot, he eventually did leave for Fort Worth, seemingly no longer interested in trying to contact his friend.

What was strange, though, was that this friend, at 14h19, was seen in rather peculiar circumstances. He was seen when he was removing a rifle from a light-green, two-tone car, registered as belonging to George T. Hunsaker. It seems George had gone hunting; but on what kind of game?

Within the hour of the assassination, two high school students, Billy Jones and Ronnie Whiterspoon, witnessed another arrest on Interstate 45, in Ferris, south of Dallas. The arresting
officers, however, discovered that inside the speeding, large black car, were three Secret Service men, who claimed they were on their way to New Orleans to investigate something relative to the assassination. Officially, there were no such men on their way, thus, once again, raising the possibility these were accomplices with fake credentials.

Jean Souetre

The CIA, in 1977, released CIA Document No. 632-796, which fell into the hands of Dallas-based researcher Mary Ferrell. The document, dated April 1, 1964, contains information about Jean Souetre’s expulsion from the United States, only eighteen hours after the assassination in Dallas. It states that Jean Souetre, aka Michael Mertz aka Michel Roux, was in Fort Worth on the morning of the assassination and in Dallas in the afternoon. French Intelligence requested this information from the CIA because they believed he either went to Mexico or Canada. French Intelligence wanted to know where he had gone to; a man responsible for assassination attempts against President de Gaulle should not be around when de Gaulle visited Mexico.

Souetre had a friend, Dr. Lawrence Alderson, living in Houston. Their friendship had dwindled to an annual exchange of Christmas cards, but immediately after the assassination, Alderson realized he was watched, probably by the FBI. Officially, Alderson received this ‘attention’ only after the French enquired about Souetre. Alderson, however, said that he was interviewed by FBI SA Frank Roots around January 1, 1964. Alderson says the FBI felt that Souetre knew who had killed Kennedy and wanted to know who had flown him out of Texas. The FBI had traced Souetre to Dallas, but had lost him there on November 21, the day before the assassination. An unnamed source has claimed that Souetre, whose modus operandi was car bombings, was in Dallas and that he, should the assassins fail to shoot Kennedy in Dealey Plaza, would have blown up the presidential limousine past the triple underpass.

Virgil Bailey, an inspector of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, arrested a Frenchman in Dallas. He didn’t remember his name, but the arrest was at an apartment ‘on either Gaston Street or Ross Street. Bailey recalled the matter was top priority.

Another INS Inspector, Hal Norwood, said he received two urgent calls from headquarters, requesting the immediate arrest of somebody. Norwood found out the local INS had already arrested that man, acting on a call from the Dallas Police Department, who had apprehended him. It seems there was another alien in town.

Michael Mertz

Bailey gave a description that doesn’t fit Souetre but that of another man, a man whose name Souetre quite often used: Michael Mertz.

Michael Mertz had been a top SDECE (French Intelligence)-agent, who developed a vast smuggling-network of heroin, not unlike Souetre, which he smuggled into the United States and Canada, where he spend quite a lot of his time. His father-in-law was linked to illegal activities in Montreal, including prostitution. Mertz, having once saved de Gaulle’s life by infiltrating an OAS conspiracy against him, wasn’t ‘hassled’ over these activities.

That Mertz was the man arrested and not Souetre could very well be; it is also entirely possible BOTH were in Texas. Checking bookings, the Pan Am-office in Houston discovered bookings for a John Mertz, Imma Rio Mertz and Sara Mertz from Houston to Mexico City on November
23. Souetre himself claims he knows Mertz was in Dallas that day and “may well have been involved... Though if he was, I am sure he was not acting alone”. Mertz, interestingly, worked together with a Christian David, who, in later years, would claim he got an offer to kill Kennedy from Meme Guerini, head of the Marseilles Mafia. At that time, Sam Giancana, head of the Chicago Mafia, was importing strippers from that same port, working with the same man. David claimed Guerini had received the contract from the American Mafia; Giancana is a logical choice. David, entering the wilderness of mirrors, claimed Lucien Sarti, a one-eyed, crack shooter, had entered the United States via Mexico. At the Mexican-American border, he had been picked up by Chicago mobsters, who had taken him to Dallas. David claimed Sarti was dressed in a police uniform. Lee Bowers did describe one team of assassins on the grassy knoll as wearing uniforms. Souetre says he is convinced there was a French connection to the assassination. Perhaps David tried to blow smoke in people’s eyes so that they could not look in the right direction.

Michel Roux

That same Pan Am office discovered bookings for Dominique P. Roux and Viviane H. Roux, who had departed Houston for Mexico City the day before, November 22. Michel Roux, another Frenchman, had been visiting new friends in Fort Worth that day. In October, 1963, Roux had been working as a room clerk in a Paris hotel, the Proust Hotel, where he had met and befriended two American tourists from Fort Worth. The next month, on November 20, Roux had phoned these people, telling them he was in Houston. Roux was apparently heading straight to Texas; he had arrived in the U.S.A. only the day before in New York. Even though he said he had left his family in Paris, the Pan Am bookings indicate he had brought them along with him. Roux, as he probably had hoped, was invited to come to Fort Worth. Roux and his hosts claimed that Roux spent the evening of November 21 at their home. The following morning, he accompanied his friend to attend classes at University from 10h00 to 12h00. Roux and his friend claimed to have heard about the assassination in a cafe. Obviously, Roux’s alibi isn’t waterproof. Suspicions that it isn’t are highlighted by the fact that the FBI and Roux have always denied to identify his hosts. Whoever they are, Roux went back to Houston on November 23 or 24, whereupon he left for Mexico, leaving the country on December 6 via Laredo, Texas, probably joining his family in Mexico City. From there, Roux flew back to Paris. Bernard Fensterwald, famous attorney and assassination researcher, believes that the conspirators had a “fall-back”-plan, which included these French criminals, if not assassins. Whether they were truly assassins or ‘merely’ conspirators will continue to be a lingering mystery.
F. THE KILLING OF JD TIPPIT

On the morning of the assassination, Jefferson Davis Tippit told his family he would get them a new car and other things ‘soon’. Even though he was quite often rough with his family, that morning, he kissed all of them goodbye. His son told a friend that his “dad seemed awfully nervous”.

Tippit had had an affair with a waitress at Austin’s Barbecue, where Tippit moonlighted as a security guard. She had become pregnant, probably by him, but had nevertheless reconciled with her ex-husband. This man had been following his wife and her lover, Tippit, during their affair around the Oak Cliff area on their nightly escapades. Some believe Tippit was killed as a result of this affair. A retired D.P.D. officer believed “it would look like hell for Tippit to have been murdered and have it look like he was screwing around with this woman... somebody had to change the tape (insert a Dispatcher’s command that accounted for Tippit’s presence in that neighborhood-P.C.)... somebody had to go to the property room and change those (cartridge) hulls and put some of Oswald’s hulls in there...”

At 13h03, Tippit failed to respond to a call. W.R. Stark and Louis Cortinas, working in Top 10 Record Shop, said Tippit was using the phone inside their shop at that time. Tippit let the phone ring seven or eight times, hung up and walked away. About ten minutes later, they heard the news of Tippit’s killing.

Wes Wise, a reporter for KRLD-TV in Dallas, saw that a car, license plate PP 4537, was parked near the scene of the crime. The owner of this car, Carl Mather, lived in Garland, Texas. An auto mechanic, T.F. White, said that his 1957 Plymouth four-door was red. The FBI, however, said the car they searched for was light or medium blue. Domingo Benavides, said that a red car was parked in front of him when Tippit was killed. Benavides, however, thought it might have been a Ford, a red 1961 Falcon.

Mather, interestingly, was a good friend of Tippit. When interviewed, Mrs. Mather said her husband had worked all day at Collins Radio Company, until 14h00, when he had come home and had gone over to the Tippits. Mrs. Mather, who was interviewed twice, said they never had a red car. Strangely, Carl Mather was never interviewed.

A car was parked on the parking-lot of the El Chico Restaurant. At around 14h00, a man who strongly resembled Oswald (but couldn’t have been because he was arrested at that time) sat in that car, until he suddenly left at high speed going west on Davis Street. Five witnesses stated they had seen Tippit sitting in his car at a service station in the area. After about ten minutes, he drove off at a high rate of speed.

Kay Coleman, a stripper for Jack Ruby, was having an affair with Harry Olsen, a D.P.D. officer and friend of Tippit, who was off duty on November 22. Coleman, when asked to give an alibi for the time of the murder, could not furnish one. Her friend Olsen said he was guarding an estate at East 8th Street, Oak Cliff, just one block away from the murder scene. Unfortunately for Olsen’s alibi, there was no such estate. Nevertheless, he did learn of Tippit’s murder. Olsen himself claimed he had access to the house phone and thus heard the news, which seems rather Impossible as there was no house there.

On December 7, Olsen crashed into a phone pole, hospitalizing him for two weeks. Afterwards he was either fired by Curry or was asked to resign “- or resigned himself, without any given
reason. Kay, one week after November 24, had already found a job in Oklahoma City. In early 1964, the couple moved to California.

Tippit and Ruby were apparently seen together during the first half of November 1963 in an unmarked police car when Harold Richard Williams was arrested. Williams knew Ruby and recognized Tippit from a photo. Williams told friends of the incident and was soon arrested by the police (again), who told him he hadn’t seen that. There are rumors that Tippit, like Ruby, was involved in narcotics trafficking. One witness would state that some of the conspirators had to deliver a shipment of drugs in Oak Cliff shortly before the assassination. It is possible that this is the reason why Tippit was there when he shouldn’t have been and that this drug connection, perhaps for a most innocent mistake or as a planned part of the framing of Oswald, caused Tippit’s death.
G. OSWALD’S ARREST

At about 13h30, Johnny Calvin Brewer heard on the radio that a policeman had been shot. Looking outside his window, he saw a man ducking when a police car drove by. Brewer followed the man, who disappeared into the Texas Theater. Brewer asked the cashier, Julia Postal, whether she had noticed a man slipping in. Postal said she had and that that man didn’t pay. Brewer decided to call the police. The reason why Brewer was so “attracted” to this man was because he had recognized him. About a week earlier, this man had come into his shoe store and had given Brewer a hard time. It was not difficult to remember him... like in some other ‘Oswald-sightings’.

Inside the theater, W.H. Burroughs, the concession stand operator, had heard the front doors open at that time, but hadn’t seen anybody open the other doors, indicating the man had gone to the balcony.

Some minutes later, several police officers waited at the rear exit with drawn guns. Captain Cecil Talbert put himself in command at the rear of the Theater, ordering Sergeant Hill to continue the search of the balcony. Captain Westbrook was ordered to command everything that took place inside the theatre.

At the back of the theatre, two cars had their engines running. One was a pickup truck that was searched for weapons by Sergeant Stringer, Westbrook’s subordinate. The other one was a police car, driven by C.T. Walker, who would lead Oswald to Police headquarters. His car was returned to him by another officer.

Sergeant Hill turned up the house lights and moved to the front of the Theatre, asking Brewer to identify the man he had seen. Before Brewer could identify him though, police officer N.M. McDonald, having come in through the back entrance, had briefly paused next to the movie screen and had gone over to Oswald before Brewer had pointed out the man he had seen.

McDonald, explaining his action, said “a man sitting near the front, and I still don’t know who it was, tipped me the man I wanted was sitting in the third row from the rear of the ground floor and not in the balcony”. The man Brewer had seen was DEFINITELY on the balcony, according to the only witness who could know and even Captain Talbert, typing Tippit’s homicide report, thought Oswald was arrested on the balcony. What is more: nobody sitting at the front could possibly know who McDonald was looking for, unless that person was out to frame Oswald. The only man who could try and do that, Jack Ruby, was sitting in the back of the theater, not afraid that he might get hurt in the scuffle when police tried to arrest Oswald.

Strangely, Stringer said that “officers heard someone in the Theatre shout ‘we’ve got him!’” Sergeant Hill came down the fire escape and Stringer asked if the suspect was captured. Hill looked inside and said “no, we haven’t got him”, whereupon someone inside the theatre, once again, shouted “we’ve got him”.

McDonald also said that Oswald’s gun misfired when he tried to arrest him. Even though John Gibson, the theater patron, said he had in fact heard such a sound, ballistics experts said that the bullets inside the gun showed no evidence of such an event. Then again, the weapon didn’t show any fingerprints of Oswald either.

Paul Bentley gave C.F. Bentley orders to get the names and addresses of the patrons on the
balcony of the Theatre. He neglected to complete that assignment, forever making it impossible to trace the mysterious man who ran up the balcony who was considered to be Lee Harvey Oswald.

But there were witnesses whose observations made it impossible Oswald was the man Brewer saw running into the theatre, whether he ran to the balcony or not. Burroughs said that the man they arrested, Oswald, had bought popcorn at 13h15. Burroughs had seen Oswald enter shortly after the movie had begun, at 13h00, and had seen Oswald sitting next to a pregnant woman. Seconds before the police came in, Burroughs had seen this woman get up and go to the ladies’ restroom. “I don’t know how she got out of the theatre. I never saw her again.” Jack Davis corroborated Burroughs, saying Oswald had also sat next to him and other people, a strange thing to do since there were so many empty seats.

Bernard Haire, who owned Bernie’s Hobby House, saw that the police bring out a young white man, in pullover shirt and slacks, looking as if he had been in a struggle, from the rear exit of the Theatre. Oswald, in front of quite a crowd and a few reporters, had been taken out the front. Haire never thought anything about this, believing Oswald had been led out the back. Haire didn’t know whether he was hand-cuffed, but he felt that man had been arrested. This man was put inside a police car and drove off.

When Oswald was taken out, Postal said one policeman held his arm around Oswald’s neck, preventing him from talking. She also said one plainclothes policeman, probably FBI agent Bob Barrett, told her “we have got our man on both counts”. Postal asked who that second person was. “… officer Tippit as well.” Barrett called Dallas’ FBI SAC Gordon Shanklin, who at 13h58, phoned Alan Belmont, an aide to H6o-ver. Minutes later, Hoover started ‘the works’, identifying Oswald as the sole assassin of the now late President Kennedy. Inside the police car, Oswald said he “did nothing”. One officer said “you’ve done a lot more, you’ve killed a policeman”. Detective Potts, at Police headquarters, said “when the uniform officers brought in a white male they, said he had killed J.D. Tippit”. To the police, it was certain they had their man... on both counts.

On one of Oswald’s sightings in the Book Depository, he was hanging around the phone-booth. When Oswald was searched at Police Headquarters, police-officers retrieved a slip of paper with a telephone number on it from his pocket. The number was of a public phone booth in the lobby of a building in Fort Worth. According to Robert Morrow, Tracy Barnes told him that Oswald tried to call (and may have succeeded) CIA officer David Phillips at that number at the time of the assassination. Antonio Veciana, head of Alpha 66 and thus working with David Phillips alias Maurice Bishop, his case-officer, said that he had seen Oswald (or a man closely resembling Oswald) talking to ‘Bishop’ in early September 1963.

Even if Oswald wouldn’t have been arrested for the killing of Tippit, the police were nevertheless looking for him. The CIS had made a list of missing TSBD-employees. On top of this list was one “Harvey Lee Oswald”. The only agencies (not even the TSBD) who had his name listed like that was Army Intelligence and the CIA. The address listed was 605 Elsbeth Street, an address where Oswald used to live the previous year, even though he lived at 602 Elsbeth, not 605. This address was completely unknown to the staff of the Depository, who only had his Irving (Ruth Paine’s) address, 2515 West 5th Street.
Another mystery is how the police knew Oswald was boarding at 1026 N. Beckley Avenue, an address he hadn’t told (according to all official sources) to anyone, not even to his wife and certainly not to the Depository employers. Oswald was listed as “O.K. Lee”, either an alias, as the Commission said it was, or a misunderstanding, according to Oswald himself (Lee, Harvey and Oswald are three names which could cause such problems. Oswald did sign with O.H.Lee). According to the DPD, they arrived at that address around 15h00, but waited until 16h00, when Judge Johnston arrived with the search warrant. According to Oswald’s housekeeper Earlene Roberts, however, the police arrived about thirty minutes after Oswald had left, making the time of arrival around 13h30. The landlady and landlord, Mrs. and Mr. Johnson, said the police were there when they arrived between 13h30 and 14h00. It seems that the police was even at Oswald’s address BEFORE he was arrested in the Texas Theatre around 13h50. Asked to explain how the police knew of this address. Captain Fritz said he “learned it from some officer”. This officer, of course, was never identified. Then again, none of the other arrests were ever looked into as we 11.

It is rather strange to discover that men such as Charles Rogers, Eugene Brading and Michael Mertz were arrested but simply set free without any thorough interrogation or investigation after Oswald was arrested. At the same time, by simply stating Tippit was shot because he was about to arrest Oswald, an impossibility as Oswald was nowhere around Tippit at that time, another homicide was left uninvestigated by the Dallas Police or, for that matter, any other agency. At the same time, it is clear that same police force (though perhaps only one man in that squad, McDonald) played a vital role in arresting a ‘suspect’, a man who was only a suspect because some people wanted to make him look like a suspect, even like an assassin. That not everybody was ‘in on it’ is clear from the knowledge that some people were arrested immediately following the assassination. But after Oswald was arrested and Fritz and Decker had spoken to the new president of the United States, Lyndon Johnson, everything, i.e. the real events, seemed to become cloaked, just like Fritz’s and Decker’s visit to “Mrs. Connally”, the president.
PART FOUR

A KINGDOM FOR OUR PRESIDENT

“So now he is a legend when he would have preferred to be a man.”
Jacqueline Kennedy

An analysis of President Kennedy’s presidency might possibly reveal a cause for why the people who ‘helped’ him get killed disliked, hated or simply wanted to get rid of him. This cause, automatically, is those people’s motive and in any crime the motivation is of major importance, unless you, like the Warren Commission, want to turn them into nuts, if not lone nuts. This means it simply isn’t enough to show some people were in Dealey Plaza, thus stating they are guilty.

Dan Rather, for example, was in Dealey Plaza at the time of the assassination; at least, that’s what he says. Researchers have discovered that Rather was not in the position where he said he was and this has led to numerous other suspicions, ranging from the reason why Rather was in Dallas to how he actually got away from Dealey Plaza. Because of all these suspicions, some have concluded Rather is somehow involved in the assassination, whereas I think it is quite possible Rather was not in Dealey Plaza at the time but simply lied about his presence there, knowing it would be good promotion for himself and a possible good career-move if he said he had been there. This is a motive, whereas most researchers who believe Rather was ‘an accomplice’ have not yet come up with a motive for him. Without a motive, most juries shouldn’t find a man guilty, quite possibly because he had nothing to gain from or no interest in that man’s demise.
CHAPTER NINE
A NAIVE, SENTIMENTAL PRESIDENT

“I have found it always true that men seldom or never advance themselves... to any great height but by fraud or by force.”
Machiavelli

As a schoolteacher, Lyndon Johnson quite often told his pupils they were looking at the future President of the United States. Though that may have impressed some, others probably thought that was a naive schoolteacher. And after having suffered an almost fatal heart attack in the mid fifties, it was quite possible Senator Johnson could never run for the presidency. But he recovered and returned to the Senate, entering the race for the Democratic nomination for President of the United States, one that would be a victorious one, most observers believed.

His main opponent was a young Senator, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, who never wanted to become a President, something that could potentially have allowed him to become the best President ever. His father Joseph said that “I told (John) Joe was dead and it was his responsibility to run for Congress. He didn’t want to. But I told him he had to”. And from Congress, it was the Senate and then... the presidency?

But Kennedy faced serious problems: His aides believed one of those problems would be his Catholicism. Only 26 percent of the population was Catholic and they believed the other 74 percent feared a Catholic president would do whatever the Pope would tell him to do, even if this wasn’t in America’s best interest. Therefore, Kennedy’s aides deviled a tactic in which they flooded the state Kennedy was about to visit with anti-Catholic leaflets, whereupon Kennedy would attack the anti-Catholic milieu (which he interpreted as a form of racism) he had to combat.

John Connally, as a friend and campaign manager for Johnson, also wanted to use a stick to poke at Kennedy, but what kind of stick? He knew both Johnson and Kennedy had had and still had numerous mistresses. Johnson apparently ‘entertained’ one Mary Margret Willy, his secretary, who got pregnant and decided to marry a good friend of Johnson instead of having an abortion. But was the public really concerned about extra-marital flings? Connally thought the public was more concerned about the President’s health. President Eisenhower had suffered an almost fatal heart-attack while in the White House and his vice-president Richard Nixon had practically ruled America ever since. Even though Johnson had suffered a heart attack in 1955 as well, Connally believed heart-attacks happened more or less unexpectedly; Kennedy, on the other hand, had an adrenal deficiency, known as Addison’s disease, which could cause a coma... anytime. Connally asked Dan Cook to investigate the issue. Cook reported that Kennedy, in fact, was in “constant danger”. Kennedy’s condition and life-expectancy had been improved when cortisone was discovered in 1949, but he learnt that the massive doses of cortisone that were administered to Kennedy could cause rather serious mental problems such as a split personality and neurotic behavior.

Connally, more as campaign-manager than good citizen, decided he had to inform the nation of this ‘problem’. Realizing the media might see this as a smear-campaign, he left all the talking to
India Edwards at the press-conference. Pierre Salinger and Theodore Sorensen, both employed by Kennedy’s campaign, termed it “despicable tactics” and said the story was simply “not true”. The press believed Kennedy and Connally, though correct, had lost his stick and received a beating from it himself.

In hindsight, it is unlikely Kennedy had Addison’s disease. It seems he suffered from Pott’s disease, tuberculosis of the spine, which is far worse than Addison’s disease. Dr. Joseph T. Brierre, a pathologist at Bethesda, says he would have diagnosed this disease in Kennedy. Many think the doctors at Bethesda were covering up the President’s Addison’s disease (which would ‘only’ have seriously debilitated his capacity as president), but it seems they were covering up Pott’s disease, a form of tuberculosis that would have killed him within the next five years; the probable duration of his presidency. Brierre thinks that Kennedy would have died in his second term, due to his medications of steroids and amphetamines.

At the autopsy, Humes and Boswell searched for the adrenals, but found nothing: they were apparently totally atrophied. Admiral Burkley, only a doctor in name according to those who knew him, prohibited an autopsy of the spinal cord, a regular procedure at any autopsy. It is possible Burkley acted upon orders of Robert Kennedy, who might have known of the Pott’s disease as well or that Burkley simply followed orders from the Kennedy family who had authorized an autopsy only to interpret the shotwounds.

Whatever “despicable” or desperate tactics the Johnson-campaign resorted to, it failed to win them the Democratic nomination: the Democratic ticket was for Kennedy, who was now searching for a running mate. Kennedy’s entourage was stunned when Kennedy offered the vice-presidency to Johnson, a man who had depicted Kennedy as “inexperienced” and “sunnyboy”. Some observers believe Kennedy (rightfully) admired Johnson as a politician; others believe Kennedy only proposed as a matter of courtesy, firmly persuaded Johnson would not accept anything but first violin. But it seems that Kennedy realized he needed a strong man from the South; he knew Johnson had taken 307 votes against Kennedy’s 13 votes out of 409 delegates in the Southern states.

Would Johnson accept second violin? Hale Boggs told Sam Rayburn, Johnson’s best friend in the Senate, that Nixon would be the next President if Johnson didn’t accept the vice-presidency. The news reached Johnson, who had apparently received the same sermon from Connally. Johnson decided to accept. He commented that he had “now learned that one out of every four Presidents dies in off ice... and I am a gambling man.” Johnson, of course, knew Kennedy suffered from Addison’s disease. But another factor might be that Johnson feared he could not be around in 1968. In 1968, Johnson would be sixty years old, the age at which his father had died. Having suffered a heart-attack already, probably only strengthened his fears he might not live to see 1969. In fact, Johnson’s mental health had diminished by 1968, probably a main factor that urged him not to run for the presidency once again.

With Johnson in Kennedy’s camp, Vice President Richard Nixon was now their new main adversary. Perhaps to have someone to talk to, Nixon had started psychotherapy with psychiatrist Arnold Hutschnecker and even talked Gerald Ford into consulting that man. Frank Sinatra, the man who promoted Kennedy wherever he went, had hired a private investigator, who reported Nixon’s visits to ‘the shrink’. ‘Naturally’, the press learnt about it; Nixon dropped his sessions. But all this was quite insufficient to ruin Nixon’s chances. Kennedy’s charm would have to help
demolish those as well. Television had reached only 3.9 million people in 1950, but by now 45 million people had one. A good time to hold, for the first time in history, television debates between the two nominees. Those who followed the debates on television thought Kennedy would win whereas those stuck with their ear to the radio thought Nixon would become the next President.

During his campaign, Kennedy had stressed the importance of a good foreign policy. The Democrats said that there would be a military build-up to close up the missile gap with the Soviet Union. The Pentagon had claimed there was such a missile-gap between the two countries, even though the CIA, using the U2-spy plane, had informed Nixon and Eisenhower there was no such gap. Kennedy, however, was not aware of this CIA-estimate and Nixon has since believed the CIA intentionally didn’t tell Kennedy of their estimate, causing Nixon to be depicted as either ‘naïve’ or ‘a commie sympathizer’.

But the ‘coup de théâtre’ was that Kennedy said he would support the Cuban exiles. It was Nixon himself who had started the program to invade Cuba and now he, the actual promoter of that idea, had to publicly state that would be unwise. Nixon felt he had to try to protect ‘his’ covert program, which was training these Cuban exiles at that very moment. Nixon, for once a true prophet, said that if an invasion failed, it would be condemned by the United Nations and it would bring Khrushchev into Latin America. No, Nixon ‘believed’ they should quarantine Cuba, not attack them. Kennedy, once again, tried to depict his opponent as being ‘soft’ on communism.

Johnson himself would later hint the CIA had supported Kennedy behind the scenes of his election campaign, informing him of their plans against Castro’s Cuba. On July 23, 1960, Dulles did speak to Senator Kennedy for two and a quarter hours about the problems with Cuba. A furious Nixon who thought the entire CIA was supporting him, found out and urged that “under no circumstances should Kennedy have knowledge of the invasion”. Dulles, however, was able to placate him, probably correctly informing the Vice-President he had done no such thing. But behind Dulles’ back, there was a pro-Kennedy faction within the CIA, led by State Department official William Wieland, who had briefed Kennedy on more sensitive projects. Wieland even arranged a meeting between Kennedy and Cuban exile leaders Antonio de Varona, Jose Miro Cordona, Aurelia Sanchez Aranga and Manuel Artime. Even Nixon, the man who had initiated the Cuban project, had never met these people.

On domestic issues, Kennedy’s campaign was helped when black activist Martin Luther King was arrested in October, 1960. Kennedy phoned his wife, Coretta King, expressing his support. Almost every Black citizen wanted to vote for Kennedy; Nixon hadn’t phoned.

