Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

RADIO TV REPORTS, INC.

4701 WILLARD AVENUE, CHEVY CHASE, MARYLAND 20815 656-4068

FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

PROGRAM Kaleidoscope STATION WAMU-FM

DATE November 22, 1983 10:00 A.M. CITY Washington, D.C.

SUBJECT John Fitzgerald Kennedy

DIANE REHM: The shots that rang out in Dallas 20 yers ago left a young President dead and a stunned nation outraged. Today the issue surrounded John F. Kennedy's assassination remain a mystery. There has never been a satisfactory solution to the mystery of who killed JFK. In the next two hours, I'll be talking with three experts looking at the Kennedy assassination after 20 years.

You've heard the old cliche: If we can send a man to the moon, then why can't we -- and then you fill in the blank. That phrase has been applied to the assassination of John F. Kennedy. With all the money and intelligence resources available to our government, why, in the last 20 years, hasn't there been a full and complete solution to the mystery of who killed JFK?

Three people who share that concern are with me this morning: Bernard Finsterwald is an attorney here in the Washington area, the author of a book called "Assassination of JFK: By Coincidence or Conspiracy?" Also, Richard Billings. He covered the assassination for Life magazine. He was editor of the House Select Committee report on the assassination, and he's coauthor of a book called "The Plot to Kill the President." On the phone with us from Cleburne, Texas is J. Gary Shaw, longtime critic of the Warren Commission and the official version of the assassination. He wrote a book called "Cover-up."

I'm Diane Rehm. And we are not going to take your calls during the first hour of the program. There is a great deal to talk about in this first hour, as you can well imagine. And we

Material supplied by Radio TV Reports, Inc. may be used for file and reference purposes only. It may not be reproduced, sold or publicly demonstrated or exhibited.

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

will take your calls after the news break at 11:05. At that time, the number to call is 966-8850.

Gary Shaw, are you with us out there?

GARY SHAW: Yes, I am. Thank you, Diane.

REHM: ...Let me ask all three of you. The first official inquiry done by the Warren Commission concluded that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone and shot JFK. In 1979 a congressional committee decided that Kennedy was probably assassinated as a result of a conspiracy. Why, in your opinion, has the case never been completely resolved?

Gary, I'll start with you.

GARY SHAW: Primarily, Diane, I think the problem has been that it jumped from a crime in Texas, a murder in Texas, to a political situation in Washington, D.C. for its investigation. It never should have been done that way. I believe that it should have been investigated and the hearings conducted in Texas under Texas law and Texas jurisdiction and kept out of the political bailiwick. I believe that's the major problem with the entire investigation, both the first one and the second one in 1978.

REHM: Bud, what would your comments be?

BERNARD FINSTERWALD: Diane, you mentioned earlier, with the resources of the intelligence community, we've been unable to solve the crime. I would say that the major reason we've been unable to solve the crime is that the intelligence community has used all its resources to see that it is not properly investigated. They've destroyed evidence, they've hidden evidence. Even today, 20 years later, most of the documents are still labeled top secret.

If we could get at the evidence that the government itself has, I think the crime would have been solved long ago.

REHM: Dick Billings?

RICHARD BILLINGS: I'm not disagreeing with either of those, although I tend to think more of the opinion of Gary Shaw, in that politicians, people in Washington who are in the position to do so, do not have the inclination to continue the investigation, even though at the completion of the congressional committee investigation, in which I participated, we were very close to learning something very, very important. We did learn something very important, and we could have learned more. But the attitude here, in spite of the fact that the most recent poll on the

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

matter, 80 percent of the people asked, the citizens, believe that there was -- that Oswald was not alone, that there was a conspiracy -- the attitude of the people at the Department of Justice and the Administration and in Congress, including members of the committee itself, today are not inclined to pursue it further.

REHM: So, it is a sort of who-cares attitude that you see reflected.

BILLINGS: Well, it's more than that. It's more than just a who-cares attitude. There's a real active inclination to close it off and to wrap it off and say, "We're not going to pursue this any further."

I think one of the -- there was another tragedy. The loss of the President certainly was a tragedy. But in the year that followed, in the years that followed that, there was the loss of something else, which I might call candor in American politics, the loss of candor. The politicians do not want to pursue it further because there's nothing in it for them. And admittedly, it is difficult. It requires money and it would require a continuing effort, which is not there. The latest we hear from the FBI, for example, William Webster, the Director, is that the investigation of the acoustics evidence, which I find very important, still, has now been determined not to have shown that fourth shot from the grassy knoll. I don't think that is the case. But based on that conclusion of a committee of the National Academy of Sciences, the Director of the FBI, for one, is now saying again, as we've heard for so many years from these top-level sources, the investigation is closed.

It's not just a who-cares. It's an active disinclination.

REHM: Gary Shaw, I know that you were also particularly impressed with the results of that poll. Give me your ideas.

SHAW: Well, from the polls that I have been acquainted with, it seems that 80 percent of the American people still believe that there was a conspiracy in the death of the President. What's frightening and what really bothers me is that that same poll also discovered that 70 percent of the people take a who-cares attitude at the conspiracy. And that bothers me tremendously. Because I think we have to realize that if there was a conspiracy and it appears that there was government complicity, by and large, at least in the cover-up of the true facts surrounding this case, then are the people who killed John Kennedy in 1963 still in a position of power, and will they do it again and again and again? And that bothers me tremendously.

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

REHM: But Finsterwald.

FINSTERWALD: I was listening to Dick's remark that there's nothing in it for a politician to investigate this. I would disagree with that. I would think an ambitious congressman or senator could easily ride into the White House if he were to investigate this issue properly, because I can't think of a single issue that gets somebody the name recognition that this one does.

So if somebody took this on as a crusade, if they lived through the crusade, I would think it would be an open way to get to the White House.

REHM: I want to go back to Gary Shaw's comment that he believed that had the investigation itself actually taken place in Dallas and been dealt with there, wrapped up there, that we would have gotten some answers far more quickly and appropriately. Considering the fact that the President had been urged not to go to Dallas to begin with, that Lee Harvey Oswald was shot by Jack Ruby in Dallas, why would you, or do you, support Gary Shaw's statement that, in fact, it might have been wrapped up in Dallas?

FINSTERWALD: Yes, I agree with that completely. For example, I think that the autopsy done at the Naval Hospital here, either by accident or on purpose, was one of the worst in any major case I've ever seen. And I certainly think that an autopsy done by the coroner in Dallas would have gotten us much better physical evidence of how John Kennedy was shot.

Also, I do not believe that it would have been as mired down in politics as it was here. It was pretty much dictated, the Warren Commission was pretty much dictated by President Johnson, in his desire to see that the investigation ended before the -- well before the election in November. So he was constantly pressuring the commission to break off its investigation and reach some conclusion.

BILLINGS: I think that's all true. And I certainly support the specific point that Bud just made about the autopsy. It was a big mistake for those people in the Kennedy party to haul the body out of Dallas, as they did. Even though it seemed to be justified at the present time, it turns out to have been a terrible mistake.

However, even with the, perhaps, the botched autopsy, or certainly the poorly performed autopsy, and the other ways the physical evidence was presented, it still could, with the proper inclination of the people in charge of the investigation, have turned out another way.

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

It wasn't lost just because they pulled it out of Texas, although that's an important point.

REHM: Considering the fact that this poll does reflect, perhaps, the thinking of a great many Americans, I'm still struck by how many people recall, to the moment, where they were, what they were doing. Yesterday I walked into the grocery store, and without any preamble the checkout cashier said to me, "Can you believe it was 20 years ago that this happened?" and began telling me what his feelings were and where he was on that day.

Considering that fact, it does interest me that there has not been greater public pressure to see that more is done about this. You talk about the politicians, perhaps they had reasons to wish that the investigation were over. But is it a public distaste to continue to deal with the tragedy that has not provided the impetus for a resolution?

Gary Shaw, what are your thoughts?

SHAW: Diane, I think the real problem lies in the lack of media attention to the real facts surrounding this case. More often than not, what we have presented to the American people are half-truths, un -- a truth that really has not been looked at by the writer or the commentator. They're really not had the time nor the ability to spend on the investigation or looking at the true facts surrounding this case. And the watchdog of our society, I believe, is the press, the media. And until they take a Watergate-type stand with this situation, we'll never alert and interest the American people in it.

BILLINGS: I'd like to elaborate on that, and make another point as well, if I may. It won't take very long.

I think there's more than just a press not being interested. I think much of what's written in the major newspapers and that appears on television is the work of people who've been around a long time and should know better. But they've taken positions in the past, and continue to stand on those positions, which in the book jacket -- on the blurb of a book jacket of a recent book called "Oswald's Game, "Tom Wicker of the New York Times comes out and says, "I never did believe in conspiracy, and now it's proven that there wasn't a conspiracy." In other words, it's more of an act of denial.

