

The Kennedy assassination: A case that will not die

by Peter Dale Scott

[Editor's Note: This is the first in a series of two articles by Peter Dale Scott, a professor of English at the University of California, Berkeley, and one of the country's leading scholarly experts on the John F. Kennedy assassination. He has authored or edited numerous articles and books on covert politics, foreign and domestic, including most recently "The Assassinations, Dallas and Beyond" Random House, 1976.]

BERKELEY, PNS — The beginning of the end of twelve years of national schizophrenia about the Kennedy assassination may be at hand.

For the first time, a national political leader, Senate intelligence committee chairman Frank Church (D., Idaho), has publicly confirmed what polls have indicated a majority of Americans have long believed: There was an official cover-up. Both the CIA and FBI withheld relevant information from the Warren Commission.

Never before has there existed such a complete divergence between official U.S. government dogma — "Oswald acted alone" — and public belief.

But the key question remains: Will some form of cover-up merely replace past ones? Will the new intelligence oversight committee proposed by the Church committee choose a broad reopening of the assassination and cover-up, or a narrow investigation not challenging the Warren Commission finding that Oswald acted alone, but merely looking into his motives?

The Senate intelligence committee has already voted to recommend the latter. Whether the momentum of an unraveling cover-up will carry it further — now that the unmentionable has been mentioned — remains uncertain.

It is certain that the past twelve years have seen one obstruction after another. For a decade, except for a brief interlude in 1966-67, the national media stuck doggedly with the lone assassin dogma.

When Lyndon Johnson speculated in a 1969 CBS interview that Oswald might have been part of an international conspiracy, that portion of the interview was deleted, and not broadcast until six years later. CBS said that Johnson's assassination remarks had been suppressed in the "interests of national security."

Yet public opinion resolutely refused to accept the official findings of the Warren Report. Some of the reasons are obvious: The improbability of the events themselves, climaxed when Oswald was murdered on TV by an equally improbable "lone assassin," Jack Ruby; the incessant work of the Warren Commission critics, whose lists of anomalies and misrepresentations produced a whole new genre of literature in the counterculture of the late 1960s; that counterculture itself, largely the product of the national division over the Vietnam war, which guaranteed that critics like Mark Lane would find a ready following on the college campuses of all 50 states.

All of the work by critics might have

become a private curiosity, as remote from political realities as the ongoing doubts about the murder of President Lincoln, had it not been for two intriguing developments.

The first was the fact of the cover-up itself, which served to glamorize the question of an assassination conspiracy. It soon became widely known, for example, that Time-Life, having bought for a large fee the film of the assassination by a bystander, Abraham Zapruder, was making the Zapruder film totally inaccessible. Bootleg prints of the Zapruder film began to circulate and draw large crowds.

The choking off of Jim Garrison's investigation in Louisiana, a development still shrouded in bitter controversy, heightened the impression that truth was being deliberately obscured.

The second development, and perhaps the decisive one, was Watergate. Watergate established as a fact that cover-ups, "in the interest of national security," could be ordered by the White House and carried out by the CIA and FBI.

Worse, the Watergate investigations failed to uncover precisely what it was that Nixon, and the CIA and the FBI all had been working to cover up. The transcript that led to the President's resignation spoke only in guarded terms of the "Cuba thing," the "whole Bay of Pigs thing," which would "make the CIA look bad" and be "very unfortunate for the country."

What all this was about has never been disclosed. But nearly the only thing that Lee Harvey Oswald and Jack Ruby had in common was a shared interest in Cuba, at a time when the CIA and the Mafia were collaborating to assassinate Fidel Castro. And Frank Sturgis, one of the six Watergate burglars, had been named in Warren Commission documents as the author of false stories about Lee Harvey Oswald.

The national investigation into Watergate was followed swiftly by a lifting of an informal media embargo against talk of an assassination conspiracy. In July 1973, shortly after the first Senate Watergate hearings, the *Atlantic Monthly* quoted President Johnson as saying, "I never believed that Oswald acted alone."