In Texas, Rayburn and Johnson told the powerful Texas oilmen that if they voted for Nixon and the Democrats would win, they could “kiss the oil depletion-allowance”. However, most oilmen felt Johnson had already betrayed them by accepting the vice-presidency of a ‘liberal’, John Kennedy. But even though Kennedy was not popular among the oil barons, they also believed he wouldn’t cause any problems; after all, his father had large investments in oil as well.

**The outcome**

The official outcome of the election was that Nixon had 303 men behind him; Nixon had 219. Counting the votes, there was a difference of a mere 118,000 votes, 34,227,000 for Nixon’s 34,109,000. Kennedy had won Texas (by 28,000 votes), Illinois (by 8858 votes) and Louisiana,
as he had hoped; Nixon had won California, Florida and Washington, as predicted. If Nixon would have won Texas and Illinois, he would have won the race. He did win 93 of the 102 Illinois counties; a switch of 4500 votes in Cook County’s 5199 precincts would give him the state.

On November 12, the Republican Party wanted an investigation of possible election fraud in eleven states (among them Illinois and Texas). The Republicans rechecked 699 precincts in Cook County and turned up a gain of 4539 votes, which would win them the state. An official recount was blocked by Chicago Mayor Daley, a man who had received a phone call from Kennedy on the very night of his election. On the 19th, Hoover was asked to investigate. Caught being two fires, Hoover apparently decided to wait with his report until after December 19, when the Electoral College would officially announce who was the next President and his report would be just another piece of paper instead of headline material. Hoover had initially supported Johnson, his friend and neighbor, but he was also a friend of Nixon, who had always helped the FBI-director; and vice-versa. Hoover thought he had enough ‘garbage’ on the Kennedys to force them into making those decision he wanted them to make.

But what had happened in Illinois? In May 1960, during the West Virginia primary in which Kennedy took on Hubert Humphrey, Paul ‘Skinny D’ Amato and Angelo Melandra had reportedly flooded the state with USD 50,000. It was apparently the first occasion in which the Mob helped Kennedy. According to Judith Exner, a mistress to John Kennedy and a lover to Chicago-Mafia don Sam Giancana, she shipped a suitcase full of dollars to Sam on April 6, 1960. John apparently asked to meet Sam in person. After the nomination, more money would be shipped and a meeting would be held in the Navarro Hotel in New York. When John was elected, Sam told Judith he would never have been elected without him. It seems that Kennedy also met with Gus Battaglia and Joe Bonanno, who said that Frank Costello, the Mafia-don from New York, protector of Carlos Marcello and mob liaison to FBI director-Hoover, “always maintained... that during the Prohibition he and Joe Kennedy were partners in he liquor business”. In March 1960, the FBI-office in New Orleans had learned that “Fischetti and other hoodlums backed Kennedy for the presidency”. Fischetti, a nephew of Sinatra, worked in Miami for Meyer Lansky.

Men like Bonanno and especially Giancana knew how close they were to Frank Sinatra and how close Sinatra was to the Kennedys. What they were about to learn though, was that even though Sinatra was close to them and even very close to the patriarch, he had little if at all influence on his sons. Jimmy Hoffa, a fellow Irishman and the mob-connected leader of the Teamsters, violently opposed Kennedy and proclaimed “you tell Bobby Kennedy for me that he’s not going to make his brother President over Hoffa’s dead body”. It was Giancana who had talked a lot of mobsters into supporting Kennedy because Giancana believed that with Joseph’s background and Sinatra’s influence, Kennedy would be more on their side than Nixon, who was certainly no angel but not that fail-proof as John Kennedy would be... they believed.

Faced with forging a Cabinet and other appointments, Ben Bradlee, the editor of Newsweek, advised Kennedy to “replace Dulles and Hoover”. The very next day, Kennedy announced they would stay on. Some believe Kennedy was afraid of the ‘garbage’ (a possible World War II-relationship with a suspected Nazi-spy, his father’s role as Ambassador to England at the start of that World War, his father’s involvement in the illegal liquor trade during the Prohibition, …) Hoover might leak to the press if he was replaced. Should he have fired Hoover, everything that he might have leaked to the press would have been interpreted as the reaction of a man who couldn’t accept his days were over, who wanted to accuse an innocent man. And Kennedy knew
the press was on his side. It is more likely that Kennedy sincerely wanted two experienced men in charge of two important agencies, domestic and foreign intelligence, i.e. the security of the nation. On the other hand, he had told people that he would replace Dulles with Richard Bissell on July 1, 1961.

As a favor for accepting the vice presidential nomination, Johnson had wanted control over those positions in the Cabinet that would go to Texans. Whereas Kennedy made his campaign manager, his brother Robert, Attorney General, Johnson made his, Connally, Secretary of the Navy. One of Kennedy’s supporters, mobster Sam Giancana, soon realized things were not going to be as blissful as they had hoped. Robert Kennedy’s appointment as Attorney General made a lot of mobsters tremble: just before the presidential race they had gone through the humiliation of appearing before a Senate Committee on organized crime. Its chief counsel, Robert Kennedy, had humiliated them even more.

Kennedy hated everything that Eisenhower had stood for, but did take one of his Assistant Secretaries (of State), Republican Douglas Dillon, into his administration, as Secretary of Treasury. That Dillon had been skeptical of Eisenhower was probably no small motive behind this decision.

On the job
For once, a President didn’t owe anyone a favor and could appoint members to his Cabinet who he considered to be the most apt for the job. Vice-president Johnson, coming from his first Cabinet meeting, told his friend Sam Rayburn, Speaker of the House, how smart they all were. Rayburn replied: “Well, Lyndon, you might be right and they be every bit as intelligent as you say, but I’d feel a whole lot better about them if just one of them had run for sheriff once.”

Robert Kennedy was, from the very first day, angry that Hoover and his Deputy Director and personal friend, Clyde Tolson, hadn’t been at that Cabinet meeting and… that he couldn’t use the FBI gym. Hoover was equally appalled when he saw Kennedy throwing darts in his office and missing, hitting the paneling, and when he saw Kennedy walking round in shirtsleeves. He called him an “adolescent horse’s ass” and “like a child playing in a Dresden china shop... pure desecration of government property”. A few weeks later, Kennedy’s black Labrador ran around freely, and he even brought his preschool-aged children with him, asking Hoover to baby sit them when he was called away to the White House. And the White House was facing a major crisis.
B. BAY OF PIGS

At the first meeting of the National Security Council, it was crystal-clear Kennedy lacked any enthusiasm for the Cuban project. This was perhaps hardly surprising since Bissell, the man who masterminded the U2-project and was now in charge of this operation, was giving a briefing that didn’t talk so much about the project as it did about paraphernalia. Nobody at that meeting learnt anything interesting about what the CIA, especially Bissell, were planning to do.

In 1958, J.C. King, head of the CIA’s Western Hemisphere Division, had met the extreme rightist William Pawley and had discussed the possible assassination of Castro even before he attained any power in Cuba. CIA-officer Frank Bender had interviewed Castro and many believed he was a staunch anti-Communist. In April 1959, just four months after Castro had thrown Batista out of his presidential seat, Castro was on a visit to Washington and hoped, as a head of state, to be welcomed by President Eisenhower himself. Instead, he was greeted by Nixon who obviously disliked Castro. Nixon commented to the CIA that they had to “get rid of this cancer”. Many of Nixon’s and Eisenhower’s friends, ‘legal’ and ‘illegal’ ones, had been on very close terms with Batista, who had helped the Americans in exploiting his own country. The Cuban sugar-economy was in American hands and not one dollar of the profits was reinvested in Cuba. Castro, unlike Batista, wanted to change Cuba for the better and hoped to nationalize this economy. Nixon, a staunch anti-Communist and protector of American interests in Cuba, interpreted this as a communist action, even though it was nothing more than sound economics. Nixon created, almost single-handedly, a reason why the United States couldn’t, wouldn’t and shouldn’t get along with Castro. And Castro realized all too well that that was going to happen.

On December 11, 1959, J.C. King informed Allen Dulles of the ‘desire’ to eliminate Castro, upon which Dulles gave his fiat to the operation. The Soviets probably saw the writing on the wall as well and in February, 1960, Soviet Premier Khrushchev sent his top-aide Anastas Mikoyan over to Cuba to meet with Castro, hoping to iron bonds between the two nations, with a possible alliance. Nixon’s decision was literally making Cuba into an enemy and whether that was his intention or not, an enemy close at home is more dangerous than one at the other side of the world.

In the States, Pawley tried to widen the gap between the United States and Cuba, trying to push President Eisenhower onto the Cuban war path. On March 17, 1960, Eisenhower did okay ‘Operation Pluto’, the Cuban project’s code name. Deputy Director of Plans of the CIA and successful project leader of the U2, Richard Bissell, Jr., was put in charge of the operation.

The action plan was two-fold: a) the assassination of Fidel Castro b) followed by an invasion, if possible accompanied by a popular uprising. To accomplish goal a), the CIA used the knowledge that Mafia figure Meyer Lansky had put a one million dollar reward on Castro’s head and that Lansky was already working with a former Cuban leader, Carlos Prio, to overthrow Castro. Apart from the American sugar companies, the Mafia was also hit in the face by Castro when he closed all casinos in Cuba. The CIA felt they should co-operate, like they had done six years earlier, when they tried to install a new regime in Guatemala. Fletcher Prouty, formerly of the Defense Department and a vehement opponent to anything the CIA engaged in, described the relationship between the CIA and the Mafia as “two huge concentric circles spread all over the world – inevitably, in some places, the circles overlap”... like in Cuba.
That August, Bissell and Edwards approached the Mobster Rosselli via CIA-officer James ‘Jim’ O’Connell and Robert Maheu, a former FBI-agent, now turned private detective, primarily working for a friend of Nixon, Howard Hughes. The CIA preferred a standard hit, but the Mafia delegation, made up of Johnny Rosselli, his boss Sam Giancana and Florida-based Santos Trafficante, opposed such an action; especially Trafficante preferred poison pills. A first attempt was scheduled for mid-March, 1961, followed by a second attempt with the help of Manuel de Varona, in April 1961. Just before the invasion, however, the CIA placed all the exile leaders under guard, thus preventing de Varona from informing his contacts in Cuba to give the pills to Castro.

Kennedy was furious when he learned the CRC had been jailed by the CIA. Unknown to him, Richard Nixon, General Charles Cabell and Mario Kohly, a rich Cuban exile, had secretly agreed, in 1960, Kohly would be the next president should the invasion succeed. This plan, Operation 40, called for the elimination of the CRC on the beaches of Cuba: the CIA would jail the members of the CRC during the invasion, then, if it succeeded, fly them to Cuba, where the CIA would kill them almost immediately upon arrival. With the CRC out of the way, Kohly would then be the new president of Cuba.

Even though Nixon had promised all that under the assumption that he would be the next president of the United States himself, the CIA tried to ‘honor’ that agreement under Kennedy’s presidency. Only the failure of the invasion saved these men their lives.

Months before the invasion, CIA-officer Howard Hunt had been sent to Havana. On his return, he reported that the CIA shouldn’t expect “a popular uprising when we invade”. This would have been optimistic news to the Pentagon, who didn’t hold this Cuban project in high regard, if only they would have learnt about this report. Some at the Joint Chief of Staffs had done an independent study and now believed the odds were against them: their success-rate was thirty percent and if they wanted to succeed, there had to be air strikes AND a popular uprising. Hunt, an unpopular guy within the CIA, had just reported such an uprising would be most unlikely. Nobody seemed to be bothered by Hunt’s prediction, even though he wasn’t the only one to sound that trumpet. Senator-elect Clairborne Pell, on his return from Cuba, said the people in Cuba were “not dissatisfied” with Castro. Two friends of Kennedy-aide Arthur Schlesinger told him that Cuba did not want to return to the days of politicians who co-operated with Lansky and other mobsters. The CIA-officers who were developing the operation, however, were not bothered by these reports, even though many within the CIA realized Bissell’s plans were unrealistic and simply too grandiose. They, however, didn’t want to be involved, weren’t included and thus lost all influence to go against the pro-invasion faction.

The CIA centralized the invasion’s logistic support in Opa Locka, Florida, using the front name ‘Zenith Technical Enterprises, Inc.’. The invasion would be run from Quarter’s Eye, Washington where a rather mysterious person, Frank Bender, would try to direct all events. Bender’s real name was probably Gerry Droller, a German born OSS-veteran who had been recruited by Tracy Barnes, who started out by running the CIA’s Swiss desk (the legacy of Allen Dulles), and was afterwards transferred to the Latin American division. According to Rafael Trujillo, Bender was one Fritz Swend, a member of the Gehlen Organisation. Bender had apparently operated in the Dominican Republic with mobster Frank Costello and Fulgencio Batista on the plans for an invasion under the alias of Don Frederico. Together with E. Howard Hunt and David At lee Phillips, Barnes organized the CIA’s propaganda machine against Cuba, even though Barnes disliked
being briefed about any operational knowledge. Like Dulles and Bissell, he was in charge of the operation but didn’t supervise the operation; he just let the operators do what they thought best, without any centralized, thoroughly informed coordination. Bissell and Dulles were too afraid that should anything go wrong, they might be blamed or asked about what they knew. Though they were the instigators, they were uninformed people when it came down to details. Yet, they had to brief the President. This formed a hiatus, one that would prove fatal as Kennedy was deciding on things that quite often didn’t correspond with reality because his briefings were incomplete or wrong as Dulles and the rest didn’t (want to) know the actual conditions themselves.

For one, Dulles assured Kennedy that Castro would be killed before the invasion, whereas Bissell, seconded by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, urged for U.S. air support if they wanted success; sixteen B26s were needed. Kennedy wanted minimum air cover and felt that sixteen planes would possibly hint the United States were supporting these exiles with planes; he informed Bissell he could use only six planes.

When the plan was presented to Kennedy on March 11, Kennedy was not eager to go through with it. Kennedy felt that, if he wanted to invade, this plan was “too spectacular”. Dulles apparently feared Kennedy would abandon the project and tried to pressure Kennedy into continuing the operation. He wondered what effect would be created should the Cuban trainees be turned loose across Latin America. Kennedy said he wanted a “quieter” one, one that didn’t call for U.S. military participation.

On March 29, Kennedy asked Bissell whether they really needed an air strike and whether there would be a popular uprising. Bissell simply reassured the President and didn’t really answer his questions. To air his own objections, Kennedy brought Senator Fullbright, who had also objected to the use of force against Castro, into the decision-making process. Before voting on the project, Fullbright voiced his opinions. The other voters, however, apparently didn’t realize Fullbright was mouthing more or less the same objections Kennedy had; they thought the President wanted to go ahead with the plan and had only allowed Fullbright to air his objections so that, in case of failure, Fullbright couldn’t say he had told them so, “... if only they would have listened to him”.

Even though some agreed with some issues Fullbright brought forward, those present preferred to go ahead with it, primarily because they wanted to close ranks with Kennedy, whom they (wrongly) thought favored the plan. Afterwards, Dean Rusk told Schlesinger that maybe they had been “oversold on the fact that we can’t say no to this thing”. General Taylor thought Kennedy’s main problem was that Kennedy felt he couldn’t go against a military decision by a brilliant military mind, President Eisenhower. But it seems most reasonable to assume Kennedy, reassured by the CIA and the Pentagon, decided to go ahead because he saw his trusted advisors were in favor of moving along as well. Nobody apparently understood that should the invasion succeed, they would be even worse off; that they would somehow have to patronize the new Cuban government and protect it in years to come. Nobody had wondered what all that might include. Nobody seemed to care.

Kennedy did say there would be no direct participation of U.S. Armed Forces. Whether the CIA-leaders really understood what he was saying is unclear. Kennedy had asked whether an invasion brigade could succeed without U.S. Forces joining them, but he did not receive a clear answer. Lacking a military intelligence advisor on his White House staff, Kennedy had to rely on others.
The invasion

A few days later, the invasion of Cuban began. During the night of the invasion, on April 17, General Charles Cabell, who controlled the air strikes by the CIA planes from Quarter’s Eye, tried to contact Kennedy twice: though the invasion was under way, there were no planes covering the troops disembarking on the shores. Secretary of State Dean Rusk awoke the President at 4h00, requesting new air cover, even though Rusk himself was the source of the ‘no go’-order. Rusk felt that the U.S. should only sent airplanes when the Brigade had captured an airstrip at Giron. That way, it could look like the planes were sky born from within Cuba. Without the airstrip, everyone would realize the planes were not Castro defectors but U.S.-sponsored planes. Rusk phoned Bundy and the President and Kennedy agreed not to send any air cover unless there were ‘overriding situations’. Now, in the middle of night, Cabell, trying to change the President’s mind, was unsuccessful in that attempt. Some believe Kennedy knew the invasion would fail without the air cover, but that he also knew the invasion would fail anyhow because they had failed to kill Castro before hitting the beach at the Bay of Pigs. Robert Kennedy, perhaps in an effort to clear his brother’s name, said that Kennedy had okayed the air cover but that Rusk had said ‘no’ because Kennedy had said no U.S. troops would be used. Rusk, according to Robert Kennedy, felt that if there was air cover, it would look as if Kennedy had lied. The President had made up his mind, Rusk apparently believed, and now his Cabinet members had to explain there would be no air strikes. Dulles, at one of the most important moments in his career as DCI, was absent, giving a lecture in Puerto Rico. He had decided not to cancel his visit because he believed that visit would be an excellent cover. If he would have been in Washington, he had the authority (but thus also the responsibility) to order the planes to leave. He was the only man within the CIA who had enough authority to talk to the President. His absence created a void and that void wasn’t covered by his lecture-cover.

Kennedy could still decide U.S. Forces would join the invasion brigade, but he realized that could start World War III. Nixon had advised him to move into Cuba, but Kennedy felt Khrushchev would then strike back, moving into Berlin. He didn’t want to take that risk. Adlai Stevenson, Ambassador to the United Nations, had always thought Kennedy was too impulsive and too certain of himself and might blunder the U.S. into World War III; Stevenson’s opinions didn’t come true... yet?

The air strike, however, was not the only problem. There had been plans for a second invasion unit that would serve as a distraction for Castro’s troops. This unit, lead by Nino Diaz, would have to invade near Guantanamo, but it seems Diaz, at the last moment, couldn’t gather his strength: his unit remained just off the coast of Cuba. It is also rumored Bissell fully realized his plan couldn’t succeed without the help of military and therefore would use this unit as a means of forcing Kennedy into ordering armed forces to help the invasion. Should this second unit have been attacked by Castro’s troops, Bissell would have depicted this attack as an attack against the U.S. military, who were stationed in the immediate vicinity of the Bay and of this unit. By April 20, when everything had collapsed except Castro, the death count had reached 184; 1189 men had been captured by Castro’s forces. The Cuban exiles had hoped they would be able to live in Cuba again; their dream had collapsed and blamed, even hated Kennedy for that. Some said it was like “finding out Superman is a fairy”.

General Thomas Lane commented that “President Kennedy’s refusal to use U.S. aircraft to protect the beachhead and destroy the Castro planes reveals the confusion of his thinking. He was
incapable of weighing the relative unimportance of criticism in the U.N. and disaster to an invasion which he personally had launched”. Kennedy would not make this error twice; he simply would stall any military solutions and go for the political solutions. It is true the air cover was essential to the operation, but it would only have given the Brigade a chance to succeed; it doesn’t mean they would have been successful simply because there was air cover. Even if there would have been air cover, the operation showed many flaws, bad leadership by the CIA-officers and would probably have failed anyway. Practically every Cuban that opposed Castro had emigrated; those Cubans remaining in Cuba preferred Castro above any American-sponsored president who would only make matters worse, they felt. Even though some in Cuba opposed Castro, their motive wasn’t because they preferred such an “American president”, but for a number of other reasons, such as having presidential or political ambitions themselves. CIA Inspector General Kirkpatrick learnt that no one in his organization had even investigated whether Castro could be overthrown. He thought he couldn’t be, because those who hated him most had left Cuba.

Kennedy realized that the way the operation had been run did not correspond with his ideas about how it would be run and was run. Kennedy believed that if the invasion failed, the Brigade-members could turn into guerilleros in the mountains, constantly attempting to break down Castro’s power. Nobody told him that because of a change in landing site from Trinidad to the Bay of Pigs, this was no longer possible as that Bay was too far away from the mountains. Kennedy thought the plans were a secret, whereas everybody had already learnt something was up. Just days before the invasion, Castro had ordered massive arrests, so massive that almost no U.S. asset was not in some jail cell.

Kennedy also realized he was not inexperienced as a man, but that he was just that: a commander. He wondered why he suddenly had trusted experts when he hadn’t trusted them ever before he became President.

The man who Kennedy held most responsible for all this was not Dulles, but Richard Bissell, whose Directorate of Plans had obviously failed. The CIA acted under the supervision of the National Security Council, but Kennedy personally accepted the responsibility for the failure in public. If he wouldn’t have, he implicitly admitted that he didn’t have control or supervision of some people within his government. In private, Kennedy commented that he “was assured by every SOB I checked with -all the military experts and the CIA- that the plan would succeed”. Those reassurances came from Bissell and Dulles. In the middle of the invasion, Kennedy commented he had, in fact, made a mistake in retaining Dulles; his brother, who he felt was wasting his time as Attorney General, should have been DCI. In secret, Kennedy wrote NSAM 55, putting future responsibility for such operations with the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and NSAM 57, which said that the CIA was only allowed to set up small clandestine operations. The CIA, however, immediately started to work on a second, perhaps even more massive invasion plan; they didn’t want to read NSAM 57. The CIA realized the President clearly felt they were not yet ‘man enough’ to lead such massive operations and those CIA-officers involved in this project didn’t want to see the truth of Kennedy’s words.

Tad Szulc, who learnt of the plans to invade Cuba and considered them to be more or less ridiculous, commented that Castro had told him he did “not hold Kennedy responsible (for the failed invasion) because this idea emerged much earlier”. Castro did say that the American government, the CIA, was behind the invasion.

The Fair Play for Cuba Committee marched in front of the United Nations-Building in New
York, repeating over again “Cuba si, Yankee no”. Nixon’s prophecy had come true.

The Bay of Pigs Aftermath

Joseph Kennedy told his son he “blew it. Don’t trust the CIA”. His son did realize that the CIA was something of a swamp and that going along with them was like going into that swamp. Kennedy felt he had to fire Dulles, Bissell and Cabell, the three people he thought were responsible for the disaster.

Before giving Dulles the opportunity to resign, Robert Kennedy, on April 22, 1961, selected Dulles, Admiral Arleigh Burke and General Maxwell Taylor, to review the entire Bay of Pigs-operation. Dulles paraded a group of people who said the CIA was not to blame, but that the real culprits were the military. Robert Kennedy might not have believed them, he certainly believed he had to use counterinsurgency, exactly what Dulles wanted him to indoctrinate with. Dulles also succeeded in pushing General Taylor into the White House as a military specialist to Kennedy. Taylor was put at the Joint Chiefs of Staff; McGeorge Bundy would be Kennedy’s special advisor.

The investigation by Maxwell Taylor put the cause of defeat as “having run out of ammunition”. Theodore Sorensen commented that “the CIA called off a convoy of ammunition” and that the CIA had also assured it would destroy Castro’s air force, which they had failed to do.

Dulles himself successfully narrowed the reasons for this failure to one single act: Kennedy didn’t approve the air cover. Though it is ridiculous to say this was the sole, even primary, reason for the failed invasion, the public, and especially those involved CIA-agents and Cuban exiles believed it was Kennedy’s unwillingness that had robbed them.

Resignations

On June 2, 1961, the press reported that Dulles would step down as DCI when Kennedy would return from his trip to Europe. Dulles, playing charades, said he “would not take it (the rumors) seriously at all”. But by July 31, Dulles planned to retire at the end of the year. He wouldn’t last that long: on September 27, Kennedy appointed John McCone as the new DCI.

Richard Bissell had run the operation and he was the man held most responsible for its failure. Kennedy told Bissell that “if this were the British government, I would resign, and you, being a senior civil servant, would remain. But it isn’t. In our government, you and Alien have to go, and I have to remain”. Bissell, six months earlier still hoping he would become DCI on July 1, agreed to resign from the CIA. But after John McCone’s wife died, he asked Bissell to stay on: “I’ve talked to Bobby Kennedy about this and he talked to the President. They have changed their minds. They will be delighted to have you stay on, but not in the DDP position”. They wanted him in an administrative position, still as a Deputy Director, but not an operational position.

Bissell, however, had already found other challenges: Dulles had guided him into a nick position at the Institute of Defense Analysis. Bissell’s successor would be his deputy, Richard Helms, who had stayed out of the entire Cuban project. Helms had always considered the project to be “not appropriate for the clandestine services”; Kennedy now felt exactly the same way.

General Charles Cabell, the man who was in charge of the air strikes, resigned on December 29, 1961, a ‘decision’ that was accepted on February 1, 1962. Even though he hadn’t really done anything wrong, he was a victim of circumstances and was fired. His replacement was Major General Marshall S. Carter, who started on his new job on March 9, 1963.
When the storm had raged over, Kennedy asked Nixon to come over to the White House and have a talk about what exactly had gone wrong and what should be done. Nixon’s advice was simple and plain: he proposed Kennedy would search for legal grounds that would legitimize his actions against Cuba and, once found, would continue with his plans, i.e. another invasion. More privately, Nixon commented Kennedy was “a chicken”, afraid as he was of the criticism. At the Kremlin, one Nikita Krushchev thought exactly the same.
CHAPTER 10
CRISIS

‘He wasn’t a great president. He didn’t have the chance.’
Gary Underwood

Kennedy inherited the Bay of Pigs invasion and “blew it”. As everyone who tried to predict the future realized: this failure would probably be the source of future problems. The first crises occurred in Berlin, where Khrushchev did what Kennedy had been fearing when had thought about moving into Cuba. When the dust settled, there was another Cuban crisis, an after-shock of both the Bay of Pigs and the Berlin crises. Somehow, these leaders were able to avoid a world war, after they had successfully maneuvered themselves in a position from which they could easily start one. Fortunately, no bloodshed ever reddened the streets.

A. THE BERLIN WALL

In June 1961, shortly after Kennedy’s weak premiere showing in the failed Cuban invasion, Kennedy was scheduled to meet his Soviet counterpart, Nikita Khrushchev, in Vienna. In 1960, Cardinal Spellman, quite in line with the Vatican’s message, had asked to “show hostility to Khrushchev’s peace talks” with Eisenhower. Those peace talks failed, largely because Gary Powers’ U2 was shot down over the Soviet Union. The Catholic Kennedy would probably, everyone thought, still remember those ‘wise’ words and, like any ‘good’ Catholic, turn out to be an anti-Communist. The Vatican, like so many other anti-Communists, believed that the Soviet Union, sometimes identified as the devil, only engaged in peace talks as a means of trying to trap, ensnare the Western World, hoping to be able to take it afterwards. The ‘all-knowing’ anti-Communists believed that anyone who fell for this “obvious” trap, was, of course, very naive.

