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AHR Forum
JFK and the Culture of Violence

MARCUS RASKIN

THE FILM *JFK*, BY OLIVER STONE and his colleagues, has had an extraordinary effect on the public consciousness. In a few months' time, the film has generated concrete political actions that never would have occurred had the film not been made or had it not struck the chord of reevaluation that comes at the end of a war/Cold War period. *JFK* seems destined to lead to the opening of the hundreds of thousands of papers collected by the House Select Committee on Assassinations and the Warren Commission but now under seal. (Perhaps this time, the government will even index the papers and hearings, something that neither the House Committee nor the Warren Commission did.) The reason for the film's effect is that it is powerful cinematically. Contrary to what some would like to believe, it is surprisingly accurate. On the complex question of the Kennedy assassination itself, the film holds its own against the Warren Commission. The speculations that various characters spout are too broad brush. Even so, the seeds of further inquiry are planted.

As a work of art, *JFK* succeeds because it confronts powerful emotions and political truths that are as age-old as Homer and Sophocles. It does no good to pick apart the rendering of an event by an artist. His or her purpose is not the particular but the general. It is to take an event and see within it a series of truths, some felt, some unconsciously understood and hardly articulated, that make sense and meaning of an event, its cause, and its implications. Indeed, artists-dramatists dare to present through a book, drama, painting, or film the structure and moral character of an entire age, which necessarily includes its agonies and foibles. Some of these explanations are tendentious, silly, paranoid, vengeful, scapegoat-oriented, and sheer lies. But *JFK* cannot be dismissed this way, for it is not a lie. It is a myth of heroic dramatic proportions that "is true" precisely because it has happened so many times that it must be retold again and again to explore the dimensions and varieties of its truth."¹

The Report of the Warren Commission had a different purpose. It was ostensibly concerned with facts, although that concern was secondary to using the language and structure of conservative authority to move the nation from dis-ease to ease about the events of the Kennedy assassination. Stone's *JFK* has a filmic political objective in the literary genre of Theodore Dreiser: to be disruptive

¹ Richard McKeon on Thomas Mann, *Thought, Action, and Passion* (Chicago, 1954), 226.

ostensibly for the purpose of getting at the truth of the American government. Still in literary terms, the Warren Commission's political purpose was closer to that of Herman Wouk's establishmentarian novels. The commission's final report was intended to soothe those who had doubts. This connection is noted by Kai Bird in *The Chairman*, his new book on John J. McCloy, the distinguished establishmentarian who was a member of the Warren Commission. McCloy stated that the commission had to be unanimous even though three of the members who held elective office, Richard Russell, Hale Boggs, and John Sherman Cooper, had grave doubts about the single bullet theory and the notion that there was no conspiracy. These doubts were also pointed out by Edward Jay Epstein in his early book on the Kennedy assassination, *Inquest*. McCloy believed that it was time to assuage the nation, let the dust settle over the dastardly events and move forward. Thus he wrote language, carefully crafted indeed, that would allow healing and soothing to work itself into the body politic, and would rally all members of the commission to sign on, their doubts notwithstanding.² It is not difficult to understand why the commission sought to quiet people's questions, however misplaced its intentions seem today.

The assassination occurred approximately one year after the Cuban missile crisis, a period in which people had been treated to the strong possibility of nuclear war. It seemed a continuing imminent threat. Kennedy's assassination added greatly to fears of instability and world crisis, and doubts about the character of American governance spread immediately to Europe. As Harrison Salisbury of the *New York Times* stated in his introduction to an edition of the Warren Commission report to which he, Anthony Lewis, Tom Wicker, and James Reston (all of the *Times*) contributed, "Not infrequently (such) groups (the 'Who Killed Kennedy committee' which included Bertrand Russell, Lord Boyd-Orr, Sir Compton Mackenzie, J. B. Priestley, Professor Hugh Trevor-Roper, Kingsley Martin and Michael Foot) . . . compare the Kennedy killing to the Dreyfus affair—the inference being that the whole weight of authority of the American Establishment—Government, Big Business, the Power Structure of Society—has been placed behind a campaign to rest the blame on a single (presumably innocent) man."³

FOR AN ENTIRE GENERATION, the scar over the healing process of forgetfulness about the Kennedy assassination hid a festering sore of doubt. This sore on the body politic spread as a result of the Indochina war, secret wars from Angola to Cambodia, assassination plots the United States participated in or initiated, the CIA's involvement in the sale and growth of heroin and opium as well as its experimentation with LSD on unwitting subjects, the use of covert agents and assets to intervene directly in the American political process, FBI illegal wiretaps and black-bag jobs, bribes to foreign leaders, and harassment of black minorities.

² Kai Bird, *The Chairman* (New York, 1992); Edward Jay Epstein, *Inquest: The Warren Commission and the Establishment of Truth*, Richard H. Rovere, intro. (New York, 1966).

³ United States Warren Commission, *Report of the Warren Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy*, Harrison E. Salisbury, intro. (New York, 1964), xxv.

Many of these governmental activities were hidden behind the veil of secrecy and loyalty oaths, which warded off independent scholars, politicians, or mere citizens from looking too carefully at how the national security state actually operated. National security leaders used half-truths, lies, and plausible deniability in order to mask the real state of affairs. And then there were the doubts raised by the Warren Commission itself.

The proofs the commission offered grew more dubious with the passage of time. There was a single bullet that supposedly passed through Kennedy and Governor John Connally. Discovered on Connally's stretcher at Parkland Hospital, it was virtually pristine, an incredible possibility given what it had struck. The commission relied on the FBI and CIA. It had no way of independently verifying what these agencies told it. What has come to be known about these agencies since that time has only increased doubts about the commission's findings, which seemed designed to protect covert activities such as gun running to Cuba and CIA involvement with gangsters.

Nor did the commission follow what is called the best evidence rule in reconstructing the assassination. To do so, it would have had to replicate as closely as possible the conditions of that day to see whether another marksman could have successfully hit a moving target in the position the president was seated. The FBI made clear that they tested a rifle that did not replicate the one fired under the conditions of November 22.⁴ Thus, as I have argued elsewhere, "The Commission now credits Oswald with doing extraordinary things without showing that one man could do them."⁵ The president's commission should have reconstructed the events by having an ex-marine of Lee Harvey Oswald's approximate background, physical size, and marksman ability see whether he could re-create Oswald's alleged feat of marksmanship. The commission might then have asked the ex-marine to perform within a 43-minute period Oswald's supposed subsequent activities. Between 12:33 and 1:16 p.m., Oswald is alleged to have shot the president and Governor Connally, left the School Book Depository (from the sixth floor), taken a "7 block walk on Elm Street, a bus ride toward the area he had just left, another walk to his rooming house where he spent 3 or 4 minutes, a pause at a bus stop for an unspecified length of time, a walk almost a mile long to the intersection at East 10th Street and Patton Avenue, and at last, the confrontation and murder of Officer Tippit."⁶ If the best evidence rule was not followed, neither was anything like the falsifiability program for testing scientific hypotheses used to prove Oswald the lone assassin.

A generation grown to maturity in the 1960s later took it for granted that governments would and did lie. In the Cold War period, it did not take a feverish mind or great logicians such as Bertrand Russell to conclude that there was something rotten in the United States. But this conclusion did not come easy. Generations of journalists and academics had been educated in institutions of higher learning to the Platonic idea of golden lies, which guardians of the state

⁴ Testimony by FBI agent Lyndal L. Shaneyfelt, Warren Commission Hearings, vol. 5, 146.

⁵ Marcus Raskin, *Yale Law Journal*, 76 (1967): 567.

⁶ Mark Lane, *Rush to Judgment: A Critique of the Warren Commission's Inquiry into the Murders of President John F. Kennedy, Officer J. D. Tippit, and Lee Harvey Oswald*, Hugh Trevor-Roper, intro. (New York, 1966), quoted in Marcus Raskin, review, *Yale Law Journal*, 76 (1967): 568.

had an obligation to tell the lesser classes. The public was to be "educated" with "sanitized" stories about reality; it was a beast to be manipulated. From J. B. Watson to Walter Lippmann to Harold Lasswell, advertising, symbol manipulation, and propaganda were assumed to be necessary attributes to governing and consuming in a mass society. Organization men and experts were socialized to interpret the world to laymen according to a preexisting framework that denied the possibility of a "free gaze" regarding evidence. The Warren Commission's bright young staff of lawyers were no match for its putative investigative arms, the CIA and FBI. Indeed, the idea of deeply questioning these organizations did not cross their intellectual radar screen, nor could they do so as long as Allen Dulles, the former head of the CIA, was on the commission. He had been fired by President Kennedy for the Bay of Pigs fiasco. In the aftermath of the Bay of Pigs, Howard Hunt became an adviser to Dulles for the purpose of defending Dulles and CIA covert operators against the New Frontiersmen, especially Robert Kennedy and Maxwell Taylor, charged by the president with assuring that such a failure would never occur again.

The war in Indochina shattered the secret establishmentarian/conventionalist way of doing business. Those directly victimized by that conflict began wondering about the character of the American government. Some came to believe that if John Kennedy had lived and had won a second term, the politics of America would have been much different and the nation would not have passed through the Indochina agony. Thus *JFK* seems to be the revenge of Oliver Stone's generation. In Freudian terms, for Stone President Kennedy is transformed into an imago who would have warded off the evil and difficulties his generation and others passed through. Stone uses his imago, Kennedy, and his dramatic instrument, Garrison, to speak to the next generation, one that knows little American history. It receives its moral, political, and historical understanding about the past through images. Thus *JFK* is potential dynamite—a 40 million-dollar Hollywood version of a samizdat—for it has shaken a carefully constructed *Weltanschauung* that sought to teach the lesson that accidents and random events are more important in the processes of social, economic, and political life than structures and organization. *JFK* is meant to use the assassination to force an audience to decide whether it wants to ground the American political process in the post-Cold War era with the same structures and habits of mind that governed it during the Cold War. Should, for example, we continue to have secrecy in government obscuring our understanding through the opaque shield of state security?

SECRETS, OF COURSE, GIVE RISE TO PARANOIA, for they leave people feeling incomplete and used. To fatalists, the world may be nothing more than a series of random events and accidents, but most people crave a coherent explanation of why the events that shape their destiny occur. Indeed, this is a psychological function of history. Without this grounding, a person feels uneasy and unable to shape at least part of his or her destiny. Historians attempt to trace causes, people,

and events that come together. And so it is with political matters. It is true that many events in a person's life, as well as great historical events, appear to be accidental or random; they seem to have no explanation. Nevertheless, if one looks closely, rejecting the culture of violence and secrecy, an explanation and a cause may be found.

There is nothing random about an assassination nor is there much that is random about a state murder. It takes planning, steely nerves, killing ability, and a motive. It will almost always involve more than one person. Those who think that groups of people do not get together to bring about a particular result are surely out of touch with reality. People, and especially governments, act with will and intention. That their means may be illegal, even criminal, or that they may fail in their objective, does not change the irreducible fact that government officials get together to bring about a particular result. Indeed, this is what a conspiracy is when a criminal purpose is added to the definition.

Conspiracy is an activity that can be carried on by governments or by members within governments who are on a frolic or who are rogues. And, as numerous prosecutions by the state have shown, conspiracies are also carried out by some citizens. It is absurd to argue that conspiracies do not exist or that will and intention have given way to Gidean gratuitous acts that have no intention or explanation by the performer of the deed, the victim, or others examining the act. Thus it is far better and more accurate to begin from the assumption that conspiracies are common, especially in politics. As I have suggested, their objectives are criminal or illegal in either execution and result or both. This is why the Report of the Warren Commission, like most government documents, should be read from the recommendations through to the body, for, in the conclusions, the reader may begin to assess what is really bothering the writers: "The Commission believes that both the FBI and the Secret Service have too narrowly construed their respective responsibilities. The Commission has the impression that too much emphasis is placed by both on the investigation of specific threats by individuals and not enough on dangers from other sources."⁷

During the Cold War, governmental conspiracies violated international law or comity. For example, the attempt by the Kennedy administration to assassinate Castro and destabilize the Cuban economy, or to hire well-known criminals to kill Castro, was surely a criminal project. A prosecutor would have had little trouble bringing an indictment for criminal conspiracy. In whatever category we wish to place Operation Mongoose, we now know that a group of men did get together over a relatively long period within the American government to plot Castro's downfall. To Castro, this could have been understood as a conspiracy and an act of war. From the point of view of those committed to getting rid of the Cuban bone in the throat of American presidents, Operation Mongoose and the attempted assassination of Castro might have been understood as the height of good government and an effective use of American power.⁸ It should hardly

⁷ *Report of the Warren Commission*, 434-35.

⁸ Note how the same style continues. In February of 1992, the present head of the CIA was in the Middle East attempting to find ways of deposing and assassinating Saddam Hussein. A few years ago,

come as a surprise that real personal consequences might have followed for President Kennedy or his brother, Attorney General Robert Kennedy. Indeed, in a Senate Intelligence Committee report of 1975, former Senator Richard Schweiker concluded that pro-Castro Cubans killed Kennedy because of the attempts made on Castro's life. Castro continues to deny the charge and genuflects before Kennedy's memory.

The idea of Soviet involvement in the assassination, a fear that President Johnson expressed, was dissolved by the Warren Commission and Soviet KGB agents who later defected to the United States. No one wanted the assassination of a president to become a *casus belli* for nuclear war, least of all the establishments of the Soviet Union and the United States. Increasing its hold on the popular consciousness, however, is the story that the Kennedy assassination was a classic state murder to be analyzed by means of the "who benefits?" platitude of vulgar political science. *JFK* posits a massive conspiracy within the government and outside of it. The conspirators worked together to assassinate the president. The film insinuates that Johnson had criminal knowledge of what would happen to Kennedy if he visited Dallas and, furthermore, claims that Johnson paid off members of the military-industrial complex with a war in Indochina. Two other possible conspiracies are presented but given less weight, namely that an anti-Castro group killed Kennedy or that a Mafia group killed him. Indeed, the House Committee that investigated the assassination of President Kennedy gave credence to the idea that organized crime was involved in his assassination. Apparently, there are illegal wiretaps that support this theory. Robert Kennedy's Justice Department had carried on a campaign against organized crime with the president's blessing. The Teamsters, especially Jimmy Hoffa, hated the Kennedys. Hoffa believed that the Kennedy campaign had unleashed a vendetta against the Teamsters as a way to get to the White House. Hoffa and organized crime had ample reason to get even. Jack Ruby had numerous connections to the Mob that were not adequately explored at the time, according to a number of analysts of the Warren Commission report, including David Scheim in *Contract on America*. With many others (starting with Penn Jones and including Oliver Stone), Scheim points out that the inordinate number of witnesses who were murdered or died in suspicious circumstances are classic examples of Mafia involvement.⁹ Of course, a murder caused by organized crime may show the integral connections between crime and politics, but it does not rise to proportions that would cause fear and dread about the political system itself.

THE THEORY I PRESENTED IN A *Yale Law Journal* review of Mark Lane's important book, *Rush to Judgment*, embraced the idea of a possible conspiracy initiated by a group of anti-Castro Cubans who had been assets of the CIA but who had slipped

the government claimed that the Libyans had sent terrorist gangs to kill President Reagan, and in April 1986 Reagan sought to assassinate Muammar Qadhafi through massive bombing of his bunker.
⁹ David E. Scheim, *Contract on America: The Mafia Murders of John and Robert Kennedy* (Silver Spring, Md., 1983), chap. 3, p. 50 and following.

out of the CIA's control. In 1963, the Cuban exile community harbored great anger against President Kennedy. Various groups unauthorized by the CIA had been picked up and stopped from carrying out covert activities against Cuba. They had continued raids after the short-lived *détente* that developed between the United States and the Soviets after the Cuban missile crisis.¹⁰ And the CIA was very much involved with the Cuban exile community. Its largest station was in Miami in 1963, and it supported a wide variety of groups with weapons, money, and "technical assistance." There was, however, a political process of "simulopts" that was followed during the Kennedy administration. Simultaneous and contradictory policy options were pursued in order to see which would bear fruit. On the same day, November 22, 1963, that President Kennedy sent a message through the French journalist Jean Daniel to Castro that the United States wanted peace with Cuba, the CIA's Desmond Fitzgerald was negotiating in Paris with an assassin about killing Castro with a poison-tipped pen.

It was taken for granted in the CIA and Cuban exile community that a *démarche* had occurred in American policy the year before, after the Cuban missile crisis of October–November 1962. This change in fundamental policy split the CIA, for there were many such as Howard Hunt, a very active operative, who felt that Kennedy had sold out the Cuban exile movement and its attempt to destroy the Castro government at the Bay of Pigs and thereafter. He hated the New Frontiersmen who, he thought, were besmirching the good name of Allen Dulles and the CIA. Moreover, Kennedy's June 10, 1963, speech at American University called for an end to the Cold War as well as general and complete disarmament. After the speech, and within a month, the United States, through Averell Harriman and Carl Kaysen, signed an agreement to ban nuclear testing in the atmosphere, in space, and under water. In order to obtain support from the Joint Chiefs, Kennedy found himself having to agree to a hugely expanded underground nuclear testing program. This was also the only way that Kennedy was able to secure the support of both conservatives and national security liberals in the Senate such as Everett Dirksen and Henry Jackson.

In assessing Kennedy's record on national security and the effect it might or might not have had on his own assassination, it is important to remember that he signed his name to budgets and doctrines that caused the defense budget to jump within two and a half years from 39.5 billion dollars to approximately 52 billion. Former President Eisenhower complained bitterly about this increase and stated publicly that the Kennedy budget was wasteful, having virtually nothing to do with defense. In 1960, however, Kennedy had campaigned on the idea of flexible response and closing the missile gap. Of course, the missile gap of the early 1960s turned out to be the opposite of what was believed. The Soviets had between three and six liquid-fuel, long-range missiles, which could be easily spotted because of the relatively long lead time necessary to get them ready for firing, yet the United States continued to build huge numbers of missiles even after intelligence revealed that the Soviets had very few. Secretary McNamara also adopted a counterforce strategy in the early years, which became the ideological reason for

¹⁰ Raskin, *Yale Law Journal*, 579 and following.

continuing to arm on the nuclear level at a furious pace. But McNamara's position on the size of the arsenal was far less than the requests made by the Joint Chiefs in 1961–1962.

The second major shift from the Eisenhower administration, Kennedy's decision to accept the idea of flexible response, meant that the United States would not only fight limited and nuclear wars but that it would also challenge local revolutions and wars of national liberation to which Premier Khrushchev had given some support, both rhetorical and real. McNamara made the following request, summing up the Kennedy administration's defense policy before the House Armed Services Committee in 1964 as it related to the arms build-up:

A 100 percent increase in the number of nuclear weapons available in the strategic alert forces.

A 45 percent increase in the number of combat-ready army divisions.

A one third increase in the number of tactical fighter squadrons.

A 60 percent increase in the tactical nuclear forces deployed in western Europe.

A 75 percent increase in airlift capability.

A 100 percent increase in general ship construction and conversion.

A sixfold increase in counterinsurgency forces.

McNamara also pointed to the "demonstrated willingness to risk using these forces in defense of our vital interests. Here are some examples: The callup of about 150,000 reservists and the deployment of 40,000 additional men in Europe in the summer of 1961. The confrontation of Khrushchev on the issue of Soviet offensive missiles in Cuba in October of 1962. The dispatch of 16,000 U.S. military personnel to South Vietnam to assist that country with logistics and training support in combating the Vietcong insurrection."¹¹

As I have stated elsewhere, "The United States intended under Kennedy to develop a war fighting capability on all levels of violence from nuclear war to counterinsurgency."¹² The irony in analyzing the militarization of American foreign policy, and by inference, American life, can be found in a speech that President Kennedy was to deliver at the Trade Mart in Dallas on November 22, 1963. Dallas was one of the main industrial arteries of the national security state. Texas had gained much from the Cold War, and there was real concern that Kennedy was a secret dove. He intended to point out to the Texas audience that this was not the case. "In less than 3 years, we have increased by 50 percent the number of Polaris submarines . . . , increased by more than 75 percent our Minuteman purchase program, increased by 50 percent the portion of our strategic bombers on 15 minute alert and increased by 100 percent the total number of nuclear weapons available in our strategic alert forces . . . [We have] . . . radically improved the readiness of our conventional forces—increased by 45 percent the number of combat ready Army divisions, increased by 100 percent the procurement of modern Army weapons and equipment, increased by 100 percent our ship construction, conversion and modernization program, increased

¹¹ House Committee on Armed Services, *Sundry Legislation Affecting the Military Establishments*, Testimony of Robert McNamara, p. 6899 (1964).

¹² Marcus G. Raskin, "The Kennedy Hawks Assume Power from the Eisenhower Vultures," *Essays of a Citizen: From National Security State to Democracy* (Armonk, N.Y., 1991), 52–53.

by 100 percent our procurement of tactical aircraft, increased by 30 percent the number of tactical air squadrons . . . Finally, moving beyond the traditional roles of our military forces, we have achieved an increase of nearly 600 percent in our special forces" namely, those forces that were used in South Vietnam.¹³

The Kennedy policy on armaments and doctrine merely begins the puzzle. There is no question that President Kennedy intended to pull 1,000 advisers out of Vietnam by the end of 1963, and there is some evidence to support the view that he intended to pull all advisers out by 1965. According to Roger Hilsman, a former assistant secretary of state who dealt with Southeast Asia and held repeated discussions with President Kennedy, it was Kennedy's intention to work out a negotiated settlement along the lines of the one with Laos.¹⁴ Yet there is a wrinkle here. Ngo Dinh Nhu, who was assassinated at the same time as his brother President Ngo Dinh Diem on November 2, 1963, had sought to work out a settlement with the North Vietnamese and the Vietcong. This diplomatic intervention was interrupted by their assassinations. The Kennedy administration had, according to Henry Kissinger, a "direct role" in the coup against Diem "which led to his assassination."¹⁵ The Kennedy policies were ambiguous. On the one hand, the president had made numerous public statements to the effect that the war had to be won by the South Vietnamese government, not by the United States. On the other, the war was seen as something of a game of chess that the United States could walk away from any time it desired; but, if the cost was not too great, we should continue to play.

Theodore White, in his book *In Search of History*, claims that Kennedy intended to get out of Vietnam and not go forward with a full-scale war. According to Kenneth O'Donnell, Kennedy's principal political adviser, "Kennedy had just pledged to Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield not only the immediate withdrawal of one thousand troops of the sixteen thousand troops in Vietnam, but the withdrawal of all of them after the 1964 election." When O'Donnell asked Kennedy how he meant to do that, he quipped, "Easy, put a government in there that will ask us to leave."¹⁶ This part of Stone's contention appears to be on solid ground.

A QUESTION REMAINS ABOUT PRESIDENT JOHNSON and his interest in going to war in Indochina. Although Johnson had made a trip to Vietnam in 1961 and came back trumpeting the Walt Rostow-Maxwell Taylor thesis, there is also evidence that he too was dubious about war on the Asian mainland. In 1954, when Johnson was the majority leader of the Senate, he made clear to Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles that he would not support American military intervention at Dien Bien Phu, nor could he carry the Senate with such support unless Britain and

¹³ John F. Kennedy, undelivered speech, November 22, 1963, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States . . .* (Washington, D.C., 1980).

¹⁴ Roger Hilsman, Letter to the Editor, *New York Times* (January 20, 1992).

¹⁵ Henry Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston, 1979), 231.

¹⁶ Theodore H. White, *In Search of History: A Personal Narrative* (New York, 1978), 531.

France fought side by side with the United States. So what caused his shift in point of view to supporting the Kennedy hawks' position?

As Stone intimates, there were a number of high-level national security meetings with Johnson immediately after Kennedy's death. The meeting that is best known was with leading advisers of the Kennedy administration, namely Dean Rusk, McGeorge Bundy, McNamara, Maxwell Taylor (Chair of the Joint Chiefs), John A. McCone of Central Intelligence, and Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge. At that meeting, it was decided to go ahead with the war even though Taylor and McNamara had prepared at Kennedy's request a two-volume study, NSAM 263, which outlined a withdrawal program. This was presented at an NSC meeting on October 5, 1963. Nevertheless, Taylor, an early proponent of brush-fire wars, and McNamara, a convert to the same sublimated war doctrine, were hawks. In the fateful days after the Kennedy assassination, they told Johnson that the war was local and limited and that, with Diem out of the way, the American commitment should be strengthened with U.S. combat forces because the war could be won. Rusk had a strong commitment to American intervention in Indochina because of his belief in the Sino-Soviet bloc relationship (an alliance that had already ended) and because, as Rusk put it, the Soviets "blinked" during the Cuban missile crisis; thus they were not likely to be a factor in inhibiting American intervention. It was thought by one assistant secretary of state that Bundy, who knew better, went along for reasons of ambition. He hoped to replace Rusk in 1965 as secretary of state and then end the war. Taylor wanted to test out his flexible-response theories.

At this stage, we can only speculate on President Johnson's motives. One view is that his understanding of the Kennedy policy was to go forward with the war and that any softening on his part would have brought down the wrath of Robert Kennedy upon him. The attorney general had been a strong proponent during the Kennedy period of covert operations and sublimated war engagements. These included engagement in Vietnam, but Robert Kennedy ceased to be a friend of the CIA.

Johnson, who had imbibed the metaphors of Munich and falling dominoes, was reinforced by his own insecurity about foreign affairs and his fear that he would be blindsided by the Kennedy advisers, some of whom had wanted him off the ticket in 1964. He would be seen as an illegitimate imposter to the presidency who tampered with Kennedy's stated policies. (Given Robert Kennedy's stated positions, Johnson could not have imagined that Robert Kennedy would blindside him from a dove rather than a hawk position.)

The role of the military during this violent period is also ambiguous. The generals who had fought in the Korean War, MacArthur and Ridgeway, were adamantly opposed to war on the mainland of Asia. General Matthew Ridgeway was a charter member of the "never again" club. Having replaced MacArthur in the Korean War, Ridgeway argued in a continuous barrage of memoranda that the United States should steer clear of an Asian land war. However, the Taylor position held sway, and it led quickly to dramatic escalations.

It should be remembered that in the initial stages of the war it was the civilian hawks left over from the Kennedy administration who rallied around a land war.

They believed in the idea of a world-wide conflict with communism and in the domino effect; that is, if Vietnam fell, all of Southeast Asia was doomed. This was not Kennedy's view, Theodore Sorensen's view, or that of the few "doves" of the Kennedy administration who, after the Cuban missile crisis, believed strongly in accommodation. The policy of *détente* had been reflected earlier in Kennedy's successful settlement of the Laotian war, his calling off the Cold War, and his interest in pressing forward with a general and complete disarmament treaty. In a May 6, 1963, memorandum to the leading national security advisers, Kennedy voiced his deep concern about the arms race and ordered the government to prepare extensive plans for general and complete disarmament. It is likely that the president was reacting to Jerome Wiesner, the science adviser who in December 1962 had told and written Kennedy that the McNamara defense build-up was an unmitigated disaster for the national security of the United States, that it forced the Soviets to follow the United States in the arms race, thereby making the United States less secure.¹⁷ The Cuban missile crisis underscored his advice.

Would any of the top Kennedy advisers for reasons of ambition, a need to test out a pet theory, for money, sex, or because of ideological persuasion participate or initiate a coup? There seems to be no hard evidence for such a conclusion. Is it possible that, as with the death of Thomas Becket, a culture of violence and command would give some conspirators at a lower level inside and outside the government the idea that a murder should occur? This is somewhat more likely, given the conflating of crime and political intrigue in the covert and military world of that time.

The film points to two figures who are unnamed. One is the Donald Sutherland character, who is probably Colonel Fletcher Prouty. The other is his boss, who sends security specialist Prouty off to the South Pole to prevent him from ensuring Kennedy's safety in Dallas. His boss would have been General Edward Lansdale, who had cut his teeth in the 1950s by making Ramon Magsaysay a hero of Philippine limited land reform and the victor against the Huk rebellion. Lansdale then promoted Magsaysay into the presidency of the Philippines and went on to work on different schemes for pacifying Vietnam and Cuba. It does not seem likely that as hawkish as Lansdale or the first-level advisers were, they would have been involved in a plot to kill President Kennedy in order to press a war and prove their ideological doctrines. However, it should be noted that most of Kennedy's advisers were far more hawkish than he. For example, advisers such as Walt Rostow, who later succeeded Bundy, had urged the use of American ground troops and the bombing of the North. As I have noted, this refrain was also sung by Johnson when he was vice-president and by General Taylor, who, prior to becoming chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was Kennedy's personal military adviser. The willingness of these advisers to kill others does not mean that they intended to or did kill the president of the United States. There is no question, however, that a culture of violence was integral to that period and that it permeated all levels of government.

¹⁷ Jerome B. Wiesner to President John F. Kennedy, memorandum, December 4, 1962, John F. Kennedy Library, Waltham, Mass.

JFK also raises the question of CIA involvement in the assassination. It should be noted that those concerned with analysis of data and political trends in the Agency were eager for the United States to work out a negotiated settlement in Vietnam. To that end, they made public a document carrying the CIA's official imprimatur and calling for an end to the war in 1964. However, the question of CIA involvement in the assassination is much less easy to slough off when one notes the intimate connection the CIA had with Cuban exile groups in Miami. For that matter, the FBI also had connections with groups it had infiltrated or with individuals it used as informants as well as with extreme rightist businessmen it protected who hated President Kennedy. These connections occurred to the Warren Commission as well.

One recommendation the commission made was that the FBI, CIA, and other agencies should inform the Secret Service when a potential threat existed to the president's life. "Since these agencies are already obliged constantly to evaluate the activities of such groups, they should be responsible for advising the Secret Service if information develops indicating the existence of an assassination plot and for reporting such events as a change in leadership or dogma which indicate that the group may present a danger to the President. Detailed formal agreements embodying these arrangements should be worked out between the Secret Service and both of these agencies."¹⁸

It is hardly surprising that the culture of violence extending into the presidency through national security decisions also allowed government officials to use organized crime and, when necessary, to confront it. Robert Kennedy as attorney general initiated a "war on crime" at the same time that the CIA sought aid from criminals in attempting to assassinate Castro.

DISCUSSIONS GO ON ALL THE TIME about killing the president. These inchoate conspiracies abound in the nation. They come to very little. That they exist, however, should not be denied. That they are exacerbated by a culture of violence is obvious. And that the Warren Commission saw its primary goal as calming the people is clear. At the time, Bertrand Russell claimed that "there has never been a more subversive, a more conspiratorial, unpatriotic or endangering course for the security of the United States and the world than the attempt by the United States Government to hide the murderer of its recent President."¹⁹

The nation is again undertaking an Oedipal odyssey, looking for itself through this heinous murder. If we are mature enough to continue the search, it is well that not only the files of this terrible tragedy be made public but that the various people who have had access to these files be subject to oaths to assure the citizenry that documents have not been destroyed. Another step will have to be taken: files of the CIA, Department of Justice, and defense agencies will now have to be opened so that we may understand more completely the culture of violence that enveloped the nation during the Cold War period. We will not be able to assess a

¹⁸ *Report of the Warren Commission*, 440.

¹⁹ Bertrand Russell, quoted by Salisbury, *Report of the Warren Commission*, xxv.

single-bullet or lone-assassin theory unless we recognize the billion-bullet/nuclear weapons-and-missile system that dictated and framed our society's reality. Most important, however, if we choose to continue with national security state secrets of the kind that enveloped the assassination of Kennedy, then the nation psychologically will continue to be tortured by lies. The culture of violence and secrecy will hold sway; cynicism and alienation in its nastiest political sense will grow even greater.

AHR Forum
JFK: The Movie

MICHAEL ROGIN

THE SAN FRANCISCO CBS TELEVISION AFFILIATE KPIX sandwiched a news report between the 1992 Super Bowl and the "60 Minutes" interview with Governor Bill Clinton and Hilary Rodham Clinton about the Democratic presidential candidate's alleged marital infidelities. Featuring a Hollywood movie, *JFK*, the putative news story reported demands, driven by the film's notoriety, to open the secret files of the House Select Committee on Assassinations. The real news, however, was the movie itself. Television news mixed newsreel videotape of the controversy surrounding the film with shots from the movie, which was, as television viewers could see, a jumble of fictional and documentary footage. *JFK* stands at the confluence of two developments, one old and one new, that came together with the election of a Hollywood actor, Ronald Reagan, as president of the United States: the conflation of politics and conspiracy, and the confusion between politics and the fiction-making visual media.

Although *JFK* has been the target of unprecedented hostile attention from journalists and political commentators, four books making Kennedy the victim of one conspiracy or another made the *New York Times* best-seller lists the first week in February; the number one non-fiction best seller was by Jim Garrison, the former New Orleans district attorney who is the hero of Oliver Stone's movie.¹ That, in addition, the journal of the American Historical Association should publish a symposium on a Hollywood movie, with contributions written within weeks of the film's release (what about research and time for reflection?) is itself source material for the future historian of late twentieth-century America. As professionals attack *JFK*'s conspiracy theory, millions of Americans rush to see the film and buy the books, and the gulf between the political class and the apparently pre-political mass public could not be wider.

"Treason doth never prosper, what's the reason? For if it prosper, none dare call it treason." These lines, quoted by Stone's Garrison, call Richard Hofstadter from his grave, for they are featured in his classic book, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics* (1965). The couplet forms the epigraph for *None Dare Call It Treason*, John Stormer's John Birch Society exposé, published the year after

I am indebted to conversations about *JFK* with Cathy Gallagher, Richard Hutson, and Kathleen Moran.

¹ See Stephen E. Ambrose, "Writers on the Grassy Knoll: A Reader's Guide," *New York Times Book Review* (February 2, 1992): 1, 23-25.

Kennedy's death, of the communist takeover of Washington.² Stone's conspiracy is anti-communist. As *JFK* unfolds, it reveals that an omnipresent "they" killed not only John Kennedy but also Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr., that "they" seized power in a "coup d'état," and that Lyndon Johnson was an "accomplice after the fact." Stone's assassins murdered Kennedy to stop him from withdrawing from Vietnam, making peace with Cuba, and ending the Cold War. But "they" killed a president who (as the movie does not say) increased military spending, heated up Cold War rhetoric, intensified the American intervention in Vietnam, and sponsored, until his own assassination, death plots against Fidel Castro.

Resembling traditional American conspiracy theories, Stone's demonology makes an easy target for those defending the allegedly beleaguered political elites smeared by *JFK*. From their perspective, the syndicated political commentator William Pfaff's, for example, Oliver Stone is a New Left McCarthyite. But such a view is maliciously ahistorical. Kennedy was no New Left hero, for either civil rights activists in the early 1960s (since his Justice Department and FBI worked against them) or for the anti-war movement that emerged after his death. Stone, in turn, is a product not of the rise of the New Left but of its demise. Blaming the New Left counterposes *JFK*'s paranoia to a rational governing class, making it impossible to understand either the power of the movie or where it goes wrong. Stone's films assault the viewer, and some commentators have protected themselves by keeping their distance from *JFK*. But if we accept the invitation to enter the Kennedy assassination from Garrison's point of view (I refer throughout to the film's Garrison, Kevin Costner), then we can trace the path from legitimate political disorientation to the moment when Garrison reaches obsession.

Since the publication of Edward Epstein's *Inquest* a quarter-century ago, reasonable people have had to doubt the Warren Commission, lone assassin, "magic bullet" (as Garrison calls it) version of the killing of Kennedy.³ (Stone's defense of his movie, in a February 3, 1992, letter to the *New York Times*, focuses entirely on the deficiencies of the Warren Commission.) In the first portion of *JFK*, a disorienting montage draws the viewer into the evidence of other assassins, other bullets, other places from which Kennedy may have been shot. Rarely have the camera shot and the gun shot been more aligned, with the viewer at once behind the telephoto lens and, like Kennedy, its target.

Reasonable people have also had to acknowledge, for a quarter-century, the power of secret government in the United States, hidden both in its unaccountable decision making at the top and its covert operations on the ground. The achievements of that government (many of which are, by the same technique of discontinuous assault, detailed in the film) include: the recruitment of Nazis to work for the CIA in the Cold War; the CIA-sponsored coups against Jacobo Arbenz in Guatemala and Muhammad Musaddiq in Iran; the FBI, Military

² Richard Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics* (New York, 1965), 110-11; John A. Stormer, *None Dare Call It Treason* (Florissant, Mo., 1964).

³ Edward Jay Epstein, *Inquest: The Warren Commission and the Establishment of Truth*, Richard H. Rovere, intro. (New York, 1966).

Intelligence, and CIA operations against domestic dissent; Watergate; Iran-Contra.

It is plausible, moreover, to link the Kennedy assassination to secret government interventions during the Cold War. Since the Watergate burglars were anti-Castro Cubans implicated in Kennedy's plots to kill Castro, President Nixon justified the Watergate cover-up on national security grounds, to keep secret the Kennedy-Cuba connection.⁴ Nixon imagined Lee Harvey Oswald as Castro's avenger. Leftist versions of the assassination propose other ties: to anti-Castro Cuban exiles, to the Cuban exile/Mafia/Kennedy tangle; to people in the national security bureaucracy; to the family of deposed South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem, murdered in the Kennedy-sponsored coup. The scenarios bewilder by their number and believability. Evidence for the withholding within government of information that might shed light on Kennedy's death is overwhelming. To attend seriously to Cold War politics and the Kennedy assassination is to risk being thrown back into the paranoid position (to use psychoanalyst Melanie Klein's term) of helpless, suspicious disorientation.⁵

The widespread feeling that America began to fall apart after Kennedy was killed prolongs national mourning; conversely, the extraordinary fixation on *JFK* is evidence of the public malaise. But the unresolved assassination, combined with Kennedy's complicity with the forces suspected of doing him in, has blocked a national mourning of the president as he actually was, encouraging the regression from what Klein calls the depressive position, where loss can be acknowledged and overcome, to idealization, splitting, and paranoia.

A plausible version of the assassination, like Don DeLillo's *Libra* (1988), makes sense of the chaos surrounding Kennedy's death, but the price of sanity-restoring, narrative coherence is that the story be presented as fiction. *JFK* refuses the fictional label by insisting it has discovered the truth. But that rejection of fictional narrative entails another, of form as well as content, for Stone replaces a convincing, novelistic, plot-as-story with a mysterious, fragmentary, plot-as-conspiracy.

The elements of a plot in both those senses are set in New Orleans. Stone, however, provides no characters whose actions connect his sordid New Orleans revelations to the Washington scene of the crime. In the exception that explains the rule, a Washington messenger turns one of Garrison's staffers into a tool of the cover-up, preparing for a scene that will discredit the Mafia assassination theory (which contaminates Kennedy) by putting it into the renegade's mouth.

Stone has no problem finding anti-communist Kennedy haters, among both Bay of Pigs veterans and home-grown right-wingers. He accepts their view of Kennedy, inverts it, and makes it the instrument of the president's death. But to give the assassination its cosmic political significance, as the coup d'état source of all that has gone wrong in the country, Stone (himself a Vietnam veteran) also needs a group that feared Kennedy was withdrawing from Southeast Asia. It is

⁴ See Fawn M. Brodie, *Richard Nixon: The Shaping of His Character* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981), 493-96.

⁵ Melanie Klein, *Love, Guilt, and Reparation and Other Works*, R. E. Money-Kyrle, intro. (New York, 1975).

harder to give verisimilitude to that story. As a result, *JFK's* political content and filmic method come to mirror the conspiracy the movie is supposedly exposing. When narrative history fails Stone, his plot splits in two: idealization of the beautiful "dying king" on the one hand, demonization of a homosexual band on the other. Sexual anxiety overwhelms politics, in *JFK's* paranoid style, as a homosexual primal horde slays the young father-king.

Although Garrison complains that the government infantilizes its citizens by keeping them from the truth, his Americans are never adults; they are Hamlets, "children of the slain father-leader whose killers still possess the throne." Stormer's *None Dare Call It Treason's* dedication—"to Holly, May her future be as bright as mine was at age 5"—speaks equally to the cry of betrayed innocence that drives *JFK*; Stone's film is "Dedicated to the young." The beautiful object of the viewer's desire in the nostalgic newsreel footage we watch along with Garrison, Kennedy is felled by the perverted desire of David Ferrie and Clay Shaw. Stone's Kennedy is at once the "father-leader" whose killing unleashes chaos and the beautiful young man (synecdochical for Garrison and the male viewer) endangered by erotic attraction.

With David Ferrie (the pilot linked to the CIA and Operation Mongoose), homophobia and conspiracy each first enter the movie, joined together on Ferrie's body. An announced "alleged homosexual incident," preceding the report of his anti-Castro activities, frames our first view of Ferrie. His flimsy story supposedly makes Garrison suspect a plot, but what fills the screen is Ferrie's nervous, flitty manner. That a middle-aged degenerate drove to Dallas with "a couple of young friends" only to hunt birds raises sexual as much as political suspicion. The two come together again in the figure of the attractive, corrupted, imprisoned homosexual prostitute, Willie O'Keefe. (Unlike Ferrie and Shaw, this figure, played by Kevin Bacon, is Stone's invention.) In the conspiratorial connections with which O'Keefe floods Garrison, sexual and political perversions are entirely intertwined. Disguise is at the heart of the "homosexual underground," O'Keefe tells the district attorney. "You don't know shit because you've never been fucked in the ass." Graphic words and images depicting some men dominating others, rather than a political narrative, links invisible Washington power to New Orleans sex. The male prostitute propositions Garrison when the interview is over. The district attorney's interrogation and trial of the homosexual businessman, Clay Shaw ("the guy's a fag"), now organizes Stone's conspiracy. Homosexual blackmail, perverted sexual practices, and murder merge in Ferrie's confession to Garrison, shortly before he is murdered in turn. Kennedy was killed, the film comes close to saying, because he refused to submit to homosexual domination.

When Garrison's wife accuses him of caring more about Kennedy than his own family, she points to the absence of heterosexual desire that feeds the homosexual threat. (From one side, *JFK* inherits Stone's misogyny; from the other, it derives from *No Way Out*, the 1987 espionage thriller in which the character played by Kevin Costner is framed for murder by a homosexual in love with the real killer, his State Department boss.) Homosexual panic may not be the universal ground of paranoia, as Freud argued in the Daniel Paul Schreber case, but it organizes *JFK*. Schreber believed that invisible rays emanating from an authoritative source

were turning him into a woman and forcing him to give birth. Such an omnipotent force slays the president; first in the shooting, then in the horrifying reenactment of Kennedy's autopsy, the extraction of his brain from his head, its instruments violate, for Stone as for Schreber, the vulnerable male body.⁶

Sensory overload characterizes Stone's film technique in general, but whereas flashbacks and editing establish eyewitness authority for the conspiracy, the homosexual scenes carry the weight of emotional disturbance. Montages of body parts, a transvestite bacchanal, and the strange movements of Ferrie and Shaw overwhelm visual and narrative coherence. Just as Stone blends the camera shot and the gun shot, so his rapid cutting, sudden close-ups, and bodily dismemberments join the filmic to the sexual fetish. Cinematic form enforces the disorienting fragmentation; homophobia is its content. Fragmentary details pregnant with meaning are the building blocks both of the content of political demonology and of Stone's paranoid film style. The director employs montage to return to the primitive, pre-illusionistic beginnings of motion pictures. Unlike classic narrative films, his images disperse rather than tell a story. But, unlike primitive cinema, Stone puts spectacle in the service of narrative. Intentionality at the top organizes the charged data of Stone's animistic universe. Conspiracy supplies the formal and final causes (in Aristotle's classification) that restore psycho-political order.

Whereas the fragments are disturbingly visible, however, the unity can only be told. The Abraham Zapruder film of Kennedy's assassination is shown over and over, frame by frame, as if it held the key to the plot, but the visual bludgeoning leads to confusion, not unambiguous conclusion. Only words keep Zapruder from turning into *Blow-Up*, Michelangelo Antonioni's 1969 film in which murder remains mysterious because the picture keeps the secret of whether it has a secret at all. Coherence in *JFK* is supplied by the longest monologues in Hollywood history. These voice-overs, spoken from within the diegesis and illustrated by streams of juxtaposed images, offer the structure for which the viewer, even more than before entering the theater, now longs. But the monologues cannot make actual connections, any more than could a traditional filmic narrative, for those would be vulnerable to exposure as fiction. *JFK*'s Deep Throat authorizes the conspiracy, his soliloquy supported by flashbacks that are keyed to his subjective account but shown as historical truth. Urging Garrison to bring Shaw to trial without knowing how everything fits together, this paternal figure prepares us to experience Shaw's acquittal as evidence that the conspiracy goes on. Garrison's thirty-five minute speech to Shaw's jury brings the film to an end.

Demonology imagines that a secret power is exercised on the body; thus sexual fantasy has always been part of the American paranoid style. In Maria Monk's antebellum, anti-Catholic, non-fiction best seller, for example, priests kidnap and engage in criminal intercourse with nuns.⁷ Women's liberation, interfering with

⁶ Daniel Paul Schreber, *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness*, Ida Macalpine and Richard H. Hunter, trans. and ed.; Samuel Weber, intro. (Cambridge, Mass., 1988); Sigmund Freud, "Psycho-Analytic Notes on an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides)," in *Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, 24 vols., James Strachey, ed., vol. 12 (London, 1953-74).

⁷ Maria Monk, *Awful Disclosure of the Hotel Dieu Nunnery of Montreal* (1836; rev. with appendix, New York, 1977).

I. Surfacing to Periscope Depth

The history of the Soviet dossier on Oswald is somewhat reminiscent of the maneuver of surfacing to periscope depth, in which a submarine approaches the surface so that it can raise its periscope and take a look around. In November 1991 the Oswald case almost surfaced from the depths of the KGB. At that time the whole world just missed by a matter of weeks finding out virtually everything the six mysterious case files contained.

It was Vadim Bakatin, after taking over the chairman's office at Lubyanka in the wake of the coup, who attempted that experiment with top secret KGB information. The "Oswald file" was hardly of fundamental importance to Bakatin; during his slightly more than four months as KGB chairman he had many more serious problems to deal with as he attempted to reform the structure of the Lubyanka empire. File No. 31451 most likely occurred to him by chance: the latest anniversary of the Kennedy assassination was approaching, and once again the world was talking about Oswald.

On orders from Bakatin the dossier was retrieved from the archives. And then the new KGB chief, who subsequently admitted that he did not fully comprehend the secret might of the machine he was directing, attempted to make the documents public. He wanted to do so because, as he put it, he had not found anything in the "Oswald file" that was fundamentally secret, and nothing that the KGB would have any point in keeping a secret any more. Of course, the names of the agents who conducted surveillance of Oswald in the USSR should not be named. Naturally the contents of purely personal phone calls tapped by the committee or intercepted personal letters should not be disclosed.

The rest of the dossier, Vadim Bakatin asserts, simply consists of interesting historical documents which, even if they could reveal methods of Soviet counterintelligence operations, can only reveal methods from 30 years ago.

Nevertheless Bakatin's efforts provoked incredible resistance on the part of Lubyanka's professionals: the KGB had never before disclosed information on the activities of any of its agents. A commission established within the KGB to study the matter was virtually beyond the control of its own chief. After several weeks of work the experts selected from the dossier only 12 insignificant documents from the dossier; these they proposed that Bakatin make public. Judging by information in our possession, he was extremely displeased with the results and ordered them to go over the dossier again. This time new players unexpectedly entered the game.

Bakatin got a call from Belarus KGB chairman Eduard Shirkovskiy. He requested that the "Oswald file" be sent to Minsk for a few days so that his agency could reach a decision on it.

Shirkovskiy's claim had some justification, because there was no question that the bulk of the dossier had

been collected by Belorussian counterintelligence agents—Oswald spent virtually all his time in the USSR in Minsk. Yet after leaving Moscow for only a few days the dossier did not return...

Very shortly thereafter Bakatin was relieved of his position, and a majority of KGB personnel categorized all of his reforms as treason.

The Oswald file was re-registered. Assigned the number 226 and a stamp on each file folder stating "Not to be released without permission of the division chief," it was put in a light brown safe in an office in the Belarus KGB building. Now the only people who have access to the papers are Eduard Shirkovskiy and a few of his subordinates.

The chairman of the Belarus KGB, to give him his due, is now making very firm statements about the possibility that the dossier will be declassified and is not leaving any illusions on the part of those interested in it. He has already been offered \$50 million for the "Oswald file," yet Shirkovskiy refused because he sees his position as a matter of principle: he will not transfer the case file anywhere outside of Minsk, and he will make the documents public only if the Belarus Supreme Soviet passes a special decree declassifying all KGB archival materials on which the statute of limitations has expired.

The Oswald file, which incidentally according to Shirkovskiy does not contain anything particularly secret, has thus probably now become something of a symbol to the Belarusian leadership, a symbol of new governmental thinking independent of Moscow.

No one knows how long this will go on.

However, what Eduard Shirkovskiy did permit during an interview with IZVESTIYA was definitely progress. While categorically refusing to allow interviews with KGB agents who worked on the Oswald case, the chief of Belarusian state security nonetheless did have the file brought out of the safe and also agreed to interviews with some of his subordinates who are thoroughly familiar with the documents. So we can thank the chief of the Belarus KGB for his help with this investigation. Thanks to the assistance of his subordinates we now have at least a general idea of why Soviet intelligence services were interested in Oswald and just how his "case" was handled.

[8 Aug p 7]

[Text]

II. Red Trackers

The system for surveillance of Oswald in the USSR was to all appearances maintained in the spirit of the latest advances in early 1960's Soviet counterintelligence. Present-day experts who have gone over the dossier note that at that time everything was done very painstakingly and, most importantly, cleverly. According to Eduard Shirkovskiy, chief of the Belarus KGB, Oswald was

Bill to Release JFK Files Moves to White House

01.10.92

By George Lardner Jr.
Washington Post Staff Writer

The House passed a comprehensive JFK records bill yesterday, calling for the disclosure of virtually all the government's files on President John F. Kennedy's assassination and setting up a review board to track them down.

The measure, drafted and passed in the Senate in August, now goes to the White House. The Justice Department has said it would recommend that President Bush sign it.

The records, many still secret, are held by Congress, federal agencies and presidential libraries and include everything from CIA and FBI reports to newspaper clippings and tax returns.

Rep. Jack Brooks (D-Tex.), chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, rescued the bill from death-by-adjournment by accepting the Senate version and dropping

his demand that the board be appointed by a special panel of federal judges rather than by the president.

Brooks contended that his approach, approved by the House in August, would have been preferable to the Senate-backed measure calling for appointment by the president and confirmation by the Senate.

Brooks said he took the step "with some misgivings" but was committed above all to enactment of a bill in this Congress.

Senate Governmental Affairs Committee Chairman John Glenn (D-Ohio), a key author of the Senate measure, said the records would be released with little bureaucratic delay. Even before the review board is appointed, affected agencies would be required to start identifying and organizing all their records pertaining to the JFK assassination.

Those records that could be made public immediately would be

transmitted to a National Archives special collection that would be set up 60 days after the bill became law. Documents that seem to qualify for "postponement" would be sent to the review board for a decision. Its decisions would be final for congressional records and reversible only by the president for executive branch records.

"Postponements" in the release of certain records would be granted only when, for example, disclosure would identify "an intelligence agent whose identity currently requires protection" or confidential sources who would face "substantial risk of harm" if their identities were made public.

It is expected that the board would need three years to complete its work. It would have the power to direct certain agencies to search for additional records or information, and if necessary, investigate the facts of that information.

The board also would have the power to subpoena private parties, conduct hearings and require any government agency "to account in writing for the destruction" of any JFK assassination records.

The measure orders the archivist of the United States to grant public-interest fee waivers for copies of the records.

The JFK records bill, expected to cost \$4.5 million a year, was introduced in March by Senate intelligence committee Chairman David L. Boren (D-Okla.) and Rep. Louis Stokes (D-Ohio), former chairman of the House Assassinations Committee, in response to the renewed controversy sparked by Oliver Stone's film "JFK" and its charges of government conspiracy and coverup regarding the assassination.

Glenn tightened the measure to give the review board more authority and to provide for a systematic disclosure process.

The CIA's JFK Secret

The Classified Files Will Show the Agency Believed in a Conspiracy

By James Johnston

Congress at long last is poised to open the so-called "secret" files on the Kennedy assassination from various investigations, beginning in 1963. It wants to satisfy academics and the curious, but the files are likely to set off new controversy.

The files will show that while government officials and the Warren Commission launched a campaign to persuade the public that Lee Harvey Oswald alone plotted to kill John Kennedy, CIA analysts took the opposite position in secret. They believed that even if Oswald was the lone assassin, he may have been the agent of a foreign conspiracy.

The gap between the government's public and the CIA's positions was widest in the days immediately after the president's death. On Nov. 23, 1963, CIA analysts prepared a memorandum covering the facts they knew at the time. They knew that Oswald had once defected to the Soviet Union. They knew that he made a trip to Mexico City two months before the assassination and talked to Soviet Vice Consul Kostikov about a visa. And they believed that Kostikov was a KGB assassination and sabotage expert.

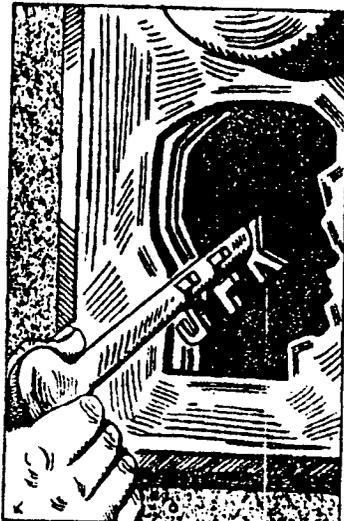
From this, their memorandum argued, there was reason enough to believe that Oswald was part of a foreign plot. If this were true, CIA analysts predicted, then Oswald himself might be killed before he could talk.

The gist of this memorandum was to be passed through CIA liaison to the FBI—with the warning that Oswald could be in danger. Unfortunately, relations between the two agencies were strained and liaison was awkward; Oswald, while in police custody, was killed before the FBI received the message. The fact that Oswald was murdered, as CIA analysts had warned, fueled their suspicions.

Also on Nov. 23, the CIA asked Mexican authorities to delay questioning Sylvia Duran, an employee at the Cuban Consulate in Mexico City who had talked with Oswald when he went there for a Cuban visa. The CIA, fearing that Duran would reveal a Cuban conspiracy, wanted the questioning delayed until the United States decided how to react.

President Johnson was briefed by CIA Director John McCone during this critical period. McCone's cryptic memoranda omit important details, but may be the only record of what Johnson was told. JFK's sophisticated taping system was removed from the White House on the afternoon of Nov. 22 and, for reasons unknown, there are no tapes from the last two weeks of his administration. Johnson recorded telephone calls on a Dictabelt system he had used as vice president, but no one has yet had access to any presidential tapes from this period.

McCone's memorandum of his first briefing simply indicates that the subject was the assassination. It does not say whether McCone knew (or told LBJ about) CIA concern



MARTIN KOZLOWSKI FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

over Oswald's safety. McCone's second briefing was at 10 a.m. on Nov. 24. A Cuban conspiracy was certainly a possibility; indeed, the CIA was involved at the time in a plot to kill Fidel Castro. Thus, it is significant that the subject of this briefing was not JFK but rather CIA operational plans against Cuba.

Allegations of a Cuban conspiracy inundated the CIA. On Nov. 25, a man told U.S. Embassy officials in Mexico City that he was at the Cuban Consulate on Sept. 17, 1963. He claimed that Oswald was there and talked about assassination and that the Cubans gave Oswald \$6,500. The CIA later dismissed the story as untrue, but McCone's memoranda reveal that Johnson's concern was such that McCone would brief him for another week.

The story was consistent with other reports the CIA received on Nov. 25. For example, the Mexico City station cabled a reminder that Castro had issued a threat against U.S. leaders in September.

Thus, as of Nov. 25, 1963, the CIA had ample reason to suspect that Cubans or Soviets—or both—were involved. Despite this, and just four days after the assassination, the Justice Department advised the White House to declare publicly that Oswald acted alone. Deputy Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach wrote presidential assistant Bill Moyers on Nov. 26:

"It is important that all of the facts surrounding President Kennedy's assassination be made public in a way which will satisfy people in the United States and abroad that all the facts have been told and that a statement to this effect be made now.

"1. The public must be satisfied that Oswald was the assassin; that he did not have confederates who are still at large; and that the evidence was such he would have been convicted at trial.

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Johnson wanted to accept this advice. On Nov. 26, he told McCone that the FBI had responsibility for the investigation: the CIA was only to assist. Since the FBI did not share the CIA's suspicions, Johnson's decision seemed to signal that he wanted the FBI view to prevail.

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ond fiddle because it wanted its own efforts to be as independent as possible. CIA analysts felt that the FBI had been derelict in its handling of Oswald before Kennedy's assassination—and they were right. In fact, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover would secretly discipline 17 agents for mistakes in handling Oswald.

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At the CIA, however, the situation was different. Responsibility for the continued investigation was given to James Angleton's counterintelligence division, which was targeted against the KGB. Theirs was a world of suspicion—and, not surprisingly, they were suspicious of the FBI's finding.

To Angleton's counterintelligence specialists, aspects of Oswald's odd character, which the FBI and the Warren Commission casually dismissed, seemed perfectly explicable. To them, Oswald acted like an agent of foreign intelligence: He used aliases and post office boxes. Less than two months before Kennedy was shot, he moved his family from New Orleans to Dallas, but lived apart and under an assumed name.

Oswald was in communication with organizations such as the Fair Play for Cuba Committee that may have had foreign ties. Agents often used such innocent-appearing contacts as means of relaying messages. Also suspicious was Oswald's counterfeiting of identity documents. The counterfeits were inferior by CIA standards, but how and why had Oswald learned this?

Then there was Oswald's trip to Mexico City. Agents periodically leave their home country in order to meet their intelligence "handlers" in safehouses. Oswald's six days in Mexico City got him out of the FBI's reach. He went to the Soviet and Cuban consulates to get visas, but the rest of his time was unaccounted for.

If there were a psychological profile for an assassin, Oswald fit it. He was disaffected with the United States and thought life would be better "on the other side." He seemed to lack conscience and could be violent. He had tried suicide once. Assassins and saboteurs with suicidal tendencies were thought willing to undertake recklessly dangerous missions.

These were only suspicions, however. When the Warren Commission's final report was issued in September 1964, the CIA publicly accepted its findings. But, Angleton's secret investigation continued for years, and he was not alone in harboring doubts. LBJ was to say privately that he thought Castro had a hand in the assassination.

The secret files will not reveal a conspiracy to shoot JFK but, as Johnson's remarks suggest, they raise disturbing questions. Did the government believe, and tell the president, that there may have been a conspiracy to assassinate his predecessor? If so, why did it tell the public the opposite?

James Johnston is a Washington lawyer. He was counsel to the Senate Intelligence Committee's 1976 investigation of the assassination.

The CIA's JFK Secret

*The Classified Files Will Show the Agency Believed
in a Conspiracy*

By James Johnston

Congress at long last is poised to open the so-called "secret" files on the Kennedy assassination from various investigations, beginning in 1963. It wants to satisfy academics and the curious, but the files are likely to set off new controversy.

The files will show that while government officials and the Warren Commission launched a campaign to persuade the public that Lee Harvey Oswald alone plotted to kill John Kennedy, CIA analysts took the opposite position in secret. They believed that even if Oswald was the lone assassin, he may have been the agent of a foreign conspiracy.

The gap between the government's public and the CIA's positions was widest in the days immediately after the president's death. On Nov. 23, 1963, CIA analysts prepared a memorandum covering the facts they knew at the time. They knew that Oswald had once defected to the Soviet Union. They knew that he made a trip to Mexico City two months before the assassination and talked to Soviet Vice Consul Kostikov about a visa. And they believed that Kostikov was a KGB assassination and sabotage expert.

From this, their memorandum argued, there was reason enough to believe that Oswald was part of a foreign plot. If this were true, CIA analysts predicted, then Oswald himself might be killed before he could talk.

The gist of this memorandum was to be passed through CIA liaison to the FBI—with the warning that Oswald could be in danger. Unfortunately, relations between the two agencies were strained and liaison was awkward; Oswald, while in police custody, was killed before the FBI received the message. The fact that Oswald was murdered, as CIA analysts had warned, fueled their suspicions.

Also on Nov. 23, the CIA asked Mexican authorities to delay questioning Sylvia Duran, an employee at the Cuban Consulate in Mexico City who had talked with Oswald when he went there for a Cuban visa. The CIA, fearing that Duran would reveal a Cuban conspiracy, wanted the questioning delayed until the United States decided how to react.

President Johnson was briefed by CIA Director John McCone during this critical period. McCone's cryptic memoranda omit important details, but may be the only record of what Johnson was told. JFK's sophisticated taping system was removed from the White House on the afternoon of Nov. 22 and, for reasons unknown, there are no tapes from the last two weeks of his administration. Johnson recorded telephone calls on a Dictabelt system he had used as vice president, but no one has yet had access to any presidential tapes from this period.

McCone's memorandum of his first briefing simply indicates that the subject was the assassination. It does not say whether McCone knew (or told LBJ about) CIA concern over Oswald's safety. McCone's second briefing was at 10 a.m. on Nov. 24. A Cuban conspiracy was certainly a possibility; indeed, the CIA was involved at the time in a plot to kill Fidel Castro. Thus, it is significant that the subject of this briefing was not JFK but rather CIA operational plans against Cuba.

Allegations of a Cuban conspiracy inundated the CIA. On Nov. 25, a man told U.S. Embassy officials in Mexico City that he was at the Cuban Consulate on Sept. 17, 1963. He claimed that Oswald was there and talked about assassination and that the Cubans gave Oswald \$6,500. The CIA later dismissed the story as untrue, but McCone's memoranda reveal that Johnson's concern was such that McCone would brief him for another week.

The story was consistent with other reports the CIA received on Nov. 25. For example, the Mexico City station cabled a reminder that Castro had issued a threat against U.S. leaders in September.

Thus, as of Nov. 25 1963, the CIA had ample reason to suspect that Cubans or Soviets—or both—were involved. Despite this, and just four days after the assassination, the Justice Department advised the White House to declare publicly that Oswald acted alone. Deputy Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach wrote presidential assistant Bill Moyers on Nov. 26:

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"1. The public must be satisfied that Oswald was the assassin; that he did not have confederates who are still at large; and that the evidence was such he would have been convicted at trial.

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The Washington Post CS
The New York Times _____
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Date 27 Sept. 1992

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JFK Records Bill Runs Into Logjam On Capitol Hill

By George Lardner Jr.
Washington Post Staff Writer

The JFK records bill, warmly embraced by Democrats and Republicans alike, is in trouble on Capitol Hill.

The Senate passed it on July 27. The House passed another version on Aug. 12. But so far, as one House staffer put it yesterday, "all you have is two bills passing each other in the night."

With less than two weeks to go before a scheduled adjournment, conferees have not even been appointed to discuss the differences. The jockeying has been so complicated that the House bill was not formally sent over to the Senate until late yesterday afternoon.

The logjam, however, may have been broken yesterday when House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jack Brooks (D-Tex.) indicated in a statement that he might relent on the key issue. He said he was "committed to seeing a bill enacted into law before the end of this Congress."

Both measures would require disclosure of government records concerning the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy, but they have become embroiled in the ongoing dispute over the independent counsel law, due to expire this year unless Congress renews it.

The big difference in the bills is in the method of appointing a five-member review board to preside over the release of the documents.

The House, taking its cue from Brooks, has called for the appointments to be made by the judges of the special, three-member court that names independent counsels in criminal cases involving high government officials. The Bush administration contends such an approach could be unconstitutional and the Justice Department has indicated it might recommend a veto if Congress insists on it.

The Senate measure provides for presidential appointment and Senate confirmation of review board members. The Justice Department has said it would recommend that President Bush sign this bill.

Brooks has strongly favored judicial appointment of review board members, arguing that they are the kind of "inferior officers" the Supreme Court had in mind when it upheld the independent counsel law four years ago. Brooks said the House bill was aimed at lifting "the cloud cast over" the Warren Commission by setting up a review panel free of "any possible political taint."

On the other side of the fence, congressional staffers say, is Sen. Carl Levin (D-Mich.), who reportedly is concerned about getting the independent counsel law renewed. Levin is chairman of the Senate subcommittee in charge of the law.

Brooks said the president and Senate "seem intent on replicating" a system of appointment that ultimately led to demands for the bill, but added that "the method of appointment should not by itself hold up this most important piece of legislation."

Sen. John Glenn (D-Ohio), a key author of the Senate-passed bill, said he hoped that given the short congressional schedule Brooks would agree to it without a Senate-House conference.

Russia's strength has always been in its deserted villages and the wilted small cities. It is in these places that its normal future is also being decided today. Will the seventh wave revive them?

A rather large amount of criticism has already been directed at the Russian "Migration" program. V. Trubin, a worker at the Central Labor Institute, participated in developing that program, but nevertheless he sees its shortcoming in the fact that it omits a very important bloc concerning the protection of the rights and freedoms of people who actually are being placed outside the threshold of the country and that call themselves democratic republic. As in other political and socioeconomic aspects, we apparently are reinventing the bicycle... Completely no consideration is being taken of international experience. The legislation is not oriented on the standards or rigid criteria that evolve from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and that were firmly established in the 1951 convention and the 1966 protocol concerning the status of the refugee for Europe, where a human-rights commission and court operate, considering conflict situations. There exists successful experience in the Cartagena Declaration on Refugees, which was adopted by the Central American countries, Mexico, and Panama. In the final analysis, 20 million Russians are living in foreign countries far away and are not trembling in fear like the people who today are crowding the corridors of the Moscow and oblast migration services.

World practice attests to the fact that it is difficult to resolve the refugee problem simply by the efforts of one country or by bilateral treaties. According to V. Trubin, it is necessary to have close cooperation with international organizations dealing with migration. And primarily with the nearby foreign countries with the purpose of creating an intergovernmental commission on refugee affairs, and of putting the national legislatures into conformity with the international norms. Russia must act as the initiator of the treaty process and the creation of the mechanism for guaranteeing people's rights and freedoms.

The shoving out of Russians, V. Trubin feels, is promoted by the socioeconomic situation that has developed with the breakdown of economic ties. At enterprises of union importance in Kyrgyzstan, 48 percent of the technical-engineering workers are Russians, and in Uzbekistan, 29 percent are. In Estonia, the Russian-speaking population constitutes one-third. And behind the laws governing citizenship, the land, and privatization, behind the slogans concerning ethnic integrity and the development of the national language and culture, and behind the shouts of "occupiers out!" one discerns only a pitifully sly idea of chasing out the Russians as competitors from the commodity, housing, labor, and land market, the idea of depriving them of their fair share of the wealth created by common efforts.

Even sharper words are expressed by V. Spasibukhov, chairman of the Russian Refugees Committee, who is an engineering systems specialist and who is a refugee from Baku himself.

"What good does it do simply to declare rights if you are walking along the street and people behind you are hitting you on the head with a stick?" he asks. "Of course, this is not being done by the people who till the soil, who take care of the livestock, or harvest the grapes. Look for those who need this kind of action, that is, the politicians. Russia, like any other country, has a moral right and is obliged to protect its fellow countrymen wherever they are, up to and including the turning off of an electrical switch and other emergency economic and political sanctions."

I keep listening attentively to the refugees' stories and taking notes... And I keep hearing, like lights flashing in the night, the words: "My husband is a Russian officer, and today I am ashamed to be a Latvian." "Don't worry, I'll take you," I was told by a Tajik woman when a crowd of teenagers with red eyes surrounded me in front of the store." Chechen friends took out of Groznyy the personal belongings of Ira and Sasha, with whose story I began this article...

KGB Case No. 31451 on Lee Harvey Oswald
92AC2102A Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
7, 8, 11, 13 Aug 92 Morning Edition, 11 Aug 92
Evening Edition

[Article by Sergey Mostovshchikov, IZVESTIYA correspondent: "Case No. 31451: What Information Does the KGB Dossier on the Man Known as the Murderer of U.S. President John Kennedy Contain?"]

[7 Aug p 7]

[Text] *Four years before the assassination of U.S. President Kennedy the Soviet KGB began collecting information on an American named Lee Harvey Oswald, a young man who on 22 November 1963 was indicted for the murder that has become the most mysterious crime of the century. The dossier compiled by the KGB consists of five thick volumes and a small file folder tied together with shoelaces. The documents appear to contain detailed information on some rather strange years in Oswald's life (October 1959 through June 1962), the period when he lived in the USSR after requesting political asylum for reasons unknown.*

The dossier, which has lain in Soviet intelligence archives for the past 30 years marked "No. 31451," remains top secret, with access to it virtually impossible. However, state security officers have agreed to answer some questions about the files preserved in the archives. Furthermore, friends and acquaintances of Oswald who are still in the former USSR remember many details from the life of the man whose name is linked to the assassination of John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

WASHINGTON POST HEALTH/OCTOBER 6, 1992

JFK's Addison's Disease

Physicians Confirm the Adrenal Gland Illness

By David Brown
Washington Post Staff Writer

Physicians who treated John F. Kennedy and examined his body after his death have confirmed that the 35th president had Addison's disease, a chronic illness that was the subject of much rumor and disinformation during his lifetime.

Kennedy was being treated for Addison's disease when he had back surgery in 1954, a member of the surgical team told the editor of the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*, according to this week's issue of the publication. Furthermore, one of the pathologists at the assassinated president's autopsy confirmed that virtually no traces of the adrenal glands were found, the journal said.

The rare illness, which is fatal if untreated, was an open secret during Kennedy's campaign for the presidency and term in office. Nevertheless, political associates, some family members and Kennedy himself denied he had the disease, which was apparently first diagnosed in 1947 or 1948.

Several historians have noted that any association of the youthful president with a serious, chronic illness would have been viewed as a political liability. Consequently, mention of the subject was often clouded by largely semantic arguments that he did not have "classic" Addison's, that he merely had an "insufficiency" of adrenal hormones, or that—because he was being successfully treated for it—he didn't have the illness at all.

The subject arose in *JAMA's* third article this year on the Kennedy assassination and autopsy. Earlier reports concluded that the president was struck from behind by two bullets, disputing conspiracy theories that more than one gunman was involved.