I'd also like to say, in your answer to your question about why the public seems to be of a who-cares attitude, I spent last night up at the University of Delaware with a couple of hundred students, and we got into this subject. And I was told by them -- and I think they're more representative than I may be. These are people who were very young but do remember, as very

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

young children -- there were not just all undergraduates there. And the point was made that back in the mid-'70s there was this attitude among the public to pressure, to -- that's why there was a congressional investigation. That's subsided now. That's gone away. That is -- the people have sort of said, "Well, they've taken it as the government's position. There's no more to find out, and we've fought this long enough."

And we're moving now, I'm afraid, into the period of the anti-critic, where people are making more of a point denying conspiracy than the people who argue for it.

FINSTERWALD: I would disagree with that. I think this is one subject that is not going to go away, as much as the government would like it to go away. They've done everything in the world to discourage it. The Congress winds up in a situation where they say, "Yes, it was the result of a conspiracy," but they fell all over themselves trying to stop their investigation at that point and not look to see who the conspirators were.

There's been a myth in this country for, I guess, ever since the country was founded that we're above political killings. Whenever one of our leaders is killed, it's always a one nut that does it. So, the authorities are fairly safe after such a killing to say a lone nut did it, and people are very reluctant to look at it.

Whereas, in fact, I think the United States was probably the most outstanding banana republic in the world during the 1960s. We lost a whole bunch of our leaders through murder. Yet we're never willing to say that these are political killers and look to see who caused it and who benefited from it. And there's still that reluctance today, even on the part of the House of Representatives. They don't want to know who the conspirators were.

REHM: You feel that they honestly don't want to know because of the implications of what knowing might have for them?

FINSTERWALD: I'd certainly say the large majority of the members of the House are that way. There may be some exceptions. But as a body, to leave a murder of this type in the situation: "yes, there was a conspiracy, but we don't want to look at the conspirators" is a hell of a way to run a railroad.

BILLINGS: What I'm saying, Bud, is that on the one hand I'm hearing your opinion that a politician who wanted to ride this issue could take it and, if he had the courage, pursue it to a political benefit. But on the other hand -- and I'm not saying you're being contradictory, but I think I want to clarify it from at least my own mind, and see if you agree -- having said that,

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

which is your opinion, and having also said the issue's not going to go away, which is your opinion, you're also saying that the Congress, which reflects and represents the attitude of their constituents, is saying, "We don't want to pursue it."

I think I hear you saying both things. One is your attitude and one is their attitude.

FINSTERWALD: Well, they didn't want to take it up in 1976, but it was public opinion and public pressure that required them to do so. But they tippy-toed through the investigation, and finally, reluctantly, reached the agreement that most of the critics had reached many yeares ago, that there was a conspiracy. But then they just closed down.

REHM: Well, that's what I don't understand. Why, having found and having agreed to the notion that there was in fact a conspiracy, why wouldn't that have then been carried on? Why wouldn't that have been the first step, as opposed to the last?

BILLINGS: Well, it should have been the first step. And I think I have established, and I agree, we can have an opinion. We can also state what we think the opinion of the politicians and the body politic happen to be.

The reason the House committee shut down is that, plain and simple, it was given a certain amount of time and a certain amount of money. And it fought, it was embattled throughout its life to even -- even to continue as long as it did. It did not receive the support of the full Congress. It would not have received it if it had fought for it.

It's the whole Congress that's responsible for that investigation shutting down. And as unfortunate as that may have been -- and I believe it was unfortunate -- all that investigation -- and I was part of it -- really was a preliminary investigation. We kind of set the stage of where to go. Then we were ready to start an investigation which would have included a field investigation, going to the places where we thought there were leads that could lead to some -- could mean something.

Instead of being able to do that ourselves, or to have the committee do it, our alternative was to recommend that the Department of Justice pursue it further. I wasn't blinded by the reality that that probably wasn't going to go anywhere, but there wasn't another alternative. There wasn't an alternative to that.

REHM: Gary Shaw, would you like to comment?

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

SHAW: Well, I agree with Bud that, politically, they -- well, almost agree. They more than tiptoed through the evidence. I think they sidestepped a lot of the evidence. I think they never really addressed, this last committee never really addressed the taintedness of the evidence that they reached their conclusions on, for instance, the autopsy, the bullet fragments and trajectory, and all of the things that they said that pinpointed or pointed toward Oswald's complicity in the assassination. And then they take a very -- and what I consider the very weakest evidence, and that is the acoustical evidence that finally said that there was a shot from the front. I predicted back when they first came out with that that that was a weak link and that the national press would, when it was finally discovered that it was a weak link, would completely do away with the conspiracy findings of the committee.

And in actuality, the evidence is much, much stronger, if you look at it, that there was a shot from the front, hence a conspiracy, which has never been addressed by the national media. And until they do and until they put it on national television and in the medias across America, the evidence that points at a rifleman or a gunman from the right-front of the President, and put it in detail with eyewitness reports and so forth, then the American people are not really going to holler, because they're still listening to the newsmen who say -- or who pooh-pooh the conspiracy.

REHM: I'd like to have your comments. And obviously, this is going to be in the realm of opinion, or indeed speculation. But what is it, Bud Finsterwald, that you believe the Congress, and perhaps even the press, may be afraid to learn?

FINSTERWALD: I think that they are very fearful now, but were even more fearful in 1963, of the unholy alliance between the CIA, the Mafia, and the anti-Castro Cubans. These strains run through all of the evidence. As hard as the government tries to put it down, there are these three groups that were involved in plots to assassinate Castro. And as Lyndon Johnson feared, it may have backfired and Castro may have killed President Kennedy. I don't agree with that, but you will find these three threads running through.

And if a decision was made in 1963 that this crime was going to be covered up -- and I believe such a decision was made almost instantly -- once that decision is made, it can never be undone. It's like the little boy that tells the first lie. Once he tells it, he has to keep on lying. And the government was committed to covering this crime up, I think, on the day it occurred; certainly within a matter of a few days. And once having lied, they cannot reverse field.

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

REHM: Dick Billings.

BILLINGS: I think it's more complex than that. And having said that, I hope can back that up in the time allotted.

Lyndon Johnson may well have had the motive to cover up because he feared that a foreign power would be implicated, and we would find ourselves in an international crisis. It could have been Cuba. It could have been the Soviet Union.

I don't think that's really what was bearing on Johnson so much. What I think really caused the cover-up were the attitudes of the people who were advising Johnson and their motives, plus the attitude of Robert Kennedy, which I think had something to do with what happened later on.

J. Edgar Hoover, the Director of the FBI then, was, for his own selfish personal and egotistical reasons, convinced and determined to convince others that Oswald was a lone nut and a lone gunman; and he was very forceful in trying to persuade Johnson, and in fact did have a part in persuading Johnson, that the crime was solved and there wasn't a need even for a Warren Commission. And when there was a Warren Commission, what was their evidence? Who were their investigators? They were Hoover's FBI.

That certainly, I think, is a very important part of the cover-up.

Katzenbach, who was the acting Attorney General, in the absence of Robert Kennedy after his brother's death, was also persuading Johnson that we know all there is to know, and all we have to do is form a commission to persuade the people that there was only one gunman.

Robert Kennedy, at that time, right away, was of the feeling that Oswald was the assassin, but there might have been a conspiracy involving Castro or gangsters, as he said at the time. Later on, however, he did not pursue that.

He might have been in a position at one point to move the country. He was a member of the Senate later on. But for reasons not quite clear, he did not push.

There are many complex reasons that have to go into the mix here.

REHM: Gary?

SHORE: Diane, I believe if the truth is ever known --and I'm one of those that are optimistic. I believe we will

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

know the truth. I belive we're closer to it today than we ever have been -- I believe we'll find out that the people that killed John Kennedy in Dallas were the same people that had been hired to kill Fidel Castro in Cuba, and that these same people were organized and trained by our own Central Intelligence Agency, and that Robert Kennedy knew of this training and knew of these assassination plots, as did the FBI.

And when organized crime, who I think was one of the major forces behind that, turned the gun from Fidel Castro to John Kennedy in Dallas, it completely compromised Robert Kennedy, the Justice Department, the CIA, the FBI, and our entire government apparatus. And hence the cover-up all of these years. They couldn't tell the American people in 1963 that, to quote Lyndon Johnson, we were operating a Murder Incorporated in the Caribbean.

So, they kicked dirt over it, and they're still kicking dirt over it today, I believe, because some of the people that were knowledgeable of those events and of that plot are still in positions of power in Washington and in the nation today.

REHM: Would you go that far, Bud?

FINSTERWALD: All I can to say to that is amen.

REHM: Dick Billings?