In Vienna, Khrushchev immediately ‘informed’ Kennedy he was going to “sign a treaty that allows East Germany to seize West Berlin” next December, in six months’ time. Khrushchev said that if the Americans were going to preserve their interests in West Berlin, he was ‘willing’ to begin a war, World War III; the Soviets would ‘readily’ accept the challenge. Kennedy, not yet totally comfortable to the chairs in his Oval Office, almost having fallen out of his chair two months before, was eager for advice. When French President de Gaulle was informed of what had happened in the Austrian capital, he told Kennedy not to take all that Khrushchev-talk too seriously: he felt Khrushchev was bluffing. The fact that each year 200,000 Germans crossed from East Berlin to West Berlin to resettle in the West had troubled the Soviet regime and especially its image for a long time. With the Berlin Wall, only the daredevils would be able or willing to defect to West Berlin, de Gaulle realized Khrushchev’s thinking had to be influenced by the Bay of Pigs fiasco.

Kennedy, however, did not accept his advice and showed his best cards to Khrushchev: he over-reacted, doing exactly the opposite from what he had done at the Bay of Pigs. He added 3.25
billion to the defense budget, tripled the draft, called up 150,000 reservists and initiated a program of civil defense from a nuclear attack; in short: Kennedy was preparing America for a nuclear war with the Soviet Union. Kennedy had fallen for Khrushchev’s bluff and if Khrushchev didn’t pay attention, he would find himself amidst a world war which he didn’t want in the first place.

On August 16, East German troops threw up barricades, building the Berlin Wall, separating East from West Berlin. Kennedy reacted by moving 1,500 troops into West Berlin, realizing that Khrushchev might put his words into deeds and take West Berlin. Kennedy, however, was playing with fire: if his troops were somehow challenged by the German troops, he would most likely have started World War III, and simply because he had overreacted to Khrushchev’s bluff. Even though his deeds suggest otherwise, Kennedy had apparently calmed down by August and asked Khrushchev to talk about the precarious situation. Khrushchev, who believed that Kennedy had no guts, apparently realized Kennedy did have guts after all. William H. Whalen, a Soviet spy inside the JCS, informed his Soviet handlers that Kennedy was not just talking about sending in troops; he was at the verge of doing so. Khrushchev readily agreed not to sign a separate peace treaty with East Germany. Khrushchev, after all, had what he wanted all along: his wall.

Faced with these Soviet threats, Kennedy still wanted military superiority. By the end of 1962, he wanted 600 intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM) and got them. By the end of 1963, he wanted thousand ICBMs and a military budget of USD 50 billion. Whether or not he had come to realize Khrushchev was bluffing, Kennedy obviously didn’t want to take any risks with this man. Somebody who bluffs is quite often a gambler and winning wars is all about odds; Kennedy was determined to have the odds in his advantage.
B. A CUBAN QUAGMIRE

The goal of the failed Bay of Pigs-invasion was to get rid of Castro’s regime, nominally Castro himself. Though Kennedy could always go for another invasion attempt, international political waters had changed the likelihood of such actions. He wanted to resort to other means to topple Castro’s regime. Castro, on the other hand knew Kennedy’s government was not going to cease attacking him and realized he could do well with a strong helping hand.

Operation Mongoose

The conclusions reached during the Bay of Pigs investigation lead to OPERATION MONGOOSE, which was going to use 600 CIA-agents and 3000 Cubans to destroy Castro, preferably before October 1962. The project would be led by Robert Kennedy himself, using a budget of fifty million dollar. On an operational level, the Operation would be supervised by General Edward Lansdale and Richard Helms. To date, it is still the largest authorized CIA-project.

The operation’s first meeting was held on November 4, in which a Special Group was formed, consisting of Robert Kennedy, Maxwell Taylor, McGeorge Bundy, Alexis Johnson, R. Gilpatrick, Lyman Lemaitzer and DCI John McCone, the latter quite often leaving Richard Helms, the new Director of Plans, mostly in charge.

By November 8, 1961, Richard Bissell had given a ‘real’ briefing to President Kennedy on what exactly had been achieved in trying to eliminate Castro so far. When Kennedy realized everything had, once again, failed, he was, once again, furious at Bissell. Bissell knew he was on his way out after what happened at the Bay of Pigs, but wanted to make the best of this operation: he decided to bring in the help of the recently formed assassination program ZR/RIFLE and its supervisor, William K. Harvey. Harvey had led the what seemed to be successful Berlin Tunnel operation in the early fifties, even though it was afterwards discovered that the Soviets had found out about it very soon after they dug their first hole. ZR/RIFLE, though not of much use in this case, did have a capacity to assassinate foreign leaders, if the need to arose.

On January 19, 1962, Robert Kennedy put, once again, pressure on Lansdale, saying operations had to be stepped up. With the Kennedys closely directing the ‘show’, frantically trying not to repeat the earlier fiasco, almost everything had to be approved by Robert Kennedy. Harvey, a heavy drinker with a dim view of the Kennedy brothers, complained about this to DCI McCone. Richard Helms, Deputy Director of Plans and also under pressure by Robert Kennedy to come up with results, heard Harvey’s complaint and told Harvey to revive the ‘Rosselli project’, in which the CIA would, once again, co-operate with organized crime. All this happened without Kennedy’s or McCone’s approval.

Robert Kennedy, however, was briefed by Hoover about the CIA having employed the Mafia without him being informed or asked for approval. Helms, of course, must have realized Kennedy was not likely to give his approval, knowing the Justice Department was trying almost desperately to lay charges against men like Giancana, Trafficante and Rosselli. Helms had just given these men the most perfect blackmail-material they could have. Nevertheless, Robert
Kennedy was not mad about the CIA using criminal elements; he was only mad because he hadn’t been informed.

To iron that crease, CIA’s General Counsels Houston and Edwards went, on May 7, on the record as having informed Robert Kennedy that the plots involving organized crime had been terminated. This was largely, if not only, a bureaucratic ploy to take away, more or less, the possibility of that these hoodlums would try and blackmail the President, should the Justice Department’s claws ever capture them. Now everything the CIA would do in cahoots with the Mafia could be plausibly denied by the Kennedys. Officially, the Kennedys had learnt the CIA had used criminal elements and the Kennedys, though not taking any repercussions against those who had ordered to do so, had ordered the termination of this co-operation. The report, however, only mentioned Giancana and Maheu, not Rosselli and Trafficante. The CIA could continue its co-operation with the latter two.

John McCone was never briefed by Harvey on the Mafia involvement. This could well explain why McCone never realized there might be a connection between this ‘Cuban thing’ and Kennedy’s assassination.

At the same time, Theodore Shackley and Gordon Campbell, his deputy, were setting up a CIA-station, JM/WAVE, in Miami. That it was on domestic soil, therefore a violation of the Neutrality Act, i.e. illegal, was, not yet, of anyone’s concern. As early as August 1960, the Justice and State Department, together with the FBI, had campaigned to get the CIA-camps out of the United States. Kennedy would begin to listen to these objections very soon and would try to follow the law.

Harvey, often working out of JM/WAVE, was ordered to work as liaison between the CIA and the Mafia. Helms correctly ordered him not to include Giancana and Maheu any longer. Sam Giancana had stayed in contact with President Kennedy, both plotting against Castro, via Judith Exner after the election. Giancana, before saying yes to their continued co-operation, had gotten Kennedy’s promise that once Castro was ousted. Kennedy would allow Joe Adonis to re-enter America.

In April 1962, Harvey and O’Donnell paid a visit to Rosselli, informing him they, once again, wanted his help. On a daily basis, Rosselli would work with CIA-agent David Sanchez Morales. Morales was a friend of Joe Fischetti, Al Capone’s cousin and possible backer of Kennedy’s presidential campaign. Morales would also work with the an illustrious ‘Maurice Bishop’, David Phillips, now in charge of the CIA’s Western Hemisphere Division.

Johnny Rosselli’s prime Cuban contact was Antonio ‘Tony’ de Varona and on April 21 he was given four poison pills, developed by the CIA’s Technical Services Division, de Varona had to try to administer them to Castro. In June, a first assassination team went to Cuba, followed by a second team in September. By September, however, there were more serious problems facing the Kennedys.

**The Cuban Missile Crisis**

Just after the fiasco at the Bay of Pigs, Robert Kennedy commented that “if we don’t want Russia to set up missile bases in Cuba, we had better decide now what we are willing to do to stop it”. That operation, MONGOOSE, had failed, or, at the very least, hadn’t succeeded yet. Could Kennedy’s vision become reality?

To Mario Kohly, it had already become a reality. Kohly, an extreme rightist who thought that he
would be the next President of Cuba should Castro’s regime be toppled, had learnt through his Cuban underground network that there were Soviet missiles as early as early 1961. During the first week of April, before the Bay of Pigs invasion, Kohly informed the Kennedys of their presence. Robert Kennedy, knowing Kohly’s background and ideas, believed Kohly simply wanted to pull a stunt on them, trying to embarrass the Kennedys who did not support Kohly as the future president of Cuba but the much more liberal and leftist members of the Cuban Revolutionary Council. When Kohly showed the Attorney General photographs and other evidence, Robert Kennedy termed Kohly a liar and a faker. Robert Kennedy made perhaps the biggest error of his career, one that would lead to the death of his brother. Robert Kennedy reacted out of prejudices, out of a dislike for Kohly and failed to evaluate Kohly’s evidence properly. The Kennedys would now learn of the missiles’ presence through other ways.

In November, 1961, just a few months after the Berlin-crisis and six months after the failed invasion, two GRU-officers (Soviet military intelligence) were sent to Cuba. As early as July 1959, Castro’s Intelligence Chief, Major Ramiro Valdes, had visited the Soviet Ambassador and the KGB Residency in Mexico City to start ‘friendly liaisons’ between the two nations. Castro had, after his visit with Nixon, realized the United States was not eager to help him. Castro believed he could not stand up against the United States without a strong sponsor. That belief only grew after the Bay of Pigs. As if Castro himself wasn’t a difficult problem enough to deal with, Kennedy now had to deal with the Soviets as well.

Khrushchev wanted to place missiles Inside Cuba as retaliation against the American missiles aimed at his dacha at the Black Sea. Mikoyan, however, had two principal objections. First: Castro could refuse to accept and Castro, in fact, was afraid that those missiles could damage the ‘good reputation’ of his revolution. Second and perhaps more important: the Cuban landscape, void of any trees, did not offer any cover for the installations of these missiles. Tom Waters, a British intelligence officer who was monitoring Soviet ships from Cyprus, realized at the end of February 1962 that some of these ships changed their routine for no apparent reason. On March 15, a first discussion was held on this matter, but the CIA had more pressing things to worry about: Anatoli Golitsyn, a KGB-officer, had just defected to the West and was heralded as a ‘big catch’ for Western Intelligence. At this discussion, it was speculated the Soviets were building a Soviet submarine base. After all: the Soviets had only six such bases in the world and most, if not all, were unfavorably located.

Cuba and Florida are only ninety miles apart. Not only did this mean Cuba was closer than your next door neighbor, the corridor between the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean was detrimental for the United States. Sixty-five percent of its most important economic part, oil, coming from Latin America, had to pass through this corridor; the Cubans didn’t have submarines, but one Soviet submarine operating along this corridor would be enough to break down the flow of oil from these regions.

What was even more important, however, was the fact that NORAD, when established in 1958, had not put an early warning system in the South. At that time, Cuba was a friendly nation and apparently nobody in the military thought things might change in the near future. This meant that an air attack from Cuba could easily go unnoticed until it was too late. Though faced with other problems, the CIA did try to use its spy inside the GRU, Oleg Penkovsky, who had been feeding the Americans enormous quantities of quality Information. Unfortunately, Penkovsky did not have any information on what was going on in Cuba.
On July 2, Raul Castro, Fidel’s brother, went to Moscow, presenting the information of Kennedy’s plan to kill his brother to Khrushchev. He asked the Soviet Union for military aid, aid which was apparently already on its way even before Castro came to Moscow. In August, the CIA relied on Philippe de Vosjoli, SDECE’s (French Intelligence) liaison to U.S.A. to contact his agents in Cuba. All CIA’s assets inside Cuba were considered to be unreliable and the British no longer had agents inside Cuba after the Suez-crisis. The CIA also decided to use technical intelligence, partly because it was more reliable, partly because its lack of human sources: its U2-planes were to fly reconnaissance missions over Cuba. On August 15, DCI McCone contacted McGeorge Bundy who asked McCone to go ahead with the missions. McCone had felt from the start that it could be a military build-up and had told Kennedy as much. Kennedy told McCone afterwards he “was right all along, but for the wrong reasons”. McCone’s feeling, Kennedy believed, was because McCone was a virulent anti-communist. Throughout everything, McCone felt that an attack had to be carried out on Cuba. The CIA, unlike its director, was convinced it was NOT a military build-up.

On August 29, the CIA learned there were Surface-to-Air-Missile (SAM) sites on Cuba. Unlike the United States, the Soviet Union had never stationed any ballistic missiles on territory of their allies. That they would do it in America’s backyard upset them even more. Kennedy, however, would have been able to live with such SAMs in his backyard: they were defensive weapons. Kennedy and his staff, however, firmly believed they were installed to defend something, something different than a line of defense against a possible second Invasion; but what? A submarine base still seemed to be the most logical answer. The CIA thought it was rather strange that the Soviets hadn’t disguised these SAMs. In retrospect, there is reason to believe Khrushchev believed they had been disguised, but that somewhere along the line of command, communications had broken down and that they therefore weren’t disguised. If they had been disguised, it is more than likely that the CIA would not have found out about these SAMs that early. Theoretically, this could mean that the Cuban missile crisis could have had a totally different and even worse scenario. The CIA also learned that the Jose Martin runway was lengthened, probably indicating that high-tech Soviet airplanes were coming to Cuba as well. All this information was taken to Kennedy, but he did not immediately react to all this information. Starting in the fall of 1961, Kennedy and Khrushchev had talked via George N. Bolshakov, who was a KGB-officer under a journalistic cover. Bolshakov and Robert Kennedy had started meeting fortnightly during the previous May. Probably acting on orders from Moscow, even though Bolshakov might have been used himself, he spread disinformation to the Americans, claiming there were only defensive weapons in Cuba. Kennedy, had no reason to disbelieve Bolshakov… yet. On September 8, Kennedy did state he would not tolerate a deployment of offensive weapons from the Soviet Union on Cuban territory.

By October 1, the CIA knew of two kinds of missiles stationed on Cuba. They knew there were SA-2 Guidelines, which were anti-aircraft, and Styx, which were mainly for coastal defense, anti-ship missiles. The CIA believed the next stage in the Soviet plan would be the arrival of Ilyushin 28 jet bombers and Medium—Range Ballistic Missiles. Among the items ‘purchased’ from Penkovsky was a manual on the deployment and use of Soviet MRBMs. Dulles now believed Khrushchev would move missiles into Cuba. Meanwhile, the CIA Moscow station had lost all contact with Oleg Penkovsky around September. The CIA believed Penkovsky had felt he was under KGB observation and had therefore decided to end all his espionage activities.
On October 10, Kennedy authorized new U2-flights over Cuba, but piloted by Air Force-pilots. That same day, Republican Senator Kenneth Keating, who supported the Cuban exile-cause, said “Soviet offensive missiles (were) in place”. Four days later, McGeorge Bundy denied on TV there were any missiles on Cuba. A week later, the NPIC discovered ‘the real thing’, two IRBM sites on Cuba, at Remedios and Guanajay. The next day, they discovered that Mig 21s were operational at Santa Clara and that two MRBM-clusters were around Sogua La Granda. The NPIC counted a total of 24 MRBMs and 16 IRBMs at nine different sites. This meant that the Soviet Union had lied about not positioning offensive weapons on Cuba. What was far worse and the essence of all this, was that the Soviets had now augmented their capacity to launch a first strike of nuclear salvos from land by eighty percent. The CIA realized that now, in fact, the Soviet Union had, more or less, what Khrushchev had been heralding to the world: military first-strike capability. The Pentagon reacted by going to DEFCOM 3, which was near full mobilization. This meant that the First Armored Division, Fort Hood, Texas and the Second Battalion, First Marine Division, Camp Pendleton, were mobilized. The Pentagon wondered how the Soviets would react to this step. The CIA also wondered whether it was purely coincidental that the Soviets had launched their first reconnaissance-satellite, COSMOS 10, on October 17, targeting the southeastern parts of the United States. The CIA was not yet worried that much about what the Soviets might learn from these photographs: the Soviets had to get the satellite back to earth first before being able to analyze the films. That would only be within a few days. The CIA realized that for the first time they had the edge over Soviet Intelligence: not only did they have aerial reconnaissance from spy satellites and the U2-planes, not only was Cuba almost home-turf whereas it was thousands of miles away from Moscow, they also possessed Penkovsky, even though he was not providing information on Cuba and was keeping a low profile at that very moment. Penkovsky had already told the Americans the Soviets possessed far fewer weapons than Khrushchev had been saying.

All this information was taken to the National Security Council (NSC), who decided that either the missiles had to be removed or there would be an invasion of Cuba, followed by the destruction of the missiles. Some of members did not even want to talk with Khrushchev, they felt they should just invade and get it over with. Eisenhower’s military career had made him realize one should never use military force unless that power could be used to the full extent, no strings attached. Kennedy had learnt that same lesson after the failed para-/military solution in the Bay of Pigs-invasion and he now supported a political solution. Kennedy now also realized that Bolshakov had been lying to him: Bolshakov was no longer a trusted conduit and another conduit had to be found... and soon.

On October 20, everything was prepared to brief French President de Gaulle and British Prime Minister McMillan. Kennedy, scheduled to travel the MidWest, cut his tour short because of a “throat-infection”; a deeply worried president kept his nation in the dark about what was going on only a few hundred miles away. The next day the Soviets retrieved COSMOS 10; the day before, they had launched COSMOS 11. The Soviets now learned, for the first time, what the Americans were doing in the southeastern parts of the United States and it must have been a trilling realization Kennedy, after the Berlin crisis, was again preparing for the ‘World War III-scenario’.

On October 22, Kennedy went public with the facts, informing Khrushchev he had to withdraw
his missiles and that there would be a quarantine of all Soviets ships trying to reach Cuba until they were withdrawn. If the ships did not turn around before being boarded by the Navy’s ships, they would be searched for weapons. It is rumored Khrushchev commented Kennedy had gone mad. Congress immediately reacted, claiming they had been warning about such a threat for months but that nobody (read President Kennedy) had been willing to listen to them. Nevertheless, Congress did decide to support Kennedy’s blockade, even though they hadn’t been properly informed or had been asked to give advice. The Senate, however, believed an invasion was the only solution. Back in the Kremlin, Khrushchev feared Kennedy might be put aside by the military, installing a military leader in the White House who would order the invasion of Cuba.

Eugenio Martinez’s reaction to the blockade was one of total surprise—everybody in and around the Cuban exile-community believed Kennedy would take this opportunity to launch the second invasion-attempt which had been secretly prepared. Kennedy, however, must have realized that for such an invasion to succeed, Castro had to be killed first... and Castro was still alive.

That same day, October 22, Oleg Penkovsky suddenly contacted the CIA, requesting an urgent meeting. Richard Jacob, the man who was sent to meet Penkovsky, was arrested. Penkovsky’s suspicions had been correct: he had been under surveillance; he was very much a dead man now. The next day the Politburo was informed about Penkovsky’s betrayal and it realized the Americans knew Khrushchev had bluffing about Soviet military superiority. Via Penkovsky, the CIA had found out that Khrushchev’s threats and figures about his intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM) were largely bogus and propaganda. The ‘first-strike’ capability of the Soviet Union was almost non-existent, also considering the Soviet ICBM were liquid-fueled, needing hours to prepare for launch.

The Politburo realized their Cuban bluff was about to be called, believing the Americans would not fall for the Soviet pressure because the Americans perfectly knew they were bluffing. The Politburo, before being informed of Penkovsky’s betrayal, thought the Americans would have to fall for their bluff, that the Americans didn’t know better than to believe Khrushchev’s words. The Soviets had to change their tactics or risk a futile war.

Khrushchev, however, was apparently not yet privy to such logic and he said, on October 24, he would sink every ship that boarded one of his ships. Khrushchev either still underestimated Kennedy or/and continued to bluff his way out of this situation.

The Pentagon had now finished plans for an invasion of Cuba. It called for the use of an army of 250,000 men, with 90,000 men from the Marines and airborne units, who would fly a minimum of 500 air-sorties. They estimated about 25,000 casualties. General Curtis LeMay said they could just bomb the missile sites; the Soviets wouldn’t do a thing. U.S. Intelligence believed there were 10,000 Soviet and 40,000 Cuban troops. Almost thirty years later, the Americans would learn there were actually 40,000 Soviets and 270,000 Cuban troops. This meant that the Soviet-Cuban troops in reality outnumbered the 250,000 American troops, which were believed to be five times larger than the Soviet-Cuban troops. General LeMay’s prediction, however, would almost certainly not have come true. The CIA thought no nuclear warheads had yet arrived in Cuba, but that twenty were underway on a Soviet ship. In reality, there were 45 nuclear warheads inside Cuba. Thirty-six of these could only be launched with Khrushchev’s approval (though physically, the Soviets inside Cuba could launch them also), nine of them could be used by the Soviets inside Cuba ‘at will’, against the United States should they invade the island. If President
Kennedy would have decided to invade, it would have been logical to assume that at least one nuclear bomb would have hit some American town or city. In the worst case scenario (and also a logical one), it could have started a thermo-nuclear World War III and possibly the end of civilization as we knew/now.

It seems Kennedy’s political plan, though weak as it might have looked to many, saved America from an enormous military if not social disaster. That he distrusted his military and intelligence experts, like he had done throughout all his life, now probably saved the world.

Kennedy, on October 23, had decided he would try and solve the crisis with the help of the Vatican and Pope John XXIII. His liaison to the Vatican would be Norman Cousins, who received help from Felix Morlion, a Belgian Dominican monk, who had been kicked out of the Vatican in 1960. Morlion, a friend of OSS-chief Bill Donovan, had set up the Vatican’s Intelligence Agency, Pro Deo, primarily staffed with Jesuits, priests who had also worked with the OSS during World War II. Pro Deo and Morlion were in close liaison with the CIA and Morlion’s CIA-alliance might have been the cause of his demise in 1960. The Pope’s role was downplayed by both nations, for obvious reasons, even though it did receive massive publicity in and around the Vatican. It also showed the extreme rightist priests that their originally conservative pope was now a liberal and not what they wanted him to be: anti-Communist.

In September, 1963, Vice-President Johnson had visited the Pope in Rome and, after the Cuba crisis, DCI John McCone would visit him as well. On May 1, 1963, McCone, a staunch anti-communist, felt he had to warn John XXIII of the ‘communist menace’. Perhaps unsurprisingly, John XXIII didn’t appreciate McCone’s company. Later that month, on May 18, Kennedy would send Cardinal Richard Gushing to a dying Pope, apologizing for the insinuations the press had made about this anti-communist thing.

On October 25, Fomin, the alias of Aleksandr S. Feklisov, the KGB-resident and the new conduit between Khrushchev and Kennedy, talked to ABC-newsman John Scali, claiming there was no nuclear threat and no warheads.

Fomin proposed a bargain: the Soviets would withdraw their missiles if the Americans would promise not to invade Cuba; Castro, on his part, would allow UN inspectors inside Cuba to supervise and inspect the removal of the missiles.

Fomin said that the Americans had learned about the missiles too soon and that they were not confronted with a ‘fait compli’. This meant that at that time, the Soviets had no credible first launch capability... yet. Fomin, however, did warn the Americans not to board any Soviet ships, as they planned to do the next day. He said that back in Moscow, people were waiting to start World War III by launching a preemptive strike when the Americans boarded their ships. Some egos were apparently too large to suffer the humiliation of having their bluff called and therefore wanted to attack. It is not clear whether it was entirely Khrushchev’s proposal or that it was from a powerful faction inside the Politburo. It was, however, so secret that not even Andrei Gromyko had been told about it. It is now generally believed that it was Khrushchev who saw things were running out of hand and pushed for a political solution as well because both nations could now start World War III without giving the order to, simply because someone pushed a button. Such a possibility would almost become a reality.

The following day, ‘Fomin’ and Scali talked again. Fomin now added a request: the Americans had to withdraw 30 Jupiter IRBM from Turkey and 15 Jupiters from Italy, plus 60 Thor IRBM from Great Britain. Apparently, Gromyko had found out about the proposal and had asked or demanded that these demands be added to the proposal. When Kennedy was informed about this
second letter of Secretary-General Khrushchev, he was angry because of the extra demand. Some claimed Kennedy even came close to ordering an invasion anyway. NATO General Lauris Nastad also opposed the withdrawal of their missiles from Europe. Though Kennedy himself had always realized these missiles were obsolete and had already made preparations to replace them, he did feel their withdrawal would look to much like a settlement; he couldn’t afford looking weak or bad to Khrushchev or anybody else this time. Robert Kennedy proposed they, simply disregard Khrushchev’s second letter talking about the withdrawal of these missiles from Turkey and Italy and simply promise there would be no invasion, sticking to what was mentioned in the first letter. Kennedy did just that. Kennedy informed Khrushchev to withdraw his missiles by October 28. If not, there would be an air strike, followed by an invasion on October 29 or 30. Khrushchev agreed to withdraw ‘his’ missiles.

But danger had not yet ebbed away. A U2 on a routine HASP from Alaska, had drifted over the Soviet Union on October 26. The Soviets hadn’t open fire and had guided the plane back into American airspace. Some have wondered whether the U2-operators simply made a mistake or whether a CIA-controlled U2 would end, like it had done in May 1960, all hopes for peace. Officials inside the Soviet Embassy had accepted that possibility as a likelihood and were burning their archives, probably wondering how long it would take before the American troops would enter their Embassy.

Two days later, Rudolf Anderson’s U2 WAS shot down over eastern Cuba, killing Anderson. The Soviets, however, said that General Igor D. Statsenko had acted without authority from Moscow. Mikhail Titov afterwards explained Moscow could no longer inform them of the situation. Left without an up-to-date central command, insecure about what to do, the Soviets inside Cuba decided to shoot at an over-flying U2. It is reported Khrushchev went mad when he learnt someone had shot down an American U2 when he was trying to end, not start, a war.