The journal this week contains an interview with Pierre Finck, one of three pathologists who performed a post-mortem examination of the president at the Naval Medical Center, in Bethesda, the night of the assassination. Finck, who now lives in Switzerland, concurred with the two other pathologists—whose interviews were published in May. But he refused to comment whether the president's adrenal glands were found to be diseased.

A confirmation of Addison's disease came from a third pathologist who was present at the autopsy. George D. Lundberg, *JAMA's* editor, says in an editorial that J.T. Boswell, one of the other pathologists, confirmed to him in August that no adrenal glands were visible and that microscopic exam of where they should have been revealed "only a few individual . . . cells."

Lundberg wrote that he also confirmed the longstanding rumor that a patient with Addison's disease described in the journal *A.M.A. Archives of Surgery* in 1955 was Kennedy, then a freshman senator from Massachusetts.

"Case 3" in the article describes the experience of "a man 37 years of age [who] had Addison's disease for seven years . . . Owing to a back injury, he had a great deal of pain which interfered with his daily routine."

The patient underwent spinal fusion at the Hospital for Special Surgery, an affiliate of Cornell University Medical College, in New York City, on Oct. 21, 1954. The focus of the report was the complicated regimen of hormones and intravenous infusions used to treat the man's adrenal disease.

Major surgery on patients with Addison's disease was—and is—considered risky, even when they are treated with hormone replacement. Kennedy, in fact, had numerous post-operative complications and was twice administered the last rites of the Roman Catholic church.

Those complications, which included two serious infections, may have been indirect consequences of his disease, though the doctors who described his case noted he never had "Addisonian crisis," an often fatal collapse of the circulation that comes from having inadequate amounts of adrenal hormones at times of stress.

JAMA confirmed Kennedy's identity with James A. Nicholas, one of the authors of the 1955 case report. Neither he nor Boswell, the autopsy pathologist, could be reached for comment.

There are two adrenal glands, one sitting atop each kidney. They produce more than half a dozen hormones, though the most important are cortisol and aldosterone. Cortisol acts to ensure that even between meals the bloodstream has enough glucose, a form of sugar essential to brain function. Aldosterone prevents the body from losing large quantities of sodium, a mineral necessary to maintain blood pressure and volume.

Animals whose adrenal glands are removed experimentally may live for brief periods but invariably die when confronted with a physiological stress, such as infection or surgery. Under those conditions, the body must produce up to 10 times the normal amount of adrenal hormones per day in order to survive.

Adrenal insufficiency was first described by Thomas Addison, an English physician, in 1855. Patients were thin and weak, had characteristic low blood pressure, anemia and tan skin. On autopsy, the size of their adrenals was greatly reduced, and there was often evidence of tuberculosis infection in the glands.

Physicians now know, however, that Addison's disease usually occurs without evidence of infection. It is presumably the result of autoimmune disease, in which antibodies attack and destroy the gland. The *JAMA* article noted there was no evidence of TB in the remnants of Kennedy's adrenals.

Treatment today consists of daily replacement with adrenal hormones, usually cortisol or prednisone, for the glucose-restoring function, and often also fludrocortisone, for the sodium-restoring function. Today, people with Addison's can expect to lead healthy, normal lives.

In the late 1940s, when Kennedy apparently developed the disease, treatment consisted of the implantation of pellets containing desoxycorticosterone—a weak adrenal hormone—under the skin every three months. In 1949, cortisone was first used, and in 1950 cortisol was synthesized, paving the way for treatment that nearly mimics natural function of the glands. ■

Rowland Evans and Robert Novak

25 OCT 1992 -- A 25

Tough Talk in Moscow

A key foreign policy adviser to Gov. Bill Clinton was described as "shocked" by unmistakable signs of coming disorder in the former Soviet Union during a closed-door Moscow conference with Russian leaders on Russia's "national interests."

The shock privately expressed by Clinton's aide, Michael Mandelbaum, had plenty of company. Henry Kissinger, another participant in the Oct. 10-11 Moscow talk, returned convinced that Russia's present mood of sweet harmony with Washington is temporary and expedient. He has told friends that resurgent Russian nationalism and a return to hegemony over much of the ancient empire is Moscow's real goal.

That should give Clinton nightmares as a campaign devoted to domestic policy comes to a close. The Arkansas governor's experience on national security is nil. What he—or President Bush or Ross Perot—is likely to encounter during the first six months of the new administration is violent disorder on a grand scale in peripheral areas of Russia, plus repudiation of major arms control deals, one of which commits Russia to destruction of all its SS-18 long-range missiles. Clinton's 1994 budget could be critically affected.

"They're just waiting for our election," a Bush administration source told us. "Everyone knows the United States can't move during presidential transitions." Last Thursday, without warning, Moscow canceled a long-planned visit by 20 top-level Senate staff aides on grounds that they were "not wanted" at this moment.

The United States and its European allies may have opened the door to wider chaos in

Central and Eastern Europe with their inability to stop Serbia's "ethnic cleansing" in what used to be Yugoslavia. Under the "saucy for the goose" rule, if the Serbians had a free hand, who will stop the Russians in the Baltics or Moldova, where the 14th Russian Army remains, or in Georgia or Ukraine, a rich new state that Russia considers as much its own heritage as the Kremlin?

The precise role to be played by the increasingly influential and hard-line ex-Soviet officer corps in coming upheavals is unknown, but the military is on the verge of ignoring arms control agreements. In the "joint understanding" guiding the uncompleted START 2 strategic arms control treaty, Moscow agreed to eliminate all 308 of the dreaded 10-warhead SS-18 missiles. But the military has told the United States that Russia will keep 154 SS-18s on the dubious—and unacceptable—proposition of stripping them down to a single warhead.

Equally disturbing to U.S. policy makers is Russia's apparent refusal to carry out the agreed plan for the United States to purchase weapons-grade uranium and plutonium from huge excess stocks in Russia. The deal had seemed airtight, providing the United States with nuclear fuel and the Russians with desperately needed hard currency. But the door has not opened yet, raising questions about who runs Moscow even today and whether sale of weapons-grade nuclear fuel to such third countries as Iran may bring greater profit to Moscow.

Officials here say that although President Yeltsin faces possible repudiation when the Russian Congress meets Dec. 1, it matters little whether he is deposed, considering the shift of policy now seen as inevitable.

Even before Yeltsin took over after the failed August 1991 putsch against Mikhail Gorbachev, Russian foreign policy was designed for smuggling up to Washington following the death of the empire. Several Americans who attended the two-day Moscow session told us what they heard strongly suggested that hard-liners have lain low the past year for one reason: to get what they could out of the United States. The answer—not much.

Paul Goble, the former State Department specialist in Soviet ethnic problems who also attended the Moscow conference, defines the emerging policy as one that will reflect a "growing nostalgia for the U.S.S.R.," motivated by "the sense that all current problems are traceable to the collapse of the old system," instead of to that system's gross imperfections.

Whatever the motivation, Moscow has put its Baltic troop withdrawal on hold, arguing that for reasons of "human rights"—to protect Russian ethnics in the Baltics who are not wanted there—Russian troops must stay. V. N. Trofimov, a top Russian foreign office official, has publicly said that Moscow should exploit the West's devotion to human rights and turn the issue against the Baltics to "destroy their self-cultivated image as victims."

With the United States rendered more or less paralyzed between Nov. 3 and the inauguration on Jan. 20, these disturbing changes in Russian policy pose a challenge to all three contenders, but particularly to Bill Clinton, whose promise of "change" at home could run into immediate trouble from the new Russian threat and its domestic economic impact.

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President Signs Bill Requiring Disclosure of JFK Documents

President Bush signed a bill Monday night requiring government-wide disclosure of documents relating to the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

Bush, however, asserted the power to override the law and exercise what he said was his constitutional authority to keep secret "executive branch deliberations," "law enforcement information," and "national security information."

He said in a two-page statement released yesterday afternoon that he would do this only in "the most extraordinary circumstances," but he complained that the law gives him too little room to prevent disclosure.

"My authority to protect these categories of information comes from the Constitution and cannot be limited by statute," Bush said. "Although only the most extraordinary circumstances would require postponement of the disclosure of documents for reasons other than those recognized in the bill, I cannot abdicate my constitutional responsibility to take such action when necessary."

The law sets up a five-member review board with the power to obtain JFK assassination records from any government office, the CIA and FBI, and committees of Congress. The board can also hold hearings and subpoena witnesses or documents if necessary.

Review board members are to be appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate. Nominations to the panel must be made in 90 days, or by Jan. 25, a few days after the inauguration.

Bush said that "because of legitimate historical interest in this tragic event, all documents about the assassination should be disclosed, except where the strongest possible reasons counsel otherwise."

He said that he had "constitutional" objections to several other provisions in the law, including requirements to consider suggestions from historical and legal organizations in making review board nominations and to submit them in 90 days.

Leonard Weiss, staff director for the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee, said the bill was the product of extensive discussions with affected agencies.

"For the president, at the last second in signing the bill, to suddenly assert authority not in keeping with the letter or spirit of the bill, is to do violence to the legislative process," Weiss said.

JFK: The Files Are Opened

A LOT OF PEOPLE have doubts about the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the official version of the John F. Kennedy assassination. That some of these are fanciful or politically inspired or bizarre does not warrant dismissing them all or simply sneering "conspiracy theory" at any mention of the the great inconsistencies and oddities that mark the story. Spurred by the persistence of legitimate doubts, Congress acted this fall to open the assassination files to the public. On Monday President Bush signed that legislation, and the countdown to full revelation began.

All government offices must immediately begin reviewing, identifying and preparing relevant documents. Within 60 days, the National Archives must establish the President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection, which will receive those documents, prepare guides and indexes and develop plans for public access. Within 90 days, the president is required to appoint a five-member independent review board whose nominations will be sent, under deadline, to the Senate for confirmation. No one who is an employee of the federal government or who has been involved in any of the many assassination investigations may be appointed to the board, which has the authority to order the release of any document.

There are a few exceptions. The release of documents may be postponed by the review board for certain enumerated reasons such as the need to protect the identity of agents ~~in~~ at risk. The president has the same authority with respect to executive branch papers only. In a message released on Tuesday, President Bush interprets this provision far more broadly than the text of the law justifies, a position that will undoubtedly be contested and, if invoked, appealed. Access to photos and X-rays taken during the autopsy would continue to be controlled by the Kennedy family. But a troubling larger exemption for "all records and other material that have been donated to the National Archives pursuant to a deed of gift regulating access to the material" was fortunately removed before the bill was passed.

These files were created in a different era, one that did not emphasize the public's right to see a wide range of government papers and one in which a shocked nation offered little objection to decisions made in the name of protecting the privacy of the murdered president's family and close associates. By now all the information about the assassination belongs to history. The release of these documents should help to answer the many questions that persist. It is good public policy.

Bill to Release JFK Files Moves to White House

01.10.92

By George Lardner Jr.
Washington Post Staff Writer

The House passed a comprehensive JFK records bill yesterday, calling for the disclosure of virtually all the government's files on President John F. Kennedy's assassination and setting up a review board to track them down.

The measure, drafted and passed in the Senate in August, now goes to the White House. The Justice Department has said it would recommend that President Bush sign it.

The records, many still secret, are held by Congress, federal agencies and presidential libraries and include everything from CIA and FBI reports to newspaper clippings and tax returns.

Rep. Jack Brooks (D-Tex.), chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, rescued the bill from death-by-adjournment by accepting the Senate version and dropping

his demand that the board be appointed by a special panel of federal judges rather than by the president.

Brooks contended that his approach, approved by the House in August, would have been preferable to the Senate-backed measure calling for appointment by the president and confirmation by the Senate.

Brooks said he took the step "with some misgivings" but was committed above all to enactment of a bill in this Congress.

Senate Governmental Affairs Committee Chairman John Glenn (D-Ohio), a key author of the Senate measure, said the records would be released with little bureaucratic delay. Even before the review board is appointed, affected agencies would be required to start identifying and organizing all their records pertaining to the JFK assassination.

Those records that could be made public immediately would be

transmitted to a National Archives special collection that would be set up 60 days after the bill became law. Documents that seem to qualify for "postponement" would be sent to the review board for a decision. Its decisions would be final for congressional records and reversible only by the president for executive branch records.

"Postponements" in the release of certain records would be granted only when, for example, disclosure would identify "an intelligence agent whose identity currently requires protection" or confidential sources who would face "substantial risk of harm" if their identities were made public.

It is expected that the board would need three years to complete its work. It would have the power to direct certain agencies to search for additional records or information, and if necessary, investigate the facts of that information.

The board also would have the power to subpoena private parties, conduct hearings and require any government agency "to account in writing for the destruction" of any JFK assassination records.

The measure orders the archivist of the United States to grant public-interest fee waivers for copies of the records.

The JFK records bill, expected to cost \$4.5 million a year, was introduced in March by Senate intelligence committee Chairman David L. Boren (D-Okla.) and Rep. Louis Stokes (D-Ohio), former chairman of the House Assassinations Committee, in response to the renewed controversy sparked by Oliver Stone's film "JFK" and its charges of government conspiracy and coverup regarding the assassination.

Glenn tightened the measure to give the review board more authority and to provide for a systematic disclosure process.

Bill to Release JFK Files Moves to White House

01-10-92

By George Lardner Jr.
Washington Post Staff Writer

The House passed a comprehensive JFK records bill yesterday, calling for the disclosure of virtually all the government's files on President John F. Kennedy's assassination and setting up a review board to track them down.

The measure, drafted and passed in the Senate in August, now goes to the White House. The Justice Department has said it would recommend that President Bush sign it.

The records, many still secret, are held by Congress, federal agencies and presidential libraries and include everything from CIA and FBI reports to newspaper clippings and tax returns.

Rep. Jack Brooks (D-Tex.), chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, rescued the bill from death-by-adjournment by accepting the Senate version and dropping

his demand that the board be appointed by a special panel of federal judges rather than by the president.

Brooks contended that his approach, approved by the House in August, would have been preferable to the Senate-backed measure calling for appointment by the president and confirmation by the Senate.

Brooks said he took the step "with some misgivings" but was committed above all to enactment of a bill in this Congress.

Senate Governmental Affairs Committee Chairman John Glenn (D-Ohio), a key author of the Senate measure, said the records would be released with little bureaucratic delay. Even before the review board is appointed, affected agencies would be required to start identifying and organizing all their records pertaining to the JFK assassination.

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Surgeon tells secrets on JFK wounds, LBJ call

By Hugh Aynesworth
of the WASHINGTON TIMES

FORT WORTH, Texas — A Fort Worth surgeon, who says he operated on Lee Harvey Oswald, claims Lyndon Johnson phoned him during the operation to make sure Oswald made a confession.

Dr. Charles Crenshaw, whose claims are discounted by some experts on the assassination, also contends President Kennedy was hit in the head and the throat by bullets from the front.

Mr. Crenshaw has caused a free-for-all among TV shows vying to air the story told in his book, "JFK: Con-

spiracy of Silence," to be published next week by Penguin/USA.

A spokesman for "Now It Can Be Told," a syndicated interview show hosted by Geraldo Rivera, says "it's certain" it will air the story today. One source said the show got the rights through a loophole.

ABC's "20/20," originally promised exclusive rights by Penguin/USA, will give a reduced report Friday.

Few, however, questioned Mr. Crenshaw's veracity despite reservations by those on the scene at the time of the Kennedy assassination in 1963.

"I can't believe that could have

happened [the call from LBJ] without me being informed of it or hearing about it afterward," said Steve Landregan, acting administrator of Parkland Hospital at the time.

"That's the kind of thing that would have been talked about all over the hospital. I never heard an inkling of anything like that."

"How much money is he going to make out of this?" queried an ex-Parkland doctor, who refused comment. "I just better not get involved."

Dr. Ron Jones, involved in both surgery attempts, said he didn't see Mr. Crenshaw present either time and doubted LBJ called the hospital.

"I would have thought that in gen-

eral we would have known if the president had called and made an inquiry," he said.

Dr. Robert M. McClelland, another surgeon, laughed when told of the assertion about the LBJ call: "It's the first I've heard about it."

Mr. Crenshaw's critics noted that his co-author, Gary Shaw, is a director of the Assassination Research Center in Dallas. This buff's group received \$80,000 from Oliver Stone to help create his less-than-factual movie, "JFK."

There is no doubt Mr. Crenshaw was present in the operating rooms, but some observers contend his role was so minimal that his long-secret

bullet had to have come from the front."

Mr. Crenshaw's view that Kennedy was hit in the throat and head from the front is original, though others once believed the throat wound — enlarged by the insertion of an endotracheal tube before most arrived in the operating room — was an entry wound.

Mr. Crenshaw asserts Johnson in his call asked him to relay "to the operating surgeon, the senior man ... tell him I want a deathbed statement from the assassin."

Neither the nurse he claims answered the phone nor "senior" surgeon Dr. Tom Shirres ever mentioned a call from LBJ.

On neither TV show is Mr. Crenshaw asked to whom he mentioned the LBJ call or if he got a statement from Oswald.

revelations seem suspect.

According to a "20/20" promo, Mr. Crenshaw says he never spoke out because he feared for his career. For years he was chairman of the surgery department of Fort Worth's John Peter Smith Hospital. He says he is now semiretired.

He says he helped place Kennedy in the casket. "I wanted to know and remember this for the rest of my life," he said. "And the rest of my life I will always know he was shot from the front."

"The head wound," he adds, "was in the parietal, occipital area and part of the temporal. It was a huge, blown-out hole. Therefore I know the

The CIA's JFK Secret

The Classified Files Will Show the Agency Believed in a Conspiracy

By James Johnston

Congress at long last is poised to open the so-called "secret" files on the Kennedy assassination from various investigations, beginning in 1963. It wants to satisfy academics and the curious, but the files are likely to set off new controversy.

The files will show that while government officials and the Warren Commission launched a campaign to persuade the public that Lee Harvey Oswald alone plotted to kill John Kennedy, CIA analysts took the opposite position in secret. They believed that even if Oswald was the lone assassin, he may have been the agent of a foreign conspiracy.

The gap between the government's public and the CIA's positions was widest in the days immediately after the president's death. On Nov. 23, 1963, CIA analysts prepared a memorandum covering the facts they knew at the time. They knew that Oswald had once defected to the Soviet Union. They knew that he made a trip to Mexico City two months before the assassination and talked to Soviet Vice Consul Kostikov about a visa. And they believed that Kostikov was a KGB assassination and sabotage expert.

From this, their memorandum argued, there was reason enough to believe that Oswald was part of a foreign plot. If this were true, CIA analysts predicted, then Oswald himself might be killed before he could talk.

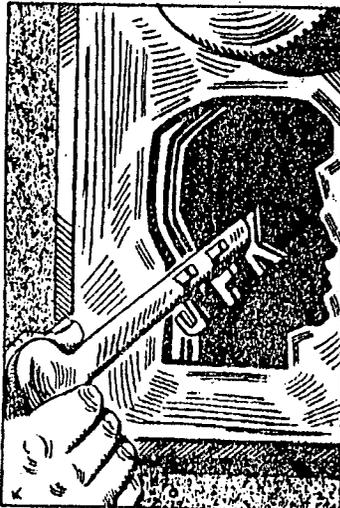
The gist of this memorandum was to be passed through CIA liaison to the FBI—with the warning that Oswald could be in danger. Unfortunately, relations between the two agencies were strained and liaison was awkward; Oswald, while in police custody, was killed before the FBI received the message. The fact that Oswald was murdered, as CIA analysts had warned, fueled their suspicions.

Also on Nov. 23, the CIA asked Mexican authorities to delay questioning Sylvia Duran, an employee at the Cuban Consulate in Mexico City who had talked with Oswald when he went there for a Cuban visa. The CIA, fearing that Duran would reveal a Cuban conspiracy, wanted the questioning delayed until the United States decided how to react.

President Johnson was briefed by CIA Director John McCone during this critical period. McCone's cryptic memoranda omit important details, but may be the only record of what Johnson was told. JFK's sophisticated taping system was removed from the White House on the afternoon of Nov. 22 and, for reasons unknown, there are no tapes from the last two weeks of his administration. Johnson recorded telephone calls on a Dictabelt system he had used as vice president, but no one has yet had access to any presidential tapes from this period.

McCone's memorandum of his first briefing simply indicates that the subject was the assassination. It does not say whether McCone knew (or told LBJ about) CIA concern

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MARTIN KOZLOWSKI FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

over Oswald's safety. McCone's second briefing was at 10 a.m. on Nov. 24. A Cuban conspiracy was certainly a possibility; indeed, the CIA was involved at the time in a plot to kill Fidel Castro. Thus, it is significant that the subject of this briefing was not JFK but rather CIA operational plans against Cuba.

Allegations of a Cuban conspiracy inundated the CIA. On Nov. 25, a man told U.S. Embassy officials in Mexico City that he was at the Cuban Consulate on Sept. 17, 1963. He claimed that Oswald was there and talked about assassination and that the Cubans gave Oswald \$6,500. The CIA later dismissed the story as untrue, but McCone's memoranda reveal that Johnson's concern was such that McCone would brief him for another week.

The story was consistent with other reports the CIA received on Nov. 25. For example, the Mexico City station cabled a reminder that Castro had issued a threat against U.S. leaders in September.

Thus, as of Nov. 25 1963, the CIA had ample reason to suspect that Cubans or Soviets—or both—were involved. Despite this, and just four days after the assassination, the Justice Department advised the White House to declare publicly that Oswald acted alone. Deputy Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach wrote presidential assistant Bill Moyers on Nov. 26:

"It is important that all of the facts surrounding President Kennedy's assassination be made public in a way which will satisfy people in the United States and abroad that all the facts have been told and that a statement to this effect be made now.

"1. The public must be satisfied that Oswald was the assassin; that he did not have confederates who are still at large; and that the evidence was such he would have been convicted at trial.

"2. Speculation about Oswald's motivation ought to be cut off, and we should have some basis for rebutting thought that this was a Communist conspiracy or (as the Iron Curtain press is saying) a right-wing conspiracy to blame it on the Communists."

Johnson wanted to accept this advice. On Nov. 26, he told McCone that the FBI had responsibility for the investigation; the CIA was only to assist. Since the FBI did not share the CIA's suspicions, Johnson's decision seemed to signal that he wanted the FBI view to prevail.

The CIA welcomed playing sec-

ond fiddle because it wanted its own efforts to be as independent as possible. CIA analysts felt that the FBI had been derelict in its handling of Oswald before Kennedy's assassination—and they were right. In fact, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover would secretly discipline 17 agents for mistakes in handling Oswald.

To allay public concern, Johnson, on Nov. 29, created the Warren Commission. Ten days later, the FBI wrapped up its investigation and submitted a five-volume report to the White House and the commission; the FBI report found no evidence of conspiracy. Katzenbach immediately urged the commission to make public the FBI's finding.

At the CIA, however, the situation was different. Responsibility for the continued investigation was given to James Angleton's counterintelligence division, which was targeted against the KGB. There was a world of suspicion—and, not surprisingly, they were suspicious of the FBI's finding.

To Angleton's counterintelligence specialists, aspects of Oswald's odd character, which the FBI and the Warren Commission casually dismissed, seemed perfectly explicable. To them, Oswald acted like an agent of foreign intelligence: He used aliases and post office boxes. Less than two months before Kennedy was shot, he moved his family from New Orleans to Dallas, but lived apart and under an assumed name.

Oswald was in communication with organizations such as the Fair Play for Cuba Committee that may have had foreign ties. Agents often used such innocent-appearing contacts as means of relaying messages. Also suspicious was Oswald's counterfeiting of identity documents. The counterfeits were inferior by CIA standards, but how and why had Oswald learned this?

Then there was Oswald's trip to Mexico City. Agents periodically leave their home country in order to meet their intelligence "handlers" in safehouses. Oswald's six days in Mexico City got him out of the FBI's reach. He went to the Soviet and Cuban consulates to get visas, but the rest of his time was unaccounted for.

If there were a psychological profile for an assassin, Oswald fit it. He was disaffected with the United States and thought life would be better "on the other side." He seemed to lack conscience and could be violent. He had tried suicide once. Assassins and saboteurs with suicidal tendencies were thought willing to undertake recklessly dangerous missions.

These were only suspicions, however. When the Warren Commission's final report was issued in September 1964, the CIA publicly accepted its findings. But, Angleton's secret investigation continued for years, and he was not alone in harboring doubts. LBJ was to say privately that he thought Castro had a hand in the assassination.

The secret files will not reveal a conspiracy to shoot JFK but, as Johnson's remarks suggest, they raise disturbing questions. Did the government believe, and tell the president, that there may have been a conspiracy to assassinate his predecessor? If so, why did it tell the public the opposite?

who do not share Stone's strong faith in Kennedy. When assessing *JFK*, one should ask this question: who else in America has dared to raise such historical issues so powerfully (or at all) in a popular medium? If it is part of the burden of the historical work to make us rethink how we got to where we are, and to make us question values that we and our leaders and our nation live by, then, whatever its flaws, *JFK* has to be among the most important works of American history ever to appear on the screen.

body of preexisting knowledge and debate. To be considered "historical," rather than simply a costume drama that uses the past as an exotic setting for romance and adventure, a film must engage the issues, ideas, data, and arguments of that discourse. Whatever else it does or does not do, *JFK* certainly meets these requirements as a work of history.

The practice of written history is not a single kind of practice. And if that practice is dependent on data, its value and contribution have never been wholly a matter of those data and their accuracy. Certainly, different works of history use data in different ways, make different sorts of contributions to our understanding. Some works of history may be important chiefly for the data they create and deliver, others for their evocation of people and events of a vanished time and place. Some historical works are noted for their elegance of argument or skill at representation, others for raising new questions about the past or for raising old questions for a new generation.

It is the same with historical films. They come in different forms and they undertake different historical tasks. Some evoke the past, bringing it to life, giving us an intense feel for people, places, and moments long past—this surely is one of the glories of the motion picture. (Who can sit through *JFK* without reliving many of the agonies of the 1950s and 1960s that it depicts?) But film may do more than evoke: the historical film can be a stimulus to thought, an intervention into history, a way of re-visioning the past. We do not go to the Hollywood historical film for data but for drama. For the way it intensifies the issues of the past. For the way it shows us the world as process, makes us participate in the confusion, multiplicities, and complexities of events long past.

JFK is a film that undertakes more than one historical burden. Because it chooses as its central strategy an investigation of the past, the film has a self-reflexive edge, one that suggests much about the difficulty of any historical undertaking and the near impossibility of arriving at definitive historical truths. More important, perhaps, *JFK* makes an apparently old issue come to life—indeed, the reaction it has evoked makes it seem like a very successful piece of historical work. Not a work that tells us the truth about the past but one that questions the official truths about the past so provocatively that we are forced once again to look to history and consider what these events mean to us today. Like a good historian, Stone begins *JFK* with a preface that contains a thesis; he uses President Dwight Eisenhower's farewell address, with its warning about the possible effect of the military-industrial complex on the future of our country, to set the stage for a film that will illustrate the prescience of Ike's words. By doing this, Stone forces us to face the kind of large issue that a more sober historian, mired in a slough of information and worried about the judgments of professional colleagues, might find difficult to raise so sharply: has something gone wrong with America since the early sixties?

Director Oliver Stone has been faulted for thinking that many changes in the United States stem from a single act, the killing of John Kennedy, but others who are less sanguine about the judgments and actions of Kennedy may take him as a symbol. Certainly, the experience of the film, like that of any important work of history, resonates well beyond the ideas of its creator and speaks to and for those

person looked but also that this is how he moved, and walked, and gestured, and this is how he sounded when he spoke.

To analyze a historical film is to see how small fictions—settings and clothing, the look and sound of characters—shade into larger and larger inventions. Even the tiniest sorts of fictions are not unimportant factors. At least, not if history is about the meaning of past events. In a medium in which visual evidence is crucial to understanding, such pervasive fictions are major contributors to the meaning of the film, including its historical meaning. So, too, is that elusive, extra-historical element, the aura carried by famous actors and actresses. A star like Kevin Costner, fresh from his award-winning *Dances with Wolves*, cannot simply disappear into the character of Garrison. From that film, he carries for many in the audience a strong feeling of the decent, simple, honest American, the war hero who more than a century ago was critical of a certain kind of expansionist militarism in American life.

LIKE A HISTORY BOOK, a historical film—despite Hollywood's desire for "realism"—is not a window onto the past but a construction of a past; like a history book, a film handles evidence from that past within a certain framework of possibilities and a tradition of practice. For neither the writer of history nor the director of a film is historical literalism a possibility. No matter how literal-minded a director might be, film cannot do more than point to the events of the past. At best, film can approximate historic moments, the things that were once said and done, but it cannot replicate them. Like the book, film will use evidence to create historical works, but this evidence will always be a highly reduced or concentrated sample; given its limited screen time, the film will never provide more than a fraction of the (traditional) data of a scholarly article on the same topic. Even as a lengthy, three-hour film that includes an unusually dense barrage of information, *JFK* must often make major points with sparse evidence or invented images. Within the world of the film, the idea that Kennedy was ready to withdraw American troops from Vietnam, for example, rests on the mention of a single memorandum and the testimony of a fictional character. The notion that black Americans loved Kennedy is conveyed by having a single woman say, "He did so much for this country, for colored people."

What I am suggesting is this: the Hollywood historical film will always include images that are at once invented and yet may still be considered true; true in that they symbolize, condense, or summarize larger amounts of data; true in that they carry out the overall meaning of the past that can be verified, documented, or reasonably argued. But, one may ask, how do we know what can be verified, documented, or reasonably argued? How do we know whether Kennedy was about to withdraw troops or whether he was loved by African Americans? Both of these highly debatable points must be answered from outside the film, from the ongoing discourse of history. From the existing body of historical texts. From their data and arguments. This need for outside verification is not unique to film. Any work about the past, be it a piece of written, visual, or oral history, enters a

agencies and officials of the U.S. government, the aim of the assassination was to get rid of a president who wished to curb the military and end the Cold War, and the "fascist" groups responsible for the assassination and the subsequent cover-up are a clear and continuing threat to what little is left of American democracy.

LET ME PUT IT SIMPLY: if the conventions of the mainstream historical film make it difficult for such works to create a past that stays within the norms by which we judge written history, certain other factors make it impossible. It is not just that most of the data by which we know the past comes from the realm of words and that the filmmaker is always involved in a good deal of translation from one medium to another, attempting to find a visual equivalent for written evidence. It is also that the mainstream historical film is shot through with fiction or invention from smallest of details to largest events. (Historians do not, of course, approve of fiction, aside from the underlying fiction that the past itself can be truly told in neat, linear stories.) Invention occurs for at least two reasons: the requirements of dramatic structure and the need of camera to fill out the specifics of historical scenes.

Drama demands the invention of incidents and characters because historical events rarely occur with the kind of shape, order, and intensity that will keep an audience in its seats. Inventions move the story forward, keep emotions high, and order complex series of events into plausible structures that will fit within filmic time constraints. When *JFK* creates a fascist, homosexual prisoner named Willie O'Keefe to give Garrison the evidence that Clay Shaw was involved with Lee Harvey Oswald, or invents a Deep Throat character in Washington (played by Donald Sutherland) to help Garrison make sense of all the evidence he has gathered by providing a theory to hold it all together, one can see that Oliver Stone is doing no more than finding a plausible, dramatic way of summarizing evidence that comes from too many sources to depict on the screen.

Invention due to the demands of the camera may be a subtler factor, but it is no less significant in shaping the historical film. Consider, for example, something as simple as the furnishings in a room where a historical character sits—Jim Garrison's office or conference room, or Clay Shaw's apartment. Or think of the clothing that characters wear. Or the words they speak. All such elements have to be approximate rather than literal representations. They say: this is more or less the way Garrison's room looked in 1966, or these are the kinds of clothes a character might well have worn, or these are likely examples of the words he or she spoke.

The same is true of individuals. This is not just a matter of the director making up characters. Even historical people become largely fictional on the screen. The very use of an actor to portray someone is itself a fiction. If the person is an actual historical figure such as Garrison, even if the actor looks like the figure (which is not true in *JFK*, for actor Kevin Costner looks little like the real Garrison, who in turn does not look much like Justice Earl Warren, the character he portrays), the film on a literal level says what cannot truly be said: not just that this is how the

AHR Forum
JFK: Historical Fact/Historical Film

ROBERT A. ROSENSTONE

TO THOSE OF US INTERESTED IN HISTORICAL FILMS, the fuss in the media over *JFK* feels familiar. Complaints that the film bends and twists history; accusations that director Oliver Stone willfully mixes fact and fiction, fails to delineate clearly between evidence and speculation, creates characters who never existed and incidents that never occurred—these are the sorts of charges made every time a historical film on a sensitive subject appears. With *JFK*, the controversy is particularly heated because of both the topic and its treatment. The film hits us with a double whammy: one of America's most popular directors not only explores our recent history's most touchy subject but does so in a bravura motion picture that (maybe it's a triple whammy) also takes a highly critical stance toward major branches of the American government.

Complaints over the misuse of history in film seem to be based on two notions: first, that a historical film is no more than a piece of written history transferred to the screen and thus subject to the same rules of historical practice; and, second, that a fact is a fact and history is little more than an organized compilation of such facts. We who write history should find these assertions questionable. At the least, we have to be aware that "facts" never stand alone but are always called forth (or constituted) by the work in which they then become embedded. In order to evaluate the way in which any work of history—including the motion picture—uses facts (or data) to evoke the past, we must investigate the aims, forms, and possibilities of the kind of historical project in which those data appear.

All this is to say something simple but important: a film is not a book. To judge the contribution of a work like *JFK*, we must try to understand just what it is a historical film can do.

As a dramatic motion picture, *JFK* comes to us in a form that has been virtually unexplored by people interested in the study of past events. Neither historians nor filmmakers have given much thought to the most basic questions about the possibilities and standards of history when it is represented in the visual media. Evaluations of historical films in essays and reviews are always made on an individual basis. Certainly, the historical profession has no agreed-upon way to answer any of the following questions: What kind of historical knowledge or understanding can a historical film provide? How can we situate it in relation to written history? What are its responsibilities to the historical "fact"? What can it tell us about the past that the written word cannot?

Such questions are too broad to answer here, but they are good to keep in mind as we think about *JFK*. My aim in what follows is less to deal with the contributions and shortcomings of the film than to approach it as part of a tradition. I want to situate *JFK* as both a certain kind of film and a certain kind of historical film. Placed in this context, the factual "errors" (if one wants to term them that) of the work will appear to be less the fault of the filmmaker than a condition of the medium and the kind of movie he has chosen to make. The contributions (if one wants to call them that) of the film, on the other hand, are in large measure its own. They derive less from the form of the film than from the way that form has been put to use.

THERE IS NO SINGLE WAY TO DO HISTORY ON FILM. The traditional division into the dramatic work and the documentary is increasingly irrelevant as recent films (*JFK* included) often blur the distinction between the two. My own research has suggested that history on film comes in a number of different forms. *JFK*, despite the many documentary elements it contains, belongs to what is certainly the most popular type of film, the Hollywood—or mainstream—drama. This sort of film is marked, as cinema scholars have shown, by a number of characteristics, the chief being its desire to make us believe that what we see in the theater is true. To this end, the mainstream film utilizes a specific film language, a self-effacing, seamless language of shot, editing, and sound designed to make the screen seem no more than a window onto unmediated "reality."

Along with "realism," four other elements are crucial to understanding the mainstream historical film:

Hollywood history is delivered in a story with beginning, middle, end—a story with a moral message and one usually embodied in a progressive view of history.

This story is closed, completed, and, ultimately, simple. Alternative versions of the past are not shown; the *Rashomon* approach is never used in such works.

History is a story of individuals—usually, heroic individuals who do unusual things for the good of others, if not all humankind (ultimately, the audience).

Historical issues are personalized, emotionalized, and dramatized—for film appeals to our feelings as a way of adding to our knowledge or affecting our beliefs.

Such elements go a long way toward explaining the shape of *JFK*. The story is not that of President Kennedy but of Jim Garrison, the heroic, embattled, incorruptible investigator who wishes to make sense of Kennedy's assassination and its apparent cover-up, not just for himself but for his country and its traditions—that is, for the audience, for us. More than almost any other historical film, this one swamps us with information. Some of it, in the black-and-white flashbacks that illustrate the stages of the investigation, is tentative or contradictory. (So much is thrown at us that, on a single viewing, the viewer has difficulty absorbing all the details of events discussed and shown.) Yet, even if contradictions do exist, the main line of the story is closed and completed, and the moral message is clear: the assassination was the result of a conspiracy that involved

the rape-and-rescue erotics of female victimization, may contribute to the shift from heterosexual to homosexual sadomasochism; if this postfeminist movie does not target threatening women, it marginalizes them instead. But the wish that women go away returns to haunt male connections. Moreover, although the story presents homosexual contagion as the cause of the assassination, the spectacle presents it as the consequence, since we meet the primal horde knowing that Kennedy is dead. Homosexual contagion is at once source and result of the killing, making the spread of alternative sexualities one more disaster for which Kennedy's death is to blame.

But the sexual politics of *JFK* is perhaps more the product of Washington men than feminists and gays. It illustrates with particular, sensate force how disorienting powerlessness invades the psyche, threatening to turn men into receptacles for sadomasochistic possession. (American male impotence as the tragedy of Vietnam is explicit in Stone's *Born on the Fourth of July* [1989] and almost as close to the surface in George Bush's Vietnam syndrome.) *JFK* deserves the attention it is getting neither as a political understanding of the assassination and its aftermath nor as a McCarthyite assault on vulnerable elites but rather for making us experience how politically produced paranoid anxieties, somatized on the visually produced mass body, turn into paranoid analysis.

under such tight surveillance that he was watched 24 hours a day. Virtually every method of gathering intelligence information except for chemical substances and psychotropic drugs were employed.

"Well, maybe they did drop a few tablets in his glass, but just the kind to make him let down his guard and be a little more talkative," said the chief of the Belarus KGB.

The dossier has another notable feature. The KGB claims that there is not a single indication in the case file that Oswald was ever interrogated by Soviet intelligence agents. On the one hand that is strange because the circumstances of Oswald's appearance in the USSR and his subsequent behavior should have prompted (and did in fact prompt!) the greatest suspicion on the part of the KGB: in 1959 it was not just every day that a tourist from America so stubbornly insisted on political asylum.

Oswald arrived in Moscow as a tourist on 15 October 1959, staying in Room 320 of the Berlin Hotel. The very next day he went to the authorities to request political asylum and Soviet citizenship—and was almost immediately refused. It was reported to Oswald via the hotel's service bureau for foreigners that his request had been denied, and that he must leave the USSR on 21 October.

On 21 October, at 2:45 pm, U.S. citizen Lee Harvey Oswald opened the veins in his left arm as a sign of protest against his treatment by Soviet authorities. He was taken to Botkinskaya Hospital and his arm sewn up. A note written in English was found on the table in his hotel room. It read: "Did I come here just to find death? I love life."

This life-loving foreigner was so peculiar that he petitioned the USSR Supreme Soviet several more times, asking that it grant him political asylum, would under no circumstances leave the USSR, and on 31 October 1959 made a scene at the U.S. Embassy, where he allegedly publicly renounced his American citizenship and went so far as to toss his passport onto the ambassador's desk.

One would assume that if American intelligence services encountered a Soviet citizen in the same situation they would definitely resort to either a concealed or a direct interrogation. The KGB claims we did not do so. Why not? We probably had our own methods. The request by Oswald, who was clever enough to attempt suicide to gain the attention of the USSR's leaders, was finally granted. Anastas Mikoyan personally gave orders to consider very carefully the American's request for political asylum in a country for which, to all appearances, he felt a great love.

In November 1959 this troublesome individual was granted the right to live in the USSR temporarily, with a residence in Minsk, a city where the KGB was obviously counting on being able to observe the American in calm surroundings. At least it was a long way from the embassy, and he would associate mainly with Soviets. If he did make any espionage contacts they would be more obvious in Minsk.

According to information from Belarusan counterintelligence personnel, that was in fact the main suspicion in regard to the American—that he was working for foreign intelligence agencies. The KGB's main effort to answer this question focused on the dossier, which subsequently grew quite fat. The dossier was marked "Case for agent processing." It is said that that is a term previously used in counterintelligence to mean that the client in question was being "felt out" with the help of a network of agents...

...In January 1960 Oswald moved to the capital of Belorussia and Moscow handed the case over to Minsk, leaving in the file applications from Oswald received by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the USSR Supreme Soviet, a transcript of a conversation with the doctor at Botkinskaya Hospital who sewed up Oswald's slashed arm and who reported to the KGB that in his opinion the American was capable of irrational acts, reports from the external surveillance service in which Oswald is given the code name "Nalim," and apparently some other initial documents as well.

In Belorussia intelligence agents gave the new client another code name—Likhoy [Russian: "valiant" or "dashing"] (apparently a plan on the name Lee Harvey) and set to work on his case painstakingly and diligently. According to a high-ranking counterintelligence officer, only one or two people in the republic KGB had full information about the operation. Several teams were set up, with none of them knowing what the others were doing. According to some sources the Oswald case involved up to 20 agents recruited by the KGB.

You can get an idea of how those agents were hired from the recollections of one of Oswald's closest friends in the USSR: Pavel Golovachev. He worked with the American in an experimental shop at the Gorizont Radio Plant in Minsk, where Oswald had been assigned to work as a metalworker at the lowest skills level.

In January 1960, literally about two weeks after Golovachev made the acquaintance of the foreigner who had unexpectedly appeared in his shop, he met a man in street clothes outside his building who showed identification as KGB agent Aleksandr Fedorovich Kostyukov. At his home 18-year-old Pasha Golovachev was shown photographs of some people that the agent called criminals and was told that it was not good to deal on the black market since he was the son of the pilot Pavel Golovachev, who had been twice awarded the Hero of the Soviet Union medal. Obviously the KGB was counting on the sheer mass of the information to intimidate Pasha and make an informer out of him by "clipping his wings." Finally it was proposed that Golovachev meet with certain people several times a week and tell them everything about Oswald.

Pavel Golovachev will not say whether he agreed to work for the KGB, but judging by what he says it is clear that he has no great love for that organization today, to put it mildly. In 1963, when Oswald was killed while being

transferred to jail, Golovachev wrote a letter to Lee Harvey's widow in America—Marina Prusakova—expressing his condolences. Subsequently he was visited at home by KGB agents, who seized all photographs of Oswald and his wife, along with letters that Oswald sent to Minsk after returning to the United States. Then Golovachev was taken to KGB headquarters, where according to him he was first threatened with prison and then advised to keep a low profile and not say too much. Before they let him go they for some reason forced him to write a request to the Main Post Office asking for his letter back, even though it was long since in the hands of the KGB.

Then Pavel Golovachev was allowed to go home. He assumes that all letters from Oswald addressed to him as well as the negatives of the photographs which have become famous around the world and were included in the Warren Commission's report are still in the KGB archives.

Judging by what other friends of Oswald have said, the KGB dossier must contain stacks of transcripts from the bugging of Lee Harvey's apartment in Minsk. It has been suggested that the apartment was absolutely full of bugging equipment. Some sources in Minsk claim that once the KGB "asked" Oswald's neighbors who lived in the apartment directly above him to leave for two days.

It was probably at that time that everything was put in place. If you look at Oswald's apartment from the street, then it is obvious that the balcony of the apartment one story higher is many times smaller than the balcony of Oswald's apartment. Consequently even a child could climb down into the American's home, much less the KGB. So most likely everything that Oswald said and did in his leisure time was recorded or at least carefully listened to.

In addition to the surveillance, the bugging and agents' reports, the KGB made good use of various "plants," as counterintelligence agents call them.

For example, judging from certain hints, the dossier contains a large number of documents filed in the course of work on the scenario that Oswald was possibly seeking contacts with people who had access to classified information. It is likely that he was repeatedly put in contact with people who allegedly possessed confidential information and was observed to gauge his reaction. On another occasion someone tried to engage him in anti-Soviet conversations. But according to his acquaintances Oswald rarely made that sort of disclosure. All in all he remained very aloof while living in the USSR, and his friends generally tried not to take any interest in the American's past or his plans for the future.

Simultaneously the KGB attempted to determine Oswald's attitude toward works by the founders of Marxism. According to some sources it was noted that the American not only had no interest in political self-improvement, but also generally shirked things like the frequent trade union meetings and mass cultural

events. That evidently aroused further suspicion, because when he requested citizenship Oswald claimed that he was a communist to the core...

Naturally the KGB attempted to carry out all these undertakings as unnoticed as possible. Yet Oswald's friends and acquaintances are convinced that he was well aware that he was under surveillance.

The American's upstairs neighbors—Semen Samuilovich and Mayya Abramovna Gertsovich—recall that Lee Harvey (Alik, as they called him) and his wife Marina Prusakova warned them and asked them to be more careful.

"Marina once said to me something like 'don't socialize with us—that could cause unpleasantness,'" recalls Mayya Gertsovich.

Ernst Titovets, a close friend of Oswald's in Minsk who is today a professor and a department head at the Belarusan Scientific Research Institute for Neurology, Neurosurgery and Physical Therapy, says that Lee Harvey clearly sensed (and perhaps actually knew?) that every step he took in the USSR and his life after his return to the United States would be carefully scrutinized later. For example, there is a curious detail in the Soviet diary allegedly kept by Oswald in the USSR and later published in the West, a diary that he is presumed to have written after his return to the United States. The American describes Titovets as an active Komsomol member. The professor says that may well be, but that he was never particularly noted for his Komsomol activism, and that Oswald was well aware of that. Most likely, Titovets feels, that sentence was written in order to protect his friend in Minsk (if the fact that he kept a diary became known in the USSR), who could have been compromised in the eyes of the Soviet authorities by his friendship with a foreigner.

But the most interesting thing is that Oswald was not actually overly fond of those authorities, despite all his claims to the contrary. In any event, when he left for America in June 1962 he handed his neighbor Mayya Gertsovich the following text in the stairwell of their building:

"Build communism by yourselves! You do not even know how to smile like human beings here!"

The real builders of communism were in fact not smiling, but rather trying very seriously to determine for what purposes the American Lee Harvey Oswald came to the USSR.

Today one can draw the following conclusions:

1. The "Likhoy" described in the dossier did not carry out any intelligence assignments for foreign intelligence agencies and was not of any interest to the KGB.
2. Likewise, KGB representatives flatly deny that he was ever recruited to work for Soviet intelligence. Since there is absolutely no way to confirm that at the present time,

there is only one fact in support of that statement: the relatively large size of the dossier compiled on Oswald. According to experts six volumes is too much for a person who had been recruited by the KGB. In such cases all that would be compiled would be one thin, top secret folder...

But in order to arrive at the first conclusion the KGB spent years watching relentlessly. Day after day the committee shadowed every step by the American, who incidentally led a very socialist life style...

[11 Aug p 3]

{Text}

III. A Metalworker's Job for a Metalworker

While the KGB was filling its fat folders Oswald led a normal Soviet life.

In January 1960 the American citizen, after receiving permission to reside in Minsk, got his first job—helping to build the first workers' and peasants' state in the world. In view of his past—as a U.S. Marine he was stationed at various bases and serviced communications equipment—the authorities assigned Oswald to the Gorizont Radio Plant as a metalworker with the lowest salary of all—R761 [rubles] per month (in very old rubles). Plus a 40-percent progressive piece-rate wage.

Researchers have always been puzzled by the choice of that particular job. The problem is that Shop Number 25, where Oswald was banded a file, hammer, nails and other tools, was called an "experimental" shop and until just recently was considered a restricted area. By no means everybody who worked at the plant was allowed to enter it. So why was an American, and a suspect one at that, immediately given a job at an off-limits facility?

However, according to Mikhail Sychev, current deputy plant director for security, the plant was not secret at all in the early 1960's. Shop Number 25 became a restricted area about two years after Oswald went back to the United States. True, other people have claimed that supposedly some "secret" prototypes were made in the shop while Oswald worked there. But even if that is true, that was not really all that illogical. On the contrary, the KGB would have a splendid opportunity, without any risk, to see how the American would behave.

If something happened he could be picked up with ease.

But he did not have to be picked up. Oswald not only showed no interest in what the plant was manufacturing, to all appearances he was not even terribly interested in his own job.

A former co-worker, Konstantin Yalak, recalls that initially the American was fairly good about performing his simple duties, which consisted of nothing more than basic sawing and screwing in screws. But then metalworker Oswald began to tighten fewer screws and spend

more time with his feet up on the table, complaining that he was not getting paid enough. It was not enough to live on!

The foreign metalworker's co-workers felt that the American was just complaining for the sake of complaining. Some people might be having a hard time, but not him. Oswald did not just live on his wages. As a living specimen of the supremacy of the socialist way of life he received an extra bonus from the Soviet authorities. Each month Oswald was paid approximately R800 by the Red Cross (obviously under the guise of humanitarian aid). These payments continued until "Likhoy" wrote to the authorities announcing his intention of returning to America.

After that he ceased to receive financial assistance.

Financial support was not all he received. Oswald obtained a one-room apartment on the fourth floor of a plant-owned building in the very heart of downtown at 4 Kalinin St. (now 2 Kommunisticheskaya St.) with amazing speed. He arrived at the plant in January 1960 and by March already had something that Soviet citizens had to wait years for.

As Oswald's neighbors Mayya and Semen Gertsovich, who lived on the fifth floor, recall it, there was a large family living directly beneath them in Apartment 24. Those people had been requesting larger living quarters for a long time, yet their requests had repeatedly been denied.

Then one fine day they were given a two-room apartment and asked to move as quickly as possible. Repairs began at once on the now-vacant apartment, and the repairs were done so quickly and so well that it was like nothing that had ever been seen in that building before.

Then the American arrived. Mayya Gertsovich recalls that she made Oswald's acquaintance by coincidence. Once there was no hot water in his apartment and she went out, leaving the tap open. The water suddenly started flowing again and began running down into the apartment of a future suspect in the assassination of the President of the United States. He came upstairs and made a row, threatening to complain to the plant. He spoke Russian poorly, and it was hard to understand him.

They resolved the conflict. But the belligerent foreigner did not greet his neighbors for a long time afterwards...

They got to know each other better when Oswald married a woman from Minsk, Marina Prusakova. During that period he became somewhat calmer, and by then he could speak Russian better.

The Gertsoviches visited him at home and recall that Oswald and his wife lived in very poor circumstances. They had some government-issue furniture that the plant had give them: a bookshelf, a kitchen table, two stools... In short, the place made a dismal impression.

Ernst Titovets, one of Oswald's best friends, states at that point that Oswald bought virtually nothing for the home. From the very start, from the very first months of his life in Minsk, it was somehow obvious that he did not plan on staying in the USSR very long. Titovets claims he had no doubts about that at all, and so was not surprised when Oswald decided to go back to the United States...

At the plant his co-workers reacted to Oswald's departure without any particular sadness or regret. Oswald was pretty soon forgotten. Naturally they remembered him in November 1963, when the name of the former metal-worker from the Gorizont Plant became famous around the world.

In the experimental shop everyone shook their heads in wonder at how such an ordinary and unremarkable person (and in their opinion a poor worker) could go and kill President Kennedy. There was even more talk when Oswald himself was shot point-blank by Jack Ruby, the owner of a seedy bar, while being secretly escorted to jail without security measures.

But they did not shake their heads over it for long: soon afterwards KGB men came to the plant and advised them not to engage idle speculation. And generally to forget the fact that an American had ever been there. Whereupon they went and removed from the local library a form containing a list of books that Oswald had read.

And then they went away.

While the whole world was saying that the man accused of killing Kennedy had lived in the USSR and probably was a Soviet agent, the KGB went back to its dossier and began carefully filing away newspaper clippings from around the world on the progress of the murder investigation of the century.

Later, after the furor had died down a bit, Oswald's Minsk file was finally closed and relegated to the archives. Not only specifically KGB data but also a tremendous amount of extremely interesting information about the habits of the man accused of murdering Kennedy were classified top secret.

[11 Aug p 8]

[Text]

IV. He Was Never a Sharpshooter

Only after 30 years had passed did the existence of a Soviet dossier on Oswald become public knowledge. And it is understandable that the information contained in those KGB file folders is of interest not only to journalists and researchers, but also to some of Oswald's former friends and acquaintances in Minsk.

They feel that they have a right to see the materials in the file that concern them personally. One can only assume that the KGB had the people who came into contact with

the American checked out through its own channels. Anyone who had close relations with the American undoubtedly appears somewhere in the dossier.

It is not hard to imagine today who those people were: the American who worked at the Gorizont Plant had a fairly limited circle of friends. He had a buddy from the shop where he worked—Pasha Golovachev, the son of the pilot Golovachev who was twice awarded the Hero of the Soviet Union medal. He became friends with a man his own age, Erik [Ernst] Titovets, a student at a medical institute, who was introduced to Lee Harvey by a female interpreter. He also socialized with a man named Aleksandr Romanovich Enger, who at the time worked at Gorizont in the radio receiver division. Enger had had an interesting life: as a skilled specialist he was sent abroad to study, then during the war Aleksandr Enger went to Argentina to escape the persecution of the Jews. From there he returned to the USSR. In addition to an interesting life he also had two interesting daughters—Eleonora and Anita-Evelin. Most importantly, Enger spoke English.

As Titovets recalls, a chance to speak his native language was important to Oswald—the American spoke Russian poorly. At the time Titovets himself was very interested in English, and since in the 1960's it was difficult to find someone to talk with who was fluent in the language he attempted to spend as much time as possible with Oswald. Ernst Petrovich [Titovets] now recalls that at first he regarded the American as something of a talking machine or a walking textbook. He tape-recorded Oswald's voice, and then with the studiousness of a future professor analyzed the features of his pronunciation, his vocabulary, and so on. Incidentally, Titovets still has those tapes, along with many letters written from America by Oswald, at his home—for some reason the KGB did not seize them.

Naturally Oswald and Titovets did not just speak English together at the time. They were 20 years old, and there were plenty of attractive girls in Minsk. So the two buddies probably had something to keep them occupied.

The pair were regulars at dances and in groups of young people.

It is difficult to say what else Lee Harvey did while he was in Minsk... It appears that he never did anything for very long. For instance, he bought a camera, but then never learned to take pictures very well.

He bought a radio so he could listen to Voice of America, which at that time was not being jammed here. Incidentally, that radio once broke and Oswald—a U.S. Marine who had specialized in electronics—could not repair it. His friends helped him out—all he would have had to do was straighten out a little plate. (Incidentally, even that incident is recorded in the dossier—counterintelligence obviously concluded that Oswald could not grasp even the simplest radio devices, and therefore had not undergone any special intelligence training).

Generally speaking the Belorussian KGB came up with the wildest notions. For instance, counterintelligence was very upset when in August 1960 Oswald joined the plant hunting club and bought a single-barreled TOZ [Tul'skiy oruzheynyy zavod—Tula Weapons Plant] hunting rifle. Later, after Kennedy was killed, it was that rifle that gave rise to the widely circulated stories and speculation that Oswald had always been crazy about weapons and never missed a chance to practice shooting. His wife Marina Prusakova, in her memoirs published in the West, also pointedly focused on this hunting toy, which Oswald allegedly made a great fuss over.

Naturally at the time the KGB was not aware of how important every detail of Lee Harvey's relationship with weapons would be to the world.

When counterintelligence found out about the TOZ it came up with its own version: "Likhoy" wanted to use hunting as an excuse to wander around in the vicinity of secret facilities.

Of course the KGB received a detailed report on every trip to the woods. True, it did not discover anything criminal—Oswald was not looking for missile silos and did not take any strolls under barbed wire. But in this connection a very interesting detail did come out: the American who, according to the official version of Kennedy's assassination, was a super-sniper actually shot very poorly. Very poorly...

That is confirmed by David Zvagskiy, formerly head of the Gorizont Plant's physical culture club. According to him a shooting match was once held at the plant. On that occasion everyone was given a Margolin pistol and berded onto the shooting range—to prepare "for labor and defense," as the saying went.

Zvagskiy remembers Oswald well. He arrived at the match in a yellow leather jacket. He held the pistol in two hands, drew it cowboy-style and took aim. They tried to explain to him that here in the USSR that was not the way people shot. To which Oswald replied that, well, that was the way they did it over there. He proceeded to fire two or three shots at a fairly large target from a distance of 25 meters. David Zvagskiy says that he would give the results a "three"—there were other people at the plant who were much better shots.

After the match Oswald was not seen at the shooting range again.

As for the TOZ, the metalworker with the code name "Likhoy" did not keep it very long: after a few trips into the woods Oswald sold it to a second-hand store. For 18 rubles. A fact which, incidentally, is also recorded in the KGB dossier, along with all the rest of the American's leisure time activities.

People in the employ of the KGB were present at every dance, party or festival attended by the U.S. citizen while he was in Minsk. Maybe he danced with them, had a drink with them or talked with them, never realizing that

every step he took was being recorded and filed away in those secret cardboard files.

Just as Oswald could not have guessed that the evening of 17 March 1961 when he and Erik Titovets went to a dance on the medical institute's evening at the Palace of Trade Unions would also be painstakingly described.

The dossier mentions the fact that that was the day he made the acquaintance of a 19-year-old Minsk pharmacy worker named Marina Prusakova, the woman who two months later would become his wife.

The story of that marriage is a topic in itself...

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[Text]

V. In Love by His Own Choice?

Minsk pharmacy employee Marina Prusakova, who has gone down in history thanks to her spouse, still prompts many questions and hypotheses among students of the Kennedy assassination.

For example: was Oswald's Soviet wife a KGB agent? If not, then why is she listed in some documents as Marina Nikolayevna and in others as Marina Aleksandrovna? Why should Oswald have married a Russian woman at all? Could he have come to the USSR with the prior intention of simply living here for a short time and finding the first female citizen who came his way in order to eventually compromise the Soviet Union after a brilliantly planned and executed FBI/CIA assassination of Kennedy?

The latter version is currently the most actively discussed around the world, and many people are inclined to consider it the most likely. History will probably judge who is right and who is wrong. The facts tell us the following.

People who are familiar with the Soviet dossier on Oswald swear that Marina Prusakova was not working for the KGB. The irregularities in connection with her patronymic are purely a family matter. Her father was in fact named Nikolay, and thus she was Nikolayevna. But her mother remarried after her daughter was born, and her second husband was named Aleksandr Medvedev. Obviously the patronymic Aleksandrovna showed up in some places because of her stepfather—merely the result of a mistake.

Marina's early life was a difficult one. Her mother died, her stepfather married another woman, and she was a complete stranger in the new woman's house. Then she moved to Minsk, where she lived with relatives—a maternal uncle named Ilya Vasilyevich Prusakov and his wife Valentina Guryevna Prusakova. There she got a job in a pharmacy.

Fate was preparing a future for her anywhere but in a pharmacy.

In early March 1961 she met Oswald at a dance at the Place of Trade Unions. After that evening he almost immediately became ill with an ear infection.

The American was sent to the hospital, and Marina began to visit him. Less than two months later, on 31 April 1961, the marriage of citizen Marina Nikolayevna Prusakova, Russian, born 1941 in the city of Molotovsk, Arkhangelsk Oblast, and U.S. citizen Lee Harvey Oswald, born 1939 in New Orleans, was recorded by the state registry office in Minsk's Leninskiy Rayon as file No. 416.

The speed with which Prusakova's marriage to the foreigner was registered is enviable, since nowadays it takes about three months between the time one submits a marriage application and the actual marriage. How could it be that the marriage of an American was approved so rapidly, and in the 1960's at that? That seems strange—more than a little strange. On the other hand, the explanation could be quite simple: though we were experiencing a thaw with America, we still continued to paternalistically chide it for its capitalism, and suddenly here was this propaganda tidbit. One of their people had defected to us, and fallen in love with a Soviet citizen to boot. Why not?

The coincidence just seemed a bit strange.

In moments of openness Marina Prusakova complained to her neighbor Mayya Gertsova that her husband was a tyrant and was always making a row about something, that he brought virtually no money home, and that he demanded rare steak and wine for breakfast. He really did not love her at all, and that was probably his assignment—to marry her. When it suddenly became clear that Oswald was preparing to leave for the United States, Marina said that there was no way that she would go to America, and that her husband was teaching her English but that she had no desire to speak that language.

Once her neighbors even tried to convince her to go to America. They argued that Oswald's mother lived there, so maybe things would be easier for them there. In Minsk there was virtually no furniture in their home.

Lee Harvey's first daughter, whom he named June-Marina, was born in 1962 and slept in a washtub. What kind of life was that?

But Marina told her neighbors that America was not for her.

To hear Oswald's friends in Minsk tell it, things were a bit different. Citizen Prusakova had a reputation in Minsk as a woman who was a little fickle, to put it mildly. According to information from several sources, in America Oswald once even hit Marina when he accidentally discovered that she was writing to some man in Minsk: a letter was returned because Marina had not put enough postage on it.

Oswald's friend Ernst Titovets is convinced that Prusakova, being a very practical woman, was the one who

sought out an American to marry. Oswald was dating and had proposed to another woman, who was working as an assembler in the same shop where he worked as a metalworker. But she rejected the American, who appeared to have actually loved her.

Nevertheless, Lee Harvey's marriage to Marina in no way changed his ideas on the sacredness of the institution of marriage. Ernst Titovets claims that Oswald literally worshipped the family, and after the birth of his daughter was a very changed man. He was the one who washed and ironed his daughter's diapers and looked after her. Marina, in the opinion of Titovets and Pavel Golovachev, another close friend of Oswald's, was a sly young woman, and all her protestations that she did not want to go to America were most likely either coquetry or pretence. By the time she left for the United States she was making derogatory remarks about the socialist system as well as any American could have done.

In response Oswald told her something approximately like this: "No matter what happens to you in the future, never say anything bad about the Soviet Union."

Which, incidentally, did not keep Oswald on the day of his departure from Minsk, while standing in the stairwell of their building with Marina, a suitcase, a backpack and a three-month-old daughter in his arms, from telling his neighbor to go on building communism herself, without any help from him.

That farewell to his neighbor took a minute, maybe less. Yet according to several sources it took Oswald more than a year-and-a-half to say those words.

There is evidence that he first declared his intention to return to the United States as early as December 1960, when he had only lived in the USSR for a little over a year. What about the superiority of the socialist way of life? Who would flee from a country where universal happiness prevailed?

It is said that attempts were even made to prevent the American from leaving. Pavel Golovachev, one of Oswald's friends, relates how once Lee Harvey signed up for an excursion to Moscow with other plant workers. But he was told that the excursion had been cancelled, even though it actually took place. Some of Oswald's former colleagues repeatedly told me about rumors circulating at the time that once Oswald tried to go to Moscow by train but was taken off the train and sent home—supposedly because movement of foreigners within the country was strictly regulated.

Yet, on the other hand, what point was there in working so persistently to hold on to him? The KGB had already written him off when it came to the conclusion that he was hopelessly uninteresting to the Soviet intelligence services. Furthermore, Lee Harvey Oswald was still an American citizen; he did not hold a passport with the hammer-and-sickle cover at all. (There was a story that he allegedly threw his American passport on a desk in the embassy and left it there. In fact he kept his U.S.

passport—No. 1733242—the whole time he lived in the USSR, and that is confirmed by KGB information.)

Clearly, too much pressure on "Likhoy" could turn into a scandal.

Furthermore, the U.S. Embassy, which Oswald did eventually reach, obviously took an interest in him as well. Buying tickets to America took money. According to some sources about \$400. There was nowhere a metal-worker could have gotten that amount...

Yet nevertheless he left with his wife and child. His mother wrote to him that she could not send him the money for the trip because she was saving up to help get the family settled when they arrived. So it must be assumed that Oswald got help from the embassy.

It was in connection with the departure of Lee Harvey Oswald and Marina that the KGB added an additional volume—the sixth—to the dossier. That volume contained materials gathered in the course of a special investigation conducted prior to their departure.

It is said that this was a customary procedure in such cases. Questionnaires, permission to exit, questioning of relatives, affidavits, forms on knowledge of military secrets and state secrets, information on loyalty to the socialist system... It appears that nothing serious was found, since the sixth folder is the smallest of all the volumes in the dossier, and probably contains only a few documents.

Of course, no one knows what kind of documents they are.

But it is interesting to note that one fine day, after gathering up his things, Oswald went to the Minsk train station. There to see him off were the Engers—a family he was friends with—and his friend Pavel Golovachev. Ernst Titovets, cited in all the sources as Oswald's best friend, did not come to see his friend off, later explaining that he could not because he was busy. Golovachev took a picture of the young couple saying goodbye from the window of the train as it pulled out of the station. That train carried away from Minsk the mystery of Lee Harvey Oswald, the main accused of killing Kennedy.

Fact: not a single one of the people I interviewed in Minsk believed for a second that the American they knew 30 years ago was capable of killing the President of the United States.

Speaking separately they all repeated the same thing: Oswald was merely set up to take the fall. He got involved in a plot in which he was used as bait by the very major forces which actually carried out the assassination.

Ernst Titovets is even writing a book on this subject, investigating the moral aspects of sacrificing an individual human life for political purposes...

KGB representatives who are familiar with the contents of dossier No. 31451 are also convinced that Lee Harvey Oswald was not independently capable of preparing and carrying out an undertaking as major as Kennedy's assassination. It appears that to counterintelligence officers in this country this is a matter of some sort of strange professional jealousy. How could it be, they reason, that we could write him off as a person absolutely unsuited to carry out any serious assignments, as an ordinary and unremarkable individual, and then that less than one year after leaving the USSR for the United States he could kill the President of the United States?! Does that mean that the round-the-clock surveillance, the tricks and traps, the scenarios and suppositions, in short, all the KGB work that is being kept secret to this very day, were simply worthless?

KGB personnel are clearly not fond of such conclusions. Some of them cling to the theory that Oswald was just a link in a very major operation, one in which he was simply assigned a role, with no concept of the overall scale of the operation. And even that was more than Minsk knew...

...Here the reaction to the news of Kennedy's assassination was unique. On 23 November 1963, one day after the tragedy, what had happened was broadcast on television, along with a photograph of the man arrested for assassinating the President of the United States.

It was Lee Harvey Oswald.

"Good lord, that's our Alik! That can't be!" exclaimed Mayya Gertsovich, who had once tried to explain to the future suspect in the Kennedy assassination that she had accidentally let water run down into his apartment, and that it was not worth complaining to the plant about.

ECONOMIC & SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Chairman Outlines Role of 'Committee on Innovations, Investments'

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[Interview with Yuriy Petrovich Pimoshenko, chairman of the Committee on Innovations and Investments and vice president of Russia's Union of Innovation Enterprises, by Igor Fedorov, ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI correspondent; date and place not given: "Of Course, There Is a Risk... Nevertheless, Foreign Businessmen Are Ready To Invest Assets in Expanding Our Production"]

[Text] The Committee on Innovations and Investments has been established in Russia's Chamber of Commerce and Industry. However, before discussing the problems of investments, our correspondent asked Yuriy Pimoshenko, the committee's chairman and vice president of Russia's Union of Innovation Enterprises:

[Fedorov] Various committees, commissions and sub-commissions are being formed today. Besides yours,

Money can't buy the KGB file on Oswald

OUT OF RUSSIA

Peter Pringle



MOSCOW — Somebody, so the story goes, is willing to pay \$50m (£26m) for the KGB's file on Lee Harvey Oswald, the presumed assassin of President Kennedy. The offer arrived on the desk of the man who now has the file, Eduard Shirkovsky, the former KGB chief in Minsk, but he is not selling — a fact that makes some people think the file must contain documents that would throw light on the murky relationship between Oswald and the KGB.

Mr Shirkovsky says the dossier contains no such information. He is keeping the file, he claims, as a matter of national pride because it was composed by agents of the Belarus KGB, not Moscow KGB, and Belarus is now an independent state.

For some months the new and improved, independent *Izvestia* newspaper, formerly the stodgy old Soviet organ, has been on the trail of the file and has talked to former officials who have either seen the dossier or knew Oswald when he lived in Minsk. Mr Shirkovsky talked, but refused to arrange interviews with KGB agents.

The Oswald dossier, No 31451, consists of five thick volumes and a small folder covering the strange years of Oswald's life from October 1959 to June 1962 when he lived in the former Soviet Union, having persuaded the KGB that an ex-US marine could have become a "Communist to the marrow", as he described himself. To prove it, he attempted to commit suicide by cutting the veins in his left hand after he was refused political asylum.

He was whisked into hospital and granted temporary residence in Minsk, where he got a job as an assembly worker in a radio factory, was assigned 20 Minsk KGB agents who were supposed to see if he were worth "develop-

ing" as an agent, and was given the code-name "Likhoi".

None of the agents knew what the others were doing and sometimes even accused each other of having too close a relationship with foreigners — ie with Oswald. One of the Minsk agents, Pavel Golovachev, met Oswald at the factory and became friends with him. He was once accused by another agent of *fartsovka* — buying goods from foreigners and selling them for profit.

Oswald's flat in Minsk was bugged. His upstairs neighbours were asked to leave their flat to allow the bugs to be

inserted. But the agents drew a blank. They also concluded that Oswald was not spy material and that he was not spying for any Western intelligence service. The KGB apparently considered him so low grade that they could not believe that he "acted alone", as the official Warren Commission of inquiry concluded, in Kennedy's assassination.

In Minsk, Oswald married Marina Prusakova, who worked in a chemist's shop, who still tweaks the curiosity of Kennedy assassination buffs. They wonder whether she might have been a KGB plant. Why, for example, was her

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Her marriage to Oswald is another curiosity less easily dismissed. He met her at a dance in Minsk in March 1961 and was married within two months. This was quick even for a Soviet marriage. *Izvestia* suggests it might have been a primitive propaganda stunt: an American asks for asylum and falls in love with a Russian girl. The stuff of socialist dreams.

When Oswald became disillusioned with Soviet society, his initial efforts to return to America were thwarted. Oswald, Marina and his newly-born daughter finally left, after telling a neighbour: "You go on building your Communism by yourselves. You can't even smile like human beings here."

Among Oswald's friends who went to see him off at Minsk railway station was Pavel Golovachev, a KGB agent who photographed the couple in the compartment window. When Oswald was killed on his way to prison after the assassination, Golovachev wrote Marina a letter of condolence. Later the KGB came to his flat and took away all photographs of Oswald and his wife, and Golovachev was threatened with imprisonment if he did not keep quiet about his relationship with Oswald.