For the first time, conferences and meetings about assassination conspiracies began to receive oblique mention in the national press. A bootleg Zapruder film print was screened for the press at one conference, then shown on late-night television.

SPREADS TO CIA

By 1975 the cancer of Watergate had spread to the CIA itself and the presidential commission chaired by Nelson Rockefeller to investigate the CIA had been established.

The Rockefeller Commission acquired as its executive director an Iowa lawyer named David Belin, whose last public service had been as staff counsel for the Warren Commission — after which he had become the Commission's most persistent and controversial defender.

Belin was chosen for the Rockefeller

Commission post by President Gerald Ford, who besides Belin was the only member of the Warren Commission to write a book defending the report.

Daniel Schorr, then the CBS reporter on CIA activities, has since disclosed that about this time Ford told a White House luncheon with editors of the *New York Times* that he had had to choose the Rockefeller Commission members very carefully, because "there was the danger that the commission would trip over matters a lot more sensitive than domestic surveillance."

When asked which matters, Ford replied, "Off the record, like assassinations."

Schorr surmised later that "the whole panoply of the Rockefeller investigation was to keep attention focused on the CIA's domestic surveillance, which had apparently leaked from a 1973 internal report of the CIA, hoping to keep under wraps other more dangerous parts of the same report."

Schorr broke part of this story in February 1975. In response, the Rockefeller Commission announced that it might investigate CIA involvement in foreign assassination plots, and President Ford added later that, although the Warren Commission might "take a look at it — the problems."

But when unanswered questions about a CIA aspect to the Kennedy assassination were raised before the Rockefeller panel, Belin — rather than investigating them — referred them to the CIA itself for a possible reply. That reply was never made.

Instead, the Rockefeller Commission chose to ignore nearly all the work of the long-time Warren Commission critics — including the charge, since proven correct, that the CIA withheld relevant material from the Warren Commission — responded only to charges that Howard Hunt and Frank Sturgis had both been present in Dallas on November 22, 1963, aired recently in the media.

This was in keeping with the last-minute decision, with all of the press now watching closely, to drop from the Rockefeller report its intended chapter on foreign assassination plots. Someone, either President Ford or Vice President Rockefeller, decided instead to turn all this assassination material over to Senator Church's committee.

It is not yet clear whether all of this material has been released or if some of it will now be transmitted either secretly or in public form to the proposed Senate intelligence oversight committee.

An attempt to narrow the investigation to Oswald's motives — particularly his ties to Cuban premier Fidel Castro — may have been behind an informal CIA memo of May 1975 by CIA counsel Ray Rocca. Rocca eleven years earlier had been the CIA liaison to the Warren Commission. The memo, in response to discussions with Rockefeller Commission Director David Belin, speculated that Oswald might have acted in response to a public speech by Fidel Castro, in which Castro allegedly threatened President Kennedy.

In the words of the 27-page Rocca CIA memo, "the purpose of this review undertaken by Mr. Belin's request, is to reconsider Lee Harvey Oswald's activity in the assumption that as an avid newspaper reader he read the Castro warning and threat."

This language in turn followed the guidelines of President Ford's remarks of April 1975, which reemphasized Oswald's role as the assassin and then recommended that the Rockefeller Commission might look at the probability of "the

involvement of anybody or anybody as a group in the assassination" — implying the involvement of Castro.

Then in November 1975, Belin made a highly publicized call to reopen the assassination inquiry to see whether "there is any credible evidence of a foreign conspiracy." He stressed that, in his opinion, this would not upset the Warren Commission conclusion that Oswald acted alone.

A few days later, Ford made a similar statement.

The key question is now whether the new Senate investigation will follow the narrow course sketched out in the past year by Belin, Rocca and Ford — three men who shared responsibility for the original Warren report — or open a far-reaching probe into both the assassination and the cover-up.