Having saved the world from a war, LeMay, in his ignorance, still felt it was a defeat for America. The Soviets thought it was a defeat for their country as well. But those CIA-officers who had been planning a second invasion of Cuba felt cheated. Their hate for Kennedy only grew and some exiles felt that if they ever wanted to live in Cuba again, they would have to take matters into their own hands, that Kennedy had once again proven he looked upon them as bargaining chips more than as freedom fighters. Robert Kennedy got furious when he learned that William Harvey had sent some of his agents into Cuba during the crisis. Harvey was one of those who believed an invasion was imminent and he felt his agents had to ‘welcome’ the American soldiers, sending lights Into the Cuban air that would guide the American troops. Kennedy was furious with Harvey for acting without authorization and it was Helms who had to save Harvey from an early retirement.

Kennedy, however, still realized it was uncomfortable living with Castro in Cuba and wanted to continue his war against Castro. Taking Nixon’s earlier advice, he searched and found a loophole in the agreement: Castro, furious with Khrushchev because he had failed to consult him on matters that directly involved him, refused U.N. inspectors inside Cuba. For Kennedy, this meant that he could continue his plotting against Castro. But Kennedy was, once again, dissatisfied with the results (the absence of results) from Mongoose and decided to make it a personal adventure: he put Robert Kennedy, whom he thought fit to be DCI, in charge of the operation’s planning, heading the Cuban Coordinating Committee.
Solo against Castro

With Harvey having fallen from grace, the Harvey-Morales-Rosselli partnership was destined to come to an end soon as well. Harvey would be replaced by Desmond Fitzgerald and Robert Kennedy preferred the Mafia not be involved. Before ending their assignment, they cut loose de Varona, a friend of Carlos Prio, who had never liked his CIA-contact Howard Hunt and had approached Meyer Lansky and Santos Trafficante. Hunt correctly accused de Varona of going freelance and Harvey also saw de Varona was stalling. He asked Rosselli to cut him loose, de Varona was replaced by a contact man, Rolando Cube-la, whose potential was never exploited because he was about to be ‘sent in’ at the time Kennedy was assassinated.

On March 18, Commando L, an offshoot-group of Alpha 66, attacked Soviet ships on orders from CIA-agent and Alpha 66 co-founder David Phillips, trying to force Kennedy into breaking his agreement with Cuba and the Soviet Union. Phillips believed the end of Operation Mongoose had been the end of Kennedy’s secret war with Castro. Unfortunately for Phillips, the Soviets protested only mildly, urging Phillips to attack them again on March 27, this time infuriating the Soviets. Phillips believed he had forced Kennedy into an outright attack against Cuba. He probably realized his failure when Kennedy repeated the ‘official’ position of his government: “There will not, under any conditions, be an intervention in Cuba by United States armed forces, and this government will do everything It possibly can... to make sure that there are not Americans involved in any actions inside Cuba.” Kennedy did not promise not to help Cuban exiles to invade Cuba, but did attack the raids on Cuba by Alpha 66. To the likes of Phillips, it meant that their efforts to break up the U.S. Soviet relationship had failed. Antonio Veciana, the Cuban leader of Alpha 66, nevertheless said he was going to attack again and again.

Jose Miro Cardona, leader of the Cuban Revolutionary Committee, felt there was going to be a ‘peaceful coexistence’ agreement between Castro and Kennedy, termed Kennedy the “victim of a master Russian plan” and resigned from the CRC. By May, the U.S. Government decided not to fund the CRC any longer, officially because of Cardona’s resignation.

Kennedy’s condemnation of the Alpha 66 -raids and his decision not to fund the CRC any longer were the final straws for the Cubans. Whereas most exiles felt betrayed after the Bay of Pigs and neglected in the Cuban Missile Crisis, they now felt rage. Kennedy had informed the Soviets that the U.S. government was not behind the Alpha 66 attacks and to show he was not, he decided to monitor the actions of anti-Castro Cubans. The anti-Castro Cubans understood Kennedy would not help them any longer and now attacked Cuba and the Soviets again and again, not so much trying to topple Castro’s regime but trying to embarrass Kennedy for what he had done to them.

Around Christmas, 1962, most Cubans captured during the Bay of Pigs invasion were liberated from their Cuban jails and returned to the United States. Before that, Robert Kennedy had put Enrique “Harry” Williams, returning in the spring of 1962 to the States as one of about sixty more or less seriously injured Brigade -members, in command of co-operating with those exiles who were still willing and able to work against Cuba with the Kennedys and with whom the Kennedys were still willing to work... an ever decreasing number. Williams selected Howard Hunt as his liaison to the CIA in Langley and James McCord as his liaison to the Bay of Pigs veterans in Fort Jackson. It meant the CIA no longer called the shots; the Kennedys did.

Kennedy wanted to stop violating the Neutrality Act and went along with the FBI and Justice and State Department: his primary aim was to push all operations outside the U.S.A., then train exiles and prepare an invasion from abroad, in such countries as Guatemala and Nicaragua. Once out of the U.S.A., the CIA would no longer be violating the Neutrality Act. To many exiles, it meant
Kennedy was trying to saddle other countries with what he no longer considered to be his problem. They considered it just another sign of his desertation from his promise and their cause.

Kennedy considered Manuel Artime, recently freed from Castro’s jail and on good terms with both the Kennedys and Howard Hunt, to be a good future leader of his nation and Artime began looking for other bases, especially in Managua. Together with Somoza, he tried to make a deal with president Orlich of Costa Rica. Somoza proudly declared that “in November, strong blows will begin against Cuban Prime Minister Fidel Castro by groups we are training.”

In the early Summer of 1963, Alpha 66, trying to cash in its promise to attack “over and over again”, having found a new sponsor in TIME’s Henry Luce, prepared OPERATION RED CROSS, an operation to kidnap two Soviet officers from Cuba and bring them to America. Once there, these officers would announce there were still missiles inside Cuba, contrary to the officially believed story that there were no more missiles inside Cuba. Alpha 66 wanted to embarrass Kennedy.

The source for this allegation were Eduardo Perez and Eddie Bayo, who gave Alpha 66 a letter claiming two GRU colonels knew where the ‘hidden missiles’ were. They were willing to defect and gain asylum. Alpha 66 did give this information to Howard Davis, who worked for a group called InterPen, who passed the letter on to Theodore Racoosin, who took the letter over to the White House. The outcome was that “a high official” in the government was interested. But, although there was interest, the deal was off: Kennedy didn’t trust the CIA and its information any longer. The abyss between the Kennedys and the Cubans, also between the President and the CIA, grew ever wider.

Using the Flying Tiger II, a boat owned by William Pawley, a good friend of former President Eisenhower, a crew, including Rip Robertson, journalist Richard Billings and John Martino, set course for Cuba. Nothing came of it and it seems Kennedy was right in not trusting this information, but that was not what the exiles thought, of course.

Solo with Castro

When most exiles took matters into their own hands, the Kennedys felt that they were losing or had already lost all ‘manpower’ to work against Castro. The exiles, feeling Kennedy had betrayed them and had forgotten them, had tried to destroy Cuba on their own; the Kennedys, realizing the exiles had gone solo, realized that Castro would remain in power. Without the means to attack the enemy, the Kennedys decided they would try to forge an alliance with the enemy, making him into a friend. Even if Williams and Artime could pull off an invasion, seeking an alliance with Castro could turn out to be brilliant deception. It, at the very least, put the Kennedys in an “almost all-win, no-lose”-situation.

But the Kennedys decided not to play that game: on September 12, Robert Kennedy vetoed all plans for a second invasion and called off all attempts to assassinate Castro. Kennedy had decided he could live with Castro as a next-door neighbor. Five days later, the Guinean ambassador to Cuba, Seydou Diallo, met U.N. Special Advisor William Attwood for lunch, informing Attwood that Castro was willing to talk to Kennedy. Diallo asked Attwood to meet Carlos Lechuga, the Cuban U.N. delegate. Attwood, however, had to inform U.N. Ambassador
Adlai Stevenson, who phoned the White House and was told to go ahead, provided it was kept secret from everyone. Six days later, Attwood and Lechuga were talking. Publicly, Kennedy and Lechuga kept on denouncing each other. It might have been brilliant deception, were it not that most phones were tapped by the CIA or/and FBI. With all the monitoring the CIA and NSA were doing in and around Cuba, it seems only likely that they knew what was happening. Lisa Howard believes they must have known. It appears rumors were floating in Langley and Miami that Kennedy had finally done what they thought he would do all along: forging an alliance with Castro.

By October, however, Attwood and the White House were losing their patience and decided to open up another channel to Castro so that the talks could continue: Jean Daniel, a French journalist, was asked to interview Kennedy, who told him there was really nothing wrong with Castro except that he was playing in the Soviet team. After all, Kennedy wanted to install a Cuban leader who corresponded to such an image. Daniel, already on his way to Havana before this interview, now had really something to talk about with Castro. Attwood opened up yet another channel: he asked journalist Lisa Howard, at whose apartment he and Legucha had first met, to call Dr. Rene Vallejo, Castro’s personal friend and doctor. By October 29, negotiations had advanced to the stage where Attwood was asked to meet Castro inside Cuba, at Veradero. On November 18, speaking in Miami, Kennedy began to ‘leak’ his new feelings on Castro’s Cuba.

In mid October, Cubela was once again in action and was prepared to kill Castro. Once again, Richard Helms had made a decision behind the Kennedys’ back and had given the go— ahead for Cubela to kill Castro. Cubela, however, might have sensed something could be wrong and requested a personal meeting with Robert Kennedy who had to assure him Cubela’s effort had the backing of the Kennedy brothers. As he had not, Desmond Fitzgerald decided to represent himself as an emissary of Robert Kennedy and he even gave Cubela a faked letter ‘written’ by Robert Kennedy which informed Cubela he was serving Kennedy’s ends. On November 22, he received the means to assassinate Castro. At the same time, Hunt and others were meeting in Washington. They agreed they could start an invasion whenever they wanted to.

It might be the CIA was simply unwilling to accept Robert Kennedy’s decision; it might even be that the Kennedys changed their position again and we don’t know about it. Though perhaps unlikely, the possibility does exist that all this, Helms going against Kennedy’s orders and the continuation of the invasion-planning, were done because the CIA knew and wanted to be ready for an invasion triggered by the assassination of President Kennedy. If so, this assassination was truly a monster and master-plot.

When the news of Kennedy’s death was announced, French journalist Jean Daniel was interviewing Castro. Castro thought “this is bad news. Your mission of peace has ended”.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

MAFIA WITCH HUNT

“Look at those who are in labor with wickedness, who conceive evil, and give birth to a lie. They dig a pit and make it deep and fall into the hole that they have made. Their malice turns back upon their own heads; their violence falls on their own scalp.”

Psalm 7

A. WAR

As a Senator, John Kennedy had been a member of the McClellan Committee, whose task was to try find and then prosecute organized crime in America. The Commission’s chief counsel was his brother, Robert Kennedy, who upon his appointment as Attorney General, made, with the knowledge received via the McClellan Committee’s investigation, Jimmy Hoffa and Sam Giancana the most wanted criminals of the United States. This step even ‘forced’ certain Democratic Representatives to denounce the efforts of the Attorney General. As early as 1956, his father Joseph had asked his son not to go after labor and racketeering, but Robert wouldn’t listen. Robert said that he’d “like to be remembered as the guy who broke the Mafia”. John, as a member of the McClellan Committee, said that “if they’re crooks, we don’t wound ’em, we kill ’em”.

Though it was potential headline material, John did employ Giancana to get elected and Giancana believed that he had created a safe haven for the entire Mafia when Kennedy was elected.

Robert, however, possibly unaware of his brother’s involvement with Giancana, set up a Justice Department Task Force that would hunt these criminals down. Robert did not want to use Hoover’s FBI as Hoover himself had always denied there had been such a thing as organized crime in the United States, even though he regularly chatted with Frank Costello, one of the biggest leaders in that milieu. Though Robert Kennedy might have known about this relationship, what made decide to circumvent Hoover seems to have been his knowledge that the FBI had been unable (most likely because they were unwilling) to develop criminal informers in the Mafia. To bridge this shortcoming, they had to resort to illegal wiretaps to gather the information they needed and that was not the approach the Attorney General wanted to take.

Kennedy wanted to get Hoffa because he knew the Teamsters could shut down the American economy if they wanted to, as they were in control of most of the transport-industry. During the McClellan Committee’s hearings, however, Hoffa and Kennedy, fellow Irishmen with that typical character and temperament, had started a personal feud, rather than simply asking and answering questions. Hoffa predicted that Kennedy would never be able to indict him on anything, but that Kennedy would employ the media, especially Time-Life and NEC, to try and break him.

Together with Hoffa, he wanted fellow Teamster Frank Fitzsimmons and William Bufalino and Robert desperately approached high Teamster -officials who themselves were facing charges
whether they didn’t want to give him the ‘desired’ information. Even though he didn’t find too many willing to tell on their boss, he did get Hoffa indicted twice; once for jury tampering in May of 1963, once for fraud the next month.

Also high on Kennedy’s ‘shopping-list’ was the New Orleans Mafia-don Carlos Marcello. Robert had already deported Marcello to Guatemala on April 4, 1961. Marcello said “they just snatched me, that is it, actually kidnapped me”, even though Marcello claimed he didn’t “blame Kennedy. (Immigration Commissioner Joe) Swing is just trying to show him (Robert Kennedy) what he can do”. But Kennedy didn’t stop with the deportation and by June 1962, Marcello asked Trafficante and Giancana to ask Sinatra whether he couldn’t intervene with the Kennedy brothers on his behalf. Carlos complained that “he’s driving my wife fuckin’ crazy. All Jackie (Carlos’ wife) do is cry all night thinkin’ Kennedy is goin’ to throw me outa the country again”. Kennedy didn’t want to listen to Sinatra and the Attorney General became even more determined to get Marcello.

Among the last top members of the Mafia to realize that the Kennedys weren’t constructing a smokescreen for the public or simply giving the impression they were cashing in their promises made during their McClellan period, were Chicago-don Sam Giancana and, via him, his aide Rosselli. Giancana commented that “you told me... before Kennedy was appointed Attorney General, but I never thought it would be this rough. You told me when they put his brother in there we were gonna see some fireworks, but I never knew it would be like this. This is murder”. Giancana wanted to kill Sinatra, but he knew that wouldn’t do any good. Instead, Giancana opened up the Villa Venice and ‘kindly’ asked the Rat Pack to do shows in his new club... for free. Some time later, Giancana closed the club, walking away with a USD 3 million profit.

But Giancana did realize he was the man who had supported Kennedy, in spite of everybody’s warnings, including Hoffa’s, that it would be unwise to get Kennedy elected. If men like Marcello, Trafficante and Hoffa were looking for a scapegoat inside the Mafia, it would be Giancana, who had to protect his reputation as one of the most powerful dons in America. Rosselli had always had a knack for keeping the most hostile factions happy and must have seen signs that some factions might want to get rid of Giancana, should he keep defending Kennedy, thinking it was all a sham.

Rosselli himself had been targeted by the Kennedys, especially via the IRS, an investigation he described as “murder”. He described his help in the anti-Castro plots, saying that “here I am, helping the government, helping the country, and that little SOB (Robert Kennedy) is breaking my balls”. Nevertheless, he didn’t take it as personalia as the other targeted leaders. When he tried to rent an apartment and believed the USD 450-rent was a bit too high, he told the manager he should get a discount as the FBI, LAPD and L.A. Sheriff’s office were sure to rent an apartment nearby as well and that the building would thus get protection from burglaries.

When Giancana realized Kennedy was playing for real, Rosselli urged Giancana to “let them see the other side of you”. Giancana had always shown his best side to Kennedy; now he would also play for real, trying to get information that might hurt the Kennedys, at the same time they were trying to get information that might hurt them.
B. LOVETRAPS

Whether John Kennedy had a heightened libido because of the amounts of cortisone he had to
take in or whether he just followed the ways of his father, he needed women for sex. Someone
said that “I think he wanted to believe in love and faithfulness and all that but what he’d seen at
home didn’t give him much hope. So he sort of bumped along.” Asked whether he he was
actually ever in love once, Kennedy said “No, though often very interested”.

Some claim that during the 34 months of his presidency, Kennedy had 33 mistresses. Actress
Marlene Dietrich said that “Jack Kennedy got me to the White House and tried a little hanky-
panky. Then, as I was getting into the elevator, he asked with great concern: “just one thing- did
you ever sleep with my Dad?”

In March and July of 1962, there were allegations that Kennedy had been married to Durie (Kerr)
Malcolm and in April 1963, Florence Kater said that Mrs. Pamela Turnure, Kennedy’s press
secretary, had had a relationship with her boss. The news made it to the front page of the
Thunderbolt, the paper of the National States Rights Party, who violently opposed Kennedy’s
civil rights-program. Though these affairs might have harmed Kennedy’s public relations a bit,
his two most dangerous affairs had already come to an end by that time.

Soviet love trap

Michael Eddowes, a London-based attorney, believes that a London group that destroyed John
Profumo’s career with a ‘love trap’ sent one of their call girls, Marielle Novotny, to the United
States to destroy Kennedy. Harry Alan Towers, Novotny’s ‘pimp’, had fled New York in 1961,
being accused of importing vice girls. According to Novotny, she met both John and Robert at
the U.N. building in New York. The affair with John occurred before and during his presidential
election campaign. Novotny believes the suite contained hidden cameras that recorded the
lovemaking. These tapes were allegedly viewed by the FBI, CIA and Novotny upon her arrest.
Kennedy told Novotny that the “charges (against you) will be dropped”; they were.

Mafia love traps

Judith Campbell-Exner was also a Kennedy ‘favorite’. During their affair, she was also involved
with mobster Sam Giancana. The two ‘heads of state’ used her as a conduit, apparently not only
for the conduit of money, but also for CIA-information on Castro that could help Giancana. She
arranged another meeting between the two men on April 28, 1961 at the Ambassador East Hotel
in Chicago where they discussed the assassination of Fidel Castro, just days after the failed Bay
of Pigs-invasion.

Hoover informed the President over dinner on March 22, 1962, of both Exner’s and Sinatra’s
Mafia-links. The Italian crooner had apparently always admired his fellow successful
countrymen and hung around them, especially around Exner’s boyfriend, Sam Giancana. It was,
after all, Sinatra who had persuaded Giancana to put all his efforts into getting Kennedy elected
as president.

Kennedy, however, didn’t take that ‘information’ too kindly. Kennedy knew Judith knew
Giancana: it was through her that he had secretly met Giancana. Kennedy apparently believed
Hoover wanted to blackmail him and told his friends to “get rid of that bastard. He’s the biggest
bore”. Robert, apparently left in the dark about the details of his brother’s bedroom activities, realized the danger of a president sleeping with the girlfriend of a man who was hunted down by that president’s brother and of the president’s friendship with a man, Sinatra, who was intimate with Giancana. It is rumored Robert seems to have threatened to resign as Attorney General if his brother didn’t end his relationship(s?). The very next day, John was scheduled to stay overnight in Sinatra’s Palm Beach house; he changed his plans and would now sleep in Bing Crosby’s home. Sinatra carried a grudge against anyone who hadn’t treated him right and now President Kennedy was added to that list. That the President had dinner with him and Marilyn Monroe the following day couldn’t placate him.

By September, the President’s friendship with the crooner had ended. At the same time, Kennedy’s relationship with Judith Exner dwindled. Johnny Rosselli, Giancana’s top aide, commented that “everyone one in the mob (knew of) Jack Kennedy’s affair with Sam’s girl... a favorite topic of gossip in the underworld at the time”. For some reason, their relationship was never really used as blackmail-material, perhaps because of Hoover’s intervention and Robert’s urging. But the president wasn’t almost that lucky with another ‘friend’.

Kennedy’s biggest ‘scalp’ was his affair with ‘Miss America’, Marilyn Monroe. Even though Marilyn herself called in on late evening talk shows, rumoring Kennedy was sleeping with Marilyn Monroe, nobody seemed to care or realize he was: just another prank call. Sam Giancana did realize he was sleeping with her and on July 12, 1961, Giancana said he knew “all about the Kennedys and Phyllis (McGuire) knows a lot more about the Kennedys, and one of these days we are going to tell all”. Phyllis McGuire, Giancana’s ‘flame’ but also a friend of Marilyn, apparently knew details of the affairs both John and Robert had (had?) with Marilyn. At the same time, Marilyn Monroe had a non-sexual relationship with Johnny Rosselli, Giancana’s top aide, but whether they ever talked about the Kennedys is unknown.

The President lost interest in the most wanted girl in the world, but his brother gained interest in her. A wiretap on Meyer Lansky informed Hoover that Lansky seemed to know about a relationship between Robert Kennedy and an El Paso-girl, which was, however, Marilyn Monroe. Hoover sent Courtney Evans to Robert Kennedy and Robert said he had never been in El Paso and that there was no basis for that allegation but it appears Robert realized they had learned about his relationship with her.

Marilyn apparently really loved Robert, who swept her off her feet when he told her he’d marry her when he was President. She had thought Sinatra had been the sexiest man and she had hoped they would marry, but nothing had come of that relationship. Like her affair with the crooner and the President, the affair with Robert smothered, possibly because Robert didn’t want to give any ammunition to Hoover and/or the Mafia for which he could blackmail the Kennedys with.

A deserted but very much in love Marilyn felt “Bobby owes me an explanation for walking out on me like that”. She had just had another abortion, probably Robert’s child, possibly John’s. In early August of 1962, she said that “if I don’t hear from Bobby, I’m blowing the lid off this whole damn thing”. Marilyn, often portrayed as having no brains, nevertheless had opinions about politics. In a letter of March 1960, discussing the upcoming presidential elections, she wrote that “of course, there hasn’t been anyone like Nixon before because the rest of them at least had souls!” On February 1, 1962, Marilyn had had a long political talk with Robert Kennedy at Peter Lawford’s house. Marilyn enquired whether they would fire Hoover and Robert satisfied her curiosity: they would not, even though they wanted to. It seems that she wrote down
all the ‘pillow-talk’ of John, but especially Robert’s: unlike John, Robert seems to have talked politics with her. He apparently told her that because of John’s back pain, Robert had to make the decision whether or not to give the air cover during the failed invasion; he refused. Though perhaps not totally accurate, a specialist was called to the White House that day. He wrote down he gave the president “600,000 Pen[icillin]”, possibly for gonorrhea. Marilyn also wrote everything painstakingly down, angering Robert who asked her to throw away that diary. Robert, who bragged about his job in front of Marilyn, must have given away some sensitive information to impress her; and those secrets were written down in Marilyn’s diary.

Addicted to barbiturates for years, trying to forget about Robert or trying to get him back, she was now behaving irrationally, if not hysterically. Would she really blow the lid off this thing and reveal everything she knew? Or would she ‘simply’ say she had slept with both John and Robert Kennedy? Nobody seemed to know, but there was a press-conference scheduled for August 6.

During the night of August 3, Marilyn had received numerous phone calls from a woman who kept on saying “Leave Bobby alone, you tramp”. It’s a fair guess that was Robert’s wife, Ethel, who might have pressured Robert, recently elected as Father of the Year, into ending his relationship with her. After that uncomfortable night, Robert apparently visited her the following afternoon, even though no-one who was involved in the mystery about her death wanted to say so until twenty years later. Neighbors did say that they had seen Robert, Peter Lawford and a man with a bag, believed to be a doctor, enter the house that afternoon. In 1985, Eunice Murray, Marilyn’s housekeeper, finally admitted Robert Kennedy had been with Marilyn on August 4. Supposedly, he was at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in San Francisco. The motive behind Robert’s visit might be that he and his companies tried to talk some sense into Marilyn, calm her down, in the hope she would not hold her press-conference the following Monday or at least not discuss anything that could harm the Kennedys.

But she didn’t live until that Monday. In the early morning of August 5, an ambulance from Schaefer Ambulance Service, driven by Murray Liebowitz and Ken Hunter, came to Marilyn’s home where they found a comatose Marilyn. She had probably gone into a coma around 22h00, late August 4, apparently after Robert Kennedy left. At 2am, the ambulance arrived at Santa Monica Hospital, where, according to Walter Schaefer, Marilyn died. Somehow, someone transferred Marilyn’s body back home, where her body was ‘officially’ found a few hours later. When the police was officially informed, Marilyn was found on her stomach, even though she probably died on her back. Her hand clutched the telephone whereas normally she would have let go off the phone as she was dying. Sgt. Jack Clemmons, who was first on the scene, said that “Marilyn Monroe was murdered. A clumsy job”. Who possibly killed Marilyn?

Hoffa, hoping to pick up some pillow-talk of which he might possibly be the subject, had asked his aide, Bernie Spindel, to install bugs in Marilyn’s home. According to Otash, he also had installed bugs at Peter Lawford’s home, a frequent ‘love nest’ for the President, but also a place where Hoffa might be the subject of some ‘dinner-talk’. The ‘Hoffa-tapes’ of that night at Marilyn’s home apparently indicate someone slapped Marilyn, that her body hit the ground and that a man asks “what are we going to do with the body?” The original body diagrams show bruises on Marilyn’s front and back and her left hip, apparent signs of a struggle.
It is rumored Peter Lawford cleaned up Marilyn’s room, cleaning it not only of their presence that night, but also of the presence of evidence of Marilyn’s relationships with the Kennedys. What is known is that Lawford asked Fred Otash, the very man who had helped Hoffa in trying to frame the Kennedys, to clean up the house, what he believes had already been done before he searched for possibly overlooked clues. Even before cleaning up the house, Lawford tried to get Robert Kennedy on a helicopter, heading back to San Francisco. There are also allegations that a tape exists of a phone-conversation from San Francisco to L.A. that night, in which a male voice asks whether she is dead yet.

After Marilyn’s death, it was believed Hoover destroyed the evidence of Robert Kennedy’s phone calls to Marilyn, plus Marilyn suicide- notes. No record of such a destruction was however, found in Hoover’s file; some believe Hoover would normally have made such a record, but this seems to have been a special case for Hoover. As far as Hoover was concerned, a man who meticulously logged all the ‘dirt’ on every politician, including that of the Kennedys, there was apparently never an affair between John Kennedy and Marilyn Monroe; no information on such an affair was retrieved from his ‘garbage’-file on the President.

It seems Marilyn’s diary also disappeared. Hers was not the only one. On October 12, 1964, Mary Pinchot Meyer, another of Kennedy’s former mistresses, died. Mary Meyer was the former wife of CIA-agent Cord Meyer, a man with a glass eye and a heavy smoker, so that quite often the smoke would curl around behind the cavity of the glass eye, who was Angleton’s deputy and Helms’ number two man. Her sister Tony was married to Ben Bradlee, publisher of the Washington Post. Via her sister and husband, she was a friend of CIA Counterintelligence Chief James Angleton and Robert Kennedy, but was also one of John Kennedy’s lovers. It seems she either believed or knew the Cuban exiles and the Mafia were behind the assassination of her former lover and this might have triggered her death, even though her murder might have been more ‘accidental’. Anyway, Mary Meyer also kept a diary. According to Ben Brad-lee, it was Angleton who broke into her place; Tony Bradlee says she was the one who found the diary and that she handed it over to Angleton. Once again, it seems that the ‘pillow-talk’ of the Kennedys was not allowed to surface in the media.