Until Mr Shirkovsky, or his successors, can be persuaded to part with the dossier — for money, or perhaps the higher interests of history — that is as far as the story goes.

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

The Independent
Date 21 Aug. 1992

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When Oswald became disillusioned

The Independent (London), August 21, 1992, p. 8.

Newsweek _____
Time _____
U.S. News & World Report *p.28*
Date *17 August 1992*

JFK

THE UNFOLDED STORY OF THE WARREN COMMISSION

In a dark Capitol Hill basement in early 1964, only the hum of a movie projector breaks the tense silence. On screen, 14 seconds of a grainy home movie flicker over and over, beginning with John F. Kennedy waving from his limousine and ending with his head exploding in a bloody spray. As they watch, staffers of the Warren Commission feel their first theory of the assassination evaporating: that a lone gunman hit Kennedy with one shot and Texas Gov. John Connally with a second. From the instant JFK



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clutches his throat to Connally's first wince, there is too little time for Lee Harvey Oswald to have fired his rifle twice. There must have been two assassins, the staffers think. One, David Belin, even calls his wife to say there was a second gunman.

That Warren Commission investigators considered a second-gunman theory is one of countless overlooked or never revealed details about their work. Today, one of the most important criminal investigations in U.S. history is also one of the most misunderstood; critics think the commission either hid the real circumstances of JFK's assassination or negligently disregarded the truth. And the past year, filled with conspiracy accusations popularized by Oliver Stone's movie "JFK," has so deepened public skepticism that, 28 years after it concluded its work, only 10 percent of Americans believe the commission's central finding—that Oswald acted alone. Under pressure, Congress will soon establish a panel to screen for release the million-plus pages of federal files on the assassination. And this week, the American Bar Association is staging a mock trial of Oswald to test whether a jury—had one had the chance—could have reached the same conclusion as the commission.

Yet for all the doubt, the record of how the commission did its work is thin. To tell the untold story of the Warren Commission, *U.S. News* reviewed thousands of pages of members' papers and interviewed the surviving 12 attorneys who conducted the probe, the one living ex-commissioner (former President Gerald Ford) and numerous staffers who had roles. Spurred by the new criticism, participants shared previously undisclosed memories and papers. Critics may charge that their version of the investigation is self-serving. But the fact remains that, despite flaws, the principal findings of the Warren investigation have withstood virtually every assault.

A lawyery beginning.
"Our only client is the truth." With that somber statement—very much in keeping with his personality—Warren welcomed his staff on Jan. 20, 1964, in the new Veterans of Foreign Wars building near the Supreme Court. Seven Establishment pillars were to run the inves-

tigation—Warren, Sens. Richard Russell of Georgia and John Sherman Cooper of Kentucky, Reps. Ford of Michigan and Hale Boggs of Louisiana, former Central Intelligence Director Allen Dulles and diplomat-banker John McCloy. As it turned out, the staffers, not the great men whose names the world recalls, were the real Warren Commission.

President Lyndon Johnson had to pressure some commissioners to take the job, and in fact, these busy men ignored most day-to-day operations. The retired Dulles dropped by, often merely to shoot the breeze. Russell drafted a letter of resignation to LBJ, furious at not being notified of an early meeting. Even when notified, he came to fewer meetings than any other commissioner. Warren was the exception; he arrived at 8 a.m. before going to the Supreme Court, returning late in the day for a few more hours.

Warren never considered hiring anyone outside the legal profession for the main staff. In some ways, that decision was crucial. Lawyers, by inclination and training, were drawn to unified explanations for the assassination. Accustomed to ordering vast universes of facts, they found it difficult to imagine the murky conspiracy theories that might have come more easily to private investigators.

J. Lee Rankin, a top Eisenhower Justice Department official and the commission's general counsel, chose two main aides. Norman Redlich, a 38-year-old New York University law professor, oversaw the investigation; Howard Willens, a 32-year-old Justice Department criminal-division lawyer, ran day-to-day operations. Résumés flooded the commission, but few, if any, of the unsolicited applications led to a job. Instead, Redlich and Willens surveyed friends for bright young lawyers. "It was an old-boys network," says Wesley Liebeler, who got his job through law-school classmates.

The principal staffers were divided into five pairs—one older and one younger lawyer—each assigned to particular issues. Some of the senior lawyers, like the commission members, tended to keep a distance. Francis Adams, a former New York City police commissioner, was so often absent that when he showed up in the middle of March, Warren mistook him for a witness.

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An old-fashioned brake.

The lawyers, stunned like the rest of the nation by the assassination, had left behind jobs and families to come to Washington. To them, the 72-year-old Warren was a giant whose reputation for integrity gave weight to their efforts. Yet his sense of propriety also served as a brake on the staff's ability to solve the mystery. He tended to see the job as a homicide investigation much like the cases he had handled as a young California prosecutor. He thought it was enough to establish beyond a reasonable doubt that Oswald shot Kennedy.

There were humorous examples of Warren's stern influence. In May, on his 33rd birthday, the tall, red-headed Liebler began growing a beard. Warren, who wanted to avoid criticism that the commission was harboring "beatniks," expressed his displeasure. Liebler, a Goldwater Republican and hardly the bohemian his beard suggested, shaved the whiskers under protest.

But Warren's ways also created more serious problems. His memory of McCarthyism was still fresh, and, contrary to "JFK's" portrayal, his fear of big-government abuses made him an unlikely conspirator. Still, some staffers thought him too concerned about the feelings of witnesses. He allowed no back-room deals to pry loose evidence, no private interrogations without a stenographer, no polygraphs. Accustomed to debriefing witnesses before depositions, the staff's criminal lawyers chafed at the precautions. (Apparently, no one told Warren

of the Secret Service agent who shoved a gun into the back of a Dallas store owner who objected when investigators brought Oswald's wife Marina into his shop to refresh her memory for testimony.)

Warren relented on a polygraph for Jack Ruby because Oswald's killer insisted on a test. But staff lawyer Arlen Specter, now a U.S. senator from Pennsylvania, says Warren later regretted the decision, remarking on a flight from Dallas to Washington that he disliked "Big Brother paraphernalia."

Warren's sense of hierarchy created tension over who would question witnesses. The junior staff had the best grasp of the facts, but with figures like Marina Oswald, Warren allowed only commissioners or Rankin to participate. He made an exception for Specter, who was in Dallas the day of Ruby's interview.

Excluded from the session, Specter went to the sheriff's office to watch a Philadelphia Phillies-San Francisco Giants baseball game. Suddenly a Secret Service agent announced that Ruby, who had said he shot Oswald partly to show that "Jews have guts," wanted someone in the room who was Jewish. Specter spoke privately with Ruby, who said he wanted Warren to take him back to Washington, away from the Texas authorities, whom Ruby suspected of antisemitism.

Though it might have been an impediment, Warren's fairness was also a bulwark for the investigation. Starting in February, for instance, critics, including Rep. John Anderson (later a presidential candidate) and radio commentator Fulton Lewis Jr., assailed Redlich for his membership on a civil-liberties panel and because his name had appeared as co-author with an alleged Communist sympathizer on a magazine article. (Redlich had never worked with the other author; the magazine had merged separate articles, giving joint credit.) The protests led to an intensified FBI check that included interviews with elevator operators in Redlich's New York apartment, his vacation neighbors in Vermont and even the obstetrician who had delivered him.

Warren responded to the barrage of mail he received with form letters insisting that anticommunist commissioners McCloy and Dulles would "protect the national interest." The storm continued until May, when Republican congressman Ford sought dismissal of Redlich, though the FBI had cleared him. An angry Warren urged the commission to keep Redlich, which it did.

The conspiracy conundrum. "If we find out it was the Russians, will it mean World War III?" a lawyer would ask. "And if LBJ had a role, will we be allowed to say so?" This was a familiar game, played often over dinner at the Monocle, a Capitol Hill restaurant. The lawyers were joking, but they knew this was more than a simple criminal investigation. Corporate lawyer David Slawson, assigned to explore foreign conspiracy possibilities, leaped into the mirrored world of espionage. Rankin had warned him to rule out no one. "not

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even the CIA." If that led anywhere, Slawson joked, he would be found dead of a heart attack at 33.

The conspiracy theories had swirled from the moment shots rang out in Dealey Plaza. Rumors often determined which witnesses the commission called (such as conspiracy theorist Mark Lane), which leads it investigated and even how it wrote its report, heavily emphasizing a re-creation of Oswald's life as an insignificant loser driven to leave his mark on history. Oswald's shadowy past—defection to the Soviet Union, marriage to a Russian wife, involvement with a pro-Castro group, mysterious 1963 trip to Mexico—fed the theories.

The conspiracy theories inevitably raised questions about the commission's dependence on the CIA and FBI. The lawyers admired their sophisticated CIA contacts, many from the same Ivy League schools they had attended. The FBI men, by contrast, seemed plodding.

After the FBI came under fire for failing to protect JFK, its agents knew their reputation was on the line and tended toward overkill responding to staff requests. At one point, Redlich says, a Dallas store owner insisted that the Oswalds had been in his shop on a day when investigators were convinced he was elsewhere. The tipster recalled a customer who had discussed with Marina the coincidence that both gave birth on the same day. In an unsuccessful search for the customer, FBI agents researched every baby born in the Dallas-Fort Worth area on that particular day. Redlich sent out the request late one week. By Monday morning, he had a stack of reports on his desk.

But the lawyers wondered whether the agencies were manipulating them. Early on, the staff learned the FBI had hidden the fact that agent James Hosty's name was in Oswald's address book. Marina had written the name when Hosty visited her house a few weeks before the assassination asking about Oswald. The lawyers quickly realized that Director J. Edgar Hoover would do whatever it took to shield the FBI from criticism.

The CIA, too, was guilty of selective disclosure. Along with Robert Kennedy and even Commissioner Dulles, the agency never revealed details about its botched assassination attempts on Fidel Castro. An even bigger problem arose in February 1964 when a prize KGB official defected and dropped a bombshell: Yuri Nosenko claimed to have handled Oswald's defection in 1959.

Nosenko said Oswald was not a Soviet agent. But James Jesus Angleton, the agency's counterintelligence chief, concluded Nosenko couldn't be trusted.

Slawson and William Coleman, investigating Oswald's foreign forays, thought this explained the CIA's refusal to let commissioners interview Nosenko. But there was another reason. After a brutal polygraph test on April 4 at a Virginia safe house, two CIA agents locked Nosenko in a 10-by-10-foot cell. He spent the next four years under illegal CIA house arrest. Later, Angleton indirectly helped undermine the commission's credibility by leaking detailed suspicions about Oswald's KGB connections. Ironically, such doubts spawned theories about CIA complicity in a coverup.

The lawyers tried to use conspiracy theorists, who were themselves trying to use the probe as a stage for their own accusations. In a secret meeting, Howard Willens listened to journalist Thomas Buchanan, who was soon to publish an early conspiracy-theory book, lay out his suspicions. Willens and Alfred Goldberg, the commission's historian, then wrote an appendix casting doubt on 127 "speculations," including Buchanan's. The lawyers also relied on the work of many spy agencies. Wiretap transcripts and spy photos are part of the secret files Congress may soon open.

All the cloak-and-dagger activity—as well as the intense public interest in the investigation—required a level of secrecy that even the lawyers found onerous. Liebeler recalls being summoned to see Rankin and Redlich. On one of his weekly flights to his Vermont vacation home, Liebeler had taken a transcript of Marina's testimony. A retired military-intelligence officer on the plane noticed the classified documents and reported the breach to the FBI. Stone-faced, Rankin told Liebeler that "Edgar" [Hoover] was concerned. Then, Rankin and Redlich started laughing, knowing that Liebeler was chastened enough by that point.

Yet the very agencies responsible for keeping the secrets seemed to apply varying standards. Autopsy doctors at Bethesda Naval Hospital at first refused to speak to Specter because he had no commission ID card. Meanwhile, in Mexico City, CIA agents took Slawson and Coleman into a bunker to report what they knew from a Cuban Embassy "asset"—a CIA spy. Above ground, the agents gave the lawyers a tour of surveillance devices trained on the Soviet and Cuban embassies. No one cared that

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neither lawyer had security clearance.

From the beginning, the lawyers found it hard to deal with conspiracy theories. The problem, as Willens and Redlich discussed, was that pursuing leads based on limited information often meant entering black holes of conjecture. It was far easier to use hard facts to blunt such speculation. To check out the hypothesis that some entity—perhaps the FBI or Cuba—had paid Oswald, the lawyers traced 17 months of Oswald's income and expenditures. Richard Mosk, a junior staffer, even double-checked Oswald's \$3.87 *Time* magazine subscription (when Mosk called the magazine, a confused subscription supervisor asked, "Where is Mr. Oswald now?"). The discrepancy between income and expenditures came to \$164.10. That, with Marina's tales of Lee's frugality, was enough for the staff to accept that Oswald had no patrons.

Indeed, the solid chain of physical evidence convinced the lawyers there was no need to obsess about a conspiracy. A rifle with a telescopic sight was at the Texas Schoolbook Depository. Handwriting experts tied Oswald to the rifle order form. Ballistics experts linked the bullet fragments and cartridges to the rifle. An eyewitness identified Oswald at the window with the rifle. And Marina revealed that her husband had tried to shoot retired Army Maj. Gen. Edwin Walker, a Dallas right-wing figure. Redlich, regarded as an intellectual presence on the staff, recalls realizing that photos found among Oswald's possessions were of Walker's house. Later, tests proved they were taken with Oswald's camera (box, Page 31). The evidence, the staff believed, was too good to refute.

A single bullet. Nothing is more symbolic of the enduring controversy over the assassination than the single-bullet theory. There was no magic moment when the theory was hatched. Poring over slides of Abraham Zapruder's home movie one winter weekend, staff lawyer David Belin could see Kennedy's hands rising to his throat at frame 225 and the impact of a fatal shot at frame 313. But it was unclear when Connally was hit. Belin asked Secret Service agents in Dallas and the governor's doctors to reconstruct his position in the limousine. Comparing their drawings with the Zapruder frames,

FBI photo expert Lyndal Shaneyfelt determined that Connally had been hit by frame 240. It seemed there was not enough time for one gunman to fire three separate shots, the first and third striking JFK, the second Connally (box, Page 36).

Moreover, if JFK had been hit in the neck before his fatal wound, what had happened to the bullet? On Friday the

13th of March, Specter asked the Navy physicians who conducted the JFK autopsy whether the same bullet could have passed through JFK's body and hit Connally. Yes, they answered. Following up, agents constructed separate animal-meat and gelatin models approximating the consistency of Kennedy's neck. Because the models barely slowed test shells, staffers concluded that the bullet in Dallas could have caused damage after passing through JFK (box, Page 30).

Unable to prove the theory on a large diorama of Dealey Plaza, staffers urged reluctant commissioners to stage an assassination re-creation in Dallas. Fearing a circus, Warren resisted. In late April, Redlich wrote Rankin, "All we have is a reasonable hypothesis which appears to be supported by the medical testimony but which has not been checked out against the physical facts at the scene." "Do you think we ought to visit Dallas?" McCloy asked historian Goldberg. Struggling to restrain himself, Goldberg replied: "How can you not?"

Inevitably, the commission had some macabre moments. During one session, commissioners and staffers were examining JFK's clothing as it had emerged from the futile emergency surgery. The surgeons had cut Kennedy's necktie directly above the knot. As he passed the clothes, Allen Dulles remarked, "By George, the president wore a clip-on tie." It was a sign of how eccentric the former CIA director seemed that no one was sure whether he was serious or making a ghoulish joke. In another odd episode, Dulles questioned a ballistics expert's testimony on three tiny bullet fragments recovered from Connally's wrist. Dulles asked to take a closer look at the piece of paper on which the fragments rested. While puffing on his pipe, he exclaimed, "There are four!" All heads turned, as the stunned expert scrambled to find that the extra "fragment" was a piece of Dulles's tobacco.

The staff finally persuaded the commissioners to re-enact the assassination. On May 24, staffers and federal agents swarmed Dealey Plaza at dawn. Redlich

peered through the rifle's gunsight, out the window of the schoolbook depository, and was delighted to see the Kennedy and Connally stand-ins lined up perfectly. "Why am I so elated?" he asked himself. "We're still investigating the assassination of the president."

Two weeks later, Specter went to Dallas with Warren. His assignment: Take exactly five minutes at the schoolbook depository to explain the single-bullet theory to Warren. When Specter finished, the chief justice walked away from the window without a word. It was the only time Specter recalls his being totally silent, as he apparently absorbed the theory for the first time. Still, it wasn't until the report was being drafted during the summer that most of the other commissioners focused on the theory.

A horrible reminder. In an April 30 memo to Rankin, Specter warned that the autopsy photographs and X-rays were "indispensable" to the commission's report. But the Kennedy family resisted releasing images of JFK's mutilated corpse, in part to avoid further pain. Indeed, Robert Kennedy refused invitations to testify. "I don't care what they do," he told an aide. "It's not going to bring him back."

With no photos to show the paths of the bullets, Warren decided to use drawings, based on the autopsy surgeons' recollections. Staffers complained that he was being too deferential to the Kennedys. Unknown to the young lawyers, Willens, who worked for RFK at Justice, kept pushing for access to the photos and X-rays. RFK has often been portrayed as blocking their release. But in mid-June he agreed to let Warren, Rankin and the autopsy doctors review them. Three years later, in a letter to Specter, Warren wrote that "the other members of the commission had no desire to see them." But Warren did see the photos before the report was written. "[T]hey were so horrible that I could not sleep well for nights," he noted in his memoirs. His horror made him reluctant to push the matter. Collectors were offering money for Kennedy's bloodied shirt. Warren feared that if the commission had the ugly photos, they might slip out.

Staffers responsible for the accuracy of the bullets' paths could only throw up their hands. "Someday someone may compare the films with the artist's drawings and find a significant error which might substantially affect the essential testimony and the commission's conclusions," Specter wrote Rankin. Indeed, the drawings did turn out to be

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inaccurate, with the fatal head wound about 4 inches lower than autopsy photos showed and the back wound 2 inches higher. No one discovered these mistakes until a 1968 review panel (box, Page 37). As it turned out, the actual photos and X-rays bolstered the conclusion that two shots had hit JFK from behind.

Concerns about the Kennedys arose again. In May, historian William Manchester, writing the authorized history of JFK's presidency, came to see Rankin, Willens and Redlich. According to Willens, Manchester said he wanted to satisfy the family that the probe was adequate, although Manchester says he was only researching his book. Willens and Rankin say Manchester asked to sit in on the closed hearings and to review chapter drafts, a request Rankin says he resisted and that Manchester denies making.

The lawyers, says Willens, felt that Manchester was trying to dissuade them from calling Jacqueline Kennedy as a witness, saying she had little to offer, an assertion the historian also denies, although he admits that he confided to the three top lawyers that JFK's widow had made very frank comments about some public people, whom he did not name. Warren feared something embarrassing might emerge, and he oversaw Mrs. Kennedy's testimony himself in her Georgetown living room, with Rankin asking the questions and RFK looking on. Nicholas Katzenbach, RFK's deputy at Justice, edited gruesome details from the transcript.

The long, hot summer. Tempers flared as pressure mounted to write the report. Warren's old-world manner was still an issue. Lawyer John Hart Ely was reprimanded for noting in a memo Oswald's treat-

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ment for a venereal disease in the Marines. And many thought Marina Oswald had snowed Warren (box, at right).

But the greatest problems arose over completing the report. Warren had kept the probe moving briskly. But the pace sometimes meant preparations were too hasty. Warren insisted, for instance, on hearing the autopsy doctors during a break in the Supreme Court schedule, although some lawyers said they were not ready. The problem emerged most notably as July 1 approached: That was the deadline Warren had set to keep his promise to LBJ of finishing before the 1964 political conventions. Every lawyer except Specter and Joseph Ball missed the June 1 first-draft deadline. Most were still wrapping up their fact-finding.

Warren blew up when Redlich and Willens told him the last week of June that they were late. The chief became so agitated during the meeting that Willens momentarily feared Warren might have a heart attack. After his anger subsided, Warren grew quiet. "Well, gentlemen," he said in a resigned voice, "we are here for the duration." He realized their work might go on for months.

McGeorge Bundy, a Johnson aide, summoned Rankin to the White House on July 14 to restate LBJ's desire for a report at least before the August 24 Democratic convention. Johnson, who otherwise remained at arm's length, worried about speculation that the White House had political reasons for a delay. Rankin agreed to an August 10 deadline, although he knew it was unreasonable. Later, he returned to the White House to tell Bundy the commission would need an extension until mid-September.

Even with this delay, the lawyers worked an exhausting 14 hours a day, seven days a week. Junior lawyers Liebeler and Burt Griffin emerged as the in-house critics (box, at left). Liebeler said that they had taken shortcuts that would later haunt them. Drafts of the report read too much like a prosecutor's brief, he argued, and had omitted information or overemphasized rebuttable evidence, such as eyewitness accounts.

Liebeler lost his bid to include a psychological profile of Oswald. Redlich argued it was impossible to psychoanalyze a dead man, getting support from three psychiatrists who testified on July 9. Liebeler lost another battle when Rankin ordered his section rewritten to tone down emphasis on Oswald's Marxism and his possible desire to impress Castro — and to earn the right to defect — by killing JFK. Rankin worried that conser-

vatives would seize on the passages to support their anti-Havana agenda, even as others argued that this fear was an undue political concern. The report's silence on these motives opened the door to conspiracy theorists obsessed with unresolved "whys" about Oswald.

The commissioners remained distant during the final weeks of writing. When the crucial conspiracy chapter was submitted to the panel on August 14, Russell complained he was too busy with budget hearings to read it. He asked the staff to seek another two-week extension from the White House. Willens told Redlich he didn't know whether to cry or shout profanities. But the delay was granted.

The problems of the two-tiered investigation — with little exchange between the commissioners and the lawyers — were evident in the vote on the report. Russell, Boggs and Cooper, the commissioners with the least contact with the inquiry, had the most doubts about the single-bullet theory. Russell refused to sign a report stating flatly that one bullet had pierced JFK's throat, then injured Connally. So McCloy took out his yellow legal pad, according to biographer Kai Bird, and wrote there was "very persuasive evidence" of it. A similar fight developed over the staff's draft that there was "no conspiracy." Ford said it was "very

difficult to disprove a conspiracy" and suggested saying there was "no evidence" of conspiracy.

As the end came, Willens told Redlich that some staffers thought questions were unanswered. Griffin worried aloud that commissioners and staff should make plans to defend the report publicly, lest critics misrepresent it — what today might be called "spin control." Liebeler agreed to stay for rewriting chores, but the plan fell through. It became clear that once the commission folded it would be unable

CONTINUED

to defend itself. Warren, who had no use for public relations, decided to let the report stand on its own, like a Supreme Court decision. Others did not. Ford used transcripts and his copious notes to write a magazine article, then a book. Warren was furious. Later, he felt betrayed again when Liebeler gave documents to author Edward Jay Epstein, who was writing "Inquest," a seminal critique of the commission's work.

When the "Report of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy" was released on Sunday, Sept. 27, 1964, it seemed to reopen a wound in the nation's psyche. Robert Kennedy told Nicholas Katzenbach he would not read it. On Monday, New England crowds surged to greet a campaigning LBJ "as if," wrote journalist Theodore White, "the nation hungered to see a president, real, live, healthy, in the flesh."

Perhaps no one would have a harder time leaving the assassination behind than the commission staff, which had sought to comprehend that cold-blooded act for an entire nation. Liebeler and Griffin left the VFW building together on the last day—convinced that they and their colleagues had solved the mystery of the assassination. The staff had engaged in searing but open debate, had avoided many distractions that might have destroyed their efforts and had emerged, by and large, with deep respect for one another and for Warren. And yet both men shared lingering fears that the report provided fodder for

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diligent critics. There, on the steps they had trod for many months, the two men embraced. And before they parted, they broke into tears of pride and frustration. Regardless of how future generations judged their work—probably the most important they or their colleagues would ever undertake—their roles in that chapter of history were at an end. ■

BY TED GEST AND JOSEPH P. SHAPIRO WITH
DAVID BOWERMASTER AND THOM GEIER

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Mock Trial Debates Lee Harvey Oswald Case

Date 10 August 1992

By ELIZABETH RISBERG
Associated Press Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) - Cool killer or patsy? After nearly 30 years, Lee Harvey Oswald is getting the trial he never had. "He was a disturbed man, a fanatic about guns," prosecution attorney Joseph W. Cotchett told the jury Monday in opening statements of the mock trial being staged by the American Bar Association.

Oswald, a former U.S. Marine who lived in the Soviet Union for a time, was determined by the Warren Commission to have been the sole assassin in the Nov. 22, 1963, sniper attack on President Kennedy in Dallas.

Oswald was slain soon after his arrest. Many books and the movie "JFK" have questioned whether he was set up to take the blame by high-level conspirators, with speculation ranging from the CIA to the Mafia.

"Defending Lee Harvey Oswald is difficult because he is not here," defense attorney Thomas Barr said.

"You would believe that the government, by this time 30 years later, would have all the facts," he added. "There should not be the slightest doubt of any kind of what the facts are ... and yet every single fact of importance in this case is open to serious doubt."

"We believe those doubts are such that in this case, where the government has the burden of proof ... it cannot carry the burden," Barr said.

The defense will question the claim that Oswald was the lone gunman. The number of shots fired is uncertain and evidence is said to indicate shots were fired from the "grassy knoll" across from Oswald's alleged firing spot.

In the prosecution's opening argument, a computer-enhanced videotape showed the route of Kennedy's motorcade and the view from the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository, from where Oswald allegedly fired three shots.

Cotchett also mentioned Oswald's residency in Russia and his fixation with Communism.

Actors portraying Marina Oswald, his Russian wife, and a host of ballistics experts and witnesses are to take the stand Tuesday. There was no script for the trial. A decision is expected late Tuesday.

To keep spectators interested, juror and lawyers used handheld devices to monitor their reactions to evidence and testimony.

Jurors reacted roughly equally to the prosecution and defense, finding them on average just over the halfway mark on a scale of 1-to-10, with 1 meaning a statement was unconvincing and 10 meaning it was very convincing.

Prosecutors also hoped that enhanced inspection of the home movie shot by Abraham Zapruder as Kennedy was shot will

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definitively show that then-Texas Gov. John Connally was wounded by the same bullet that passed through Kennedy's neck. The technical evidence was developed by Failure Analysis Inc. of Menlo Park, Calif., a company that investigates and analyzes disasters.

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The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
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Date 7 Aug 92 _____

Oswald files remain under KGB wraps

MOSCOW — Former KGB chief Vadim Bakatin tried to release files on Lee Harvey Oswald last year but was blocked by veteran spies who feared disclosure of their names and methods, a newspaper reported yesterday.

Russian intelligence officers have said the files shed no light on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in 1963.

But they have balked at releasing them, despite greater openness in the country after the collapse of the Soviet communist regime.

Mr. Bakatin took over the KGB during a wave of reform after the failure of the hard-line communist coup last August.

He reviewed the Oswald case, dossier No. 31451, consisting of six folders, and then agreed to a request by the head of the Belarussian KGB, Eduard Shirkovsky, to ship them to the Belarussia's capital, Minsk, for review.

Oswald, who was married to a Soviet woman, lived in Minsk from 1959 to 1962, worked in a factory there and was kept under tight KGB surveillance before he returned to the United States a few months before the Kennedy assassination.

The Washington Post _____
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 The Wall Street Journal _____
 The Washington Times _____
 USA Today _____
 Associated Press _____
 UPI _____
 Reuter _____
 Baltimore Sun-5A
 Date 5 August 1992

KGB files reportedly show it had no role in JFK death

By Will Englund
 Moscow Bureau

MOSCOW — The KGB kept close tabs on Lee Harvey Oswald while he was living in the Soviet Union, but his files show that the Soviet spy agency had no role in President John F. Kennedy's assassination, the head of state security in the republic of Belarus said yesterday.

The files also suggest that Oswald was a notoriously poor marksman, said Eduard Shirkovsky, the security chief.

Those files have remained classified, but Mr. Shirkovsky told a news conference in Minsk yesterday that the Parliament of Belarus could order them to be opened, the Itar-Tass news agency reported.

There appears to be plenty to look through. When Oswald defected in 1959, the KGB suspected he might be a CIA spy, so he came under intense scrutiny, Mr. Shirkovsky said.

Enough information was filed away on Oswald to fill six volumes. The KGB eventually decided, among other things, that he was not working for the CIA, Mr. Shirkovsky said.

It noted that Oswald had a rifle while he was living in Minsk, the capital of what is now Belarus, but

according to the files it was a hunter's rifle given to him by a sportsmen's group.

"Witnesses say he was a poor shooter, and it is difficult to imagine he could kill the president," Mr. Shirkovsky said.

Mr. Shirkovsky said the KGB conducted a detailed study of Oswald's personality while he was in Minsk — a study that modern-day researchers would love to get their hands on.

"But facts collected at that time show that KGB bodies were not involved in the tragic events in Dallas 30 years ago," Mr. Shirkovsky said. "Security bodies did not cooperate with Oswald."

One of the many mysteries of Oswald's life is the 2½ years he spent in the Soviet Union. After serving in the Navy at a secret radar installation in Japan, he renounced his U.S. citizenship in Moscow and eventually settled in Minsk. There he met the woman who was to become his wife, Marina Nicholaevna.

In 1962, he moved back to the United States. Apparently, neither he nor his wife had any trouble making the move — an extraordinary feat in those times. President Kennedy was assassinated a year later.

Byelarus**KGB Chief Opposes Releasing Oswald Files**

*OW0408163592 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1559 GMT 4 Aug 92*

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Byelarus's KGB chief Eduard Shirkovskiy has highly praised the Byelarusian-Ukrainian agreement on cooperation between the secret services of the two countries signed in Kiev on July 31. He pointed out the fact that the republican KGB carried out only intelligence and counter-intelligence activities needed for a neutral state.

Eduard Shirkovskiy said that he had personally examined the case of Lee Harvey Oswald and added that it would be declassified only by permission of Parliament. The KGB General believes that it should not be done, for the six volumes of materials of the case reveal all methods of operation work of the secret service. Though, Eduard Shirkovskiy expressed confidence that Lee Harvey Oswald was unlikely to be involved in the assassination of President John Kennedy. He added that Lee Harvey Oswald was neither KGB, nor CIA collaborator, and that he was no marksman.

KGB 'Not Involved'

*LD0408222392 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service
in Russian 1750 GMT 4 Aug 92*

[By BELINFORM correspondent Larisa Lazar]

[Text] Minsk, 4 August (TASS)—So far the numerous attempts by our own and foreign journalists to become acquainted with the six-volume dossier kept in the Byelarusian KGB archives on Lee Harvey Oswald, one of the participants in the "crime of the century," have met with no success. "It will only be possible once the Byelarus Supreme Soviet decides to declassify the case," reported Eduard Shirkovskiy, chairman of the State Security Committee of the Republic, at a news conference today.

He said that when Oswald lived in Minsk the security forces came to the conclusion after studying him carefully that he could not be a CIA agent. At the same time the entire Security Service was mobilized in operational work to study the American so that the document could only be made public with the agreement of the supreme body of state.

"On the basis of the facts collated at the time it is possible to establish that KGB bodies were not involved in the tragic events in Dallas 30 years ago," Eduard Shirkovskiy said. "State Security did not involve Lee Harvey Oswald in any cooperation. As for the fact that Oswald had a weapon while he was in Minsk, he was actually given this as a member of the Hunting and Fishing Club. However, according to eyewitnesses' statements, he was not a particularly good marksman and it is hard to imagine that he could kill the president."

No 'Political Subtext' in Russia Agreements

*MK0508070292 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA
in Russian 4 Aug 92 p 3*

[Igor Sinyakevich report under "Byelarus" rubric: "Republic Will Not Deviate From Autonomous Policy, Reassures Mikhail Myasnikovich, First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers"]

[Excerpts] A news conference about the Byelarusian-Russian agreements signed in Moscow 20 July was given by the following members of the republic government: First Vice Premier Mikhail Myasnikovich (head of government Vyacheslav Kebich is on leave); Defense Minister Colonel General Pavel Kozlovskiy; and Gennadiy Shkurd, chief of the customs department. [passage omitted]

Answering a NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA correspondent's question, acting head of government Mikhail Myasnikovich said: "Regarding whether we will support Russia politically because it has made some economic concessions to us, I will say this: We have not demanded anything unusual from Russia. We have enshrined within the framework of bilateral agreements the volumes of reciprocal deliveries of resources and other economic ties which were formed before the Union's collapse. Right now Russia has many problems of its own, and they are no less acute than in Byelarus. We must all think about the fact that it is no longer possible to live at another state's expense, even within the framework of the ruble zone. Everyone is sufficiently intelligent and knows each other's economy. Regarding the attempts to read between the lines of some kind of political subtext, participants in the talks can confirm that this was not observed either in the official documents or the unofficial situation—certainly not on the part of Russia, even though some of your colleagues are trying to make out that they made oil concessions to the Byelarusians, who are now going to follow Yeltsin's policies. We have our own policies which are based on our laws and our Declaration of Sovereignty, in which the status of neutrality is enshrined, and we will not deviate from them one step."

Germany To Finance Soldiers' Retraining Center

*OW0408173192 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1538 GMT 4 Aug 92*

[From the 5 August "Presidential Bulletin" feature; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] First Deputy to the Prime Minister of Byelarus Mikhail Myasnikovich, who is acting Prime Minister during the Prime Minister's vacation, signed a decree to open a center in the small town of Kolodischi (near Minsk) for the retraining of soldiers discharged to reserves. Germany will finance the center's activities. According to information from sources in Byelarus' Council of Ministers, the German government has appropriated 8,210,000 marks for the project. In September the center is expected to admit more than 500 of

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
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Moscow INTERFAX
Date 4 August 1992

Byelarus: KGB Chief Opposes Release of Lee Harvey Oswald Files

Moscow INTERFAX

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Senate Backs Release of Files On JFK Killing

Associated Press

The Senate voted last night to require the government to release its files on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, a response to renewed public interest in the 1963 shooting.

On a voice vote, lawmakers approved a measure compelling officials to release the documents after reviewing them. They would be available to the public through the National Archives.

Papers that officials declined to release would be delivered to a five-member independent panel, appointed by the president with the Senate's consent.

That committee, to consist of historians, attorneys and other professionals, would make the final decision on whether to withhold the materials. Papers could be kept secret if they endangered national security or violated a person's privacy.

The panel would review the unreleased papers periodically to see if they could be released. All documents still held by the government would have to be released no more than 25 years after the measure's enactment.

The legislation was sponsored by Sen. John Glenn (D-Ohio). A similar bill has been approved by two House committees.

Interest in Kennedy's assassination was heightened by the 1991 film "JFK," which drew an account of an elaborate conspiracy. Soon after the assassination, the Warren Commission concluded that the killing was the act of lone gunman Lee Harvey Oswald.

The Washington Post A9
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
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Reuter _____

Date 28 July 1992

27 July 1992

GTON POST

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Privacy and the JFK Files

In the July 22 editorial "The JFK Assassination Files," The Post offered a provocative interpretation of legislation that would accelerate the review, declassification and release of documents relating to President Kennedy's assassination.

The Post asserted that most of the materials in question are to be found in several presidential libraries. In fact, most are agency records and files created by House and Senate investigators.

Within the libraries, the materials range from the official records of the Rockefeller Commission on the Central Intelligence Agency to the routine personal papers of many associates of presidents Kennedy and Johnson, to the diaries and reflections of those most affected by President Kennedy's assassination. Most of these records are already open for research or will be in time. The key question is how and under what circumstances.

The records of the Rockefeller Com-

mission are not the issue. The status of those records has been discussed at length, and the records have been made available time and again for official inquiries and will be made available again. The focus of the amendment and much of the public's attention is the small amount of personal materials housed in the libraries and still under restrictions requested by the donors and agreed to by the government. These small collections contain the personal observations and recollections of those close to the events or close to the individuals involved.

We at the Archives have testified that many of these materials have been opened to government inquiries, and I have pledged full support and assistance in working with donors on this latest effort.

Disclosure to ensure the public that there are no "secrets" is a laudable goal. But this goal must be balanced against the privacy rights of the donors and the long-term impact on historical

sources. These materials would never have been recorded or transferred to the Archives' custody if the authors felt that Congress or another authority could throw them open to public scrutiny without some level of donor control. The purpose of the amendment exempting donor materials is not to protect "secrets" but to protect rights. Those who would legislate away the privacy rights of donors are in the curious position of arguing that government can only win the trust of the public by betraying the trust of individual donors.

America's presidential libraries were created to preserve the historical record for scholars and to share that record in time with the American public. Every presidential library boasts rich veins of primary material, much of it given with the understanding that reasonable time restrictions would apply, if only so that nothing in the documents could be used to embarrass living persons. If Congress abrogates lawful agreements, it will not only empty the vaults of future libraries, it will risk the destruction of confidential or revealing accounts of history in the making. While instant release might provide a field day for tabloid journalism, it would be a severe loss for history.

As archivist of the United States, it is my job to safeguard America's documentary heritage. Perhaps, just for once, the cynics and conspiracy theorists could accept the stated reason for the amendment because it is the right thing to do.

DON W. WILSON
Archivist of the United States
Washington

The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 26 July 1992

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DON W. WILSON
Archivist of the United States
Washington

The article this refers
to follows.

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The Washington Post A 5
The New York Times _____
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Date 22 July 1992

The JFK Assassination Files

CONGRESS IS now considering legislation designed to open the files on President John F. Kennedy's assassination, but one of the four House committees to which the bill has been referred has unnecessarily complicated and weakened the effort. At the request of the archivist of the United States, Don W. Wilson, the Judiciary Committee adopted an amendment that would exempt from the assassination material to be released "all records and other material that have been donated to the National Archives pursuant to a deed of gift regulating access to the material." In theory, this would allow the custodians of the Kennedy, Johnson and Ford presidential materials—and in some cases even members of presidential families—to withhold documents at will. The Senate bill has no comparable amendment, nor does the version of the bill reported by the House Government Operations Committee.

Before 1981, presidential papers and even the working papers and reports of presidential commissions were considered the personal property of the chief executive to be disposed of however he wished. Almost all the records bearing on the Kennedy assassination were made during this time

and were given to libraries under specified conditions governing access. House leaders expect that notwithstanding the Judiciary Committee amendment, the Ford and Johnson papers will probably be made available for release, as will the Kennedy material except for matters relating to the autopsy. Access to that is now restricted to congressional investigators and other experts approved by the Kennedy family.

Nevertheless, the House bill that finally goes to the floor should not contain the loophole. The presumption should be that all material on this matter of great public concern be made available to the public without restriction or prior approval.

A few valid reasons for preserving secrecy—to protect the name of an agent still at risk, for example—are spelled out in the bill, and they should be invoked only by the independent review board, which would be created by statute. The whole point of this legislation is to open up the record for examination by scholars, conspiracy theorists and any interested citizen. Allowing families or government archivists to keep a single document under wraps without explanation or cause undercuts the disclosure effort and makes the bill a sham.

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
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The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times A5
USA Today _____
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Date 25 July 1992

Panel rivalry could keep lid on JFK files

By Virginia Cope
CONGRESSIONAL QUARTERLY

A feud between two House panels is threatening a bill to unseal documents about President John F. Kennedy's assassination in 1963.

The bill stalled over the issue of trying to determine what not to release. Nearly everyone agrees that concerns such as privacy should keep the lock on some material; the question is how much.

Two House committees — Government Operations and Judiciary — approved the bill, but Judiciary added restrictions on the release of JFK files.

Government Operations Chairman John Conyers Jr., Michigan Democrat, and ranking Republican Frank Horton of New York expressed dismay at Judiciary's action.

"I honestly can't understand how something so simple can get so complicated," Mr. Horton said. "All we want to do is get these files released."

Judiciary's provisions would prohibit disclosure of material given to the National Archives under a "deed of gift." That includes almost all the documents in the presidential libraries of Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson and Gerald R. Ford — including

the records of the Rockefeller Commission, which in the 1970s investigated links between the CIA and Lee Harvey Oswald and Jack Ruby.

The Judiciary amendments also would allow the National Archives to charge for copies of the JFK materials and not permit fees to be waived under the Freedom of Information Act.

Mr. Conyers made his position on the provisions clear when questioning a witness at a hearing this week: "Do you think Judiciary inadvertently created a loophole allowing government agencies to withhold more than they ought to? And that they also crafted provisions allowing costs to be imposed that would work in a prohibitive fashion against release, and that adjustments should be made?" he asked David W. Belin.

Mr. Belin was executive director of the Rockefeller Commission and counsel to the Warren Commission, the panel that initially investigated the murder. His emphatic response: "Yes."

Aides for both committees said they are working on a compromise that would significantly weaken the deed of gift provision, which Rep. Don Edwards, California Democrat, inserted at the request of Archivist Don W. Wilson.

• Distributed by Scripps Howard.

'Tapes' offers intriguing look at murder of JFK

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK
Even if you reject the theory underpinning Oliver Stone's political thriller "JFK," the Viewer's Choice pay-per-view cable TV service offers a fascinating companion piece, "The JFK Assassination: The Jim Garrison Tapes."

Whether you'll enjoy it depends on a few questions: Do you think President John F. Kennedy was assassinated by a conspiracy? If so, was it a rogue CIA operation carried out on behalf of the military-industrial complex?

Was it done by Mafia hitmen? Anti-Castro Cubans? Or was it a Vietnamese faction, avenging the murders of the Diem brothers in the 1963 coup? Was Lee Oswald the shooter or the dupe?

See how fast the questions multiply?

"The Jim Garrison Tapes," written and directed by John Barbour — yes, that John Barbour, creator of NBC's hit "Real People" in 1979 — is a 95-minute documentary about former New Orleans District Attorney Garrison's theory of the case.

Mr. Garrison's theory, which led to the 1967 arrest and trial of Clay Shaw on conspiracy charges, is that Kennedy's death was simply a coup d'etat: Kennedy threatened entrenched interests, so Kennedy died.

Mr. Shaw, a socially prominent New Orleans businessman who ultimately was acquitted, was alleged to be one of Oswald's CIA-connected handlers; Oswald was the low-level CIA worker who was set up to take the fall.

Whether or not you believe any or all of that, "The Jim Garrison Tapes" (available through Aug. '91) is worth watching for a number of reasons:

■ It's a photographic journey

back through the time of the assassination, and the archival newsreels, movies, videotape and still pictures are beautifully presented. If you lived those days, you'll remember them.

■ It shows how thoroughly Mr. Stone researched and cast his metaphoric investigation of the great national trauma; the eccentric eyebrows of key witness David Ferrie (Joe Pesci in "JFK") were no exaggerated film effect.

■ It shows the home movie footage shot by Abraham Zapruder, which documents the bloody killing of President Kennedy.

■ It talks to several writers whose books constitute the bulk of Kennedy conspiracy lore, including Jim Marrs, author of "Crossfire," (which posited the "triangulation crossfire ambush" Mr. Stone also adopted for his film).

■ It coldly lists the various foul-ups, official panic, botched police work, bungled evidence, coincidence, media hysteria and government misconduct that add up, to certain interpreters, to conspiracy and coverup.

Mr. Barbour says it took him 10 years to bring a 1982 interview with Mr. Garrison, then a Louisiana state judge, to a television audience.

"I'm not a proseletyzer or a preacher," Mr. Barbour says. "I'm a teacher."

In 1982, while "Real People" was on the air, Mr. Barbour went to New Orleans and got a three-hour interview with the former district attorney. "Garrison, next to Buckminster Fuller, is the brightest man I ever met," Mr. Barbour says.

He became fascinated with Mr. Garrison's case after reading the prosecutor's first book about the case, "Heritage of Stone," and was astonished at the quality of Mr. Garrison's witnesses and documentation.

Mr. Garrison, Mr. Barbour points out, was the first person to get the Zapruder film shown publicly and is, so far, the only person ever to bring a criminal trial in the assassination of JFK.

The Washington Post _____
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Date 24 July 1992 _____

A18 WEDNESDAY, JULY 22, 1992

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Action Urged On JFK Data

Backers of a bill to require public disclosure of government records concerning the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy warned yesterday that it may die unless Congress takes action before the summer recess.

House Government Operations Committee Chairman John Conyers Jr. (D-Mich.) and ranking minority member Frank Horton (R-N.Y.) said the drive has been stalled because their committee and the House Judiciary Committee have approved different versions of the bill. The Democratic leadership has yet to say which one it prefers.

If the indecision continues into September, the lawmakers said they were afraid that preoccupation with election campaigns could make it impossible to enact the measure this year.

Both House bills would set up a five-member review board to collect assassination-related materials and arrange for their disclosure at the National Archives unless there is "clear and convincing" grounds, such as national security considerations, for postponing publication.

The House Judiciary bill, however, provides for appointment of board members by a special federal court panel, while the Government Operations version calls for appointment by the president and confirmation by the Senate. The two bills also differ on the precise grounds for postponement, and the Judiciary Committee version creates what could be a large loophole by exempting from the definition of "assassination material" documents donated to presidential libraries under a deed of gift.

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 23 July 1992

The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 22 July 1992

The JFK Assassination Files

CONGRESS IS now considering legislation designed to open the files on President John F. Kennedy's assassination, but one of the four House committees to which the bill has been referred has unnecessarily complicated and weakened the effort. At the request of the archivist of the United States, Don W. Wilson, the Judiciary Committee adopted an amendment that would exempt from the assassination material to be released "all records and other material that have been donated to the National Archives pursuant to a deed of gift regulating access to the material." In theory, this would allow the custodians of the Kennedy, Johnson and Ford presidential materials—and in some cases even members of presidential families—to withhold documents at will. The Senate bill has no comparable amendment, nor does the version of the bill reported by the House Government Operations Committee.

Before 1981, presidential papers and even the working papers and reports of presidential commissions were considered the personal property of the chief executive to be disposed of however he wished. Almost all the records bearing on the Kennedy assassination were made during this time

and were given to libraries under specified conditions governing access. House leaders expect that notwithstanding the Judiciary Committee amendment, the Ford and Johnson papers will probably be made available for release, as will the Kennedy material except for matters relating to the autopsy. Access to that is now restricted to congressional investigators and other experts approved by the Kennedy family.

Nevertheless, the House bill that finally goes to the floor should not contain the loophole. The presumption should be that all material on this matter of great public concern be made available to the public without restriction or prior approval.

A few valid reasons for preserving secrecy—to protect the name of an agent still at risk, for example—are spelled out in the bill, and they should be invoked only by the independent review board, which would be created by statute. The whole point of this legislation is to open up the record for examination by scholars, conspiracy theorists and any interested citizen. Allowing families or government archivists to keep a single document under wraps without explanation or cause undercuts the disclosure effort and makes the bill a sham.

The Ups and Downs of Going Over the Top

By ANDREW ROSENTHAL

Vote for Bill Clinton. But not too early, please. And not too often.

Of all the scripted events at a party convention in which the nomination is clinched, the most carefully managed is the formal nomination vote.

Last night, in grand old tradition, legions of eager young political aides scrambled around Madison Square Garden bearing messages and counting heads, while campaign higher-ups bargained, wheedled, pleaded and occasionally threatened various delegations.

The object: to make certain that the vote went in a way that conveyed the right symbolism.

Normally, the nominee's "delegate whips" arrange for some states to pass their voting turn to others so the "right" state casts the votes that give the nominee a majority.

This time, the plan was to have the state be Arkansas, Mr. Clinton's home state. But Arkansas comes second in the alphabet and has only 48 votes. That made the margin of error slim.

The Brown delegates were giving the Clinton camp a hard time. Their group from Colorado, for example, had threatened to ruin Mr. Clinton's night by voting for him and throwing off the count.

So another way was found. Alabama, first in the alphabet, passed its turn to

ON STAGE

vote to Arkansas — after much long-winded speechifying by its leaders that prompted shouts of "Vote, vote, vote" from other delegations.

Then Mr. Clinton's mother, Virginia Kelley, cast Arkansas's votes, the first 48 for her son. It was Ohio, in the end, that put Mr. Clinton over the top.

Movie Director Holds Forth

What was the question again?

Debates at the Democratic National Convention on platform planks and party rules can get pretty arcane, very political and sometimes downright obscure.

Take, for example, when Oliver Stone, director of the movie "J.F.K.," mounted the podium last night, ostensibly to offer support for a minority proposal backed by the delegates pledged to former Gov. Edmund G. Brown Jr. that would have called for a mid-term party gathering in 1994.

But Mr. Stone, like many of the other boisterous Brown partisans, had a lot to say and did not think his team was being given enough time to say it. So he used his time on the podium to talk about some of his favorite subjects.

"We're tired of the C.I.A. and the lying," Mr. Stone shouted.

"We're tired of being treated like kindergarten students who cannot be trusted with their own true history. Open the file. All the files. J.F.K., R.F.K., M.L.K., the cold war."

The Central Intelligence Agency, Mr. Stone said, "must be broken and its history must be revealed, like the Nazi Party in Germany."

Gore Takes the Lead On Spelling Issue

Well, now we know he can say it, but can he spell it?

During his speech to the convention last night, the Rev. Jesse Jackson made a joking reference to Senator Al Gore's forthcoming contest with Vice President Dan Quayle and to Mr. Quayle's famous "potato with an 'e'" gaffe.

Mr. Gore, he declared confidently, could spell a long word that Mr. Jackson had made up for the occasion.

Today, the Tennessee Senator decided to prove Mr. Jackson right when he appeared in the convention hall in Madison Square Garden at 4:29 P.M. to be shown where to stand when he accepts his nomination on Thursday night.

Stepping to the microphone, Mr. Gore, not exactly known for being a stand-up comic, paused, grinned at the several dozen spectators in the hall at that early hour before the convention resumed, and rattled off Mr. Jackson's word: "Chloro-fluoro-antidisestablishmentarianism."

Robert Kennedy Remembered With Tears

While most Americans can turn the convention on and off at will by switching channels on their television sets, the proceedings are a test of patience for the 5,000 delegates and alternates. Yesterday, they blew whistles, fidgeted with their signs and talked to friends while speakers droned on.

But there were times when they were riveted. And for two women in the Massachusetts delegation, like most of the others, one of those moments came during the presentation of a filmed tribute to Robert F. Kennedy.

"Yes, yes," Lisa McBirney, 28 years old, of Quincy, Mass., said over and over, her eyes brimming with tears.

One row and one generation ahead of her, Sheryl Marshall, 42, of Newton, Mass., said, "That was my youth. He would have been the first person I voted for. Twenty-four years ago, I was full of hope. I thought we were going to change the world. I feel that way now for the first time since then."

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times A 12
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
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UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 16 July 1992

Panel Creates Exemption To Disclosure of JFK Files

By George Lardner Jr.
Washington Post Staff Writer

The House Judiciary Committee has created what could be a huge loophole in legislation calling for disclosure of most government records concerning the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The committee last week approved an amendment that would exempt from being defined as "assassination material" all records and other material "donated to the National Archives pursuant to a deed of gift regulating access to those materials."

That would put documents in the John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson and Gerald R. Ford presidential libraries beyond the reach of the historical review board proposed in the bill unless the board gets the consent of family members or those in charge of the deeds of gift.

"Making these records public should not depend on the willingness of the donors to display their generosity in giving the materials to the review board," said James Lesar, president of the nonprofit Assassination Archives and Research Center here. "The records are a matter of great public interest and that should transcend any personal interest in them."

Rep. Don Edwards (D-Calif.) introduced the amendment as part of what he described as a "noncontroversial" package sought by Archivist of the United States Don W. Wilson and officials at the Kennedy library in Boston.

"They said they were interested in trying to protect donors like Mrs. Johnson and the Kennedy family," Edwards told a reporter. "We thought we were doing the right thing."

Under the Presidential Records Act of 1978, most records in presidential libraries, beginning with Ronald Reagan's, are defined as federal rather than private records. But the law was not retroactive.

Access to JFK autopsy records and X-rays, as a result, is still controlled by a deed of gift from the Kennedy family. The papers of the Commission to Investigate CIA Activity Within the United States, appointed by Ford and headed by then-Vice President Nelson Rockefeller, are treated as Ford's property.

"This is in keeping with legal practices prior to 1978 when records of presidentially appointed commissions

could be regarded as 'personal' to the president, since the commission provided advice directly to him," Archivist Wilson said at a recent House hearing on the bill.

Wilson urged Congress to exempt all "donated materials" from the definition. He said he was worried that Congress "may inadvertently discourage future donations of similar historical" records unless existing donation agreements are honored.

Wilson said Ford has already assured the National Archives that "relevant portions" of the records of the CIA commission, popularly known as the Rockefeller Commission, would be made available to the review board. The archivist said he believed those in charge of assassination-related records at the other libraries "are also likely to cooperate."

The files of the Rockefeller Commission, established in 1975 to examine illegal and improper CIA activities, include records about attempts to assassinate Cuban leader Fidel Castro as well as an examination of allegations linking accused assassin Lee Harvey Oswald and Oswald's killer, Jack Ruby, to the CIA. The commission rejected the allegations.

Another "noncontroversial" amendment sought by the archivist, and accepted by the Judiciary Committee at Edwards's urging, would allow the National Archives to charge for copies of all released assassination-related materials and not grant any fee waivers under the Freedom of Information Act.

Veteran assassination researcher Lesar denounced this provision as "devastating, particularly since the National Archives has a history of overcharging egregiously for documents." JFK assassination records can now be obtained from many federal agencies under FOIA fee waivers, but Lesar said if the Judiciary Committee bill passes, the records will be transferred to the archives, which will automatically start charging for them.

Wilson has said that the archives charges only 10 cents a page at its "self-service" machines. Lesar said "you can get it done at a commercial shop up the street from my office for a nickel a page and you don't have to do it yourself." Besides that, he said, "they're telling you you have to come to Washington to get it for a dime, which is above cost. They're discriminating against people who don't live here."

CAFE Treaty on Manpower Limitations Discussed

*LD1206060992 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service
in Russian 1307 GMT 11 Jun 92*

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Smelov]

[Text] Vienna, 11 Jun—Issues involving an agreement limiting the manpower of the conventional armed forces of states participating in the Vienna talks on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe [CAFE] were under intense discussion at a plenary sitting of the forum held here today.

The agreement, on which work has been going on for over a year already, is intended to be a substantial adjunct to the treaty on conventional armed forces in Europe, signed at the CSCE Paris summit in November 1990, and to form an "integral composition" with it. The main point of the manpower agreement is that, as a result of its being achieved, all the participating states, without exception, will assume a political commitment to limit the manpower of their conventional armed forces to a national level that each of them will announce. It is for the sake of such a limitation that the document, which will undoubtedly promote the strengthening of security and stability in Europe, is being concluded.

As the discussion at the Vienna forum shows though, some of its participants are now trying to solve, through the manpower agreement, a number of side issues that are often not only out of keeping with its aims but also go beyond the framework of the mandate for the current talks. This is manifested with particular clarity in such areas as the involvement of personnel in the exchange of information and limitations and questions of control [kontrol]. A strange situation has arisen: On the one hand, everyone agrees that the monitoring [kontrol] of manpower numbers by means of a head count is an unrealistic task. Incidentally, the problem has been discussed in detail but without success in all possible ways during the many years of talks on reducing armed forces and armaments in Central Europe. On the other hand, some delegations are seeking to fit into this unrealistic task a scheme for exchanging data in the manpower agreement, a scheme that many experts regard as being excessively detailed and complex, sharply out of keeping with the content of an agreement that is clear in its objectives.

Russian delegation leader Vladimir Shustov told ITAR-TASS that the delegation objects to the manpower agreement's covering more and more elements that have no connection with conventional armed forces, which are considered within the framework of the CAFE treaty. This concerns the Navy's land-based elements apart from those that are connected with the CAFE treaty, as well as internal troops and a number of other elements. The subject of a future agreement, he continued, is an accord on the nonexceeding of national levels for the numbers of conventional armed forces of the states in the area of application, which will be achieved in 40 months after the coming into force of the CAFE treaty and will have to be observed henceforth. It follows

logically from this that in the manpower limitation agreement there should be no consideration of any kind of assessment either of existing personnel numbers or of the process for achieving the final levels. All that should be assessed is observance of the national level of limitations, the diplomat indicated.

At today's plenary sitting, the Russian delegation circulated a document setting out its position on various aspects of the exchange of information. Moreover, it was stressed that the proposed scheme for the exchange of information was a fair compromise that took account of an absolute majority of the ideas and wishes voiced during the talks. The hope was expressed that the proposal, if adopted, would make it possible to render the work of the talks more intensive, and to complete the preparation of the text of the agreement by the appointed time, namely before the CSCE Helsinki summit.

Foreign Journalists in PRC Protest 'Violence'

*PM1006144792 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
9 Jun 92 Morning Edition p 4*

[Yuriy Savenkov report under the "From Our Correspondents and News Agencies" rubric: "Protest by Foreign Journalists in Beijing"]

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Ex-KGB Chief on Kennedy Assassination

*LD1006145792 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English
1311 GMT 10 Jun 92*

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Sergey Sosnovskiy]

[Text] Bonn June 10 TASS—KGB took no part whatsoever in the organization of the assassination of President John Kennedy, ex-chief of the KGB Vladimir Semichastniy said in an interview with the German magazine DER SPIEGEL.

Semichastniy headed the KGB when the tragic events unfurled in Dallas, Texas.

Asked when the KGB first came across Lee Harvey Oswald, Semichastniy said: "When our counter-intelligence chief reported that Oswald asked us for political asylum". I.E. about two years prior to the assassination.

"We arrived at a conclusion that Oswald was a common person of little interest".

Oswald spent some time in Moscow and was later transported to Minsk where he lived under local KGB surveillance. The Oswald file contained mainly "trivial things: love affairs, dancing sprees and picnics with a girl-friend".

According to Semichastniy, Oswald could not be the central figure in the assassination of Kennedy. "He is a stooge, a sort of lightning rod in a much more serious operation", which "was brilliantly arranged", Semichastniy said.

Eight U.S.-Built WWII Aircraft Discovered

*LD1106093292 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English
2042 GMT 11 Jun 92*

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Mikhail Shevtsov]

[Text] Moscow June 10 TASS—The "Ekipazh" (Crew), a Moscow based military-patriotic group, discovered eight American aeroplanes supplied to the former Soviet Union under a lend-lease agreement exactly fifty years ago, preserved in reasonably good condition, in the vicinity of the Petropavlovsk-Kamchatski district. These

planes had taken part in combat missions during the World War II against Japan.

According to the "Ekipazh" leader Sergey Tsvetkov, who recently returned from an expedition to the Kuril Islands and the Kamchatka Peninsula, they found American war-planes "King Cobra", "Mitchels" and "Bostons", and also the Soviet made jet fighters "MiG-15", which are as rare in the country's museums as cannons of Napoleon's period.

On the Island of Shumshu, where the group worked several times, tens of Japanese KN-44, A6M, "Zero", KT-99 and other planes were discovered. These finds will not only replenish our and foreign museums with the rarest exhibits of technology, but will also open many unknown pages of those men's fate who fought on these flying machines, Sergey said.

According to Sergey Tsvetkov, the group goes to battle sites of the World War II at the cost of interested parties, including foreign ones. The group plans to spend all its earnings on the restoration of the military hardware and the creation of its own museum. During ten years of their work these volunteers have established places of deaths of thousands of unknown soldiers and uncovered hundreds of military hardware. Some of these war relics have been donated to Russian museums.

Television's Memory Hole

Television, for all its awesome reach, has an ephemeral touch. Even the best programs rarely leave footprints in libraries, archives, indexes or books. It is harder to retrieve the transcript of a documentary seen by millions than to unearth an obscure magazine article read by thousands.

Who remembers, for example, an ambitious four-part CBS documentary called "The Warren Report," broadcast just 25 years ago? It was apparently overlooked by the American Medical Association, which claimed in May that two pathologists, Dr. James J. Humes and Dr. J. Thornton Boswell, had broken a 28-year silence to discuss their autopsy on President Kennedy.

In truth, Dr. Humes had offered essentially the same defense of the Warren Commission's forensic findings when he was interviewed by CBS 25 years ago. I only learned of this during a chance

encounter with Leslie Midgley, the program's executive producer, who has been following with bemused detachment the uproar over Oliver Stone's recent film, "J.F.K."

The documentary yields other surprises. Take the famous photograph of a grinning Lee Harvey Oswald holding his rifle. The picture's authenticity has been widely questioned, most recently in "J.F.K." The shadows cast by his face and body don't match, prompting charges that Oswald's head was superimposed on someone else's body.

In 1967 the network had Lawrence Schiller, a professional photographer, recreate the picture at the same address, 214 Neeley Street, on the same date in March, using a model. A straight nose shadow corresponded with an angular body shadow, just as in the disputed picture.



The shadows matched.

Mr. Midgley's team had another excellent idea, to test the assertion that one man could not possibly have fired three shots within 4.8 to 7 seconds, as the Warren Report concluded. The team built a tower and target track to match the distances in Dealey Plaza. Eleven volunteer marksmen, most of them unfamiliar with Oswald's Italian Mannlicher-Carcano, took turns firing three shots at a moving target. A weapons engineer made three hits in 5.2 seconds; a state trooper made two hits and one near miss in less than 5 seconds. The average firing time was 5.6 seconds.

The larger point here is that television made an honorable effort to answer nagging questions 25 years ago in a program that, like much good TV journalism, sadly vanished into a memory hole. All the familiar arguments were ventilated: the flaws in the Warren Report, Jim Garrison's conspiracy thesis, the conflicting

accounts of eye witnesses, police, the F.B.I. and the C.I.A.

Walter Cronkite's prefatory words took note of a growing stream of books, articles and even a film that challenged the Warren Report. Eric Sevareid's comments would seem equally topical today. Few, he said, could believe that a "single, weak-chinned little character" could have caused so much havoc.

Excerpts of this CBS News Inquiry have been rebroadcast, but the original has never been reshowed in its entirety. Indeed, it took an intensive search by the network to locate a transcript. One remedy would be to reissue the program on videocassettes, and thus remind a new generation of a serious effort to address their parents' doubts about Dallas.

KARL E. MEYER

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 25 JUNE 1992

Senate Panel Revises, Approves JFK Legislation
By JOHN DIAMOND
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) - A Senate committee endorsed legislation Thursday that would clear the way for the release of secret documents relating to the assassination of President Kennedy.

The Senate Governmental Affairs Committee, voting unanimously, became the third congressional panel to back the bill. Congressional leaders expect floor debate and relatively quick passage after the July 4th recess.

The legislation establishes a review board to examine hundreds of thousands of Kennedy assassination documents and decide which ones to make public and which to keep secret.

The committee bowed to Bush administration objections and agreed to let the president appoint the review board. The initial proposal would have given that job to the federal appeals court. The committee's measure also strengthens the presumption that documents should be released unless there is a substantial reason not to do so.

"The bill passed today by the committee will get records released faster and reduce the bureaucracy involved in the original proposal," said Sen. John Glenn, D-Ohio and the chairman of the committee.

"The bill does not authorize the government to conduct another investigation into the assassination of President Kennedy," Glenn said. "However, it will give the public a firsthand opportunity to become fully informed."

The House Governmental Affairs Committee earlier this month approved a similar bill allowing the president to appoint the review board. The House Judiciary Committee recommended allowing the courts to appoint the board, which would review executive branch documents. The FBI and the CIA have said they are reviewing and releasing JFK documents on their own, without the prompting of legislation.

Pressure to disclose all the government paperwork on the assassination grew in large part from the popular film, "JFK," which advanced a government conspiracy theory of the assassination and specifically criticized the withholding of documents.

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
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Date 25 JUNE 1992

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE APPROVES RELEASE OF JFK FILES

WASHINGTON, June 25, Reuter - A U.S. Senate committee on Thursday voted to make public secret government files on the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy that were not scheduled for release until the next century.

The bill from the Governmental Affairs Committee calls for releasing files from the Central Intelligence Agency, Federal Bureau of Investigation and other government agencies on the 1963 assassination in Dallas. A five member panel would review the papers for security and privacy considerations.

Many of the documents are being held until the year 2029.

"The bill does not authorize the government to conduct another investigation into the assassination of President Kennedy. However, it will give the public a first-hand opportunity to become fully informed through the public release of this information, of the events surrounding this tragic event," Senator John Glenn, an Ohio Democrat, said in a statement.

A House of Representatives committee has approved a similar bill. The legislation was in response to increased interest in the assassination because of the 1991 movie "JFK," which suggested there was a government-wide conspiracy to murder Kennedy.

A commission headed by then-Chief Justice Earl Warren found in 1964 that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in killing Kennedy with a rifle.

The legislation must be passed by both the House and Senate and must then be signed by President George Bush to become law.

CAFE Treaty on Manpower Limitations Discussed
*LD1206060992 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service
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As the discussion at the Vienna forum shows though, some of its participants are now trying to solve, through the manpower agreement, a number of side issues that are often not only out of keeping with its aims but also go beyond the framework of the mandate for the current talks. This is manifested with particular clarity in such areas as the involvement of personnel in the exchange of information and limitations and questions of control [kontrol]. A strange situation has arisen: On the one hand, everyone agrees that the monitoring [kontrol] of manpower numbers by means of a head count is an unrealistic task. Incidentally, the problem has been discussed in detail but without success in all possible ways during the many years of talks on reducing armed forces and armaments in Central Europe. On the other hand, some delegations are seeking to fit into this unrealistic task a scheme for exchanging data in the manpower agreement, a scheme that many experts regard as being excessively detailed and complex, sharply out of keeping with the content of an agreement that is clear in its objectives.

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Under the Presidential Records Act of 1978, most records in presidential libraries, beginning with Ronald Reagan's, are defined as federal rather than private records. But the law was not retroactive.

Access to JFK autopsy records and X-rays, as a result, is still controlled by a deed of gift from the Kennedy family. The papers of the Commission to Investigate CIA Activity Within the United States, appointed by Ford and headed by then-Vice President Nelson Rockefeller, are treated as Ford's property.

"This is in keeping with legal practices prior to 1978 when records of presidentially appointed commissions

could be regarded as 'personal' to the president, since the commission provided advice directly to him," Archivist Wilson said at a recent House hearing on the bill.

Wilson urged Congress to exempt all "donated materials" from the definition. He said he was worried that Congress "may inadvertently discourage future donations of similar historical" records unless existing donation agreements are honored.

Wilson said Ford has already assured the National Archives that "relevant portions" of the records of the CIA commission, popularly known as the Rockefeller Commission, would be made available to the review board. The archivist said he believed those in charge of assassination-related records at the other libraries "are also likely to cooperate."

The files of the Rockefeller Commission, established in 1975 to examine illegal and improper CIA activities, include records about attempts to assassinate Cuban leader Fidel Castro as well as an examination of allegations linking accused assassin Lee Harvey Oswald and Oswald's killer, Jack Ruby, to the CIA. The commission rejected the allegations.

Another "noncontroversial" amendment sought by the archivist, and accepted by the Judiciary Committee at Edwards's urging, would allow the National Archives to charge for copies of all released assassination-related materials and not grant any fee waivers under the Freedom of Information Act.

Veteran assassination researcher Lesar denounced this provision as "devastating, particularly since the National Archives has a history of overcharging egregiously for documents." JFK assassination records can now be obtained from many federal agencies under FOIA fee waivers, but Lesar said if the Judiciary Committee bill passes, the records will be transferred to the archives, which will automatically start charging for them.

Wilson has said that the archives charges only 10 cents a page at its "self-service" machines. Lesar said "you can get it done at a commercial shop up the street from my office for a nickel a page and you don't have to do it yourself." Besides that, he said, "they're telling you you have to come to Washington to get it for a dime, which is above cost. They're discriminating against people who don't live here."

CIA Opens Pre-Dallas File on Oswald

Mexico City Trip Noted but Little New Offered on JFK Assassination

By George Lardner Jr.
Washington Post Staff Writer

The file the CIA compiled on Lee Harvey Oswald before the assassination of President John F. Kennedy was made public yesterday, but it offered slim pickings for long-time students of the case.

It also served as a reminder that the file would have been thicker if other CIA documents pertaining to Oswald from that period had not been apparently destroyed in what the agency once described as a matter of routine housekeeping.

Oswald, a former Marine who defected to the Soviet Union in 1959, was arrested in Dallas shortly after the assassination and was charged with the president's murder early the next morning. In a finding that has been hotly disputed over the years, the Warren Commission concluded that he killed the president, acting alone.

The 34 documents released yesterday dealt with Oswald's defection to Moscow and his activities following his return to the United States in 1962. Most of the records came from other agencies, such as the FBI and the State Department, and almost all of them had been made public before. Only 12 documents, including four of newspaper clippings, originated at the CIA.

"It all looks familiar," said James H. Lesar, a Washington attorney who heads the nonprofit Assassination Archives and Research Center here. "I suppose without checking page by page, I can't say there's nothing new, but a preliminary review doesn't seem to show anything."

The CIA opened a personality file—known as a 201 file—on Oswald on Dec. 9, 1960. That record, which consisted initially of a single page and was listed under the name "Lee Henry Oswald," noted he had "defected to the USSR in October 1959."

The 14-month delay between Oswald's defection and the opening of the file has never been satisfactorily explained. The House Select Committee on Assassinations, which looked into that issue in the late 1970s, pointed out that the CIA had been alerted to the defection by a State Department cable dated Oct. 31, 1959.

"At least three other communications of a confidential nature that gave more detail on the Oswald case were sent to the CIA in the same period," the committee said in its final report. Moreover, CIA officials told the committee that the substance of the Oct. 31, 1959, cable was sufficient to warrant the opening of a 201 file.

That, in turn, raised the question of where the cable and other messages pertaining to Oswald had been sent and stored at the CIA prior to the opening of the 201 file. The CIA told the committee there was no way of tracing the paths these documents took, explaining "because document dissemination records of relatively low national security significance are retained for only a 5-year period, they were no longer in existence for the years 1959-63."

Seven of the 12 CIA documents released yesterday were made public before as part of the files of the Warren Commission. Most of the

new records dealt with an old subject: Oswald's trip to Mexico City in the fall of 1963.