BILLINGS: I don't have the evidence to support the first part of that. You can't prove a negative. The CIA involvement in the Castro plots is certainly clear. But you can have all of what Gary Shaw said -- the Castro Cuban element, and I certainly hold to the organized crime factor -- and still have much the same result. I just don't have the evidence for the participation of the CIA in that plot.

FINSTERWALD: Well now, are you talking about the CIA as an organization, or some renegade CIA people? I don't think anybody sat down out at CIA Headquarters and plotted the murder of John Kennedy.

SHAW: I agree, Bud.

FINSTERWALD: But I do think that there were some CIA agents or contract agents, or whatever you want to call them, alumni, who were involved in the anti-Castro movement, who thought of John Kennedy as a traitor and someone that had to be gotten rid of.

REHM: So you're saying that without any official sanction whatsoever, you may have had a renegade movement within

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

the organization that acted on its own accord?

FINSTERWALD: Exactly.

SHAW: Let me give you just one example of that. Prior to the Bay of Pigs invasion, the word had come down of the possibility of a change of heart of the Ameican government in participating and supporting that invasion. Certain of these CIA personnel who were directly responsible for the training of the Cuban exiles for this invasion told the exiles, "Look, if the word comes down for us not to proceed with this invasion, you lock us up, and we'll tell them that you just overcame us, and you go on with this invasion." In other words, "Ignore what the President of the United States and what the orders say. You go ahead and go on with this invasion."

BILLINGS: It's one thing to ignore the President, and it's something else to participate in killing him. I still don't have the evidence that the agency or former members or renegade members participated in the plot.

FINSTERWALD: Well, if we had the evidence that could prove that, we wouldn't be sitting around this table today. But there's certainly a great deal of evidence that points in that direction. We can't come up with any conclusive proof as to who did it. I think we will be able to do so in the future. And I agree with Gary, that I'm optimistic about it. I only hope that on the 40th anniversary we are not sitting around this table debating the same questions.

SHORE: Let me give you, again, just an example of this participation.

REHM: All right.

SHORE: In 1961 -- and we have documents that support this -- our CIA put into operation against Cuba what they called, by cryptonym, their ZR Rifle program. The ZR Rifle program was basically the assassination apparatus of our intelligence agency. The principal agent -- not the principal agent, but the chief of that operation was a man by the name of William Harvey. The principal agent of that operation was a man known for his ability to do dastardly deeds. His cryptonym, and his name is still unknown to us, his cryptonym was Q.J. Wynn (?).

All of this was involved in the training of Cuban exiles in terrorism, in assassination toward Fidel Castro. And I believe it was these rogue elements, because of the traitor --they considered John Kennedy a traitor with regard to Cuba --that turned it around and pointed the guns at Dallas.

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

REHM: J. Gary Shaw, who is a longtime critics of the Warren Commission and the official version of the assassination. He is the author of a book called "Cover-up." He's on the phone with us from Cleburne, Texas.

Here in the studio is Richard Billings, and he was editor of the House Select Committee report on the assassination and the coauthor of a book called "The Plot to Kill the President." And Bernard Finsterwald. He is the author of a book called "The Assassination of JFK: By Coincidence or Conspiracy?" He is an attorney here in the Washington area and a long-term watcher of this whole process....

For those of you who may have joined us a bit late, we are having a two-hour special this morning, the Kennedy assassination after 20 years....

It seems to me that the volumes of evidence in this case obviously make many, many different theories about who was responsible for the death of John F. Kennedy possible. Has there been a great deal of new evidence which has developed since the report of the House Select Committee?

What would your ideas be, Bud?

FINSTERWALD: I don't know of a great deal of new evidence. There have been many attempts to develop certain leads which we've been following, and a number of freedom-of-information suits have been filed. These, almost universally, have been unsuccessful, and relatively little progress has been made.

We have been actively pursuing a couple of leads which donot depend on the U.S. Government. For example, there is one lead that was followed by the House committee unsuccessfully which involved the possibility that the hired gunmen in the killing were graduates of what are known as the OAS, or the Algerian-French group. These were people who were intent on assassinating de Gaulle because he gave Algeria away. They were trained assassins. There were two or three thousand of them roaming the world, and they were available.

We have made some progress with this lead because for a short period of time we were able to get a good deal of information from the French Government. They, too, have not clammed up. So neither the French nor the U.S. Government is willing to help.

REHM: There are some fascinating details, coincidental though they may be, in regard to the purported exit of the fellow who might have been a suspect.

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

FINSTERWALD: Well, we've been able to find out that there may have been three French terrorists in Dallas rather than one. And in fact, there's very strong evidence that two of those three moved on after that event to Mexico City. And the reason they were going there is that Charles de Gaulle was going to make a state visit there in March of '64. And we found out about this because the French were terribly worried about de Gaulle's life. There were some 33 attempts on his life.

And I found out from a longtime graduate of the OAS that they did, in fact, send three people to Mexico City, in an attempt to kill de Gaulle. And we think two of the people that were in Dallas went on to Mexico City.

But these things could easily be run out. We could either prove that they were valid, that these leads are valid or not, if the government would help. But they're withholding a whole stack of material on this, and the U.S. courts will not force them to divulge.

REHM: Speaking specifically of the one about whom I've seen some material written, Jean Rene Soutre (?), is he still alive?

FINSTERWALD: He is alive. And if you want to read about him, you get this week's National Enquirer, or last week's National Enquirer, and there's an interview with him. And he says that, yes, he thinks there was a French connection, but he blames it on a lifelong enemy of his, a man named Mertz (?), who was a great drug trafficker.

REHM: But the problem is that wasn't Soutre using the name Mertz for a time?

FINSTERWALD: Or vice versa. They used each other's names, as near as I could tell, when they were going to do something, on the theory that if they got caught or if there was a lead, it would lead to their enemy rather than to themselves. And I would say that either one was capable of being involved in it.

And there's the third one in this trio who's now an American citizen and lives in New York City, but no one can get near him. You can't see him, you can't talk with him, you can't interview him. He's completely incommunicado.

REHM: Soutre left the country the day after the assassination, a very hasty exit?

FINSTERWALD: According to a CIA document, he was deported by the United States Government within 48 hours of the

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

assassination. But that is the only document in that series that we've got. We got that by mistake. All the rest of them are classified top secret, and we can't really get to the bottom of the three Frenchmen in Dallas that day.

REHM: Dick, any comments on that?

BILLINGS: It's fascinating but frustrating to have private theories which certainly hold some water. But the frustration is in the fact that while they remain private investigations and without any help from the government, they're not going to go anywhere. And at the same time, we have -- I'm depressed about what the prospects are. I think it's evident that I'm not as optimistic about the future of this case.

REHM: Yeah, it's interesting, because I hear the difference between your conversation and Gary's and Bud's in that particular regard.

BILLINGS: Oh yes. Oh yes. I'm not nearly as optimistic as they appear to be that there's going to be this breakthrough, that we're going to renew, reopen -- five years from now, I understand, the 22nd of November falls on a Friday. So that'll be quite a date to remember, 25th anniversary. I think we'll still be beating our heads against the wall then.

I'm pessimistic about this. The stonewalling that has gone on, the lack of cooperation, the disinclination in the government seems to have pretty well worked.

REHM: Gary Shaw, you have also been interested in the rumor that continues to persist about an Oswald double.

SHORE: I've worked for a number of years on that particular aspect. If your listeners remember, there was much evidence that someone was planting evidence that would later point the finger at Lee Oswald as being the assassin. I'm talking about having a scope mounted on his gun at a local gun store, going to a rifle range and crossfiring at another individual's target; and when the individual got angry with him about it, this guy made a big to-do about that. There was the used car dealership where he took a fast ride down the Dimins (?) freeway. And there's the visit to the Cuban lady, Sylvia Odio, in Dallas; and mention is made of Oswald, and he said, "He's a little bit crazy and he could kill the President," and this sort of thing.

When the Warren Commission looked at all of this, they discarded it because Oswald, during all of these activities, was allegedly in Mexico. Primarily, that was the gist. But as it turns out, we've discovered that there was a young man that

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

admitted in 1964 to a reporter that he was using the name Oswald in a gun-running operation to the Cuban exiles. His partner in that affair was none other than Jack Ruby. And one of the things that Jack Ruby wanted to keep from the Warren Commission, and told his attorney that he wanted to keep out of it, was his as-sociation with a man named Davis.

Well, the FBI said they could not find him, and evidently made no attempt to, because a very fine writer by the name of Seth Cantor (?) had no trouble at all in finding him, and interviewed him in 1964 and learned a little bit about him.

The key thing, I think, is that this man was associated with Jack Ruby. He was an Oswald lookalike. He was very fond of guns and gun ranges. He was a gun-runner. He was using, admittedly, the name of Oswald in that operation. And to make a long story short, he ends up being arrested in Morocco shortly after the assassination because he has a letter on his person talking about the Kennedy assassination and Oswald, and he also is accused of running guns to this same French faction, the OAS, that connects with John Swetzrun (?) and Michael Mertz and Michael Rou (?).