Much later, there were allegations that Giancana had sent in some of his assassins who inserted a deadly dose of Nembutal directly into her blood. Marilyn’s Nembutal intake WAS ten times the therapeutic dose and nothing was found in Marilyn’s stomach. It is, however, quite possible that the medical staff at Santa Monica Hospital realized Marilyn had taken an enormous amount of sleeping pills (she always did) and emptied her stomach as the first procedure in trying to save her life. The bagman’ seen with Robert Kennedy might also have inserted a dose of barbiturates into Marilyn’s blood, only adding to her ‘normal’ doses of barbiturates.

Perhaps the combination of the doses of medication and the slap on her face, falling on the floor, caused her to go into a coma from which she would not recover. This would, to me, rule her death as accidental and not murder. Even so, the Kennedys could have feigned a suicide, ‘positioning’ her body in the unnatural she was found in. Much remains unknown (who phoned the ambulance? who brought her back?), but the Kennedy’s accidental death-scenario seems to fill more gaps than Giancana’s murder scenario.

The apparent motive behind this murder was that Giancana tried to frame the Attorney General when it was discovered he had been present at and quite possibly responsible for Marilyn’s death. It is, however, rumored and claimed (amongst others by FBI Assistant Director Courtney Evans) that some of this material was used in trying to blackmail the Kennedys. Even if they
didn’t really tried to blackmail the Kennedys, it is still possible blackmail material. The Kennedys were playing ‘hanky-panky’, not only with their mistresses, but also with the Mafia.
C. EYE TO EYE

When blackmail doesn’t work, what other means can you employ to get the government off your back? In early 1962, a desperate Giancana didn’t know either and said that “everyone is on his own, they got to make it any way they can”. Giancana himself, in early 1963, felt that the FBI-surveillance had become unbearable. Giancana, on his daily golf trip, was constantly ridiculed about his meager performance on the course. Because of their harassment, he decided to instigate a civil suit, which meant the authorities had an occasion to cross-examine him. When, in June of 1963, the case came in front of the court, his attorney asked whether he had “ever broken any laws that would merit FBI surveillance”, he answered “no”. The authorities waved the right to cross-examine. Not only must this have satisfied Giancana as he realized they weren’t able or willing to really get at him beyond mere harassment, the judge also ruled in favor of him, ordering the FBI to stay at least one hole behind Giancana’s party.

Others, however, were thinking of more drastic measures, possibly because they felt more heat than Giancana. As early as February, 1962, Philadelphia’s Angelo Bruno believed that “with Kennedy, a guy should take a knife, like one of them other guys, and stab and kill the fucker... I hope I get a week’s notice. I’ll kill. Right in the fuckin’ White House. Somebody’s got to get rid of this fucker”. In May 1962, Gilbert Beck ley’s functionary Eddie McGrath, a member of the Genovese family felt that “when is fucking a federal offense, and if it is...” he wanted “the President indicted, because I know he was whacking all those broads Sinatra brought him out. If I could just hit Bobby Kennedy... some kind of bomb that will explode”. In October, 1963, Buffalo’s Peter and Stefano Maggadino thought “President Kennedy should drop dead” and “They should kill the whole family”.

Jimmy Hoffa told Edward Partin, a friend of some years, in July or August of 1962 that he hated Robert and wanted to kill him. He wanted to throw a plastic bomb at his car or his house. Hoffa had a second scenario in mind, using a telescopic rifle, somewhere in the South, when Robert was traveling in an open limousine.

In August, Tampa-based Mafia don Santos Trafficante told a friend, Jose Aleman, about a million dollar loan to the Teamsters. Trafficante said it was “not right what they are doing to Hoffa. Mark my word, this man Kennedy is in trouble, and he will get what is coming to him... Kennedy is not going to make it to the election. He is going to be hit”. When Trafficante discovered Aleman was an FBI-informant, he reinterpreted his veiled threat: Kennedy would simply not be re-elected; he, of course, did not know Kennedy was going to be assassinated. Trafficante was a ‘tough guy’, even 0v Mafia standards. Lucky Luciano once said that Trafficante was “one of the few guys in the whole country that Meyer Lansky would never tangle with”. And Kennedy was tangling with Trafficante, the latter felt. Like so many other mobsters, Trafficante took the attacks by Kennedy rather personal.

Carlos Marcello, at the same time he had depicted his wife’s anxiety over her husband’s possible deportation, said he “gotta plan. You wait, you wait an’ see if that sonofabitch Bobby Kennedy is gonna take me away from my wife an’ kids”.

Three months later, Marcello proclaimed that it would be more logical to kill John. Marcello described his threat prosaically: “Don’t worry about that little Bobby sonofabitch. He’s going to be taken care of... If you want to kill a dog, you don’t cut off the tail, you cut off the head... The
dog will keep biting you if you only cut off its tail, but if the dog’s head is cut off, the dog will
die; tail and all”. Hit the head. The Mafia couldn’t kill Robert because they knew John would
order an investigation. But should John die, Robert’s days as attorney general would be over.
“You gotta hit the top man and what happen with de next top man? He don’t like de brother”.
Marcello said to take the stone out of his shoe. He said he would set up a nut, “some crazy guy”
to take all the heat, “the way they do in Sicily”. As history as learned, this was exactly the way it
happened.
PART FIVE

AMERICA, THE UGLY

‘Tuta rosa coram spinis’. “My father told me that it meant ‘the rose is safe within its thorn’. Later I learnt it could be read as ‘the rose of safety must be sought in the midst of danger. Finally, I learnt it was ‘the flower of safety lies within the perilous thorns’."

Charles Palliser, THE QUINCUNX

CHAPTER TWELVE

A MURDERER’S CONFESSION

“For nothing is hid that shall not he manifest, nor anything secret that shall not be known and come to light…take heed then how you hear.”

Luke 8: 17-18

When Oswald was killed by Jack Ruby on November 24, 1963, the overwhelming feeling was that now the truth, what had motivated Oswald to kill President Kennedy, would not be known. Even though Oswald didn’t kill Kennedy, it is true that the quest for a motive and the search for the truth ended with Oswald’s death, assuming it had started at all.

What made Ruby ‘tick’? Why had he killed Oswald? Some days after his arrest, his defense attorneys put forward that Ruby had killed Oswald out of an overwhelming grief if Oswald wouldn’t die, Jacqueline Kennedy would have to come to Dallas and testify on Oswald’s trial, reliving that most horrible experience and facing the slayer of her husband. D.A. Henry Wade had already mentioned Jacqueline would NOT have to come to a possible trial, but Ruby’s attorneys were not the defenders of the truth; their duty was to get their client out of jail or, as that would be quite difficult with the whole nation having witnessed his crime live on television, get an as small sentence as possible.
A. CRIME PAYS

Barney Ross, a quite famous boxer in Chicago who got a shot at the world title, used to hang out with about a dozen kids in Chicago around 1926. Most of these kids ran small and innocent errands for another idol, Al Capone, who seemed to rule, and probably did rule, over Chicago instead of the Mayor. Among these youngsters was one Jack Rubenstein, a Jewish boy, who would meet “interesting” people in his early childhood. Still, it seems he could resist the urge to become involved in organized crime, even though some suspect he was a drug runner.

But after having moved to Los Angeles in 1933, working for Frank Goldstein, a gambler, and Solly Schulman, he moved back to Chicago four years later, where he apparently was caught in the web. Ruby joined up with the Dave Miller gang who worked in Jake Arvey’s 24th Ward and reportedly got involved with drug trafficking. One of his friends was Lenny Patrick, later one of the Mafia’s assassins, who was close with Sam Giancana, the upcoming kid in the Chicago-Mafia. Another friend was Dave Yaras, who would go to Havana and become friends with both Lansky and Trafficante. All three knew Irwin Weiner, a friend to Tony Acardo, Sam Giancana, Jimmy Hoffa, Santos Trafficante and Alien Dorfman.

Barely back in Chicago, Leon Cooke, a lawyer who had established Local 20467 of the ‘Iron and Junk Handlers Union’, was murdered. The only suspect seemed to be one John Martin, but nobody was ever prosecuted. As a result, Paul Dorfman, a friend of Tony Acardo, became the new leader; Jack Rubenstein the new Secretary-Treasurer. Soon afterward, the Union decided to join hands with the Teamster Union, led by Jimmy Hoffa. Twelve years later. Jimmy Hoffa, at that time head of the Michigan Teamsters, wanted control over the entire MidWest. He believed Chicago would be the key to that ambition and he used Dorfman as his man in town.

According to mobster Frank Loverde, Ruby had killed a man in 1946 and fled from Chicago to Texas. Whether or not he had to flee Chicago, he did move to Dallas, which had always been some sort of sanctuary of the criminals.

About twenty other gangsters from Chicago who wanted to organize the local crime scene in the area had come to Dallas in 1946. These mobsters, led by Pat Manno, included Danny Lardino, James Weinberg, Marcus Lipsky, Martin Ochs, Paul Lambriola and Paul Roland Jones, the latter two good friends of Ruby. All these mobster were already hanging around the Singapore Club, owned by Eva Grant, Ruby’s sister. Jones offered Steve Guthrie, the Sheriff, a ‘cut’ (amounting to USD 150,000 a year) in the profits if he were to protect their gambling interests. Unfortunately for Jones, Guthrie had taped this attempt to bribe him and Jones was arrested.

According to Guthrie, Jones had told him that Ruby was soon coming to Dallas to open “a very fabulous restaurant” with an upstairs gambling facility. This would serve as a front for the Chicago Mafia’s interests in town. According to the FBI, Ruby was the chief pay-off man to the Dallas Police Department; The Chicago Mafia had let go of the idea to make love with the Sheriff’s Department: they courted the DPD.

Jones’ words were barely spoken when Rubenstein became manager and co-owner of the Silver Spur Club, situated at 1717 South Ervay. The club would become one of the favorite hangouts of Jones. To complete his new image, Rubenstein, on December 30, 1947, was officially changed in Jack Leon Ruby.
The fifties were the silent years. Ruby starting up the Vegas Club with Joe Locurto, another Chicago Mobster. By 1957, Dallas got its own local Mafia don, Joseph F. Civello. Civello was not a member of the Chicago Mafia but of the Louisiana Mafia, led by Carlos Marcello. Marcello, as head of the oldest Mafia organization in America and therefore considering to be a special don, had to be on good terms with Sam Giancana, one of the most powerful Mafia figures in America. It’s no wonder that Civello and Ruby were to meet each other regularly.

Ruby also started a career as gunrunner, something that is quite often added to the curriculum of a drug runner. In the early fifties, he reportedly shipped weapons to Cuba, together with Carlos Prio, the friend of former CIA-supported Cuban president Fulgenio Batista. A few years later, Prio would become a dear friend of the likes of Frank Sturgis, men who wanted to see Castro out of Cuba.

When Castro tried to get into the seat of power in Cuba, mobsters like Santo Trafficante, Norman Rothman, a friend of Ruby, Frank Sturgis, a friend of Rothman, and Jimmy Hoffa were all too happy to supply him with firepower. Gene San Souci, a Teamster official in Indianapolis, had persuaded Hoffa to join in. San Souci died in a plane crash just before Castro’s takeover; others, like Robert McKeown in Houston, were arrested and charged with conspiring a gunrunning scheme to Cuba. On October 2, he would be convicted to a sixty day -jail sentence and a USD 500-fine. In April, 1959, Castro himself visited Houston where he and McKeown were photographed together. That same month, Castro changed his policy on the casinos and jailed Santos Trafficante and Jake Lansky. The Cuban leader had changed his policy.

Rosselli and Giancana went to visit their friend Santos in his Cuban jail and Ruby was also ‘invited’ to visit Cuba three times. His host, Lewis McWillie, apparently wanted him to visit Santos Trafficante as well. Ruby had apparently been friends, or at least trying to be friends, with Trafficante when Ruby wanted a financial interest in the Colonial Inn, a nightclub in Florida, the domain of Trafficante, Meyer Lansky, Frank Costello, Marcello’s and Hoover’s ‘friend’ and Lucky Luciano, the emperor of the narcotics trade.

Lewis McWillie was one of Trafficante’s helpers in Cuba and was manager of the Tropicana Hotel in Havana, a hangout of Meyer Lansky, from September 1958 till May 1960 and also a friend of Pat Kirkwood, the manager of The Cellar in Fort Worth.

Ruby visited Cuba from August 8 till September 11 and on September 12 and 13. Nevertheless, Ruby’s bank account shows he was in Dallas on August 6, 21 and 31 and September 4. Ruby had become a candidate for PCI, a Potential Criminal Informant. According to the FBI, there were about seven to nine meetings between Ruby and FBI-agent Charles W. Flynn. The first one would be held on April 28, the very same month Trafficante was imprisoned by Castro.

Ruby had received orders, probably from Rosselli or Giancana, to get three people out of Cuba; he asked McKeown what he could do. Ruby was paying USD 5,000 per person and was willing to give McKeown USD 25,000 if he could arrange a letter of introduction that would allow him to meet Castro himself. Whether he ever met Castro, in August, the two were mob leaders were released. Manuel Piniero Losada of the Directorate of Intelligence interviewed Trafficante upon his release from prison and gave him 24 hours to leave the country. On October 10, 1959, Ruby’s PCI-status was ended.

The Mafia decided to change its policy with Castro; Lansky put a bounty of USD 1,000,000 on Castro’s head; the rest of the Mob went in cahoots with the Cuban exiles and the CIA. Ruby was one of those who plotted Castro’s dismissal.

Nancy Perrin Rich and her husband Robert, a gunrunner, were at a meeting led by Colonel L.
Robert Castorr, a retired Army Colonel, who was also a friend of another ‘man in arms’, General Edwin Walker. Castorr knew one John Martin, who apparently is not the same individual who was a suspect in the Cooke-murder, but a Cuban whose real name was Juan Martin. The meeting was arranged by Dave Cherry, a bartender in the University Club on Commerce Street. They proposed to run a boat to Cuba, bringing military supplies and Enfield rifles, thought to have been stolen from a military base somewhere in the States, into Cuba. They had to return to Miami with a boatload of Cuban emigrants.

A second meeting was held five or six days later. At this meeting, Ruby walked in, talked to Castorr in private and gave him a pack of money. A third meeting, on which Perrin and his wife withdrew from any further involvement, was allegedly held with Vito Genovese’s son as a member. Perrin, who asked to drive the boat, was offered USD 10,000. If they would have continued, they would have been on a boat together with Donald Edward Browder and possibly Rufus Youngblood, a Secret Service agent.

After Ruby’s arrest, he told a visitor, Wally Weston, that “now they’re going to find out about Cuba, ... the guns, ... New Orleans, ... about everything.”

On trial

On November 27, Ruby was indicted for murder by a Dallas grand jury. Ruby’s lawyers realized that a Jewish Yankee nightclub manager had all the bad luck he could get in Dallas. If he ever wanted to get an impartial jury and trial, they needed a change of venue. Their request was denied on February 10, 1964. One week later, the jury selection began, dragging on until March 3.

From March 4 till March 14, the eight men and four women jurors sat through the trial in which Henry Wade tried to convince them of Ruby’s guilt, which wasn’t ‘that’ difficult since every television-channel gave repeat showings of this murder, but only argued for premeditation, not conspiracy. Wade’s duty was to try to convict Ruby and if Ruby was part of a conspiracy, the jury might have concluded Ruby was just another patsy, the one who had to do the dirty job, possibly making them more inclined to find him less guilty. On the other hand, Wade wasn’t the man who was going to argue there was a conspiracy. Even in 1992, Wade claimed, when he was attacked for his actions during the weekend of the murder, that he had five witnesses who had seen Oswald shoot from the window. The truth, of course, is that he had only one man, Howard Brennan.

Ruby’s lawyers, Tom Howard, Joe Tonahill and Melvin Belli tried to depict their client as a victim of temporary insanity, caused by psychomotor epilepsy. Psychiatrists, however, countered that claim and testified Ruby suffered no such problem.

Melvin Belli, Ruby’s lawyer, had entered his defense team in a rather peculiar way. Seymour Ellison, Belli’s law partner in San Francisco and a friend of mobster Moe Dalitz, received a phone-call from Las Vegas from “a friend associated with proprietors in Cuba and had been ousted from that country”, requesting assistance for “one of our guys (who had) just bumped off that SOB that gunned down the President”. Belli was also a friend of Mickey Cohen, who had been involved with Marilyn Monroe, and Michael Shore, who knew Irwin Weiner, another mobster and friend of Ruby. Appearing before the Warren Commission, Ruby asked Joseph Ball, a lawyer in Los Angeles, whether he knew Belli.

After both parties had finished their pleading, the jury returned the ‘guilty’ verdict. Judge Joe B. Brown gave Ruby the death sentence, a verdict that was appealed by Ruby’s defense team.
Throughout the trial, no-one had linked Ruby to organized crime, nobody seemed to be interested in who this man really was.
B. NO QUEST FOR TRUTH

Ruby had not been put on the witness stand. After his trial, he said “everything pertaining to what’s happened has never come to the surface. The world will never know the true facts of what occurred (or) my motive... The people (who) have so much to gain from and had such an ulterior motive to put me in the position I am in... will never let the true facts to the world”.

During his trial, the well-known columnist Dorothy Kilgallen had asked Judge Brown to deliver a message to Ruby from a personal friend, “who could be a singer”. Kilgallen and Ruby enjoyed each other’s company for about eight minutes, eight minutes in which none of Ruby’s four body-guarding deputy sheriffs were sitting next to him. Even though her column of April 14, 1964, in the New York Journal American did ask some embarrassing questions, she only discussed the topic of her conversation with Ruby with some close friends. She told them that “this has to be a conspiracy! I’m going to break the real story and have the biggest scoop of the century”.

But she never did. In March 1965, Kilgallen fractured her shoulder, officially caused by “a fall”, and was hospitalized twice, once for three weeks. Her doctors declined to comment, but it is possible she was on drugs and alcohol at that time. She had told Mark Lane that her “phone is tapped”. Recovered from her ‘fracture’, she published her last item on the assassination on September 3, 1965, in which she wrote that “even if Marina explained why her late husband looked so different in an official police photo and the widely-printed, full-length picture featured on the cover of Life Magazine, it would cause a sensation”. Perhaps she really had found out more about the assassination, she surely hinted she knew more.

On November 8, 1965, her 52 year-old, dead body was found in her home. The first conclusion was that she had died of a heart attack, but this was changed to an overdose of alcohol and pills. Her death certificate, dated November 15, listed “acute ethanol and barbiturate intoxication”, but they couldn’t determine the circumstances in which this had occurred. Detective John Doyle says she had taken a maximum of two Seconal pills. She and her husband, Richard Kollman, had separate bedrooms and she was not found in her own, but in the master bedroom, sitting, not lying, in bed.

Shortly before her death, she said she was going to New Orleans to “open this case”: “They’ve killed the President, the government is not prepared to tell us the truth and I’m going to do everything in my power to find out what really happened.” Two days after her death, her close friend, Mrs. Earl Smith, was also found dead, of “undeterminate causes”. Mark Lane described Kilgallen as the “only U.S. journalist interested in learning facts”. It seems no one was left now. Kilgallen, however, was not the only one who could break the story. On June 7, 1964, Ruby was visited by the Warren Commission. Whereas it would be normal that only a few people were allowed to stay during the interrogation, a busload of people (Warren, Ford, Rankin, Specter and Ball, attorneys Leon Jaworski, Robert Storey and Joe Tonahill, Secret Service agent Elmer Moore, Sheriff Bill Decker, assistant D.A. Jim Bowie and several police officers) were present as well. In this ‘relaxed’ atmosphere. Ruby would be asked ‘the final truth’, because Commission member Gerald Ford believed that the Commission had the truth as only client.

Ruby, towards the end of a relaxed interrogation, said he believed his ‘life was in danger... I may not live tomorrow to give any further testimony... I want to get out to the public... the truth of everything and why my act was committed, but I can’t say it here... if you want to hear any
further testimony, you will have to get me to Washington soon, because it has something to do
with you. Chief Warren”. ‘Chief Warren’, however, wasn’t interested in what kind of role he was
believed to be playing. Warren said it was “impossible”, for no apparent or logical reason, to get
Ruby to Washington, even though Ruby pleaded eight times to be taken to the capitol.
Realizing his pleas were to no avail, he said he “was used as a scapegoat... now maybe something
can be saved. It may not be too late. But if I am eliminated, there won’t be any way of knowing”.
Saying farewell instead of goodbye, Ruby told Warren: “Well, you won’t ever see me again... a
whole new form of government is going to take over the country and I know I won’t live to see
you another time.”

A new trial?
On October 5, 1966, the Texas Court of Appeals reversed Ruby’s conviction and granted him a
new trial. Ruby realized that this could mean he could get a five-year sentence; he could be out
on the streets as soon as the trial was over, having already served three years of his time in jail.
On December 7, they decided the trial would be held in Wichita Falls.
But quite suddenly, on December 9, Ruby was taken to Parkland Hospital. Apparently suffering
from a persistent cough and nausea, the doctors concluded he had pneumonia. The very next day,
however, cancer was diagnosed. After some testing, it was decided that Ruby’s lung cancer was
no longer curable.
Ruby told his family that he had been injected with cancer, something scientists say is
impossible. Though this might be considered as the ramblings of a man who can’t accept he’s
about to die, there are indications things are not what they seem to be.
Deputy Sheriff All Madox said “we had a phony doctor come into from Chicago... you could tell
he was Ruby’s doctor. He spent half his time up there talking with Ruby. Ruby told me: ‘well,
they injected me for a cold. It were cancer cells’.” DPD officer Tom Tilson said that “it was the
opinion of a number of other police officers that Ruby had received injections of cancer.” Bruce
McCarthy was asked to analyze Ruby’s cancer cells and explained there are two types of cancer
cells: cilia (which affect the respiratory system) and micro-villi (affecting the digestive system).
McCarthy identified Ruby’s cells as microvilli. He said it was simply impossible Ruby had lung
cancer; microvilli don’t affect the lungs. It seems that Ruby was injected with cancer cells, but
that they could not cause a lethal disease like cancer, as scientists say.
Though many believe Ruby died of cancer, he didn’t. On January 2, 1967, a blood clot formed,
forcing the doctors to put Ruby on an oxygen-mask. The next day, at 9h00, Ruby had a spasm;
ninety minutes later, he was declared dead. Dr. Earl Rose, the man who had done the autopsy of
Tippit and Oswald and should have done the autopsy on the President, discovered that the
heaviest concentration of cancer cells was in the right lung, with traces of white cancerous
tumors throughout the body. According to the doctors who treated Ruby, his cancer had
originated in the pancreas, but Rose saw a normal pancreas. Rose listed the immediate cause of
death to be pulmonary embolism (i.e. a massive blood clot) that had formed in the leg, had gone
through the heart and had ended in his lung. Ruby’s body was flown to Chicago, where he was
born, and buried in the West lawn Cemetery, next to his parents.

Before his death, Ruby had attempted at least three suicide attempts. He tried to hang himself,
split his skull by running into a wall and at one time unscrewed the light bulb and threw water
over his feet, trying to electrocute himself, only discovering the light bulb was too high to reach
while standing. When a fellow inmate ‘John’ left jail. Ruby wrote him a sixteen page letter in which Ruby writes about Nazis and the deaths of Jews. “You must realize that the people here want everyone to think I am crazy... they plan on doing away with (me)... This man (President Johnson) is a Nazi in the worst order. For over a year now they have been away with my people (the Jews)... Johnson is going to try to have an all-out war with Russia... The only one who gained by the shooting was Johnson and he was in a car in the rear and safe when the shooting took place... what would the Russians, Castro or anyone else have to gain by eliminating the President... Johnson who knew weeks in advance as to what was going to happen because he is the one who was going to arrange the trip for (the) president, this had been planned long before president himself knew about (it)”.

In a second letter, he wrote “they found some very clever means and ways to trick me and which will be used later as evidence to show the American people that I was part of the conspiracy in the assassination of president... They alone planned the killing, by they I mean Johnson and others... In all the history of the United States never has a president been elected that has the background of Johnson. Believe me, compared to him I am a Saint”. He also wrote to his psychiatrist Werner Teuter that he “was framed to kill Oswald”.

However, not all of his doctors and psychiatrists were as “nice” as Dr. Teuter. One of them was Dr. Louis Joy Ion West, a psychiatrist who had worked with the CIA’s MKULTRA-program, a program testing the use of LSD and other possible psychological procedures. It has never been explained why Dr. West was brought in as a psychiatrist; he had no connection to Ruby or Dallas. If Ruby was in some way administered LSD, this could explain Ruby’s pitiful attempts to go jumping up and down, trying to reach the light bulb and thus kill himself or to split his skull. His family said the people around Ruby told him that because of what he had done, killing Oswald, there were massive deportations and killings of Jews; that the trains he heard outside his jail were full of Jews. Ruby’s letters do reflect this belief that Johnson in some way had ordered these deportations. He even asked his family to contact the President to explain the truth behind his motives.

Ruby had come to believe that either somebody was killing Jews or that the Arabs would soon attack Israel (the latter soon to become a reality). Ruby believed there were people, especially the John Birch Society, who wanted to depict him as a man who was behind the assassination of President Kennedy as well. Ruby believed that those ‘lies’ harmed his people, the Jews. Ruby had requested a polygraph examination for especially that reason: that he could show he was not involved in the assassination, only in the murder of Oswald.

Even so, Ruby, in what were perhaps his clearer moments, apparently had knowledge or at the very least believed that Johnson knew about the assassination before it occurred and that he even might have been an active participant in the plotting. Madeleine Duncan Brown, a Dallas advertising executive, claims she was the mistress of Johnson for over twenty years. She said that on the morning of November 22, Johnson told her “those goddamned Kennedys won’t embarrass me again after today. That’s not a threat, that’s a promise!”. According to Brown, he later told her “it was ordered by American oilmen and the CIA”, but ‘explained’ “you’ve seen nothing, heard nothing, and you don’t repeat anything!”.

In 1967, Jim Garrison also argued that Johnson was the man who gained the most from Kennedy’s assassination. Many felt Johnson was, in fact, the greatest benefactor. His aides and
friends knew that Johnson had had the most miserable time of his life as vice president. Robert Kennedy and Johnson hated each other and to ease the tension, Johnson was sent on missions abroad, visiting twenty-six countries in all. He wasn’t interested in other cultures, but he did receive center stage abroad, even though he had to learn Robert Kennedy had told the Scandinavian heads of state “Johnson did not speak for the government” when Johnson visited their countries.