NEXT: A close look at the collaboration between David Belin and Ray Rocca, and why the Rocca memorandum was intended to resurrect the possibility of involvement of Fidel Castro.

MONTGOMERY
WARD

CATALOG OVERSTOCK

Wards Bargain Centers PRE-HOLIDAY SALE

12%-92% off



SAVE \$1
WESTERN-LOOK
BOY'S SHIRT

3.47

REGULARLY 4.59

Authentic Western styling sets today's pace. Wards sale-prices 'em within your budget. Longwear polyester-cotton; no iron needed. Sizes 10-20.

SAVE
2.91



TWIN, FULL, QUEEN-SIZE
WASHABLE CHENILLE SPREAD

YOUR
CHOICE

6.97

REG. 9.88

Fringed, medallion design, in 4 colors.

7.88 drapery, 72x63, 3.97
8.88 drapery, 72x84, 3.97

BOYS' 3.59 SWIM TRUNKS

Athletic style with bold stripe. 2.47

2.99 BI-CENTENNIAL BELT

Heavy vinyl with enamel buckle. 1.97

49.99 CRYSTAL CHANDELIER

12x14". Basket-shape 1-light. 29.97

5.97, CRISS-CROSS SCUFFS

Soft vinyl; cushion insole. 2.97



2.91 OFF.
FASHION WEDGE
LEATHER SANDAL

3.97

REGULARLY 6.88

Womens' popular platform style is smart for walking tall in cool fashion. Suede wrapped wedge; man-made bottom. In tan, medium width, 5-10.



TRADITIONAL
SWIVEL ROCKER

59.97

REGULARLY '88

Button tufting, no-sag seat. Hardwood frame, polyurethane foam padding. Velvet or tweed.



SAVE \$22
5-BAND RADIO

16.97

REG. 39.95

Handle, carry strap, earphone jack, antenna and batteries included.

DISCOUNT FASHIONS VAUGHN ST. 2nd FLOOR

92% OFF! 8.97-'23, ASST. DRESSES

Womens and teens sizes; cotton, poly, wool. 1.92

2.91 OFF! 6.88, WOMENS' TUNIC TOPS

Sleeveless, 100% polyester. 3.97

2 OFF! 5.99, WOMENS' PULLOVERS

Sleeveless, 100% polyester. 3.97

5 OFF! 14.88, MISSES PANTSUITS

Summer styles-great buy! 8.97

2 OFF! 7.88, MENS' SLACKS

100% polyester, easy care. 5.27

BARGAIN ANNEX ONLY FURNITURE AND APPLIANCES

94 OFF! 574.95, 21-CU. FT. REFRIG.

Top freezer auto. icemaker. 479.97

99 OFF! 299.95, KING BEDDING SETS

Firm mattress. Great comfort-save! 199.97

40% OFF! 21.88, DINETTE CHAIRS

Metal frames, vinyl cushion. 12.97

9 OFF! 79.95, 18" ROTARY MOWER

2-stroke Tecumseh engine. 69.97

37 OFF! 66.99, HURRICANE LAMP

Antique style; w/nightlight in base. 29.97



PATCHWORK DENIM AND
STRIPED CORD GAD-ABOUTS

1.47 to 2.97

REGULARLY 2.99-6.99

Choose totes, shoulder styles, jazzed up with shiny buckles, big patch pockets and hardware. Carry-it all, in durable denim!

6.99, pocketed travel bag. 2.97

6.99, laundry bag in striped cord. 2.97

2.99, Zip-top shoulder bag. 1.47

4.99, patchwork denim knapsack. 2.47

2.99, strapped, zip-top hip hugger. 1.47

SOME ITEMS: Scratched, dented, 1-2 of a kind.

Subject to prior sale. No phone or mail orders, please!

Just say, "Charge it!"