It turns out that after his arrest, he is released from that opera -- from that imprisonment, or the arrest, by none other than the principal agent of the ZR Rifle program of the CIA, Q.J. Wynn, who we discussed briefly a while ago.

REHM: So there are all kinds of ins and outs that simply could have a link or could perhaps be simply coincidence.

What about the recent exhumation in 1981 of Oswald's body? Was that also in line with this thinking that, in fact, there might have been a double?

SHAW: In my opinion, no. I think that's one of the unfortunate things that got a lot of media attention back a couple or three years ago and never should have happened. I believed then and I believe even more strongly now that it's Lee Oswald buried in that grave.

Really, what needed to have been investigated at that time was this other false Oswald situation, not who's buried in Lee Oswald's grave. But let's look at Mr. Tommy Davis Jr. and his connections to organized crime, to Jack Ruby, to Oswald, to the Cuban exiles, and to the assassination apparatus of our own government, the CIA.

FINSTERWALD: I would certainly agree that the exhumation of Lee Harvey Oswald was a big waste of time and a negative thing.

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

I was listening to Gary recite some of the better-known things that we know. I personally believe that we have in our knowledge today the necessary facts to break the case. I just don't think we're smart enough to put them together. I don't think we need all that much more in the way of factual information.

One thing that would be of enormous help, but we've never been able to do, is to use a computer in trying to solve this crime, where various and sundry people were at a particular time, and the ties between all of these people. But trying to keep all of this straight in your head and then sort it out has just been more than any of us have been able to do.

REHM: How much time do you spend on it, Bud?

FINSTERWALD: Oh, nights and weekends. Sometimes at the office, because we're running some 30 or 40 freedom-of-information cases, which take some time. But it's mostly an avocation. And as someone said, it's also an addiction, an obsession. I would certainly agree with that.

REHM: Are there other people around the country working as actively as you in trying to find a solution to this?

FINSTERWALD: Oh, there are many of them that are working a lot harder than I am. I'd say that there are probably between 50 and 100 people working seriously at it at the moment.

REHM: And you do remain optimistic that some break along the line is going to come.

FINSTERWALD: Either some dramatic break will come, like somebody crawling out from under the woodwork and telling us what happened, or just nittering at it long enough and keeping up the pressure long enough. I think we'll find out. It took some 70 years to solve the Lincoln assassination. It's now pretty much solved. And they didn't have the Xerox machine or tape recorders or any of the modern things in those days. And I think, with the advances in science and the persistence of the critics, that we'll unwind it in due time.

REHM: What would it take in terms of money?

FINSTERWALD: The only real use for money would be in a congressional investigation. There's been a lot of hue and cry that we spent some $5 million investigating this case. This is less than one airplane costs for the military.

It's not the money that has stopped Congress from doing

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

this, it's fear that's done it. There are many, many congressional investigations on much less dramatic and important subjects that have cost many times what this one has cost. It's using the power of Congress, not a question of money. If we use the subpoena power and require the government to give up every piece of paper it's got, without deletions, we'd be a long way toward solving the crime.

REHM: Do you think -- at this point in our history, what do you suppose would be the usefulness of knowing?

FINSTERWALD: I think it would restore a great deal of integrity to the U.S. Government, and I think it would restore some of the loss of support that the public gives to the government. The people of this country are very skeptical about how their government operates and when their government's lying to them and when they're telling the truth. And I think we could restore some of the confidence if we were to go at this investigation honestly.

REHM: Dick Billings?

BILLINGS: Well, as I said earlier, one of the -- the second tragedy of all this is the death of candor in American political life. And certainly there's a reasonfor pursuing it. But why is it not possible -- I would like to argue for pursuit of some of the points that were established by the congressional committee, which seem to be disputed now both by the forces of the government who want to end it all and by Gary Shaw and Bud Finsterwald, who want to go further and have these other theories -- as I said before, fascinating but frustrating. It would cost in the neighborhood of $500,000, certainly no more than a million, which sounds like a lot of money, but in terms of government appropriation...

REHM: Relative terms. Absolutely.

BILLINGS: ...relative terms, to really understand what went on on that acoustics tape. That has been called, now, a weak link. It really was the basic piece of scientific evidence that the committee based its conclusion, the congressional committee, the House committee, of conspiracy.

That tape is being pooh-poohed on all sides, which is a very big mistake.

FINSTERWALD: Isn't that the Rosetta Stone?

BILLINGS: No. Well, that -- look, that -- let me talk about that tape for a minute.

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

We're now left with the argument by the government, by the Director of the FBI that a flaw was found in the examination of that tape by the experts retained by the House committee. I say the jury is still out on that. The experts, who had nothing to gain and everything to lose by being wrong, determined they heard those four shots.

We recommended that the tape be further analyzed. And we got the answer back that because of something called the Barber inference or the Barber whatever, that they were able to hear voices on a -- there are two channels at work here, and hearing a voice on one channel and matching that with the other channel led them to believe that the shots that were discovered by our experts happened, occurred at a different time, a minute later, and a different place than they would have. Our experts have been studying that conclusion, and find it inconclusive, and that that so-called inference may not exist.

And until we know that -- and that would not take very much to figure out. That could be done very inexpensively -- I think it's wrong to just dismiss that acoustics evidence, because that is a hard piece of science that I have -- I have a lot of faith in that.

REHM: Gary Shaw?

SHAW: Let me clarify. When I called it the weak link, I didn't mean for an instant that I disbelieved that those shots are on that tape. I happen to be one of those that believe that they are. The problem and the reason it's a weak link is because the analyzation of it is so subject to opinion. And we've got the opinion of one group of scientists that I believe were a little bit more independent than the government group of scientists that came up with the latter opinion.

All I'm saying is that to buttress this, and the thing that's never put forth to the American people, is the enormous evidence of a shot from the front by the eyewitnesses, the earwitnesses, the movement of the President in the limousine, by the people, the police officers who ran to that area, by the women and people screaming and saying, "They're shooting the President from the bushes." All of these things buttress that tape.

And all I'm saying is that's a weak link because it's so subject to the opinion of the various scientists.

REHM: The other aspect of the record that we have of that hideous incident is the Zapruder film. And that has been studied over and over and over again.

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Is it also interesting that the woman called "the babushka lady" and her film has never quite shown up, and yet we seem to have a photograph of her taking films?

SHAW: I'll be glad to talk about that because I have interviewed the babushka lady.

REHM: All right.

SHAW: I found her in about 1969 and got the full story of her film. She is seen in other films taking this motion picture of the motorcade and of the President being shot from a position opposite of Abraham Zapruder.

REHM: Yes.

SHAW: A position that, it's said in an FBI memo which mentions here, not by name but by her position and her being seen in other films, says that the schoolbook depository and the grassy knoll would be in her view.

When I found her she told me that shortly after she went back to her place of business, which happened to be next door to Jack Ruby's club there in Dallas, another club, she was visited by two men who introduced themselves as either Secret Service agents or FBI agents. She doesn't remember which. She was 18 years old at the time. They asked her for her film, or they said they understood she had taken a film. She said that she had, but that it had not been developed. They told her they would take the film and develop it and return a copy to her and keep a copy for them to study. She's never seen the film since that day.

Later on she married a very high-ranking member of organized crime there in Dallas and, of course, forgot all about the film. He was killed in a gangland slaying shortly before I met her in 1969, and she talks freely about it now.

This evidence was given to the committee. There was even rumors that they had found the film, but I don't know this for certain. But it's an important film and one that the government knew existed but never went after.

REHM: Dick Billings.

BILLINGS: I don't know that it was -- I have not any knowledge that it was found by the committee. I know about the story up to this point. I do not know any more than that.

REHM: Bud?

FINSTERWALD: I don't know anything about it. But I

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

think somebody should comment on the fact that when the House committee was set up, one of the major purposes was to make as much knowledge available to the American public as possible. Yet when they closed down, the chairman of that committee ordered that the record should be sealed for 50 years.

So, we're in worse shape with respect to the House committee records than we are with the Warren Commission records, which at least some of them which are available under freedom of information. The House committee's material is simply locked up for 50 years, period.

REHM: I'm interested in Gary Shaw's comment that the husband of the babushka lady was killed. It seems to me there have been a great number of killings somehow, distantly or closely, related to this particular case.

You're smiling, Dick Billings. In your mind, perhaps it is totally reasonable, totally coincidental. I have questions. And I would think a great many people would have questions.

BILLINGS: I'm smiling because the number of killings isn't what persuades me nearly so much as by picking and choosing. I think some of the deaths that have occurred since the assassination have some relevance. But this all goes back to a book by Penn Jones and arguments since then that there's much more than coincidence to the number of people killed or who have died in some mysterious way.