His entourage didn’t understand why he had accepted that post. It was rumored that John Connally, LBJ’s best friend, had talked him into accepting that position. Connally and Johnson went way back and, in the late 1940s and early 1950s, had been associated with Fort Worth gamblers who were associated with Jack Ruby, then a new but rising ‘star’ in the Dallas area. W.C. Kirkwood, the father of Pat Kirkwood who entertained the Secret Service men the night before the Dallas-trip, was well-known and liked by oilmen of the likes of H.L. Hunt and Glint Murchison and politicians like Johnson and Sam Rayburn, Johnson’s political father-figure. Johnson also introduced Connally to Sid Richardson, Glint Murchison’s best pal and one of the richest men in America.

Murchison, at one time, had bought Cabell’s grocery chain in Dallas, at a time when Jody Thompson had bought 7-Eleven. Ben Cabell, the Dallas mayor and owner of the grocery chain and Glint Murchison had made the deal, Murchison hoping Ben’s son, Earl, would start a chain of such stores over the entire country. Ben’s sons, however, were not interested and Glint Murchison decided to sell his chain to Thompson. The Cabell-boys, Charles and Earl, had other plans. Charles Cabell made it to Deputy Director in the CIA, eventually being fired by Kennedy after the Bay of Pigs, while Earl would become mayor of Dallas, at the time Kennedy was assassinated.

Clint Murchison and Lyndon Johnson had always ‘co-operated’. Johnson informing Murchison which senator needed money or another favor. Murchison, realizing he was buying power in Washington, always gave the ‘poor politician’ what he needed, even though he perhaps didn’t even think of asking Murchison. All Johnson had to do was to make sure that the oil depletion allowance had enough support on the floor.

Jack Sullivan, a senatorial aide, said Johnson received not only payoffs from men like Murchison, but also from Teamster leader Jimmy Hoffa, another enemy of Robert Kennedy. “For years, men came into Johnson’s office and handed him envelopes stuffed with cash... even when he was vice president 50,000 dollar... was what one lobbyist for one oil company testified he brought to Johnson’s office as vice president.”

On October 16, 1962, amidst the Cuban missile crisis, Kennedy had decided that there was going to be a tax on profits that were being made outside the United States by American citizens or companies; among those ‘targeted’ were, of course, the larger oil companies who had substantial to large foreign investments.

In early 1963, however, Kennedy attacked the oil depletion allowance that made up to 27.5 percent of the oil barons’ income-tax-exemption. Even though the oil millionaires had voted for the Kennedy-Johnson ticket, which Johnson had said would not push for the allowance, Kennedy seemed to back down from that deal. The oil barons had gained their fortune almost overnight and they realized all too well that they could lose that same fortune even before midnight. A communist-inspired revolution was the worst of their nightmares; in that case, everything they
had earned would be turned over to the state. This was one of the reasons why so many of them, men such as Hugh Roy Cullen (from Houston), Sid Richardson, H.L. Hunt and Glint Murchison, had backed Senator McCarthy. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, Murchison had befriended Senator McCarthy, who was beginning his communist witch-hunt. Murchison felt McCarthy was “going to get those homos out of the State Department.” H.L. Hunt, probably the richest man in America with a personal fortune of USD 4 billion, was an extreme rightist who, according to friends, believed “that communism began in this country when the government took over the distribution of the mail”.

Dr. Orlando Bosch, the Cuban exile who was in and around Dealey Plaza on November 22, had broken with the CIA in early 1963 and blamed, like so many others, Kennedy for betraying the Cubans. Bosch sought private sponsors and went in cahoots with Sturgis and with Sierra Martinez; his major backer, however, was H.L. Hunt.

John W. Curington, a special assistant for H.L. Hunt since 1951, said Hunt had told him “America would be much better off without Kennedy” and that Hunt had even asked him “to check Oswald’s security in jail”. Immediately after the assassination, H.L. Hunt, accompanied by his team of former FBI-agents security guards, flew to Mexico, where he stayed for the next month. In Mexico, he was accompanied by fellow Dallasite, General Edward Walker, who had been fired by Kennedy for spreading right-wing literature among American troops in Germany. Ruby testified that “there was a John Birch Society right now in activity, and E. Walker is one of the top men in this organization”.

Johnson, however, had a much heavier problem on his hands than simple boredom. Henry Marshall, an Agriculture Department official, was investigating Billie Sol Estes, who had manipulated federal farm support programs; to be precise, he had made fraudulent transfers of federal cotton allotments to obtain subsidies from the U.S. Agriculture Department and masking the sale and transaction of non-existent fertilizer storage tanks. As late as January 25, 1961, Marshall had passed Estes, even though Marshall had suspicions against the man. On June 3, however, Marshall was found dead on his estate, being shot five times in the abdomen-so they claim, by a bolt-action rifle. It was rumored one shot hit Marshall in the back.

To cover up and slow down this investigation, Johnson had to rely on his former neighbor and friend, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover. As FBI deputy director William Sullivan described their relation: “Johnson and Hoover had their mutual fear and hatred of the Kennedys in common- and more.” Both were masons in their spare-time, Hoover even making it to the highest, the thirty-third, grade. During the 1960 election-campaign, Johnson had apparently enquired whether he couldn’t see Hoover’s garbage-file on Kennedy.

In April and May, 1962, Republican Congressman Bill Cramer played the game of politics, urging Johnson should be impeached because of his association with Estes in two grain storage operations in Texas. Hoover claimed that rumor was false. On May 16, the press reported that Estes had received a Teamster loan, worth USD 12 million. Johnson, also on Hoffa’s list of recipients, must have felt another spike in his hand. To make matters worse, Kennedy said that “if any member of the Executive Branch is involved, ... (he will be) immediately disciplined appropriately”. On May 18, D.A. Bryan Russ ordered a grand jury inquiry into Marshall’s death. Four days later, the Medical Examiner said Marshall had been murdered... that he was shot in the back. Justice of the Peace Leo Fainer, who didn’t want an autopsy performed, said he had “no comment”. In 1985, Estes, given immunity from prosecution, apparently testified in front of a grand jury that Johnson had ordered Marshall’s death to prevent his connections with Estes from
In October 7, 1963, Bobby Baker, a man who had walked into Washington on top of Johnson’s shoes, had to resign as Secretary of the Majority Leader of the Senate, after his wheeling-dealing had been exposed by the Washington Post. On November 22, 1963, LIFE reported that Murchison’s lawyers Bedford Wynne and Thomas Webb were named as part of the “Bobby Baker-set”. The charges were almost similar to Estes’ and Johnson had to lick Hoover’s heels, hoping he would not bring out information that would link him with Baker.

Hoover and Clyde Tolson always spent their vacation at the Del Charro hotel in California, the hotel owned by Clint Murchison, who was the ‘best pal’ of Sid Richardson. Other guests included Richard Nixon, John Connally and Carlos Mar-cello, the Louisiana don of the Mafia. Another guest was Joan Crawford, Kilgallen’s drinking companion. Everyone was afraid or at least wary of Hoover; Richardson was the only one who talked back to Hoover, ordering him to “Edgar, get your ass over here and get me some more chill”, and Hoover complied.

Murchison, like Estes and Johnson, was involved with the Teamsters and with Mafia-don Frank Costello, a good friend of Sam Giancana and of J. Edgar Hoover. Costello had been the protégé of Marcello, another Del Charro guest, in his career as Mafia don in New Orleans. Costello and Hoover had met secretly in New York’s Central Park for years.

All these are interesting connections and with men such as H.L. Hunt as possible conspirators, it is no wonder that people of his likes were also considered as being involved in the assassination. They are the elite and because the elite is connected to practically everyone else who is a part of that elite, it is ‘normal’ they are constantly involved in every possible scandal, whether they are involved or not.
CHAPTER THIRTEEN

KILL THE PRESIDENT, WILL YOU?

‘They conspired against him to slay him.’
*Genesis 37:18*

David Ferrie, Jack Ruby, Orlando Bosch, David Atlee Phillips, Homer Echevarria, Chauncey Marvin Holt, Charles Rogers and Charles Nicoletti had all shared one experience: all were or had been involved in the attempts to overthrow Castro’s government. Some had entered that ‘movement’ because their superiors, Mafia-figures or CIA-officials, had ordered them to help; others, the Cuban exiles, felt they had to help if they ever wanted to set foot again on their homelands.

Their hate had started when they believed the Dulles-propaganda machine that claimed the sole reason for the defeat of the invasion-force was Kennedy’s denial for air cover. This narrow and wrong view absolved not only their own person, but also that of the Mafia who had been unable to kill Castro and that of the CIA who had shown major flaws in the operation.

Soon afterward, in fact: too soon afterwards, they all believed Kennedy had given up the ‘Cuban cause’. Though correct at the time of the assassination, most of them thought they were correct months before Kennedy decided to stop promoting a second invasion-squad. Orlando Bosch had rebelled in early 1963 and had published a pamphlet, “The Tragedy of Cuba”, in which he charged Kennedy with betraying the Cuban case. He mailed a personal copy to Kennedy. Men like Bosch, the most virulent terrorist among all exiles, thought that regaining Cuba would be done without the President; they believed they had to take care of themselves, that the U.S. government would no longer help them. Those people who hated Kennedy after the failed invasion at the Bay of Pigs, were now upset and angry and felt abandoned.

David Phillips said that the best thing for the U.S. would be if “people like Kennedy and his advisers should not be running it”. Charles Sapp, Chief of Miami’s Police Intelligence Section, reported that “violence hitherto directed at Castro’s Cuba may now be turned toward governmental agencies in the United States”. In Miami, handbills were passed out among Cubans that read: “Cuban patriots—face into the truth. Only one development will make it possible for Cuban patriots to return to their homeland in triumph. That is an inspired act of God. Such an act would place a Texan into the White House who is a friend to all Latin Americans.”

According to a Mafia source, “there came a point... when CIA personnel and angry at Kennedy told their hired murderers they could keep the money for the Castro job if they would murder the President”. It would be a total misrepresentation if we understand a lot of CIA personnel did this; surely, a few like David Phillips and ‘Dave Palmer’ would have been most happy to do just that. According to Helmet Streibher, a ‘friend’ of Nazi war criminals Reinhard Gehlen and Otto Skorzeny and their friend Allen Dulles, the “men who killed Mr. Kennedy were CIA contract agents”, identifying these men not as employees of the CIA, but as being employed, contracted for one specific CIA-project, such as the Cuban invasion. This group normally included Cuban exiles and regular CIA-contract agents.

Thomas Beckham, an acquaintance of Ferrie, said that “it was later I learned Kennedy was killed with the knowledge of the CIA by the Cubans... It was to look like Castro had it done.”
Apparently, these Cubans hoped that by depicting Oswald as a Castro sympathizer, if not agent, it would influence Johnson, forcing him to invade Cuba. If he did, they would be able to return to their homes in Cuba.

One reason for their early revolt was that they, as the conservatives among the exiles, were no longer those who were still on good terms with the CRC. Should a second invasion ever come, the more liberal and leftist leaders would become the most likely candidates for the Cuban presidency. The right-wing Cubans, however, those who had played ‘hanky-panky’ with the Mafia during Batista regime, realized that even should Castro be eliminated, they would not have a chance of becoming prominent politician in the new Cuban government if Kennedy had his say in that matter.

Around and inside this group were a number of important Mafia figures who had always thought Kennedy would not hunt them down, but, in what they considered to be good Kennedy tradition, he apparently didn’t keep his word: the Kennedys went after these men with a vengeance never heard of. They certainly hated Kennedy, but they were even more afraid and scared to death Kennedy would get them. He had shown he could tease them; and teasing can hurt. Could he also bite? They must have had some strange sort of respect for him because they somehow realized that man could break them. For them, it was catch or be caught and these street-weathered men surely tried to catch. They had tried influencing him via Frank Sinatra, they had tried blackmail and possibly frame one of them in bed with another, dead woman. They realized nothing would work except eliminating one of them; they wanted to eliminate Robert because he, more than his brother, was causing them all these problems.

The problem though, was that John, if his brother would be killed, would probably hunt them down until he had seen revenge. In 1963, in cities like Miami and New Orleans, with a heavy concentration of CIA, Mafia and Cuban ‘personnel’, almost the entire population believed either the Cubans or the Mafia would eventually kill Kennedy.

Lucky Luciano, at the age of 64, had died on January 26, 1962 on the airfield at Naples of a heart attack and because he had been the boss of the narcotics empire, that empire needed a new Emperor. Vito Genovese was in jail and Meyer Lansky wanted to stay clear of operational activities; Santos Trafficante, already deeply involved with the Cuban exiles, was chosen to be his successor. This network used Cubans as runners and hit men and operated from South America, Turkey and the recently opened and blooming market of South-East Asia. The ‘flow of goods’ from Turkey was rapidly dropping and the end of U.S. presence in South-East Asia, read VietNam, would mean a drastic decrease in the amount of drugs available in the U.S. Because Kennedy was so independent, nobody knew what he would do with the VietNam-war.

Kennedy had inherited VietNam as a fetus, saw it grow in a baby; after his death, it would grow into a monster. VietNam, like other nations in the region, was a ‘hot spot’ on political agendas, one of those countries where the Cold War between East and West has materialized into a real war. The United States had inherited a war from the French and president Eisenhower didn’t know what to do with it. When VietNam fell in Kennedy’s hands, he gave rather conflicting statements. The Bay of Pigs, however, changed his attitude towards VietNam. He felt he could not send troops, how much some of the people around him wanted to do just that, de Gaulle and another famous World War II general, Douglas MacArthur, had told him not to get involved in VietNam too much. It seems Kennedy was stunned MaArthur would promote a political solution rather than a military solution.

Either Kennedy apparently felt he had to help the VietNamese government and therefore sent
advisors to VietNam or we have to believe the Deputy Secretary of Defense, Roswell Gilpatric, who believes Kennedy even reluctantly agreed to send advisors, just to satisfy some of his opponents and advisors. In July 1962, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara was ordered to plan a phased withdrawal of the 16,500 advisors. That plan arrived on the President’s desk in May 1963 and on October 20, he ordered the return of the first thousand troops by the end of that year. Kennedy had also told friends that he wanted to see a complete withdrawal from VietNam; he had come to believe that the Americans would not have to fight another people’s war.

When they learned that their worst thoughts, a complete withdrawal within the next two years, would come true, it probably only helped strengthen their belief Kennedy had to go. In South America, one never knew: it was feared that men like Castro and Che Guevarra wanted to ‘convert’ other Southern and Latin American countries to communism as well. Where could the Mafia get narcotics when all its major suppliers were dry or would be communist countries? This sudden halt of narcotics would mean an abrupt halt to continuous wealth and power; a halt to a booming, though illegal, enterprise. But the narcotics empire was also threatened in another way. Milton William ‘Bill’ Cooper is a man who came forward and offered information about the government’s relationship and attitude towards UFOs. Portions of his story have been corroborated, portions are simply impossible to corroborate or to discredit because of a lack of relevant information, primarily because of the cloak of secrecy by which the CIA envelopes most if not all of its operations. This cloak works both ways, and is often used by people not at all associated with the CIA, but who can use the cloak to claim involvement with the intelligence agency.

Cooper claims Kennedy learned portions of the truth about this narcotics empire and realized that the CIA was heavily involved with it. This is quite possible, considering that those most deeply involved in the Cuban plots had been equally ferociously involved in the drug trade. Kennedy apparently also learned that part of the profit was used to continue a cover-up about alien crashed disks whose crash site; quite often desolate, had been ‘cleaned up’ by the military. Apparently, alien bodies (one possibly alive) had been recovered from these crashed disks. Kennedy forced the CIA to end their involvement in this drug trafficking network and threatened to reveal the truth about the presence of aliens and alien technology to the people within the next year (before the summer of 1964) if they did not. He apparently commissioned a plan to implement this decision. MJ-12, according to Cooper a group of people that had been installed as ‘supervisor’ over the ‘alien cover-up’, were confronted with this ultimatum and, again according to Cooper, decided they had to get rid of Kennedy. Though MJ-12 has twelve members, there is no information about who these members were in 1963. In 1947, the DCI was a member and it seems the DCI was always a member of this group – even though the possibility that MJ-12 actually existed is minimal.

Dorothy Kilgallen had also been interested in UFOs and crashed disks, particularly the controversial story about a crash in Aztec, New Mexico. Kilgallen identified General George C. Marshall, then Secretary of State, as one of the key persons behind the cover-up. Cooper alleges that McGeorge Bundy, Kennedy’s Secretary of State, was part of the Alien Study Group. If anything, these allegations show what profound impact the murder has assumed – and perhaps how far away from the true reasons for the assassination we have drifted since November 22, 1963.

Gary Underbill had visited his friends Robert and Charlene ‘Charlie’ Fitzsimmons on Long Island and told them about a plot in the assassination on November 23, 1963. A shaken and
fearful Underbill said that a small group within the CIA (according to some sources Underbill specified them as members of the Far Eastern Division) had killed him and that his “life was in danger”. He believed Oswald was a patsy and that “the bastards” had done something outrageous: killing the President. He hinted he had learned details before the assassination, but hadn’t believed they would really kill him. “They” were a bunch of drug runners and gun runners, a bunch in Southeast Asia. Kennedy had given them some time after the Bay of Pigs, giving them a chance to save face, but was apparently still going to blow the whistle on them. “And they killed him!” On May 8, 1964, his lifeless body was found in his Washington apartment. His death was ruled a suicide, even though the shot had entered the left side of his head, the pistol was in his left hand and Underbill was beyond any doubt right-handed. Underbill had talked to another friend of him, Asher Brynes (who found his body), reporting on what he had discovered during his own private investigation into the assassination. After his death, his estranged wife Patricia refused to turn over his papers.

In the mid 1960s, a rumor floated around Washington that the Far Eastern Division (headed by Edward Lansdale and Lucien Conein) had killed Kennedy with the help of the Western Hemisphere Division (headed by David Phillips and Desmond Fitzgerald). Operation Mongoose was officially (for cover) put within the Far Eastern Division, even though their involvement ended there (apart from Lansdale).

It seems the Mafia and the CIA were not only upset about Cuba, they could lose even more income and power.

Lawyer Frank Ragano claims that he, as attorney for both Santos Trafficante and Jimmy Hoffa, knew of a plot by Santos Trafficante, Jimmy Hoffa and Carlos Marcello, the man who had put out a contract on Kennedy’s head, to kill the President.

After the assassination, Robert Kennedy told his press aide Edwin Guthman that he “thought they might get one of us, but Jack, after all he’d been through, never worried about it... I thought it would be me”. Mobster Stefano Magaddino agreed with that point: he felt Robert had caused John’s death by pressing too many issues. Russell Bufalino felt “they killed the good one. They should have killed the other little guy”; Angelo Bruno felt it was “too bad his brother Bobby was not in that car too”.

The Mafia wanted to kill the President, but realized they lacked ‘firepower’ and that firepower was available to that group of disgruntled CIA-officials, Cuban exiles and other Mafia figures who thought their efforts in furthering the Cuban invasion had been discarded by the Kennedys and who, ever since the Bay of Pigs, had felt some if not much hate for them. When Marcello had put out a contract on Kennedy in April of 1963, the Cubans probably didn’t need urging and jumped upon the opportunity to get rid of their ‘cancer’, knowing that they would need funds for an invasion from the Mafia if they were to succeed. As for the CIA: Allen Dulles himself believed “an intelligence service is an ideal vehicle for a conspiracy”. One of the reasons that bothered the CIA was that they were not simply held at arm’s length by the White House, they were literally run and controlled by the White House. Previously, they were allowed to do whatever they wanted to do and nobody in the White House wanted to know. McGeorge Bundy even tried to go as far so that he would know the identity of every CIA-spy recruit. Dulles, probably flabbergasted, opposed this move, successfully. But still, the Kennedys didn’t give the CIA any breathing space. Because of this tight control, it is quite possible the Kennedys learnt a lot of dirty secrets.
The Kennedys also wanted to diminish the CIA in size, via budget-cuts and the NSAM stating the CIA was not to engage in large-scale operations, and strip it of its importance and power, disseminating some of their tasks to other agencies. It seems Lyndon Johnson informed certain CIA officials that Kennedy had authorized Defense Secretary Robert McNamara to establish these alternative agencies.

One of these agencies was the National Security Agency, NSA, headed by Joseph Francis Carroll. The NSA was the ‘high-tech’-agency, in charge of practically all of the technical intelligence, an ever growing part (both in size and importance) of the intelligence business. If there would be another U2-operation, it was likely to be directed by the NSA, not the CIA. After Roger Hilman’s appointment as head of the State Department’s Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR), that section was seriously squashed from CIA officers who not only used the INR, but also used its budget for CIA-operations.

On the military side of the intelligence business, Kennedy stressed the importance of the Army’s Green Berets, who had to give America a “greater ability to deal with guerilla forces, insurrection, and subversion”, three items formerly handled by the CIA’s Deputy Directorate of Plans. At the same time, McNamara, following Kennedy’s request, created the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), an agency that wanted to centralize all intelligence coming from the various agencies, thus taking over the role of the CIA.

The Kennedys had learned to distrust the CIA as an institution and Hoover, who was the FBI. Hoover’s FBI was used as errand-boy when the Justice Department’s Organized Crime Section clashed with organized crime instead of the Justice Department using the FBI as the investigating tool. At the same time, the Kennedys used the FBI as a personal tool, trying to keep tabs on those around them. Hoover had done nothing else, but now ‘they’ were running the show, not Hoover, and Hoover’s ego, frail as it was, might have been bruised.

This group set up a patsy, Lee Harvey Oswald, in ‘good’ Sicilian-tradition like Carlos Marcello had said he would. To heighten the possibility of an invasion once Kennedy was out of the way, they depicted Oswald as a man who had acted upon Castro’s orders. They thought, quite naively, that would be enough for President Johnson to start or plan a second invasion of Cuba, a retaliation strike against Castro, the foreign communist leader who had killed his ‘friend’, President Kennedy. In hindsight, it is clear they, once again, just like during the Bay of Pigs, overestimated their own powers and naively thought they could pull off such a stunt.

Johnson later commented to a reporter of the San Francisco Chronicle that during Kennedy’s presidency, “we’ve been running a damn Murder, Incorporated, in the Caribbean”. It seems that it eventually did murder someone, but not the one the Kennedys intended to kill.

The elite

But it didn’t work out that way: Johnson never pursued the possibilities of a new invasion and, on April 7, 1964, dropped the entire project. Johnson apparently objected to these plans primarily because of his hate for Robert Kennedy, the mastermind behind these plans. Though his opposition to the conspirators’ desired outcome of the assassination might absolve Johnson as a possible conspirator, there is more to it than that, and Jack Ruby seems to have realized that all too well. In America, as in every society, there is a group of people who make up the elite and who therefore have more influence and privileges than the bulk of the people. Because anyone of them seems to know everyone of them, they are always just one step away
from or have one hand in the decision that is made or event that occurs. And because of this, they always gain.

Most of them had always disliked the Kennedys. The ‘old elite’ disliked them because they were newcomers from Ireland and the ‘new, southern elite’ disliked them for numerous reasons. The old elite had disliked them because they were Irish Catholics. They thought, if not feared, Kennedy would do everything the pope would tell him to do. It seemed it would turn out to be the other way around. To prove his independence from Rome, he declined to send an Ambassador to the Vatican and didn’t even celebrate the customary mass in the White House. Cardinal Spellman lost all the influence he had had during Eisenhower’s presidency, when he had a listening ear in John Foster Dulles’.

‘Catholic Kennedy’ even favored birth control, an act that was considered a crime even by most non-Catholic Christians. The Jesuits’ leadership, always known for its conservative, even extreme rightist standpoints, even feared Kennedy would install a Pope or ‘brainwash’ the ailing pope John XXIII, trying to make him see things from his point of view, which was that of birth-control and detente between East and West. Pope John XXIII was in fact willing to revolutionize everything: he set out to strip the Church of its worldly power and wealth; he had already established a birth control commission. Even though he died in his eighties and was in failing health, there have been consistent rumors that his death was ‘hastened’, not by God but by human hands, afraid as some men, particularly priests, were that he might be able to accomplish what he had started.

Many others, especially the right-wing ‘new elite’, thought Kennedy was a liberal and a liberal, they believed, was open to communism more than what was good for America. Kennedy allowed communism to set foot in America and he was, perhaps unwittingly, helping the communist cause; at least, that was what they believed. They believed Kennedy was somehow plotting against his own country by being more open to the communists. In reality, Kennedy believed that nationalism was a much stronger motive to move people than communism or anti-communism and he believed that by making countries such as Algeria and VietNam independent, the nationalist movement would automatically overpower possible communist factions. To the outside world, however, it looked as if Kennedy always gave in to the communist world. On the morning of the assassination, a full-page ad in a Dallas newspaper asked a series of why-questions to the President. Most questions wondered why Kennedy was a lover of communism.

Though it is true Kennedy was much more open towards communism than some of his predecessors, Kennedy had the common sense to look at the Soviet Union as it truly was, not as what most anti-Communists made it out to be. Unable to let go of their pet theories such as roll back- and domino-theory, they didn’t realize Kennedy was dealing with the Soviet Union as a real country, not as they viewed it, as an imagined and grossly exaggerated enemy. Should some of them want to eliminate Kennedy, they would and did interpret it as ‘good for the country’. Kennedy was, in their eyes, after all, a communist or at least communist-inspired. In early November, 1963, Hoover proves this point when he mentioned that “President Kennedy’s closest advisors are either communists or communist sympathizers”.

Most of the elite feared for their future when Kennedy was president. Whereas the Mafia and the CIA had been scared to death, the oilmen also feared there might be an oil-depletion allowance which could hamper their luxurious life. And, of course, other businessmen knew that if the oilmen, one of the most powerful groups in America, weren’t beyond the president’s reach (as
they had been with his predecessors), than they certainly weren’t safe for ‘unpopular measures’.

When Dulles was fired, a lot of people once again realized that the Kennedys didn’t think twice when it came to taking drastic measures, whatever branch of government or layer of society was involved. Imagine: they even thought about retiring the ‘icon’ of the bureaucrats: J. Edgar Hoover, a man who had immeasurable power inside America years before the oilmen and the Mafia gained in power, at a time the CIA’s birth lay still twenty years into the future. With Dulles ‘resignation’, people began to realize Kennedy didn’t like conservatives, anti-Communists and, no wonder, these people didn’t cooperate with him, even though they should have to. One of these men was James Jesus Angleton, who had seen his dear friend and mentor Allen Dulles fired. To Angleton, as to many other anti-communists, peace-negotiations and everything else than smelled like relaxation between East and West was a Communist ploy. Those who fell for it were stupid and naive AND a danger to America because, they believed, it opened America’s borders for a Communist invasion. If nothing else, socialism seemed to want one world government and Kennedy was, in their view, quite serious about the United Nations Organization, the very incarnation of ‘one world government’.