The CIA station there told headquarters in an Oct. 9, 1963, cable that an American male speaking broken Russian, who "said his name was Lee Oswald," visited the Soviet Embassy on Sept. 28 and spoke with Valeriy V. Kostikov, who was subsequently identified as a member of the KGB's "wet affairs," or assassinations, section. The cable also said the CIA station in Mexico City had photos, presumably taken in routine surveillance of the Soviet Embassy, of a 6-foot-tall man around 35 years old with athletic build and a receding hairline and suggested the photos were of Oswald.

One of the photos—subsequent Freedom of Information Act litigation showed there were 16 of them, according to Lesar—was made public by the Warren Commission. It was not of Oswald, and no one has ever figured out who was pictured in it. The discrepancy stirred still unresolved debate over whether the photo was of a man who did speak with Kostikov and pretended to be Oswald or whether Oswald himself visited the embassy but the CIA mistook a photo of someone else as his picture.

The CIA provided the partially censored records first to the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee and then to the National Archives, which made them public. But officials at the Archives were apparently chagrined at the agency's failure to give them the unexpurgated originals.

Staff researcher Robert Thomason contributed to this report.

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times 2A _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 4 June 1992 _____

House panel votes to release JFK files

A House committee voted yesterday to make public secret government files on the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

"Too many suspect that the truth is being concealed. The only way to put these concerns to rest is to open the files, now," Government Operations Committee chairman John Conyers, Michigan Democrat, said before the committee acted.

The committee's bill would create a five member board to review the material before its release to make sure that no intelligence sources were disclosed and individual privacy rights were protected. Board members would be named by the president and confirmed by the Senate.

The effort to release hundreds of thousands of documents from the CIA, the FBI, the Warren Commission and other government agencies was prompted by last year's movie "JFK," which suggested that a government conspiracy was responsible for Kennedy's murder.

The Washington Post 417
 The New York Times _____
 The Los Angeles Times _____
 The Wall Street Journal _____
 The Washington Times _____
 USA Today _____
 Associated Press _____
 UPI _____
 Reuter _____

JFK: THE FILES

Date 1 JUNE 1992

A House subcommittee unanimously approved legislation last week to unseal government records dealing with the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. The bill would set up a judicially appointed citizens review board to examine all the secret government material on the assassination and recommend which items should be released. The Bush administration has objected to the proposed review process as an unconstitutional infringement on executive powers and has suggested that the president could withhold documents on national security or privacy grounds. Last week's action moves the full measure to the House Judiciary Committee, one of three panels that must approve the bill before it is sent to the House floor.

The mountain of material, held by Congress, federal agencies, libraries and archives, contains everything from autopsy photographs and top-secret intelligence reports to newspaper clippings and tax returns. What follows is an outline of material related to the assassination that is held by government agencies:

The Warren Commission. Officially, the Committee to Investigate the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy.
Quantity: 363 cubic feet of material.
Location: National Archives, Washington.
Status: 98 percent available to the public.
Comments: Commission concluded in 1964 that Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone assassin.



The Rockefeller Commission. Officially, the Commission to Investigate CIA Activities Within the United States.
Quantity: 2,500 pages of material on JFK assassination.
Location: National Archives and Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library, Ann Arbor, Mich.
Status: Highly classified, official government access only.
Comments: File includes material on plots to assassinate Cuban leader Fidel Castro. Commission concluded in 1975 that Kennedy was shot from the rear, rejecting allegations that CIA agents were linked with Oswald and Oswald's killer, Jack Ruby. The Ford Library is assisting scholars in requesting government agency permission for its release.

Federal Bureau of Investigation.
Quantity: 499,431 pages of documents.
Location: FBI public reading room, headquarters, Washington.
Status: 223,689 pages or 93 feet of material available to the

public. Agency is processing more files for release. There are about 22,056 pages of files on related people such as Oswald's wife, Marina. Of that total, 5,029 pages have been made public.

Comments: Unlike most other sources, the FBI's JFK file continues to grow. The FBI recently interviewed two "hobos" arrested in Dealey Plaza and believed by some to have been assassins. The FBI concluded the two were, in fact, hobos and not involved. A third hobo was found to have died. The FBI also recently pursued and dismissed a tip that Oswald had been seen with Ruby before the assassination. The FBI is withholding some material to protect intelligence sources or personal privacy.

The Church Committee. Officially, the Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities.
Quantity: About 5,000 papers on Kennedy assassination.
Location: Senate Intelligence Committee.
Status: Classified.
Comments: Committee reported in 1976 that the CIA and the FBI "failed in, or avoided, carrying out certain of their responsibilities" in the JFK probe. But the committee said its finding "does not lead to the conclusion that there was a conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy."

The House Select Committee on Assassinations.
Quantity: A one-volume report; 12 supporting volumes; 414,000 pages of unpublished material.
Location: National Archives.
Status: Report and supporting volumes publicly available. Unpublished material secret until 2029.
Comments: The committee reported in 1979 that a second gunman probably fired and missed Kennedy. Historian Dick Billings, who served on the committee and drafted the report, said most of the important material was published in the supporting volumes. Material held until 2029 includes autopsy photos and X-rays, personal income tax returns, committee housekeeping records and material protected under national security concerns. The 2029 date stems from a House rule that seals all unpublished committee records for 50 years.



Central Intelligence Agency.
Quantity: About 250,000 to 300,000 pages.
Location: CIA headquarters, Langley, Va.
Status: About 11,000 pages made public through Freedom of Information Act requests.
Comments: The agency has established an internal historical review board to examine JFK documents and release all but those protected by national security or privacy considerations

CONTINUED

Secret Service Records.

Quantity: 11,000 pages of documents and several audiovisual items.

Location: National Archives.

Status: Access governed by Freedom of Information Act.

Comments: Although researchers must file FOIA petitions to view the Secret Service file, most of the material is publicly available through the Warren Commission files. Scattered documents have been withheld under FOIA exemptions dealing with national security, personal privacy and law enforcement records.

Department of Justice, Criminal Division case file.

Quantity: 65,000 pages.

Location: National Archives.

Status: Access governed by Freedom of Information Act; 11,000 pages withheld under exemptions dealing with personal privacy and law enforcement records.

Comments: The department is leading the Bush administration's opposition to legislation creating a citizens review board to release assassination documents. The Justice Department argues that the bill infringes on the president's power to control executive branch documents.

State Department.

Quantity: 7,000 pages.

Location: Most transferred from State to National Archives.

Status: Access governed by Freedom of Information Act.

Comments: Most material available through Warren Commission report.

Letters

Times ignores best evidence of Kennedy assassination

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times 2E _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 1 June 1992

Your May 21 editorial "Best evidence" was slightly illusive. You suggest that two doctors, Dr. James J. Humes and Dr. J. Thornton Boswell, appeared at a press conference with new information regarding their examination of the body of President John F. Kennedy on the evening of Nov. 22, 1963. The fact is they neither appeared at the press conference nor provided new information.

That much of the controversy about the assassination emanates from the autopsy rendered by these physicians is central to the issue of their credibility in 1992. Should you doubt that the autopsy performed on President Kennedy was shoddy, it need only be compared to Warren Commission Document 320, the autopsy performed by Dr. Earl Rose, then medical examiner in Dallas, on Lee Harvey Oswald. It is significant that Dr. Rose's autopsy of Oswald was not included in the Warren Report despite President Johnson's Executive Order 11130 directing investigation into the subsequent violent death of the man charged with the assassination. Comparison immediately reveals why Dr. Rose's autopsy wasn't included; it would have embarrassed the government's autopsy of the president.

Two facts regarding the president's autopsy are offered in light of your editorial:

■ Dr. Humes and Dr. Boswell did not know that the anterior throat wound, which they thought was a simple tracheostomy, was in fact a bullet wound until the following day when Dr. Humes spoke with Dr. Malcom Perry in Dallas. A review of Page 4 of the autopsy reveals the problem created when Dr. Humes describes the "upper right posterior thorax" wound as "presumably of entry." Continuing, he describes the anterior neck wound, which he never examined as a bullet wound thusly:

"The wound presumably of exit was that described by Dr. Malcom Perry of Dallas in the low anterior cervical region." The operative term regarding the wounds being "presumably." Autopsy reports should provide facts, not speculation, the accepted exception being the autopsy of an assassinated president.

■ The fact that the autopsy physicians did not completely trace the path of the bullet wound in the back created concern as to the accuracy of their connecting the wounds of the back and throat. This, coupled with their probe of the back wound that indicated one whose terminus could be felt with their fingers, vitiates the contention that the two wounds were entrance and exit wounds caused by the same bullet.

The issue of why they did not trace the course of the bullet was best addressed by Dr. Pierre Finck, the third attending physician, when questioned during Jim Garrison's trial of Clay Shaw. Dr. Finck, when asked why they didn't trace the path of the bullet stated under oath that they were ordered not to. Whether Dr. Finck was truthful or not, the fact remains that they did not trace the course of the bullet. That this was a prime purpose of the autopsy has been overlooked.

Lastly, the role of Adm. George G. Burkely, personal physician to the president, has been ignored for 30 years. Adm. Burkely was one of the few people present at every significant location the day of the assassination; in the motorcade and at Parkland Hospital in Dallas, in Air Force One during the return trip, and at Bethesda Hospital during the autopsy. Adm. Burkely signed President Kennedy's death certificate, which coincidentally wasn't included in the Warren Report. The reason for its exclusion: His location of President Kennedy's wounds dev-

astated the single-bullet theory permitted by linking the back and throat wounds. He also verified the clinical drawings made during the autopsy, but in the version reproduced in the Warren Report this verification was conveniently and neatly excised. He was never called as a witness before the Warren Commission. The reason was that his knowledgeability regarding Kennedy's death and the location of the wounds would have placed him at odds with the single-bullet theory crafted from the flawed autopsy.

That The Times chooses to support the single-gunman theory of the Warren Commission is unfortunate. Despite the rhetoric from both supporters and critics of the Warren Commission, one fact emerges from the debate, and that is that all the facts are not known. That the critics and the public *don't know what they don't know* is not a cause for blame. It is the fault of a government that failed to fully and completely investigate the murder of a president and then failed to provide what it did know to the nation it serves. We may never know the full truth about Kennedy's death, but our best opportunity for discovery rests with the critics and an open-minded and inquiring free press.

JOHN W. MASLAND
Springfield

The article this refers to follows.

CONTINUED

Alas, it is evident by now from your editorial of May 21 on the testimony of the naval doctors who performed the autopsy on John F. Kennedy that The Washington Times, too, throwing away all claims to being an objective investigative newspaper, ferreting out the truth in the face of all obstacles, wants desperately to believe in the lone-gunner theory, to the extent that it is willing to conclude sarcastically that if the good naval doctors have spoken, the case is settled.

No matter that they have ex post facto invented a new law of physics they call the "jet propulsion effect" which contradicts the law of conservation of momentum, which has served mankind flawlessly since its conception, and claim that the pattern of the cranial wound is for some reason explained by yet another law of physics, (named) that (and I can hear them spluttering) "is fool-proof — absolutely, unequivocally, and without question." Where have I heard such ex cathedra pronouncements before? They recall the Warren Report itself and its frantic efforts to exclude other evidence: "to the exclusion of all other weapons," etc.

Real conservatives should be aghast at the possibility that such an assassination can take place in this country, that in effect a coup d'etat took place here in a manner reminiscent of a banana republic, and should shudder at the demonstration of the power of the government to deceive its citizenry. Is this democracy? No. This is totalitarianism.

JOHN D.S. MUHLENBERG
Vienna

CONTINUED

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times 2A _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 30 May 1992

Jury denies request to reopen RFK case

LOS ANGELES — A grand jury declined a request by "JFK" director Oliver Stone and others to pursue claims that police destroyed evidence and badgered witnesses to the killing of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, a man wounded in the attack said Thursday.



Stone

Paul Schrade said he was disappointed by the decision but will take the request to a new Los Angeles County grand jury to be empaneled July 1, as well as to Congress and the state Legislature.

Mr. Kennedy was fatally shot in the kitchen of the Ambassador Hotel on June 5, 1968, moments after he claimed victory in California's Democratic presidential primary. Sirhan Sirhan, a Jordanian immigrant, was convicted of the New York senator's slaying and is serving a life term.

Mr. Schrade, a former union leader who was wounded in the head, believes a second gunman was involved.

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times 2A _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 29 May 1992 _____

House panel supports JFK documents bill

A House panel unanimously approved legislation yesterday to release secret records dealing with the assassination of President Kennedy. Whether the documents hold new information remains to be seen.

The Judiciary subcommittee on economic and commercial law gave the legislation its first favorable vote after defeating two Republican amendments that would have increased executive branch control over government secrets.

The bill would set up a judicially appointed citizens review board to examine all the secret government material on the assassination and recommend which should be released. The president could withhold documents on national security or privacy grounds.

The mountain of secret material, held by Congress, federal agencies, libraries and archives, contains everything from autopsy photographs and top-secret intelligence reports to newspaper clippings and tax returns.

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times A13
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 29 May 1992

Panel Votes to Release File on Kennedy Death

WASHINGTON, May 28 (AP) — A House subcommittee today unanimously approved legislation to release Government records on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The panel, the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Economic and Commercial Law, gave the legislation its first favorable vote after defeating two Republican amendments that would have increased the executive branch's control over the documents. Today's action moves the measure to the full Judiciary panel.

The bill would set up a judicially appointed citizens' review board to examine all the secret files on the assassination and recommend which should be released. The President could withhold documents on the ground of privacy or national security, however.

The secret material contains everything from autopsy photographs and top secret intelligence reports to newspaper clippings and tax returns.

The Warren Commission concluded in 1964 that Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone, killed Kennedy in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963. Conspiracy theories have abounded ever since.

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Mountain of JFK Documents Awaits Public Release

By JOHN DIAMOND
Associated Press Writer

Date 29 May 1998

WASHINGTON (AP) - A mountain of documents pertaining to the assassination of President Kennedy awaits public release as legislation to unlock the files moves through Congress.

The secret material - held by Congress, federal agencies, libraries and archives - contains everything from autopsy photographs and top secret intelligence reports to newspaper clippings and tax returns.

Whether the documents hold new information remains to be seen.

Legislation creating a system for the release of the material advanced a step in the process Thursday as the Judiciary Committee's economic and commercial law subcommittee unanimously approved the measure. The voice vote came after Democratic members defeated Republican proposals to strengthen White House control over the documents.

Scholars, journalists and assassination experts will pore over the secret records as they become public. But some doubt they will turn up anything new because several congressional investigative panels already have had full access to the files.

"There might be little fragments of information," said Dick Billings, co-author of a book on the assassination. "I don't expect to see any major revelations."

The Warren Commission concluded in 1964 that Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone, killed John F. Kennedy in Dallas. Conspiracy theories have abounded ever since.

"Is there going to be a smoking gun? No," said Jeff Goldberg, a journalist who wrote extensively on conspiracy theories. "Is there stuff in there that's going to be historically interesting? Undoubtedly."

As the debate in Congress continues, the FBI and the CIA are reviewing the JFK files and gradually making thousands of pages available to the public. Some of the recent releases appear to reveal more about the workings of government than about the assassination.

With some fanfare, for example, a CIA historical review panel recently released the agency's 110-page file on Oswald predating the November 1963 assassination. Assassination researcher James Lesar said the CIA blacked out a key word from one document even though historians have long known the full text.

The Oct. 10, 1963, memo from CIA headquarters to its Mexico station describes Oswald's contact with the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City a week earlier.

"Lee Oswald who (contacted) SOVEMB 1 Oct. probably identical Lee Henry Oswald (201-289248) born 18 Oct. 1939."

The classified message stamped "secret" got Oswald's middle name wrong. More important to Lesar, the word "contacted" was

CONTINUED

handwritten over a blacked-out word. Lesar said that word is "phoned." The CIA, for some reason, remains sensitive about acknowledging that it was bugging the Soviet Embassy, he said. "What's really comical about it is that you've got this historical review program and apparently they don't know enough history to know that they've already released this stuff," Lesar said.

CIA Director Robert Gates acknowledged the problem in recent testimony before the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee.

"Unfortunately, and for reasons I do not know, what we are dealing with is a mass of material that is not indexed, is uncataloged and is highly disorganized - all of which makes the review process more difficult," Gates said.

The release of the Oswald file is not the only instance in which a furor has surrounded "secret" assassination material that is, in fact, available to the public.

The Journal of the American Medical Association last week released its latest issue in which the pathologists who conducted Kennedy's autopsy said the president was definitely shot from behind. Some media outlets described the comments as breaking "a 28-year silence." In fact, two of the doctors gave the same testimony in a 1978 appearance before a congressionally appointed review panel.

Similarly, lawmakers have reiterated Kennedy family requests that the gruesome autopsy photographs be kept from public view. Yet some of the photos have been shown on television and published in books and magazines.

Sen. John Glenn, D-Ohio, chairman of the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee, says the documents bill seeks not so much to resolve uncertainty about who killed JFK but to address the "climate of suspicion and distrust that has grown over the years regarding the official explanation of the assassination."

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 29 May 1992

WASHINGTON (AP) - Here is an outline of the material held by government agencies relating to the assassination of President Kennedy. The information was provided by Sen. John Glenn, D-Ohio, the chairman of the governmental affairs committee, the National Archives, the CIA and the FBI:

-The Warren Commission. Officially, the Committee to Investigate the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy.
Quantity: 363 cubic feet of material.
Location: National Archives, Washington.
Status: 98 percent available to the public.
Comments: Commission concluded in 1964 that Lee Harvey Oswald was lone assassin.

-The Rockefeller Commission. Officially, the Commission to Investigate CIA Activities Within the United States.
Quantity: 2,500 pages of material on JFK assassination.
Location: National Archives and Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library, Ann Arbor, Mich.
Status: Highly classified, official government access only.
Comments: File includes material on plots to assassinate Cuban leader Fidel Castro. Commission concluded in 1975 that Kennedy was shot from the rear, rejecting allegations that CIA agents were linked with Oswald and Oswald's killer, Jack Ruby. The Ford Library is assisting scholars in requesting government agency permission for its release.

-The Church Committee. Officially, the Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities.
Quantity: About 5,000 papers on Kennedy assassination.
Location: Senate Intelligence Committee.
Status: Classified.
Comments: Committee reported in 1976 that the CIA and the FBI "failed in, or avoided, carrying out certain of their responsibilities" in the JFK probe. But the committee said its finding "does not lead to the conclusion that there was a conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy."

-The House Select Committee on Assassinations.
Quantity: A one-volume report; 12 supporting volumes; 414,000 pages of unpublished material.
Location: National Archives.
Status: Report and supporting volumes publicly available. Unpublished material secret until 2029.
Comments: Committee reported in 1979 that a second gunman probably fired and missed Kennedy. Historian Dick Billings, who served on the committee and drafted the report, said most of the important material was published in the supporting volumes.

CONTINUED

Material held until 2029 includes autopsy photos and X-rays, personal income tax returns, committee housekeeping records and material protected under national security concerns. The 2029 date stems from a House rule that seals all unpublished committee records for 50 years.

-Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Quantity: 499,431 pages of documents.

Location: FBI public reading room, headquarters, Washington.

Status: 223,689 pages or 93 feet of material available to the public. Agency is processing more files for release. There are about 22,056 pages of files on related people such as Oswald's wife, Marina. Of that total, 5,029 pages have been made public.

Comments: Unlike most other sources, the FBI's JFK file continues to grow. FBI recently interviewed two "hobos" arrested in Dealey Plaza and believed by some to have been assassins. The FBI concluded the two were, in fact, hobos and not involved. A third hobo was found to have died. The FBI also recently pursued and dismissed a tip that Oswald had been seen with Ruby before the assassination. The FBI is withholding some material to protect intelligence sources or personal privacy.

-Central Intelligence Agency.

Quantity: About 250,000 to 300,000 pages.

Location: CIA headquarters, Langley, Va.

Status: About 11,000 pages made public through Freedom of Information Act requests.

Comments: Agency has established an internal historical review board to examine JFK documents and release all but those protected by national security or privacy considerations.

-Secret Service Records.

Quantity: 11,000 pages of documents and several audio-visual items.

Location: National Archives.

Status: Access governed by Freedom of Information Act.

Comments: Although researchers must file FOI petitions to view the Secret Service file, most of the material is publicly available through the Warren Commission files. Scattered documents have been withheld under FOI exemptions dealing with national security, personal privacy and law enforcement records.

-Department of Justice, Criminal Division Casefile.

Quantity: 65,000 pages.

Location: National Archives.

Status: Access governed by Freedom of Information Act; 11,000 pages withheld under exemptions dealing with personal privacy and law enforcement records.

Comments: The department is leading the Bush administration's opposition to legislation creating a citizen review board to release assassination documents. Justice argues that the bill infringes on the president's power to control executive branch documents.

-State Department.

Quantity: 7,000 pages.

CONTINUED

Location: Most transferred from State to National Archives.
Status: Access governed by Freedom of Information Act.
Comments: Most of material available through Warren Commission
report.

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today 3A _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 29 May 92 _____

JFK AUTOPSY: Two Navy medical technicians at the autopsy of President John F. Kennedy said government-released photos and X-rays were falsified. Jerrol Custer and Floyd Riebe spoke at a New York news conference to rebut recent reports of two Navy pathologists who did the autopsy and who support the official findings that Kennedy was shot twice from behind by a lone assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald.

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National Correspondent, JAMA®

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The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press X _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 2 April 1992

Valenti Blasts 'JFK' as Nazi-esque Propaganda

LOS ANGELES (AP) - Jack Valenti, a top film industry official and former aide to President Johnson, has issued a stinging attack on Oliver Stone's film "JFK," comparing it to Nazi propaganda and calling it a "hoax."

In a seven-page statement that Valenti said was unconnected to his role as president of the Motion Picture Association of America, he tackled Stone's depiction of a Kennedy assassination conspiracy that included then-Vice President Johnson.

Valenti, whose association provides movie ratings, dismissed the film's allegation of a coverup as "quackery" plucked from a "slag heap of loony theories" in a book by former New Orleans prosecutor Jim Garrison.

He called the film a "hoax" and a "smear" and said: "In much the same way, young German boys and girls in 1941 were mesmerized by Leni Reifenstahl's 'Triumph of the Will' in which Adolf Hitler was depicted as a newborn god."

Garrison, played by Kevin Costner in "JFK," became obsessed with trying to prove that Kennedy was killed by conspirators, not by Lee Harvey Oswald acting alone.

"Does any sane human being truly believe that President Johnson, the Warren Commission members, law enforcement officers, CIA, FBI, White House aides, and assorted thugs, weirdos, frisbee throwers, all conspired together as plotters in Garrison's wacky sightings?" Valenti asked.

"And then for almost 29 years nothing leaked? But you have to believe it if you think well of any part of this accusatory lunacy," he said.

Valenti dismissed Garrison's book as "hallucinatory bleatings."

Valenti told The New York Times, in a story published Thursday, that he withheld his criticism of "JFK" until after the Academy Awards on Monday. "JFK" had received eight nominations, including best picture.

"I waited to speak out because I didn't want to do anything which might affect this picture's theatrical release or the Oscar balloting," Valenti said.

The movie, which had been nominated for best picture, won two Oscars for technical achievement.

Stone told the Times he respected Valenti's loyalty to Johnson but found "his emotional diatribe off the mark."

"The overwhelming majority of Americans ... agree with the central thesis of my film: that President Kennedy was killed by a conspiracy which included people in the government," Stone said.

A call seeking comment from Garrison was not returned.

Karl Malden, president of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, was away filming and was unavailable for comment, an assistant said.

Valenti also called the film a "monstrous charade" about Johnson that ranks with Soviet revisionist history.

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''Mr. Stone hurls at Lyndon Johnson one of the deadliest slurs one human can lay on another, a charge of accessory to and an accomplice in a cover-up of the murder of the president of the United States,'' Valenti said.

Valenti, who became a special assistant to Johnson immediately following Kennedy's assassination Nov. 22, 1963, in Dallas, cited an intimate knowledge of White House affairs in rebutting the film's portrayal of events.

He also defended the members of the Warren Commission. ''To indict these men of honor, along with Lyndon Johnson, is vicious, cruel and false.''

CIA to Release Some JFK Documents

Gates Says He Is 'Determined' to Declassify

Assassination Files

By George Lardner Jr.
Washington Post Staff Writer

CIA Director Robert M. Gates expressed determination yesterday to release "every relevant scrap of paper in CIA's possession" about the assassination of President John F. Kennedy to dispel the notion that the intelligence agency or other elements of the government were involved in the murder.

Gates made the pledge in an emotional postscript to testimony before a Senate committee on a bill that could require disclosure of as many as a million pages of still secret records relevant to the 1963 assassination.

The Justice Department has warned that it probably would recommend a veto of the measure if Congress passes it in its current form, but Gates said that "because of high interest in the JFK papers, I am not waiting for legislation."

The CIA director promised a first installment this week. He said he has ordered declassification of all CIA files on Lee Harvey Oswald that were compiled before the assassination and said they will be made public at the National Archives "with quite minimal deletions" in a day or two.

The packet, according to one source, will include 11 CIA documents on Oswald, six of them never released before, and 22 documents on Oswald from other agencies, all of them previously released. They deal with Oswald's defection to the Soviet Union in 1959 and his activities after his return to the United States in 1962.

"There is very little new here, and it is not worthy of archives," another source said.

According to the Associated Press, which yesterday reviewed a set of the records provided to the

committee, the documents show that government agents used informers as well as face-to-face interviews to keep occasional track of Oswald before the assassination.

Gates told the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee that the 110-page packet was "a small fraction of what we hold," but described it as "an earnest of my commitment immediately to begin review for declassification of this material."

Closing his appearance with some personal remarks, Gates said: "The only thing more horrifying to me than the assassination itself is the insidious, perverse notion that elements of the American government, that my own agency, had some part in it. I am determined personally to make public or to expose to disinterested eyes every relevant scrap of paper in CIA's possession in the hope of helping to dispel this corrosive suspicion. With or without legislation, I intend to proceed."

The JFK records bill, sponsored by Sen. David L. Boren (D-Okla.), chairman of the Senate intelligence committee, and Rep. Louis Stokes (D-Ohio), former chairman of the House assassinations committee, grew out of the controversy over the Oliver Stone movie "JFK" and its allegations of high-level government involvement in plotting the Kennedy assassination and then covering up the conspiracy.

The measure would create an independent, court-appointed board with power to review and release all congressional and executive branch records "relevant" to the assassination. The president would still be able to block release, and the board would have discretion to postpone disclosure for specified reasons, such as exposure of current intelligence sources and methods or substantial invasions of privacy.

The Washington Post A17
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
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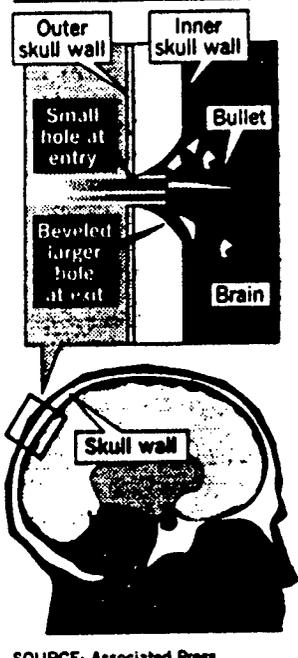
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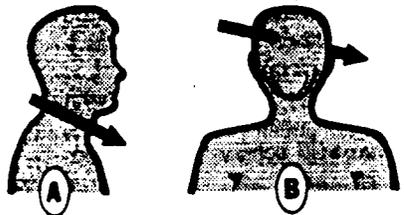
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SHOT 'FROM ABOVE AND BEHIND'

JFK AUTOPSY DOCTORS BACK WARREN COMMISSION



Doctors at Bethesda Naval Hospital who performed the autopsy of President John F. Kennedy back the conclusions of the Warren Commission that he was shot twice from behind on Nov. 22, 1963, in Dallas. The doctors base their conclusions on the shapes of his bullet wounds. Bullets make a round entrance wound and a beveled exit wound (left). A study of Kennedy's wounds support the bullet trajectory consistent with a gunman firing from the rear, they say. The doctors support the conclusions that:
A: Bullet 1 entered Kennedy's neck and exited the throat.
B: The fatal bullet, from either the second or third shot, entered the back of Kennedy's head and exited above the right ear.



SOURCE: Associated Press

THE WASHINGTON POST

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The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 19 May 1992

AMA: Lone gunman shot Kennedy, twice
By NED KILKELLY

NEW YORK (UPI) — The pathologists who conducted the autopsy of President John F. Kennedy remain certain, nearly three decades later, that he was shot twice by a lone gunman who fired a rifle from above and behind his Dallas motorcade, editors of the nation's top medical magazine said Tuesday.

Two former U.S. Navy pathologists broke nearly 29 years of silence by talking about the autopsy, conducted at the Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., the day Kennedy was killed, in an interview with The Journal of the American Medical Association.

JAMA also interviewed the doctors who were most involved in the efforts to resuscitate the mortally wounded president in the emergency room of Dallas's Parkland Memorial Hospital.

The interviews, published in JAMA's May 27th issue, support the conclusion by the Warren Commission that the president was killed by a lone gunman in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963.

"Based upon solid, unequivocal forensic evidence," said George Lundberg, JAMA editor and a former military pathologist, "I can state without concern or question that President Kennedy was struck and killed by two and only two bullets fired from one high-velocity rifle."

Lundberg, speaking at a news conference at a Midtown Manhattan hotel, said, "No other bullets struck the president. A single assassin fired both."

Lundberg said an "abrasion collar" on the skin of the back of Kennedy's neck showed where the first bullet entered, and that it exited the front of the president's throat.

"The second bullet entered the back of the head and exploded the right side of the head, destroying the brain with a surely lethal wound," Lundberg said.

None of the doctors JAMA interviewed were present at the news conference.

The two pathologists, Drs. James Humes and "J" Thornton Boswell, examined Kennedy's body in Maryland after it was flown from Dallas, apparently against state law and over the strong protests of the medical examiner in Dallas.

Homicide is a state crime, and is usually investigated by the local authorities.

Lundberg speculated that federal agents insisted on moving the autopsy out of security concerns after the assassination, and pressure from Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, who insisted on returning to Washington, D.C., with her husband's body.

But Lundberg maintained there was no evidence of a conspiracy to alter the autopsy findings or the body between Dallas and Maryland.

"There was no interference with our autopsy and nobody tried to suppress the findings," Boswell says in the JAMA article.

And although Humes admitted to burning his original autopsy notes

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because they were blood-stained, he said he rewrote them entirely and included them as part of the completed report.

He said he agreed to talk to JAMA "because I am tired of being beaten upon by people who are supremely ignorant of the scientific facts of the president's death."

Four Dallas physicians who worked directly on the dying president also refuted the claim of a former colleague, Charles Crenshaw, made in a recent book, that the throat wound was an entrance wound.

"I do not even remember even seeing him in the room," Malcolm Perry, who performed the tracheostomy, told JAMA. Perry added that Crenshaw was offering conclusions beyond his expertise.

Lundberg said conspiracy theories based on two or more assassins or that the president was shot from the front are based on fabrications and unsubstantiated allegations.

He called last year's popular movie "JFK," in which filmmaker Oliver Stone portrayed the assassination as part of a broad conspiracy, "primarily skillful film fiction" that gravely insulted the military physicians involved.

"He did a terrible disservice to the country in rewriting history," Lundberg said of Stone.

"The autopsy findings cannot state which one person fired the rifle, whether there were other shots that missed, or whether Lee Harvey Oswald worked with the New Orleans mob or the CIA," Lundberg said.

"The best explanation for the motivation of the myriad conspiracy theorists are paranoia, desire for personal recognition and public visibility, and profit," he said.

Lundberg added that JAMA was asking the government to release the records pertaining to the assassination and the autopsy, "to remove the final vestiges of doubt."

The JAMA article does not address the "magic-bullet theory," which suggests that the first bullet struck Kennedy and kept going, apparently changing direction and then hitting Texas Gov. John Conolly, who was sitting in front of the president.

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The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
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The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 19 May 1997

AMA STUDY SUPPORTS WARREN COMMISSION FINDINGS ON JFK KILLING

By Arthur Spiegelman

NEW YORK, May 19, Reuter - Two doctors who performed the autopsy on John F. Kennedy broke a 29-year silence on Tuesday to say the U.S. president was killed by two bullets fired from above and behind by a lone gunman using a high-powered rifle.

In detailed comments released by the Journal of the American Medical Association, pathologists James Humes and J. Thornton Boswell spoke out in hopes of ending a national debate, fuelled by the film "JFK," that maintains Kennedy was killed in a conspiracy.

The doctors endorsed the conclusions of the official Warren Commission probe into the assassination. They said all evidence showed Kennedy was hit by two bullets in the back of the head fired by a lone gunman using a rifle.

The Journal presented their conclusions at a news conference which was not attended by either doctor. Their findings were immediately challenged by a leading supporter of the theory that Kennedy was murdered in a conspiracy.

The Journal's editor, Dr George Lundberg, lashed out at conspiracy proponents who he said were trying to win publicity and profit from a president's death.

"The best explanations for the motivation of the myriad conspiracy theorists are paranoia, desire for personal recognition and public visibility and profit," he told the news conference.

The Warren Commission found that Kennedy was killed by gunman Lee Harvey Oswald who fired at him from the window of a building overlooking the route of his motorcade through Dallas on November 22, 1963.

Lundberg said the autopsy could not state who fired the rifle, whether there were shots that missed or whether Oswald worked with organised crime or with the Central Intelligence Agency, all charges made by conspiracy theorists.

Almost three decades later, most Americans say that they do not believe the Warren Commission or that Oswald acted alone.

The two doctors said there was no evidence of a third bullet striking the president or of one being fired from a direction other than above and behind Kennedy.

They also denied that their original work was tampered with by higher-ups, that they were pressured to reach the conclusions they did, or that the body of the late president had been altered at the autopsy. All those charges were made by people claiming that the president was killed in a conspiracy.

They said that they examined the body after it was taken from a coffin and they took extensive photographs of it. Humes said he destroyed his original notes because the pages were stained with blood but he made a complete copy which is in the

CONTINUED

Page 35.

Lincoln, Kennedy, and the Autopsy

From Washington to Dallas on the Union Line
The air was numbing cold.
The people listened with fists
shoved deep in pockets.
They heard their fellow American say,
"Ask not what your country can do for you
Ask what you can do for your country."
The words rang out
like a shot.

Marc S. Micozzi, MD, PhD

Presidential assassinations leave a deep scar on our collective memory and consciousness as a nation. Somehow, the American public in 1992 seems more comfortable with its knowledge of the circumstances of the death of our first assassinated President, Abraham Lincoln, investigated in the mid-1860s, than it does with that of our most recent, John F. Kennedy, investigated in the mid-1960s.

See also p 2794.

When Lincoln was shot at Ford's Theatre in Washington, DC, on the evening of Good Friday, April 14, 1865, no US President had been assassinated before, and, coupled with the simultaneous bloody attack on Secretary of State William Seward and his family at his home and the attempt on Vice President Andrew Johnson, no one knew quite what to do. Ambulance service did not then exist in Washington and cases like that of the wounded President were generally attended in the home and not the hospital. Instead, President Lincoln was carried across the street and placed in a bed in the Petersen Boarding House where he was attended by army physicians until he died early the next morning.

The only concentration of specialized medical capability in the federal government was at the Army Medical Museum (today's Armed Forces Institute of Pathology) founded barely 3 years before in Washington at the outbreak of the Civil War.¹ Museum physicians were called on to perform the autopsy that then—as now—was done to clearly establish the cause and manner of death.² These results were quickly made available to the public and quelled rampant rumors about Lincoln's death, allowing a stricken nation to begin to come to terms with its grief.³

When President Kennedy was shot in Dallas in November 1963, during a trip to Texas to open the new US Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine in San Antonio, the federal government had at its command tremendous medical and other resources in a nation replete with the most advanced medical technology, services, and capabilities. Yet the subsequent autopsy at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md, and investigation of this death have not left the nation satisfied with the results.

How was the federal government able to accomplish in an 1865 presidential death investigation what was not repeated to the public's satisfaction in 1963? Part of the problem has been public access to correct information. To a trained medical examiner, it is necessary to obtain and study the medical facts of the autopsy and correlate them with the circumstances of the shooting to arrive at a reasonable conclusion.

My first opportunity personally to observe the relevant facts and correlations of the Kennedy assassination, presented as medical examiner evidence, came at the meeting of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences in New Orleans, La, on February 19, 1992. Forensic scientist Michael West, DDS, of Hattiesburg, Miss, gave a special presentation organized by Michael Baden, MD, of New York, NY, that correlated the Kennedy autopsy findings with the circumstances of the shooting as shown frame-by-frame on the Zapruder film.⁴ For the first time, I was able to rest, personally satisfied with the generally accepted autopsy results of the original death investigation and the Warren Commission report, for the simple reason that I was able to correlate the medical evidence with the observed circumstances.

We have relied on the media to communicate this critical information to the public at large. As conspiracy theories have spread, the public has not yet been satisfied with this information. Open access to the medical information had until recently been denied, leaving only speculation. Now we may finally reach an end to the era of speculation regarding the cause, manner, and circumstances surrounding the death of President John F. Kennedy.

On this April 15, exactly 127 years after Lincoln's death, we convened a second panel in Washington, DC, to carefully study the ethical⁵ and technical questions of access to medical information derived from original autopsy materials from 1865 (already on public display in Washington for some decades) regarding the possibility of Abraham Lincoln having had Marfan's syndrome.⁶ Certainly, the National Museum of Health and Medicine of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology has the unique capability in the case of President Kennedy, as well, not only to retain autopsy materials and roentgenograms for posterity, but also to make them available to forensic scientists and to accurately and tastefully present them to the public so all can see for themselves the evidence of what really happened in Dallas (and Bethesda) on that fateful day and night. If we are careful in our obligations toward the collection, care, keeping, and access to medical information and materials, we will be able to answer medical questions (when and if such answers are warranted) whether 30 or 130 years later.

Marc S. Micozzi, MD, PhD

From the National Museum of Health and Medicine, Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, Washington, DC.

Reprint requests to National Museum of Health and Medicine, Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, Washington, DC 20306-6000 (Dr Micozzi)

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3. Taft CS. 'Murder of President Lincoln' and 'Last Hours of Abraham Lincoln.' *Med Surg Reporter*. 1865;12:452-454. Editorial.

4. Rush JW, West MH. Confirmation of the single bullet theory. Presented at the 44th annual meeting of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences; February 19, 1992. New Orleans, La.

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6. Micozzi MS. When the patient is Abraham Lincoln. *Caduceus*. 1991;7:35-42.

At Large

With Dennis L. Breo

JFK's death—the plain truth from the MDs who did the autopsy

There are two and only two physicians who know exactly what happened—and didn't happen—during their autopsy of President John F. Kennedy on the night of November 22, 1963, at the Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md. The two, former US Navy pathologists James Joseph Humes, MD, and "J" Thornton Boswell, MD, convened last month in a Florida hotel for two days of extraordinary interviews with *JAMA* editor George D. Lundberg, MD, himself a former military pathologist, and this reporter about the events of that fateful night. It is the only time that Humes and Boswell have publicly discussed their famous case, and it was the result of seven years of efforts by Lundberg to persuade them to do so.

Bullets came from above and behind

The scientific evidence they documented during their autopsy provides irrefutable proof that President Kennedy was struck by only two bullets that came from above and behind from a high-velocity weapon that caused the fatal wounds. This autopsy proof, combined with the bullet and rifle evidence found at the scene of the crime, and the subsequent detailed documentation of a six-month investigation involving the enormous resources of the local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, proves the 1964 Warren Commission conclusion that Kennedy was killed by a lone assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald.

Humes, who was in charge, calls it "probably the least secret autopsy in the history of the world." It was Humes and Boswell who opened the casket when the President's body was brought by ambulance from Andrews Air Force Base after the flight from Dallas. It was Humes and Boswell who lifted the former President from his casket and placed him on the examining table to begin a four-hour autopsy. (They were joined later at the autopsy table by Army

Lt Col Pierre Finck, MC, who participated as an expert consultant; Finck, who now lives in Switzerland, declined to come to Florida for the joint interview.) Humes says he is breaking his 29-year silence "because I am tired of being beaten upon by people who are supremely ignorant of the scientific facts of the President's death."

Coincidentally, on the second day of the interviews, Boswell told the group that a Fort Worth physician, Charles Crenshaw, MD, had appeared on TV that very morning to argue the claim in his recent book, *JFK: Conspiracy of Silence*, that when he allegedly observed the dead President at Dallas' Parkland Hospital, he was positive that the bullets struck Kennedy from the front, not the back, "as the public has been led to believe." Crenshaw, who was a surgical resident in 1963, is not mentioned in the Warren Commission's 888-page summary report and his 203-page, generously spaced paperback was written with the aid of two assassination-conspiracy buffs. Crenshaw's book is only the latest in a long parade of conspiracy theories purporting to tell how Kennedy was really killed, including the 1991 release of Oliver Stone's film, *JFK*. Humes and Boswell had agreed to the *JAMA* interview without the slightest idea that Crenshaw's book had been published.

Now, his face incredulous with disbelief, Humes exploded with his summation. Pointing toward the window, the exasperated pathologist said, "If a bullet or a BB were fired through that window, it would leave a small hole where it entered and a beveled crater where it exited. That is what 'J' and I found when we examined the President's skull. There was a small elliptical entrance wound on the outside of the back of the skull, where the bullet entered, and a beveled larger wound on the inside of the back of the skull where the bullet tore through and exploded out the right side of the head. When we recovered the missing bone

fragments and reconstructed this gaping wound where the bullet exited, we found this same pattern—a small wound where the bullet struck the inside of the skull and a beveled larger wound where it exited. This is *always* the pattern of a through-and-through wound of the cranium—the beveling or crater effect appears on the *inside* of the skull at the *entrance* wound and on the *outside* of the skull at the *exit* wound. The crater effect is produced when the bony tissue of the skull turns inside out where the bullet leaves."

'A foolproof finding'

He concludes, "In 1963, we proved at the autopsy table that President Kennedy was struck from above and behind by the fatal shot. The pattern of the entrance and exit wounds in the skull proves it, and if we stayed here until hell freezes over, nothing will change this proof. It happens 100 times out of 100, and I will defend it until I die. This is the essence of our autopsy, and it is supreme ignorance to argue any other scenario. This is a law of physics and it is foolproof—absolutely, unequivocally, and without question. The conspiracy buffs have totally ignored this central scientific fact, and everything else is hogwash. There was no interference with our autopsy, and there was no conspiracy to suppress the findings."

Though the evidence is less well defined, Humes emphasizes that his autopsy found that the other bullet that struck Kennedy, the so-called "magic bullet" that was the first to hit Kennedy and that also hit Texas Gov John Connally, was also fired from above and behind. He says, "There was an 'abrasion collar' where this bullet entered at the base of the President's neck, and this scorching and splitting of the skin from the heat and scraping generated by the entering bullet is proof that it entered from behind. Unfortunately, at

the time of the autopsy, the tracheostomy performed on the President at Dallas in an attempt to save his life obliterated the exit wound through the front of his neck near the Adam's apple. Soft-tissue wounds are much more iffy than bone wounds, but there is no doubt from whence cometh those bullets—from rear to front from a high-velocity rifle."

Still, the other scenarios continue to be painted. "Recently," Humes notes, "there were about 300 people at a convention in Dallas, each hawking a different conspiracy theory about how the President was killed. I think this kind of general idiocy is a tragedy—it almost defies belief—but I guess it is the price we pay for living in a free country. I can only question the motives of those who propound these ridiculous theories for a price and who have turned the President's death into a profit-making industry."

Humes and Boswell had a long, long day 29 years ago, and, in many ways, it has never ended. The 6-foot, 4-inch, physically energetic Humes is a commanding presence, and he says, "I was in charge of the autopsy—period. Nobody tried to interfere—make that perfectly clear." The 5-foot, 9-inch, pipe-puffing Boswell is precise and methodical, and he says, "We documented our findings in spades. It's all there in the records. And Jim is not the kind of guy anybody pushes around." Their comments on the record are essential because polls show, in the wake of the film *JFK* and the glut of conspiracy-theorist authors, that many, if not most Americans disbelieve the Warren Commission finding that Oswald, "acting alone and without assistance," killed Kennedy. To set the record straight, they agreed to relive for *JAMA* their actions of Friday, November 22, 1963.

On the day the President was shot at 12:30 PM, while riding in an open motorcade through the sunny streets of Dallas, it was cold and gray in the Washington, DC, area. Commander Humes, then 39, was the director of labs of the Naval Medical School in Bethesda, Md. Commander Boswell, then 41, was chief of pathology at the naval hospital, which was part of the Bethesda National Naval Medical Center. Humes was Boswell's boss.

Humes had signed on with the US Navy in 1943 to complete his undergraduate work at Villanova University, Villanova, Pa, as part of the Navy's V-12 enlistment program. After earning his medical degree at Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, in 1948, he completed his internship and residency in anatomic and clinical pathology at the Bethesda



Photo: US Naval Medical School

The three pathologists who performed the autopsy on President John F. Kennedy on the night of November 22, 1963, were photographed days later (top photo, from left): US Navy Cmdr J. Thornton Boswell, MC; US Navy Cmdr James Joseph Humes, MC; and US Army Lt Col Pierre Finck, MC. Breaking their 29-year silence on this famous case, Drs Humes (left in bottom photo) and Boswell were interviewed by *JAMA* last April.



Photo: Dennis L. Bree

medical center; the US Naval Hospital in Philadelphia; and the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology in Washington, DC. He was certified by the American Board of Pathology in anatomic and clinical pathology in 1955. His postings included military hospitals in the Canal Zone, Hawaii, and San Diego. He was appointed chief of pathology at the Naval Medical School in 1960 and promoted to director of labs for the medical school in 1961. By 1963, he had performed several autopsies on military personnel killed by gunshot wounds and he had

also spent seven years at the Bethesda facility, which he "knew like the back of my hand." Boswell, a graduate of the Ohio State University Medical School, received his certification in anatomic pathology in 1957 and clinical pathology in 1959. He, too, had previously autopsied several gunshot wounds, and most of his military experience was at the naval hospital in Bethesda.

Ironically, shortly before President Kennedy was shot and pronounced dead at 1 PM at Dallas' Parkland Hospital, Humes left the medical center to go



Photo: Thomas I. Brown

Dr Humes: "This was the least secret autopsy in the world and the cause of death was blatantly obvious. There is no doubt from whence cometh those bullets—from rear to front from a high-velocity rifle."

home. He had promised to help his wife, Ann, prepare for a dinner party for 24 that evening, almost all of them military personnel. Five of the Humeses' seven children were in school, with the youngest two at home. The radio and TV were off, and the couple did not learn of the tragic news until their older children returned on the school bus. He recalls, "The kids told Ann, 'The President's been shot,' and she was telling them, 'That's a terrible thing to say,' when we

turned on the TV and learned for ourselves. My wife and I were both very upset, and we decided that a dinner party on this evening was out of the question." Washington phone circuits were jammed, and while Ann Humes tried to get a line to call her guests to cancel, Commander Humes took his son out for a haircut; his first communion was scheduled for the next morning. When father and son returned, they found that Ann Humes had finally found an open phone

line, only to have the operator interrupt with an emergency call from the Surgeon General of the Navy, Admiral Edward Kenney. It was 5:15 PM and Admiral Kenney said, "Jim, you better hurry over to the hospital."

By the time he arrived at the hospital, Humes was "beginning to get the message that the President's body was en route. There was great commotion and a cordon of Marines and military police." Once inside, he was told by Admiral Kenney, the ranking military officer, "to be prepared to do an autopsy' on the late President."

'Find the cause of death'

"My orders were to find the cause of death and I was told to get anyone I thought necessary to help do the autopsy, but to limit it to only the help I needed. Hell, I could have called in people from Paris and Rome if I thought it necessary, but as it turned out, I didn't. About this time, I also received a phone call from Dr Bruce Smith, the deputy director of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology [AFIP], offering me whatever help I might need. Bruce was a friend and I thanked him, saying I would call later if I needed help."

While Humes had been preparing for his dinner party, Boswell had been at the hospital going over autopsy slides with pathology residents. He recalls, "Early in the afternoon, we received a call from Dr Bruce Smith from AFIP, saying, 'The President's body is on its way to Bethesda for an autopsy.' I argued, 'That's stupid. The autopsy should be done at AFIP [which was located five miles away at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center].' After all, the AFIP was the apex of military pathology and, perhaps, world pathology. I was told, 'That's the way it is. Admiral [George] Burkley [the President's personal physician] wants Bethesda.' Apparently, Admiral Burkley had called the AFIP from Air Force One en route from Dallas. Later, I was told that Jackie Kennedy selected Bethesda because her husband had been a Navy man."

Humes was in total charge

By 7:30 PM, Humes was in his scrubs in the hospital's new morgue, built only four months earlier. He had selected Dr Boswell as his assistant. The morgue was at the back of the hospital, and, as Dr Humes stepped *outside* the morgue onto the loading dock, he noticed a crowd milling about and an unknown man carrying a large, old-fashioned "Speed Graphic" camera. Still outside the morgue, the pathologist told the unknown cameraman, "Get out!" Then, Humes asked, "Who's in charge here?"

The answer was only 2 feet away, as a man in full military dress answered, "I am. Who wants to know?" Humes explains, "The man who said he was in charge outside the morgue was some general representing the military section of the District of Columbia. I told him what my assignment was and asked him about the chap with the camera. Well, seconds later, this chap with the camera was sent away."

No generals in the morgue

As the general remained *outside* the morgue, Humes stepped back inside to prepare to receive the President's body. He emphasizes, "Nobody made any decision in the morgue except ME. Nobody distracted or influenced me in any way, shape, or form."

Jackie and Bobby Kennedy and a host of others accompanied the motorcade bringing the President's body from Andrews AFB to the Naval Medical Hospital morgue. While Jackie and Bobby Kennedy and the other VIPs were met at the front of the hospital and escorted to upstairs rooms, the casket was brought to the morgue at the rear of the hospital by Admiral Burkle. The bronze casket had one broken handle, and Humes and Boswell opened it. Humes says, "We found the unclothed body of President John F. Kennedy, wrapped in sheets in a swaddling manner, the massive head wound wrapped around and around with gauze and bandages." Together, they lifted the body onto an examining table, and Humes emphasizes, "There was no body bag anywhere near the scene. I cannot imagine how this talk about the President's body being delivered in a body bag got started, but it is absolutely false."

Opening the casket was a "shocking experience" for Humes, who was a Kennedy supporter. He recalls, "His identifying facial features were all intact and there he was, the President of the United States, now dead at age 46 with a terrible wound of the head. He wasn't that much older than me, and other than the head wound, he looked perfectly normal. He was a remarkable human specimen and looked as if he could have lived forever. It was very, very distressing." After the initial shock, however, Humes and Boswell got down to business. Humes notes, "This is what we are trained to do, and we got down to the task at hand."

As Admiral Burkle, the President's personal physician, stood by their side, a team of 10 "locked in" and proceeded to start what would turn out to be a thorough four-hour autopsy. Humes emphasizes, "I was in charge from start to finish and there was no interference—



Photo: Dennis L. Bree

Dr Boswell: 'We documented our findings in spades. It's all there in the records.'

zero. It was myself, 'J' [Boswell], [Dr] Finck, two Navy enlisted men who served as autopsy technicians, three radiologists, including chief Jack Ebersole, MD, and two photographers, including the medical school's chief of photography, John Stringer. We took 14 x-rays of the body from head to toe and we took 52 photos from every possible angle."

He dispels the myth that no photos were allowed. "The medical school's director of photography was a civilian,

John Stringer, and, in my opinion, he was one of the best medical photographers in the world. He took 25 black-and-white photos and 27 color photos, all with large 4-by-5-inch negatives. No significant aspect of the autopsy was left unphotographed." He adds, "The wounds were so obvious that there was no need to shave the hair before photographs were taken."

Responding to published reports that photo negatives were seized by the FBI and that the FBI took its own photo-

graphs, Humes is incredulous. He says, "Yes, there were FBI and Secret Service people milling about the room. And, at one point, there was an unauthorized Navy corpsman taking photos in the morgue and the FBI quite properly seized and destroyed that film, since the photographer did not have credentials. However, the official photos taken by John Stringer were never touched, and no one from the FBI even had a camera, let alone the intention to take autopsy photos. These reports are an incredible lie."

He dispels another myth—that the morgue was controlled by generals and other brass in uniform. "The President's military aides from the Air Force, Army, and Navy were all present," Humes says, "and they were all in dress uniforms, but they were not generals and their influence on the autopsy was zero. The only high-ranking officer was Admiral Burkley, and he left shortly after the autopsy began to join Jackie and Bobby Kennedy upstairs."

See also p 2791.

And a third myth—that he was not qualified to do a gunshot autopsy. "I'd done gunshot wounds before and this one was perfectly obvious—there was a huge hole on the right side of the President's head that only could have resulted from the exit of a high-velocity missile. Dr Bruce Smith [the deputy director of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology] had initially thought that we might want a neuropathologist as a consultant, but once we opened the casket and saw the devastating nature of the President's head wound, we knew that there was no need for the skills of a neuropathologist. I called Dr Smith back and told him what we had found, and he decided to make available Dr Pierre A. Finck, who was one of the AFIP's experts in ballistics. I had never before met Dr Finck, who arrived at about 9:15 PM."

Finck, a shy, retiring man who had been trained in Europe, was an Army colonel, and he had trouble getting by all the Marines and sailors who were providing security outside the Navy hospital. Once inside, he completed the autopsy team.

Humes emphasizes, "There was a lot of commotion, but we are trained to focus on the task at hand, even under crowded conditions. Bethesda was a large teaching hospital. The morgue room contained an

amphitheater which sat 30 to 40 people, and we were used to seeing authorized medical personnel come and go to observe autopsies." Still, he says that the scene in the autopsy room was "somewhat like trying to do delicate neurosurgery in a three-ring circus." The crowd did not influence the autopsy results, Humes says.

Boswell adds, "Sure, there were FBI and Secret Service people observing the autopsy and talking on their radios to people outside the room, and we could hear a play-by-play of what we were doing and talking about, but nobody tried to interfere and we were able to focus on the matter at hand." He adds, "The FBI and Secret Service told us that two fragments of the President's skull had been recovered in Dallas and were being rushed to Bethesda and that bullet fragments had also been recovered in Dallas."

Humes provides a poignant remembrance of the scene. "The people around the President were totally devastated," he says. "They were still in a state of shock and the reality of what had happened had not yet sunk in. Unless you live in Washington, it's hard to imagine the mind-boggling aura that surrounds the President of the United States. These people thought they had let the President down, and now their hero was gone." Boswell adds, "The people who accompanied the President's body to the morgue were the most disturbed and distressed people I have ever seen."

Humes continues, "We were unfazed by all the commotion and concentrated on getting our x-rays, which we read right at the table, and our photographs, which we relied upon for future documentation. 'J' and I both took down autopsy notes and diagrams."

Fatal wound 'blatantly obvious'

The pathologists found two wounds from a high-velocity missile that would later be matched to the military-jacketed bullets fired from above and behind the President by Lee Harvey Oswald. The fatal shot entered the back of the President's skull and exploded away almost a 6-inch section on the right side of his head; the second bullet entered at the base of his neck, but its exit track was not immediately apparent.

"The fatal wound was blatantly obvious," Humes recalls. "The entrance wound was elliptical, 15 millimeters long and 6 millimeters wide, and located 2.5 centimeters to the right and slightly above the external occipital protuberance. The inside of the skull displayed the characteristic beveled appearance. The x-rays disclosed fine dustlike metallic fragments from back to front where the bullet traversed the head before cre-

ating an explosive exit wound on the right temporal-parietal area. These fragments were not grossly visible. Two small fragments of bullet were recovered from inside the skull—measuring 3 by 1 millimeters and 7 by 2 millimeters.

"The head was so devastated by the exploding bullet and the gaping jagged stellate wound it created—it blew out 13 centimeters of skull bone and skin—that we did not even have to use a saw to remove the skullcap. We peeled the scalp back, and the calvarium crumbled in my hands from the fracture lines, which went off in all directions. We made an incision high in the spinal cord and removed the brain, which was preserved in formalin. Two thirds of the right cerebrum had been blown away.

"After the brain was removed, we looked more closely at the wound, and noted that the inside of the rear of the skull bone was absolutely intact and beveled and that there could be no question from whence cometh that bullet—from rear to front. When we received the two missing fragments of the President's skull and were able to piece together two thirds of the deficit at the right front of the head, we saw the same pattern on the outer table of the skull—a bullet that traveled from rear to front. Every theorist who says the bullet came from the front has ignored this critical irrefutable diagnostic fact. We did everything within the means of reasonable people to record with x-rays and photos what we saw."

The second bullet was more of a puzzle. "If we made a mistake," Humes says, "it was in not calling Dallas before we started the autopsy. Our information from Parkland Hospital in Dallas before we started the autopsy was zero. If only we had seen the President's clothes, tracking the second bullet would have been a piece of cake, but we didn't have the clothes. In hindsight, we could have saved ourselves a lot of trouble if we had known that the doctors at Parkland performed a tracheostomy in an attempt to save the President's life and that this procedure obliterated the exit wound of the bullet that entered at the base of the neck."

'Time to quit speculating'

"The tracheostomy was a gaping wound, about 3 to 4 centimeters around, and we didn't think of it as an exit wound. We also noticed that the Dallas doctors had tried to place chest tubes in the front of the President's chest, but the tubes had not gone in and we found no increase of blood or fluid in the pleural cavity. There was a contusion of the extreme apical portion of the right upper lobe of the lung but no laceration.

This article is one of a number of articles on violence that will appear in upcoming issues of THE JOURNAL. The reader is referred to the June 10, 1992, issue, which will be dedicated to studies of violence.

We also noted damage to the neck muscles, trachea, and pleura, but there was no bullet. It was bothering me very greatly, like nothing you can imagine, that we could find neither the second bullet nor its exit track. 'J' and I both knew that bullets can do funny things in the body, and we thought it might have been deflected down to the extremities. We x-rayed the entire body, but did not find a bullet." The autopsy was also criticized because the pathologists did not dissect the President's neck to track the second bullet. Humes says bluntly, "Dissecting the neck was totally unnecessary and would have been criminal.

"By midnight, we decided it was time to quit speculating about the second bullet, and I am very comfortable with this decision. It is true that we were influenced by the fact that we knew Jackie Kennedy was waiting upstairs to accompany the body to the White House and that Admiral Burkley wanted us to hurry as much as possible. By midnight, our task was done—it was perfectly obvious what had killed the man. The second bullet was important, but not of overriding importance. We knew we would find the explanation sooner or later."

The explanation came sooner, the next morning at 7:30 when Humes called Dallas to talk to Dr Malcolm Perry, the surgeon who had performed the tracheostomy. "The light came on when I talked to Dr Perry," Humes says. "Of course, the bullet had exited through the neck." Referring to Dr Crenshaw's contention that the wound in the front of the neck was small and round *after the tracheostomy was performed* and at the time the President was placed in a casket, Dr Humes says, "We found a gaping wound in the front of the neck where the tracheostomy had been performed, and if Dr Crenshaw was correct, the only possible explanation is that the neck wound was intentionally enlarged while the body was en route from Dallas, and the insinuation of this scenario does not deserve a response."

Humes and Boswell had remained at the morgue until 5 that morning, helping to embalm the President's body. Humes says, "We were able to almost perfectly restore the President's appearance, and a local funeral home brought out a beautiful mahogany casket to replace the bronze one from Dallas. When Admiral Burkley and Bobby and Jackie Kennedy left to take the body to the White House, 'J' and I finally went home." Boswell says, "The mood in Washington was so apprehensive that the commanding officer of the U.S Naval Medical School, Capt J. H. 'Smokey' Stover, asked me to drive behind Jim to make sure that he got home safely."



Photo: Dennis L. Brea

Thanks to seven years of pursuit by George Lundberg, MD (center), editor of JAMA, Drs Humes (left) and Boswell finally got together on a grassy knoll in Florida to discuss the 1963 autopsy of President John F. Kennedy. Later, Dr Lundberg said he 'completely believes' the autopsy report that Kennedy was killed 'by only two bullets that struck him from above and behind and caused fatal high-velocity wounds.'

Humes spent most of Saturday, November 23, drafting the autopsy report. In the process, he burned his autopsy notes, but not really. "This is the criticism I keep hearing over and over again," he says, "that I burned my notes and that this means there must have been a conspiracy. Well, it's true that I burned my original notes because they were stained with the President's blood, and I did not want them to become a collector's item, but I burned them *after* I had copied verbatim in my own handwriting the entire contents. I make no apology for this, but I will explain my reason:

"One of my assignments had been to escort foreign Navy officers around US bases. Along the way, we'd always try to show the foreign officers slices of Americana. On one of these trips, we saw an exhibit that purported to be the chair on which President Abraham Lincoln sat when he was shot at Ford's Theater. There were stains on the back of the chair that were reported to be from Lincoln's blood. I was appalled at this type of display, though I later learned that the stains were from maccassar, a hair preparation of the day that inspired the antimaccassar doily, and not from Lincoln's blood. In any event, when I saw that my own notes were stained with Kennedy's blood, I vowed that this type of revolting object would not fall into the wrong hands. I burned the notes that night in my fireplace."

Admiral Burkley wanted the autopsy report by midnight Sunday, November 24, and early Sunday morning Humes returned to the Naval medical school to go over his handwritten report with Drs Boswell and Finck. The three pathologists met in the office of Adm C. B. Galloway, the commanding officer of the National Naval Medical Center. While talking, they were called to watch a nearby TV set—Jack Ruby had just shot Lee Harvey Oswald in Dallas. Returning to their report, the three experts had no trouble agreeing on the facts of their autopsy. The report, "A63-272," was the 272nd autopsy performed that year at the hospital. The admiral's secretary typed the handwritten report into six pages. Humes says, "Our conclusions have stood the test of time." The cause of death is given as "gunshot wound, head." The summary, as published in the 1964 Warren Commission report, reads as follows:

The original 1963 autopsy report

"It is our opinion that the deceased died as a result of two perforating gunshot wounds inflicted by high-velocity projectiles fired by a person or persons unknown. The projectiles were fired from a point behind and somewhat above the level of the deceased. The observations and available information do not permit a satisfactory estimate as to the sequence of the two wounds."

"The fatal missile entered the skull above and to the right of the external occipital protuberance. A portion of the projectile traversed the cranial cavity in a posterior-anterior direction (see lateral skull roentgenograms), depositing minute particles along its path. A portion of the projectile made its exit through the parietal bone on the right, carrying with it portions of cerebrum, skull, and scalp. The two wounds of the skull combined with the force of the missile produced extensive fragmentation of the skull, laceration of the superior sagittal sinus, and of the right cerebral hemisphere.

"The other missile entered the right superior posterior thorax above the scapula and traversed the soft tissues of the supra-scapular and supra-clavicular portions of the base of the right side of the neck. This missile produced contusions of the right apical parietal pleura and of the apical portion of the right upper lobe of the lung. The missile contused the strap muscles of the right side of the neck, damaged the trachea, and made its exit through the anterior surface of the neck. As far as can be ascertained, this missile struck no bony structures in its path through the body.

"In addition, it is our opinion that the wound of the skull produced such extensive damage to the brain as to preclude the possibility of the deceased surviving this injury.

"A supplementary report will be submitted following more detailed examinations of the brain and of microscopic sections. However, it is not anticipated that these examinations will materially alter the findings."

That night, Humes hand-delivered the autopsy report, signed by Humes, Boswell, and Finck, to Admiral Burkley at the White House. On December 6, 1963, Humes alone submitted to Burkley his supplementary report, writing in the final summary: "This supplementary report covers in more detail the extensive degree of cerebral trauma in this case. However, neither this portion of the examination nor the microscopic examinations alter the previously submitted report or add significant details to the cause of death."

Shortly afterward, Humes turned over everything from the autopsy to Admiral Burkley—bullet fragments, microscopic slides, paraffin blocks of tissue, undeveloped film, x-rays—and the preserved, unsectioned President's brain. "Burkley said he wanted everything," Humes says, "and he came out to Bethesda to get it. I gave it to him all in one package. What was left at Bethesda? Zero. I didn't make a copy of anything. Frankly, I was glad to be out from under the respon-

sibility. Admiral Burkley gave me a receipt for the autopsy materials, including the brain. It was my understanding that all the autopsy materials, except the brain, would be placed in the National Archives. He told me that the family wanted to inter the brain with the President's body. I don't know what happened to the brain, but I do know that Admiral Burkley was an honorable man."

The medical autopsy of President John F. Kennedy was concluded. The conspiracy autopsies had yet to begin.

Humes and Boswell concede that Kennedy's body was illegally moved from Dallas, in violation of Texas laws requiring that Texas homicides be autopsied in Texas, and that there would have been less confusion if the autopsy had been performed in Dallas, but Humes emphasizes:

"There was a very, very good reason why this happened. Lyndon Johnson did not know what was going on in Dallas on this day, and for all he knew a cabal could have been in the works. He wanted to get back to his base and his base was Washington, DC. He would not leave without Jackie Kennedy, and she would not leave without her husband's body. Johnson had to get back to Washington, and, ergo, the body had to be brought back. That's that, and I cannot believe that any reasonable person would disagree with this course of action."

He adds, "Several days after the autopsy, I got a call from someone in Dallas demanding that we return the bronze casket that had carried the President's body from Parkland Hospital to Bethesda. I told him I had no idea what had happened to that casket, and I didn't—it wasn't my responsibility. He was very insistent, but so was I."

Autopsy confirmed four times

The autopsy findings have been confirmed many times since 1963, a fact that has been largely ignored in the current hoopla over the film *JFK* and over Dr Crenshaw's new book and media appearances. The first time was the publication of the Warren Commission report in 1964, and Humes has brought to the interview a copy of his own Warren Commission report signed by Chief Justice Earl Warren. It was only during their interviews with Warren Commission investigators that Humes and Boswell saw for the first time the clothing worn by President Kennedy.

Humes says, "Once we saw the holes in the back of the President's suit jacket and shirt and the nicks on his shirt collar and the knot of his necktie, the path of the second bullet was confirmed. That bullet was traveling very fast and it had

to go somewhere. I believe in the single-bullet theory that it struck Governor Connally immediately after exiting the President's throat."

Boswell adds, "Having seen the clothing, I now know that I created a terrible problem with my own autopsy drawings. My drawings of the bullet holes on the night of the autopsy did not precisely match up with the actual holes in the clothing, because we were not aware that the President's suit jacket had humped up on his back while he waved at the spectators. These errors were later exploited by the conspiracy crowd to fit their premises and purposes." The clothing was kept in the National Archives, along with the rest of the autopsy materials.

Photos not published

Both Humes and Boswell agreed to the commission's stipulation that the autopsy photos were not to be viewed. Humes explains, "I agreed with the commission's decision not to make the photos part of the official report. I had stated in the autopsy, 'The complexity of these fractures and the fragments thus produced tax satisfactory verbal description and are better appreciated in photos and roentgenograms which are prepared,' and I meant it. The head wound was devastating, and if the photos were made part of the commission report they would have become public. I did not think that these photos should appear on the front pages of newspapers, and I did not trust the ability of the commission to keep them secret. So, 'J' and I worked with an artist to reconstruct drawings of the President's wounds, based upon our original measurements. These drawings are very accurate and met the purposes of the Warren Commission. In 1964, there were no crazy conspiracy theories about the death of the President."

It was not until November 1, 1966, that the two pathologists saw the autopsy photos—when they were summoned to the National Archives to help categorize all autopsy materials.

The second confirmation of their autopsy came in 1968, as the result of a request made by Drs Humes and Boswell themselves. In 1968, there were crazy conspiracy theories coming out of the woodwork. On January 26, 1968, Boswell sent a letter to Ramsey Clark, then the US attorney general, in an attempt to put the issue to rest. The letter read:

"As you are aware, the autopsy findings in the case of the late President John F. Kennedy, including x-rays and photographs, have been the subject of continuing controversy and speculation. Dr Humes and I, as the pathologists concerned, have felt for some time that an impartial board of experts, including

pathologists and radiologists, should examine the available material.

"If such a board were to be nominated in an attempt to resolve many of the allegations concerning the autopsy report, it might wish to question the autopsy participants before more time elapses and memory fades; therefore, it would be my hope that such a board would be convened at an early date. Dr Humes and I would make ourselves available at the request of such a board.

"I hope that this letter will not be considered presumptuous, but this matter is of great concern to us, and I believe to the country as well."

Four physicians were subsequently appointed to a blue-ribbon panel to evaluate the original autopsy. The four included:

- William H. Carnes, MD, professor of pathology at the University of Utah, Salt Lake City, and a member of Utah's Medical Examiner's Commission. He was nominated by J. E. Wallace Sterling, the president of Stanford University.

- Russell S. Fisher, MD, professor of forensic pathology at the University of Maryland and chief medical examiner of the state of Maryland. He was nominated by Dr Oscar B. Hunter, Jr, president of the College of American Pathologists.

- Russell H. Morgan, MD, professor of radiology at The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore, Md. He was nominated by Dr Lincoln Gordon, president of The Johns Hopkins University.

- Alan R. Moritz, MD, professor of pathology at Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio, and former professor of forensic medicine at Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. He was nominated by Dr John A. Hannah, president of Michigan State University.

None of the four had any previous connection with prior investigations or reports on the President's assassination. After an exhaustive study of all relevant materials, the four members of the panel signed and submitted a 16-page report to Attorney General Clark in April 1968, unanimously concluding:

"Examination of the clothing and of the photographs and x-rays taken at autopsy reveal that President Kennedy was struck by two bullets fired from above and behind him, one of which traversed the base of the neck on the right side without striking bone and the other of which entered the skull from behind and exploded its right side. The photographs and x-rays discussed herein support the above-quoted portions [the conclusion] of the original Autopsy Report and the above-quoted medical conclusions



Photo: Dennis L. Gray

Dr Boswell: 'It appears that [filmmaker] Oliver Stone may have taken Dr Finck's mistaken perceptions about the alleged military presence in the morgue and used it as the sole mistaken basis for the autopsy scenes in his movie, *JFK*.'

of the Warren Commission Report."