The number, I don't think, is that unusual, considering the period of time and the part of the country these people work or their line of work. On the other hand, the death of David Ferry in New Orleans continues to interest me, because I don't think he died the way it was said he died.

I think there are a number of these deaths that are worth looking at without having to accept the whole idea of the mysterious deaths.

FINSTERWALD: I would certainly agree with that. I think that some of them are quite pointedly connected with the assassination. A man named George de Mohrenschildt, who was under subpoena by the House committee, either was killed or killed himself within a matter of hours when he was informed that an investigator was coming up to talk to him.

The number three man in the FBI, who had retired and was to appear before the House committee, was living up in New England. He walked out on his back porch one morning and was shot through the head by a deer hunter who mistook him for a deer on his back porch.

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Another man who was a member of the Mafia was killed, dismembered, put in a barrel with cement and chains. They could hardly label that a suicide.

But I agree with Dick. It is not important, the exact number. But there's been a great deal of violence connected with this investigation.

REHM: Gary Shaw?

SHAW: Well, I think one of the unfortunate things about that -- and I agree with both of these gentlemen -- the unfortunate thing is that got a lot of attention in the various media, especially like the Enquirer and other books, the strange-death theory; and I think it scared an awful lot of witnesses into silence.

FINSTERWALD: Well, it should have scared them into silence.

REHM: So, you feel that there are people out there who know more than they are willing share, simply out of fear.

SHAW: I certainly do.

REHM: Would you agree with that, Bud?

FINSTERWALD: That's speculation, but there's every evidence to that effect, because volunteering to talk on the subject has not proved to be very healthy for those who have tried it in the past.

REHM: What about your own personal situation? Have you ever had any concern about your relentless pursuit on this case and whether there might be some danger to your own life?

FINSTERWALD: I've never really seriously thought about it. One sort of normal precaution we take is that when any one of us gets any piece of information that we think is particularly interesting, we immediately Xerox it and pass it around so no one person has an exclusive on anything.

I've had my office broken into a number of times, things of that type, but nothing in the way of violence.

REHM: How about you, Gary?

SHAW: I'm not paranoid at all. I sleep good at night and walk comfortably wherever I go. I, like Bud, have had my office broken into, and on occasion my files rifled; by who and for what reason, I have no idea. But I'm open. And like Bud

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

says, any information I get is shared with at least a dozen other folks. So I'm not concerned about it.

REHM: All right. We are coming up to the top of the hour. We are going to take your calls right after the news.

* * *

REHM: Welcome back to Kaleidoscope and to the second half of the Kennedy assassination after 20 years. During this part of the program we are going to open the phones and take your calls. The number to call is 966-8850....

Good morning. You're on the air.

KEVIN WALSH: Good morning, Diane. I've been a fan of your program for some time. My name is Kevin Walsh. And I've also been an admirer of Dick Billings and Bud Finsterwald since 1975 and the responsible work that they've done on this investigation.

My purpose in calling today is to point out something that has been referred to earlier -- that is, the disposition of the working files of the Select Committee on Assassinations. As Bud had pointed out, they are locked up for 50 years and will not be released until the year 2028. Somewhat of a spectacle down at the National Archives, when directly across from those records we have a comparable record group of the Warren Commission which is nearly 95 percent available.

There was on April 13th a resolution introduced by the former members of the Select Committee, the members of Congress who had the most direct involvement with these records, and that resolution does provide for the accelerated release, under methodical federal guidelines, of these records. Meaning that professional archivists will screen these records and isolate that which is classified or needlessly embarrassing to innocent individuals, and fulfill that mandate of the Select Committee to get out the facts as they were best determined.

I did want to just call in and to mention that today, on the anniversary, that there is some disappointment that the media has totally ignored this congressional effort that has now some 42 members of Congress co-sponsoring. And it is rather sad, I think, that the Washington Post has devoted a great deal of ink to describing people's feelings 20 years ago, but does not address itself to the problems of today with regard to the withholding of these files, and that, in fact, a story was killed which went into the state of affairs with this House Resolution 160.

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

REHM: Okay, sir. Let's see what the comments are here in the studio. Thank you so much for your call.

Bud, do you want to comment?

FINSTERWALD: Yes. I think that this is a splendid ef-fort by the former members to correct an error that was made by the chairman. The members of the committee were not consulted when these documents were locked up. A number of them were quite angry about it. And they've now, apparently, made an effort to rectify that. And it is my belief that, unless something unusual happens, this resolution will pass and these documents will be subject to freedom of information.

REHM: Dick Billings.

BILLINGS: Consistent with what I believe since the date 20 years ago, I think every bid of information that can be brought out should be brought out. I think the decision to lock up the papers for 50 years was a mistake; and in that I part from my chief counsel, Mr. Blakey, Professor Blakey, with whom I subsequently wrote a book. I can stand in accord with some of the important decisions of the committee and disagree with some of the administrative decisions. And this is one with which I disagree.

REHM: ...Good morning. You're on the air.

WOMAN: Your guests and yourself seem to have discounted the possibility of a planned assassination within a government agency, such as the CIA, and tried to make it seem as though it might be more the work of renegade CIA agents. Yet some of us do not find it inconceivable that such a thing could happen.

As you recall, Madame Nhu, at the time of President Kennedy's assassination, implied that he was to blame for the death of the Diem brothers. I think it has been brought out that the downfall of that government was planned by our country.

At the same time, more or less the same time period, Brazils' Joao Goulart was also brought down by our government under Kennedy.

Now, when people die, such as the Diem brothers, under such planned downfalls of governments, then I would consider that an assassination.

REHM: All right. Let's see what the comments are.

WOMAN: The thing in Chile under Salvador Allende, also

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

being shot, is another example of how our government gets involved in planned assassinations.

REHM: All right. Thanks for your call.

Gary Shaw, do you want to comment?

SHAW: Just to say this: Unfortunately, I think that our government did get involved in political assassination of foreign leaders. I think the proof of that is well documented.

And as far as saying that they actually perpetrated, all of these crimes against the individuals she mentioned, I don't think we have enough evidence to say that. But just the very fact that they had an assassination apparatus is disturbing enough.

REHM: Good morning. You're on the air.

MAN: Of all the books I've read about the assassination, the one that intrigues me the most was in 1975 called "Appointment in Dallas: The Final Solution of the Assassination." And it was written by a man of good credentials, Hugh McDonnell (?) who is, I think, Chief of Los Angeles Detectives, etcetera. And he maintains that he interviewed the man who actually assassinated Kennedy.

And the reason I'm calling, since the author is of good reputation, why was it never followed up? Did he write this as fiction, or what?

FINSTERWALD: This was written by Hugh McDonnell, and I know Hugh McDonnell quite well. And he actually has followed that up with another book which implicates Lyndon Johnson, in an indirect way, in the assassination. I personally do not agree with this. But there's been no attempt by anyone that I know to suppress Hugh McDonnell's work. He's written a number of books, and they've all been published and received a good deal of attention.

MAN: But why wouldn't people like you three join in this effort to find this guy, this Saul, who he claims did the assassination?

FINSTERWALD: Well, we have joined in, and I've worked very closely with Hugh McDonnell. He had one meeting with the person he thought was the assassin. I'm not certain that the hired assassin may not have been one of the three Frenchmen we're talking about. I've discussed this with Hugh McDonnell, and we are working on it together.

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

REHM: Thanks so much for your call.

Hi. You're on the air.

MAN: Yes. A couple quick questions. Have any of the fingerprints, unidentified fingerprints that were found in the book depository been cross-checked with any of the Watergate conspirators -- namely, Frank Sturgis? And has anyone ever identified the so-called Secret Service agent who showed his identification on the grassy knoll right after the shots? And were Hunt and Frank Sturgis in Dallas on November 22nd?

BILLINGS: Well, I don't know that the fingerprints have been checked; therefore I have to suspect not.

The Secret Service agent in question has not been identified.

There was an attempt -- there were photographs passed around of three so-called tramps arrested after the assassination that were in a railroad car, I believe, behind that picket fence, one of whom very closely resembled Hunt. And there was a lot of curiosity about that. I believe his claim to have been in Washington that day has held up.

REHM: All right, sir. Thanks for your call.

Hi. You're on the air.

MAN: Would anyone like to comment on David Lifton's opinion on the assassination in his book "Best Evidence"?

REHM: Gary Shaw,...he wonders whether you'd like to comment on David Lifton's book "Best Evidence." And I gather there you're talking about the whole question of the autopsy and the brain and that kind of thing.

SHAW: My comment would be that David Lifton raised a lot of questions that I think are impossible to answer with what we have right now. I believe that something was done to the President's body. How, why -- well, I know why -- but where it was done, and that sort of thing, is very fuzzy to me.