On the morning of November 22, 1963, in Dallas, handbills were passed out which read “Wanted for Treason”. The major charge leveled against Kennedy was “betraying the Constitution (which he swore to uphold). He is turning the sovereignty of the United States over to the communist controlled United Nations... He is betraying our friends (Cuba,...) and befriending our enemies (Russia, ...).

Angleton, the man who directed the CIA in its dealings with the Warren Commission, realized that if Dulles was fired, he, the archconservative, could be fired next. That wasn’t that bad, were it not that with Dulles gone, he was now about the only man in the CIA who could protect their dirty secrets.

At the end of World War II, Dulles and Angleton, both with the OSS, had helped numerous Nazi war criminals escape from Europe via the famed Ratlines. The Nazis had always opposed the communists and were equally opposed to one global government. Dulles and Angleton believed that the Soviet Union posed and would pose a much bigger threat to America than Germany and they felt they, knights in shining armor, had to protect and arm America from and against that ‘evil’.

A large number of these war criminals came to America, where they were helped by various extreme rightist organizations, among them some oil companies. Unknown to Angleton and Dulles, Prince Anton Vasilevich Turkul, the ‘director of the Ratlines’, the network by which these criminals emigrated from Europe, was a Soviet spy, a reality that might have dawned on them when he defected. At the British end of the network, one Kim Philby had run important programs and knew a lot. This Soviet spy defected to the Soviet Union on January 23, 1963 and it scared a lot of people in American intelligence that such a man in such a high place would be a Soviet spy, even though they had known that since 1953. There had been doubts about which side really owned Philby and in 1951 both William Harvey and Angleton were asked by DCI Walter Bedell Smith to assess the man. Harvey believed Philby was a Soviet spy; Angleton was unable to draw a conclusion, probably because he started to realize what had happened.

Dulles and Angleton, hoping to destroy the Soviet Union by helping anti-Communist Nazis, whatever crimes these had done during World War II, into America where they could and would
co-operate with the CIA, had not only brought Nazis to America but also, if not primarily, Soviet spies who had infiltrated the program with the help of the program’s supervisor, Turkul, himself a Soviet spy. Angleton and Dulles had unwittingly but still illegally helped infiltrate Soviet spies into America, not only under the cover, but also with the protection of the CIA AND FBI. Men of Dulles’ and Angleton’s intelligence must have realized the truth, though probably not the extent, of what they had unwittingly done. If this secret would ever get out, it would mean a total re-evaluation of the entire government bureaucracy (the military, the CIA, the FBI, University and industrial programs for the government, NASA, ...) and eventually a total rewriting of what had occurred after World War II. Even today, the full extent is not fully known and the secret is coming out only slowly; Dulles’ and Angleton’s actions (dare one say crimes?) are still not common knowledge.

When Dulles was fired, a large amount of these files were destroyed. Should Angleton have to leave, something that under Kennedy’s presidency was certainly within the realm of reality, the Nazi secret was due to come out soon, even though Dulles’ ghost was still very much inside Langley’s corridors after he left. I know of people who wrote President Kennedy or the Attorney General about Nazi war criminals hiding out in America and it seems reasonable to assume there were and would be more than just a few American citizens who would write him about this matter. In one case, it is most likely Robert himself read the letter as he personally knew the author of that letter. Even if Robert started a superficial investigation or simply inquired, it could have lead to the deepest secrets or at least lead to a staggering result, even if that deepest secret was never probed. This is one of the reason why the CIA denied every link it could have with Oswald, knowing that should they allow someone to dig into that matter, he might find ‘things that are relevant to other things’.

Another man involved in these ratlines was General Charles Thrasher, whose aide-de-camp was Clay Shaw, our man who could have played ‘hanky-panky’ (quite literally) with Soviet Intelligence moles. Shaw was also involved with two firms: Permindex and Centro Mondiale Commerciale (CMC), which had among its board of directors Nazi’s like George Mandel, Guiseppe Zigiotti and who was on friendly terms with Hjalmar Schacht, financer of Hitler’s Germany. Even if Shaw was innocent of conspiring to kill Kennedy, he was not a man without ‘dubious’ links and, once again, the CIA had to cover things up because ‘things might pertain to other things’.

FBI-director Hoover, who wanted to control “the CIA, said in 1948 that a Communist spy network had subverted the OSS. It would be a strange coincidence if a disillusioned Hoover had accidentally made such a remark after he had been unable to grasp control of the CIA. It seems he not only declined to co-operate with the CIA because he was disillusioned but also because he realized every co-operation opened the doors of the FBI to Soviet infiltration.

At the same time, journalist Drew Pearson dug into the secret in a few of his columns; the military, in charge of the cover-up because the CIA didn’t exist before 1947, bugged his phone and spied on him, calling him a “real troublemaker”.

Though it may seem as if this dirty secret could only harm the image of the CIA, reality is not so easy. Many oil companies co-operated in hiding them, just like other companies. Walter Dornberger, V2-head in Peenemunde, could get a job at Bell Helicopters; Werner von Braun landed with the NASA.

It seems this “cabal” who brought the Nazis to America united in the “Sovereign and Military Order of Malta”, though they aren’t the true Order of Malta, who has always denied any links to
The Order provided the Nazis with money and passport/ much like the Vatican did. Their membership list includes men such as Reinhard Gehlen, Joseph P. Kennedy, James J. Angleton and Allen Dulles. Pope John XXIII, the popular pope who shocked the Church on its very foundations, vehemently opposed the Order, also present within the corridors of the Vatican. Giovanni Montini, aka Paul VI, John XXIII’s successor, was ‘friends’ with the CIA, primarily because of his involvement with the Ratlines. Others were also part of the elite, but some, like Dulles and Hoover, also feared for their job and power, the former having lost just that. FBI Director Hoover could perhaps best be described as a lunatic and not too many people will argue with such a description unless they themselves have something to hide. Hoover had learned to hate the Kennedys, especially Robert. He even bragged he didn’t speak to Robert Kennedy during his final six months as Attorney General. Hoover had feared for his career with Truman, but the Kennedys had decided they would dismiss him when he reached his retirement age of 65. Hoover, always denying organized crime existed in the United States, was forced to concentrate most of his attention on these former Italian citizens, even being bypassed when Robert Kennedy set up his own organization to hunt down the major Mafia-figures. As if it wasn’t degrading enough, Kennedy also mingled with how the FBI treated the Communist Party of the United States and was best mates with a ‘Communist Negro’, Martin Luther King, a man Hoover hated even more than Robert Kennedy. Hoover had learnt about various threats of Mafia figures, hinting Kennedy was ‘wanted’ or even in immediate danger. Hoover stuffed those reports ‘safely’ away, not informing the Secret Service or the President. It is not clear whether these wiretaps were installed with or without the proper authorization. If they were authorized, Hoover is guilty of treason, failing to inform the proper authorities, the Secret Service and the President, of these threats. If they were illegal, you can interpret the law in such a way that he still had to report them. At the very least, he could have unofficially informed the President of such threats, if he really would have cared about the President’s health. After the assassination, Johnson needed Hoover to control the investigation of the assassination and other scandals in which he was involved; Hoover needed Johnson if he wanted to stay on as FBI-director. The ‘IOUs’, the way people had done business and played politics before the Kennedys, could, after Kennedy’s demise, be picked up again: back to the good old days. On November 25, 1963, there was a sudden reversal of Kennedy’s policy on VietNam. Kenneth O’Donnell, White House-aide, wrote that “the President’s order to reduce the American military personnel in VietNam by one thousand before the end of 1963 was still in effect the day he went to Texas. A few days after his death, during the morning, the order was quietly rescinded”. According to John Judge, his mother, who held a top position at the Pentagon, told him they would escalate the war in VietNam, a war that would last ten years and cost 57,000 lives. It seems Kennedy’s death released the reins of those officers who had sat still when Kennedy was calling the shots. On October 3, 1963, Arthur Krock wrote on the front page of the New York Times that “twice the CIA flatly refused to carry out the instructions from Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, brought from Washington, because the agency disagreed with it”. He likened the CIA’s growth “to a malignancy which the very high official was not sure even the White House could control... If the United States ever experiences an attempt at a coup to overthrow the Government it will come from the CIA. The agency represents a tremendous power and unaccountability to anyone”. After Kennedy’s death, freed from his ‘desires’, they could now, once again, more or less do
what they wanted to do. One author has claimed Johnson said “just get me elected and you can have your war”. With Johnson as the new president, America had, once again, a president who really didn’t care and didn’t care and want to know the ‘little’ details.

Even though VietNam was neither cause nor motive, except the possibility for future policy changes by the Kennedys, a ‘fear’ they tried to cash in just about a month before the President was assassinated, VietNam is the best example of how the elite pulled the assassination towards them.

The conspirators wanted to see an invasion launched against Cuba; most of them frankly didn’t care about VietNam except a few men like Trafficante, who were involved in both countries. But on the very fringe of this conspiracy, only involved because they knew and were linked to certain ‘core-conspirators’, where people who were members of the elite and who could simply, because they had power and influence, do what they wanted with it. The desired reward, Cuba, was not attained, but ‘the old guard’, the people Kennedy had bypassed in almost everything he did even though he sometimes asked them for advice, was now, after the assassination, once again free from the meddling Kennedy. And one of the first Kennedy ‘errors’ they corrected was his policy on VietNam.

This assassination, like the assassination of Roman Emperor Galba, was a “shocking crime done on the initiative of a few individuals, with the approval of a larger group and the passive approval of all citizens”, as Tacitus put it. Tacitus is certainly correct on the first two statements. And, I think, he is also correct on the third one. Perhaps the best example is that when the Warren Report came out, Jim Garrison believed the Commission’s conclusions. He didn’t doubt the men who controlled America, had faith in them; he had no reason to doubt their conclusions because he believed they were honorable men, just like they said they were. This is exactly what Tacitus meant: passively accepting the lie, therefore passively and unknowingly (should I say naively?) approving of what had happened: a political crime masked as a lone nut who shot the president for no reason.
CONCLUSION

“in the final analysis our most basic common link is that we all inhabit this planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children’s future. And we are all mortal.”

John F. Kennedy, June 1963

When President Kennedy visited Europe, the people considered him to be “the Wonder of the World”, “only he can save humanity”; his wife was “the Queen of the World”. Always more at ease abroad, in Europe, he told a Berlin crowd: “All free men, wherever they may live, are citizens of Berlin, and therefore, as a free man, I take pride in the words: Ich bin ein Berliner! I am a Berliner!” The crowd’s reaction was bigger and more emotional than any rock star or perhaps Jesus Christ in his days could ever have hoped for; they were ecstatic. But the many Americans were hysteric when the discussion turned towards the Kennedys.

America, as a people and nation, is relatively unfamiliar with the idea of ‘conspiracy’, a word that to this day seems to resonate like ‘paranoid’. Some, especially those who want to ridicule the idea of a conspiracy in any assassination, claim it is ridiculous to say all these plotters sat down and decided to do away with Kennedy. As if that was the only form of conspiring.

The word conspiracy can be translated from its Latin roots as “breathing together”, which is an accurate description of the word. Some people, not necessarily for the same reasons, believe or desire something has to be done: sometimes this action is legal, sometimes it is not... sometimes it is a conspiracy. Most often, a ‘conspiracy’ is a process in which a few or just one person decide to work together in trying to do achieve something. They will search for people who can help and whom they believe are willing to co-operate and they will find also others who, somehow, have learned what this small group of people is doing.

The Cuban CIA-contract agents and their friends killed the president after the conspiracy process was initiated when Marcello put out a contract on Kennedy’s head. The Cubans jumped on the opportunity, some CIA officials involved in the Cuban project decided to ‘help’ as well. When this foundation was laid, a group of people, opportunists, jumped onto this, hoping they might profit and benefit from the assassination. Among this group was a man like Hoover. He allowed Kennedy to be killed and thus granted immunity to the real culprits.

To those who really killed Kennedy, that group of CIA-officials, Cuban exiles and Mafia figures, the ‘anti-Castro-cabal’ that had been involved in the assassination attempts against Castro, the biggest revelation will be what Carry Miller wrote me about: “Although the outcome of the ongoing public quest for truth concerning the assassination remains in the area of uncertainty, the one revelation that will continue to emerge and stand out from all others connected to this tragedy is the CIA’s use of career criminals in carrying out its unethical agendas. Political assassinations, counterfeiting, money laundering, drug smuggling, rigging foreign elections and, of course, staging foreign government coup d’états had all been carried out by the CIA for so long that by the time the Agency met its first setbacks during the Kennedy administration, the fine but unsteady line dividing patriotic duty from criminal behavior, I suspect, all but disappeared for many CIA-officials. So conditioned were Agency covert operations to the criminal mentality by way of the very nature of their task and underworld associations, that, when Kennedy’s policies, in their eyes, were proving to be a stumbling block towards effective control of the communist menace, they dealt with the ‘Kennedy problem’ in the same way they
confronted ideological adversities -without mercy or remorse.

“Therefore, if and when the truth is wrestled out of our governing and bureaucratic bodies, the 
overriding rationale offered citizens to explain Kennedy’s murder will be ‘patriotic duty’. The 
public, of course, will not buy it but the lame exercise will serve as a graphic reminder as to how 
far U.S. Intelligence services, particularly the CIA, strayed from the very foundations of the 
democratic principles and processes governing the Western World.” As Truman himself, the man 
who had created the CIA, wrote in the Washington Post of December 23, 1963: “this quiet 
intelligence arm of the President has been so removed from its intended role that it is being inter-
preted as a symbol of sinister and mysterious intrigue and a subject for cold war enemy 
propaganda”.

Most Cuban exiles and mobsters were indeed fighting for their very survival, hated and feared 
the President because he and his brother seemed to block that road they wanted to move on. It 
seems Kennedy, though riding into office on their horse, found its saddle uncomfortable and 
pREFERRED a nice chair once inside the Oval Office. Kennedy no longer listened or gave them 
benefits, he even threatened to jail or extradite the mobsters. The Cuban exiles believed they 
would never see the old neighborhood in Cuba where they had grown up or lived before Castro 
came to power. They felt Kennedy had promised them they would and they believed he had 
broken his vows. Whatever they might think and even though Kennedy was not an angel as a 
man or president, he had EVERY right to try to eliminate and eradicate organized crime and 
close a law-breaking agency like the CIA.

Other people knew they had a president on hand who would do what he thought best and if you 
had another opinion and you told that opinion to him, he probably did exactly the opposite of 
what you believed would be the correct decision, even though you thought you were dead right. 
Kennedy, the reluctant politician, had no political complexes, a disease so many politicians 
suffered from. He had certainly many human weaknesses, but those weaknesses had little bearing 
on his political decisions. As soon as these weaknesses threatened to do just that, he made sure 
they couldn’t, even though he didn’t shrink from abusing his powers as president. The Mafia, 
who tried to use those weaknesses to influence his decision-making as a last resort in their battle 
with the Kennedys, failed miserably.

Kennedy’s advisors were just that; he had a mind of his own, a vision of his own, even though he 
had a vision for mankind and not a program to act out as president. He had no agenda as a 
president, he had a vision, a frame of mind that would help him in what he felt he had to do as a 
president. He didn’t, like so many presidents and heads of state, simply react to the situations that 
were brought to him, he pondered them and decided. He decided with a free and open mind, no 
longer a mind that thought in terms of East versus West or in any other stratification except that 
of reality. That kind of President had disappeared after the Cuban missile crisis, possibly after 
Marilyn Monroe’s death, a death that probably shook up both Kennedys, whether her death was a 
suicide, accidental murder or premeditated murder. Quite possibly. Kennedy’s physical torments 
that had been tormenting him since early childhood, probably gave him a maturity that was 
coupled with a young and especially flexible mind. Some Americans feared nothing good could 
come of this thinking; they preferred a thinking within the confines of traditionalist though 
patterns, like the Cold War vision: East versus West, Bad versus Evil, with God, ‘of course’, on 
America’s side. How could God possibly support those Soviet communists?
The Cuban Missile Crisis had brought East and West at the edge of World War Three and the only road that led away from the third world war was that the two leaders would have to talk; and they did. Apparently so thrilled, they continued to talk, resulting in the famous ‘red phones’ and the test ban treaty.

The Cold War mentality no longer reflected the situation of the 1960s. The three most important men in the World/ Kennedy, Pope John XXIII and Secretary General Khrushchev, made a step towards ‘global warming’, the end of this Cold War. The step was taken out of sheer necessity: when they first worked together, during the Cuban Missile Crisis, it was the only option except war, the total destruction of that world. This need ignited the ‘engine’ of peace talks, a step that was possibly about to be made in 1960 with Eisenhower.

Martin Luther King said there were two faces to John Kennedy: “one presided in the first two years under pressure of the uncertainty caused by his razor-thin margin of victory. In 1963, a new Kennedy had emerged. He had found that public opinion was not in a rigidly solid mold. He was, at his death, undergoing a transformation from a hesitant leader with unsure goals to a strong figure with deeply appealing objectives.” Nobody ‘in high places’ besides these three world leaders seemed willing or understood it was appropriate to take that step. In 1960, it seems reasonable to assume the U2-incident was somehow provoked, even though everyone knew that a U2 would eventually be downed by the Soviets. This time, in late 1962, early 1963, Pope John XXIII was stalled and possibly helped to death; Khrushchev, at the end of 1962, was already the target of a plot to oust him; he would fall two years later. Kennedy, the man who possibly inspired the two others, was slain as well.

Many people thought that Kennedy’s approach towards the Soviets was utter madness. These were the same people who, not too long ago and possibly at that very moment, couldn’t imagine ‘niggers’ might be blessed with anything more than nice teeth and a good health so that they could serve the rich whites. Though in practice Kennedy wasn’t that different from them, in theory he was very different and the problem with Kennedy was that he almost constantly informed the public of his visions of the future and, after having explained those visions, tried to mold the situations so that they could become as he had envisioned them: the civil rights program.

In hindsight, with the knowledge of the end of the Cold War in the 1980s, we truly see — and not simply hope because we want to see — that there were signs of the end of the Cold War in 1963. In the Cold War, it was not the USA versus the USSR, it was the East-bloc versus the West Bloc: if some country had trouble with upcoming socialist people, the West thought the Communist were advancing and started to take over the whole Western world. But Kennedy learned that such a Domino-theory was no longer a valid theory (if it had ever been one and not just the figment of a bad imagination) and he saw that there didn’t have to be such a bloc any longer: he dealt with the nations individually, not just with the entire ‘East Bloc’. Kennedy considered Cuba and VietNam as two nations, not two members of the East Bloc. As small a difference as that may be, it was one of the stimulating forces behind the end of the Cold War in the 1980s, when most nations of the East Bloc decided to cut themselves loose from the USSR. Kennedy started a foreign policy in which the outcome of the Cuban and VietNam-issue would only influence the relations with these two countries and NOT with the Soviet Union. Kennedy had abandoned the Cold War-mentality, domino theories and even the CIA, primarily because he knew the CIA was not up to its task and constantly showed, as if it was trying to prove, it was uncontrollable. Instead, Kennedy decided and acted on his own ideas, ideas that were being
forged at that very time: Kennedy was just learning what international politics looked like today and he acted in a way that was in correspondence with the current climate, with a real situation, not in a way that reflected the vested and outdated opinions of people who had come to power ten to thirty years earlier and whose opinions had never changed since.

There was that other ‘great institution’, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, whose director controlled American life, freedom of speech and the democratic system in such a way that he, in hindsight, can only be termed a dictator behind the scenes, a man who used his puppets to promote his pet and crank theories and ideas, ideas that predated the second world war, ideas that were formed at the end of the first world war, ideas that were helplessly outdated by 1963, yet continued to influence American society to its very core and thus stagnated America, in what it was in 1917: desperately afraid of the Communists and a possible communist revolt or invasion.

America’s vision of reality had stagnated in 1917, until a young President, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, at the end of 1962, together with Khrushchev, the man who was a product of this event in 1917, tried to change all that, tried to get rid of this fear that had scared American politicians ever since 1917. These men had been so afraid of the Great Bear that had risen in the streets of Saint Petersburg in 1917, that in 1963 they thought that Bear was still standing there in front of them, whereas that Bear had departed, even though they had tried their utmost best to bring it back after 1945. Apparently, they delighted in fear.

When the president was killed, they blamed an innocent man as Kennedy’s lone assassin. Though it was a deliberate frame-up, there is some truth to the notion that this way, America’s innocence was conserved and America’s illusions were protected: only a lone disgruntled boy could shoot this great president; how could a group of people ever consider that this president was a bad president? That would mean that for some people America didn’t correspond to the idea generally held in front of Americans and the world; America, the great, the beautiful, the best, with on top of all this good, America’s president. Though many realized this in no way corresponded to the truth, it apparently did feel good to project such a picture, perhaps hoping that it would thus becoming true. When assassination researchers criticized the Warren Commission, a lot of people didn’t want to hear there was something wrong with this Commission, because it would mean the honorable man might not be so honorable, but simply human. And could it really be America was just another country like so many others?

Whereas the ‘Castro-cabal’ killed Kennedy, it was exactly this CIA and the FBI, the ‘investigators’, along with a scared new president, that approved the crime, that didn’t hunt down the assassins or even try to. It forces us to ask that all-important question: what is the biggest crime: killing someone or failing, even though you are forced by laws, to search for the murderer? The latter means that they approved of what the former did and that certainly should and could not be the way in which a true democratic system of state operates.

When Garrison tried to find the assassins, he was targeted, not primarily because he tried to find the assassins, but because many realized that should he find something, he would destroy America’s image... or should it be dream? Aaron Kohn said he was “no longer interested in if he’s right... His (Garrison’s) course is a destructive one”. So the lie had to be protected.

If Kennedy was killed by a group of people with the goal of establishing a different form of government, even though Johnson was an elected official, that would mean America was worse than most other countries, that it was just like any other banana republic, John McCloy’s and a
lot of people’s worst-case scenario of what America could be. By covering up this fact, America became even worse than a few others banana-republics. The American government even tried its utmost best to cover up this justified criticism against the Warren Commission, depicting those authors as communists or anti-Americans, if ‘plain fool’ didn’t suffice to silence their tongues. America is not solemnly to blame for that: other countries also accepted the Commission’s version of the truth and still believe America is better than the rest of the countries and is NOT a banana-republic. The sad truth is that America was just that in 1963: a banana republic in which the highest official was killed by a group of people who disagreed with his visions and policy. Instead of doing it the democratic, American (?) way in the election of 1964 by trying to rally as many people as possible behind their cause or via the impeachment-procedure if Kennedy was really breaking laws, they realized that they were a minority and Kennedy would certainly be given the time, another four years, to continue to do what he felt best. To these people, that meant he continued to destroy what they had built up. And given another four years, he would probably be able to finish his quest, finish them off, they believed.

In Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar, where Caesar is ‘also’ killed by ‘honorable men’, Brutus explains his crime: “not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more”. To some among this group of people who killed or approved Kennedy’s murder, there are some who probably truly believed they saved America. As someone close to this group once said: “I think Kennedy was a great President, but he led this country in the wrong direction.” It is exactly this group that, like Hoover, were trapped in a mentality that had come to light before in 1917 when a New York Jew fled to Russia, changed his name into Trotsky and said he wanted to export the Communist revolt. And during World War Two they thought that ‘mad dictator’, Stalin, was so mad he would in some way harm the U.S.: he would but it was thanks to people like Dulles and Angleton. Stalin, through the KGB, hit America in a way that could have happened only because its opponent, America, was paralyzed by fear. The KGB, slow and often clumsy as it is, was dealing with reality; the CIA and FBI were paralyzed by fear and hunting daydreams, perhaps unable to face the real situation. Perhaps they could face the real situation, but Hoover was stubborn and a psychopath and Dulles and Angleton had to protect their own dirty secrets. And if the head of the FBI and the CIA say ‘no’, there aren’t many people, quite often not even the president, who can say ‘yes’.

These bureaucrats placed their own ego and person above that of America, destroying the latter in an effort to save the former. Truly in love with their country and themselves, two completely different things, they nevertheless combined, so afraid of communism because it might possible be able to harm their nation and their ideas, they masturbated with Hitler’s dictatorial regime and not only infected America with Nazis and war criminals, they also infected America with communist spies, a virus that has yet to break out. Most of them hopefully believed they were doing the best for their country; they were, in reality, destroying it. And they apparently didn’t understand they were destroying America by trying to depict it as beautiful and wonderful, without any flaws, after the Kennedy assassination. They only highlighted that American democracy was only a sham. Gaeton Fonzi, investigator for the Assassination Committee, said that “the conspiracy to kill the president of the United States was also a conspiracy against the democratic system and thus a conspiracy against you. I think you should get very angry about that.” John McCloy said that he thought the Constitution, what should be the cornerstone of civilization, was “just a piece of paper” to him. He proved his point by allowing Nazis to enter America, he proved it once again as a member of the Warren Commission, even though he
wanted to show America was not a banana-republic. McCloy was the first to know it was just that.

“The structure of civilization”, as Jonathan Vankin correctly notes, “itself requires mass adherence to have faith in the institutions that built civilization and make it run... it all comes down to a faith in authority”. Richard Helms, when testifying to one of the committees in the early 1970s, said that the American citizen, to a certain degree, had to believe he and others like him were doing their best for the good of the country. When Kennedy died and the cover-up started, the American public, really for the first time because nothing so grandiose had ever been covered up before (even though more grandiose secrets had been kept from them), realized their faith had been betrayed. That awakening not from a nightmare but to a nightmare is the core reason why the Kennedy assassination is still so popular and so controversial.

When Kennedy died, the world had to wait thirty years to see accomplished what could have been done during Kennedy’s presidency: the end of the Cold War, more or less facing reality. For this delay, we cannot solely blame the ‘anti-Castro cabal’, those who really shot the President; for this, we have to blame those who approved and in the end, like Tacitus had understood when his Emperor was killed, we all, every citizen of the world, are to blame for that. The Cold War prevented nations from trying to understand other nations, other cultures, other people. Above all, it prevented us to understand our own culture and our own nation, simply because we had nothing to compare it against and if we did, immediately assumed ours was superior anyway. And we all, every citizen of the Western and most of the Eastern world, believed America was somehow better. It was bigger, but not better.

When Kennedy died, it was a hope, only subconsciously present among most of the people, that died. Perhaps the loss of that hope, the grief created by it, made so many people consent with the assassins.

If they did it because they frankly didn’t care about Kennedy or the truth, it means it is not just a small cabal of people in high places that are the culprits. It is the entire nation that does not reflect the American democratic system. It means that the entire nation thought Kennedy was not leading America in the right direction, that they had elected the wrong official, that those who voted for him were wrong. Some, like Sam Giancana, certainly realized that they had been wrong. Giancana believed that the only way possible to correct his mistake was kill a man. It would have been correct to end Kennedy’s days as president, through the proper democratic corridors built for exactly these situations: when a president is elected and that president does not respond to the ideas of the electorate, that president can be impeached. Assassination, however, is not the same as impeaching that man. Kennedy cherished life more than he cherished the presidency, unlike most politicians.