The panel's report noted, "The possibility that the path of the bullet through the neck might have been more satisfactorily explored by the insertion of a finger or probe was considered. Obviously, the cutaneous wound in the back was too small to permit the insertion of a finger. The insertion of a metal probe would have carried the risk of creating a false passage—in part because of the changed relationship of muscles at the time of autopsy and in part because of the existence of postmortem rigidity. Although the precise path of the bullet could undoubtedly have been demonstrated by complete dissection of the

soft tissue between the two cutaneous wounds, there is no reason to believe that the information disclosed thereby would alter significantly the conclusions expressed in this report."

The Garrison prosecution

The next confirmation came in 1969 in New Orleans when Pierre Finck was subpoenaed to testify at the trial of Clay Shaw, as part of District Attorney Jim Garrison's conspiracy prosecution. Shaw, of course, was acquitted, and, until the publication of this interview, Finck's testimony was the only public airing of the expert medical opinions on the assassination.



Dr Humes: 'There was no interference with our autopsy and nobody tried to suppress the findings.'

Boswell says, "A careful reading of the entire transcript of Dr Finck's testimony shows that he held tightly to the facts of our autopsy and supported its conclusions. However, Pierre was a meek and mild man who had been trained abroad, not in the United States. He was very 'brass conscious,' and he thought that generals were out of this world. At Bethesda, Finck was out of his element—an Army colonel in a Navy hospital—and he apparently mistook the President's military aides and other military personnel for generals. During the trial, Garrison was able to exploit Pierre's misperceptions about the scene to give the impression that it was controlled by generals. Jim [Humes] and I state categorically that there was no

interference with our autopsy. The patient was extraordinary, the autopsy was ordinary, or at least as ordinary as it could be under the circumstances."

Boswell knows because he, too, was in New Orleans in 1969 at the request of the US Justice Department. "The Justice Department was so convinced that Garrison was on a fishing expedition in his prosecution of Clay Shaw," Boswell says, "that it summoned me to New Orleans to refute Finck's testimony, if necessary." It turned out that it wasn't necessary." It now appears, Boswell adds, that filmmaker Oliver Stone may have taken Finck's mistaken perceptions about the alleged military presence in the morgue, as detailed in the transcript of the trial, and used it as the sole basis

for the mistaken autopsy scenes in his movie *JFK*. Humes calls the movie scenes "absolutely false and ridiculous," but we are getting ahead of the story.

The next confirmation of the President's autopsy came from the 1977 House Select Committee on Assassinations. Congress appointed a panel of nine experts chaired by forensic pathologist Michael Baden, MD, to investigate the medical findings. In his 1989 book, *Unnatural Death—Confessions of a Medical Examiner*, Baden agrees with the findings of Humes-Boswell-Finck but still terms Kennedy's autopsy the "exemplar" of the "bungled autopsy." He writes, "Despite all these errors and for the wrong reasons, Humes came to the right conclusions—that Kennedy had been shot by two bullets from behind, one in the head and one in the back. They [the wounds] were poorly tracked, but he got the two most important things right."

Humes says he has not read Baden's book and does not intend to. Mindful that this is a rare attack upon an autopsy that was solidly endorsed by an expert panel in 1968, he reacts to this quoted passage by saying, "Imagine that—we got it right, AS DUMB AS WE ARE! What possible purpose can be served by this kind of attack?"

Apprised of Baden's comment, "[Commander Humes] had never done one like it before," Humes incredulously exclaims, "Who had?" As Baden's written criticisms are read to him, Humes indignantly explodes, "False... false... false. My God, where does this stuff come from?" To cite but one example, Baden writes, "He [Humes] also knew that religious Catholics tend to be opposed to autopsies. And he was not in a position to press the issue." Humes replies, "Come on, now. I am a devout Catholic and for 19 years I was director of laboratories at St John Hospital, in Detroit, Mich, which is a Catholic hospital with a very active autopsy service. This autopsy was requested by the Kennedy family, who are Catholics."

***JFK*, the film, termed a 'hoax'**

Then, there is the film, *JFK*. Jack Valenti, a former aide to President Lyndon Johnson and the current president of the Motion Picture Association of America, recently described *JFK* as based on the "hallucinatory bleatings of an author named Jim Garrison, a discredited former district attorney in New Orleans." He also calls it a "hoax," a "smear," and "pure fiction," rivaling the Nazi propaganda films of Leni Riefenstahl.

Syndicated columnist George Will says, "*JFK* is cartoon history by Stone,

who is 45 going on 8. In his three-hour lie, Stone falsifies so much he may be an intellectual sociopath, indifferent to truth." *New York Times* columnist Anthony Stone says, "Oliver Stone used as his mouthpiece, Jim Garrison, the former New Orleans district attorney, who in real life bribed witnesses to prosecute an innocent man—and was laughed out of court. Stone alleges a conspiracy among the Army, the CIA, Lyndon Johnson, and countless others—without a shred of evidence." Stone has been quoted as saying his critics are motivated by a "fear of facts." *Chicago Tribune* reporter Paul Galloway responds, "Nope. They were angry with the way he disregarded the facts."

Humes does not disagree with these criticisms of Stone, which he finds mild. His son had recently persuaded him to see *JFK*, and now he tells his colleague, Boswell, "J,' if you see this movie, believe me, you'll need heavy sedation. The autopsy scene bears no relation to reality, the man they have playing me looks older than I am now, and the triangulated shooting scene is preposterously impossible."

Conspiracy fanciers, including Stone, have tried to make much of the fact that the privately owned Zapruder film of the assassination shows Kennedy's head lurching backward after being hit. Humes and Boswell have both seen the Zapruder film "30 to 40 times," and they note that studies published two decades ago by surgeon John Lattimer demonstrated that an object struck in the rear by a high-velocity missile similar to the bullets that hit Kennedy *always falls backward* as a result of the jet-propulsion effect created by tissues exploding out the front.

JAMA's Lundberg, a stickler for detail, poses some questions that remain official mysteries:

Who ordered the autopsy?

Who ordered the autopsy?

"It must have been Jackie Kennedy," says Humes. "She made the request through Admiral Burkley." Boswell says, "It must have been Robert Kennedy. He was acting on behalf of the family." Lundberg counters, "Well, we have a lot of 'must haves,' but no answer." Humes says, "Well, George, I hope you're not saying that we shouldn't have done the autopsy! My orders came from Ed Kennedy, the surgeon-general of the Navy. The President's personal physician, Admiral Burkley, was standing beside me at the autopsy table. Jackie Kennedy was waiting upstairs for the body with Robert Kennedy, and what greater au-

thority can you have than the Attorney General of the United States [Robert Kennedy]?" Lundberg concludes, "OK, there were verbal OKs all over the place." Boswell adds, "Captain Stover [the medical center's commanding officer] was very thorough, and I'm sure he had someone complete the paperwork."

Who made the absolute identity?

Humes chuckles, "Well, the President's face was not exactly unknown. And the body was accompanied by the FBI, the Secret Service, military aides, and Kennedy family members. We saw no need for dental x-rays."

What happened to the brain?

Boswell says, "I believe that it was buried with the body." Humes says, "I don't know, but I do know that I personally handed it over to Admiral Burkley and that he told me that the family intended to bury it with the body. I believe Admiral Burkley."

What was the condition of Kennedy's adrenal glands?

Humes says, "I am not prepared to answer this question now, except to say that the President was *not* 'cushingoid' and did not have the appearance of a man with the odd fat deposits and facial puffiness associated with the cushingoid appearance. As his activities indicate, he was a very healthy and vigorous man. At some time in the near future, 'J' and I will have to sit down and write for history our report of the condition of the President's adrenal glands."

Should the body be exhumed for another autopsy to remove all doubts?

Humes is appalled. "That suggestion is ridiculous on the face of it. There is nothing further to be learned." Boswell adds, "The family would never permit it, anyway."

Boswell concludes, "In hindsight, we might have called in a civilian pathologist like Russell Fisher, who was right next door in Baltimore. We didn't need him to confirm our findings, but it might have removed the doubts about military control." Humes says, "Russell was a friend and we easily could have asked him to come in to help, but we had no problem in determining the cause of death."

'Irrefutable evidence'

Lundberg says, "I am extremely pleased that, finally, we are able to have published in the peer-reviewed literature the actual findings of what took place at the autopsy table on November 22, 1963. I completely believe that this information, as personally given by Jim [Humes] and 'J' [Boswell], is scientifically sound and, in my judgment, pro-

vides irrefutable evidence that President Kennedy was killed by only two bullets that struck him from above and behind and that caused fatal high-velocity wounds."

Humes concludes, "I really have not had much ongoing interest in the autopsy. We did what we had to do in 1963, and we did it right. And, I can't say that the criticism has hurt my career." Indeed, Humes retired from the Navy in 1967 with the rank of captain; worked 19 years at Detroit's St John Hospital as vice president for medical affairs and director of laboratories; and served from 1986 through 1989 as a field inspector for the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education. In 1980, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Award presented jointly by the College of American Pathologists and the American Society of Clinical Pathologists (ASCP). He was president of ASCP from 1974 to 1975; president of the Michigan Society of Pathologists in 1974; the first president of the American Registry of Pathology from 1976 through 1978; and a member of the AMA House of Delegates from 1978 through 1988. Now semiretired, he is a clinical professor of pathology at the University of Florida School of Medicine, Jacksonville, and lives in nearby Ponte Vedra, Fla, where he has his choice of playing 105 golf holes, including the Tournament Players Championship course at Sawgrass. Boswell retired from the Navy in 1965, with the rank of commander, and worked in supervisory pathology positions at Suburban Hospital, Bethesda, Md, from 1965 through 1972; and with a large pathology group in Fairfax, Va, from 1972 to 1983. Now retired, he lives in Bethesda.

Humes stops the interview where he started. "The President was killed by a devastating gunshot wound to the head fired from above and behind by a high-velocity rifle. The second bullet that struck him in the back of the neck was also fired from above and behind. That's it. Everything else is adventitious."

It is an apt description. The adventitia, of course, are the external coatings of the blood vessels, giving rise to the adjective, "adventitious," for "added from another source and not inherent or innate . . . arising or occurring sporadically or in other than the usual location."

It is the perfect description for the growing industry of conspiracy theories from people who are ignorant of the essential facts and yet purport to know how President Kennedy must have been killed, at least in their minds. □

JFK's death, part II— Dallas MDs recall their memories

Only 90 minutes passed in Dallas from the time Lee Harvey Oswald raised his rifle at 12:30 PM until the slain body of President John F. Kennedy was escorted aboard Air Force One for the 1500-mile flight to Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland and the autopsy at the US Naval Medical Center in Bethesda. The medical team at Dallas' Parkland Memorial Hospital spent only 25 frenzied minutes in their futile effort to resuscitate Kennedy, but that whirlwind of events and emotions produced indelible personal memories.

In truth, though, there were no examinations, measurements, or photographs performed in Parkland's Trauma Room 1 that in any way, shape, or form allowed any of the physicians attending the President to make any meaningful evaluation of the entry and exit gunshot wounds and the forensic circumstances of death. That assignment was left to the autopsy pathologists at the Naval Medical Center, and their comments in the preceding story stand as the definitive version that Kennedy was struck by only two bullets fired from behind and above from a high-velocity rifle.

This is the unanimous appraisal of four Dallas physicians who have broken their 29-year silence to speak with this reporter about their famous 1963 case. Malcolm Perry, MD, a surgeon, worked the hardest to try to save the patient and performed a tracheostomy in an attempt to create an airway for the dying Kennedy. Jim Carrico, MD, a first-year surgical resident, was the first physician to treat Kennedy, at 12:35 PM, and the first to notice the small bubbling wound in the front of the neck that necessitated the tracheostomy. M. T. "Pepper" Jenkins, MD, the hospital's long-time chief of anesthesiology, rushed to the scene to try to help ventilate the patient. Charles Baxter, MD, a surgeon, assisted in the resuscitation attempt. These were the four key players on the Parkland medical team of November 22, 1963.

Previously, the four have kept their memories private, but they agreed to be interviewed by *JAMA* in the wake of a new book written by one of their former Parkland Hospital colleagues, Charles Crenshaw, MD, that has bolstered conspiracy theorists because of Crenshaw's incredible 1992 claim that the bullets "struck Kennedy from the front" and that the autopsy photos must have been altered, proving "there was something rotten in America in 1963." Crenshaw attributes these statements and others to his alleged intense eyewitness observations of the dying President.

Although the other four Parkland physicians have some doubt about whether Dr Crenshaw wrote most of the sensationalistic book or deferred to his two coauthors, both of whom are conspiracy theorists, and although they are reluctant to publicly condemn Crenshaw's claims, they emphasize that they believe Crenshaw is wrong.

Since it is hard to prove a negative, no one can say with certainty what some suspect—that Crenshaw was *not* even in the trauma room; none of the four recalls ever seeing him at the scene.

'Dreams of notoriety'

Dr Perry says, "In 1963, Chuck Crenshaw was a junior resident and he absolutely did not participate in a meaningful way in the attempt to resuscitate the President and in the medical decision making. I do not remember even seeing him in the room." Dr Jenkins says, "He may have been in the room, but he was not among the inner circle attending to the patient." Dr Carrico says, "Charles has extended his conclusions far beyond his direct examinations. Everyone in that room was trying to save a life, not figure out forensics." Baxter adds, "Jim [Carrico] has just made a very astute observation."

Why, then, would Crenshaw make such claims and write a book representing himself as being in the forefront of the resuscitation effort?

Baxter says, "Charles and I grew up in Paris, Texas, and I've known him since he was three years old. His claims are ridiculous. The only motive I can see is a desire for personal recognition and monetary gain."

Thumbing rapidly through Crenshaw's slender paperback book, Carrico stops at page 15 and quotes Crenshaw's words, "Many of us have dreamed that history's grand scheme will involve us in some far-reaching role or experience thrusting us into notoriety and dramatically changing our lives." Carrico concludes, "There's your answer, in Charles's own words. I don't have those kind of dreams."

Jenkins says simply, "Crenshaw's conclusions are dead wrong."

Perry concludes, "When I first heard about Crenshaw's claims, I was considering a lawsuit, but after I saw Charles on TV one day all my anger melted. It was so pathetic to see him on TV saying this bogus stuff to reach out for his day in the sun that I ended up feeling sorry for him." He adds, "Crenshaw says that the rest of us are part of a conspiracy of silence and that he withheld his information for 29 years because of a fear his career would be ruined. Well, if he really felt he had valuable information and kept it secret for all those years, I find that despicable."

Crenshaw's book insinuates that the Bethesda autopsy pathologists altered Kennedy's wounds and it specifically charges that "the incision Perry had made in his [Kennedy's] throat at Parkland for the tracheostomy had been enlarged and mangled, as if someone had conducted another procedure. It looked to be the work of a butcher. No doubt, someone had gone to a great deal of trouble to show a different story than we had seen at Parkland."

Well, the physician who did that work at Parkland—Dr Perry—and three physicians who observed the tracheostomy—Drs Baxter, Carrico, and Jenkins—all say that the autopsy photos of

the throat wound are "very compatible" with what they saw in Parkland Trauma Room 1. Dr Baxter says, "I was right there and the tracheostomy I observed and the autopsy photos look the same—very compatible." Dr Carrico says, "I've seen the autopsy photos and they are very compatible to the actual tracheostomy." Dr Jenkins adds, "They're the same." Dr Perry concludes, "Of course, tissues sag and stretch after death, but any suggestion that this wound was intentionally enlarged is wrong. When I talked to Commander Humes the morning after the assassination and told him we had done a tracheostomy, he said, 'That explains it—the bullet exited through the throat.'"

Drs Baxter, Carrico, Jenkins, and Perry emphasize that their experiences in the trauma room do not qualify them to reach conclusions about the direction from which the fatal missiles were fired. In fact, Dr Jenkins doubts if any of the Parkland physicians even had a good look at the President's head, explaining, "I was standing at the head of the table in the position the anesthesiologist most often assumes closest to the patient's head. My presence there and the President's great shock of hair and the location of the head wound were such that it was not visible to those standing down each side of the gurney where they were carrying out their resuscitative maneuvers." However, all four agree, in Carrico's words, that, "Nothing we observed contradicts the autopsy finding that the bullets were fired from above and behind by a high-velocity rifle."

As a result of Crenshaw's media allegations, the four other Dallas physicians have been besieged with calls from other members of the Parkland medical team that was on the scene on November 22, 1963. Baxter says, "I can assure you that these calls are uniformly in disagreement with Crenshaw's claims. Most of those who know the facts express disgust at Crenshaw's actions and question if he was involved in the care of the President at all. There has not been one call supporting his position."

Crenshaw also claims in his book to have received a telephone call from President Lyndon B. Johnson, asking him to extract a confession from the dying Lee Harvey Oswald. Baxter responds, "Did that happen? Heavens no . . . imagine that, the President of the United States personally calls for Chuck Crenshaw." Another Crenshaw claim is that he was the last to view President Kennedy's body as he closed the casket and that it was at this point that he observed the head wound. Dr Jenkins responds, "It is highly unlikely that any physician would have closed that casket."



Photo Dennis L. Bero

Parkland Hospital physicians who tried unsuccessfully to resuscitate President John F. Kennedy included (clockwise from top left) anesthesiologist Pepper Jenkins, surgeon Malcolm Perry, surgical resident Jim Carrico, and surgeon Charles Baxter.

Carrico emphasizes, "We were trying to save a life, not worrying about entry and exit wounds." Perry says, "The President's pupils were widely dilated, his face was a deep blue, and he was in agonal respiration, with his chin jerking. Jim [Carrico] was having trouble inserting the endotracheal tube because of the wound to the trachea and I didn't even wipe off the blood before doing the 'trach.' I grabbed a knife and made a quick and large incision; it only took two or three minutes." He adds, "So many people have theories about the assassination, but I have yet to meet one who has read the entire 26 volumes of the Warren Commission report."

The continuing controversy over the assassination and the refusal to believe



the 26-volume, elephantinely documented Warren Commission report obscure the real human tragedy of the event. Pepper Jenkins recalls one poignant anecdote:

"The President was a bigger man than I recalled from seeing him on TV. He must have had really severe back pain, judging by the size of the back brace we cut off. He was tightly laced into this brace with wide Ace bandages making figure-of-eight loops around his trunk and around his thighs. His feet were sticking off one end of the gurney and his head was at the other end, cradled in my arms. I was standing with the front of my jacket against his head wound, an alignment that put me in the best position to carry out artificial ventilation.

I was getting gushes of blood down my jacket and onto my shoes.

"Jacqueline Kennedy was circling the room, walking behind my back. The Secret Service could not keep her out of the room. She looked shell-shocked. As she circled and circled, I noticed that her hands were cupped in front of her, as if she were cradling something. As she passed by, she nudged me with an elbow and handed me what she had been nursing in her hands—a large chunk of her husband's brain tissues. I quickly handed it to a nurse."

'It's too late, Mac'

It was Dr William Kemp Clark, a Parkland Hospital neurosurgeon, who most closely observed Kennedy's massive head wound. He told Dr Perry, "It's too late, Mac. There's nothing more to be done." It was Dr Clark who pronounced the President dead at 1 PM, only 25 minutes after he was wheeled into the emergency room.

By this time, the Secret Service had allowed a Catholic priest to enter the room to administer the last rites. Jenkins recalls, "All of the medical staff seemed to disappear, dissolve, fade from the room, except, I believe, for me and Dr Baxter. I was busy disconnecting the electrocardiographic leads, removing the IVs, and extracting the endotracheal tube. However, before I could finish these duties, Mrs Kennedy returned to the President's side and I retreated to a corner of the room. She kissed the President on the foot, on the leg, on the thigh, on the abdomen, on the chest, and then on the face. She still looked drawn, pale, shocked, and remote. I doubt if she remembers any part of this. Then the priest began the last rites in deliberate, resonant, and slow tones, and then it was over."

Jenkins recalls that Secret Service agents then "grabbed the President's gurney on each side and wheeled it out of the room, all but running over Dr Earl Rose, the Dallas medical examiner [whose office was right across the hall from the emergency room]."

Dr Rose, who is now retired in Iowa City, also gave *JAMA* a rare interview to pick up the narrative. "I was in their way," Rose recalls. "I was face to face with Secret Service Agent Roy H. Kellerman, and I was trying to explain to him that Texas law applied in the instant case of the death of the President and that the law required an autopsy to be performed in Texas.

"Agent Kellerman had experienced a tragedy on his watch and, although he had no legal authority, he believed that his primary responsibility was to transport the body back to Washington, DC.



Photo: Dennis L. Brno

Ignoring the autopsy evidence, Dallas surgeon Robert McClelland maintains a "strong opinion" that the bullets that struck Kennedy came from the front. He bases this conclusion on his viewing of the Zapruder film of the assassination.

He was very distressed, apparently taking the death as a personal affront, and he and I were not communicating. It was not a hostile discussion, but he and I were expressing differing views on what was appropriate."

A standoff over removing the body

Theron Ward, a Dallas Justice of the Peace, was at the hospital to assert the applicable Texas law, but, in Rose's words, "he did nothing. . . he was frozen with fear. In effect, no one was in charge of the situation. Agent Kellerman tried three tactics to have his way—he asserted his identity as representing the Secret Service; he appealed for sympathy to Mrs Kennedy; and he used body language to attempt to bully, or, should I say, intimidate. I don't recall the exact words, but he and I exchanged firm and emotionally charged words. At no time did I feel I was in physical danger because he and the others were armed. I was not looking at Agent Kellerman's gun, I was looking at his eyes, and they were very intense. His eyes said that he meant to get the President's body back to Washington."

In 1963, Rose was 6-feet, 2-inches tall and solidly built. He was not the kind to back down from a fight if he believed he was right. "I was raised in western South Dakota," he said, "and I carried that baggage with me. People raised in western South Dakota may lose a fight, but they don't get bullied or intimidated." The standoff, however, was soon over. Rose says, "Finally, without saying any more, I simply stood aside. I felt that it was unwise to do anything more to ac-

celerate or exacerbate the tension. There was nothing more I could do to keep the body in Dallas. I had no minions, no armies to enforce the will of the medical examiner."

Later that day, Rose autopsied patrolman J. D. Tippit, who was killed by Oswald; two days later, he autopsied Oswald himself, who was killed by Jack Ruby; a few years later, he autopsied Ruby.

It is 29 years later and Rose, who has a law degree as well as a medical degree, still feels strongly that the Kennedy autopsy should have been performed in Dallas. "The law was broken," Rose says, "and it is very disquieting to me to sacrifice the law as it exists for any individual, including the President. Having one set of rules for the rich and famous and another for the poor is antithetical to justice. There have been many arguments to try to justify the removal of the body, but to me they all seem like retrospective and self-serving theories. People are governed by rules and in a time of crisis it is even more important to uphold the rules, as this case amply demonstrates."

Rose believes that a Dallas autopsy, which he would have performed, "would have been free of any perceptions of outside influences to compromise the results. After all, if Oswald had lived, his trial would have been held in Texas and a Texas autopsy would have assured a tight chain of custody on all the evidence. In Dallas, we had access to the President's clothing and to the medical team who had treated him, and these are very important considerations."

Further, Rose believes that the removal of the body was the first step in creating disbelief about what had happened. "Silence and concealment are the mother's milk of conspiracy theories," he says. "If we have learned anything in the 29 years since the President was shot, it is that silence and concealment breed theories of conspiracy and the only answer is to open up the records, without self-serving rules of secrecy, and let the American people judge for themselves."

Rose, who is a board-certified forensic pathologist and who has personally examined Kennedy's autopsy materials and records, next turned his attention to the claims made by Dr Crenshaw, who is a surgeon. "I believe that Dr Crenshaw believes what he is saying when he argues that the shots came from the front," Rose says, "but he is mistaken." Pressed on his degree of confidence in this statement, Rose finally says, "I am absolutely sure that he is in error."

Rose was a member of the 1977 House

Select Committee on Assassinations that had access to the entire autopsy file of President Kennedy and that supported the autopsy conclusions. Though he thinks the Bethesda autopsy was "less than optimal," Rose has no argument with the central fact, saying, "I agree that the two wounds to the neck and head came from behind and above and that there is no room for doubt on this finding. The physical evidence corroborates this without question." He concludes, "Do not attribute to conspiracy what can be explained by distrust, inexperience, or ineptitude." Offering his own appraisal of who killed Kennedy, Rose says, "Oswald is the prime suspect and there is no credible evidence for any other suspect. However, there will always be reservations until all the evidence is disclosed. Only this morning the US Justice Department again opposed on the grounds of national security a Congressional resolution to open the Kennedy files."

Mistakes and conspiracies

One might think that all this demonstration of facts and expression of expert medical opinion would end the controversy over the President's autopsy, but one would probably be wrong. Even in that Parkland Hospital trauma room there was one other physician who still disbelieves the President's autopsy report. Robert McClelland, MD, is a respected surgeon who assisted in the last steps of the tracheostomy on President Kennedy. Interviewed in Dallas, he told this reporter that he maintains a "strong opinion" that the fatal head wound came from the front. Pressed on his reasons, he says, "After I saw the Zapruder film in 1969, I became convinced that the backward lurch of the head had to have come from a shot from the front. Unlike Crenshaw, I do not believe that one can tell the direction from which the bullet came simply by looking at the head wound, as I did, but the wound I observed did appear consistent with a shot from the front. That observation is secondary to my viewing of the Zapruder film, which convinced me that the shots were from the front." Reminded that at least 16 pathologists have also studied the Zapruder film and also examined the autopsy clothing, notes, photos, and x-rays and have concluded the opposite, McClelland remains unshaken. "I can't speak for them," he says, "and although I am not an expert in ballistics, pathology, or physics, I still have a strong opinion that the head shot came from the front."

So it goes. McClelland had originally mistakenly written in his hospital chart



Dr Earl Rose: "The law was broken, but I had no minions, no armies to enforce the will of the medical examiner and perform the autopsy in Dallas."

that the wound to Kennedy's head struck the *left* temple. This error, as published in the Warren report, later prompted a call from the office of New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison, who wanted to bring him to New Orleans in 1969 to testify in the conspiracy trial of Clay Shaw. McClelland recalls, "Well, when I told the investigator that I had made a mistake in 1963, there was a sudden silence at the other end of the line."

Mistakes do happen and contribute to conspiracy theories. Similarly, Dr Jenkins wrote in a 1963 report that Kennedy's "cerebellum" had been blown out, when he meant "cerebrum." Dr Perry appeared at a riotous press conference on the day of the assassination and said that the fatal shot "might have come" from the front. All have become grist for the rumor mill.

Jenkins was a technical consultant to the making of the film *JFK*, advising on the layout and equipment of the Parkland Hospital trauma room. Assured of director Oliver Stone's passion for authenticity, Jenkins was able to help re-create the

1963 room right down to the last detail and also to re-create the original Parkland emergency room entrance, which in subsequent decades has been engulfed by the complex of new buildings constructed at the parent University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas. When Jenkins showed up at the set for a day of shooting, he noticed that the actors representing the medical team were all being issued blood-soaked scrub suits. Advising Stone that only he and Mrs Kennedy were splattered with blood, Jenkins was told by the director, "Oh, doc, people expect to see blood!" Jenkins notes, "So much for authenticity." Jenkins himself made a cameo appearance in the film, but says, "I was so bored with the film that I fell asleep and missed my two seconds on camera!"

People expect to read about conspiracy theories and this probably will not change. Earl Rose concludes, "The defamers of the truth can only be confronted and defeated by the truth."

This special report is our attempt to confront the defamers of the truth. □

JFK conspiracy's profit industry still choosing theory over facts

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

The Miami Herald p. 23
Date 22 May 1992

SANDY GRADY

IN THE pivotal scene in Oliver Stone's comic-book movie, *JFK*, a military man named "X" is sitting on a park bench in Washington and unraveling the plot to kill John F. Kennedy. The murder, "X" tells prosecutor Jim Garrison in the film, was masterminded by Pentagon generals and the CIA to scuttle Kennedy's plans to pull out of Vietnam. "Don't take my word," says "X." "Do your own work — your own thinkin'."

Many moviegoers did their own thinkin' and shrugged, yeah, probably happened that way. Most believers seemed to be young; half of Americans weren't alive when JFK was killed in 1963. Fed on lies of Watergate and Vietnam, the '90s generation easily could swallow the myth that their own government rubbed out a president.

It was swimming against the tide to argue that Stone's cartoon conspiracy, like his thunderously distorted movie, was preposterous. If all the weirdos, Mafiosos, druggies, generals, and CIA types conspired to waste Kennedy (how many? six? 300?), why hadn't one spilled the truth in 29 years?

'Through the looking glass'

"We're through the looking glass here, people," Kevin Costner, the wooden actor playing Garrison, told viewers. "White is black and black is white."

OK, the leap through the looking glass was entertaining, transfixing, palatable. After all, two-thirds of Americans think that a conspiracy killed Kennedy. No wonder that *JFK* made Stone more famous and grossed \$70 million. Never mind that it was a crude, bloody fairy tale. And lousy history.

The danger is that Stone's clever, paranoid mishmash can be embedded in the national psyche as truth. If a bunch of militaristic cowboys knocked off JFK, well, the coup could be blamed for everything that's gone wrong with America. Beats living with the dull possibility that a lone kook named Lee Harvey Oswald shattered history with a homemade rifle.

Will silence-breaking interviews with two Navy pathologists, who performed the autopsy on Kennedy and now denounce Stone's movie as a hoax, stop the torrent of Kennedy conspiracy theories? No way.

A helluva lot more people saw *JFK* than will read the fine print in the Journal of the American Medical Association, where pathologists James Humes and J. Thornton Boswell ended their 29-year silence.

"I'm tired of being beaten upon by people who are supremely ignorant of the scientific facts of the president's death," said Humes. He obviously includes Stone, whose film theorized that three teams of gunmen fired six shots, hitting Kennedy from the front.

The Navy docs repeat what they told the Warren Commission: Kennedy was hit by two shots fired from behind by a single rifle. They detailed the exit wounds in the front of Kennedy's throat and head.

"This is a law of physics, and it is fool-proof," insisted Humes. "The conspiracy buffs have totally ignored this . . . and everything is hogwash. If we stayed here until hell freezes over, nothing would change it."

They slammed the movie's theory that Pentagon chiefs or the FBI pressured them, tampered with the autopsy or altered Kennedy's body. "Nobody interfered," said Humes. Sound conclusive? In the three-decade-old war between the Conspiracists and Non-Conspiracists, nothing will ever be settled about JFK's murder.

Naturally, Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., ridiculed in the *JFK* film, his Senate campaign nagged by critics, was proud to hear his Warren Commission work "verified and confirmed."

And John Connally, riding in the front seat that day, said that the docs supported his memory: "I'm absolutely convinced that three shots were fired, two hit Kennedy, one hit me." Connally called the movie "evil."

But there's no chance that the testimony of the Navy pathologists will quiet the endless storm of JFK murder skepticism.

Why? Simple: There are automatic bucks to be made from the fascination with JFK's murder. Whole forests have been slashed down to manufacture 600 Kennedy death-plot books. Mark Lane makes a career in the JFK cottage industry. Never mind that a new book by Dr. Charles Crenshaw (*JFK: Conspiracy of Silence*), who claims that he was in the operating room, was savaged by the

CONTINUED

pathologists.

"This presentation was cooked. It's a lie! Kennedy was overthrown. He was killed in a conspiracy," shouted Harrison Edward Livingstone, author of *High Treason 2*, after the doctors' press conference Tuesday.

So it goes. Even the move led by Sen. David Boren, D-Okla., and Rep. Louis Stokes, D-Ohio, to open the million pages of JFK documents in CIA and FBI files won't squelch wide suspicion that JFK's slaying was covered up by feds.

A lurid fantasy such as Oliver Stone's — generals and CIA spooks and mobsters plotting to slay a popular, handsome president — is a pattern easier to accept than the terrible randomness of a whacko with a mail-order gun.

The idea of a lone, crazed gunman changing history is too cruel, irrational, senseless. Give us a movie. Who needs real life?

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The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
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The Wall Street Journal _____
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The Miami Herald 22A
Date 22 May 1992

JFK: Shedding new light

THE CREDIBILITY of the Warren Commission's findings on John F. Kennedy's assassination has received a powerful boost from four doctors in a position to know the truth. They broke their 29-year silence in interviews published this week in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

The doctors — two who treated the mortally wounded president, and two who performed an autopsy on him — agree that medical evidence showed that he was shot twice, from behind, by a single weapon.

Pathologist James Humes put it well. Noting that "there was no interference with our autopsy, and there was no conspiracy to suppress the findings," he added: "President Kennedy was struck from above and behind by the fatal shot. The pattern of the entrance and exit wounds proves it. . . . This is a law of physics, and it's foolproof."

That's what the Warren Commission also concluded. Ever since then, however, conspiracy buffs have fantasized other scenarios. Speculation reached new heights late last year with director Oliver Stone's controversial film, *JFK*.

That film was praised as a cinematic achievement but widely criticized for blurring fact and fiction. It rekindled conspiracy

SECRECY BREEDS DISTRUST

fires whose embers have glowed since the Warren Commission concluded that Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone, killed the president. Most Americans didn't and don't believe the Warren Commission or that "the whole story" has been told. Many no doubt will cling to the notion — propounded by the film — that Mr. Kennedy was the victim of multiple assassins working for sinister forces inside the government and "the establishment."

Yet as the *Journal's* editor, Dr. George Lundberg, perceptively observes: "I think the nonavailability of information has contributed greatly to people wondering."

The *Journal* deserves credit for helping resolve some of the doubt by publishing the doctors' insights. Moreover, this whole episode ought to be a lesson to public officials in a position to shed additional light on this or any other controversial investigation:

Conspiracy theories are most likely to thrive — and official credibility to suffer — whenever there's a perception that the persons in positions of power are withholding vital information from the public.

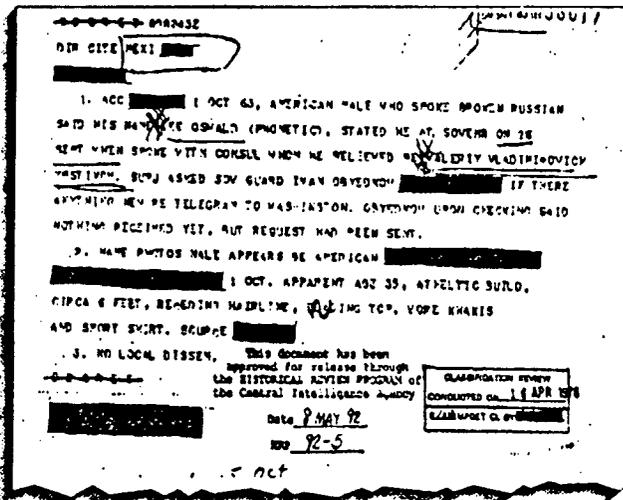
WASHINGTON AT WORK THE KENNEDY ASSASSINATION: GETTING AT HISTORY



BY RAY LUSTIG-THE WASHINGTON POST

In the wake of the controversy over Oliver Stone's movie "JFK," the CIA earlier this month released 34 documents compiled on Lee Harvey Oswald before the 1963 assassination. Twenty-two documents, came from the FBI and the State Department; 12 originated at the CIA. Most dealt with Oswald's defection to Moscow in 1959 and his activities after he returned to the United States in 1962.

Seven of the 12 CIA documents were previously made public. Their release was approved by CIA Director Robert M. Gates, and they are available at the National Archives. Above, director Stone, right, confers with public relations executives Frank Mankiewicz, left, and Mark Robertson during April hearings on the Assassination Materials Disclosure Act of 1992, which could open up more records on the Kennedy assassination. Further hearings on the act are being held today.



Ambassy Moscow

Mrs. Oswald came in to discuss the situation with regard to her son, Lee Oswald, who had gone to the Soviet Union and attempted to renounce his citizenship in a visit to the Embassy on October 31, 1959. Mrs. Oswald said she had come to Washington to see what further could be done to help her son, indicating that she did not feel that the Department had done as much as it should in his case. She also said she thought there was some possibility that her son had in fact gone to the Soviet Union as a US secret agent, and if this were true she wished the appropriate authorities to know that she was destitute and should receive some compensation.

Character: REGISTRATION ACT - CUBA; INTERNAL SECURITY - CUBA

DOC. MICRO. SER.

Synopsis: Information from NOPD on 8/9/63 revealed that LEE H. OSWALD was arrested on that date for disturbing the peace along with three other Cubans who had objected to OSWALD's distribution of FPCC literature. OSWALD fined \$10.00 or 10 days on 8/12/63 in Municipal Court, New Orleans. OSWALD reported to have distributed FPCC literature in New Orleans 8/16/63 along with another unknown white male. OSWALD appeared on a radio program on 8/21/63 in a debate against two anti-Castro persons. at which time OSWALD denied that FPCC is Communist controlled and he admitted he personally was a Marxist. OSWALD reported 8/25/63 and believed to be...

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____ 62
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 21 May 1992

Best evidence

With the press conference Monday by two retired naval doctors who performed the autopsy on the corpse of President John F. Kennedy, the nation was plunged once more into the grisly details of the Kennedy assassination and the even grislier arcana of the controversy about a supposed assassination conspiracy. But if the two doctors are right, their information may have brought us a bit closer to terminating the debate for good.

There are two main problems with the "lone gunman" theory endorsed by the Warren Commission. One is the highly peculiar coincidence that the alleged assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, was himself murdered by Jack Ruby 48 hours after he supposedly shot Kennedy. Oswald's murder, conspiracy theorists often argue, was intended to silence and then frame the only man who could have explained the president's murder. The problem with that theory is that Ruby would have had to be part of the conspiracy, and we know that it was in fact a coincidence that Ruby happened to be in the police garage when police escorted Oswald through, giving him the chance to shoot.

The other problem arises from the two bullets that entered Kennedy's body. The Warren Commission held that he was shot twice by separate bullets, both from the same gun. One bullet, which passed through his neck, managed to strike Gov. John Connally, who was sitting in the front seat of the presidential limousine. Critics claim that no bullet could have behaved in this way without fragmenting. Moreover, film of the assassination shows that Kennedy's head jerked back when he was shot by bullet No. 2, indicating that he was shot from the front by another gunman.

Dr. James J. Humes and Dr. J. Thornton Boswell, retired naval officers, worked on Kennedy's body at Bethesda Naval Hospital the night he was shot. Conspiracy theorists have long muttered about the sinister goings-on at the autopsy — that it wasn't Kennedy's body, that evidence was fabricated and falsified to conceal a conspiracy. But both doctors, whose interviews will appear in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, affirm that this is nonsense.

Dr. Humes was in charge of the autopsy. He says it certainly was Kennedy upon whom he operated. He also says that his main finding was that the damage done to Kennedy's head could have resulted only from a single bullet entering from the rear and exiting from the front. Markings on the inside and outside of the skull were consistent with that hypothesis. And, he

says, "This is always the pattern of a through-and-through wound of the cranium. . . . This is a law of physics and it is foolproof — absolutely, unequivocally and without question."

As for the jerking of Kennedy's head in the Zapruder film, this was due, says Dr. Humes, to the "jet propulsion effect" caused by brain tissue exploding from the exit wound. The bullet that hit Kennedy and also Mr. Connally also entered from the rear, and its exit wound was obscured by a tracheotomy performed at the Dallas hospital where other doctors had tried to save the president's life. In other words, the medical evidence from the autopsy, according to the doctors who performed it, is consistent with the conclusion that Kennedy was slain by a lone gunman firing from behind, which is where Oswald was located.

Of course, this doesn't satisfy the conspiracy buffs, many of whom make a pretty good living at their profession of casting doubt on the Warren Commission and grasping at any whip with which to beat it. Harold Weisberg, author of several books on the Kennedy assassination, discounted the doctors' evidence. He questions whether, as *The Washington Post* reported, "a full-jacketed military bullet such as those fired from the Texas School Book Depository in Dallas" could have left the kind of fragments Drs. Hume and Boswell said they found by X-rays of Kennedy's head during the autopsy.

How, we'd like to know, does Mr. Weisberg know what kind of bullet was fired? Most conspiracy theories reject the view that Oswald fired the bullets, that the assassins used Oswald's Mannlicher-Carcano rifle found in the Book Depository or that the shell casings found there were those of the fatal bullets. If these weapons were not the ones used, how come Mr. Weisberg can be so sure about how the real bullets would have behaved? In order to discount the doctors' evidence, he has to assume a key part of the Warren Commission's argument, that the shell casings found were those of the bullets that struck Kennedy.

Conspiracy theorists are not likely to be deterred by evidence. Nevertheless, what Dr. Hume and Dr. Boswell had to say filled in more real blanks than the conspiracy mavens want to fill, and their evidence is welcome as a serious contribution to historical knowledge.

■ **Rep. Esteban Torres:** A recent editorial on legislation related to the Federal Reserve misidentified Rep. Esteban Torres, the chairman of a House banking subcommittee. The Times regrets the error.

Doctors Affirm Kennedy Autopsy Report

By LAWRENCE K. ALTMAN

Breaking a 28-year silence, the two pathologists who performed the autopsy on President John F. Kennedy have affirmed their original findings that he was hit by only two bullets, fired above and behind, and that one of them caused the massive head wound that killed him.

And five doctors who cared for the wounded President in the emergency room of a Dallas hospital said they observed nothing while treating Kennedy that contradicts the pathologists' findings. They also criticized another doctor in the emergency room that day, whose new book asserts there was a conspiracy to cover up evidence that the President was shot from the front, not the back.

Some Questions Answered

The two pathologists and the other five doctors have not previously discussed the Kennedy assassination, except before the Warren Commission that investigated it. They made their assertions in interviews reported in the May 27 issue of *The Journal of the American Medical Association*.

In the interviews, the doctors offered answers to several questions about the assassination and its aftermath, including the nature of a throat wound Kennedy suffered; whether the new President, Lyndon B. Johnson, demanded that doctors extract a confession from Lee Harvey Oswald, the accused assassin, when Oswald was treated in the same emergency room after being shot two days later; what happened to the original notes of the autopsy and whether Kennedy's body might have been interfered with en route from Dallas to the Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., where the autopsy was performed.

Dr. George D. Lundberg, editor of the journal and a pathologist, said the interviews were the result of a seven-year effort to "help calm the ardor of the honest conspiracy theorists who have simply

not had access to the facts."

Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Democrat of Massachusetts, said through a spokeswoman that he welcomed "these authoritative medical opinions, and I hope they will help to end the irresponsible speculation that has been taking place and that is so distressing to our family."

Dr. Lundberg and Dennis L. Bree, who interviewed the doctors for the journal, described the doctors' comments at a news conference in New York City yesterday. The doctors themselves did not appear and, Dr. Lundberg said, do not want to be interviewed further. A third pathologist involved in the autopsy, Dr. Pierre Finck, now lives in Switzerland and declined to be interviewed for the journal articles.

The pathologists, Dr. James J. Humes and Dr. J. Thornton Boswell, both are whom are now retired from the Navy, said there was no doubt about the nature of the gunshot wounds and denied that there had been any interference from military or political officials, a major contention of conspiracy theorists. The pathologists, who were Naval medical officers at the time of the autopsy, said the bullets were fired by a high-velocity weapon.

"We documented our findings in spades," Dr. Boswell said. "It's all

Doctors say the bullets that killed Kennedy came from behind.

there in the records" that include x-rays from head to toe and 52 photographs.

Dr. Humes said, "No significant aspect of the autopsy was left unphotographed."

"In 1963, we proved at the autopsy table that President Kennedy was struck from above and behind by the fatal shot," Dr. Humes said, adding, "I am tired of being beaten upon by people who are supremely ignorant of the scientific facts of the President's death."

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The autopsy results have subsequently been independently confirmed several times.

The pathologists and many other medical experts agree that some of the questions raised about the Kennedy assassination would have been avoided had the autopsy taken place in Dallas, as required by Texas law. No autopsy was done there, the journal articles say, because security officials were anxious to get the new President back to the safety of Washington and Mr. Johnson refused to leave Dallas without Mrs. Kennedy and she refused to leave her husband's body behind.

The interviews follow a new wave of conspiracy charges raised by Oliver Stone's movie "J.F.K." and a book, "J.F.K. Conspiracy of Silence" (Signet, 1992) by Dr. Charles A. Crenshaw, who was a junior member of the team that tried to save Kennedy's life at Parkland Memorial Hospital in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963.

Among Dr. Crenshaw's charges is that the bullets struck Kennedy from the front, that Kennedy's wounds were altered between the time his body left the hospital in Dallas and the autopsy in Bethesda, and that his body was received in Bethesda in a body bag, not a coffin.

Pathologists Defend Selves

While the two pathologists have been criticized as lacking experience in gunshot wounds, they rebutted these and other charges in the journal articles, saying that in their Navy service they had autopsied people who had died from gunshot wounds.

But a spokeswoman for Signet, said Dr. Crenshaw stood by story. Referring to the journal articles, the spokeswoman said: "It's the old party line. The American public is still being manipulated."

The pathologists said they were not aware of Dr. Crenshaw's book at the time of the interviews. Speaking to Dr. Crenshaw's charge that Kennedy's body arrived in a bag, Dr. Humes said that he and Dr. Boswell lifted Kennedy's body from the coffin directly onto the examining table. The body was nude and swaddled in sheets, they said, and Kennedy's head, brutally wounded, was wrapped with gauze and bandages.

"There was no body bag anywhere near the scene," Dr. Humes said. "I cannot imagine how this talk about the President's body being delivered in a body bag got started, but it is absolutely false."

Dr. Humes said his team did not need to use a saw to remove the top of the skull, as is usual in autopsies, because the bullet that killed Kennedy had blown out 13 centimeters (about 5 inches) of skull, bone and skin.

when Dr. Humes peeled the scalp back, he said, the skull bone "crumbled in my hands from the fracture lines, which went off in all directions."

Head and Throat Wounds

The pathologists said the first bullet entered the back of Kennedy's neck and left through the front of the throat. The second bullet entered the back of his head and exploded the right side of his it, destroying a major portion of the brain.

After examining the inside of the rear of the skull bone and piecing together what they could of the remaining brain, the pathologists said, there was no question where the bullet had come from: rear to front.

The first shot left an "abrasion collar where this bullet entered at the base of the President's neck," Dr. Humes said, "and this scorching and splitting of the skin from the heat and scraping generated by the entering bullet is proof that it entered from behind."

The pathologists said they were temporarily baffled about the exit wound, which was obliterated when the surgeons in Dallas had cut through it to create an airway for Kennedy in a procedure known as a tracheostomy.

In his book, Dr. Crenshaw said he saw a small, round wound in Kennedy's neck in Dallas and a gaping wound on a photograph of Kennedy's neck at the autopsy, suggesting that the wound had been altered between Dallas and Bethesda.

Dr. Humes said, "We found a gaping wound in the front of the neck where the tracheostomy had been performed, and if Dr. Crenshaw was correct, the only possible explanation is that the neck wound was intentionally enlarged while the body was en route from Dallas, and the insinuation of this scenario does not deserve a response."

Dr. Humes said confusion about the exit wound would have been avoided had the pathologists telephoned the Dallas doctors immediately, rather than on the morning after the autopsy, as they did. "If we made a mistake, it was in not calling Dallas before we started the autopsy," Dr. Humes said. "Our information from Parkland Hospital in Dallas before we started the autopsy was zero."

Pathologists generally talk to attending doctors before starting an autopsy. Dr. Humes did not say why they did not call Parkland doctors before they began work.

One element of the conspiracy theory stems from charges that Dr. Humes's original notes disappeared. In the journal report, written by Mr. Breo, Dr. Humes explained that he burned his original set of notes because they were stained with Kennedy's blood. To

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prevent the notes from ever becoming a ghoulish collector's item, he said, he burned them in his fireplace "after I had copied verbatim in my own handwriting the entire contents.

Mr. Breo said the five doctors who led the team to save Kennedy's life in Dallas told him that Dr. Crenshaw did not participate in the effort in any meaningful way. He also said that none of the five recalled even seeing Dr. Crenshaw at the scene. Mr. Breo said that he did not try to interview Dr. Crenshaw and that the doctor was not mentioned in the Warren Commission's summary report.

But the full report makes several references to Dr. Crenshaw. In one, Dr. Charles R. Baxter, one of the Dallas doctors interviewed by Mr. Breo, told the Warren Commission that Dr. Crenshaw was in the emergency room.

The Dallas doctors and Dr. Lundberg said in the journal interviews that they suspected that Dr. Crenshaw wrote his book for personal gain. Dr. Lundberg said the book was "a sad fabrication based upon unsubstantiated allegations.

Dr. Baxter also denied knowledge of any call from President Johnson demanding an autopsy of Oswald. In his book, Dr. Crenshaw said the President made such a call.

The other four Dallas doctors are Dr. Malcolm Perry, Dr. Robert McClelland, Dr. Jim Carrico, a first-year surgical resident at the time, and Dr. M. T. Jenkins, who was then the chief of anesthesiology at Parkland. Of the four, only Dr. McClelland believes that the bullet entered Kennedy's throat from the front. But Dr. Lundberg, the journal editor, said Dr. McClelland was not an expert in forensic pathology and ballistic wounds.

Dr. Lundberg also called Mr. Stone's film "skillful film fiction" and "a grave insult to the military physicians involved, among others."

Mr. Stone's publicist said that the director was in Europe and could not be reached for comment.

Dr. Lundberg called on the Government to open the Kennedy archives to serious study and "to place the relevant Kennedy materials on permanent display near those of President Lincoln for full viewing by any and everyone."

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The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
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Two Shots, From the Rear

Pathologists who performed the autopsy on President Kennedy now reaffirm that he was struck by two rifle shots from the rear. By organizing and publishing this restatement of a key finding of the Warren Commission, The Journal of the American Medical Association has performed a service for reasonable people and reason.

Heated claims of conspiracy endure even after three decades; the clamor will probably never end entirely. But this basic physical evidence survives and, to all those willing to listen, it offers proof against paranoia.

All that Dr. James Humes and Dr. Thornton Boswell conclude is that the President's wounds did not and do not lie. A bruise *at the rear* of the neck signifies a bullet's entry. The "beveling" or angle of the bone fracture *at the back* of the skull makes clear the direction of the bullet that blew away the side of the President's head. It's like deducing the direction of a BB shot from its path through a pane of glass, small at the entry point and coning out at the other side.

Conspiracy buffs remain free to contend all they please that other would-be assassins fired at the President (and missed) in Dallas on that terrible day in November 1963. Or that Lee Harvey Oswald was only the point man in a conspiracy involving gangsters, or Cubans or even all the high officials named by the character "X" in the Oliver Stone movie "J.F.K."

Jim Garrison, the New Orleans prosecutor whose relentless pursuit of a conspiracy is glorified in the film, knew of this evidence and its clarity. So did the jury that swiftly acquitted Clay Shaw, the businessman whom Garrison falsely accused of conspiracy. The Stone film omitted this evidence from its portrayal of the trial.

For these and other reasons, it makes considerable sense for the Federal Government to declassify and publish reams of still-secret information. Students of the assassination who are neither hysterical nor paranoid believe there's still much to learn about the assassin and about the actions of intelligence agencies.

Congress is proceeding wisely to create a commission for that purpose. To be credible, that commission must have the power to override the resistance of intelligence agencies. Yet the Bush Administration has opposed, and even threatened to veto a bill moving in both houses. Why? Because the White House insists that Congress respect the President's ultimate authority over secrets.

Would that President Bush understood as clearly as the medical journal how much more important it is to satisfy the public's rightful quest for the rest of the John Kennedy assassination story. Frustrating it will only feed the flames of suspicion.

JFK autopsy docs support Warren Commission

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The New York Times _____
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By DONALD BERTRAND

Daily News Staff Writer

The two doctors who performed the autopsy on John F. Kennedy broke a 29-year silence yesterday to support the 1964 Warren Commission finding that the President was shot by a lone assassin.

Dr. James Humes and J. Thornton Boswell, the pathologists who did the four-hour autopsy at Bethesda Naval Hospital, offer their first public discussion of the case in the May 27 issue of *The Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Dr. George Lundberg, the JAMA editor who interviewed the pathologists, said that "both bullets struck from behind. No other bullets struck the President... The eyewitness accounts and scientific evidence are indisputable."

He called the Oliver Stone movie "JFK," which raised conspiracy theories questions about the Nov. 22, 1963, assassination, "a very skillfully done movie" but one that mixed "what was really documentary and what was beautifully fake documentary."

Stone, he said, "has done the country a terrible disservice in rewriting history falsely."

In a book published last month, "JFK: Conspiracy of Silence," Dr. Charles Crenshaw, who says he was in the

Dallas emergency room where Kennedy was treated, claims the bullet entered Kennedy from the front.

But in the JAMA interview Humes contends, "In 1963, we proved at the autopsy table that President Kennedy was struck from above and

behind by the fatal shot."

"I found when we examined the President's skull... there was a small elliptical entrance wound on the back

of the skull, where the bullet entered, and a beveled larger wound on the inside of the back of the skull, where the bullet tore through and exploded out the right side of the head."

The path of the second bullet was not so obvious. Neither the other bullet nor its exit track could be found, Humes says.

At a Manhattan press conference, Lundberg said that in a second article in JAMA, the four physicians who treated Kennedy in Dallas also supported the Warren Commission findings.

None of the four attending doctors recall Crenshaw in the room where Kennedy was treated.

Autopsy docs support lone-gunman theory

By KIERAN CROWLEY

Four doctors who examined President Kennedy after his assassination ended years of silence yesterday to publicly support the Warren Commission conclusion that he was shot twice from behind by a lone gunman.

The doctors, in interviews for the May 27 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, rebutted conspiracy theories about the Nov. 22, 1963 assassination.

Dr. George Lundberg, who interviewed the doctors for the journal, called the Oliver Stone movie "JFK" which raised new questions about the assassination, "skilful film fiction."

"I think he has done the country a terrible disservice in re-writing history falsely," said Lundberg.

The interviews ended 28 years of silence for pathologists James Joseph Humes and J. Thornton Boswell, who performed the Kennedy autopsy.

The other two doctors, who have seldom spoken out about the assassination, tried to revive the president at Parkland Hospital in Dallas minutes after the shooting.

The four doctors, who declined to meet the press yesterday, maintain Kennedy was shot twice from behind by a single gunman, as the much-disputed commission report decided in 1964.

They told the journal that bullets always leave a small hole where they enter and a beveled crater where they exit.

"We proved at the autopsy table that President Kennedy was struck from above and behind by the fatal shot," Humes said.

"The pattern of the entrance and exit wounds in the skull proves it....

This is a law of physics and it's foolproof.

"There was no interference with our autopsy, and there was no conspiracy to suppress the findings," he said.

Many of those who support conspiracy theories about the assassination believe Kennedy was shot from the front, and that the government tried to cover up what really happened by moving the autopsy to a Navy hospital.

The commission found that Kennedy was killed by Lee Harvey Oswald, who was himself killed two days later by Jack Ruby.

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The New York Times _____
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Lone gunman shot Kennedy, autopsy, ER doctors believe

By Beth J. Harpaz
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Two doctors who tried to revive a mortally wounded President Kennedy and two others who performed the autopsy are certain he was shot twice from behind by a lone gunman, as the Warren Commission concluded 28 years ago.

Dr. George Lundberg, editor of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, said yesterday the four doctors dispelled conspiracy theories about the 1963 assassination in rare interviews for its May 27 issue.

The doctors maintain Kennedy was shot twice from behind by a single gunman, as the much-disputed commission report decided, Dr. Lundberg told reporters at a news conference. The governmental inquiry determined Kennedy was killed by Lee Harvey Oswald.

Many of those who support conspiracy theories about the assassination believe Kennedy was shot from the front and that the government tried to cover up what really happened by moving the autopsy to a Navy hospital.

Dr. Lundberg said the journal, as

a professional publication devoted to scientific research, has "a very good chance, perhaps the best chance, of setting to rest the talk of conspiracy around the autopsy.

Pathologists James Joseph Humes and J. Thornton Boswell, who conducted the autopsy at Bethesda Naval Hospital, told the journal that bullets always leave a small hole where they enter and a beveled crater where they exit.

"We proved at the autopsy table that President Kennedy was struck from above and behind by the fatal shot," Dr. Humes said. "The pattern of the entrance and exit wounds in the skull proves it. . . . This is a law of physics and it's foolproof."

He added: "The conspiracy buffs have totally ignored this central scientific fact and everything else is hogwash. There was no interference with our autopsy and there was no conspiracy to suppress the findings."

Conspiracy theories got recent boosts from Oliver Stone's movie "JFK" and a book published last month, "JFK: Conspiracy of Silence," by Charles Crenshaw, a doctor who says he was in the Dallas

emergency room where Kennedy was treated. Dr. Crenshaw claims the bullet entered Kennedy from the front.

Dr. Lundberg, a physician who worked for 11 years as a pathologist and who interviewed the doctors, called the Stone movie "skillful film fiction."

None of the doctors in the room where Kennedy was treated recalls seeing Dr. Crenshaw there.

"We were trying to save a life, not worrying about entry and exit wounds," said another attending physician, James Carrico. But he added: "Nothing we observed contradicts the autopsy finding that the bullets were fired from above and behind by a high-velocity rifle."

One conspiracy theorist, Harrison E. Livingston, author of the best-selling "High Treason 2," showed up at the news conference where the articles were released and accused the American Medical Association of being in on the cover-up.

"The AMA is a political action committee," he said. "President Kennedy mattered to all of us and he didn't matter to this political action committee."

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WASHINGTON AT WORK

THE KENNEDY ASSASSINATION: GETTING AT HISTORY

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In the wake of the controversy over Oliver Stone's movie "JFK," the CIA earlier this month released 34 documents compiled on Lee Harvey Oswald before the 1963 assassination. Twenty-two documents, came from the FBI and the State Department; 12 originated at the CIA. Most dealt with Oswald's defection to Moscow in 1959 and his activities after he returned to the United States in 1962.

Seven of the 12 CIA documents were previously made public. Their release was approved by CIA Director Robert M. Gates, and they are available at the National Archives. Above, director Stone, right, confers with public relations executives Frank Mankiewicz, left, and Mark Robertson during April hearings on the Assassination Materials Disclosure Act of 1992, which could open up more records on the Kennedy assassination. Further hearings on the act are being held today.

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Embassy Moscow

Mrs. Oswald came in to discuss the situation with regard to her son, Lee Oswald, who had gone to the Soviet Union and attempted to renounce his citizenship in a visit to the Embassy on October 31, 1959. Mrs. Oswald said she had come to Washington to see what further could be done to help her son, indicating that she did not feel that the Department had done as much as it should in his case. She also said she thought there was some possibility that her son had in fact gone to the Soviet Union as a US secret agent, and if this were true she wished the appropriate authorities to know that she was destitute and should receive some compensation.

Classification: REGISTRATION ACT - CUBA; INTERNAL SECURITY - CUBA

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Synopsis: Information from NOPD on 8/9/63 revealed that LEE H. OSWALD was arrested on that date for disturbing the peace along with three other Cubans who had objected to OSWALD's distribution of FPCC literature. OSWALD fined \$10.00 or 10 days on 8/12/63 in Municipal Court, New Orleans. OSWALD reported to have distributed FPCC literature in New Orleans 8/16/63 along with another unknown white male. OSWALD appeared on a radio program on 8/21/63 in a debate against two anti-Castro persons, at which time OSWALD denied that FPCC is Communist controlled and he admitted he personally was a Marxist. OSWALD reported [redacted] 8/25/63 and believed to [redacted]

2 JFK Autopsy Pathologists Defend Conclusion on Fatal Bullet

By George Lardner Jr.
and David Brown
Washington Post Staff Writers

Two pathologists who conducted the autopsy on President John F. Kennedy strenuously defended their work—and their conclusion that he was shot twice by “bullets that came from above and behind”—in interviews made public yesterday by the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Although the two doctors acknowledged some shortcomings in their post-mortem at Bethesda National Naval Medical Center on the night of Nov. 22, 1963, they said they were nonetheless confident almost 30 years later that their work was sound and unaffected by high-level pressure to get it done quickly.

That and related “conspiracy” charges—both new and recycled—have arisen in the recent revival of interest in the assassination, prompted by Oliver Stone’s movie “JFK” and several recent books on the subject.

Retired Navy Capt. James J. Humes, the chief pathologist at the JFK autopsy, told JAMA that he decided to speak up now “because I am tired of being beaten upon by people who are supremely ignorant of the scientific facts of the president’s death.”

Humes and retired Navy Cmdr. J. Thornton Boswell, a pathologist who assisted him, gave their account of the four-hour autopsy in interviews with JAMA editor George D. Lundberg, himself a former military pathologist, and Dennis L. Breo, author of the JAMA article, which will appear in the May 27 issue.

Humes and Boswell found Stone’s movie—which depicts the autopsy as though it were rigged to support a lone-gunman conclusion—particularly rankling.

“The president’s military aides from the Air Force, Army and Navy were all present,” Humes said, “and they were all in dress uniforms, but they were not generals and their influence on the autopsy was zero.”

The central finding was that the fatal damage to the president’s skull could only have been done by a bullet entering the back of the head and exiting near the right temple. In particular, they said the head shot produced a large beveled wound on the inside of the president’s skull when it entered, and another beveled wound on the outside of the skull when it exited.

“This is *always* the pattern of a through-and-through wound of the cranium. . . . This is a law of physics and it is foolproof—absolutely, unequivocally, and without question,” Humes is quoted as saying in the article.

An internationally known forensic pathologist and expert on gunshot wounds yesterday confirmed that such a pattern of injury clearly establishes the trajectory of a bullet.

“If you have a gunshot wound of bone and it is punched out on one surface and beveled out on the opposite surface, then the bullet entered on the punched-out surface, and the beveled surface is the exit,” said Vincent J. M. Di Maio, chief medical examiner for Bexar County, Tex., which includes San Antonio.

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The New York Times _____
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He said that once in a great while, there is beveling on both surfaces of a bone, and in such cases trajectory is hard to establish. But, he said, "Based on these statements [made to JAMA], there is absolutely no doubt that the bullet came from the rear and exited from the front."

The direction of the bullet was further supported, Humes asserted, by X-rays that "disclosed fine, dust-like metallic fragments from back to front, where the bullet traversed the head before creating an explosive exit wound."

The two pathologists testified before the Warren Commission in 1964 and were interviewed in 1978 by a panel of forensic pathologists for the House Select Committee on Assassinations, which criticized their work for a number of "inadequacies." JAMA editor Lundberg said at a news conference in New York yesterday that he hoped the new article would show "there was no conspiracy as regards the autopsy, its findings or its report."

That assertion drew an immediate burst of criticism from some longtime JFK researchers.

Harold Weisberg, author of "Post Mortem" and other books on the JFK assassination, said there was no way of telling whether the metallic fragments shown in the X-rays traveled "from back to front or front to back" and voiced doubt that they would have been left by a full-jacketed military bullet such as those fired from the Texas School Book Depository in Dallas. In addition, he said, the 40 fragments were "all clustered in the front of the head in a very short path."

Di Maio, however, said it would be natural for fragments to be clustered around the exit point "because the bullet is not traveling head-on, but has been destabilized and possibly deformed" by then.

Humes and Boswell also dismissed the argument that Kennedy must have been shot from the front because his head jerked backward, citing research that such a motion is caused by the "jet-propulsion effect" of brain matter and other tissue streaming from the large exit wound.

The pathologists said the other

bullet that hit Kennedy, the so-called magic bullet that also struck Texas Gov. John B. Connally, clearly hit Kennedy from behind because of the "scorching and splitting of the skin" as it entered the base of the president's neck. But they could not find an exit wound because they said it had been obliterated by a tracheotomy performed at Parkland Hospital in Dallas before the president's body was brought to Washington.

"If we made a mistake, it was in not calling Dallas before we started the autopsy," Humes said. "Our information from Parkland . . . before we started the autopsy was zero."

The 1978 forensic panel specifically criticized Humes and Boswell for failing to follow "normal procedure" and check with Parkland. The nine-member panel also faulted the military doctors for not dissecting the wound that traversed Kennedy's upper back and only probing it with a finger.

Humes offered no apology in the JAMA interview, asserting that "dissecting the neck was totally unnecessary and would have been criminal." He said they decided "to quit speculating" around midnight, admittedly "influenced by the fact that we knew [Jacqueline] Kennedy was waiting upstairs to accompany the body back to the White House and that Admiral [George] Burkley [Kennedy's physician] wanted us to hurry as much as possible."

The pathologists painted a picture of confusion as dozens of officials and spectators milled around during the autopsy. Humes described it as a "three-ring circus," and recalled that a medical corpsman was taking photographs for his own use until his camera was seized by Secret Service agents.

Humes and Boswell had said in 1978 that the hurry-up mood influenced the autopsy, but the forensic panel said it was disturbed by the presence of unnecessary medical personnel. The panel said this and other shortcomings, such as the failure to examine the brain thoroughly, "have continued to feed the confusion and mistrust so long associated with the autopsy."

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The autopsy was also performed without study of Kennedy's clothing—evidence that could have shed light on the neck wound.

"One's examination of the clothing is as much a part of the autopsy as examination of the heart or of the brain. In fact, it is more important in most cases of forensic autopsy," said Di Maio.

The third member of the autopsy team, retired Army Lt. Col. Pierre Finck, said in a 1965 written report that he was "denied the opportunity to examine the clothing of Kennedy. One officer who outranked me told me that my request was only of academic interest."

Finck, then a ballistics expert from the Armed Forces Institute of Pa-

thology, declined to be interviewed for the JAMA article. Boswell described him as "a meek and mild man" who was very "brass conscious" and who may have mistaken "the President's military aides and other military personnel for generals."

Finck is one source of the contention, by conspiracy theorists, that the autopsy was directed and possibly subverted by unidentified senior officers at the autopsy.

A companion JAMA article, based on interviews with the Parkland and other Dallas doctors, disclosed that Jacqueline Kennedy brought "a large chunk of her husband's brain tissues" into the emergency room and wandered around looking "shell-shocked" before giving it to one of the treating physicians.

Retired Dallas medical examiner Earl Rose recalled how he tried to keep Secret Service agents from removing the body to Washington because Texas law required a local autopsy. He described a face-off with Secret Service agent Roy H. Kellerman at Parkland.

"Finally, without saying any more, I simply stood aside," Rose told JAMA. "I felt that it was unwise to do anything more to accelerate or exacerbate the tension." Unlike the Bethesda doctors, who are hospital pathologists, Rose was a trained forensic pathologist, a medical subspecialty involving deaths in

criminal and other legal investigations. He still believes a Dallas autopsy "would have been free of any perceptions of outside influence."

The JAMA accounts amount to an unqualified endorsement of the Warren Commission conclusion that Kennedy was killed by Lee Harvey Oswald alone. They also address several loose ends that have perplexed and inspired conspiracy theorists for years. For example:

Humes and Boswell say they removed the president's body, wrapped in sheets, from the same bronze casket it had been placed in at Parkland. Reports that the remains arrived in a body bag are "absolutely false," according to Humes.

Boswell said that he was told Bethesda was chosen for the autopsy at Jacqueline Kennedy's request "because her husband had been a Navy man."

Neither Humes nor Boswell appeared at yesterday's news conference, and Lundberg said they do not intend to give any more interviews.

Staff writer David Von Drehle contributed to this report from New York.

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Director Gates says release is "small fraction of what we hold" on 1963 killing.

The Justice Department maintains the bill is "constitutionally flawed," objects to the idea of a court-appointed review board and contends the reasons stipulated for nondisclosure are too narrow. Deputy Assistant Attorney General David G. Leitch said yesterday that the Justice Department was willing to work with the committee to produce an acceptable bill, but confirmed the department also is drafting an executive order as a possible alternative.

Other witnesses, such as James H. Lesar, head of the nonprofit Assassinations Archives and Research Center, said legislation was essential and the Justice Department's restrictive standards would do "devastating damage to the ideal of full disclosure."

The CIA's collection of records pertaining to the assassination consists of 250,000 to 300,000 pages, including 33,000 on Oswald—most of them received from other agencies—that were compiled after the assassination. FBI Director William S. Sessions said the bureau's holdings at last count totaled 499,431 pages, including more than 263,000 that have yet to be processed, much less released.

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Congressional Roundup

Gates Orders Release of Secret C.I.A. File on Oswald Before '63

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, May 12 — Robert M. Gates, the Director of Central Intelligence, said today that he had ordered the release within days of a secret C.I.A. file on Lee Harvey Oswald's activities before the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in 1963.

Mr. Gates's announcement of the declassification of the 110-page file represented a first trickle in what could soon be a vast river of assassination documents to be made public soon. He testified on legislation to create a review board to speed the disclosure of the estimated one million documents on the case still in the Government's hands.

Mr. Gates announced the voluntary release of the Oswald material at a Senate hearing on the legislation, a Congressional effort to respond to public skepticism about the official accounts of the Kennedy assassination and revived interest in the matter spawned by the recent film "J.F.K."

The movie, which challenged a central finding of a Presidential review commission convened after the killing, has been criticized by historians as distorting the facts. The commission concluded that Oswald acted alone when he shot Kennedy in a Dallas motorcade on Nov. 22, 1963.

The material in the Oswald file relates to a shadowy period that has been the subject of decades of conjecture by historians and conspiracy theorists. During that period the former Marine Corps radar technician familiar with U-2 spy flights defected to the Soviet Union in 1959, redefected to the United States in 1962 and traveled to Mexico City in September 1963.

For Mr. Gates, the disclosure of the file seemed to represent an effort to align his agency on the side of full disclosure on a highly popular issue even though the C.I.A. has for years ferociously guarded even the most trivial secrets in its files.

The file, which was made available to The Associated Press today, consists of 33 documents, 11 of them originating in the C.I.A.

James Lesar, a lawyer who operates the Assassination Archive and Research Center in Washington, said that based on a cursory reading of the documents the material has been available to researchers. Many of the documents are F.B.I. memos sent to the C.I.A. and may be among those already released by the F.B.I. in response to Freedom of Information requests.

Mr. Gates and William S. Sessions, the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, who also testified today before the Governmental Affairs Committee, embraced the goal of opening the records. But they warned that the powers the legislation would grant the review board encroached on executive branch prerogatives, like the authority to protect classified information.

DAVID JOHNSTON

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Date 13 MAY 1992

CIA papers show Oswald was targeted

By Tom Squitieri
USA TODAY

CIA documents released Tuesday confirm that federal agents tracked Lee Harvey Oswald for three years before he assassinated President John Kennedy in 1963.