That's about the only comment I could make.

FINSTERWALD: Well, I agree with what Gary says. There's a lot of leads in the book that you can't really prove one way or the other. But there are certain factual things which are quite true. And that is that the President's body was altered before the autopsy. Nobody really knows where or why.

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

And the thing that's always intrigued me was that the brain of John F. Kennedy has never showed up.

REHM: Well now, hasn't Evelyn Lincoln said that she did pass that on to one person in particular?

FINSTERWALD: She said she passed on a brain. But when the body arrived for the autopsy in Dallas, the brain was clearly missing. There are photographs of the inside of the skull with no brain. That brain has never showed up again. Supposedly, it went to Robert Kennedy, and it then disappeared. But from the shot in Dallas that blew his head apart to this day, no one knows where the brain of John Kennedy is. And it was removed from the body before the autopsy.

BILLINGS: I don't have an answer to the brain.

On the Lifton theory of the altering of the President's body and the Lifton book, I reject the basic theory, based on the advice that I was able to get from the medical examiners who were consultants as members of a panel retained by the House committee.

This is the kind of evidence that I, in my relative ignorance of such things, will rely, if I feel the expert is objective and has no ax to grind. In this case, Michael Baden, the chairman of our medical panel, convinced me that there was no medical alteration of the head wound to the -- the wound to the President's head. And on the basis of that, I reject the Lifton thesis.

REHM: Thanks so much for your call.

Hi. You're on the air.

MAN: As you probably know, a Washington psychic made herself a big reputation by predicting the assassination of the President. Would any of you know if the talents of any of these people have ever been used in solving this case?

REHM: I'm getting some head-shaking here.

FINSTERWALD: I think the answer is no, they have not been used, certainly not by any official group.

REHM: Gary Shaw, do you want to comment?

SHAW: No.

REHM: All right.

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

That's it, sir. Thanks for calling.

Hi. You're on the air.

MAN: Looking back, I recall, as everyone else does, what I was doing. And I first heard over the radio about the Italian radio was saying that right-wing extremists had killed Kennedy. And immediately you sensed a national hatred of Dallas and of the South. And then when I got to a television set, I saw Chet Huntley very indignantly referring to hate.

And then, suddenly, when it was found out that Oswald had -- his involvement with the Communist front Fair Play for Cuba Committee, there was a complete absence of desire to really explore the motivation of just what was going on, in my opinion. Jackie Kennedy said that this robs Kennedy's death of all its meaning.

And I just wonder, is this kind of -- the fact that the political motivation was not what people wanted it to be one of the factors that led to such a poor effort to investigate it?

And I don't have any pet theories. I don't know whether the Mafia did it. I don't know whether Castro did it. But I do know that Senator Russell, who probably had about as high as --you know, may have been the man of about the highest integrity on the Warren Commission, he disavowed the findings of the Warren Commission.

But, my question again, could the disappointed hopes for, you know, this kind of hatred, to attack so-called right-wing extremists, which originally had been thought to be behind the killing, could that be a factor in the sluggard manner in which this investigation was carried on?

REHM: Gary Shaw?

SHAW: Well, I don't think that the government would be prone to cover up the fact that it was a right-wing conspiracy or that it was a conspiracy of the left wing. I think what they were prone to cover up was the fact that there was involvement on the part of certain elements that reached into our government.

MAN: Well, yes. I think I can agree there. There were embarrassing things because the Kennedy Administration spoke openly about the political assassinations of Diem. And I saw Howard K. Smith say that -- you know, the famous quote, that Kennedy was trying to kill Castro, and Castro got him first. But some people think that since he was trying to use the Mafia, and the Mafia wanted to get rid of Kennedy to because of the Kennedys' prosecution of the Teamsters union, that it was them

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

that got him, or Castro and the Mafia could have worked out a deal and both of them could have been rid of an undesirable element.

REHM: Okay. All right, sir. I'm going to cut you off right there, and let's see what the comments are.

FINSTERWALD: I think that one of the reasons that there was an immediate look at the right wing is because events that occurred in Dallas. Dallas was known as the nut capital of the country at that time. And shortly before, Adlai Stevenson had been there and had been spit upon and subject to being roughed up. And I think the immediate reaction of the public when it did happen in Dallas was that it had something to do with the right wing. I think the fact that it took place in Dallas was purely coincidental.

BILLINGS: I think that immediately after the assassination, in spite of some of those early statements, because of what Bud just said, of the attitude in Dallas, I think the country was basically stunned. I don't think, really, there was a lot of public opinion.

I think what's important, though, is what the government was doing, reacting immediately. And I don't think that has anything to do with whether it was left wing or right wing. I think they wanted to calm down the country, and I think they had a number of reasons for wanting to settle it.

REHM: Hi. You're on the air.

WOMAN: Most of the information that I am familiar with concerning conspiracy theories about the assassination comes from a book I read last year by a British journalist, Anthony Summers, called "Conspiracy," which I'm sure you gentlemen are probably very familiar with. And I was very impressed by the -- it took me about a month to plow through the thing. It's loaded with documentation and it's footnoted to death, and the guy, I think, really did his homework.

One of the things that intrigued me the most is his discussion of the Camp Street office in New Orleans that was listed on leaflets that Oswald handed out for the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. That office, apparently, also functioned as the headquarters listed on leaflets that were distributed by a right-wing group in New Orleans. And if my memory serves me correctly, Summes raises the possibility that, in fact, both left and right-wing extremist grops were being used in some way by the people in the CIA to pursue policies and activities connected with Cuban exiles and Castro and so forth.

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

I wonder if you could comment on that Camp Street office and what we definitely know about it.

FINSTERWALD: What you've really raised is the question of who Lee Harvey Oswald really was. For example, when he went to Russia, was he a genuine Marxist defector or was he simply an American agent who pretended to be a defector? When he came back, he worked out of the office of a man named Guy Bannister in the building that you mentioned. Guy Bannister was a fanatic anti-Communist. He was formerly an FBI agent in charge of the Chicago office. In that same office you found David Ferry, who was a fanatic anti-Communist. David Ferry also worked for the Mafia chief in New Orleans.

So, it's hard to distinguish between Lee Harvey Oswald's real feelings and real self and the cover that was given him in his various activities during his rather short life.

BILLINGS: 544 Camp Street is an important piece of evidence. Unfortunately, it has been used in perhaps a more complex way than it needs to be. There's the theory that Bud just gave. There was the theory that was presented in the book by Tony Summers.

There's another theory that is in a current book called "Oswald's Game" that is currently popular that uses -- that explains these connections between Oswald and the anti-Castros and the right wing there in New Orleans in the summer of '63 as his attempt to infiltrate those groups. And the book then comes to the conclusion that Oswald still is the lone assassin.

I don't think you have to go to either direction and necessarily one or the other has to be true. My own view is that Oswald was in touch with these right-wing people and that this has a bearing on the assassination, without it being so complicated.

REHM: Gary, do you want to wrap that up?

SHAW: I think they've covered it adequately.

REHM: You mentioned a new book, "Oswald's Game." I wonder whether, with the numbers of books on the Kennedy assassination that have come out, whether the profit motive is there in trying to keep the multi-assassin theory alive. You know, a great many people, I would think, wonder about that.

BILLINGS: Well, having written a book about the subject, I'm not going to accuse somebody else of a pure profit motive. I do know, however, that if you want to write a book,

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

the publisher has a profit motive, or he's not going to publish your book. So there is something to that.

REHM: And the public is still absolutely interested enough to buy books about the assassination.

BILLINGS: Well, it seems to be. We said earlier there was a who-cares attitude.

REHM: Yeah, exactly.

BILLINGS: But that might a book about Oswald's so-called game -- I'd like to comment about that book for a moment, if I may. It is receiving some bit of attention. And that book takes all the evidence that we know about, a lot of which is denied by the Warren Commission, or it was not used by the Warren Commission and has since been denied by its former staff members, all dealing -- a lot dealing with Oswald's contacts with strange people and strange places in the summer of 1963, which would lead one or has lead many people to believe in his participation in a conspiracy.

She explains all that away by Oswald's simply, as I said, trying to infiltrate the anti-Castro Cubans. What she leaves out entirely, because she writes very selectively, is any evidence whatsoever about Jack Ruby and his connections. And therefore I think it's an incomplete book.

FINSTERWALD: I also might add that if you think that the Tony Summers book is a complicated book, there is a book coming out in the spring by a man named Henry Hurt, who works for Reader's Digest. And most people think of Reader's Digest as a very conservative anti-Communist organization. This book is going to be violently anti-Warren Commission and violently anti-House Committee, saying that both groups have failed to investigate the case properly and that it is crying for investigation. And in my view, it will be the most thorough and up-to-date summary of where we are at this time.