In the concept of state, it is accepted as normal that the entire nation would give his life to protect that of the president, of the leader of that state. When that leader dies, it quite often means, in situations of war, that that nation dies alongside him. In this battle, a covert battle, a new kind of warfare invented by the CIA abroad and FBI at home, was fought between the forces of government and those who disagreed with that form of government. In a covert battled Kennedy, the head of state, was the first to die. The ‘covert action’, the CIA’s, the FBI’s and even the Kennedy’s pet method of action, has so drastically altered politics, at home and abroad, that this new way of warfare has changed the entire political scene.

Among those who have to give their lives for the president is every Secret Service agent who
goes to work knowing he might have to give his life for a man who embodies the idea of state, even though they don’t like him. When Kennedy was killed or just injured, it meant they had failed. A few of these agents, and one especially, Bill Greer, even took Kennedy’s life. The only Secret Service agent who really did react was Clint Hill, who was only added to the detail after Jacqueline had asked for him. During the reconstructions, nobody could perform Hill’s dash to the limousine as fast as he done. He was awarded a Treasury medal, a ceremony attended by Jacqueline. In 1975, he was interviewed for CBS’ 60 Minutes. Hill, unlike Greer and some other agents who left the investigative hearings with a smile on their faces, said that if he could only have run (even) faster, the President might still be alive. He told Mike Wallace he “felt guilty for not reacting faster”, even though that would be almost impossible for man and machine. Clint Hill broke down in tears.
EPILOGUE

The Kennedy assassination is more than just a few holes in the corpse of a dead president. The Warren Commission was a lie, even though they themselves were a victim of circumstances as both the FBI and CIA, their investigative organs, worked against, rather than with the Commission. The House Select Committee, and especially the Justice Department, failed to identify the culprits. Though they may have satisfied some researchers that finally, sixteen years after the assassination, there was an official verdict of “a possible conspiracy”, the Justice Department, under another staunch anti-Communist, Ronald Reagan, though most probably without him ever knowing what they were doing, a situation almost impossible should Kennedy have been president, disagreed with that Committee. To this day, Oswald is still considered to be the lone, unaided, insane assassin of President John Kennedy. Whether the real culprits, a cast that might include Oswald, are alive or dead, it doesn’t matter; eventually, to satisfy the American public, history will have to be rewritten anyway and perhaps it is easier to rewrite it when they are dead. That history has still not been rewritten perhaps indicates some of them might still be at large, out (t)here. It certainly means that some people within American society are still living inside a glorious fantasy and are unable to come to terms with the sad truth.

Even though many citizens accept there was a conspiracy, they reason that “Kennedy is dead anyway, and nothing can be done about it”. Psychologists term this feeling one of helplessness, feeling that no matter what you do, nothing will change. It is Mark Lane, the man who I term the first Warren Commission critic, who said that “democracy is not a spectator sport”. Yet, America was a spectacle. The American public believed its government and therefore let them do what they were doing; it was for the best of the country, wasn’t it? If America has gone the wrong way, the citizens are as much to blame for it as they blame the politicians: the citizens simply allowed the politicians to do whatever they thought needed to be done. Or, even worse, they believed they could change nothing while they hold the key, the right to vote, to change, or at least try to change, a situation, should they think it is wrong.

It took the American public Watergate and, in part, the VietNam-war, before they wanted to hear something was wrong with the United States and its leaders, including and perhaps foremost Kennedy. How could Watergate not? Today, the American public watches it government with Argus’ eyes, even screaming murder and rape before the victim has even invited her future murderer and rapist inside.

When the Warren Report was accepted as truth, Jack Ruby was among the few who saw a new era had dawned. And like all the others how didn’t perhaps see but were trying to look, he was cut short and not allowed to talk. The Warren Report was the first lie. It’s been said that the American public has been lied to before, but never Oft this large scale. As Dr. Charles Wilber expressed it: “a lie begets further lies... awareness of the devastating results of lying as official policy... No lie can be justified in terms of the end result. For, in the long run, an official lie begins a chain of further lies, so that when the truth finally surfaces, there is revealed a stinking morass of interlocking lies that cause long-term, if not permanent, damage to the government”. The most important message of this assassination should be that the truth, however ugly, has to be dealt with. Otherwise, you are not dealing with reality but with a fantasy, a fantasy that people begin to accept as the truth, thus creating an image of a world from within that unreality. When
decisions have to be made, using that fantasy as “true background”, it shouldn’t surprise many that these decisions don’t alter anything in actual (and ugly) reality. And some people wonder why their decisions don’t work.

The acceptance of the Report also made ‘repeat performances’ possible. In fact, between 1963 and 1983, there were six known attempts on presidents and presidential candidates. And all were lone nuts. It has led some people to ridicule America as a country full of nuts.

The identity of a nation requires knowledge about the history of that nation, like legends did within the ancient civilizations. The Commission’s ‘history-writing’, however, has become a false legend, even though it is written. Even though intelligent men like Dulles and McCloy fully realized what they were doing, they apparently didn’t have the intelligence to think about the consequences. How could these intelligent men be so naive as to think people would buy their theory? As soon as they heard about the Zapruder-film, they should have realized all their efforts would be in vain. But what did the FBI say about the Zapruder-film? They refused it because it “would not be of any evidentiary value”. How further away can one get from the real world?

The Commission, these seven men and their commander, Lyndon Johnson, should have realized that they would have become true honorable men if they would have exposed the truth, even if that meant they would implicate themselves to a small degree. But instead, trying to neglect the facts of the real world, they didn’t even know what was on that Zapruder-film; therefore, they didn’t know its importance, altered or not.

It seems the fear of being implicated caused such a strain on so many people and agencies that clear thinking and logic appears to have been an illusion to them. It is as if they were haunted by Kennedy’s ghost, who seemed to come back to the White House, not only in Johnson’s nightmares, but even haunting him in broad daylight, when he was informed about how the Warren Commission was progressing. It seems Johnson was not able to frighten Kennedy’s ghost out of the White House. He was not the only president who failed in that task.

It is as if they believed that anyone who would seek the truth was possessed by Kennedy’s soul and they attacked those men with an almost as intense vigor as they had done with Kennedy in Dealey Plaza. It was a silly and stupid attack, which could, would and did only backfire. It didn’t backfire with bullets, but they were casualties nevertheless. Politics is all about ego and Kennedy became a martyr, to some a Saint, even though he wasn’t. Those presidents who followed him all left with bruised egos. And I assume the list will grow.

Though many of these plotters will have rationalized their crime, perhaps quite correctly, that Kennedy was an illegitimate President because he had stolen the elections, his death, nevertheless, was against the law, even though that is “only a slip of paper”. It brought about an entirely new way of government. Though Kennedy’s government and way or policy-making were not the best there has ever been and will be, far from it, his tenure was the last in which a President wasn’t afraid of what might happen to him. Kennedy’s death set the example; before Kennedy, there was perhaps only Lincoln as ‘role model’, and he had been dead for such a long time, in what seemed to be such a different world.

Kennedy did the same dirty tricks other politicians did; but he did them without being afraid of what might backfire at him; perhaps he even did it with courage, without scruples. Whereas he should have been afraid of blackmail, he perhaps foolishly ignored such possibilities and continued on what he thought best. Those who killed Kennedy instilled such a fear in a President
and in politicians in general that some even made sure their vice presidents were such losers this ‘unseen hand’ would realize it was better that the President would be alive than dead. As Jack Ruby said: “If Adlai Stevenson would have been vice president instead of Lyndon Johnson, we wouldn’t have been sitting here.”

When politicians and especially presidents of a superpower work in an atmosphere of almost constant fear, it is no small wonder there actions aren’t what they could and should be. Whereas Kennedy’s bad decisions might be caused by inexperience or young age or any other reason, they were, quite often, quite courageous.

Only by officially exposing the culprits will politicians and future presidents be rid of the ‘mark of the beast’. As Robert Kennedy said on June 3, 1968, just before his death: “I now fully realize that only the powers of the Presidency will reveal the secrets of my brother’s death.” Will that courageous President please stand up? Or is he afraid he will follow Kennedy’s presidency perhaps too closely, i.e. die in office?

It is never too late for the truth to surface. But the longer it takes, the more filth and dirt will be dragged up when the truth does eventually surface. Apart from a dead president, we should also bear in mind those who were either murdered or committed suicide as a result of what they went through. They died for being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

For those who think this book exposes much dirt: when the truth will be officially accepted, as it eventually must have been, as history has learned us it will, whether it is Castro’s assassinations attempts or the Dreyfus-affair in France, agencies such as the CIA and FBI are going to report a lot more filth and dirt and will have to tear down the statues of men like Dulles and Hoover. In the public’s mind, these statues have long been torn down. The longer an injury is not taken care of, the more difficult it is to heal. Eventually, a permanent scar will remain; or a corpse.

Even though much of the presidents’ and politicians’ ‘garbage’ has been put on the front lawn of the White House, the collectors have still not come to collect it. All the while, it keeps stinking. Books such as these do expose the truth, but they only heighten the citizen’s suspicions and make the pile on the front-lawn only higher. Perhaps the man in the White House still believes the collectors will free him from the garbage and the smell. Once again, these ‘intelligent’ men are, I believe, too naive: the garbage cleaners are a part of the public, not of the establishment. It will be the owner of the House himself who will have to take away the garbage himself. A ‘Mea Culpa’ in name of many presidents and other bureaucrats will have to be heard before the American citizen can say ‘Amen’ and can finally close and accept what has happened... for good.

And the men who will most need this are the politicians themselves. Politics no longer are what they were: they have become an ugly and dishonorable profession, which seems to hold nothing in stall for you but people’s grudges. Faced with all this, many presidents did forget they were and are there, even though it wasn’t appreciated, to serve the people, not to serve themselves. The key to make this profession (more) honorable again sits with the politicians himself. And when they do expose the truth, they will be true honorable men, probably also in the eyes of the American citizen.

Politicians have to accept the death of Kennedy was not a simple homicide; it was a conspiracy; it is even a political act. It even smells like a “coup d’état” as the head of state was set aside by unlawful means. The U.S. government, of course, does not like to hear this and nor does it want to say Kennedy’s death was a political crime, a coup d’état. The longer they don’t, the longer they show they are the leaders of a banana -republic, dictators, a word that means ‘rulers without a legitimate basis to be head(s) of a nation’. Even to many Americans, they have already become
that. The American public is to blame for letting it get this far, but it will be their representatives, the politicians, who will have to accept that the only way to revive America in “America the beautiful” is by admitting there is such a thing as “America the ugly”. Hiding the head in the sand, trying to persuade yourself America IS beautiful only means you are postponing the moment when America will be truly beautiful. I am not pleading for an insurrection against the government, as that government has claimed against so many other researchers, I am pleading for an embracing of the government, America and, especially, America as it is defined by the Constitution, the true image of “America the beautiful”. Until the time arrives when this politician steps forward, one will have to paraphrase “I did not give you a spirit of fear, but I give you peace” as “I tried to give you a spirit of peace, but you got a spirit of fear”.

On November 22, the daughter of Supreme Court Justice Byron White asked her father: “Daddy, when are we going to be happy again?” Tom Wicker wrote in Esquire Magazine that “Americans look back upon the smudged image of Kennedy as to their own lost dreams. Kennedy is the most fascinating might-have-been in American history, not just for what he was in his time but for what we made of him-not because of what we were but because of what we thought we were and know now we’ll never be”. Perhaps that is why some Americans pray to Kennedy as if he was a Saint and why Cardinal Gushing’s eulogy compared him with Jesus Christ: “May the angels, dear Jack, lead you into Paradise... May the spirit of God embrace you, and mayest thou, with all those who made the supreme sacrifice of dying for others, receive eternal rest and peace. Amen.”

Let’s all hope Henry Miller’s prediction that “America is the very incarnation of doom. She will drag the whole world down to the bottomless pit” will not turn out to be truth. When America, and especially its government, stands up and faces Kennedy’s ghost, American politics will, at least in part, be rid of fear and anxiety. Only then will America be ‘The Brave’.
APPENDIX I

THE CONNALLY MYSTERY

November 22, 1963 will be remembered for the President Kennedy’s death. But another man, another politician sitting in front of the President, was also almost killed: Texas governor John Connally. According to Lady Bird’s press secretary, “it’s a terrible thing to say, but the salvation of Texas is that the governor was hit”. Lady Bird, Johnson’s wife, agreed. Ever since that Friday, people have wondered whether Connally was hit by accident or intentionally.

The Warren Report prophesied Connally was hit accidentally. The (false) conclusion of the Warren Report that Oswald was the president’s lone assassin, however, lacked a motive for Oswald: why would he want to assassinate a President he adored? Nobody had ever heard him say a bad word about his president.

The Commission was unable to dig up its most likely and perhaps even favorite theory that either the Soviet Union or, more likely, Cuba had instructed Oswald to assassinate Kennedy. They now had to resort to a ‘lone nut’ theory who was crazy, thus trying to explain Oswald’s lack of motive. It only proved the Commission’s stupidity: even though it is possible, it is hard to believe that a lone nut who had never been a crack rifleman would have shot three times, killing one, almost two people. The Commission’s purpose, to convince the public of Oswald’s lone guilt, had now become totally unconvincing.

The Commission might have constructed a much better motive had it listened to those who thought they knew Oswald. George Bouhe, a Soviet emigrant, said Oswald hated Connally because of his dishonorable discharge when he defected to the Soviet Union. Alexandra de Mo1threnschildt, Oswald’s best friend’s daughter, said Oswald hated Connally for some reason. Marina also agreed that her husband hated Connally. All of them said so to the Commission.

Believing Oswald had aimed at the presidential limousine, these people knew Oswald was very taken in by his dishonorable discharge. They believed that he wanted to take that rage out on the man who had been Secretary of the Navy at that time. John Connally. Captain Andy Kerr, an aide to Connally, even recalled that “Connally did may serious attention to Oswald’s letter” when it arrived, even though Oswald was not privy to Kerr’s information.

On September 25, 1963, one ‘Harvey Oswald’ even went to Austin, where he visited the Selective Service and wanted to speak to John Connally about his discharge. ‘Oswald’ claimed he was registered in Miami, but lived in Fort Worth.

Even though Oswald did not shoot at Connally, this theory would have saved the Commission some unnecessary headaches.

So why did the Commission not accept this scenario? The only two logical reasons seem to be that they didn’t think of it or that they didn’t want to conclude a president had died accidentally by the hands of a lone assassin who ‘only’ wanted to kill a governor who, while Secretary of the Navy, had changed his discharge from honorable to dishonorable.

There is also a ‘clue’ that Connally was intentionally hit by someone named ‘H.L. Lee’. On October 4, attorney Car-roll Jarnagin visited the Carousel Club and overheard Jack Ruby talking to a man whose name he didn’t hear, but who told Ruby to call him ‘H.L. Lee’. Lee “just go in from New Orleans”, having “hitchhiked” all the way. They talked about some job and Ruby told
Lee he would “get the money after the job is done”. Lee said he was a “Marine sharpshooter” and asked where he could do the job. He thought it was “too risky” doing it from the roof of some building and preferred doing it from a window. He asked what Ruby had against the governor and Ruby told him he “won’t work with us on paroles. The boys in Chicago have no place to go, no place to operate... Cuba is closed... Everything is dead... If we can open this state...” Ruby told him the “Attorney General... now there’s a guy the boys would like to get, but it’s no use... He stays in Washington too much”. Afraid he might not be able to escape “through the backdoor”, Ruby said “they’ll think some crackpot or communist did it, and it will be written off as an unsolved crime”. Lee thought there was only one building suitable... ”the school book depository”. Somebody’s name was called and Ruby said “he’s from the FBI”; Lee left quickly.

The very next day, Jarnagin reported that conversation to the authorities but to no avail. In February, Jarnagin talked to Wade, but thought the story didn’t ring true in some places; that they wouldn’t shoot the governor but the D.A. if they had trouble with paroles. It apparently never entered Wade’s mind that it could be that, if it really occurred, Ruby told ‘Lee’ some ‘bogus-reason’ and not the real reason why they wanted to get rid of the governor. Jarnagin said he was later shot in his leg with a drug pellet, apparently containing a strong dosis of amphetamines, hospitalizing him for three months. Jarnagin believed he was ‘harassed’ because of what he knew.

In Texas, a lot of people still believe Connally was the real target of the assassin, even though it is not clear whether they identify the assassin as Oswald or as a group of conspirators.

Oswald, however, was not alone in disliking Connally. Jackie Kennedy, like quite a few other women, disliked Connally for some reason. He irritated Jackie because he was “saying all those great things about himself”. Connally not only had a superior air about him, but also seems to have been a constant actor, never showing the real man behind the politician. If Connally was shot at on purpose, others, the conspirators, must have had a reason to dislike him as well. The reason why ‘they’ wanted to kill Connally is very much open to speculation.

When he arrived in Trauma Room Two of Parkland Memorial, the medical staff’s first impression was that he had been hit by two bullets. They diagnosed a wound in the back, a collapsed lung caused by rib shards that had come loose when the bullet hit his fifth rib and a sucking chest wound that had closed itself when Connally had fallen into the lap of his wife, Nellie. The same bullet had missed the heart by one inch. Connally’s wrist was badly damaged and, in similar cases, the doctors in the past had had to resort to amputation. Connally’s wrist eventually healed. Furthermore, Connally also had a thighwound. Connally might have died if he, by sheer luck, hadn’t closed the chest wound. Arriving in Parkland, however, it was clear that he would survive, even though a few nurses held other opinions and informed Nellie he would probably die.

If it was the intention of the assassins only to injure Connally, they did a fine job. Because Connally had been wounded in that fatal crossfire, his bullet was described as ‘a silver bullet’, meaning that future elections were no problem any longer: Connally had an immense popularity.

Connally, however, would probably have died if he hadn’t been moving around in the car, trying to get a glimpse of the president who was sitting right behind him. His movements probably saved him from a bullet that would have gone right through his heart. Some have speculated that they wanted to get rid of Connally like they got rid of Oswald two days later: they somehow
knew, or at least could know, more and wanted to shut them up... for good. Connally was deeply involved with the planning of the motorcade-route and was best friends with oilmen like Clint Murchison, who was Sid Richardson’s, Connally’s former boss, best friend. Whether all this would be reason enough to implicate him as a conspirator, I don’t know. It certainly seems to be no reason to assassinate him.

Another reason might be the same reason for Kennedy’s’ death. The night before, Kennedy had told Jackie that Connally was trying to show he was independent and that he therefore aligned with all those ‘Republican fat cats’. If Connally, like Kennedy, was going to become an uncontrollable politician in an important state such as Texas, the plotters who lived or even had been born in Texas might have decided to get rid of two ‘independents’ at once. However, Connally always had been close to the Republicans and, in later life, would become a true Republican, joining forces with President Nixon. Connally’s move towards the Republicans might just have been a stage in him changing political parties.

The most ardent rumor is that the Mafia wanted to get into the Texas and Louisiana oil business, getting percentages from oil barons’ income. It seems Connally didn’t allow them to get in, keeping all the profits for the barons; he thus closed a rich source of income for these powerful organized criminals. Both groups, the oilmen and the Mafia, were in some way involved in the assassination-conspiracy and it could be that the Mafia wanted more out of this conspiracy than the other partners, including the Cubans and some CIA-agents, did. To the Mafia, getting rid of Connally meant an open avenue to more money, more money than they had lost because of Robert Kennedy’s witch hunt against them. The Mafia seems to be too business-minded not pursue this possibility. It only meant aiming your rifle at a slightly different angle. You even had an excuse for your crime: you just missed the President.

Another good reason seems to be the realization of the plotters that Connally was also Johnson’s best friend. It does not seem farfetched to speculate that killing him was a clear signal to the next President, one that Johnson could not fail to notice: they would get him as well, like Kennedy, if he didn’t ‘behave’. And to show it that they meant business, they injured or wanted to kill his best and lifelong friend.

No researcher believes the plot to assassinate Kennedy resulted from an original plot to assassinate Connally. But it does seem very likely that it did happen the other way around. Probably unfortunately to them, their second stage of their plot failed. Or did it succeed?
APPENDIX 2

WOMEN IN HISTORY

“When I used to read fairy tales, I fancied that kind of thing never happened, and now here I am in the middle of one.”

*Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland*

The Secret Service, unable to protect the President, tried to protect the wife of the alleged assassins and put her in a motel outside Dallas. The motel was owned by the Great SouthWest Corporation, a joint venture of the Rockefellers and the Wynne family. The motel manager, James Herbert Martin, at that time under federal investigation regarding government funds, switched jobs and became Marina’s manager. One of her attorneys was William McKenzie, once a partner of Bedford Wynne, friends of the Murchisons, in the Wynne-McKenzie law firm. One of McKenzie’s current partners was Pete White, whose onetime client in 1954 was Jack Ruby. Another partner was Ivan Irwin, Sr., who had been a partner in a law firm that was identified by Ruby’s friend Paul Roland Jones as a conduit for Mafia bribes.

Fred Harvey, working for the INS in their New York-office, flew over to Dallas and told Marina that “if you want to live in this country, you will have to help”. She was told that if she did not, she would have to return to the Soviet Union and Marina was not looking forward to going back to the Soviet Union with her two little children. Marina apparently felt the FBI and Secret Service were using ‘Soviet KGB-techniques’ to repress people from speaking out.

Life Magazine’s Dallas representative was one Isaac Don Levine, also a CIA-employee, who immediately offered Marina USD 25,000 for a book about her life and experiences. The money apparently came from Meredith Press, but it was arranged by Levine and Life’s owner, C.D. Jackson.

Earlier, Life had been able to buy the famous Zapruder-film which, together with Marina’s possible revelations, could have shattered the ‘dreams’ of the Warren Commission. Zapruder’s lawyer was Sam Passman, from Passman and Jones law firm. His partner, Shannon Jones, had been with the CIA in Texas, had worked with the OSS in World War II and was also a lawyer for Joseph Civello, Marcello’s assistant in Texas.

Drew Pearson said that “Life Magazine is always pulling chestnuts out of the fire for the CIA”. In the spring of 1964, Harper and Row would publish Marina’s biography, co-authored by Priscilla McMillan-Johnson, who had during the summer and fall with a still heavily guarded/protected Marina. In early September, her entourage hoped the book would be finished by December. Nothing happened, even though Marina, in 1968, four years later, said it would be finished soon. Nothing happened once again, even though coauthor Priscilla Johnson wrote a few essays about Oswald in the early seventies, revealing that U.S. leader were NOT killed or shot because of their controversial policies, a clear indication of what Johnson thought about a possible conspiracy. Her book, she said, would deal with Oswald and his motives, an issue never been tackled, not even by the Commission. Johnson hadn’t mastered the notion that the Commission believed Oswald was mentally deranged at that moment and had no motive. She felt it was “easier to seek conspiracies outside than to look to the Oswald within each one of us”.


Though true, she apparently was unable to find such a conspiracy. In the fall of 1977, MARINA AND LEE was finally published after thirteen years of awaiting and thirteen years in which Marina could not speak out, even though she wasn’t eager to. The book contains such rubbish psychology like “Oswald’s willingness to risk killing Mrs. Kennedy while aiming at her husband was an example of the “unconscious matricidal wish” showing through. Apparently, Oswald had commented to Johnson that concerning his defection, he “would like to give my side of the story—I would like to give people in the United States something to think about”. Johnson abused that quote out of context, making it sound as if Oswald was speaking in general terms or even related to the assassination. She commented that “in retrospect, that is an important remark. It may have more bearing on his motives in the assassination”.

TIME’S reviewer Patricia Blake felt the book was the “first plausible explanation for Oswald’s assassination of John F. Kennedy”. Marina herself commented that the book was “a big disappointment, appearing much too late to be a big seller”.

On November 25, Lee Harvey Oswald was buried in a cemetery that would accept him; the Rose Hill Burial Park in Fort Worth. Three ministers refused to conduct the service. A Lutheran clergyman had promised but didn’t appear. A Fort Worth minister, Rev. Louis Saunders, who came as a spectator, agreed to conduct a small service; attending newsmen volunteered as pallbearers. Before Oswald was buried, the coffin was opened and Marina slipped her wedding ring on her dead husband’s finger.

Marina reflects she “once testified that I looked in his eyes and I saw he was guilty. It seems very different now. I think back, and I realize that the look in his eyes was scared. I didn’t realize how they led me... I didn’t know you aren’t supposed to lead a witness... the Warren Commission used me... I buried him. I was introduced as a witness and I became his executioner”. She “didn’t want to harm him, let’s put it that way. A wife has to protect her husband. Even in death.” Marina said she had grown “suspicious of everything and everybody”. “I discovered things about Lee after his death. I did not know that much at all before.” Marina had heard a Russian artist on TV who said that people usually deserve the type of government they have. “And you know, that kind of makes sense to me... What pains me the most is such beautiful people -the majority of them-in this country, and they’re so betrayed... But just by a few”.

When June Lee, their eldest child, was in the second grade and her class was studying U.S. Presidents, June was asked to go across the hall to another room when they studied Kennedy. Marina remarried in June 1965 with Kenneth Jess Porter; they had a son, Mark. Both her daughters, to this day, do not use the name “Oswald” because it is so “stigmatized”. Though not ardent attackers of the Warren Report, they nevertheless do want to see ‘better evidence’ against their slain father.

Even though Marguerite Oswald, Lee’s mother, had a tale to tell as well, nobody would ever publish her book before her death in 1981. She felt her son “acted on official orders” and that her “son and the Secret Service were all involved in a mercy killing for national security... Lee was a hero doing a very difficult job. Then he was double-crossed and killed on cue by Jack Ruby”. Before she died, she told nurses that “now I’ll never have the chance to write that book and prove Lee was double-crossed. I hope he will understand. Now everybody has let him down”. She was buried next to her slain son, Lee.
Robert, Lee’s brother, believes to this day his brother acted alone.

Jacqueline Kennedy, the other widow, grieved over her dead husband. Though she knew about most of his escapades and had probably long accepted them, it didn’t mean they didn’t love each other. Left with not much money, considering her spending habits, she apparently fell in love with an even bigger flirt than John Kennedy, Aristotle Onassis, a man who, during John’s presidency, was not exactly a dear friend of Robert Kennedy, but nevertheless quite often visible around the family.

Judith Exner, Kennedy’s one time mistress, got a telephone call from her mother who asked her to switch on the TV, where news of her lover’s death was continuously broadcasted. Exner said she cried for days on end, drinking to forget the pain. “I really loved that man”.

Each in their own way loved a man who was killed for a reason they perhaps will never be able to understand when that reason will be compared against their love for their husbands, fathers or lovers. They have to learn to realize that some people can hate more than love.
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