CIA Director Robert Gates pledged to make public this week a 33-document file on Oswald's life before the assassination in order to help clear the agency of suspicion it had a hand in Kennedy's murder.

Gates provided a copy of the documents to the Senate Government Affairs Committee, which then made a copy available to The Associated Press.

Testifying before the committee, Gates said if Congress fails to pass legislation to unseal the JFK files, the CIA will examine its classified documents and issue its own report.

"I am determined, personally, to make public or to expose ... every relevant scrap of paper in the CIA's possession in the hope of helping to dispel this corrosive suspicion."

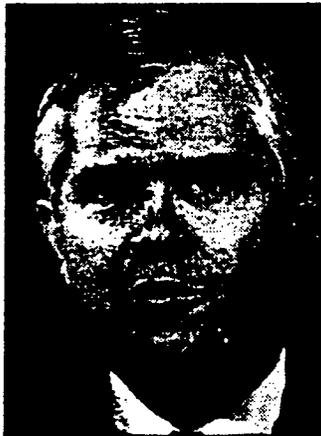
The Warren Commission in 1964 found that Oswald acted alone in shooting Kennedy from a perch in the Dallas School Book Depository on November 22, 1963. The defunct House Assassinations Committee said in its 1979 report that evidence indicated there was a second gunman.

Conspiracy theorists believe the CIA, FBI, organized crime and rogue elements had a role in the murder.

Congress is considering creating a five-member panel to decide which files should be made public. The president could veto release of any document that might compromise national security.

In a voice choked with emotion, Gates recalled how Kennedy's call to public service motivated him and how, as a college student in Virginia, he drove to Washington to watch Kennedy's funeral procession.

"With or without the legisla-



By Dean Curtis, USA TODAY

GATES: Says Kennedy's call to public service inspired him

tion, I intend to proceed," Gates said. "I owe that much to his memory."

The CIA data shows the agency's interest in Oswald was piqued by his defection to the Soviet Union in 1959.

The agency monitored his activities after he returned to the USA in 1962, including a visit to Mexico City that, conspiracy theorists believe, Oswald took to meet with others plotting to kill Kennedy.

Information collected by the CIA after the shooting — about 33,000 pages — will still be held by the agency.

FBI Director William Sessions reversed an earlier agency position and supported the release of classified Kennedy documents. Also:

► Deputy Assistant Attorney General David Leitch said the White House is considering issuing an executive order that would unseal some executive-branch agencies' assassination documents.

Committee Chairman Sen. John Glenn, D-Ohio, said that move was an attempt to derail the congressional legislation.

► Rep. Louis Stokes, D-Ohio, head of the House Assassinations Committee, said "telephone intercepts" on calls from organized crime figures about mob plots to kill Kennedy will be released.

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Date 13 May 1992 _____

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CIA Documents Portray Oswald as Fearful of Prison

By JOHN DIAMOND

Associated Press Writer

Date 13 MAY 1992

WASHINGTON (AP) - Newly declassified CIA documents on the Kennedy assassination portray Lee Harvey Oswald as an arrogant defector who came home from the Soviet Union in 1961 only when assured he wouldn't be imprisoned.

The 110-page Oswald file containing documents collected before the Nov. 22, 1963, assassination of President John F. Kennedy illustrate the government's intense interest in defectors and uphold the picture of Oswald as an aloof and abrasive ideologue.

The strange biography of Oswald, identified by the Warren Commission as the lone gunman who killed Kennedy, has long been a cottage industry for assassination aficionados.

Among the many questions surrounding his life are whether his pro-Communist contacts were a motive in the shooting; how was he able to return to the United States so easily after defecting and marrying a Soviet woman; was he a U.S. government agent who got mixed up in a plot to kill the president?

Part of the CIA file includes communiques between the State Department and the U.S. Embassy in Moscow in 1961 when Oswald, two years after defecting to the Soviet Union, announced he wanted to return home.

Oswald demanded "full guarantees that I shall not, under any circumstances, be prosecuted for any act pertaining to this case." The State Department gave no guarantees but told Oswald, a former Marine, that there appeared to be no impending prosecution.

CIA Director Robert Gates, who turned over the file to the Senate Government Affairs Committee on Tuesday, said the documents represented the beginning of a concerted agency effort to allow public access to the 300,000-page Oswald file. He said they will be open to public review at the National Archives within a matter of days.

"I believe that maximum disclosure will discredit the theory that CIA had anything to do with the murder of John F. Kennedy," Gates told the committee.

But one assassination expert isn't so sure the Oswald file contains anything new that hasn't already been obtained through Freedom of Information Act lawsuits.

"At first glance, it looks pretty familiar," said attorney James Lesar, director of the private Assassination Archives and Research Center. The CIA and other Bush administration agencies, Lesar said, "are making a public relations gesture to show how open they are."

Lesar said the CIA file does touch on areas of interest to assassination researchers.

An October 1963 CIA memo discusses the visit to the Soviet embassy in Mexico City of a man identifying himself as "Lee Oswald." It describes the person as being 6 feet tall with an athletic build, not a description that matched Oswald's slight

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physique.

The question of whether someone was posing as Oswald in a contact with Soviet officials so close to the assassination is matter of keen interest to assassination scholars.

"There is a lot of interest in whether Oswald was part of a defector's program," Lesar said. "There were other Americans in the military service who defected and the suggestion has been that this may have been part of an infiltration campaign."

Tuesday's hearing was on legislation to release assassination material. Gates and FBI Director William Sessions both said they supported such a goal, but they raised numerous objections to the proposed legislation. Most of their objections concerned the right of the president to control the release of executive branch documents.

The legislation would establish a judicially appointed review board that would have the power to review and release assassination documents. The president would be allowed to veto the release of any document determined to be a threat to national security.

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CIA gives senators Oswald file

Data to be made public 'any day'

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CIA documents on Lee Harvey Oswald show that government agents used informants and face-to-face interviews to track the shadowy defector off and on for three years leading up to President Kennedy's assassination.

The 110-page file, given to a Senate committee yesterday and made available to the Associated Press, comprises all the CIA documents collected before the Nov. 22, 1963, assassination in Dallas. CIA Director Robert Gates told the Senate Government Affairs Committee that the file will be available to the public "any day now."

In a hearing on legislation to allow the release of thousands of assassination-related documents, Mr. Gates said he wants to clear the CIA of "this corrosive suspicion" that agency operatives were involved in Kennedy's assassination.

The file, which Mr. Gates brought with him to the hearing, consists of 33 documents, 11 of them originating in the CIA. They concern Oswald's defection to the Soviet Union in 1959 and his activities after returning to the United States in 1961.

James Lesar, a lawyer who operates the Assassination Archive and Research Center, said, based on a quick perusal, that the material has been available to researchers. Many of the documents are FBI memos sent to the CIA and may be among those already released by the FBI in response to Freedom of Information Act requests.

The documents show what appears to be a mild government interest in Oswald beginning with his defection and extending up to his mysterious visit to the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City a month before the assassination.

Documents from the U.S. Embassy in Moscow describe Oswald as arrogant and demanding, first in renouncing his U.S. citizenship and then in seeking it back two years later. One embassy document sent to the State Department notes that Oswald was worried that if he returned to the United States he would be prosecuted and jailed for defecting.

The State Department gave no guarantees but told Oswald there appeared to be no prosecution impending.

Several documents mention Oswald's service in the Marines in the late 1950s and his posting at an air base in Japan. There is no mention in these papers that the base was being used by U-2 spy planes.

An October 1963 CIA memo discusses the visit to the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City. It describes the person who identified himself as "Lee Oswald" as being 6 feet tall with an athletic build, not a description that matched Oswald's slight physique.

The question of whether someone was posing as Oswald in a contact with Soviet officials so close to the assassination is a matter of keen interest to assassination scholars.

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Date 13 MAY 1992

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CIA Director Robert Gates

After Oswald was identified as the assassin, government files expanded rapidly. The CIA has about

33,000 pages relating to Oswald and up to 300,000 pages of material dealing with the assassination. Mr. Gates said a CIA historical review panel will gradually work through the other documents and approve the release of most.

Mr. Gates and FBI Director William Sessions said they both support the goal of releasing assassination material. But they raised numerous objections to the proposed legislation. Most of the objections concern the right of the president to control the release of executive branch documents.

Deputy Assistant Attorney General David Leitch confirmed under questioning that the Bush administration is working on an executive order directing federal agencies to declassify and release Kennedy assassination documents.

Sen. David Boren, Oklahoma Democrat and chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, said that the bill should still pass regardless of what Mr. Bush orders.

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Date 2 April 1992

Jack Valenti Blasts Oliver Stone and 'JFK'

NEW YORK (AP) - Jack Valenti, president of the Motion Picture Association of America and a former top aide to President Lyndon Johnson, has denounced the film "JFK" as a hoax and a smear, a newspaper reported.

Valenti also said the Oliver Stone film that opened in December was "pure fiction" rivaling Nazi propaganda, The New York Times reported Thursday.

"I waited to speak out because I didn't want to do anything which might affect this picture's theatrical release or the Oscar balloting," Valenti was quoted as saying. The movie received two technical awards at Monday night's Academy Award ceremonies.

Valenti said his comments were personal and not connected to his responsibilities in the movie industry.

Valenti said Stone's film was a "monstrous charade" based on the "hallucinatory bleatings of an author named Jim Garrison, a discredited former district attorney in New Orleans."

The movie implies that Johnson was waiting in the wings to take over and was part of a conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy.

"Does any sane human being truly believe that President Johnson, the Warren Commission members, law enforcement officers, CIA, FBI assorted thugs, weirdos, Frisbee throwers, all conspired together as plotters in Garrison's wacky sightings?" Valenti asked.

"And then for almost 29 years nothing leaked? But you have to believe it if you think well of any part of this accusatory lunacy."

Valenti said many young people leave theaters "convinced they have been witness to the truth."

In a 7-page statement and an interview, Valenti called the movie a "hoax" and a "smear," The Times said.

"In much the same way, young German boys and girls in 1941 were mesmerized by Leni Reifenstahl's 'Triumph of the Will' in which Adolf Hitler was depicted as a newborn god," Valenti said.

Stone told the Times he respected Valenti's loyalty to Johnson but found "his emotional diatribe off the mark."

"The overwhelming majority of Americans ... agree with the central thesis of my film: that President Kennedy was killed by a conspiracy which included people in the government," Stone said.

Surgeon tells secrets on JFK wounds, LBJ call

By Hugh Aynesworth
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

FORT WORTH, Texas — A Fort Worth surgeon, who says he operated on Lee Harvey Oswald, claims Lyndon Johnson phoned him during the operation to make sure Oswald made a confession.

Dr. Charles Crenshaw, whose claims are discounted by some experts on the assassination, also contends President Kennedy was hit in the head and the throat by bullets from the front.

Mr. Crenshaw has caused a free-for-all among TV shows vying to air the story told in his book, "JFK: Conspiracy of Silence," to be published next week by Penguin/USA.

A spokesman for "Now It Can Be Told," a syndicated interview show hosted by Geraldo Rivera, says "it's certain" it will air the story today. One source said the show got the rights through a loophole.

ABC's "20/20," originally promised exclusive rights by Penguin/USA, will give a reduced report Friday.

Few, however, questioned Mr. Crenshaw's veracity despite reservations by those on the scene at the time of the Kennedy assassination in 1963.

"I can't believe that could have happened [the call from LBJ] without me being informed of it or hearing about it afterward," said Steve Landregan, acting administrator of Parkland Hospital at the time.

"That's the kind of thing that would have been talked about all over the hospital. I never heard an inkling of anything like that."

"How much money is he going to make out of this?" queried an ex-Parkland doctor, who refused comment. "I just better not get involved."

Dr. Ron Jones, involved in both surgery attempts, said he didn't see Mr. Crenshaw present either time and doubted LBJ called the hospital.

"I would have thought that in gen-

eral we would have known if the president had called and made an inquiry," he said.

Dr. Robert M. McClelland, another surgeon, laughed when told of the assertion about the LBJ call: "It's the first I've heard about it."

Mr. Crenshaw's critics noted that his co-author, Gary Shaw, is a director of the Assassination Research Center in Dallas. This buff's group received \$80,000 from Oliver Stone to help create his less-than-factual movie, "JFK."

There is no doubt Mr. Crenshaw was present in the operating rooms, but some observers contend his role was so minimal that his long-secret revelations seem suspect.

According to a "20/20" promo, Mr. Crenshaw says he never spoke out because he feared for his career. For years he was chairman of the surgery department of Fort Worth's John Peter Smith Hospital. He says he is now semiretired.

He says he helped place Kennedy in the casket. "I wanted to know and remember this for the rest of my life," he said. "And the rest of my life I will always know he was shot from the front."

"The head wound," he adds, "was in the parietal, occipital area and part of the temporal. It was a huge, blown-out hole. Therefore I know the

bullet had to have come from the front."

Mr. Crenshaw's view that Kennedy was hit in the throat and head from the front is original, though others once believed the throat wound — enlarged by the insertion of a endotracheal tube before most arrived in the operating room — was an entry wound.

Mr. Crenshaw asserts Johnson in his call asked him to relay "to the operating surgeon, the senior man ... tell him I want a deathbed statement from the assassin."

Neither the nurse he claims answered the phone nor "senior" surgeon Dr. Tom Shires ever mentioned a call from LBJ.

On neither TV show is Mr. Crenshaw asked to whom he mentioned the LBJ call or if he got a statement from Oswald.

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Valenti's Anti-'JFK' Tirade

■ In a tirade against the movie "JFK," Jack Valenti, president of the Motion Picture Association of America and a former aide to President Lyndon Johnson, called the film a "smear" and a "monstrous charade," the New York Times reports today.

"I waited to speak out because I didn't want to do anything which might affect this picture's theatrical release or the Oscar balloting," Valenti was quoted as saying. The film, directed by Oliver Stone, received only two technical awards at Monday night's Academy Award ceremonies.

"Does any sane human being truly believe that President Johnson, the Warren Commission members, law enforcement officers, CIA, FBI, assorted thugs, weirdos, Frisbee throwers, all conspired together as plotters in [author Jim] Garrison's wacky sightings?" Valenti asked.

Stone told the Times he respected Valenti's loyalty to LBJ but "The overwhelming majority of Americans . . . agree with the central thesis of my film: that President Kennedy was killed by a conspiracy which included people in the government."

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Date 2 April 1992

Valenti Blasts 'JFK' as Nazi-esque Propaganda

LOS ANGELES (AP) - Jack Valenti, a top film industry official and former aide to President Johnson, has issued a stinging attack on Oliver Stone's film "JFK," comparing it to Nazi propaganda and calling it a "hoax."

In a seven-page statement that Valenti said was unconnected to his role as president of the Motion Picture Association of America, he tackled Stone's depiction of a Kennedy assassination conspiracy that included then-Vice President Johnson.

Valenti, whose association provides movie ratings, dismissed the film's allegation of a coverup as "quackery" plucked from a "slag heap of loony theories" in a book by former New Orleans prosecutor Jim Garrison.

He called the film a "hoax" and a "smear" and said: "In much the same way, young German boys and girls in 1941 were mesmerized by Leni Reifenstahl's 'Triumph of the Will' in which Adolf Hitler was depicted as a newborn god."

Garrison, played by Kevin Costner in "JFK," became obsessed with trying to prove that Kennedy was killed by conspirators, not by Lee Harvey Oswald acting alone.

"Does any sane human being truly believe that President Johnson, the Warren Commission members, law enforcement officers, CIA, FBI, White House aides, and assorted thugs, weirdos, frisbee throwers, all conspired together as plotters in Garrison's wacky sightings?" Valenti asked.

"And then for almost 29 years nothing leaked? But you have to believe it if you think well of any part of this accusatory lunacy," he said.

Valenti dismissed Garrison's book as "hallucinatory bleatings."

Valenti told The New York Times, in a story published Thursday, that he withheld his criticism of "JFK" until after the Academy Awards on Monday. "JFK" had received eight nominations, including best picture.

"I waited to speak out because I didn't want to do anything which might affect this picture's theatrical release or the Oscar balloting," Valenti said.

The movie, which had been nominated for best picture, won two Oscars for technical achievement.

Stone told the Times he respected Valenti's loyalty to Johnson but found "his emotional diatribe off the mark."

"The overwhelming majority of Americans ... agree with the central thesis of my film: that President Kennedy was killed by a conspiracy which included people in the government," Stone said.

A call seeking comment from Garrison was not returned.

Karl Malden, president of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, was away filming and was unavailable for comment, an assistant said.

Valenti also called the film a "monstrous charade" about Johnson that ranks with Soviet revisionist history.

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"Mr. Stone hurls at Lyndon Johnson one of the deadliest slurs one human can lay on another, a charge of accessory to and an accomplice in a cover-up of the murder of the president of the United States," Valenti said.

Valenti, who became a special assistant to Johnson immediately following Kennedy's assassination Nov. 22, 1963, in Dallas, cited an intimate knowledge of White House affairs in rebutting the film's portrayal of events.

He also defended the members of the Warren Commission. "To indict these men of honor, along with Lyndon Johnson, is vicious, cruel and false."

CIA Opens Pre-Dallas File on Oswald

Mexico City Trip Noted but Little New Offered on JFK Assassination

By George Lardner Jr.
Washington Post Staff Writer

The file the CIA compiled on Lee Harvey Oswald before the assassination of President John F. Kennedy was made public yesterday, but it offered slim pickings for long-time students of the case.

It also served as a reminder that the file would have been thicker if other CIA documents pertaining to Oswald from that period had not been apparently destroyed in what the agency once described as a matter of routine housekeeping.

Oswald, a former Marine who defected to the Soviet Union in 1959, was arrested in Dallas shortly after the assassination and was charged with the president's murder early the next morning. In a finding that has been hotly disputed over the years, the Warren Commission concluded that he killed the president, acting alone.

The 34 documents released yesterday dealt with Oswald's defection to Moscow and his activities following his return to the United States in 1962. Most of the records came from other agencies, such as the FBI and the State Department, and almost all of them had been made public before. Only 12 documents, including four of newspaper clippings, originated at the CIA.

"It all looks familiar," said James H. Lesar, a Washington attorney who heads the nonprofit Assassination Archives and Research Center here. "I suppose without checking page by page, I can't say there's nothing new, but a preliminary review doesn't seem to show anything."

The CIA opened a personality file—known as a 201 file—on Oswald on Dec. 9, 1960. That record, which consisted initially of a single page and was listed under the name "Lee Henry Oswald," noted he had "defected to the USSR in October 1959."

The 14-month delay between Oswald's defection and the opening of the file has never been satisfactorily explained. The House Select Committee on Assassinations, which looked into that issue in the late 1970s, pointed out that the CIA had been alerted to the defection by a State Department cable dated Oct. 31, 1959.

"At least three other communications of a confidential nature that gave more detail on the Oswald case were sent to the CIA in the same period," the committee said in its final report. Moreover, CIA officials told the committee that the substance of the Oct. 31, 1959, cable was sufficient to warrant the opening of a 201 file.

That, in turn, raised the question of where the cable and other messages pertaining to Oswald had been sent and stored at the CIA prior to the opening of the 201 file. The CIA told the committee there was no way of tracing the paths these documents took, explaining "because document dissemination records of relatively low national security significance are retained for only a 5-year period, they were no longer in existence for the years 1959-63."

Seven of the 12 CIA documents released yesterday were made public before as part of the files of the Warren Commission. Most of the

new records dealt with an old subject: Oswald's trip to Mexico City in the fall of 1963.

The CIA station there told headquarters in an Oct. 9, 1963, cable that an American male speaking broken Russian, who "said his name was Lee Oswald," visited the Soviet Embassy on Sept. 28 and spoke with Valeriy V. Kostikov, who was subsequently identified as a member of the KGB's "wet affairs," or assassinations, section. The cable also said the CIA station in Mexico City had photos, presumably taken in routine surveillance of the Soviet Embassy, of a 6-foot-tall man around 35 years old with athletic build and a receding hairline and suggested the photos were of Oswald.

One of the photos—subsequent Freedom of Information Act litigation showed there were 16 of them, according to Lesar—was made public by the Warren Commission. It was not of Oswald, and no one has ever figured out who was pictured in it. The discrepancy stirred still unresolved debate over whether the photo was of a man who did speak with Kostikov and pretended to be Oswald or whether Oswald himself visited the embassy but the CIA mistook a photo of someone else as his picture.

The CIA provided the partially censored records first to the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee and then to the National Archives, which made them public. But officials at the Archives were apparently chagrined at the agency's failure to give them the unexpurgated originals.

Staff researcher Robert Thomason contributed to this report.

CIA papers show Oswald was targeted

By Tom Squitieri
USA TODAY

CIA documents released Tuesday confirm that federal agents tracked Lee Harvey Oswald for three years before he assassinated President John Kennedy in 1963.

CIA Director Robert Gates pledged to make public this week a 33-document file on Oswald's life before the assassination in order to help clear the agency of suspicion it had a hand in Kennedy's murder.

Gates provided a copy of the documents to the Senate Government Affairs Committee, which then made a copy available to The Associated Press.

Testifying before the committee, Gates said if Congress fails to pass legislation to unseal the JFK files, the CIA will examine its classified documents and issue its own report.

"I am determined, personally, to make public or to expose ... every relevant scrap of paper in the CIA's possession in the hope of helping to dispel this corrosive suspicion."

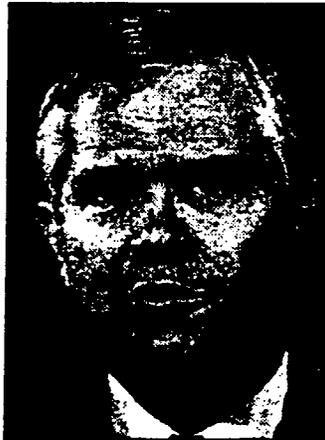
The Warren Commission in 1964 found that Oswald acted alone in shooting Kennedy from a perch in the Dallas School Book Depository on November 22, 1963. The defunct House Assassinations Committee said in its 1979 report that evidence indicated there was a second gunman.

Conspiracy theorists believe the CIA, FBI, organized crime and rogue elements had a role in the murder.

Congress is considering creating a five-member panel to decide which files should be made public. The president could veto release of any document that might compromise national security.

In a voice choked with emotion, Gates recalled how Kennedy's call to public service motivated him and how, as a college student in Virginia, he drove to Washington to watch Kennedy's funeral procession.

"With or without the legisla-



By Dean Curtis, USA TODAY

GATES: Says Kennedy's call to public service inspired him

tion, I intend to proceed," Gates said. "I owe that much to his memory."

The CIA data shows the agency's interest in Oswald was piqued by his defection to the Soviet Union in 1959.

The agency monitored his activities after he returned to the USA in 1962, including a visit to Mexico City that, conspiracy theorists believe, Oswald took to meet with others plotting to kill Kennedy.

Information collected by the CIA after the shooting — about 33,000 pages — will still be held by the agency.

FBI Director William Sessions reversed an earlier agency position and supported the release of classified Kennedy documents. Also:

► Deputy Assistant Attorney General David Leitch said the White House is considering issuing an executive order that would unseal some executive-branch agencies' assassination documents.

Committee Chairman Sen. John Glenn, D-Ohio, said that move was an attempt to derail the congressional legislation.

► Rep. Louis Stokes, D-Ohio, head of the House Assassinations Committee, said "telephone intercepts" on calls from organized crime figures about mob plots to kill Kennedy will be released.

The Washington Post _____
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Date 13 May 1992

The Washington Post _____
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Date 13 MAY 1992 _____

The CIA is releasing with "minimal deletions" a 110-page file compiled on Lee Harvey Oswald before the assassination of President Kennedy, agency director Robert Gates told Congress. The Associated Press said the file shows how agents used informants and interviews to track Oswald in the three years prior to the 1963 assassination.

CIA to release file on Oswald to rebuff conspiracy theorists

By John Diamond
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The CIA is releasing with "minimal deletions" a 110-page file compiled on Lee Harvey Oswald before the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, agency director Robert M. Gates told Congress yesterday.

Mr. Gates said he wants to clear the CIA of "this corrosive suspicion" that agency operatives were involved in the Nov. 22, 1963, assassination. The sooner the full records into the slaying are released, Mr. Gates said, the better the chances the agency will clear its name.

"The only thing more horrifying to me than the assassination itself is the insidious, pervasive notion that elements of my own government, including this agency, had something to do with it," Mr. Gates told the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee.

He recalled driving to Washington as a college student and watching the Kennedy funeral procession.

In a hearing on legislation to allow the release of thousands of assassination-related documents, Mr. Gates said a CIA historical review group is preparing to send the Oswald file "with quite minimal deletions" to the National Archives. That should occur "any day now," he said.

The 110-page file, which Mr. Gates brought with him to the hearing, consists of 33 documents, 11 of them originating in the CIA. They concern Oswald's defection to the Soviet Union in 1959 and his activities after returning to the United States in 1961.

After Oswald was identified as the assassin, government files expanded rapidly. The CIA has about

33,000 pages relating to Oswald and up to 300,000 pages of material dealing with the assassination. Mr. Gates said the in-house review panel will gradually work through the other documents and approve the release of most.

"I believe that maximum disclosure will discredit the theory that CIA had anything to do with the murder of John F. Kennedy," Mr. Gates said.

Mr. Gates and FBI Director William S. Sessions said they both support the goal of releasing assassination material. But both raised numerous objections to the proposed legislation. Most of the objections concern the right of the president to control the release of executive branch documents.

Mr. Gates and Mr. Sessions said the quest for openness should not be used to make public the names of government informants or medical and professional evaluations of private people.

Deputy Assistant Attorney General David Leitch confirmed under questioning that the Bush administration is working on an executive order directing federal agencies to declassify and release Kennedy assassination documents.

Sen. John H. Glenn, D-Ohio, the committee chairman, said the move sounded like an attempt to pre-empt legislation on the assassination documents. Lawmakers involved in the drafting of the bill, including Sen. David L. Boren, D-Okla., chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, and Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., a former legal counsel to the Warren Commission, which investigated the assassination, said that the bill should still pass regardless of what President Bush orders.

The legislation would establish a judicially-appointed review board that would have the power to review and release assassination documents. The president would be allowed to veto the release of any document determined to be a threat to national security.

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The Washington Post _____
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USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
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Reuter _____
N.Y. Post P. 9
Date 13 MAY 1992

CIA releases pre-JFK Oswald file

By MEL JUFFE

The CIA yesterday released copies of a 110-page file compiled on Lee Harvey Oswald before the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

CIA director Robert Gates told a Senate hearing that the formerly top-secret dossier was complete, except for "quite minimal deletions."

The National Archives began making plans to print and distribute copies today.

Experts on the assassination said they expected few surprises, since the CIA had turned Oswald's pre-assassination

data over to investigators of the Warren Commission and the House Special Committee on Assassinations, which investigated the Kennedy's murder.

An angry Gates said he hoped the documents' release would clear the CIA of "this corrosive suspicion" that the agency was involved in the Nov. 22, 1963, assassination.

"The only thing more horrifying to me than the assassination itself is the insidious, pervasive notion that elements of my own government, including this agency, had something to do with it," Gates told the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee.

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Date 3 April 1992

VALENTI'S 'JFK' RETORT: Jack Valenti, head of the Motion Picture Association of America, has some less-than-laudatory words for one of his industry's high-profile products, Oliver Stone's *JFK*. "A monstrous charade about President Johnson that ranks right up there with the best work of old-guard Soviet revisionist historians," says Valenti, a former aide to Johnson. Valenti said he waited until after the Oscars to issue his seven-page statement, "because I didn't want to do anything which might affect the movie's theatrical release." Stone told the *New York Times* he found Valenti's "emotional diatribe off the mark."

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BALTIMORE SUN F-1
Date **3 APRIL 1992**

Valenti calls 'JFK' 'a hoax' and rejects conspiracy theory

Associated Press

Los Angeles

Jack Valenti, a top film industry official and former aide to President Johnson, has issued a stinging attack on Oliver Stone's film "JFK," calling it a "hoax."

In a statement Mr. Valenti said was unconnected to his role as president of the Motion Picture Association of America, he attacked Mr. Stone's depiction of a Kennedy assassination conspiracy that included then-Vice President Johnson.

Mr. Valenti, whose association provides movie ratings, dismissed the film's allegation of a coverup as "quackery" plucked from a "slag heap of loony theories" in a book by former prosecutor Jim Garrison.

"Does any sane human being truly believe that President Johnson, the Warren Commission members, law enforcement officers, CIA, FBI, White House aides and assorted thugs, weirdos, . . . all conspired together as plotters in Garrison's wacky sightings?" Mr. Valenti asked.

Mr. Valenti told the *New York Times*, he withheld his criticism until after the Academy Awards on Monday. "JFK" had received eight nominations, including best picture, and won two Oscars for technical achievement.

Mr. Stone called the comments an "emotional diatribe off the mark."

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 Associated Press _____
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Date 3 April 1992

JFK autopsy disputed

Texas doctor: No doubt about frontal wound

By Tom Squitieri
USA TODAY

Charles Crenshaw, an attending physician for the dying John F. Kennedy, takes issue with the official story and says there is little medical doubt the president's fatal head wound came from the front.

Concern for his career prompted his silence for almost 29 years, Crenshaw says. He writes about his experience in *JFK: Conspiracy of Silence*, which goes on sale today.

"We placed him (Kennedy) in a coffin. But before we did, I looked at the wound again. I wanted to know and remember this for the rest of my life. And the rest of my life I will always know he was shot from the front," Crenshaw, 59, says on ABC's *20/20*, airing tonight.

Crenshaw was a third-year resident at Parkland Hospital in Dallas when Kennedy was brought there on Nov. 22, 1963. He was part of the emergency room trauma team for both Kennedy and assassin Lee Harvey Oswald.

The Warren Commission concluded Oswald acted alone, firing fatal shots from behind Kennedy and his motorcade.



ABC
CRENSHAW: Wounds clearly showed 2, maybe 3, gunmen

"The evidence is conclusive that President Kennedy was shot from the rear. The autopsy surgeons said that, and it has been confirmed by numerous reviews of the X-rays and photographs," said Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa. — who served as an assistant Warren Commission counsel — Thursday.

But Crenshaw said one bullet entered Kennedy's head just above the right eyebrow. He said a shot to JFK's throat also came from the front, but the hole was tampered with so it resembled an exit wound.

His statement supports the 1989 contention of Robert McClelland, a senior hospital surgeon, that Kennedy was shot from the front and that conflicting autopsy evidence

was "an attempt to cover up."

All notes from the Kennedy autopsy performed at Bethesda naval hospital in suburban Washington have disappeared.

The Warren panel never interviewed Crenshaw, now chief of surgery at John Peter Smith Hospital in Fort Worth.

The issue of additional shooters centers on how many bullets were fired at Kennedy.

The Warren Commission said three: one which missed the car, a second "magic bullet" going through JFK's back, throat and then hitting Texas Gov. John Connally, and a third blasting Kennedy's head.

Conspiracy advocates and some officials maintain at least four bullets were fired:

► Connally has maintained he was not struck by any of the bullets that hit the president — a fact noted by the CIA in an April 1, 1967, memo.

► A Dec. 16, 1963, Defense Department memo notes that one bullet "is not accounted for at all" in the initial reports of the shooting and that evidence suggests the president had an entry in the front of the neck.

Meanwhile, a group has asked a Los Angeles grand jury to reopen the police investigation of Robert Kennedy's 1968 assassination. The group, led by RFK aide Paul Schrader — also wounded in the attack — claims more than one gunman was involved in the slaying of President Kennedy's brother.

NEWSMAKERS

JFK autopsy disputed

Texas doctor: No doubt about frontal wound

By Tom Squitieri 03.04.92
USA TODAY

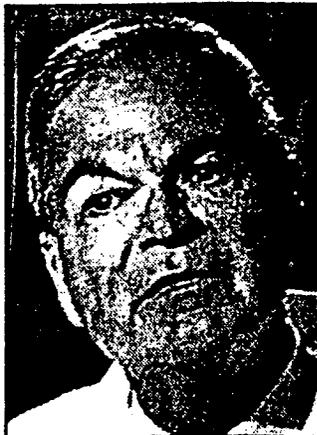
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PHIL. INQ A-10
Date 3 APRIL 1992

JFK shot from front, says trauma physician

ASSOCIATED PRESS

DALLAS — A doctor who was part of Parkland Memorial Hospital's trauma team when President John F. Kennedy died there says Kennedy's fatal head wound had to come from the front, rather than from behind as the Warren Commission concluded.

But two other doctors yesterday questioned whether their former colleague knew enough about the wounds to challenge official conclusions.

Charles Crenshaw, whose book, *JFK: Conspiracy of Silence*, is to be published next week, talked about the assassination publicly for the first time in televised interviews this week.

Crenshaw was a third-year resident at Parkland when Kennedy was brought there on Nov. 22, 1963.

In an interview to be aired tonight on ABC's 20-20 program, Crenshaw describes how he looked at Kennedy's wounds before "we placed him in the coffin."

"I wanted to know and remember this for the rest of my life," he says. "And the rest of my life I will always know that he was shot from the front."

The Warren Commission, which investigated Kennedy's assassination, concluded the President was killed by Lee Harvey Oswald, who the commission said fired the fatal shot from behind Kennedy's passing motorcade.

The commission never called Crenshaw to testify, and the doctor said he was afraid to speak out before.

"If I had gone against all the other people and created this bomb, I'd have been a pariah of our medical community," said Crenshaw, 59, now the semiretired head of surgery at John Peter Smith Hospital in Fort Worth. "I could have lost my job."

Yesterday, Kenneth E. Salyer, a doctor who said he worked with Crenshaw in the emergency room, suggested the frenzied emergency room was not the place to make a sound conclusion about the wounds.

Salyer declined to criticize Crenshaw for his assertion about Kennedy's wound, but said: "Anybody can make an observation and make a statement about it, and some people have a little more expertise than others. ... He is trained as a general surgeon."

Another physician, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said: "We were trying to keep the President alive. We weren't trying to establish the forensic facts of the case."

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 Date 3 APRIL 1992

Group wants a new look into RFK assassination

REUTERS

LOS ANGELES — A Los Angeles group alleged yesterday that the police investigation of Robert F. Kennedy's assassination was seriously flawed and called for a grand jury probe.

The group, which is said to include *JFK* film director Oliver Stone, accused Los Angeles police of covering up or destroying evidence that could cast doubt on Sirhan Sirhan's role as the only gunman in Kennedy's 1968 assassination.

The group, which also includes actor Martin Sheen, author Norman Mailer and the American Civil Liberties Union, called for a reopening of the investigation.

"They deliberately destroyed evidence in order to maintain the one-gun theory," Paul Schrade told reporters. Schrade, who said he was wounded in the slaying, was a member of Kennedy's California presi-

dential campaign.

A Los Angeles police spokesman said the department had nothing to hide and was always willing to help any grand jury.

William Bailey, a former FBI agent who said he was involved in the investigation of Kennedy's murder, estimated that at least 11 bullets were fired in the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles when the candidate was shot.

"You could probably make a case for 14 [bullets]," Bailey told reporters.

The police reported that only eight bullets were fired, all from Sirhan's gun.

Asked why the group had waited so long to seek an inquiry, Los Angeles lawyer Marilyn Barret said that police files from the case had not been opened to the public until 1968 and that it had taken several years to finish the preparatory work.

Valenti Calls 'J. F. K.' 'Hoax' and 'Smear'

By BERNARD WEINRAUB

Special to The New York Times

HOLLYWOOD, April 1 — In a highly unusual and angry statement, Jack Valenti, the president and chief executive of the Motion Picture Association of America and a former top aide to President Lyndon B. Johnson, denounced the film "J. F. K." today as a "hoax," a "smear" and "pure fiction" that rivaled the Nazi propaganda films of Leni Reifenstahl.

Mr. Valenti, a film industry spokesman and lobbyist in Washington, has kept silent until now about the Oliver Stone film, which opened in December. He emphasized that he was making a personal statement that "has no connection to my responsibilities in the movie industry."

"Indeed, I waited to speak out because I didn't want to do anything which might affect this picture's theatrical release or the Oscar balloting," he said.

In the seven-page statement, Mr. Valenti said Mr. Stone's film was "a monstrous charade" based on "the hallucinatory bleatings of an author named Jim Garrison, a discredited former district attorney in New Orleans." The movie implies that President Johnson was part of a Government conspiracy in the assassination of President Kennedy.

"Does any sane human being truly

believe that President Johnson, the Warren Commission members, law-enforcement officers, C.I.A., F.B.I., assorted thugs, weirdos, Frisbee throwers, all conspired together as plotters in Garrison's wacky sightings?" he asked. "And then for almost 29 years nothing leaked? But you have to believe it if you think well of any part of this accusatory lunacy."

"In scene after scene Mr. Stone plasters together the half true and the totally false and from that he manufactures the plausible," Mr. Valenti said in his statement. "No wonder that many young people, gripped by the movie, leave the theater convinced they have been witness to the truth."

"In much the same way, young German boys and girls in 1941 were mesmerized by Leni Reifenstahl's 'Triumph of the Will,' in which Adolf Hitler was depicted as a newborn God," he said. "Both 'J. F. K.' and 'Triumph of the Will' are equally a propaganda masterpiece and equally a hoax. Mr. Stone and Leni Reifenstahl have another genetic linkage: neither of them carried a disclaimer on their film that its contents were mostly pure fiction."

What makes the statement especially unusual is that as head of the Motion Picture Association since 1966, the Texas-born, Harvard-educated Mr. Valenti has sought to keep his employers, the movie studios, as happy as possible without stirring controversy despite his high profile in Hollywood and Washington. One of those employers, Warner Brothers, produced "J. F. K.," which has raised considerable debate over its blend of speculation, fiction and fact.

In a telephone interview, Mr. Valenti said he delayed attacking the movie because of his job. "Warner Brothers is a member of my association, and I owe them a fidelity to my responsibility," he said. "While this is a personal statement, I did not want to do anything that, in the slightest way, would affect this picture's journey and its chances of winning an Academy Award." The movie, which won Academy Awards on Monday night for cinematography and editing, has grossed more than \$68 mil-

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The Washington Times _____
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Date 2 APRIL 1992

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The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
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The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times 92 _____
USA Today _____
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Date 7 May 1992

Evidence weighs against a conspiracy in Kennedy killing

Allow me to offer a further response to the critics of the Warren Commission findings on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

As a former counterintelligence professional with more than 32 years of experience with the FBI and CIA, I do not believe that any police or intelligence organization would have adopted Lee Harvey Oswald's planned use of the Texas School Book Depository as a base of operation.

There are too many uncertainties:

■ The parade route could have been changed at the last moment.

■ The speed of the presidential escorts might have varied, making success more difficult if not impossible.

■ No adequate escape route was devised. Lee Harvey Oswald was on his own, quickly apprehended and faced intensive interrogation.

Unfortunately, Oswald succeeded and unwittingly gave birth to the spate of conspiratorial theories that still abound, spearheaded by members of the Com-

mittee To Investigate Assassinations, who lump the assassinations of President Kennedy, Robert Kennedy and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King together in the same conspiratorial stewpan.

In my own official contacts with the Warren Commission, I was most impressed by the high quality of the staff and the impartiality of its drive to ascertain the facts.

ARTHUR E. DOOLEY
Arlington

The Washington Post _____
 The New York Times _____
 The Los Angeles Times _____
 The Wall Street Journal _____
 The Washington Times _____
 USA Today _____
 Associated Press _____
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Date 28 April 1992

Justice Department Objects To JFK Documents Resolution
 With AP Photo WX17
 By JOHN DIAMOND
 Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) - Legislation to release Kennedy assassination documents hit a snag Tuesday as the Justice Department, reversing Bush administration policy, came out "strongly" against the proposal.

Assistant Attorney General W. Lee Rawls said in a letter made public Tuesday that the proposed House-Senate resolution "would severely encroach upon the president's constitutional authority to protect confidential information."

Rawls also raised national security concerns, saying that language clearing the way for the release of CIA and FBI documents could endanger intelligence methods and sources. And he said the bill would leave law enforcement and executive branch deliberations open to public scrutiny.

"We strongly object to the resolution in its current form," Rawls said. If passed, the Justice Department "would give serious consideration to recommending presidential disapproval."

Until Tuesday, top ranking Bush administration officials - including CIA Director Robert Gates and FBI chief William Sessions - had supported the legislation, saying they would cooperate in making public thousands of secret documents relating to the 1963 slaying of President Kennedy.

Rawls said the Justice Department is "sympathetic to the concerns" of the public about the assassination and is drafting an alternative version. But the department's bill would broaden the president's power to withhold information and increase his control over the review process.

Rep. John Conyers, D-Mich., chairman of the House Government Operations Committee, said the letter from Rawls arrived Monday evening, the night before the committee's legislation and national security subcommittee met to consider the bill. He said Justice Department officials declined to attend the hearing. Gates was also invited but could not attend.

"I have a tremendous concern that we not compromise the bill in order to get something that is veto-proof," said Rep. Christopher Shays, R-Conn. "It's really hard for me to imagine what national security issues are at stake."

Under the proposed resolution, the federal appeals court in Washington would appoint a five-member citizen board to review and decide on the release of assassination documents. In cases involving executive agencies such as the FBI or CIA, the president could refuse to release material but only on narrow privacy or national security grounds.

"The thrust of the legislation is to release everything that's releasable," said Rep. Louis Stokes, D-Ohio, coauthor of the bill and former chairman of the House assassinations committee of the late 1970s.

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The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
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Date 28 April 1992

''JFK'' DIRECTOR URGES RELEASE OF FILES ON KENNEDY ASSASSINATION

By Robert Green

WASHINGTON, April 28, Reuter - Oliver Stone, director of the controversial film ''JFK,'' urged Congress on Tuesday to make public secret government material on President John F. Kennedy's assassination to resolve conspiracy theories.

Stone told a House of Representatives Government Operations Committee hearing most Americans do not believe Kennedy was killed by Lee Harvey Oswald acting alone, as a commission chaired by Chief Justice Earl Warren found in 1964.

''The murder of President John F. Kennedy remains, after nearly 30 years, the crime of the century and for the overwhelming majority of Americans it is the unsolved crime of the century,'' Stone said. ''Now more than three in four, according to all recent samplings of public opinion, think some conspiracy was involved.''

Stone endorsed a resolution to release the material after review by an independent five-member panel, but the Justice Department said the measure was unacceptable.

''The resolution's disclosure requirements for executive branch information would severely encroach upon the president's constitutional authority to protect confidential information,'' Assistant Attorney General W. Lee Rawls said in a letter to the committee on Monday.

Stone's movie, released last year, raised the theories that Kennedy's assassination was planned by a small group of U.S. intelligence officials and covered up by a broader group of American leaders including Lyndon Johnson, who became president when Kennedy was killed in Dallas on November 22, 1963.

The movie led to calls in Congress and elsewhere to release all the information about the murder.

''JFK'' was based on a book by former New Orleans district attorney Jim Garrison, who conducted his own investigation of the assassination, and other sources. It has been criticised for mixing fiction and fact.

''We tried to be responsible,'' Stone said, adding that he had at least two sources for all information in the film.

The resolution would make public material from the Warren Commission, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Justice Department and other government agencies and from a select House committee that investigated the assassination from 1977 to 1979.

Much of the material is being kept secret for up to 50 years under current law.

The House select committee concluded there was a probability of conspiracy because of evidence that indicated other shots were fired at Kennedy than those by Oswald.

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Date 25 April 1992

Measure to Release Kennedy Documents Prompts Call for Same in King Case

By CHRISTOPHER SULLIVAN

Associated Press Writer

A measure in Congress to unseal government-held documents in President Kennedy's assassination has brought calls to open thousands of files in the killing of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Researchers long dissatisfied with the investigation of the King case want the congressional resolution amended to include material on the shooting in 1968, five years after Kennedy was shot.

"The failure to include it sends two messages, both of them insalubrious," said James Lesar of the Assassination Archive and Research Center in Washington.

"First, unless Oliver Stone makes a movie, Congress doesn't release files; and second, that the assassination of a black political leader is somehow less important than the assassination of a white one."

Stone, whose "JFK" put a spotlight on sealed Kennedy documents, is among those scheduled to testify Tuesday when the House opens hearings on the resolution. He planned to call for inclusion of the King files, said Jane Rusconi, a research coordinator for the movie.

In a speech last month introducing the resolution, Sen. David Boren, said questions about King's assassination remain.

"The timely release of all documents of historic value and importance helps assure that even the most secret programs of our government will be operated in accordance with basic American values," the Oklahoma Democrat said.

The resolution would set up an independent, five-member board to review and release files on the Kennedy assassination, including FBI and CIA material, and documents amassed by the Warren Commission and two later congressional investigations.

Agencies holding the documents could object on grounds their release could compromise intelligence sources or methods, invade personal privacy or harm foreign relations.

The 848 boxes of material on both the Kennedy and King killings, files gathered in a House Select Committee on Assassinations probe in the late 1970s, are under seal until the year 2029.

"I don't think we should have to wait ... to get at this stuff," said Philip Melanson, author of "The Murkin Conspiracy," a sharp critique of how King's killing was investigated.

Some investigators believe the mysteries surrounding King's assassination are more likely to be solved than those in the Kennedy case.

"Unlike the JFK case, this has known, living, identifiable individuals who, while you can't say they're co-conspirators, are in the shadows and may have something to say," said Melanson, a

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professor at Southeastern Massachusetts University.

The House assassinations panel concluded in 1978 that conspiracies may have been behind both killings, contrary to previous investigations that blamed only Lee Harvey Oswald for Kennedy's slaying and James Earl Ray for King's.

The House panel laid out a number of leads in the King case that it said should be investigated further. The committee said a St. Louis-based conspiracy of racial bigots may have been involved.

Independent researchers have raised many other questions, noting, for example, a witness report that a man fleeing the scene of a shooting dumped a rifle and Ray's small overnight bag.

Ray pleaded guilty but has since denied killing King, saying he was a dupe of a mysterious middleman named "Raoul." He said he left his overnight bag in his flophouse room across a Memphis street from where King was slain.

Rep. Louis Stokes, the Ohio Democrat who headed the House select committee, said earlier this year that he had no idea why the committee's leads weren't followed up. He said he stood by the committee's findings. He is a sponsor of the JFK resolution.

Previous efforts to unseal the select committee files failed and made no distinction between Kennedy and King material.

Asked why the King files weren't included in the current resolution, Stokes said Friday:

"The JFK movie stirred up a storm with reference to the sealing of the files relative to JFK. People from all over the country contacted me regarding getting those files open. I don't have a single letter requesting opening of the Martin Luther King files."

A King family spokesman said Saturday that King's widow, Coretta Scott King, was unavailable for comment.

CIA Report On Openness Classified Secret

By George Lardner Jr.
Washington Post Staff Writer

When CIA Director Robert M. Gates publicly promised "a greater openness and sense of public responsibility" at the intelligence agency a few weeks ago, he was acting on the recommendations of a special task force that had studied ways to make the agency more visible, credible and responsive to the outside world.

But when the 15-page "Task Force Report on Greater CIA Openness" was submitted to Gates Dec. 20, it was stamped "Secret," a classification formally reserved for information "the unauthorized disclosure of which reasonably could be expected to cause serious damage to the national security."

CIA officials refused to disclose any of the report, even in the wake of Gates's Feb. 21 speech. "An internal document," an agency spokesman told a reporter that day. "We determined [it] must be withheld in its entirety," the agency informed the American Civil Liberties Union's Center for National Security Studies about two weeks later in response to a request under the Freedom of Information Act.

Now, after public scolding at a House hearing, Gates has approved declassification of almost the entire report as well as his five-page decision directive, dated Jan. 6, and sent them to one of the scolders, Rep. Lee H. Hamilton (D-Ind.), former chairman of the House intelligence committee.

Much of the task force's report simply mirrors, albeit with more detail, what Gates announced publicly: initiatives to declassify historical records, greater accessibility to the press on the part of agency officials, expanded contacts with public audiences and colleges and universities. It is difficult to discern anything that would do "serious damage to the national security."

There are, however, some items that might be considered embarrassing. For instance, the report shows that despite agreement within the agency and outside it on the need for more openness, the CIA's public affairs office, expected to be a mainstay of the new look, is being forced to cut its budget by a third.

"We recognize that a program of increased openness will require commitment of additional resources, not only for PAO [the public affairs office] but for other parts of the agency," the report said.

The task force, headed by then-CIA public affairs director Joseph DeTrani, also touted what it saw as the accomplishments of the agency's existing media program.

"PAO now has relationships with reporters from every major wire service, newspaper, news weekly and television network in the nation," the report said. "This has helped us turn some 'intelligence failure' stories into 'intelligence success' stories, and it has contributed to the accuracy of countless others.

"In many instances," the report continued, "we have persuaded reporters to postpone, change, hold or even scrap stories that could have adversely affected national security interests or jeopardized sources and methods."

Gates rejected some of the task force recommendations, including a proposal that the public affairs office give unclassified background briefings to reporters "when there is a major international event" such as the Persian Gulf War.

The CIA director said he was "inclined to support" a plan to declassify records on specific events, "particularly those which are repeatedly the subject of false allegations, such as the 1948 Italian elections, 1953 Iranian coup, 1954 Guatemalan

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The New York Times _____
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Date 23 April 1992

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coup, 1958 Indonesian coup and the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962."

The CIA had been adamant about keeping the report under wraps as recently as March 18, when the new PAO director, Gary Foster, was questioned about it by House Government Operations Committee Chairman John Conyers Jr. (D-Mich.) at a hearing on government secrecy.

Foster said that people whose names are classified were mentioned in the report. He said some portions might not be classified, "but taken out of context, they wouldn't mean much to anybody." As it turned out, only the names were excised from the report and decision directive that Gates sent Hamilton April 13, the same day a column Hamilton wrote on "The Cost of Too Much Secrecy" appeared in The Washington Post.

"It's a step in the right direction for the agency and I applaud that," Hamilton said. But Leslie Harris, Washington ACLU legislative director, called it "disappointing."

"It reads like an internal discussion of how we can get people to like us," Harris said. "It doesn't call for a

serious look at what secrecy is really necessary now that the Cold War is over."

The names of the members of the task force, including DeTrani, were deleted. And so were the names of journalists, businessmen, academics and others who, the report said, "shared their views on CIA openness with the task force."

That list presumably includes Washington Post executive editor Leonard Downie Jr. and other Post editors whom DeTrani consulted last fall on a visit to the newspaper.

CIA spokesman Peter Earnest said the names of those the CIA consulted were blacked out under FOIA provisions permitting secrecy for "deliberative" materials and for the agency's "sources and methods."

"I'm not a CIA 'source,'" Downie said. "They visited us quite openly. We wanted to tell them how they could tell us more about what they do. It sounded as if they were interested in being more open and in finding ways of making the CIA more accessible to us so we could cover them better."

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

Gary E. Foster
Director
Public and Agency Information
(703) 482-7778

16 April 1992

To CIA Employees

The DCI spoke in Michigan on 13 April at the invitation of the Detroit Economic Club. Attached is the text of his speech, followed by a transcript of the questions asked from the audience and the DCI's replies.


Gary E. Foster

Attachments

1990, the Intelligence Community watched the developments in Iraq, watched the deployment of the troops, and provided high-quality tactical warning of Iraqi military intentions. I would say that the Iraqi experience is typical of most of our intelligence experiences. You are rarely going to get it 100 percent right. Part of the problem that we face is that in many instances in this world, we are trying to forecast the actions of individuals who themselves don't know what they're going to do yet. I might add that I'm prepared to put our record in assessing the actions and economic performance of foreigners up against most commentators here in this country about what's going on in this country ((laughter)). But I think that we do have some extraordinarily fine capabilities. You can rest assured that you will hear of every single one of our failures. There are many successes that somehow we have managed to keep a secret.

Q: Are the CIA's files relating to the assassination of President Kennedy going to be made public? Why were they not made public earlier? How do you feel about them being placed in the public's eye?

DCI: We have a major initiative underway at CIA -- in a post-Cold War, post-Soviet world -- to be more open about what we do. We think there is a lot we can tell you about the intelligence process -- how it works, who is involved, what the rules are that guide it, and, to a limited extent, how we do. As part of this openness effort, we have changed the rules for declassification of historical documents just within the past two months. And I have created a new unit within CIA, comprised of people who are looking at these documents from the standpoint of historians, with a view toward the declassification of as many historical documents as we can release. We will review all documents that are 30 years old or

older. We will declassify all of the national intelligence estimates that we did on the Soviet Union up until 10 years ago. And as we look at documents that are 30 years old and older, we will look, as a first priority, at the JFK papers, the Bay of Pigs, and the Cuban missile crisis. Now these JFK papers that are in the possession of CIA were all looked at, or made available, to both the Warren Commission and the House Select Committee on Assassinations. Some of these documents belong to other agencies, and we cannot unilaterally release those. Some of these documents have been sequestered by the House Assassinations Committee. But within that framework, as I have indicated before, we are fully prepared to do our part in making available all of these papers associated with the assassination of President Kennedy. We will take only those actions necessary to protect intelligence sources, but I think we can lean very far forward in making these documents available, and we are prepared to do so.

Q: There's a lot of interest in the covert activities of the CIA. To the extent that security will permit you to comment, could you describe briefly the nature and extent of those activities?

DCI: I think it's important first to differentiate between covert action and clandestine activities in our world. Most of the information that we acquire from human sources we acquire clandestinely. We go out and we recruit agents, and they tell us what's going on. That is the clandestine acquisition of information. That kind of acquisition of information -- and the analysis of that information as well as information we get from other sources such as satellites -- accounts for roughly, probably 97 or 98 percent of the resources of our Agency.

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LETTER FROM TEXAS

Date 16 April 1992

Interest in JFK Keeps Archivist Busy

DALLAS

In her first 18 months as city archivist, Cindy Smolovik spent much of her time presiding in a quiet corner of City Hall over century-old City Council records, property deeds and old maps. Now she is among the must-see people and places on the assassination tour of Dallas.

Smolovik was catapulted to fame and doubled work shifts in January when the Dallas Police Department released its files on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. As their sole custodian, she is the one to see for a look at the 11,406 pages of documents.

"People are clamoring to see them," Smolovik said. Despite her increased workload, she sees some benefit to her increased popularity: "Before this, no one even knew we had an archives."

Ironically, Smolovik said, most of the files contain little not already reported publicly. "A lot of this is on file in the National Archives," she said, adding that copies were sent to the Warren Commission for its investigation into the shooting of Kennedy Nov. 22, 1963.

That has not stopped the crowds. Smolovik's time is booked as far as two months ahead, and she sees about eight people a day, more than came all last year. Visitors are allowed to bring only a pencil and paper, and Smolovik makes photocopies if asked.

The documents, collected by police after the assassination, include intelligence reports, photographs, the homicide report and telegrams sent to accused assassin Lee Harvey Oswald with such short, simple messages as "You filthy tramp" and "You are a dead man."

There are photographs of witnesses, of the Texas School Book Depository building from which Oswald is believed to have shot Kennedy as the president's motorcade passed, and of other places and people tied to the assassination.

Witness affidavits recount stories told many times in books, movies and television specials—Oswald's former landlady who saw him board the bus she was riding after the shooting, bystanders who said they saw Oswald shoot police officer J.D. Tippit after the assassination, motorcade watchers who saw the president shot.

Smolovik's visitors range from reporters to high school students working on term papers. Most viewers,

though, are professional and amateur assassination researchers, she said, who have flocked here in abundance for years.

Last November, more than 400 aficionados converged here to trade and debate Kennedy assassination theories at a convention sponsored by the JFK Assassination Information Research Center here. Last spring, Oliver Stone's controversial movie, "JFK," was filmed here.

Although 75 percent of Dallas residents did not live here in November 1963, the city still squirms uncomfortably in the infamy acquired with the death of the popular young president.

Last winter, planners of the International Special Olympics put the city atop their list of sites for the 1995 event. But increased attention to the assassination prompted the group to drop Dallas, with officials expressing concern that the location might prove uncomfortable for the group's founders, the Kennedy family.

Even longtime Dallasites who felt that they had found peace years after the tragedy were startled when Stone arrived to make his movie and redid the exterior of the School Book Depository. The building had stood empty and deteriorating before Dallas County bought and renovated it for office space in 1978.

Three years ago, the Dallas County Historical Foundation opened an exhibit, The Sixth Floor, in that area of the building, which had remained closed long after renovation. Stone's restoration, though short-lived, was for many Dallasites an eerie look back.

Smolovik is preparing for the long term. When she noticed that the JFK documents were deteriorating after only a few weeks of increased handling, she photocopied all 11,406 pages, and visitors must make a specific request to see an original.

Yet another related movie, "Ruby," has opened, members of Congress have called for release of all records pertaining to the assassination, and polls indicate that more Americans than ever—75 percent—do not believe that Oswald acted alone.

Many doubters think that the truth lies undetected in closed files. Smolovik said she expects no end soon to the increased interest.

—Elizabeth Hudson

'JFK Conspiracy' offers new voices

By Susan Bickelhaupt
GLOBE STAFF

So, you thought you'd heard every fact and every theory about the assassination of President Kennedy? Think again.

A live, two-hour program called "The JFK Conspiracy" claims to tie together existing evidence with new revelations to offer an explanation of John F. Kennedy's death. It will air live from Washington, D.C., at 8 tonight on Channel 64 (WNAC), the Fox affiliate in Providence, and on WPIX out of New York. In Boston, WFXT (Ch. 25) will air the show next Tuesday, April 21, at 10 p.m. In all, more than 150 stations nationwide are running the show.

The program's producers say that, though it does include reenactments, the show will not combine fiction with its facts and will not speculate. It will rely solely on documented facts, they say, to establish its contention that Lee Harvey Oswald did not act alone.

James Earl Jones will narrate and moderate the two hours. The lineup of in-studio and taped guests includes Oliver Stone, director of the movie "JFK"; Victor Marchetti, who was the executive assistant to the deputy director of the CIA during the '60s, and is now an agency critic and writer; Col. Fletcher Prouty, the retired US Air Force chief of special operations who was portrayed as "Mr. X" in "JFK"; Dr. Cyril Wecht, a forensic pathologist hired by the House Select Committee on Assassinations to determine the direction of the bullets that struck Kennedy; and two eyewitnesses. By the end of the show, said executive producer

George Paige, "Any rational thinking person will conclude that this was a conspiracy."

Paige said he was sent material several months ago by a New York writer, Dan Christian, who for the past 12 years had been compiling information on the assassination. Christian shared with Paige a document that had been drawn up by a Dallas prosecutor based on confidential information from federal agents.

"We had only heard speculation, but that document opened my eyes and piqued my curiosity," Paige said. "Then we started doing more research."

The show was meant to be completely independent from the Academy-award nominated "JFK," but as it turned out there were connections. One is that Stone, who will appear on the show, shared some research with Paige. The other, said Paige, is that the attention paid to "JFK" made some people feel more comfortable about coming forward.

Among the guests will be two eyewitnesses to the assassination who were interviewed by the House Select Committee and had been ordered not to talk about their testimony. They are breaking that order to speak out, as is forensics expert Wecht, who maintains that it is clear that Kennedy was shot from in front and not from behind.

"He was told and threatened not to reveal anything he saw," Paige said.

Paige said he believed for a long time that Oswald was the lone assassin, but not anymore. After tonight's show, he said, he expects more people to agree with him.

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
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Reuter _____

Boston Globe p. 26
Date 15 April 1992

Did J.F.K. Really Commit Suicide?

Newsweek

Time P. 64

U.S. News & World Report

Date 13 APRIL 1992

Of course not, but it's about the only theory that doesn't turn up in a fusillade of best-selling books on the assassination

By DAVID ELLIS

So you think America has lost its creative edge, that its citizens can no longer devise innovative solutions to what ails the country and the world? Well, stroll through your local bookstore and think again: no fewer than seven new books on the Kennedy assassination have recently been published. Several have made it to the best-seller lists, where they joined two paperbacks: *On the Trail of the Assassins* by Jim Garrison and *Crossfire* by Jim Marrs, both of which inspired Oliver Stone's film *JFK*.

The latest addition to the shelf is *JFK: Conspiracy of Silence* (Signet; 205 pages; \$4.99 paper) by Charles A. Crenshaw. It is the first account written by a doctor who was part of the Parkland Memorial Hospital trauma team that tried to save Kennedy and, two days later, his assassin (sorry, alleged assassin), Lee Harvey Oswald.

Crenshaw says that until now, he and his colleagues refused to "rock the boat" by publicly disputing the Warren Commission's finding that Oswald was the lone assassin. But he is adamant that the head wound suffered by the President came from the front of the motorcade, thus making it impossible for Oswald to have murdered Kennedy from a sixth-floor rear perch. The physician says it is clear that "someone had tampered with the body" during its extralegal transfer from Texas to the autopsy room at Bethesda Naval Hospital in Maryland, presumably to support a single-gunman scenario. The injuries shown on autopsy photos, Crenshaw says, "are not the same wounds I saw at Parkland."

That theory isn't new, but Crenshaw's account contains a vivid anecdote that will no doubt be seized upon by those who argue that there was a government conspiracy. When Oswald, shot by Jack Ruby, wound up at Parkland, Crenshaw noted the presence of a heavysset armed man in the operating room. Moments later came a telephone call from Washington. On the other end of the line, according to Crenshaw, was Lyndon Johnson, who demand-

ed that the medical team obtain "a deathbed confession from the accused assassin," to be recorded by the mysterious agent. When Oswald died minutes later, the man disappeared.

In *The Texas Connection* (Texas Connection Co.; 323 pages; \$21.95), Craig I. Zirbel claims to provide the "final answer" on Johnson's role. Zirbel says Johnson probably organized the murder with a group of right-wing oilmen as a shortcut to the Oval Office. The author provides no persuasive evidence to support the allegation, relying instead on the argument that Johnson was a murderer because he had the turpitude to behave like one. Zirbel ticks off Johnson's egomania, drinking habits and philandering as examples of his "violations of moral rules." The author dismisses opposing speculations of why Kennedy was killed, saying the Mafia did not participate in the assassination because "for a hit to have been made against the President, [Chicago Mob boss] Sam Giancana would have had to consent."

Surprise. *Double Cross* (Warner Books; 366 pages; \$22.95), written by Giancana's brother Chuck and godson Sam, says that is exactly what happened. Chuck Giancana played the role of underworld *Candide*, charting his brother's rise as the most powerful Mob boss west of the Mississippi and taking note of his snuff work for the CIA. "It's beautiful," says Sam. "The Outfit even has the same enemies as the government."

But the government soon became the enemy. Although Giancana boasted that he fixed votes, funneled thousands into the 1960 Democratic campaign and picked up girlfriend Judith Campbell from J.F.K., the Kennedys forgot their debts to the Mob. In 1961 New Orleans crime boss Carlos Marcello was deported in Robert Kennedy's crackdown on organized crime. An outraged Giancana began monitoring the private lives of both brothers. Along the way, the book says, Marilyn Monroe was murdered in a Mafia attempt

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to blow the lid off her affair with R.F.K. When that didn't play out, Giancana spent a year planning the assassination, which was carried out by a loose association of professional killers. According to the book, Oswald was a former spy sacrificed by anti-Kennedy elements in the CIA to take the fall. Then Ruby, Giancana's "Dallas representative," dispatched Oswald. The CIA turns up in Mark Lane's *Plausible Denial* (Thunder's Mouth Press; 393 pages; \$22.95), which claims Watergate burglar E. Howard Hunt played a key role in killing J.F.K., who intended to disband the spy agency.

For readers who want just a little spice added to the Oswald-did-it scenario, there is Bonar Menninger's *Mortal Error* (St. Martin's Press; 361 pages; \$23.95). According to Howard Donahue, a Baltimore ballistics expert, Kennedy was killed by a Secret Service agent in the presidential motorcade who accidentally discharged his AR-15 rifle. But Donahue says that Kennedy probably would have died anyway from the neck wound inflicted by Oswald. Among those unconvinced by this scenario is Menninger's publisher, who added a 17-page disclaimer to the book. ■

If Kennedy Had Lived

By WALTER ISAACSON

What if . . . ? For historians the question can be a great parlor game, launching all-night arguments over what would have happened if, say, Hitler had got the Bomb or Pickett had not charged at Gettysburg. Nowadays one of the hottest questions involves speculating about what John Kennedy would have done in Vietnam had he not been killed in November 1963.

John M. Newman, a former U.S. Army major who teaches history at the University of Maryland, has entered this fray with a meticulously documented argument that Kennedy planned to withdraw from Vietnam had he been re-elected in 1964. Earnest yet overheated, grounded in footnotes yet prone to flights of conspiratorial conjecture, *JFK and Vietnam* (Warner Books; 506 pages; \$22.95) reads like a strange hybrid between a doctoral dissertation and the rough draft of an Oliver Stone screenplay, and with reason: it was, indeed, Newman's dissertation, and Stone did use it as a basis for his movie *JFK*.

The U.S. military, Newman argues, provided overly optimistic battlefield assessments after American advisers were sent to Vietnam in the early 1960s. These were designed to encourage Kennedy to continue America's commitment there. Newman contends that Kennedy eventually became aware of this deception, but he went along because it served his own secret purpose: to withdraw some of the U.S. advisers under the guise that the war was going so well that they were no longer necessary. The "elaborate deception," Newman writes, "was originally designed to forestall Kennedy from a precipitous withdrawal, but he was now using it—judo style—to justify just that."

Newman shores up his thesis with citations from newly declassified documents. He is particularly impressive in detailing the evolution of a national security action memo—NSAM 263—that Kennedy signed in October 1963, ordering the withdrawal of 1,000 of the 16,000 or so American advisers in Vietnam. Newman also documents the subtle changes in policy that occurred after Kennedy was shot less than two months later. The 1,000-man withdrawal went ahead, but instead of full units departing, it "was turned into a meaningless paper drill" by counting individual soldiers who were due for rotation. In addition, four days after taking office, Lyndon Johnson signed a new memo—NSAM 273—that Newman shows was subtly but significantly different from the version Kennedy had been contemplating: among other things, it allowed U.S. involvement in covert actions against North Vietnam.

Newman's thesis would have been both powerful and persuasive had he stuck to the facts he uncovered in the documents. Instead he indulges in unnecessary speculation and theorizing. Every instance in which Kennedy whispers to a dovish Senator or makes a public remark about his desire to be extricated from Vietnam is taken as evidence of his secret intentions; the far more frequent examples of his invoking the domino theory and denouncing the idea of withdrawal are construed as public posturing, designed to deceive conservatives in

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order to get re-elected. In fact, it would be more logical to interpret Kennedy's contradictory pronouncements at their two-face value: like most charming politicians, he tended to tell people what they wanted to hear. Even he may not have known what he really planned to do in Vietnam after the election.

In the end, a good historian must realize that the "What if . . . ?" game is indeed just that—a game. Statesmen must be judged by what they did, not by what they might have done. By this measure, Kennedy comes out well in Newman's reckoning. He was not deceived by the falsely optimistic reports on Vietnam. Despite Pentagon pressure, he did not send in combat troops. And one of his last acts was ordering the withdrawal of a significant number of advisers. Newman has done a good job of making this record clearer; he would have done even better had he left it at that. ■

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today D2 _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 13 April 1992 _____

Kissinger, not in line for 'JFK'

Quotables ... Henry Kissinger: "I absolutely refuse to see the film *JFK*. I don't deny there may have been some plot involved, and that more than one person may have been shooting in Dealey Plaza that day, but to stretch that into saying the vice president and the CIA and the FBI were somehow involved in this is going beyond the bounds of decency. I condemn that thought out of hand. As for President Kennedy himself, I thought him on the way to becoming a great president. His capacity for growth and his leadership abilities far outweighed some early mistakes."

If Kennedy Had Lived

By WALTER ISAACSON

What if . . . ? For historians the question can be a great parlor game, launching all-night arguments over what would have happened if, say, Hitler had got the Bomb or Pickett had not charged at Gettysburg. Nowadays one of the hottest questions involves speculating about what John Kennedy would have done in Vietnam had he not been killed in November 1963.

John M. Newman, a former U.S. Army major who teaches history at the University of Maryland, has entered this fray with a meticulously documented argument that Kennedy planned to withdraw from Vietnam had he been re-elected in 1964. Earnest yet overheated, grounded in footnotes yet prone to flights of conspiratorial conjecture, *JFK and Vietnam* (Warner Books: 506 pages; \$22.95) reads like a strange hybrid between a doctoral dissertation and the rough draft of an Oliver Stone screenplay, and with reason: it was, indeed. Newman's dissertation, and Stone did use it as a basis for his movie *JFK*.

The U.S. military, Newman argues, provided overly optimistic battlefield assessments after American advisers were sent to Vietnam in the early 1960s. These were designed to encourage Kennedy to continue America's commitment there. Newman contends that Kennedy eventually became aware of this deception, but he went along because it served his own secret purpose: to withdraw some of the U.S. advisers under the guise that the war was going so well that they were no longer necessary. The "elaborate deception," Newman writes, "was originally designed to forestall Kennedy from a precipitous withdrawal, but he was now using it—judo style—to justify just that."

Newman shores up his thesis with citations from newly declassified documents. He is particularly impressive in detailing the evolution of a national security action memo—NSAM 263—that Kennedy signed in October 1963, ordering the withdrawal of 1,000 of the 16,000 or so American advisers in Vietnam. Newman also documents the subtle changes in policy that occurred after Kennedy was shot less than two months later. The 1,000-man withdrawal went ahead, but instead of full units departing, it "was turned into a meaningless paper drill" by counting individual soldiers who were due for rotation. In addition, four days after taking office, Lyndon Johnson signed a new memo—NSAM 273—that Newman shows was subtly but significantly different from the version Kennedy had been contemplating: among other things, it allowed U.S. involvement in covert actions against North Vietnam.

Newman's thesis would have been both powerful and persuasive had he stuck to the facts he uncovered in the documents. Instead he indulges in unnecessary speculation and theorizing. Every instance in which Kennedy whispers to a dovish Senator or makes a public remark about his desire to be extricated from Vietnam is taken as evidence of his secret intentions; the far more frequent examples of his invoking the domino theory and denouncing the idea of withdrawal are construed as public posturing, designed to deceive conservatives in

Newsweek _____
Time P. 64
U.S. News & World Report _____

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order to get re-elected. In fact, it would be more logical to interpret Kennedy's contradictory pronouncements at their two-face value: like most charming politicians, he tended to tell people what they wanted to hear. Even he may not have known what he really planned to do in Vietnam after the election.