MONTGOMERY
WARD

VAUGHN ST. STORE

27th and N.W. Vaughn

Open Mon. and Fri. 9:30 to 9:30

Sun. 11-5; other days, 9:30-5:30

BARGAIN ANNEX

Across st from Vaughn St. store

Open Mon. and Fri. 9:30 to 9:00

Sun. 11-5; other days, 9:30-5:30

WALNUT PARK STORE

Union Ave. at Killingsworth

Open Friday night, 9:30 AM to 8 PM

Sun. 11:00-5:00; other days, 9:30-5:30

Historical marker honors Dr. Lillie Jackson

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and history (ASALH) presented a bronze marker which was placed in honor of Dr. Lillie Mae Jackson, May 25th at Freedom House, located at 1234 Druid Hill Avenue, in Baltimore, Maryland.

The Association honored Dr. Jackson, often referred to as "Ma Jackson" or "that NAACP lady," in the fourth of a series of 100 markers dedicated to Black American pioneers.

An ASALH research committee headed by Dr. Roland C. McConnel, Chairman of the Morgan State College Department of History, reports that Lillie Mae Carroll, born in Baltimore on May 25, 1889,

was a descendant of Charles Carroll, signer of both the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution, and John Bowen, a free African chief.

President of the Baltimore Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People for 35 years, she increased the NAACP membership from 2,000 in 1935 to nearly 18,000 by 1946, making the NAACP the largest civil rights organization in Maryland.

Through the NAACP, Lillie Jackson used seven successive law suits in the Maryland Court of Appeals to open the University of Maryland Schools of Law, Medicine, Pharmacy, Dentistry, Nursing,

the Graduate School of Sociology and the Undergraduate School of Engineering (1935-1950) in her fight against segregation.

Her work with the NAACP resulted in successful campaigns to employ Blacks as cab drivers, bus drivers, firemen, policemen, and other municipal and state employees, as well as employees in the private sector. Municipal swimming pools, tennis courts, State Parks, and beaches were desegregated through a series of suits won in the Supreme Court (1954), setting a precedent for the entire nation.

Dr. Jackson and the NAACP led successful fights against police brutality, and supplied bail and legal defense for some 300 student sit-in leaders and freedom riders.

After 35 years of leadership in the civil rights struggle, Lillie Jackson had received commendations on local and national levels, which included an honorary Doctor of Humanities from Morgan State College (1956).

When she retired from the NAACP (1970), Dr. Jackson founded Freedom House, Incorporated. Begun as a federation of inner city neighborhood leaders to combat crime and juvenile delinquency, it has grown to assist the community with problems of housing, health and youth employment. Credited with a reduction of neighborhood crime, Freedom House, Incorporated conducts a Summer Job program and a day camp.

The dedication of the plaque was conducted with the cooperation of the Mayor's office, City of Baltimore, and the hundreds expected to attend.

The two-year historical project was made possible by a grant from the Amoco Foundation, Incorporated. As a result of this joint ASALH-Amoco Foundation Bicentennial program, the first bronze marker was placed at the birthsite of Dr. Carter G. Woodson, founder of ASALH and "Father of Black History," in New Canton, Buckingham County, Virginia. The second plaque was dedicated to American educator Dr. H. Councill Trenholm at Alabama State University in Montgomery, Alabama, and the third was dedicated to Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong, known internationally as the "King of Jazz," in Armstrong Park, New Orleans, Louisiana.

DR. JEFFREY BRADY Says:

"Do Not Put Off Needed Dental Care"
Enjoy Dental Health Now and
Improve Your Appearance



Come In At
Your Convenience
Open Saturday Morning
•
No Appointment Needed
•
Complete Cooperation
On All Dental
Insurance Plans
•
Complete Dental Services

Union or Company Dental Insurance
Coverage Accepted On Your
Needed Dentistry

Park Free — Any Park 'n Shop Lot
HOURS: Weekdays 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sat., 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

DR. JEFFREY BRADY, DENTIST
SEMLER BUILDING

S.W. 3rd & Morrison St. Portland, Oregon
Take Elevator to 2nd Floor 3rd St. Entrance

Phone: 228-7545