REHM: Henry Hurt was supposed to be with us on this program this morning. Unfortunately, his publisher moved his due date up on him, so that his book now must be completed by the 31st of December. And he felt he simply couldn't take the time to be with us. But I think it will be a book that a lot of people are interested in.

Bud, I'd like your comment on this profit-motive aspect.

FINSTERWALD: Well, there have been some three or four hundred books that have been published. I think that the average author makes about six cents an hour for the work that they put

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

in on it. It is true what Dick says, that the publishing companies won't publish unless they're going to make some money. But the number of hours, days, weeks, years that has to be put in to produce a book, it's got to be one of the poorest-paid jobs in the world.

REHM: Gary, you published your own.

SHAW: I think profit, of course, has to enter into it to some extent. But I think, by and large, the reasons for the writing of the books is that people have certain thoughts and certain opinions and certain facts that they want to get before the people, and the only way they can do it is to write or appear on television, or something of that nature.

REHM: Hi. You're on the air.

MAN: ...I had sort of an overall question, and that is that many of the people that I've talked to that still believe in hte lone-assassin theory very frankly say, well, if you don't believe in the lone-assassin theory, what does that say about the American system? And it seems to me that although I agree very much that there seems to be no doubt of the involvement of the CIA and the organized crime -- there's an overwhelming amount of evidence -- when you say that, you say something about the basic myths that most Americans believe in about their system and about the accountability of their system. And it seems to me that 20 years from now, when it's well in the past, it might be safer to expose those myths because they won't reflect so much on how people then feel about their system.

And I would like your guests to comment on what it means about the American -- the whole fabric of American society that organized crime and renegade elements of the CIA could actually kill a President, to have the power to do that.

REHM: All right, sir. Thanks for your call.

FINSTERWALD: I think it's necessary to draw a very clear line between the crime, on the one hand, and what I consider a cover-up, on the other. It may be that the government and its people had nothing to do with the murder. But I can imagine the scene at CIA Headquarters at Langley on the afternoon of the murder when it came over the radio that a man named Lee Harvey Oswald had been picked up for the crime, and somebody punched their computer and out runs a stack of paper six inches thick on Lee Harvey Oswald. And I think they took one look at that and said, "Oh, my God! We've got simply to stick him with his cover story and not ever let it be known that he was involved with U.S. intelligence.

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

As I said earlier, once that decision is made, once you tell the first lie, you can't reverse course. There's no way you can do it.

REHM: Gary Shaw.

SHAW: Well, I think it's important to note that the one thing that came out -- or one of the things that came out of the House Select Committee's investigation is that the Central Intelligence Agency and the FBI did not give all of the information that they had to the Warren Commission. And I think it's important to point out that one of the members of that Warren Commission was the former CIA Director Allen Dulles. And I think the intelligence connection of Oswald is very important.

REHM: Dick Billings.

BILLINGS: I think that the death of candor is tragic.

REHM: You're on the air.

MAN: I'd like to have your guests' opinion of the ties between the deaths of Bobby and Jack Kennedy, and perhaps even Martin Luther King, as well as the rumors of threats to Ted Kennedy and the urgency to keep the Kennedys out of the White House.

And I kind of have an opinion about the democratic stance in terms of our country and the appearance that the politicians, underworld, and other groups, including big business, hide so much information. There appears to be a lot of deception. And I'm wondering what that does to the democratic air.

BILLINGS: The ties are very vague, in my experience, of the assassinations mentioned. And that doesn't include the threats to Ted Kennedy. But of those assassinations mentioned, the ones that I know that I have been investigated, both the King and the Kennedy, which were covered by the House committee, a connection was not found.

As for Bob Kennedy, speculation that he might also have been a victim of an organized crime conspiracy is a subject of some fascination without proof.

FINSTERWALD: I might just comment that contrary to general knowledge, there is an active investigation of the killing of Robert Kennedy going on right now, based on a number of factors. I'll just mention two of them.

One is, is there's a great deal of evidence that there

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

were eleven shots fired in the pantry of the hotel, and the gun that Sirhan had could only hold eight shots. The other is the fact that the shot that killed Robert Kennedy was fired from behind and below and at a range of not more than three inches. And Sirhan was never in a position to do that. And these physical questions, as in the John Kennedy case, simply don't go away. People refuse to let the case go without having it thoroughly investigated. And that...

REHM: What kind of an investigation is going on now in regard to the RFK case?

FINSTERWALD: This is purely a private investigation, and it's spurred by a group from Western New England College in Massachusetts. And they have spent a great deal of time interviewing people and gathering evidence that's been ignored in the past. I don't know how they're going to proceed with it, but I just wanted to let the listener know.

REHM: What about on the caller's question of a link, perhaps?

FINSTERWALD: There are certain vague connections between all three of these cases. It would take me at least 20 minutes, which we don't have, to go into them. If the caller would like to talk to me privately about it, I'll be glad to discuss it.

MAN: That would be very interesting.

REHM: All right, sir. And why don't you call us after the program, call us after 12:00 Noon here on the business line, 686-2690?

MAN: Thank you.

REHM: ...Good morning. You're on the air.

MAN: ...I'd like to take off on the different tack. And I think the discussion, while I appreciate it and it is good, I think I'm going to be still angry and frustrated after it's over.

REHM: I'm going to have to ask you to speak up....

MAN: I was saying that I feel that the discussion is good, but after the discussion I'm still going to be angry and frustrated. So I say after this discussion, where do we go? And I would like to propose to your guests that the three of them, along with others, set up a post office box number or some sort

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

of organization where the people can take part and we can have a people's investigation.

I heard one of your guests say it would take about 500,000 to a million dollars. I heard another guest say something about computers. Why not give the people a chance to get into this thing and pursue it, and maybe then the elected officials will come on board? Using the independent press, setting up a computer in Texas, setting up one in D.C., feeding in this information, getting investigative reporters, investigative attorneys, and let's move on with it, rather than continue to discuss it, since we know that our government is not going to put up the money for it.

REHM: Okay, sir. Let's see what the comments are.

Gary Shaw, do you want to take a crack at that one?

SHAW: I would love to see just that. And there have been attempts to do that. In fact, Bud currently has just such an organization set up with his office. Unfortunately, among the critics, there's never been a situation where we could all get together. And private money has funneled into this time and time again. And I know for a fact that Bud has put many dollars in, as have I and several others. And we'd love to see just that.

But to do that, you've got to have publicity. And how to get that publicity is the key.

FINSTERWALD: Let me suggest to the caller, if he's got a pencil handy, that he write to a Dr. Jack Gordon, who is at the Western New England College in Springfield, Mass. He is in the process of setting up such a group. And I think that it will grow into quite a grass-roots movement in the future.

REHM: And that's Dr. Jack Gordon, Western New England College in Springfield, Massachusetts.

Dr. Jack Gordon, you may have a little mail in your mailbox fairly soon.

Good morning. You're on the air.

MAN: ...Diane, I have before me a copy of the Warren Report. It's the edition published by the Associated Press. I bought this at the time of the report. And I'm just appalled at the perpetuation of myths which go on despite the aspects of the Warren Report which are purely factual and simply are beyond question.

For instance, it was recently brought up on this program

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

a widespread view that the brain of John F. Kennedy is missing. Well, at page 228, as part of the autopsy report on the corpse of John F. Kennedy, is a very complete description of the brain. The left hemisphere is entirely intact. Of course, the right hemisphere was destroyed by the bullet which penetrated from the rear and blew it away.

And that ties in to the so-called grassy knoll business. The grassy knoll supporters, of course, argue that someone fired from the right and a little in front. Now, if that bullet had entered from the right and in front, it would have destroyed the left hemisphere, which is nevertheless entirely intact in the autopsy report.

Furthemore, you mentioned the Zapruder film. Now, I'm a little hot about this because I'm not a professional, but for 20 years I've been hearing this baloney that goes floating around.

Now, the Zapruder film. I remember seeing that. And there was a cloud -- this is a horrible, grisly thing. There was a cloud of matter suspended in and above and in front of the head of John F. Kennedy. It's really quite a coincidence, but the Zapruder film caught this moment when his brain was suspended, part of it, as a cloud of fine particles in the air and it was floating ahead of him; in other words, in the direction of the travel of the limousine in which he was riding.

Now, other pictures show that the breeze was blowing the hair of the people backwards. And in one of those pictures, just a moment before, Mrs. Kennedy is holding her hat, obviously to hold it against the breeze which is created by the forward movement of the limousine.

Now, if that bullet was from the grassy knoll, that cloud of suspended particle matter would not have been in front and in the direction of travel.

REHM: All right, sir. Now I'd like to give Bud Finsterwald...

MAN: And another thing....

REHM: Now hold on, sir.

MAN: No. I want to say...

REHM: I'm sorry. You're going to have to wait a minute, or I will simply cut you off. You have said a great deal and -- go ahead, Bud.