In the end, a good historian must realize that the "What if . . .?" game is indeed just that—a game. Statesmen must be judged by what they did, not by what they might have done. By this measure, Kennedy comes out well in Newman's reckoning. He was not deceived by the falsely optimistic reports on Vietnam. Despite Pentagon pressure, he did not send in combat troops. And one of his last acts was ordering the withdrawal of a significant number of advisers. Newman has done a good job of making this record clearer: he would have done even better had he left it at that. ■

At the last minute the committee produced purported acoustical experts who testified there could have been another shot fired by a gunman from the grassy knoll that missed not only all the occupants of the presidential limousine but the car itself. A committee majority concluded there was a "high probability two gunmen fired at President Kennedy." Even then the committee didn't buy Stone's theory that the second guy actually killed Kennedy.

Subsequently a committee on ballistic acoustics established by the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences, National Academy of Engineering and Institute of Medicine unanimously dismissed as inaccurate the claim that there were two gunmen and more than three shots.

The acoustic impulses attributed to additional gunshots, the NRC committee concluded, were actually recorded about one minute after Kennedy had been shot and the motorcade instructed by police to speed on to the hospital.

The possibility that there are any deep, dark revelations beyond confirmation of enormous incompetence hidden in the House committee storage boxes is as remote as the Himalayas.

There may be, however, a tiny bit more meat in the files of the Warren Commission.

The Warren Commission, operating in an emotional atmosphere, was highly sensitive to the political dangers inherent in exploring possible foreign involvement in motivating Oswald. And in those chill days of the Cold War covert CIA activities were sacred and rarely referred to.

Once the commission established to its satisfaction that Oswald was the sole killer it was content.

The Soviet Union appears not to have been involved. Its embassy quickly, secretly dispatched to President Johnson the KGB files on Oswald's brief sojourn in Moscow and marriage to a Russian woman. The files, according to a Johnson aide who saw them, demonstrated Oswald was not a KGB agent and, in fact, was viewed with such suspicion and distrust his activities were closely monitored.

But Oswald's connections to Cuba are suggestive. In particular, classified CIA documents might reveal more about his activities during a trip to Mexico City shortly before Kennedy's assassination, during which he is known to have been in contact with Cuban officials.

President Johnson told me he believed while Oswald acted alone he was acting at the encouragement of Cuban agents seeking to retaliate against Kennedy for CIA plots to kill Fidel Castro.

This is a far cry from the vast conspiracy wildly envisioned by Stone, or even a specific Castro-ordered hit. But Oswald was a Cuban sympathizer who may have been eager in a nutty way to please Castro. If his Cuban contacts were more substantial than previously proven, they may provide a credible motive for his act.

And giving Oswald an understandable reason for his deed would in turn help to demolish the madness unleashed by Stone about imaginary high-level Washington plots and scheming military complexes.

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 29 April 1992

Justice Department Objects to JFK Documents Release

AP Photo WX9

By JOHN DIAMOND

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) - The Justice Department, despite earlier administration hints to the contrary, is opposing legislation to release documents related to President Kennedy's assassination in 1963.

Responding to the popular movie, "JFK," television documentaries and opinion polls, House and Senate leaders of both parties want swift passage of the bill authorizing an opening of the archives.

They say the point is not to cater to any particular conspiracy theory about the murder of Kennedy, but to restore public trust in government.

Until Tuesday, the Bush administration was going along with opening the files. CIA Director Robert Gates gave a speech in February about the need for new openness in the intelligence community, and said his agency would cooperate in the release of assassination documents. FBI chief William Sessions said his agency would do the same.

Then this week, on the eve of the first congressional hearing on the legislation, the Justice Department submitted a nine-page letter detailing major objections to the proposal. Assistant Attorney General W. Lee Rawls wrote that the bill "would severely encroach upon the president's constitutional authority to protect confidential information."

Rawls also raised national security concerns, saying that language clearing the way for the release of CIA and FBI documents could endanger intelligence methods and sources.

"We strongly object to the resolution in its current form," Rawls said. If passed, he said, the Justice Department "would give serious consideration to recommending presidential disapproval."

The letter drew a chilly reaction Tuesday from Republicans and Democrats at a hearing of the House Government Operations legislation and national security subcommittee.

"I had hoped for the administration's full support and cooperation," said Chairman John Conyers, D-Mich. "But I must report that it appears that the administration is dragging its collective feet."

The ranking Republican on the panel, Rep. Frank Horton of New York, and Rep. Christopher Shays, R-Conn., said there was no good reason to block the release of 30-year-old secrets.

"It's really hard for me to imagine what national security issues are at stake," Shays said.

Under the proposed resolution, the federal appeals court in Washington would appoint a five-member citizen board to review and decide on the release of assassination documents. In cases involving executive agencies such as the FBI or CIA, the president could refuse to release material but only on narrow privacy or

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national security grounds.

"The thrust of the legislation is to release everything that's releasable," said Rep. Louis Stokes, D-Ohio, co-author of the measure and former chairman of the House committee that reviewed the Kennedy and other assassination cases in the late 1970s.

The Washington Post _____
 The New York Times D-23
 The Los Angeles Times _____
 The Wall Street Journal _____
 The Washington Times _____
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 Reuter _____

Date 29 APRIL 1992

Justice Dept. Assails Bill on Kennedy Files

WASHINGTON, April 28 (AP) — Legislation that would create a procedure for the Government's release of documents on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy hit a snag today when the Justice Department, reversing Bush Administration policy, came out "strongly" against it.

In a letter to a House committee chairman, Assistant Attorney General W. Lee Rawls said the proposed House-Senate resolution "would severely encroach upon the President's constitutional authority to protect confidential information." The letter said that if Congress passed the resolution in its current form, the Justice Department "would give serious consideration to recommending Presidential disapproval."

At issue is public disclosure, after

screening, of hundreds of sealed boxes of Congressional and executive-branch documents dealing with various Government investigations into the assassination of Kennedy, who was shot to death in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963.

Under the proposed resolution, the Federal appeals court in Washington would appoint a five-member citizens' board to review each document and, after giving consideration to concerns like individual privacy, decide whether to release it.

Mr. Rawls's letter, sent to Representative John Conyers, the Michigan Democrat who heads the House Government Operations Committee, said the constitutional authority to appoint such a board, and to oversee its work, rested with the President, not with the courts.

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
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Date 29 April 1992

Justice Dept. reneges on opening JFK files

By Tom Squitieri
USA TODAY

The Justice Department — reversing what Congress thought was a firm promise of support — Tuesday said it will oppose efforts to open sealed files on the JFK assassination.

The announcement came as a House subcommittee began hearings on legislation aimed at immediate disclosure.

"My worst fears were realized," said subcommittee chairman John Conyers, D-Mich. "It is difficult to imagine any legitimate national security reasons to keep these records secret any longer."

The 80 boxes of material are now set to be released in 2029.

Assistant Attorney General W. Lee Rawls said Justice will urge President Bush to veto the bill — he has already hinted he might — if it isn't changed to better protect intelligence methods and sources.

Justice's announcement drew quick opposition.

The advocacy group Public Citizen threatened to sue for release of almost 200 photos and X-rays of Kennedy's body. The photos are now in the National Archives.

And film director Oliver Stone, who testified at Tuesday's hearings, said, "This is typical of the stonewalling that has taken place for 30 years."

"What do they have to lose?" asked Stone, whose movie, *JFK*, spurred calls to open the

files. Among data withheld:

▶ 40 boxes of Warren Commission material.

▶ "Scattered documents" from the Secret Service.

▶ 11 boxes at Justice.

▶ Material from the CIA, Army and Navy intelligence — including some that are thought to mention Bush.

Justice Dept. objects to release of JFK papers

FROM COMBINED DISPATCHES

Legislation to release JFK assassination documents hit a snag yesterday as the Justice Department, reversing Bush administration policy, came out "strongly" against the proposal.

Assistant Attorney General W. Lee Rawls said in a letter made public yesterday that the proposed House-Senate resolution "would severely encroach upon the president's constitutional authority to protect confidential information."

Mr. Rawls also raised national security concerns, saying that language clearing the way for the release of CIA and FBI documents could endanger intelligence methods and sources. And he said the bill would leave law enforcement and executive branch deliberations open to public scrutiny.

"We strongly object to the resolution in its current form," Mr. Rawls said. If it passed, the Justice Department "would give serious consideration to recommending presidential disapproval."

Until yesterday, top-ranking administration officials — including CIA Director Robert Gates and FBI chief William Sessions — had supported the legislation, saying they would cooperate in making public thousands of secret documents related to the 1963 slaying of President Kennedy.

Mr. Rawls said the Justice Department is "sympathetic to the concerns" of the public about the assassination and is drafting an alternative version. But the department's bill would broaden the president's power to withhold information and increase his control over the review process.

Rep. John Conyers, Michigan Democrat and chairman of the House Government Operations Committee, said the letter from Mr. Rawls arrived Monday evening, the night before the committee's legislation and national security subcommittee met to consider the bill. He said Justice Department officials

declined to attend the hearing. Mr. Gates also was invited but could not attend.

"I have a tremendous concern that we not compromise the bill in order to get something that is veto-proof," said Rep. Christopher Shays, Connecticut Republican. "It's really hard for me to imagine what national security issues are at stake."

Under the proposed resolution, the federal appeals court in Washington would appoint a five-member citizen board to review and decide on the release of assassination documents. In cases involving executive agencies such as the FBI or CIA, the president could refuse to release material, but only on narrow privacy or national security grounds.

"The thrust of the legislation is to release everything that's releasable," said Rep. Louis Stokes, Ohio Democrat, who is co-author of the bill and was chairman of the House Assassinations Committee of the late 1970s. "Ultimately, everything will be released."

By opposing the legislation, the Justice Department goes up against a wave of public pressure that followed the movie "JFK." The Oliver Stone film offered a government-conspiracy theory of the assassination and sharply criticized the continued concealment of documents.

Mr. Stone, who testified at yesterday's hearing, said afterward that "the Justice Department has now set itself up against this process, as has President Bush."

He told the subcommittee that most Americans do not believe that Kennedy was killed by Lee Harvey Oswald acting alone, as a commission chaired by Chief Justice Earl Warren found in 1964.

"The murder of President John F. Kennedy remains, after nearly 30 years, the crime of the century, and for the overwhelming majority of Americans, it is the unsolved crime of the century," Mr. Stone said.

Much of the unreleased material is being kept secret for up to 50 years under current law.

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times AL6
USA Today _____
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The Washington Post _____
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The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
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Date 29 April 1992

Citizens Group Sues for Release of Kennedy Autopsy Photos

By JOHN DIAMOND
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) - A citizens group sued today for the release of about 200 autopsy photos and X-rays of slain President John F. Kennedy.

Public Citizen filed suit in U.S. District Court against the National Archives alleging that the photos have been withheld improperly from public view.

The suit was filed a day after the Justice Department said it opposed legislation calling for the release of assassination documents. The bill, which has bipartisan support, excludes the autopsy material to protect the privacy of the Kennedy family.

The National Archives has restricted access to the photos since 1966, when the Kennedys turned over the material on condition that it be kept from public view while the late president's immediate family members are alive, according to Public Citizen.

The lawsuit claims the photos are government property, and should not be subject to the restrictions of a private family.

"The photos and X-rays were taken by government personnel," said a spokesman for Public Citizen, Bob Dreyfuss. The Kennedy family restriction "was not a legal or binding provision because these were and always have been government records," he said.

Although some autopsy photos have been published in books on the 1963 assassination, most have never been released. Dreyfuss said access to the material would enable historians to clear up some questions over the source of Kennedy's wounds.

"There are charges about whether some (photos) may have been altered or doctored," said the spokesman for Public Citizen, a consumer advocacy group founded by Ralph Nader.

An assistant in the archives' media relations office said the agency's spokesman could not immediately return a call seeking comment.

The legislation calling for release of the assassination documents had drawn support from lawmakers and top administration officials - including CIA Director Robert Gates and FBI chief William Sessions. But on Tuesday the Justice Department released a letter opposing it.

Assistant Attorney General W. Lee Rawls wrote that the bill "would severely encroach upon the president's constitutional authority to protect confidential information."

Rawls also raised national security concerns, saying that language clearing the way for the release of CIA and FBI documents could endanger intelligence methods and sources.

"We strongly object to the resolution in its current form," Rawls said. If passed, he said, the Justice Department "would give serious consideration to recommending presidential disapproval."

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The letter drew a chilly reaction Tuesday from Republicans and Democrats at a hearing of the House Government Operations legislation and national security subcommittee.

"I had hoped for the administration's full support and cooperation," said Chairman John Conyers, D-Mich. "But I must report that it appears that the administration is dragging its collective feet."

The ranking Republican on the panel, Rep. Frank Horton of New York, and Rep. Christopher Shays, R-Conn., said there was no good reason to block the release of 30-year-old secrets.

"It's really hard for me to imagine what national security issues are at stake," Shays said.

Under the proposed resolution, the federal appeals court in Washington would appoint a five-member citizen board to review and decide on the release of assassination documents. In cases involving executive agencies such as the FBI or CIA, the president could refuse to release material but only on narrow privacy or national security grounds.

"The thrust of the legislation is to release everything that's releasable," said Rep. Louis Stokes, D-Ohio, coauthor of the measure and former chairman of the House committee that reviewed the Kennedy and other assassination cases in the late 1970s.

Justice Dept. resists opening of JFK files

By John Aloysius Farrell
GLOBE STAFF

WASHINGTON - The Justice Department "strongly" opposes and may urge President Bush to veto a congressional resolution that would open up secret government files on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The position was revealed at a congressional hearing yesterday in which Republicans and Democrats, conspiracy buffs and defenders of the single-assassin theory, Warren Commission staff and film director Oliver Stone put aside their differences to demand the files be opened, leaving the Bush administration as a lone potential obstruction.

"I speak for all the members of the Warren Commission staff in urging the expeditious and comprehensive disclosure of all documents," said Howard P. Willens, who served as assistant counsel to the commission that investigated the 1963 assassination and was a deputy and liaison to then-Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy.

"The stone wall must come down," said Stone, who called the department's position "repugnant."

The Justice Department issued its threat in an April 27 letter to Rep. John Conyers of Michigan, who is chairman of the House Government Operations Committee, which held yesterday's hearing.

"We strongly object to the resolution. . . . If it were presented to the president without amendment," we "would give serious consideration to recommending presidential disapproval," said W. Lee Rawls, assistant attorney general.

It was the Bush administration's first formal response. Administration officials such as the CIA director, Robert Gates, and the FBI director, William Sessions, had told individual congressmen and the press the administration would cooperate.

The Justice Department objected because the resolution would encroach upon the president's "constitutional authority," Rawls wrote. "The separation of powers requires that the president be able to withhold privileged information from the Congress as well as the public."

G. Robert Blakey, author of the resolution and the former counsel of the House Assassinations Committee, said the Justice Department's action was "captious - that means nit-picking."

In four hours of testimony, no witness predicted that the files would hold a "smoking gun." But several specialists - and even Willens - said the Warren Commission's credibility would be further undermined by release of the files.

"Nothing I have seen contradicts the Warren Commission's finding that Lee Harvey Oswald killed the president," said James Johnston, who was counsel to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, of which the late Sen. Frank Church of Idaho was chairman, when it investigated the intelligence community in 1975.

"However, the Church Committee files will show that the Warren Report was fundamentally flawed because senior intelligence officials apparently made conscious decisions to withhold substantial, material information," he said.

The secret data will raise questions about whether Oswald had accomplices, or may have been working for an intelligence agency, said Johnston. As an example, Johnston briefly sketched his own suspicion: that Oswald may have been part of a plot by Cuban intelligence operatives to shoot Kennedy before the CIA could kill Fidel Castro.

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
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Boston Globe P. 3
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Johnston told the tale of a Cuban-American drifter named Gilberto Lopez who followed Kennedy from Florida to Texas in the week before the assassination, while awaiting a mysterious "go-ahead order" from unnamed officials in Cuba. Lopez left Texas immediately after the assassination and was flown home by the Cuban government from Mexico City, he said. Like Oswald, he had contacts with the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, a pro-Castro organization, he said.

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
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UPI _____
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Philadelphia Inq. p. A6
Date 29 April 1992

Justice Dept. objects to proposal to release JFK assassination files

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Legislation to release Kennedy assassination documents hit a snag yesterday as the Justice Department, reversing Bush administration policy, came out "strongly" against the proposal.

Assistant Attorney General W. Lee Rawls said in a letter made public yesterday that the proposed House-Senate resolution "would severely encroach upon the president's constitutional authority to protect confidential information."

Rawls also raised national security

concerns, saying that language clearing the way for the release of CIA and FBI documents could endanger intelligence methods and sources. And he said the bill would leave law enforcement and executive-branch deliberations open to public scrutiny.

"We strongly object to the resolution in its current form," Rawls said. If passed, the Justice Department "would give serious consideration to recommending presidential disapproval."

Until yesterday, top-ranking Bush administration officials — including

CIA Director Robert M. Gates and FBI chief William S. Sessions — had supported the legislation, saying they would cooperate in making public thousands of secret documents relating to the 1963 slaying of President John F. Kennedy.

Rawls said the Justice Department was "sympathetic to the concerns" of the public about the assassination and was drafting an alternative version. But the department's bill would broaden the president's power to withhold information and increase his control over the review process.

Feds now say JFK files should be kept secret

By MEL JUFFE

In a stunning reversal of policy, the Justice Department — evidently speaking for the Bush administration — has come out strongly against legislation to release documents on the Kennedy assassination.

A proposed House-Senate resolution "would severely encroach upon the president's constitutional authority to protect confidential information," Assistant Attorney General W. Lee Rawls said in a letter made public yesterday.

Rawls said the proposed release of CIA and FBI documents could endanger intelligence methods and sources. His eight-page letter contained 22 specific criticisms, tearing into every aspect of the bill.

Until yesterday, CIA director Robert Gates, FBI chief William Sessions and other top-ranking Bush administration officials had been on record supporting the legislation. They had said they would cooperate in making public thousands of secret documents relating to the 1963 murder of President John F. Kennedy.

Rep. John Conyers (D-Mich.), chairman of the House Government Operations Committee, said the surprise letter from Rawls arrived Monday evening, only hours before the committee's legislation and national security subcommittee met yesterday to consider the bill.

Gates and Justice Department officials declined to attend the hearing, Conyers said.

Rep. Christopher Shays (R-Conn.) scoffed at the Justice Department objections, saying, "It's really hard for me to imagine what national-security issues are at stake."

By opposing the legislation, the Justice Department goes up against a wave of public pressure that followed the movie "JFK."

The Oliver Stone film depicted the assassination as a result of a huge right-wing conspiracy of top government officials.

Stone, who testified at yesterday's hearing, said afterward, "The Justice Department has now set itself up against this process, as has President Bush."

The switch in White House policy appears to set the stage for a major confrontation with the Congress.

Staff aides on the Conyers committee predicted a heated clash when the committee holds its second hearing in mid-May.

"I think the Bush administration will be accused of a cover-up," said one staff aide. "It's White House business as usual — keep everything secret."

Congressional probers had been especially eager to get their hands on 1,350 secret tapes the FBI made of New Orleans Mafia boss Carlos Marcello in 1979 and 1980.

Marcello "implicated himself in the assassination on three of those tapes," according to Robert Blakey, former chief counsel to the House Assassination Committee, who attended yesterday's hearing.

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
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Date 29 April 1992

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press X _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 29 April 1992

Citizens Group Sues for Release of Kennedy Autopsy Photos

By JOHN DIAMOND
Associated Press Writer

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The suit was filed a day after the Justice Department said it opposed legislation calling for the release of assassination documents. The bill, which has bipartisan support, excludes the autopsy material to protect the privacy of the Kennedy family.

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"The photos and X-rays were taken by government personnel," said a spokesman for Public Citizen, Bob Dreyfuss. The Kennedy family restriction "was not a legal or binding provision because these were and always have been government records," he said.

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The Washington Post A7
 The New York Times _____
 The Los Angeles Times _____
 The Wall Street Journal _____
 The Washington Times _____
 USA Today _____
 Associated Press _____
 UPI _____
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Date 30 April 1992

Archives Sued for Release of JFK X-Rays

By Michael York
 Washington Post Staff Writer

A John F. Kennedy assassination researcher filed suit in federal court yesterday in an attempt to force the National Archives to disclose about 200 photographs and X-rays of the slain president that have been kept in locked files since 1966.

D. Mark Katz, the Rockville researcher, and the Public Citizen Litigation Group alleged in the suit that the National Archives has improperly withheld the material, and they maintain that restrictions on disclosure imposed by the Kennedy family are legally invalid. The suit maintains that the material should be released under the Freedom of Information Act.

Bills in Congress would release material collected by committee investigations, but the measures contain an exception for autopsy records. On Monday, a Justice Department official said in a letter to Sen. John Glenn (D-Ohio) that the department opposed several portions of the legislation. A department spokesman said yesterday, however, that the administration still supports release of the investigation records.

The National Archives obtained the autopsy photos in 1966. The Kennedy family transferred the material to the government with the proviso that it be kept private until the death of President Kennedy's immediate family.

In the suit filed yesterday, the public interest group said that the autopsy photographs and X-rays were made

by federal employees and thus were federal property and should not have been transferred to the Kennedy family.

Susan Cooper, a National Archives spokeswoman, said the government won a similar FOIA suit in 1972, when the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that a private individual could not challenge the Kennedy restrictions. However, Theresa A. Amato, a lawyer for Public Citizen, said the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals has rejected that court's decision. The Supreme Court has not ruled on the issue.

Some of the autopsy photos sought in the suit have been published. Under the terms of the Kennedy restrictions, the archives may grant access to the material to "recognized experts in the field of pathology or related areas" with approval of the Kennedy family.

Bob Dreyfuss, a spokesman for Public Citizen, a group founded by Ralph Nader, said disclosure of the material could help resolve questions about the 1963 assassination, including whether the material itself has been tampered with.

Melody Miller, spokeswoman for Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.), told the Associated Press that the family considers the photos private but has allowed qualified experts and government investigators full access to the material.

"Unrestricted public release of the autopsy materials would obviously be very painful to the Kennedy family," Miller said.

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times 6-10
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 30 April 1992

Suit Seeks Pictures From Kennedy's Autopsy

WASHINGTON, April 29 (AP) — The public-interest group Public Citizen sued the National Archives today for release of about 250 X-rays and photographs taken during the autopsy on President John F. Kennedy several hours after he was assassinated.

The suit, filed in Federal District Court here, said the Kennedy family's tight restrictions on access to the material had caused it to be improperly withheld from public scrutiny.

Although some autopsy photographs have been published in books about the assassination, most have never been released. A spokesman for Public Citizen, Bob Dreyfuss, said access to the material would enable historians to clear up some questions about Kennedy's wounds and therefore might lead to answers about how many gunmen killed the President and whether he was the victim of a conspiracy.

The National Archives has restricted access to the photographs since 1966, when the Kennedys placed them under Government care on condition that they be kept from public view as long as any member of the slain President's immediate family was still alive.

The suit contends that the photographs are Government property, because they were taken by Government personnel during the autopsy at the Bethesda Naval Medical Center. Thus, the suit says, the family's restrictions were "not a legal or binding provision."

A spokeswoman for the archives, Susan Cooper, said today that its lawyers were still studying the suit and that the archives therefore had no comment.

Legislation pending in Congress would authorize the Government's release of many thousands of documents on the Kennedy assassination, but it would exempt the autopsy photos.

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THE JFK CONSPIRACY

Wednesday at 8 on 5 and 54

Producer George Paige and producer/writer Daniel Helfgott come to Washington this week to stage a live, two-hour show linking John F. Kennedy's assassination in November 1963 to the Bay of Pigs, the Cuban missile crisis and even the Watergate break-in. Among their guests is an eyewitness to Kennedy's shooting who Paige said has received death threats from anonymous sources trying to stop the person's appearance. Paige also said he'll reveal the name of Deep Throat, the secret informant on whom Washington Post reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein depended in part as they unraveled the Watergate story. And he said he has uncovered "startling new medical evidence that contradicts the Warren Commission." The evidence — he wouldn't tell what it is — was sent to forensic pathologist Cyril Wecht, also scheduled for the show. "We discovered it somewhere else, and we sent it to him and we asked him to confirm what we believed," said Paige. "He confirmed it." The show, airing from BizNet on H Street NW and hosted by James Earl Jones, will reinforce suspicions that Kennedy's death involved many. Paige will offer a 900 number to survey "how many really believe it was a conspiracy and who was responsible." Slated to appear, besides Wecht: filmmaker Oliver Stone; Victor Marchetti, former executive assistant to the deputy director of the CIA; former Air Force Col. Fletcher Prouty, who Paige said was charged with military support of the clandestine operations of the CIA; Gaeton Fonzi, investigator for the House Select Committee on assassinations; Madeleine Brown, identified as the mistress of President Johnson, and Jean Hill and Ed Hoffman, eyewitnesses to the assassination.

5.54 JFK Conspiracy. Host James Earl Jones reveals how existing evidence and new testimony provide an explanation of the events and people surrounding the Kennedy assassination. (Live) (2 hrs.)

Wed, 15 Apr. = 8-10 p.m.

Abe Lincoln's Jack Ruby

By Jane Raymond Walpole

THE PRESIDENT had been shot. His killer was caught, then gunned down in plain view of his captors. People wondered how this could have happened. They puzzled over a bullet that changed course in mid-flight. They whispered about high officials perhaps implicated in the assassination plot. The suspicions grew because there were no answers and probably never would be.

John Kennedy, Lee Harvey Oswald, Jack Ruby and the CIA? No—Abraham Lincoln, John Wilkes Booth, Edwin Stanton and Boston Corbett. Lincoln and Booth are known to all. Stanton was Lincoln's secretary of war. But who was Boston Corbett?

Known by his admirers as "Lincoln's Avenger" and by his detractors as the "Glory-to-God Man," Boston Corbett was first sergeant of the cavalry detachment sent out to capture Booth. His professed shooting of Booth led to wild acclaim by Stanton, the press and the public—and to angry gibes that he was a religious fanatic and a liar.

Since no one doubts that Ruby shot Oswald, why the doubts that Corbett shot Booth? For one thing, Ruby pulled his trigger on national television and in plain sight of police. No one saw Corbett fire—though at least 10 men were close by. And then there was his defiance of orders . . . and the bullet's odd trajectory . . . and the nonexistent revolver . . . and the reward money. And, of course, Corbett himself.

Thomas Corbett seemed normal enough, living with his young wife in New York City. But her unexpected death drove him to the bottle and to vagrancy, until one night in Boston a band of evangelists offered him salvation. He accepted, and the event transformed his life. He changed his given name to Boston, let his hair grow in flowing tresses, castrated himself to lessen the temptation of sin and traveled the Eastern seaboard as an itinerant preacher.

In Richmond, Corbett was revolted by the sight of slave auctions. When the Civil War began, he quickly enlisted in the army, determined to punish slavery

by killing sinful Southerners. His sermons to fellow soldiers soon gained him the derisive title of the "Glory-to-God Man," but he was equally fanatical in shooting rebels.

Captured in May 1864, Corbett was sent to the hellhole of Andersonville; in November, body and mind sapped by the brutal conditions, he was exchanged and, in March, he was mustered out. But with Gen. U. S. Grant's final offensive straining the manpower pool, he volunteered for active duty with a promotion from private to sergeant. Boston Corbett was about to burst into the headlines.

After Booth shot Lincoln at Ford's Theater on April 14, 1865, he disappeared, fleeing through Maryland and hiding in a swamp. On April 23, Stanton and Col. Lafayette Baker, head of the Army Detective Bureau, learned that Booth had crossed the Potomac and was headed toward Richmond. A cavalry unit was scratched together and placed under Baker's cousin, Lt. Luther Baker, with orders to take Booth alive, if possible. Once more, Sgt. Corbett volunteered.

Early on April 26, the ragtag troop surprised Booth in a tobacco shed on a farm just west of Port Royal, Va. When Booth refused to surrender, the barn was surrounded and set afire. Suddenly a shot rang out. Booth lurched from the blazing barn and collapsed, a revolver in his hand and a bullet in his neck. Within two hours Booth died, never having regained full consciousness.

Baker, upset at not taking Booth alive, was certain someone had disobeyed orders and shot the assassin. Everton Conger, a detective who had been sent along to advise Baker, sized up the situation as suicide. But to placate Baker, Conger asked each of the 26 men in the troop if he had shot Booth. There were 25 denials. Then Corbett responded, "Yes sir, I shot him." Conger, taken aback, asked the sergeant why he had disobeyed orders. Gazing heavenward, Corbett replied, "Providence directed me!"

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The Washington Post CS
The New York Times _____
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Date 12 April 1992

The other men snickered. But Conger, who already doubted Corbett's mental stability, relaxed. Clearly Booth had committed suicide. Conger rode off to Stanton with the news. But Baker wanted a scapegoat, and Corbett had admitted to disobeying orders. He gratefully arrested the sergeant, packed up Booth's body and returned to Washington.

The day after Conger had reported to Stanton, Baker and his unrepentant sergeant were called to the secretary's office. Corbett entered a prisoner and emerged a hero. "The rebel is dead. The patriot lives," proclaimed Stanton.

And now Lincoln's avenger had his moment of fame. Newspapers around the world vied for interviews. Cards bearing his photograph sold by the thousands. He moved to a Washington hotel to be closer to reporters and admirers and farther from jeering soldiers in camp.

Conger was not alone in discounting Corbett's claim. None of the troopers at the flaming barn believed his story. No one had seen him aim at Booth or had heard a shot from outside the shed. And the shot itself would have needed a fantastic trajectory. As he defiantly rejected Baker's surrender demand, Booth was standing at the barn door with his left shoulder facing Corbett 20 yards away. But the bullet had struck Booth in the right side of the neck, angling downward and backward. Corbett shrugged off any doubters: "It wasn't strange—God directed that bullet."

And what about the gun that fired the bullet? According to the autopsy report, Booth was killed by a "conoidal pistol ball," the kind used in revolvers. Booth had two revolvers in the barn; whether either had recently been fired and whether Booth had powder burns

around his wound are not recorded. Corbett, on the other hand, had been issued a carbine; only the officers carried revolvers. Yet Stanton, after reading the autopsy report, sent a memo to the Army's chief of ordnance stating that Corbett had lost his Colt revolver and should be issued a replacement.

Possibly Boston Corbett had found an unauthorized revolver and did use it to kill Booth. Possibly he did believe that God had chosen him to strike down Lincoln's assassin. And possibly he wanted the \$75,000 reward. He pressed his case before the Committee on Claims but received only the \$1,653.85 awarded to each of the 26 troopers. To the unimpressed committee members, Corbett was merely "that insane man."

So why, then, did Stanton believe (or profess belief) in his patriot? Why would he swallow such an improbable story told by such an unbalanced man? Here, facts give way to conjectures.

Maybe Stanton hoped that Booth's death would quiet the nation. Maybe he wanted to plant the idea that Booth was part of a large Confederate conspiracy, thus justifying harsh retribution against the South. In either case, Booth couldn't be allowed the honor of suicide. Far better that Sgt. Corbett had shot him.

Or perhaps Stanton feared that a talkative Booth could implicate the secretary himself in Lincoln's death; circumstances had fueled such suspicions almost immediately. Stanton strongly disagreed with Lincoln's desire to welcome the South back into the Union with minimum penalties, and Vice President Andrew Johnson of Tennessee would prove as lenient. But if Booth's band of conspirators had succeeded in killing Johnson and Secretary of State William Seward as well as Lincoln that April 14, Stanton would have had substantially more influence over the course of Reconstruction. As it happened, the plans went awry and Johnson and Seward survived. But this did not stop Stanton from taking temporary charge of the government—and the hunt for Booth.

Then there is the ease with which Booth rode out of Washington through a military checkpoint. And Booth's pocket diary, supposedly intact when Baker turned it over to Stanton but missing more than a dozen pages when Stanton gave it back—pages dated shortly before and after April 14. And the papers burned by Robert Todd Lincoln some 50 years after his father's death, papers that he reportedly stated contained evidence of treason in his father's cabinet. Suppositions all—the truth will never be known.

Boston Corbett the hero proved a nine-days' wonder. He left the army, but had trouble adjusting to civilian life. After receiving several threats signed "Booth's Avenger," he moved to Kansas and tried his hand at farming. The Kansas legislature, recognizing Corbett's erstwhile fame, appointed him sergeant-at-arms. One day, taking umbrage at horseplay by idle page boys, he sprayed the Senate chamber with bullets—and was sent back to the farm. His uncertain mind finally snapped, and in 1887 he was committed to an insane asylum. A year later he escaped, headed toward Mexico and vanished.

But the myth of Boston Corbett remains—the myth of an officially sanctioned hero and patriot, a myth no one can truly believe or totally disprove.

Jane Walpole is a retired English professor living in Charlottesville.

The Washington Post _____
 The New York Times _____
 The Los Angeles Times _____
 The Wall Street Journal _____
 The Washington Times _____ **F2**
 USA Today _____
 Associated Press _____
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 Reuter _____

Date 10 April 1992

The flaws of the Warren Commission report

It is disappointing to see my favorite newspaper in its March 30 editorial defending David Belin and the Warren Commission report, which, it is said, 75 percent of the American public no longer believe.

Mr. Belin, former commission counsel, may be right in pointing out that the movie "JFK" repeatedly ignores or misrepresents the known facts of the assassination.



Lee Harvey Oswald

However, the same may be said of Mr. Belin and the Warren Commission in ignoring these known facts that are glaringly inconsistent with the conclusions of the report:

■ The doctors in Dallas who examined President Kennedy described the throat wound as an entrance wound (end of "single bullet" theory).

■ Gov. John Connally maintains that he was struck by a separate bullet; the Zapruder film of the assassination appears to confirm this (end of "single bullet" theory).

■ The bullet fragments collected from Mr. Connally's wounds weighed more than the material lost from the relatively

undamaged bullet that allegedly struck both Kennedy and Mr. Connally (end of "lone assassin" theory).

■ The Zapruder film clearly shows JFK's head being thrown violently to the rear, and pieces of his skull and brains were found on the trunk of the limosine, not on the hood (end of "lone assassin" theory).

■ Lee Harvey Oswald, after supposedly committing the crime of the century, stashing his rifle among some boxes in an area removed from the sniper's nest and running down four flights of stairs without anyone seeing or hearing him, was found by Texas School Book Depository Supervisor Roy Truly and Dallas Police Officer Marrion Baker moments after the assassination in the second-floor cafeteria, calmly sipping a soft drink (end of Lee Harvey Oswald as the "lone assassin" theory).

■ Oswald denied shooting the president, said he had nothing against him and claimed he was being set up as a patsy.

■ The Warren Commission itself was unable to ascribe a motive to Oswald.

Moreover, Mr. Belin is mistaken in maintaining Howard Brennan "actually saw Oswald firing from the Book Depository," and it is to your great discredit that you perpetuate such falsehoods without investigation.

The fact is that while Mr. Brennan said he saw someone fire a shot from the sixth-floor Depository window, Mr. Brennan was un-

able to make a positive identification of Oswald in a police lineup even though he had seen Oswald's picture on TV; only a month later, after prodding by the FBI, did Mr. Brennan change his testimony. Mr. Brennan's complete testimony was reported as "riddled with contradictions" and was not admitted for use by the House Assassinations Committee.

Unfortunately, space does not



John F. Kennedy

permit me to address the other issues you raised in the editorial, the J.D. Tippit murder and Jack Ruby's killing of Oswald. They remain controversial and demand a rebuttal of your misleading commentary.

The truth is difficult to discern when so cleverly hidden by a bodyguard of official lies. Nothing is served by such a carelessly researched editorial as yours without a reply by those opposed to your opinions. Or is The Washington Times, too, part of the cover-up, like The Washington Post, Newsweek, Time, etc.?

JOHN D. S. MUHLENBERG
 Vienna

The article this refers to follows.

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The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
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The Washington Times AA _____
USA Today _____
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Date 9 April 1992

Surgeon breaks silence on JFK to promote book on conspiracy

By Hugh Aynesworth
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

DALLAS — Dr. Charles Crenshaw, the 59-year-old Fort Worth surgeon who has been the darling of the talk shows the past week, returned to Texas yesterday to promote his new book, "JFK: Conspiracy of Silence," and said he wrote it after meetings with conspiracy theorists and filmmaker Oliver Stone.

He reiterated his earlier allegations that President John F. Kennedy was hit in the head that fateful Nov. 22, 1963, by two shots from the front — not from the rear, as envisioned by both the Warren Commission and the House Assassinations Committee.

In television appearances he has walked through Dealey Plaza and shown reporters where additional gunmen were stationed.

Dr. Crenshaw's book, which already is in its second printing after an initial press run of 500,000, describes him struggling to save Lee Harvey Oswald on Sunday, Nov. 24, after the accused assassin had been shot by nightclub owner Jack Ruby.

In the midst of that losing battle, he explained, President Lyndon Johnson telephoned and told him he had to obtain a "confession" from

Oswald.

Dr. Crenshaw estimated that the call came about 12:04 p.m. Dallas time (1:04 p.m. Washington time). According to White House logs and a diary furnished to The Washington Times by the LBJ Library in Austin, there is no telephone call involving LBJ listed between 11:45 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. through the White House switchboard.

Johnson arrived at the White House at 11:35 a.m. that Sunday and met the Kennedy family at 12:55 p.m. in the Blue Room, according to the documents. From then until long after the time Dr. Crenshaw claims he was called by the new president, Johnson was either in the White House with the Kennedys, en route to the Capitol or attending the JFK memorial ceremony there — always in the company of others.

Dr. Crenshaw said the autopsy pictures he first saw at the Assassination Information Center in Dallas in 1991 convinced him he should tell his Parkland Memorial Hospital story.

"I think going through the exhibit again and seeing these autopsy pictures really kicked it off to do a joint venture," said Dr. Crenshaw, alluding to his collaboration with co-author J. Gary Shaw, a conspiracy

theorist and Stone adviser who is a director of the assassination center.

Mr. Shaw, he said, took him to Mr. Stone while "JFK" was being filmed here. Mr. Stone gave Mr. Shaw's center \$80,000 to help with the movie.

Asked about numerous apparent errors and the presentation of various conspiracy theories in the paperback, Dr. Crenshaw said yesterday that only about half of the book is his words. "I can only refer you to Gary Shaw," he said, but Mr. Shaw was not available.

Some of the more startling allegations include:

- LBJ told him a man in the Oswald operating room would take Oswald's deathbed confession. Dr. Crenshaw said he looked around and saw a man who "looked like Oliver Hardy" wearing a badge and an ill-fitting suit with a pistol in one pocket. He said he thought, "If Oswald doesn't die on the table, is 'Oliver Hardy' or someone else going to kill him?"

- JFK's body was definitely altered — the wounds enlarged and changed — to hide the fact that the telling shots came from the right front, not from Oswald's gun behind the motorcade. "Those weren't the same wounds [on the autopsy pictures] that I saw at Parkland."

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
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King Features Syndicate
Date *8 April 1992*

''OPEN THE RECORDS''

BY MARIANNE MEANS

WASHINGTON -- Even though the whole exercise is likely to be an enormous waste of time, energy and money, it is good that Congress is about to make public almost everything in government files about the assassination of President Kennedy.

Oliver Stone's fictional movie ''JFK'' stirred up so many phony but emotional questions that the very existence of stacks of dusty records closed to the public was beginning to look sinister. The last thing Washington needs right now is another issue, no matter how meritless, which feeds public suspicions that politicians lie an cover up institutional misdeeds.

Nearly 30 years have passed since Kennedy was shot in a Dallas motorcade. The official reasons for sealing the records -- protecting personal privacy or national security -- are now mostly moot.

The Warren Commission published 26 volumes of testimony and exhibits when it finished its probe of the assassination in 1964. The unreleased materials include Secret Service data (knowledge of which could have been helpful to future assassins), potentially slanderous allegations about individuals that could not be substantiated, and classified investigative reports that might have damaged intelligence sources and techniques.

Access to the autopsy photographs and X-rays of the dead president were limited to qualified medical experts at the request of the Kennedy family. (In fact, Stone and a hand-picked team of physicians examined them at the National Archives, where they are housed.)

The House assassination probe, conducted in the late 1970s, published 12 volumes of evidentiary material but placed 935 boxes of miscellaneous stuff in storage under seal. The probe had been such a wasteful farce that at the time the committee was regarded as merely trying to hide the evidence of a sloppy and inept job, done at a cost to the taxpayers of \$5 million.

Having covered the House probe, I know it was marred by headline-seeking, uninformed members, inaccurate research, unclarified contradictory statements, endless rehashing of old discredited rumors and retracing of the steps of previous investigators. After two years it finally held hearings replete with witnesses who were long on theories and short on hard facts.

No credible evidence was produced to contradict the Warren Commission conclusion that Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone assassin and that the CIA was not conspiratorially involved. Despite District of Columbia delegate Walter Fauntroy's premature claim that investigators had solid leads pointing to a conspiracy or a government coverup, nothing of the kind ever emerged.

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The Washington Post _____
 The New York Times _____
 The Los Angeles Times _____
 The Wall Street Journal _____
 The Washington Times _____
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 UPI _____
 Reuter _____

Date 30 April 1992

Today's debate is on the **KENNEDY ASSASSINATION**
 and whether to open the government's records of the case.

Release JFK death papers

OUR VIEW Government should stop fighting over technicalities and release the Kennedy assassination files.

Some people may find it hard to believe that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in assassinating President John F. Kennedy on Nov. 22, 1963.

Other people may find it hard to believe, as Oliver Stone asserts in his movie *JFK*, that a massive government conspiracy killed Kennedy.

But what's almost impossible to fathom is why a government agency would oppose releasing documents that might settle the question.

Yet that is what an overly protective U.S. Justice Department is doing.

It most likely is just bureaucratic turf guarding. But by saying it will urge President Bush to veto proposed legislation that would release 80 boxes of previously withheld materials on the Kennedy assassination, the department feeds public suspicions of a cover-up.

Justice's arguments against release of 30-year-old information are slender — that it could endanger intelligence meth-

ods and sources and "encroach upon the president's constitutional authority to protect confidential information."

The legislation provides protections. The documents would be screened by an independent panel before release, and matters directly relating to national security would still be withheld.

There's no need for greater secrecy. Not according to former president Gerald Ford and 12 members of the Warren Commission, who all urge disclosure of all documents about the assassination.

Not to Sen. Ted Kennedy, the late president's only surviving brother, who indicated the family has no objections to release of documents, though it wants to limit access to autopsy photos and X-rays to qualified experts.

This late last gasp to withhold more documents runs counter to the promises made by CIA Director Robert Gates and FBI Director William Sessions to cooperate on releasing information.

The Justice Department should help settle the public doubts about Kennedy's death, not raise new ones with legal mumbo jumbo no one can understand.

The Washington Post _____
 The New York Times _____
 The Los Angeles Times _____
 The Wall Street Journal _____
 The Washington Times _____
 USA Today A12 _____
 Associated Press _____
 UPI _____
 Reuter _____

Date 30 April 1992

Use care in papers law

OPPOSING VIEW The pending bill regarding the JFK files raises constitutional concerns that must be resolved.

The Department of Justice strongly supports the fullest possible disclosure of information relating to the assassination of John F. Kennedy. The public interest is best served by a full and final review of this tragic event.

As indicated in the department's letter to the congressional committees reviewing this issue, our objections to the proposed legislation are technical, constitutional ones which involve the structure and operation of the commission the legislation would create.

These objections rest on important principles regarding the separation of powers under our Constitution, but they



By Paul J. McNulty, director of policy and communications for the Department of Justice.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The letter McNulty refers to, from Assistant Attorney General W. Lee Rawls, expressed concern the bill "would severely encroach upon the president's constitutional authority to protect confidential information."

Rawls also raised security concerns, saying that language clearing the way for release of CIA and FBI documents could endanger intelligence methods and sources.

"We strongly object to the resolution in its current form," Rawls said. If passed, he said, the department "would give serious consideration to recommending presidential disapproval."

in no way undermine the department's willingness to make available to the public as much information as possible.

The department is willing to work expeditiously with the Congress to resolve our constitutional objections so that the information may be made available.

Newsweek 36
Time _____
U.S. News & World Report _____
Date 6 April 1992

Have Your Spy Call My Spy



ILLUSTRATION BY CHIP WASS

You know the world has changed when spies offer you *their* secrets—so long as you talk to their agent first. Last week the Foreign Intelligence Veterans Association, a group of retired KGB officers, said it had hired Hollywood agent Brian Litman to help sell the stories of their dastardly deeds to Western studios and publishers.

Litman's star property is

Col. Oleg Nechiporenko, who met with Lee Harvey Oswald in Mexico City two months before JFK's death. He says he can explain "why Oswald could not have been a KGB agent"—but you'll have to wait for the book. Another retired colonel, Anatoly Yatskov, set up the heist of U.S. atom-bomb secrets in the '40s. The group's vice president Anatoly Privalov says its 500 members can barely subsist on pensions averaging \$7 a month: "We need the money."

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
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Reuter _____

N.Y. NEWSDAY P. 13
Date **6 APRIL 1992**

Head Stone

Oliver Stone, who loves controversy the way David Dinkins loves a good tux, is still getting a lot of heat from everyone who may or may not be CIA, as well as the editors of the N.Y. Times and film czar Jack Valenti. Why, just the other day, Valenti said that "JFK" was a "hoax" and a "smear." Of course, we find it hard to trust anyone who *also* finds Jerry Vale an inspiring example of hair fashion for men. Now there's more. The Village Gate, known for jazz and an occasional play, is jumping on the conspiracy train. Tonight at 6 p.m., Gate keeper Art D'Lugoff tells us, he's holding his first "event" — a forum called "An Assassination Salon: The JFK Debate Continues." On the panel will be such assassination-book authors as Mark Lane, John H. Davis and Jerry Polioff. Plus Bill Kunstler, who was Jack Ruby's lawyer, and Post columnist Jack Newfield. Tix are 10 bucks. We used to believe in the conspiracy theory, but now we know for sure that the CIA and military-industrial complex actually are out to get *us* — by driving us crazy with events like this.

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times ALL
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 6 April 1992

Distortions Will Continue No Matter What

■ **JFK:**The Warren Commission released 98% of its material. But few who accept conspiracy theories bother to review it.

By **RICHARD M. MOSK**

On March 27, legislation was introduced in Congress to release government files relating to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. I, along with other members of the staff of the Warren Commission—which investigated the Kennedy assassination—have supported such action.

It must be recognized, however, that among the many deceptions of those promoting Kennedy-assassination theories are the allegations that the Warren Commission sealed all or most of its files and that those files contain evidence of a conspiracy.

The Warren Commission published its 888-page report in September, 1964. The report was followed by the release of 26 volumes of transcripts, testimony and copies of photographs, documents and other exhibits. The commission has released 98% of its material. Unfortunately, few of those who so easily accept conspiracy theories have bothered to review even the report, despite its availability—it has recently

been reissued by private publishers.

The remaining 2% of the material was not released because of laws, regulations or other legitimate reasons. These documents consist of the following:

—The autopsy photographs and X-rays of President Kennedy's body. These were restricted in deference to the privacy request of the Kennedy family. Nevertheless, over the years, a number of medical and forensic experts have viewed them.

—The identity of confidential sources and methods of investigative agencies. For instance, sources in foreign governments obviously must be kept confidential.

—Information about presidential protection. The disclosure of techniques to protect the President could compromise security measures.

—Isolated hearsay allegations that were found to be meritless. Such allegations involved the privacy and reputations of those who were their subject, as well as of those who made them.

—Other documents that by law must be kept confidential—that is, tax returns and visa applications.

Those of us who have seen some or all of these files are convinced that they contain nothing that would cast doubt on the Warren Commission conclusions. David Belin, who served as a counsel to the

Warren Commission and later as executive director of the Rockefeller Commission that later investigated the CIA, and who viewed all the files related to the Kennedy assassination, has publicly stated that nothing in those files contradicts the findings of the commission. Indeed, in 1977, he filed a Freedom of Information Act request to have the files made public.

Earlier this year, commission staff members requested that these files be released, and consulted with those involved in the proposed legislation to open the files.

It is absurd to assume that those of us who worked for the commission carefully retained evidence of a cover-up, thereby relying on generations of others who had access to such material to maintain our alleged secret. We would hardly support the release of information if it contained suggestions of our own malfeasance.

When these files are ultimately released, conspiracy theorists will undoubtedly distort the material (as they have done with information already available), assert that not all of it was released and contend that documents were destroyed. A public that has been so easily manipulated by writers, publishers and movie makers who profit from revisionist history are not likely to reject such false and defamatory assertions.

Richard M. Mosk is a Los Angeles attorney.

Doctor's role in JFK case questioned

By Barry Shlachter
Ft. Worth Star-Telegram

FT. WORTH—Charles Crenshaw, a Ft. Worth physician, has ventured into the shadowy world of Kennedy assassination conspiracies and found himself ensnared by controversy even before his 203-page paperback was officially put on sale Friday.

In "JFK: Conspiracy of Silence," the semiretired head of surgery at John Peter Smith Hospital writes that "bullets" hit President John Kennedy's head from the front, not one in the back of the head as the Warren Commission found.

Crenshaw broke a public silence he says he has been pressured to maintain by hitting the talk-show circuit last week, starting with an interview on Geraldo Rivera's "Now It Can Be Told," then ABC's "20/20," "Good Morning America," "Donahue," CNN's "Larry King Live" and so on.

But the man described on the cover as "the surgeon who tried to save JFK" actually played no role in Kennedy's care at the Parkland Hospital emergency room in Dallas, said Malcolm Perry, 62, the physician depicted in Crenshaw's book as the one who worked hardest to resuscitate the mortally wounded president.

"I have not read the book," said Perry, who on Nov. 22, 1963, was Parkland chief of vascular surgery.

"But Dr. Crenshaw was not involved in the efforts to save the president, and there was only one bullet.

"He was a junior resident," Perry said. "He didn't assist or help, and I don't even remember him being there. It's entirely possible he might have looked in during the 20 minutes we attempted to save President Kennedy's life. A lot of people stuck in their heads and were asked to leave. But he had nothing to do with the procedures."

Crenshaw failed to respond to three messages left at his Ft. Worth home. "He's pretty much gone into seclusion," said Brenda Hyde, an employee of John Peter Smith Hospital.

His co-author, Jens Hansen of neighboring Arlington, said the 59-year-old Crenshaw is unable to comment because of contractual obligations to his publisher. But he quoted him as saying that Perry apparently was confused because Crenshaw was not among those doctors who testified before the Warren Commission.

"I was afraid to go to the Warren Commission because I would have said what I am saying now," Hansen quoted him as saying.

But there are nine references to Crenshaw in the commission's report, said Hansen, who also said Crenshaw inserted a catheter in Kennedy's leg and "worked on the head area."

"And he was the last doctor to see President Kennedy placed in the casket," Hansen said.

Moreover, it was Crenshaw who put his arm around Jacquelyn Kennedy when another doctor, Charles Baxter, told her the president was dead, Hansen said. "Dr. Crenshaw's involvement is well-established in documentation."

In his book, Crenshaw says a mixture of "fraternal doctrine, naivete, fear and career-mindedness" led to the conspiracy of silence by Parkland doctors. He quotes Baxter, a ranking Parkland physician, as warning staff that anyone attempting to make a dime off the assassination would have their medical careers ruined.

Baxter, according to a "20/20" interview transcript made available to the Ft. Worth Star-Telegram, confirmed he issued the warning, adding that he felt it needed to be said.

In commenting last week, Perry said he is breaking a longstanding promise to himself not to be interviewed on the Kennedy assassination. Most of the Parkland doctors involved similarly have been publicity-shy but not, he said, because of any outside pressure.

"It's a painful experience most of us don't want to relive," explained Perry, now chief of vascular surgery at Texas Tech University Medical School in Lubbock.

Crenshaw's book maintains that there were entry wounds on the front of Kennedy's head and that they must have been caused by a second gunman on the grassy knoll at Dallas' Dealey Plaza.

These statements have been welcomed by assassination writers like Jim Marrs of Springtown, Texas, author of "Crossfire," which

formed part of the basis for the Oliver Stone film "JFK."

"Well, he's just finally telling the truth," Marrs said. "The Dallas doctors have never lied, they just have kept silent. And the rumors have been because they were ordered to do so by Washington."

But Perry, one of those Dallas doctors, disputes he was ever silenced and continues to believe there was just one bullet. "There were no wounds at the front of the head at all," he said.

Baxter told "20/20's" Tom Jarriel that it was impossible to determine the direction of the bullet from the wounds. "What would appear clinically as an entry wound became a question mark," said Baxter, a professor of surgery at Southwestern Medical School in Dallas.

Perry believes some of the speculation on the front-bullet entry stems from a Parkland doctor, Robert McClelland, who wrote about a temple wound. The basis for this was an intern seeing blood on Kennedy's temple, but there was no wound there, Perry said.

And Perry himself might have fueled the second-gunner theory with a remark at a news conference shortly after the assassination, about a wound in the neck that "looked like an entry wound."

"I said it was small, that it looked like an entrance wound and I clearly identified it as conjecture," he said in a call from Lubbock. "But this was taken out of context by the reporters."

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____
Chicago Tribune p.18
Date 6 April 1992

TIMES, SUNDAY, APRIL 5, 1992

Hated It!

P. E7

Jack Valenti, president of the Motion Picture Association of America, put on his movie critic boots last week and jumped all over Oliver Stone's film "J.F.K." Mr. Valenti was a friend and aide of Lyndon B. Johnson, and took lengthy issue with Mr. Stone's directorial implication that President Johnson had some hand in covering up a Government conspiracy in the assassination of John F. Kennedy. The resultant "accusatory



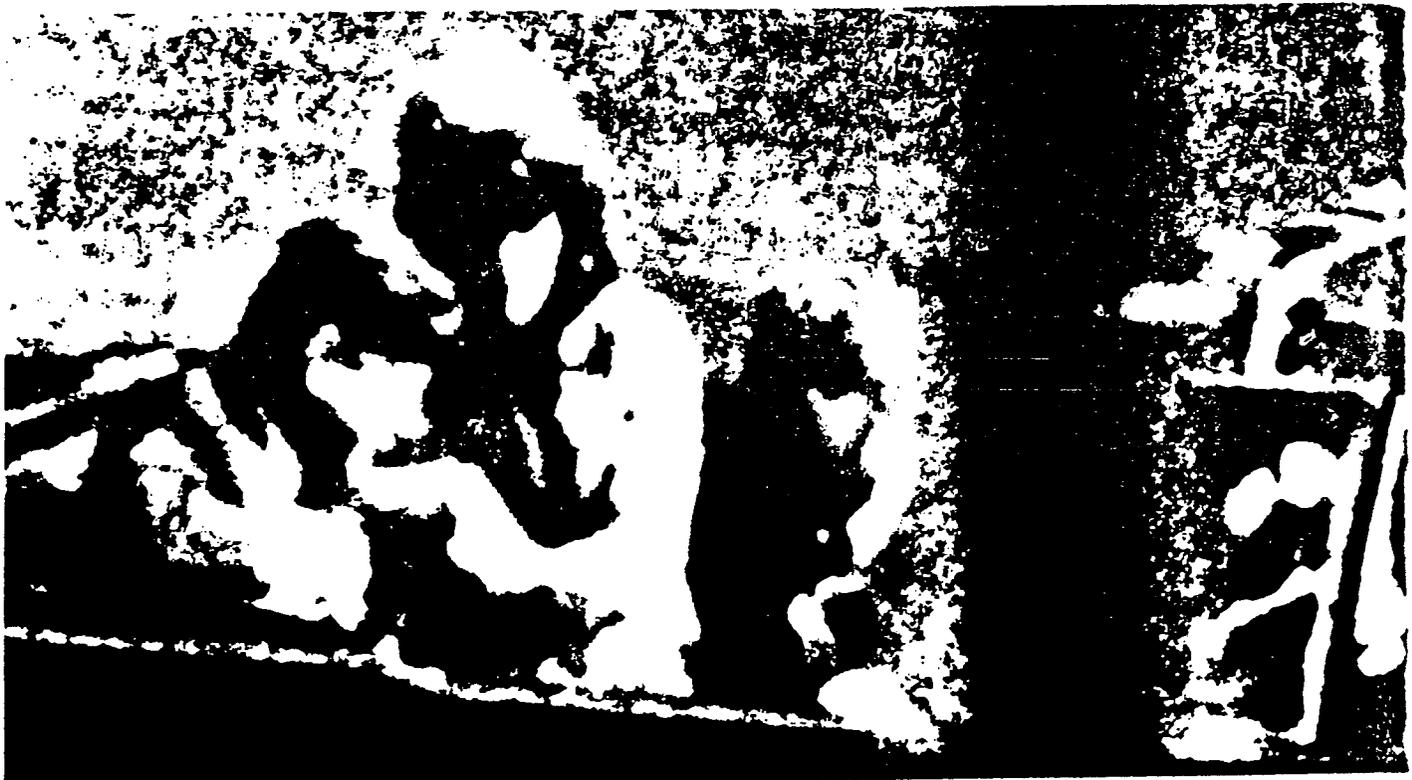
Paul Heston/The New York Times

lunacy," said Mr. Valenti, was propaganda on a par with Leni Riefenstahl's cinematic glorification of Hitler and the Nazi Party. Mr. Valenti, who was in Dallas as L.B.J.'s press secretary when J.F.K. was assassinated, said he held off his criticism until after the Academy Awards — "J.F.K." won two Oscars — so as not to influence the industry's judgment. Mr. Stone said that he found Mr. Valenti's "emotional diatribe off the mark." Most Americans, he said, believe that President Kennedy was the victim of a conspiracy that included Government officials.

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times 132 _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 4 April 1992 _____

■ **OLIVER STONE'S NEXT ASSASSINATION:** You didn't think he had finished the saga when "JFK" was released, did you? Now Mr. Stone, among others, is calling for further investigation into the 1968 assassination of Robert F. Kennedy by Sirhan Sirhan (and who knows who else). It should really come as no surprise: Why would the conspiracy of politicians, generals, anti-Castro Cubans, right-wing homosexuals and Mafiosi who took over the government after killing JFK, stop there? There were plenty of other potential troublemakers for the new fascist national security state (as Mr. Stone has described America — sorry, Amerika), Bobby definitely among them. One can only recall Kevin Costner recoiling in horror in "JFK" at the news of the murder of Bobby and Martin Luther King Jr. They got them, too. Sure "they" did.



Kennedy-Ermordung in Dallas am 22. November 1963: ... den Präsidenten vor dem 8. November 1964 erledigen

Das dickste Fragezeichen der Welt

Rudolf Augstein über neue Spekulationen im Mordfall John F. Kennedy

Der berühmteste Mord der Weltgeschichte war bis 1963 der an Gajus Julius Cäsar am 15. März des Jahres 44 v. Chr. Die Täter sind bekannt und stehen in den Geschichtsbüchern.

Wer John Fitzgerald Kennedy, den 35. Präsidenten der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika, am 22. November 1963 in Dallas/Texas ermordete, ist bis heute keineswegs aufgeklärt. Ein Netz des Schweigens hat dichtgehalten.

So erklärt sich das unerwartet große Interesse an dem Film „JFK – Tatort Dallas“ von Oliver Stone. Er ist außergewöhnlich gut geschnitten, enthält aber lauter Spekulationen, die zu widerlegen gar nicht lohnt.

Mir erscheint eine im vergangenen November veröffentlichte These von Mark North als die wahrscheinlichste, obwohl auch sie nicht bis in alle Einzelheiten beweisbar ist*.

Jeder Journalist sollte hinter seinem Stoff zurücktreten. Hier gelingt es mir nicht. Ich saß an jenem 22. November 1963, einem Freitag, mit dem Verleger Alfred Neven DuMont zu Tisch, als kurz nach 20 Uhr der damalige Hamburger Generalstaatsanwalt Ernst Buchholz anrief und mir mitteilte, daß auf Kennedy ein Attentat verübt worden war.

Diese Nacht in der SPIEGEL-Redaktion werde ich nie vergessen. Seit 12 Stunden schon liefen 48 Seiten des redaktionellen Teils durch die Druckwalzen. Auf dem Titelblatt sollte Herbert von Karajan erscheinen. Das alles war Makulatur. Meine Chefredakteurskollegen Johannes K. Engel und Claus Jacobi taten das Handwerk, das sie beherrschten. Für Spekulationen hatten sie keine Zeit.

Ich aber mußte mich aus allen verfügbaren und sich häufig widersprechenden Nachrichtenquellen informieren, um das Ereignis in einer auch bei Erscheinen des SPIEGEL am folgenden Montag noch vertretbaren Form zu kommentieren.

Kaum jemand mochte in jener Nacht glauben, daß Lee Harvey Oswald tatsächlich der alleinige Schütze gewesen sein sollte. Das heute nicht mehr existierende *Hamburger Echo* bezweifelte wenige Tage später sogar, daß er überhaupt der Attentäter gewesen sei.

Mark North nun hält es für möglich, daß John F. Kennedy noch eine zweite Amtszeit beschieden gewesen wäre, hätte es den Chef des Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), J. Edgar Hoover, nicht gegeben. Der hat, und das ist be-

weisbar, Nachrichten über Mordpläne gegen den Präsidenten und seinen jüngeren Bruder Robert („Bobby“) Kennedy mit Vorsatz zurückgehalten, ein meineidiger Schurke mithin, würdig der Hauptrolle in einem Drama von Shakespeare.

Eine Nebenrolle spielten Lyndon B. Johnson, als Vizepräsident wegen Korruption und Amtsmißbrauchs – wie später Nixons Vizepräsident Spiro T. Agnew – von einer Anklage („Impeachment“) bedroht, den Kennedy für eine zweite Amtszeit wohl kaum nominiert hätte, sowie Earl Warren, der höchste Bundesrichter der Vereinigten Staaten, unter dessen Vorsitz der nach ihm be-

* Mark North: „Act of Treason“, Carroll & Graf Publishers, Inc., New York: 672 Seiten, 26,95 Dollar.

** Wie bedroht sich Johnson fühlte, bewies ein Ausbruch im Büro des Sprechers des Repräsentantenhauses, John McCormack, am 4. Februar 1964. Johnson, mittlerweile Präsident, kam, ohne den anwesenden Washingtoner Lobbyisten Winter-Berger zu bemerken, hereingestürzt und begann „hysterisch zu brüllen“. „John, dieser Hurensohn (ein Bobby Baker) wird mich rumieren. Wenn der cocksucker redet, lande ich im Knast... Ich habe diesen *mothertucker* aufgebaut, und nun bringt er es noch so weit, daß ich als erster Präsident der Vereinigten Staaten den Rest meines Lebens hinter Gittern verbringe.“



nannte Report über die Umstände des Kennedy-Mordes mit offenkundig falschen, wenn nicht gar verfälschten Gefälligkeiten erschien**.

Beginnen wir mit der Hauptperson. Der 1895 geborene J. Edgar Hoover wurde 1934 Chef des FBI. Die Kommunistenhatz und der perfekte Aufbau seines Apparats waren ihm wichtiger als die Gangsterjagd. Mit dem notorischen Mafioso Frank Costello traf er sich mehrmals im New Yorker Central Park. Die Jahre der Prohibition zwischen 1920 und 1933 bezeichnete er als Nährboden des organisierten Verbrechens, was sicher stimmt.

Die halbherzige Ermahnung Präsident Franklin D. Roosevelts, sich mehr um die Unterwelt zu kümmern, befolgte er halbherzig. Mit dem Kommunistenfresser Joseph McCarthy (1909 bis 1957) arbeitete er eng zusammen.

Freund Johnson, inzwischen Präsident geworden, erklärte Hoover 1964 zum bedeutendsten lebenden Amerikaner, was ihn aber nicht daran hinderte, am nächsten Tag seinen Mitarbeitern zu erzählen, es sei ihm lieber, einen Mann im Zelt zu haben, der nach draußen pißt, als umgekehrt.

J. Edgar Hoover lebte mit seiner Mutter zusammen, bis sie starb - da war er 43 Jahre alt. Dann nahm er sich einen Stellvertreter, Clyde A. Tolson, der zugleich sein Stellvertreter im Amt war. Mit ihm fuhr er morgens ins Büro, mit ihm aß er zu Mittag, fast immer im „Harvey“ nahe dem Mayflower-Hotel, immer am selben Tisch, immer bedient

vom selben Kellner, einem Exil-Kubaner („Hello, Castro, haha“). Seine Rechnungen in Restaurants und sonstigen Etablissements bezahlte er grundsätzlich nie. Auch die Abende verbrachte er mit Tolson. Die Schlußfolgerung fällt leicht: ein gemeinsam alt werdendes Schwulen-Paar.

Tolson (der drei Jahre länger lebte als sein Freund) trank gern, Hoover nicht, besonders dann nicht, wenn Fotografen in der Nähe waren. Tolson mußte dann das Glas unterm Tisch verstecken.

Hoover war Rassist. An den Fotos, die er illegal in Absteigen aufnehmen ließ, wo der Bürgerrechtler Martin Luther King verkehrte, interessierten ihn weniger die sexuellen Praktiken als die Hautfarbe der Mädchen.

Bei Pferderennen, zu denen er regelmäßig mit Tolson ging, mußten seine Agenten vorher sicherstellen, daß er nicht Gefahr lief, mit einem stadtbekanntem Buchmacher fotografiert zu werden. Bei Wetten riskierte er nie mehr als zehn Dollar, Verluste bezahlte er aus der eigenen Tasche.

Drei Präsidenten hatte er im Amt überlebt, als John F. Kennedy im November 1960 mit knapper Mehrheit zum Präsidenten gewählt wurde. Zwar bekam er insgesamt mehr Stimmen als sein Konkurrent Richard Nixon, aber in einigen Wahldistrikten gab es organisierte Unstimmigkeiten, die, und das war das erste Unglück, das FBI zu untersuchen hatte.

Zwar war das endgültige Wahlergebnis immer noch überzeugend. Aber das zweite Unglück kam gleich danach. Kennedy wußte, daß er sein Vermögen

den ungesetzlichen Alkoholgeschäften seines Vaters Joseph (den Roosevelt unbekümmert als Botschafter nach London geschickt hatte) während der Prohibition verdankte. Er gab deshalb viel Geld für karitative Zwecke aus.

J. Edgar Hoover mußte nun diese krummen Geschäfte untersuchen, obwohl ihm gar nichts daran lag. Er mochte den alten Kennedy.

Gleichwohl hätte der neue Präsident den FBI-Chef, dem auf Lebenszeit das volle Dienstgehalt zustand, unter einem ehrenvollen Vorwand feuern müssen. Das wäre nicht schwieriger gewesen als die abrupte Entlassung des damals ranghöchsten und angesehensten Offiziers der US-Streitkräfte, Douglas MacArthur, durch Truman wegen potentiellen Ungehorsams (Tokios Prokonsul vor dem Kongreß: „Man hat mich sogar einen Kriegstreiber genannt“).

Wenn da nicht Kennedys Lebensgewohnheiten gewesen wären! Daß er ein notorisch untreuer Ehemann war, spielte damals noch keine so große Rolle. Aber unverständlich bleibt, warum er an dem Tag, an dem er seiner Wahl zum Präsidenten sicher war, die ihm von Frank Sinatra zugeführten Gangster-Liebchen nicht aufgab. Er hätte sie ja abfinden können, anstatt für karitative Zwecke zu spenden.

Wußte er nicht, daß er seinem Feind Hoover, diesem schwulen, aber pruden Mann, das Erpressungsmaterial geradezu frei Haus lieferte, wenn er sich als Präsident über ein halbes Jahr lang Judith Campbell-Exner mit dem Gangster Sam „Mo Mo“ Giancana (und natürlich mit Frank Sinatra) teilte?



John, Robert Kennedy, Hoover (M.): Keine Warnung vom „Direktor“

ZEITGESCHICHTE

wiederum durch Mord erfolgen sollte, niemals vergessen und vergeben, was Hoover ihm an Telefon mitteilte:

Hoover. Ich habe Neuigkeiten für dich
Robert Kennedy. Was für Neuigkeiten?

Hoover, sehr kalt und geschäftsmaÙig
Man hat auf den Präsidenten geschossen

Robert Kennedy, fassungslos. Was? Oh
Ich ... Ist es ernst? Ich ...

Hoover. Ich denke, es ist ernst. Ich werde
mich um Einzelheiten bemühen. Ich rufe
dich an, wenn ich mehr herausgefunden
habe.

Hoover war, wie Robert Kennedy
sich später beschwerte, „nicht aufgeregter,
als wenn er mir die Tatsache mitgeteilt
hätte, daß er einen Kommunisten an der
Howard University enttarnt hat“.

Eine halbe Stunde später wieder ein
Anruf von Hoover, der schlicht wissen
ließ: „Der Präsident ist tot.“

Seltsamerweise hatten der FBI-Direktor
und Robert Kennedy im ersten Augenblick
denselben Gedanken: War es die CIA unter
ihrem Direktor John McCone gewesen? An
ebendiesem Dallas-Tag hatte die CIA ein
Kommando nach Kuba in Marsch gesetzt,
um Fidel Castro zu ermorden, nicht das erste
Mal übrigens. Bobby fragte McCone wenige
Stunden nach dem Mord frei heraus:
„Haben Sie meinen Bruder ermordet?“
Er hatte nicht, wohl wirklich nicht.

Die heile Welt des Kuba-Krisen-Kennedy,
der Camelot-Gesellschaft, der Artus-Runde,
das alles war in Stücke gebrochen. Der
Held, dessen physische und moralische
Gebrechen nur die eng-



Marilyn Monroe, Kennedy-Brüder (1962): Geliebt und mißbraucht

sten Vertrauten kannten, war dahin,
und nie wieder würde einer wie er kommen.

Mit Mordanschlägen auf Castro, gegen
den Kennedy einen persönlichen Haß hegte,
hatte man den Präsidenten vorsichtshalber
wohl nicht befaßt. Aber warum wußte er
nichts von Elsur? Es gab natürlich schon
damals legale und illegale Abhörmetho-
den. Heute hören die Dienste der USA die
ganze Welt ab.

Elsur war die Waffe, die J. Edgar Hoover
gegen drei Präsidenten, gegen Kennedy,
Johnson und Nixon (den Kissinger nicht
dazu bringen konnte, Hoover zu feuern),
in der Hand hatte. Er starb 1972 im Amt.

Auch Kennedy war nicht kleinlich, wenn
es ums Abhören ging. Nach dem Debakel
in der Schweinebucht hatte ihm gar nicht
gefallen, wie die Militärs ihre eigene Rolle
herunterzuspielen versuchten. Darum ließ
er in den Konferenzräumen des Kuba-Krisen-
stabes heimlich Abhörvorrichtungen anbrin-
gen, was König Artus sicher mißbilligt hätte.
Er selbst hatte ein Abhörgerät an seinem
Schreibtisch, machte aber kaum Gebrauch
davon, weil er befürchtete, es nicht rechtzei-
tig wieder abzustellen.

J. Edgar Hoover hat Kennedy bestimmt
nicht umbringen wollen. Er hatte zugelassen,
was zu ändern er nicht gesonnen war. Aber
da JFK nun, wie erwartet und erhofft, tot
war, hatten Johnson und er das gleiche
Interesse: Es mußte ein verrückter Einzeltäter,
ein Kommunist gewesen sein. Hoover „wußte“
das schon wenige Stunden nach Lee Harvey
Oswalds Verhaftung.

Die Mafia, von der Hoover und sein
Stellvertreter Tolson so beharrlich keine
Notiz nehmen wollten, war damals längst
ein Folterverein. Carlos Marcello, als Nicht-
Staatsbürger ständig von der Abschiebung
bedroht, genügte es, wenn der Präsident
sein Leben verlor. Dann würde er seine
Geschäfte wie früher weiterführen können.
Als Ober-



Oswald-Ermordung in Dallas: Opler und Metzler, FBI-Zutörer?

ZEITGESCHICHTE

zufällig sonntags ohne Kinder und der FBI-Direktor war nicht da, so setzte er sich und sagte: „Ich kann warten.“

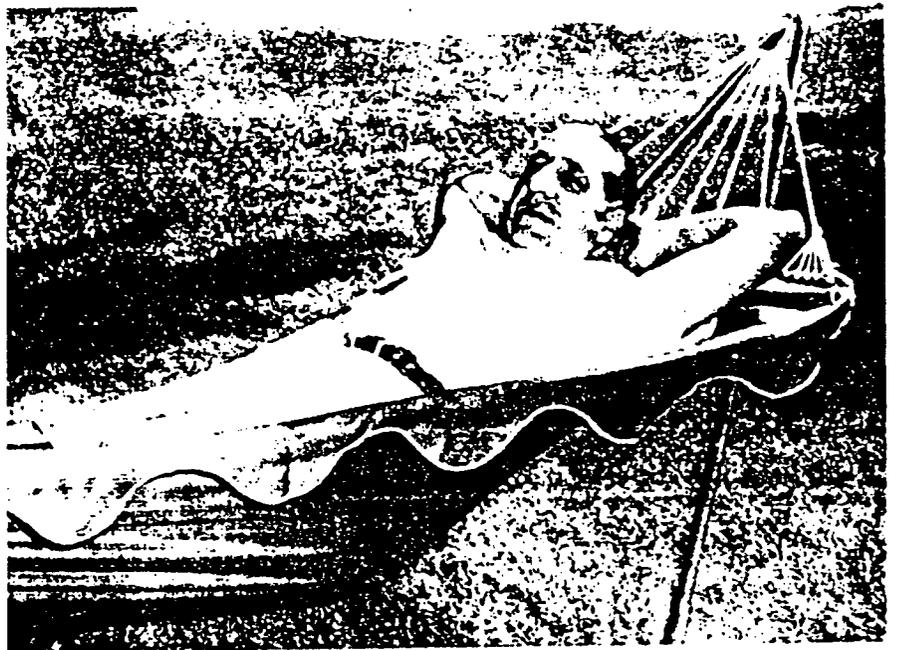
Mit dem Präsidenten selbst hätte Hoover sich vielleicht auf dem schlüpfrigen Boden der Schnüffelbettwiese einigen können. Er wollte ja nur eine Verlängerung seines Vertrages über die vorgeschriebene Pensionsgrenze hinaus, natürlich bis ans Sterbebett („Mein Gott, was soll aus den Vereinigten Staaten werden“). Mit dem jüngeren Kennedy aber, der moralischer dachte als sein älterer Bruder, gab es keine Verständigung. Bobby, der engste Vertraute des Präsidenten, suchte sich gleichwohl eine eigene Aufgabe, die von Hoover nur instrumentiert wurde: die Bekämpfung des organisierten Verbrechens.

Erfolge konnten da nicht ausbleiben. Die Gangster überlegten, ob sie den Justizminister umbringen sollten, kamen aber bald auf den schlaun Gedanken, es müsse gleich der Präsident selbst sein. Denn dessen Vize und damit potentieller Nachfolger Lyndon B. Johnson war noch mehr von Hoover abhängig, als es Kennedy jemals gewesen war. Er würde danach trachten, Bobby bei der ersten sich bietenden Gelegenheit loszuwerden.

Wie kam Hoover in den von ihm eifersüchtig gehüteten Besitz seiner Erkenntnisse? Durch die üblichen illegalen



Gangster Giancana, Geliebte Campbell-Exner: Erpressungsmaterial frei Haus



Mafia-Boss Costello: Treffen im Central Park

Mittel, vor allem aber durch ein System, genannt Elsur (*Electronic Surveillance*). Es lieferte keine Bilder, wohl aber Stimmen. Von der Existenz dieses Systems wußten nicht einmal die Kennedy-Brüder etwas.

So liest sich der Elsur-Bericht vom 2. Mai 1963 aus New York: Ein Sal Profaci und ein Michelino Clemente unterhalten sich. Clemente:

Bob Kennedy wird erst aufhören, wenn wir alle im Gefängnis sitzen. Bis die Commission sich trifft und die Soche anpackt, werden die Dinge bleiben, wie sie sind.

Die „Commission“ war die oberste Schaltstelle der Cosa Nostra für friedliche und kriegerische Auseinandersetzungen.



Am 14. Oktober 1963 – wir nähern uns dem Tag des Mordes – meldet sich Elsur aus einem Kleidergeschäft in Chicago. Sam Giancana, Kennedys Teilhaber an Judith Campbell-Exner, ist auch anwesend. Man überlegt, ob Bobby Kennedy Golf spielt. Von JFK weiß man das. Einer schlägt vor, eine Bombe in seiner Golftasche zu plazieren.

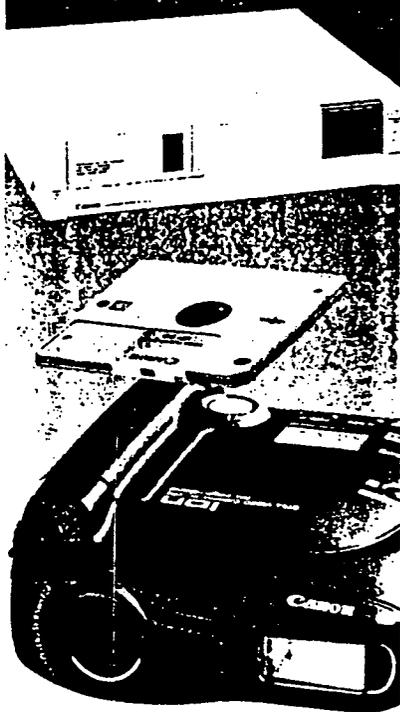
Am 31. Oktober 1963 ist Elsur aus Buffalo zu hören: Stefano und Peter Maggadino unterhalten sich über den Präsidenten. Peter: „Er sollte tot umfallen.“ Stefano: „Man sollte die ganze Familie umbringen. Mutter und Vater auch.“ Vater Joseph war von einem Schlaganfall teilweise gelähmt, weil Hoover ihn wohl oder übel hatte verfolgen müssen.

Keine dieser Elsur-Meldungen wird von J. Edgar Hoover, über dessen Tisch sie alle liefen, an den Personenschutz des Präsidenten, den im Vergleich zu Hoovers FBI kümmerlichen Secret Service, weitergegeben, keine an den vorgesetzten Justizminister, der schließlich auch im Visier war, keine an den Präsidenten selbst. Im Elisabethanischen England hätte man solch einen tückischen Verräter im Tower geköpft.

Curt Gentry schildert in seiner Hoover-Biographie, was 23 Tage nach dieser letzten Elsur-Meldung aus Buffalo geschah*: Der Telefonanruf erreichte Robert Kennedy in einer Konferenzpause beim Lunch in Hickory Hill, wo man einen Tag lang die Bekämpfung des organisierten Verbrechens besprechen wollte. Bobby würde bis zu seinem Tod, der

* Curt Gentry: „J. Edgar Hoover, The Man and the Secrets“, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 848 Seiten, 29,95 Dollar.

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ZEITGESCHICHTE

Welcher Kunststücke mag sie sich wohl bedient haben? Oder hatte Giancana bei dem knappen und vergebens angefochtenen Wahlausgang von Chicago seine Hand im Spiel? Auch mit Giancana selbst ist Kennedy mehr als einmal zusammengetroffen. Der hatte enge Beziehungen zu der Marcello-„Familie“, die laut Mark North den Mord von Dallas durch Vertragskiller in die Wege geleitet haben soll.

Es kann dem FBI-Direktor, der sein Hauptquartier in Washington SOG (Seat of Government) nennen ließ, nicht gefallen haben, daß Kennedy sich brüstete, als erster Präsident der Vereinigten Staaten im Schlafzimmer Abraham Lincolns (ein Mordopfer auch er) Ehebruch begangen zu haben. Dies alles, reichlich genug, hätte noch nicht gereicht, wenn JFK nicht seinen 35jährigen Bruder Bobby zum Justizminister gemacht hätte. Der war dem Präsidenten ergeben, aber aus anderem Holz: Beide Brüder, um Mißverständnissen vorzubeugen, waren zu Beginn ihrer amtlichen Tätigkeit stramme Antikommunisten.

Robert Kennedys Rolle in der Kuba-Krise des Jahres 1962 ist weit übertrieben worden. Es war John, der sich wegen Berlin berechnete Sorgen machte (von denen Adenauer in Bonn nichts wissen wollte). Es war John, dessen Treffen mit Chruschtschow in Wien weltweit falsch dargestellt worden ist, als hätte der junge und unerfahrene Präsident sich vom Herrn des Kreml den Schneid abkaufen lassen. Nach dem Debakel in der kubanischen Schweinebucht war das nicht allzu schwer, und J. Edgar Hoover trug sein Teil dazu bei.

Es war JFK, dem bewußt war, daß die USA den Sowjets auf dem Gebiet der atomaren Sprengköpfe im Verhältnis 20 : 1 überlegen waren - und daß doch gleichwohl die Sowjets jeden Schlag auf Kuba mit der nahezu kampflösen Einnahme West-Berlins erwidern müßten. Was dann? Als Bobby den (verwandten) Kriegsrat demgemäß in Abwesenheit des Präsidenten zur Abstimmung aufrief, siegte nicht seine Rhetorik („Mein Bruder wird nicht der Tojo des Jahres 1962 sein“), sondern der im Raum schwebende Wille des Präsidenten.

Dem war natürlich klar, daß er einerseits im Hinterhof der USA weder Raketen noch atomare Waffen dulden konnte; daß aber andererseits Chruschtschow diese Monroe-Logik nicht begreifen würde, weil er ja derlei Kriegsgerät in der Türkei und anderswo auch hinnehmen mußte.

Kennedy ist damals kritisiert worden, unter anderem von dem späteren Außenminister Henry Kissinger. Er hatte aber, von heute aus gesehen, recht, er, und nicht die Falken à la Dean Acheson.



Hoover-Freund Tolson
Mutters Stellvertreter

Was passiert wäre, wenn Kennedy seine Kaltblütigkeit verloren hätte, ist gar nicht auszudenken. Da er aber auch auf dem Höhepunkt der Krise ein unverbesserlicher Frauenheld war, beauftragte er seinen Verteidigungsminister Robert McNamara, ihm eine neu in sein Blickfeld getretene Sekretärin des Wirtschaftsministers ins Bett zu schicken. Artus-Runde, Camelot.

Bobby wird auch beim Tod der von beiden mißbrauchten Marilyn Monroe eine bis heute zweifelhafte Rolle spielen. Er war nun als Justizminister nominell der Vorgesetzte von J. Edgar Hoover. Beide piesackten einander, wo sie nur konnten.

Hatte der immer korrekt gekleidete Hoover, der sonntags nie ins Büro kam, die stärkeren Bataillone - 14 000 Angestellte, die Hälfte aller Beschäftigten des Justizministeriums -, so kam ein leichtgeschürzter Bobby (sie duzten einander) just sonnabends mit seinen Kindern ins Büro des Direktors und bat ihn, eine Weile den Babysitter zu spielen, da er selbst ins Weiße Haus müsse. Kam er

AUSLAND

ließ er das beschließen und von seinem Freund Trafficante in Chicago absegnen, was man einen „contract“ nennt, gewissermaßen einen Preis auf den Kopf von JFK.

Der wirrköpfige Lee Harvey Oswald kann der angeheuerte „contract killer“ zumindest allein nicht gewesen sein. Er hatte Beziehungen zu linken Exil-Kubanern, das paßte. Er war in Rußland gewesen und hatte von dort eine russische Frau mitgebracht, das paßte ebenso. Er wollte nach Havanna und Fotograf werden, und das paßte auch.

Gar nicht paßte, daß er, obwohl früher Marineinfanterist, kein sehr guter Schütze war. Bis heute halten die Schußwaffen-Spezialisten es für unmöglich, daß selbst ein Meisterschütze mit einem Mannlicher-Carcano-Gewehr auf diese Entfernung ein bewegliches Ziel dreimal oder gar viermal treffen konnte, noch dazu in der bekannt kurzen Zeit.

Peinlicher noch: Das FBI mußte sich gegen Pressespekulationen wehren, daß Oswald sein bezahlter Informant gewesen sei. Daß Hoover sich weigerte, das Original von Oswalds Steuererklärung zu veröffentlichen, spricht dafür. Die Warren-Kommission, die nichts weiter war als eine Untersuchung J. Edgar Hoovers gegen J. Edgar Hoover, spielte mit.

Wieso stand Oswald nicht auf der Liste der gefährlichen Personen, da er doch in Dallas in einem Schulbuchhaus beschäftigt war, an dem der Präsident vorbeifahren würde? Und wo war das Motiv?

Er hatte nichts gegen den Präsidenten. Er hatte etwas gegen das FBI, dessen Beamte seine des Englischen nicht mächtige Frau Marina verhört und eingeschüchtert hatten.

Er erschien selbst im FBI-Office von Dallas und drohte auf einem Zettel, das ganze Gebäude in die Luft zu sprengen. Und diesem Mann hatte man weiter keine Beachtung geschenkt. Er trank eine Cola im Frühstücksraum, während sich das Auto des Präsidenten näherte. Er wurde auch nicht verhaftet, als er nach den Schüssen das Schulbuchgebäude verließ.

Mag sein, daß er dann in Panik geriet. Er holte seine Pistole aus seiner Pension (oder auch nicht). Daß er damit den Streifenpolizisten Tippit erschossen habe, konnte infolge einer „Verformung“ der vier Geschosse und aufgrund vieler anderer Umstände nicht einwandfrei belegt werden. Wir befinden uns in Texas.

Einen Mann von der psychischen Labilität Oswalds als „contract killer“ anzuhauern wäre heller Wahnsinn gewesen, und Marcellos Leute waren keine Amateure. Aber auch Mark North muß uns den einwandfreien Beweis dafür schuldig bleiben, daß Lee Harvey Oswald im zweiten Stock des Schulbuch-Lagerhauses zu Mittag aß, während „mindestens“

zwei Schützen den Präsidenten ermordeten.

J. Edgar Hoover aber, und hier stehen wir wieder auf festem Boden, wußte durch chiffrierte Airtel-Telegramme von einem Plan der Gangster Marcello und Trafficante, den Präsidenten vor dem 8. November 1964 zu ermorden, vor einer eventuellen zweiten Amtsperiode also.

Da wir uns in Texas befinden, gibt es von den Vernehmungen Lee Harvey Oswalds keine Protokolle, keine Tonband-Aufzeichnungen. Dafür aber durfte der Postinspektor eine halbe Stunde mit ihm sprechen.

Ein anonymes Anruf traf ein, man werde Oswald auf dem Weg ins Gefängnis ermorden. Dies geschah. Der Nachtclubbesitzer und frühere FBI-Zuträger Jack Ruby kam unbehelligt ins Kellerge-

... .. Polen

Fleißige Schüler

Die gerade erst gewählte Regierung droht schon wieder zu stürzen. Als Retter hält sich Präsident Walesa bereit.

Der Abgeordnete Andrzej Wielowiejski kam nach einem Gespräch mit amerikanischen Geschäftsleuten zu einer deprimierenden Einsicht: Westliche Investoren schätzten „Prag und Budapest mehr als Warschau“.

Als Gründe für die Zurückhaltung machte der Deputierte von der linksliberalen Demokratischen Union völlig



Premier Olszewski: „Losungen aus einer vergangenen Epoche“

schoß des Polizeigefängnisses und erschoss Oswald mit einem Colt.

Spuren konnten nun kaum noch verwischt werden, die von Johnson und Hoover gesteuerte Warren-Kommission konnte ihr Verwirrspiel beginnen. Der von Kennedy abgesetzte, von Johnson in die Kommission berufene frühere CIA-Direktor Allen Dulles (der Bruder des verstorbenen Außenministers John Foster) sagte, er an Hoovers Stelle würde notfalls einen Meineid schwören, natürlich nicht gegenüber dem Präsidenten.

Earl Warren, der höchste Richter des Landes, beschied einen Journalisten, der ihn fragte, ob der „Report“ denn auch veröffentlicht werde. „Sicherlich, aber nicht zu Ihren Lebzeiten.“

Er wurde veröffentlicht - als das dickste Fragezeichen der Welt.

überlastete Telefonleitungen. Dreck und die „Häßlichkeit der Hauptstadt“ aus.

Er hätte noch ein Argument nennen können: die instabile politische Lage des Landes, die bereits Züge einer permanenten Staatskrise trägt.

Drei Monate nach seiner Wahl zum Premier ist die Regierung des Zentrumspolitikers Jan Olszewski, 61, die sich auf nur 3 Parteien von 29 im Parlament stützen kann, ins Trudeln geraten. Zuerst war Finanzminister Karol Lutkowski zurückgetreten, weil er sich mit seinem Chef nicht über die künftige Haushaltspolitik einigen konnte; dann lehnte das Parlament Olszewskis lange vorbereitetes Programm zur Gesundung der Wirtschaft ab.

Die Abstimmung im Sejm zeigte, wie widersprüchlich die politische Lage in

Valenti Calls 'J. F. K.' 'Hoax' and 'Smear'

By BERNARD WEINRAUB

Special to The New York Times

HOLLYWOOD, April 1 — In a highly unusual and angry statement, Jack Valenti, the president and chief executive of the Motion Picture Association of America and a former top aide to President Lyndon B. Johnson, denounced the film "J. F. K." today as a "hoax," a "smear" and "pure fiction" that rivaled the Nazi propaganda films of Leni Reifenstahl.

Mr. Valenti, a film industry spokesman and lobbyist in Washington, has kept silent until now about the Oliver Stone film, which opened in December. He emphasized that he was making a personal statement that "has no connection to my responsibilities in the movie industry."

"Indeed, I wanted to speak out because I didn't want to do anything which might affect this picture's theatrical release or the Oscar balloting," he said.

In the seven-page statement, Mr. Valenti said Mr. Stone's film was "a monstrous charade" based on "the hallucinatory bleatings of an author named Jim Garrison, a discredited former district attorney in New Orleans." The movie implies that President Johnson was part of a Government conspiracy in the assassination of President Kennedy.

"Does any sane human being truly

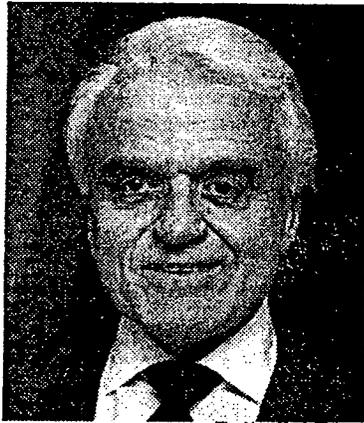
believe that President Johnson, the Warren Commission members, law-enforcement officers, C.I.A., F.B.I., assorted thugs, weirdos, Frisbee throwers, all conspired together as plotters in Garrison's wacky sightings?" he asked. "And then for almost 29 years nothing leaked? But you have to believe it if you think well of any part of this accusatory lunacy."

"In scene after scene Mr. Stone plasters together the half true and the totally false and from that he manufactures the plausible," Mr. Valenti said in his statement. "No wonder that many young people, gripped by the movie, leave the theater convinced they have been witness to the truth."

"In much the same way, young German boys and girls in 1941 were mesmerized by Leni Reifenstahl's 'Triumph of the Will,' in which Adolf Hitler was depicted as a newborn God," he said. "Both 'J. F. K.' and 'Triumph of the Will' are equally a propaganda masterpiece and equally a hoax. Mr. Stone and Leni Reifenstahl have another genetic linkage: neither of them carried a disclaimer on their film that its contents were mostly pure fiction."

What makes the statement especially unusual is that as head of the Motion Picture Association since 1966, the Texas-born, Harvard-educated Mr. Valenti has sought to keep his employers, the movie studios, as happy as possible without stirring controversy despite his high profile in Hollywood and Washington. One of those employers, Warner Brothers, produced "J. F. K.," which has raised considerable debate over its blend of speculation, fiction and fact.

In a telephone interview, Mr. Valenti said he delayed attacking the movie because of his job. "Warner Brothers is a member of my association, and I owe them a fidelity to my responsibility," he said. "While this is a personal statement, I did not want to do anything that, in the slightest way, would affect this picture's journey and its chances of winning an Academy Award." The movie, which won Academy Awards on Monday night for cinematography and editing, has grossed more than \$68 mil-



Jack Valenti

The New York Times

Continued on Page C24

Valenti Calls 'J.F.K.' a 'Hoax' and a 'Smear'

Continued From Page C15

lion in the United States and is expected to prove a strong box-office success in Europe.

Mr. Valenti said he had told Warner Brothers that he planned to issue a statement but had not provided the text to the studio. "They recognize that I am in a difficult position, but I told them that this was such a personal thing, it goes deep into my vitals," he said. "I owe where I am today to Lyndon Johnson. I could not live with myself if I stood by mutely and let some film maker soil his memory."

Mr. Stone, who received a copy of the statement from Mr. Valenti late this afternoon, said by telephone: "While I respect Jack Valenti's enduring loyalty to President Johnson, I find his emotional diatribe off the mark. The overwhelming majority of Americans — and not just the young, whom Mr. Valenti puts down as too impressionable — agree with the central thesis of my film: that President Kennedy was killed by a conspiracy, which included people in the Government."

He added: "I am enormously proud of the artistic and political impact which 'J. F. K.' has had. I hope

Mr. Valenti, now that he has vented his spleen, will join in supporting the joint House-Senate resolution that all Government files in the assassination of President Kennedy be opened so that the American people can have a fuller understanding of that tragedy and its continuing implications for our democracy."

Robert A. Daly, the chairman of Warner Brothers, said the company supported Mr. Stone but understood Mr. Valenti's fury. "Our feeling is very simple," he said. "We support the movie. We think it's a wonderful movie. We have the utmost regard for what Oliver Stone did. As far as Jack

Valenti is concerned, the fact that he's loyal to L. B. J. is admirable, and I would hope anybody who worked for me for all those years would be that loyal. I have nothing but the highest regard for Jack."

Mr. Daly said that if the Warren Commission files are opened because of pressure generated by the film, he was convinced that some of the movie's speculation about more than one assassin would be borne out.

'I Was There'

Mr. Valenti began working for Mr. Johnson in 1955 when he was the Senate majority leader and later served at the White House as Mr. Johnson's assistant from 1963 to 1966. Mr. Valenti handled the press during the visit of President Kennedy and

Vice President Johnson to Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963, when Mr. Kennedy was assassinated.

In his statement, Mr. Valenti said: "My own rebuttal to Mr. Stone comes down to this: I was there, and he wasn't."

Mr. Valenti said in his statement that he stood beside Mr. Johnson when he was sworn in on the plane carrying Kennedy's coffin, that he lived at the White House for two months afterwards, that he "read every paper that crossed the President's desk, including the most top-secret documents, and was an eyewitness to many of his most confidential phone conversations." He continued: "I was there when President Johnson ruminated about the assassination, and the urgency to enlist the

most prestigious citizens within the Republic to inspect this murder carefully, objectively, swiftly."

After naming some of the members of the Warren Commission, which Mr. Stone has denounced because of its conclusion that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in killing Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Valenti said: "To indict these men of honor, along with Lyndon Johnson, is vicious, cruel and false."

He added, "No matter his brilliant creative skills, and they are considerable, Mr. Stone has with deliberate forethought put on the screen a monstrous charade about President Johnson that ranks right up there with the best work of old-guard Soviet revisionist historians."

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 12 MAY 1992

CIA, FBI DIRECTORS BACK RELEASE OF JFK MATERIAL

WASHINGTON, May 12, Reuter - The directors of the CIA and FBI said on Tuesday they supported release of classified information about the assassination of President John Kennedy to resolve doubts about whether Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone.

"We are hoping that opening up and giving journalists, historians and, most importantly, the public access to government files will help to resolve questions that still linger over 28 years after the assassination," the Central Intelligence Agency's Robert Gates said in testimony at a U.S. Senate hearing.

"Further, I believe that maximum disclosure will discredit the theory that CIA had anything to do with the murder of John F. Kennedy," Gates added.

The Senate Governmental Affairs Committee is considering legislation to release hundreds of thousands of government documents about the 1963 assassination that have been kept secret since the official investigation chaired by Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren. The commission found that Oswald acted alone.

"I wholly endorse the purpose of this bill to release as much information pertinent to the assassination as we responsibly can," the chief of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, William Sessions, said in testimony to the committee.

Efforts to win release of the documents, most of which are being held until the year 2029, have been sparked by the film "JFK," which posed the theory that the CIA and other government agencies conspired to murder Kennedy and cover up their involvement. The film has been criticised for mixing fiction and fact.

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 12 MAY 1992

CIA Says It Will Release Oswald File Predating Assassination

By JOHN DIAMOND

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) - The CIA will release a 110-page file on Lee Harvey Oswald that predates the assassination of President Kennedy, agency Director Robert Gates told a Senate panel today.

In a hearing on legislation that would allow the release of thousands of assassination-related documents, Gates said a CIA historical review group is preparing to send the Oswald file "with quite minimal deletions" to the National Archives.

The record in the file deals with Oswald's defection to the Soviet Union in 1959 and his activities after his return to the United States in 1961, Gates said.

Gates and FBI Director William Sessions said they both support the goal of releasing assassination material. But both raised numerous technical objections to the proposed legislation. Most of the objections concern the right of the president to control the release of executive-branch documents.

Sen. John Glenn, D-Ohio, chairman of the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee, which held the hearing, said that the Bush administration may be preparing an executive order directing executive-branch agencies to release assassination documents.

"This somehow might look as though it's pre-empting this legislation," Glenn said. Lawmakers involved in the drafting of the bill, including Sen. David Boren, D-Okla., chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, and Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., a former legal counsel to the Warren Commission, said that the bill should still pass regardless of what Bush orders.

"To have the executive branch be judge and jury over documents in its possession would not be the kind of resolution to this issue we need to assure the public," Boren said.

The legislation would establish a judicially-appointed review board that would have the power to review and release assassination documents. The president would be allowed to veto release of any document that might compromise national security.

Gates said the CIA has some 33,000 pages of material on Oswald, most of which was accumulated after the Nov. 22, 1963, Kennedy assassination. The Warren Commission concluded that Oswald was the lone assassin of Kennedy in Dallas.

Gates brought to the hearing the 110-page pre-assassination portion of the Oswald file, "so that you can see firsthand how slender it was at the time."

Gates said that he agrees with the spirit of the legislation.

"I believe that maximum disclosure will discredit the theory that CIA had anything to do with the murder of John F. Kennedy," Gates said.

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

EXCERPTED

THE REUTER TRANSCRIPT REPORT

Date 12 MAY 1992

SENATE GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE HEARING
Topic: S.J.Res. 282, Assassination Materials Disclosure Act
of 1992
May 12, 1992

CIA DIRECTOR ROBERT GATES: Mr. Chairman, I'm here today at your request to provide my views on Senate Joint Resolution 282, the Assassination Materials Disclosure Act of 1992, and to describe the nature of the documents held by the Central Intelligence Agency that relate to the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

I very much appreciate the opportunity to speak on this important matter. Let me begin by stating that I am in complete agreement with the purpose underlying the joint resolution, that efforts should be made to declassify and make available to the public as quickly as possible government documents relating to the assassination of President Kennedy.

We hope that opening up and giving journalists, historians, and most importantly, the public, access to governmental files will help to resolve questions that still linger over 28 years after the assassination.

Further, I believe that maximum disclosure will discredit the theory that CIA had anything to do with the murder of President Kennedy.

Even before the introduction of this joint resolution, I recognized the need for greater public access to CIA documents of historical importance. Two months ago I announced the establishment of a new unit within CIA that will be responsible for declassifying as many historical documents as possible consistent with the protection of intelligence sources and methods.

This new unit, the Historical Review Group in the Agency's center for the Study of Intelligence, will review for declassification documents 30 years old or older and national intelligence estimates on the former Soviet Union that are 10 years old or older.

In addition to the systematic review of 30 year old documents, I have directed the history staff and the Center for the Study of Intelligence to assemble CIA records, focusing on particular events of historical importance, including the assassination of President Kennedy.

Historical Review Group will then examine the documents for the purpose of declassifying the records. Because

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EXCERPTS

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of high interest in the JFK papers, I am not waiting for legislation or other agencies to start declassifying documents belonging to CIA.

The Historical Review Group, at my direction, already has begun its review of the documents related to the assassination of President Kennedy. And I'm happy to report that the first group of these records, including all CIA documents on Lee Harvey Oswald prior to the assassination has been declassified, with quite minimal deletions and is being transferred to the National Archives for release to the public.

This is, I acknowledge, a small fraction of what we hold. But it is in earnest of my commitment immediately to begin review for declassification of this material. And indeed, as I speak, the reviewers are going through a substantial number of documents, and I anticipate that many of these will be released shortly.

As we carry out our program to declassify Kennedy assassination documents, our goal will be to release as many as possible. In fact, I recently approved a new CIA declassification guideline for our historical review program, which specifically directs a presumption in favor of declassification.

I believe we can be very forward leaning in making these documents available to the public and I have instructed the Historical Review Group to take this attitude to heart. In this spirit, the agency today will make publicly available these new guidelines for historical review and declassification.

To understand the magnitude of the effort involved in reviewing these documents for declassification, it is important to place them in some context. CIA's collection of documents related to the assassination of President Kennedy consists of approximately 250,000 to 300,000 pages of material. This includes 64 boxes of copies and originals of information provided to the Warren Commission and the House Select Committee on Assassinations and 17 boxes of material on Lee Harvey Oswald accumulated after President Kennedy's assassination.

Unfortunately, and for reasons that I do know, what we are dealing with is a mass of material that is not indexed, is uncatalogued and is highly disorganized, all of which makes the review process more difficult. The material contains everything from the most sensitive intelligence sources to the most mundane news clippings.

These records include documents that CIA had in its files before the assassination. A large number of records that CIA received later is routine disseminations from other agencies, as well as the reports, correspondence and other papers that CIA prepared in the course of the assassination investigations.

I should emphasize that these records were assembled into the present collection as a result of specific inquiries received from the Warren Commission or the House Select Committee on Assassinations.

Prior to President Kennedy's assassination, CIA held only a small file on Lee Harvey Oswald that consisted of 33 documents, amounting to 110 pages, some of which originated with the FBI, State Department, the Navy and newspaper clippings.

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EXCERPTS

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Only 11 of these documents originated within CIA.

I brought along a copy of Oswald's file as it existed before the assassination, so that you can see firsthand how slender it was at the time. As I've already noted, we've declassified the CIA documents in this file with quite minimal deletions and we are providing them to the National Archives.

The records in this file dealt with Oswald's defection to the Soviet Union in 1959 and his activities after his return in 1962. By contrast, it was only after the assassination that CIA accumulated the rest of the material on Oswald--some 33,000 pages, most of which CIA received from other agencies after November 22nd, 1963.

The committee has asked about documents in our possession generated by other agencies. In fact, much of the material held by CIA originated with other agencies or departments. For example, in the 17 boxes of Oswald records, approximately 40 percent of the documents originated with the FBI and about 20 percent originated from the State Department or elsewhere. Our staff is still going through the material, compiled at the request of the Warren Commission and the House Select Committee on Assassinations, which includes 63 boxes of paper records and one box that contains 73 reels of microfilm.

The microfilms in part overlap material in other parts of the collection. We estimate that within the 63 boxes of paper records, approximately 27 percent originated with a variety of other U.S. government agencies, private organizations, and foreign and American press.

Although our documents do include many documents from other agencies, we nonetheless have a substantial collection of CIA documents that will require considerable effort to review. And as I said earlier, at my direction, this review for declassification is now underway.

A preliminary survey of these files has provided us some indications of what they contain. Although the records cover a wide variety of topics, they principally focus on CIA activities concerning Cuba and Castro, Oswald's defection to the Soviet Union, and Oswald's subsequent activities in Mexico City and New Orleans.

They also include a large number of name traces requested by the staff of the House Select Committee on Assassinations, as well as material relating to the Garrison investigation and Cuban exile activities.

CIA cannot release a number of documents unilaterally because in the limits and the Privacy Act which protects the names of American citizens against unauthorized disclosure, the sequestration of many documents by the House Select Committee on Assassinations and the fact that many of the documents belong to agencies other than CIA.

However, we have already taken steps to lift the sequestration, to coordinate with other agencies, and to begin the process of declassification. If necessary, in the absence of legislation, I will ask the House of Representatives for a resolution permitting CIA to release the results of the declassification effort on the sequestered documents.

While I expect a large amount of the material can be declassified under our program, I assume that there will be

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information that cannot be released to the public for a variety of reasons, including privacy concerns or the exposure of intelligence sources and methods. Let me take a moment to give an example of this type of material.

During the investigation by the House Select Committee on Assassinations, I understand that security and personnel files were requested on a number of CIA employees. These files contain fitness reports or performance evaluations, medical evaluations and credit checks on individual CIA officers. Although irrelevant to the question of who killed President Kennedy, these and other personal documents ultimately ended up in the sequestered collection of documents. I do not believe that the benefit to the public of disclosure of this information outweighs the clear privacy interest of the individuals in keeping the information confidential.

Similar privacy concerns exist with documents containing derogatory information on particular individuals where the information is based on gossip and rumor. Our files also contain the names of individuals who provided us intelligence information on a promise of confidentiality. We would not disclose their names in breach of such a promise.

Where we cannot disclose such information to the public, the agency will make redactions and summarize the information in order to ensure that the maximum amount of information is released, while still protecting the identify of an agent or the privacy of an individual.

If legislation is not passed by the Congress and signed by the president regarding the JFK papers, to enhance public confidence and to provide reassurance that CIA has not held back information relevant to the assassination, I would appoint a panel of distinguished Americans from outside of government, perhaps including distinguished former jurists to examine whatever documents we have redacted or kept classified. They would then issue an unclassified public report on their findings.

The effort required to declassify the documents relating to the assassination of President Kennedy will be daunting. However, it is an important program and I am committed to making it work. Even in a time of diminishing resources within the intelligence community, I have allocated 15 full time positions to expand the history staff and to form the Historical Review Group that will review the JFK documents and other documents of historical interest.

GATES (continuing): I believe these actions attest to the seriousness of our intent to get these papers declassified and released, and to open what remains classified to outside non-governmental review. It is against this background that in response to the committee's request I cite our few technical reservations about the mechanism established by the joint resolution to achieve this same result. I intend to address only intelligence community concerns. I will defer to the Department of Justice on any additional problems posed by the joint resolution.

First, vesting in an outside body the determination as to whether CIA materials related to the assassination can be released to the public is inconsistent with my own statutory responsibility for the protection of intelligence sources and methods.

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Second, I'm concerned that the joint resolution contains no provision requiring security clearances or secured document handling by the Assassination Materials Review Board or its staff.

Third, I'm concerned that the joint resolution does not provide the agency with the opportunity to object to the release of CIA information contained in documents originated by Congress or the Warren Commission. Under the joint resolution, documents originated by these entities can be released directly by the executive director of the Assassination Materials Review Board without any review by the president or other executive branch agencies.

Fourth, the joint resolution provision for a 30-day period for agencies or departments to repeal decisions by the executive director to release information may not provide sufficient time for meaningful review of what could prove to be a large volume of material at one time.

Fifth, and finally, Section 6 of the joint resolution, which outlines the grounds for postponement of public release of a document, makes no provision for postponing release of documents that may contain executive privilege or deliberate process, attorney-client, or attorney work product information. While such privileges could be waived in the public interest,

and in fact are not likely to arise with respect to factual information directly related to the JFK assassination, they would be unavailable under the joint resolution in the rare case they might be needed.

These are the technical problems that I believe can be solved, and that will in fact expedite the release of documents bearing on the assassination of President Kennedy.

But again, whatever the future course of this legislation, CIA is proceeding even now to review for declassification the relevant documents under its control.

Further, we will cooperate fully with any mechanism established by the Congress and the president to declassify all of this material.

Mr. Chairman, let me close with a comment on why I am personally committed to get these documents out. Like all Americans old enough to recall that terrible day in November 1963, as several members of the committee have alluded to, I also remember where I was and what I was doing. I was a college student at William and Mary. I can remember how the word spread like wildfire between classes of that horrible event. I made my way to Washington that weekend and stood at the intersection of Constitution and Pennsylvania Avenues where I waited for hours to watch the president's funeral cortege. I will never forget it.

I entered public service less than three years later, heeding President Kennedy's inaugural call, a call I think many in my generation heard. He said then: Now the trumpet summons us again, not as a call to bear arms, though arms we need, not as a call to battle, though in battle we are, but as a call to bear the burden of a long twilight struggle, year in and year out, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, a struggle against the common enemies of man--tyranny, poverty, disease, and war itself.

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Mr. Chairman, the only thing more horrifying to me than the assassination itself is the insidious perverse notion that elements of the American government, that my own agency, had some part in it. I am determined personally to make public or to expose to disinterested eyes every relevant scrap of paper in CIA's possession in the hope of helping to dispel this corrosive suspicion. With or without legislation, I intend to proceed. I believe I owe that to his memory.

Thank you.

SENATOR GLENN: Thank you, Mr. Gates. Mr. Sessions.

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 12 MAY 1992

CIA Documents Released in JFK Assassination
Eds: INSERTS 2 grafs after 2nd graf pvs; The 110-page, to ADD
government interest in Oswald pre-assassination, details on
documents.

AP Photo WX16

By JOHN DIAMOND

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) - CIA documents on Lee Harvey Oswald show that
government agents used informants and face-to-face interviews to
track the shadowy defector off and on for three years leading up to
President Kennedy's assassination.

The 110-page file, given to a Senate committee Tuesday and made
available to The Associated Press, comprises all the CIA documents
collected before the Nov. 22, 1963, assassination in Dallas. CIA
Director Robert Gates told the Senate Government Affairs Committee
that the file will be available to the public "any day now."

Government interest in Oswald began in 1959, at the height of
the Cold War, because of the ex-Marine's announced intention to
defect to the Soviet Union. The FBI and CIA exchanged dozens of
memos describing Oswald's background, recounting his meetings with
government officials and detailing interviews with relatives and
associates.

Among other tidbits contained in the documents are: that
Oswald's mother was "shocked" to learn of his defection; that
Oswald feared he would be jailed as a traitor after he decided to
return to the United States; that he gave the "plight of the
American negro U.S. imperialism" as reasons for his defection; and
that a man identifying himself as "Lee Oswald" at the Soviet
Embassy in Mexico City a month before the assassination may have
been someone else.

Gates said he wants to clear the CIA of "this corrosive
suspicion" that agency operatives were involved in Kennedy's
assassination.

"The only thing more horrifying to me than the assassination
itself is the insidious, perverse notion that elements of my own
government, including this agency, had something to do with it,"
Gates told the committee.

In a hearing on legislation to allow the release of thousands of
assassination-related documents, Gates recalled driving to
Washington as a college student to stand along Pennsylvania Avenue
and watch Kennedy's funeral procession.

The file, which Gates brought with him to the hearing, consists
of 33 documents, 11 of them originating in the CIA. They concern
Oswald's defection to the Soviet Union in 1959 and his activities
after returning to the United States in 1961.

Attorney James Lesar, who operates the Assassination Archive and
Research Center, said, based on a quick perusal, that the material
has been available to researchers. Many of the documents are FBI
memos sent to the CIA and may be among those already released by
the FBI in response to Freedom of Information requests.

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The documents show what appears to be a mild government interest in Oswald beginning with his defection and extending up to his mysterious visit to the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City a month before the assassination.

Documents from the U.S. Embassy in Moscow describe Oswald as arrogant and demanding, first in renouncing his U.S. citizenship and then in seeking it back two years later. One embassy document sent to the State Department notes that Oswald was worried that if he returned to the United States he would be prosecuted and jailed for defecting.

Oswald demanded "full guarantees that I shall not, under any circumstances, be prosecuted for any act pertaining to this case." The State Department gave no guarantees but told Oswald there appeared to be no prosecution impending.

Several documents mention Oswald's service in the Marines in the late 1950s and his posting at an air base in Japan. There is no mention in these papers that the base was being used by U-2 spy planes.

An October 1963 CIA memo discusses the visit to the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City. It describes the person who identified himself as "Lee Oswald" as being 6 feet tall with an athletic build, not a description that matched Oswald's slight physique.

The question of whether someone was posing as Oswald in a contact with Soviet officials so close to the assassination is a matter of keen interest of assassination scholars.

After Oswald was identified as the assassin, government files expanded rapidly. The CIA has about 33,000 pages relating to Oswald and up to 300,000 pages of material dealing on the assassination. Gates said a CIA historical review panel will gradually work through the other documents and approve the release of most.

Gates and FBI Director William Sessions said they both support the goal of releasing assassination material. But they raised numerous objections to the proposed legislation. Most of the objections concern the right of the president to control the release of executive branch documents.

Deputy Assistant Attorney General David Leitch confirmed under questioning that the Bush administration is working on an executive order directing federal agencies to declassify and release Kennedy assassination documents.

Sen. John Glenn, D-Ohio and the committee chairman, said the move sounded like an attempt to preempt legislation on the assassination documents.

Sen. David Boren, D-Okla. and the chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, said that the bill should still pass regardless of what Bush orders.

"To have the executive branch be judge and jury over documents in its possession would not be the kind of resolution to this issue we need to assure the public," Boren said.

The legislation would establish a judicially-appointed review board that would have the power to review and release assassination documents. The president would be allowed to veto the release of any document determined to be a threat to national security.

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Date 12 MAY 1992

CIA Documents Released in JFK Assassination

Eds: SUBS 4th graf, "The only, to CORRECT "pervasive" to "perverse."

AP Photo WX16

By JOHN DIAMOND

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) - CIA documents on Lee Harvey Oswald show that government agents used informants and face-to-face interviews to track the shadowy defector off and on for three years leading up to President Kennedy's assassination.

The 110-page file, given to a Senate committee Tuesday and made available to The Associated Press, comprises all the CIA documents collected before the Nov. 22, 1963, assassination in Dallas. CIA Director Robert Gates told the Senate Government Affairs Committee that the file will be available to the public "any day now."

Gates said he wants to clear the CIA of "this corrosive suspicion" that agency operatives were involved in Kennedy's assassination.

"The only thing more horrifying to me than the assassination itself is the insidious, perverse notion that elements of my own government, including this agency, had something to do with it," Gates told the committee.

In a hearing on legislation to allow the release of thousands of assassination-related documents, Gates recalled driving to Washington as a college student to stand along Pennsylvania Avenue and watch Kennedy's funeral procession.

The file, which Gates brought with him to the hearing, consists of 33 documents, 11 of them originating in the CIA. They concern Oswald's defection to the Soviet Union in 1959 and his activities after returning to the United States in 1961.

Attorney James Lesar, who operates the Assassination Archive and Research Center, said, based on a quick perusal, that the material has been available to researchers. Many of the documents are FBI memos sent to the CIA and may be among those already released by the FBI in response to Freedom of Information requests.

The documents show what appears to be a mild government interest in Oswald beginning with his defection and extending up to his mysterious visit to the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City a month before the assassination.

Documents from the U.S. Embassy in Moscow describe Oswald as arrogant and demanding, first in renouncing his U.S. citizenship and then in seeking it back two years later. One embassy document sent to the State Department notes that Oswald was worried that if he returned to the United States he would be prosecuted and jailed for defecting.

Oswald demanded "full guarantees that I shall not, under any circumstances, be prosecuted for any act pertaining to this case." The State Department gave no guarantees but told Oswald there appeared to be no prosecution impending.

Several documents mention Oswald's service in the Marines in the

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late 1950s and his posting at an air base in Japan. There is no mention in these papers that the base was being used by U-2 spy planes.

An October 1963 CIA memo discusses the visit to the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City. It describes the person who identified himself as "Lee Oswald" as being 6 feet tall with an athletic build, not a description that matched Oswald's slight physique.

The question of whether someone was posing as Oswald in a contact with Soviet officials so close to the assassination is matter of keen interest to assassination scholars.

After Oswald was identified as the assassin, government files expanded rapidly. The CIA has about 33,000 pages relating to Oswald and up to 300,000 pages of material dealing on the assassination. Gates said a CIA historical review panel will gradually work through the other documents and approve the release of most.

Gates and FBI Director William Sessions said they both support the goal of releasing assassination material. But they raised numerous objections to the proposed legislation. Most of the objections concern the right of the president to control the release of executive branch documents.

Deputy Assistant Attorney General David Leitch confirmed under questioning that the Bush administration is working on an executive order directing federal agencies to declassify and release Kennedy assassination documents.

Sen. John Glenn, D-Ohio and the committee chairman, said the move sounded like an attempt to preempt legislation on the assassination documents.

Sen. David Boren, D-Okla. and the chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, said that the bill should still pass regardless of what Bush orders.

"To have the executive branch be judge and jury over documents in its possession would not be the kind of resolution to this issue we need to assure the public," Boren said.

The legislation would establish a judicially-appointed review board that would have the power to review and release assassination documents. The president would be allowed to veto the release of any document determined to be a threat to national security.

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Date 12 MAY 1992

CIA Releasing Early Files on Owsald

By JOHN DIAMOND
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) - The CIA is releasing with "minimal deletions" a 110-page file compiled on Lee Harvey Oswald before the assassination of President Kennedy, agency director Robert Gates told Congress on Tuesday.

Gates, his voice choked with emotion, said he wants to clear the CIA of "this corrosive suspicion" that agency operatives were involved in the Nov. 22, 1963 assassination. The sooner the full records into the slaying are released, Gates said, the better the chances the agency will clear its name.

"The only thing more horrifying to me than the assassination itself is the insidious, pervasive notion that elements of my own government, including this agency, had something to do with it," Gates told the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee.

He recalled driving to Washington as a college student to stand along Pennsylvania Avenue and watch Kennedy's funeral procession. In a hearing on legislation to allow the release of thousands of assassination-related documents, Gates said a CIA historical review group is preparing to send the Oswald file "with quite minimal deletions" to the National Archives. That should occur, he said, "any day now."

The 110-page file, which Gates brought with him to the hearing, consists of 33 documents, 11 of them originating in the CIA. They concern Oswald's defection to the Soviet Union in 1959 and his activities after returning to the United States in 1961.

After Oswald was identified as the assassin, government files expanded rapidly. The CIA has about 33,000 pages relating to Oswald and up to 300,000 pages of material dealing on the assassination. Gates said the in-house review panel will gradually work through the other documents and approve the release of most.

"I believe that maximum disclosure will discredit the theory that CIA had anything to do with the murder of John F. Kennedy," Gates said.

Gates and FBI Director William Sessions said they both support the goal of releasing assassination material. But both raised numerous objections to the proposed legislation. Most of the objections concern the right of the president to control the release of executive branch documents.

Gates and Sessions said the quest for openness should not be used to make public the names of government informants or medical and professional evaluations of private persons.

Deputy Assistant Attorney General David Leitch confirmed under questioning that the Bush administration is working on an executive order directing federal agencies to declassify and release Kennedy assassination documents.

Sen. John Glenn, D-Ohio and the committee chairman, said the move sounded like an attempt to preempt legislation on the

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assassination documents.

Lawmakers involved in the drafting of the bill, including Sen. David Boren, D-Okla. and the chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, and Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa. and a former legal counsel to the Warren Commission, said that the bill should still pass regardless of what Bush orders.

"To have the executive branch be judge and jury over documents in its possession would not be the kind of resolution to this issue we need to assure the public," Boren said.

The legislation would establish a judicially-appointed review board that would have the power to review and release assassination documents. The president would be allowed to veto the release of any document determined to be a threat to national security.

Congress and the administration appeared to be headed for a battle over executive privilege. The Justice Department recently raised strenuous objections to the bill and said it would consider recommending a veto if it were passed unchanged.

The mood was more conciliatory in Tuesday's hearing, however, with administration officials saying they were willing to compromise and coauthors of the bill saying they could agree to changes.

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Date 12 MAY 1992

CIA, FBI DIRECTORS BACK RELEASE OF JFK MATERIAL
(Eds: New story with background, detail, quotes)

By Robert Green

WASHINGTON, May 12, Reuter - The chiefs of the CIA and FBI on Tuesday urged the release of stacks of classified Kennedy assassination documents to help resolve the doubt, debate and conspiracy theories that swirl around modern America's most wrenching murder.

Central Intelligence Agency Director Robert Gates said he believes a public airing of what investigators know will free his agency of suspicions -- revived by Hollywood in the film "JFK" -- that it was part of a conspiracy to kill President John F. Kennedy in Dallas on November 22, 1963.

"We are hoping that opening up and giving journalists, historians and, most importantly, the public access to government files will help to resolve questions that still linger over 28 years after the assassination," Gates said in testimony at a Senate Governmental Affairs Committee hearing.

"Further, I believe that maximum disclosure will discredit the theory that CIA had anything to do with the murder of John F. Kennedy."

Federal Bureau of Investigation Director William Sessions also supported the proposed release of classified Kennedy files, saying, "I wholly endorse the purpose of this bill to release as much information pertinent to the assassination as we responsibly can."

The Senate committee is considering legislation to release hundreds of thousands of documents about the assassination that have been kept secret since the official investigation chaired by Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren.

The Warren Commission found that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in shooting Kennedy from the Dallas School Book Depository -- a conclusion questioned for decades by millions of Americans attracted by conspiracy theories that cast suspicion on government agencies, the Mafia, a variety of foreign governments and others.

The proposed legislation would create a five-member independent panel to decide what Kennedy investigative material should be made public.

Democratic Senator David Boren, chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee and a co-sponsor of the legislation, testified that he had checked with the Kennedy family and received its approval for the bill.

Deputy Assistant Attorney General David Leitch said the executive branch was considering issuing an executive order to release many of the documents covered by the bill.

"There is an effort under way to see if that would work," Leitch said, adding the proposal was in the drafting stage and he did not know how it would compare with the proposed bill.

Efforts to win release of the documents, most of which are

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being held until the year 2029, have been sparked by the movie "JFK," which suggested that the CIA and other federal agencies conspired to murder Kennedy and cover up their involvement. The film has been criticised for mixing fiction and fact.

Gates said the CIA had 300,000 pages of material relating to the assassination and was reviewing it to prepare it for release.

Sessions said the FBI had made public 224,000 of the 499,000 pages of documents it had on the assassination.

"I fully support in principle the notion that it is time to re-examine what remains undisclosed to determine whether the governmental interests in protecting these documents remains," Sessions said in his statement.

The bill's authors include Representative Louis Stokes, who chaired a House committee on the assassination in 1977 that concluded it was likely that there was a second gunman.

Stokes has said transcripts of FBI eavesdropping on mobsters might add more information on whether organised crime members were involved in a conspiracy.

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Date 12 MAY 1992

CIA chief says his agency clean in JFK case

BY TRISHA THOMAS

WASHINGTON (UPI) CIA Director Robert Gates told Congress Tuesday he has begun declassifying all relevant information on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

Gates said he will make public "every relevant scrap of information" to put an end to the "insidious, perverse notion that my agency could have been involved."

Gates, FBI Director William Sessions, several members of Congress and academics testified before a Senate committee on the release of documents related to the most famous murder of the century.

Senators on the Committee on Governmental Affairs acknowledged that much of the public interest surrounding the documents came from the movie "JFK" in which director Oliver Stone promotes a conspiracy theory that ties the killing to the CIA, among others.

All the witnesses testifying agreed on the importance of disclosure of most of the documents but disagreed on the process for determining what is released and when.

The most emotional testimony came from Gates who said he heard about the 1963 assassination while a college student at William and Mary in Williamsburg, Va., and rushed to Washington, where he waited for hours on the corner of Pennsylvania and Constitution avenues to watch the funeral procession pass.

Gates said he has already started declassifying documents and will not wait for legislation to begin.

"I believe I owe that to his memory," Gates said.

"I am happy to report that the first group of these records, inclusions on Lee Harvey Oswald prior to the assassination, has been declassified with quite minimal deletions and is being transferred to the National Archives for release to the public," Gates said.

The Warren Commission investigating the case identified Oswald as the lone Kennedy assassin, a conclusion questioned by many Americans.

Gates said he has established a unit of 15 people to review the material and expects them to finish going through all related CIA documents within the next year.

Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., who is facing a tough re-election battle and has been criticized recently for his role as assistant counsel on the Warren Commission, strongly pushed for full disclosure in his testimony before the committee.

Specter has co-authored Resolution 282 called the Assassination Materials Disclosure Act with Senator David Boren, Democrat of Oklahoma.

"The issue has reached a crescendo and there is no doubt that prompt action ought to be taken," Specter told the committee.

"I think it is very important to put it all out there and let the chips fall where they may," the senator said.

The hearings were held to get official comments on the act designed to make public as many still-classified documents as possible.

If passed, the resolution would create an independent review board of five members. The board would review files from seven sources: the CIA, FBI, other executive branches, the Warren Commission, the Rockefeller

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Commission, the House Assassination Committee and the Senate Church Committee.

FBI Director William Sessions told the committee he supported full disclosure but thought it important that the government agencies decide which documents should not be released.

"The burden should be upon us in the agency to justify withholding any information," Sessions said.

Both the FBI and CIA officials emphasized the need to protect people and methods still being used to gather intelligence.

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 Date 12 MAY 1992

CIA agrees to release Lee Harvey Oswald file that predates Kennedy killing

WASHINGTON, May 12 (AFP) - The Central Intelligence Agency will release a 110-page file on Lee Harvey Oswald, the man believed to have assassinated President John Kennedy in 1963, CIA director Robert Gates said Tuesday.

The file was created before the assassination and deals with Oswald's 1957 defection to the Soviet Union, return to the United States two years later and subsequent activities.

Director Oliver Stone's movie "JFK" has stirred a hot controversy over what the movie alleges was a conspiracy by the CIA, the military-industrial complex and the mafia to assassinate Kennedy.

The House of Representative's Warren Commission concluded that Oswald was the only gunman in the killing but "JFK" and other conspiracy proponents say more than one gunman was involved.

The movie, the ensuing controversy and persistent questions about the assassination have prompted public demands that the classified documents on the Kennedy assassination be released.

Gates told the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee, which is considering opening thousands of documents related to the assassination, that the CIA was preparing to release the file to the National Archives with "minimal deletions."

Gates and Federal Bureau of Investigations Director William Sessions have said they supported releasing most of the documents but raised technical objections, most having to do with the president's right to control documents generated by the executive branch.

The CIA has nearly 33,000 pages of information gathered on Oswald, most accumulated since Kennedy's assassination on the November 22, 1963.

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Cox News Service
Date 12 MAY 1992

CIA TO OPEN ITS FILES ON LEE HARVEY OSWALD
By BOB DART
c.1992 Cox News Service

WASHINGTON — The CIA is releasing documents the spy agency gathered on Lee Harvey Oswald before the 1963 assassination of President Kennedy, the director of central intelligence said Tuesday.

"I believe that maximum disclosure will discredit the theory that the CIA had anything to do with the murder of John F. Kennedy," agency director Robert Gates told a Senate committee.

Gates and FBI Director William Sessions told the Government Affairs Committee that the Bush administration is committed to quickly opening thousands of files about the Kennedy assassination to clear up lingering mysteries. Their testimony seemed to retreat from earlier Justice Department opposition to proposed legislation setting up an independent review board to oversee the declassification of documents.

"Today it appears that many Americans have doubts that the assassination has been fully explained," Sessions conceded. "Thus, I wholly endorse the purpose of this bill to release as much information pertinent to the assassination as we responsibly can."

Gates said the CIA will give the National Archives 110 pages of documents "with quite minimal deletions" that dealt with Oswald's defection to the Soviet Union in 1959 and his actions after his return in 1961.

The director said these files, assembled by the CIA before the Kennedy assassination, will be soon opened to the public.

The federal investigation chaired by Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren found that Oswald, a ne'er-do-well former Marine, acted alone in shooting Kennedy as the president rode through Dallas in a motorcade. The Warren Commission's conclusions have been widely disputed for decades — most recently by director Oliver Stone in his movie "JFK."

In addition to voicing suspicions about the CIA, conspiracy theorists have variously accused the Mafia, Fidel Castro, anti-Castro Cuban exiles, the KGB and others with involvement in the assassination.

Legislation has been introduced in the Senate and House to create a five-member independent commission to review any JFK assassination files that the government wants to keep closed. Otherwise, the bill would quickly make public hundreds of thousands of documents sealed since the 1960s.

"This bill is the result of a climate of suspicion and distrust that has grown over the years regarding the official explanation of the assassination," admitted Sen. John Glenn, D-Ohio, the committee chairman.

Disclosure is the only way to "dispel distrust," Glenn said.

But Ernest May, a Harvard history professor, predicted that setting up an independent review board to decide what classified

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material must be withheld will not satisfy the doubters.

"Would spinners of conspiracy theories take the board's word?" he testified. "Would they not instead accuse it of colluding in concealment of 'smoking guns'?"

May said the effort may be doomed to failure. If the review board yields to outside pressure for a wide-ranging probe -- "a fishing expedition" -- the disclosures could be "embarrassing and possibly harmful." On the other hand, a board that acts narrowly will be accused of a cover-up, he said, which could "make matters worse rather than better."

But the legislation appeared headed toward quick enactment.

"It seems to me the time has come to open these files to the public and let them speak for themselves," said Sen. David Boren, D-Okla., chairman of the Intelligence Committee and a sponsor of the JFK legislation. "Let historians and journalists and the people read them and draw the appropriate conclusions."

The Justice Department had objected to the bill on constitutional grounds, saying it crossed into the domain of the executive branch. However, Sessions said the department will work with Congress to find agreeable legislative language.

The FBI and CIA chiefs agreed that action was needed to end the speculation spawned anew by the "JFK" movie.

If the legislation is not passed, Gates said, the CIA would act on its own. He said the agency is already declassifying assassination documents relating to Cuban exiles and the investigation of New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison. These papers also concern Oswald's activities in New Orleans and Mexico City, he said.

"The only thing more horrifying to me than the assassination itself is the insidious, pervasive notion that elements of my own government, including this agency, had something to do with it," Gates said.

lion in the United States and is expected to prove a strong box-office success in Europe.

Mr. Valenti said he had told Warner Brothers that he planned to issue a statement but had not provided the text to the studio. "They recognize that I am in a difficult position, but I told them that this was such a personal thing, it goes deep into my vitals," he said. "I owe where I am today to Lyndon Johnson. I could not live with myself if I stood by mutely and let some film maker soil his memory."

Mr. Stone, who received a copy of the statement from Mr. Valenti late this afternoon, said by telephone: "While I respect Jack Valenti's enduring loyalty to President Johnson, I find his emotional diatribe off the mark. The overwhelming majority of Americans — and not just the young, whom Mr. Valenti puts down as too impressionable — agree with the central thesis of my film: that President Kennedy was killed by a conspiracy, which included people in the Government."

He added: "I am enormously proud of the artistic and political impact which 'J. F. K.' has had. I hope

Mr. Valenti, now that he has vented his spleen, will join in supporting the joint House-Senate resolution that all Government files in the assassination of President Kennedy be opened so that the American people can have a fuller understanding of that tragedy and its continuing implications for our democracy."

Robert A. Daly, the chairman of Warner Brothers, said the company supported Mr. Stone but understood Mr. Valenti's fury. "Our feeling is very simple," he said. "We support the movie. We think it's a wonderful movie. We have the utmost regard for what Oliver Stone did. As far as Jack Valenti is concerned, the fact that he's loyal to L. B. J. is admirable, and I would hope anybody who worked for me for all those years would be that loyal. I have nothing but the highest regard for Jack."

Mr. Daly said that if the Warren Commission files are opened because of pressure generated by the film, he was convinced that some of the movie's speculation about more than one assassin would be borne out.

'I Was There'

Mr. Valenti began working for Mr. Johnson in 1955 when he was the Senate majority leader and later served at the White House as Mr. Johnson's assistant from 1963 to 1966. Mr. Valenti handled the press during the visit of President Kennedy and

Vice President Johnson to Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963, when Mr. Kennedy was assassinated.

In his statement, Mr. Valenti said: "My own rebuttal to Mr. Stone comes down to this: I was there, and he wasn't."

Mr. Valenti said in his statement that he stood beside Mr. Johnson when he was sworn in on the plane carrying Kennedy's coffin, that he lived at the White House for two months afterwards, that he "read every paper that crossed the President's desk, including the most top-secret documents, and was an ear-witness to many of his most confidential phone conversations." He continued: "I was there when President Johnson ruminated about the assassination, and the urgency to enlist the most prestigious citizens within the Republic to inspect this murder carefully, objectively, swiftly."

After naming some of the members of the Warren Commission, which Mr. Stone has denounced because of its conclusion that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in killing Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Valenti said: "To indict these men of honor, along with Lyndon Johnson, is vicious, cruel and false."

He added, "No matter his brilliant creative skills, and they are considerable, Mr. Stone has with deliberate forethought put on the screen a monstrous charade about President Johnson that ranks right up there with the best work of old-guard Soviet revisionist historians."

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Date 2 April 1992

Jack Valenti Blasts Oliver Stone and 'JFK'

NEW YORK (AP) - Jack Valenti, president of the Motion Picture Association of America and a former top aide to President Lyndon Johnson, has denounced the film "JFK" as a hoax and a smear, a newspaper reported.

Valenti also said the Oliver Stone film that opened in December was "pure fiction" rivaling Nazi propaganda, The New York Times reported Thursday.

"I wanted to speak out because I didn't want to do anything which might affect this picture's theatrical release or the Oscar balloting," Valenti was quoted as saying. The movie received two technical awards at Monday night's Academy Award ceremonies.

Valenti said his comments were personal and not connected to his responsibilities in the movie industry.

Valenti said Stone's film was a "monstrous charade" based on the "hallucinatory bleatings of an author named Jim Garrison, a discredited former district attorney in New Orleans."

The movie implies that Johnson was waiting in the wings to take over and was part of a conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy.

"Does any sane human being truly believe that President Johnson, the Warren Commission members, law enforcement officers, CIA, FBI assorted thugs, weirdos, Frisbee throwers, all conspired together as plotters in Garrison's wacky sightings?" Valenti asked.

"And then for almost 29 years nothing leaked? But you have to believe it if you think well of any part of this accusatory lunacy."

Valenti said many young people leave theaters "convinced they have been witness to the truth."

In a 7-page statement and an interview, Valenti called the movie a "hoax" and a "smear," The Times said.

"In much the same way, young German boys and girls in 1941 were mesmerized by Leni Reifenstahl's 'Triumph of the Will' in which Adolf Hitler was depicted as a newborn god," Valenti said.

Stone told the Times he respected Valenti's loyalty to Johnson but found "his emotional diatribe off the mark."

"The overwhelming majority of Americans ... agree with the central thesis of my film: that President Kennedy was killed by a conspiracy which included people in the government," Stone said.

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Date 2 April 1992

Valenti's Anti-'JFK' Tirade

■ In a tirade against the movie "JFK," Jack Valenti, president of the Motion Picture Association of America and a former aide to President Lyndon Johnson, called the film a "smear" and a "monstrous charade," the New York Times reports today.

"I waited to speak out because I didn't want to do anything which might affect this picture's theatrical release or the Oscar balloting," Valenti was quoted as saying. The film, directed by Oliver Stone, received only two technical awards at Monday night's Academy Award ceremonies.

"Does any sane human being truly believe that President Johnson, the Warren Commission members, law enforcement officers, CIA, FBI, assorted thugs, weirdos, Frisbee throwers, all conspired together as plotters in [author Jim] Garrison's wacky sightings?" Valenti asked.

Stone told the Times he respected Valenti's loyalty to LBJ but "The overwhelming majority of Americans . . . agree with the central thesis of my film: that President Kennedy was killed by a conspiracy which included people in the government."

Surgeon tells secrets on JFK wounds, LBJ call

By Hugh Aynesworth
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

FORT WORTH, Texas — A Fort Worth surgeon, who says he operated on Lee Harvey Oswald, claims Lyndon Johnson phoned him during the operation to make sure Oswald made a confession.

Dr. Charles Crenshaw, whose claims are discounted by some experts on the assassination, also contends President Kennedy was hit in the head and the throat by bullets from the front.

Mr. Crenshaw has caused a free-for-all among TV shows vying to air the story told in his book, "JFK: Conspiracy of Silence," to be published next week by Penguin/USA.

A spokesman for "Now It Can Be Told," a syndicated interview show hosted by Geraldo Rivera, says "it's certain" it will air the story today. One source said the show got the rights through a loophole.

ABC's "20/20," originally promised exclusive rights by Penguin/USA, will give a reduced report Friday.

Few, however, questioned Mr. Crenshaw's veracity despite reservations by those on the scene at the time of the Kennedy assassination in 1963.

"I can't believe that could have happened [the call from LBJ] without me being informed of it or hearing about it afterward," said Steve Landregan, acting administrator of Parkland Hospital at the time.

"That's the kind of thing that would have been talked about all over the hospital. I never heard an inkling of anything like that."

"How much money is he going to make out of this?" queried an ex-Parkland doctor, who refused comment. "I just better not get involved."

Dr. Ron Jones, involved in both surgery attempts, said he didn't see Mr. Crenshaw present either time and doubted LBJ called the hospital.

"I would have thought that in gen-

eral we would have known if the president had called and made an inquiry," he said.

Dr. Robert M. McClelland, another surgeon, laughed when told of the assertion about the LBJ call: "It's the first I've heard about it."

Mr. Crenshaw's critics noted that his co-author, Gary Shaw, is a director of the Assassination Research Center in Dallas. This buff's group received \$80,000 from Oliver Stone to help create his less-than-factual movie, "JFK."

There is no doubt Mr. Crenshaw was present in the operating rooms, but some observers contend his role was so minimal that his long-secret revelations seem suspect.

According to a "20/20" promo, Mr. Crenshaw says he never spoke out because he feared for his career. For years he was chairman of the surgery department of Fort Worth's John Peter Smith Hospital. He says he is now semiretired.

He says he helped place Kennedy in the casket. "I wanted to know and remember this for the rest of my life," he said. "And the rest of my life I will always know he was shot from the front."

"The head wound," he adds, "was in the parietal, occipital area and part of the temporal. It was a huge, blown-out hole. Therefore I know the

bullet had to have come from the front."

Mr. Crenshaw's view that Kennedy was hit in the throat and head from the front is original, though others once believed the throat wound — enlarged by the insertion of an endotracheal tube before most arrived in the operating room — was an entry wound.

Mr. Crenshaw asserts Johnson in his call asked him to relay "to the operating surgeon, the senior man ... tell him I want a deathbed statement from the assassin."

Neither the nurse he claims answered the phone nor "senior" surgeon Dr. Tom Shires ever mentioned a call from LBJ.

On neither TV show is Mr. Crenshaw asked to whom he mentioned the LBJ call or if he got a statement from Oswald.

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times AS _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____

Date 2 April 1992

The Washington Post _____
The New York Times _____
The Los Angeles Times _____
The Wall Street Journal _____
The Washington Times _____
USA Today _____
Associated Press _____
UPI _____
Reuter _____
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Date 3 APRIL 1992

Group wants a new look into RFK assassination

REUTERS

LOS ANGELES — A Los Angeles group alleged yesterday that the police investigation of Robert F. Kennedy's assassination was seriously flawed and called for a grand jury probe.

The group, which is said to include *JFK* film director Oliver Stone, accused Los Angeles police of covering up or destroying evidence that could cast doubt on Sirhan Sirhan's role as the only gunman in Kennedy's 1968 assassination.

The group, which also includes actor Martin Sheen, author Norman Mailer and the American Civil Liberties Union, called for a reopening of the investigation.

"They deliberately destroyed evidence in order to maintain the one-gun theory," Paul Schrade told reporters. Schrade, who said he was wounded in the slaying, was a member of Kennedy's California presi-

dential campaign.

A Los Angeles police spokesman said the department had nothing to hide and was always willing to help any grand jury.

William Bailey, a former FBI agent who said he was involved in the investigation of Kennedy's murder, estimated that at least 11 bullets were fired in the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles when the candidate was shot.

"You could probably make a case for 14 [bullets]," Bailey told reporters.

The police reported that only eight bullets were fired, all from Sirhan's gun.

Asked why the group had waited so long to seek an inquiry, Los Angeles lawyer Marilyn Barret said that police files from the case had not been opened to the public until 1968 and that it had taken several years to finish the preparatory work.