FINSTERWALD: I'd just make a couple of comments.

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

One, as to the brain. There's no question that a brain was produced at the autopsy. The real question is who's brain it was and what happened to it. Certain sections were taken out of the brain. They have never showed up. The brain itself has disappeared. Whether it was John Kennedy's brain, I don't know. But it was removed from his skull before it got to the autopsy room at the Naval Hospital, which has never been explained.

So far as whether the shot came from the front or the rear, there was a motorcycle officer riding somewhat to the rear and to the left, and he was completely covered by the matter from the President's head, which would indicate that the shot did come from the right and from forward.

But you can't go into all of these thousands of factual misconceptions on a program of this type. It's just not -- we just don't have the time to do it, really.

REHM: Gary Shaw, do you want to comment?

SHAW: I'll just comment real quickly. The gentleman says he has a copy of the Associated Press version of the Warren Report. I would remind that listener that there are allegedly -- and I say this sarcastically, to some extent -- 26 volumes of supporting evidence to that report. And the problem with that report is that they didn't underline for us where they told us a lie about what was contained in the other 26 volumes.

In addition to those 26 volumes, there is a mass of material that was never published and is in the National Archives, a portion of which is still classified information and we're not able to see it.

So, to take that one little report is, to those of us who have studied the case and studied the evidence and studied the 26 volumes, is laughable.

REHM: Do you want to comment, Dick?

BILLINGS: I'm not sure that you have to have the shot from the right front hit the President's head. The evidence, as analyzed by the medical panel employed by the House committee, agreed with the Warren Commission that the shot to the head was from the rear. The evidence from the acoustics tape does show a shot from the right front.

It is our belief, and it is my belief, that there was a shot, that it was not the one that hit the President in the head, which would be consistent with what the gentleman was saying on the phone.

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

REHM: Hi. You're on the air.

MAN: ...In the early 1960s, I was someone sympathetic to Castro's Cuba, and I was familiar with the left-wing groups in the New York City area, and I guess nationally. And I used to read a newspaper called the Militant, which I understand Lee Harvey Oswald, I know, was also a subscriber to. That was put out by something called the Socialist Workers Party.

What I'm getting at is that at that time Kennedy and Khrushchev were pursuing a sort of detente. And part of that detente, apparently, was an agreement that Castro would pull back certain revolutionary activities that he was involved in at the time. I'm not sure this has been on the public record, but Castro was supporting revolutionary groups in Santo Domingo and Haiti, for instance. He suddenly pulled back in 1963 and began to arrest Trotskyites, Socialist Workers Party people, in Cuba. And this was duly reported in the Militant.

So, I could always -- I've always felt there was motivation for Oswald, if he was a committed Trotskyite, if he was, to read all of this and to see that by hitting Kennedy, he would stop the selling out of what was very sacred to the left -- that is, the Cuban revolution -- that is, the Kennedy-Khrushchev detente, which was going on at that time.

That doesn't displace all of the public information you've got on a conspiracy. But I always felt there was a very strong, logical motivation for a Lee Harvey Oswald to go off the wire and to do what he did.

Would you have any comment on that?

REHM: Gary Shaw.

SHAW: I, again, could not hear him, Diane.

REHM: Bud, why don't you take it?

FINSTERWALD: I would say that my only comment would be is that the listener is assuming that Lee Harvey Oswald was in fact a dedicated left-wing Marxist of some type. There's a great deal of evidence to show that he was not that, but that he was a U.S. agent pretending to be that. And in that case, the Cuban -- Castro's attitude toward the Socialist Workers Party would have had absolutely no effect on this, one way or the other.

BILLINGS: It's an interesting theory. I am not of the belief that Oswald was motivated, one way or another, by his politics. I think there were other factors working.

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

MAN: Okay. Thank you.

REHM: Hi. You're on the air.

MAN: I was wondering what the panelists think is the role of insanity and conspiracy combined. It seems like all the major assassinations have been done by very unstable people, and yet they seem to have a political motivation at the same time. How do these panelists view the combination of insanity and conspiracy together?

BILLINGS: You can go through all the -- many of the historic assassinations of high-level chief executive figures, going back through the past century, and come up with a number of them, including attempted assassination of President Roosevelt in the 1930s, and find that you've got a preponderance of nuts.

If that's supposed to explain Oswald, fine. It doesn't explain Oswald at all, as far as I'm concerned. Oswald may have been nutty, but he wasn't -- he wasn't alone and he wasn't nutty enough to -- he wasn't deranged enough to do it that way. There were motivations that weren't political, but they weren't just because he was nutty.

FINSTERWALD: Also, I think if you look at Oswald's career, whatever it may have been -- he died at age 23 or 24. By that time, he'd spent 2 1/2 years in Russia, he spoke four languages, somebody with a tenth-grade education. He did a lot of things that were interesting and required a great deal of talent.

So, he may have killed the President. I seriously doubt it. But I certainly would not in any way characterize him as a nut.

SHAW: I'd say this. It's only in the last couple of decades that we've been told quickly, before the smoke even settles aroung the scene, that there was no conspiracy, that it was a lone assassin, that the man was mentally deranged, before any investigation. And I think that's rather strange.

REHM: ...Good morning. You're on the air.

WOMAN: I'd like to ask your guests a question, please. About ten years ago a movie came out that was played maybe two months or three months in the theaters, and then it was like taken out and you never heard anything about it again, and it was called "Executive Action." And when I viewed that film, it certainly convinced me that there was more than just one assassin. And I was wondering if your guests could comment on that.

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

FINSTERWALD: Yes. That movie was writtein by a longtime critic named Mark Lane. I think when the case is finally solved, much of the movie, either accidentally or otherwise, will turn out to be true.

REHM: What does the movie say? I never saw it.

FINSTERWALD: The movie says that there was a concerted right-wing, well-organized, well-financed, plot to kill the President. And they left Oswald at the scene as a patsy. And I'm not sure that all the details of it will pan out, but I certainly think that large parts of it will turn out to be true.

BILLINGS: I think that one of the developments over the years that has made it more difficult is the fictionalization, either in intended form or maybe misintended. I think that hurts more than it helps.

REHM: How about you, Gary?

SHAW: I could not hear the question again, Diane. But I assume from the answers of Dick and Bud that they're talking about the film "Executive Action."

REHM: That's right.

SHAW: And I somewhat agree with Bud. I think when the truth finally comes out that that film would be very, very close to the truth.

REHM: Interesting.

Hi. You're on the air.

MAN: Is Mr. Upshaw....

REHM: Hi. You're on the air.

MAN: What ever happened to Jim Garrison's investigation, the leakage that was put out before he was ready to take it to trial? And I think, if I remember correctly, a lot of his witnesses were eventually killed or something happened to them, that he couldn't prosecute the trial, or couldn't finish it.

FINSTERWALD: I had dinner with Jim Garrison not too long ago in New Orleans. And despite the Federal Government's best efforts to get rid of him, Jim Garrison is an elected judge in New Orleans.

And you are correct. His investigation was subject to a great deal of pressure. He did not -- he was his own worst enemy

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

on top of that. But he was not able to get a single out-of-state witness. In other words, anybody that he wanted to subpoena from any of the states, inevitably, these were turned down. So he was, in fact, trying the case with only witnesses from the New Orleans area, which was just impossible. There were many things that went wrong in the investigation, not just that.

But I also very recently was able to see the CIA's files on Clay Shaw and the equisite nature of the CIA's attention to that case. They followed it day by day and instructed their people to be as disruptive as possible.

REHM: Now, Clay Shaw is no longer living. Is that correct?

FINSTERWALD: That is correct. Clay Shaw died some years ago. But it was in his file that I found out the exact nature of the U.S. Government's attention to the case in New Orleans.

REHM: Do you want to comment on that, Dick?

BILLINGS: Quickly. I'll try to do it quickly.

I believe there were two Garrison investigations. One began in the fall of 1966 and ended in February 1967, and there was a lot of very valid evidence in that.

I think what happened after that is Garrison purposely, for fear of retribution, botched his own investigation.

REHM: Hi. You're on the air.

WOMAN: Basically, this is my question. Five years ago we had Mort Sahl here as a commentatory, and he very heavily believed in Clay Shaw and conspiracy. And I was wondering how the commission or how the group feels about this.

REHM: Now, hold on just a minute. I'm not sure they're terribly clear here. And if you could speak up, please.

WOMAN: About five years ago, the Washington area had a commentator, and well-known comedian, Mort Sahl. And during his time, he talked quite a bit about Clay Shaw and conspiracy. He also wrote a book. And I was wondering if there is any truth to this, or if any of what he has stated is valid -- in other words, a conspiracy, they worked out of New Orleans, and Clay Shaw was involved with the investigation.

BILLINGS: Well, I believe that the government was closely monitoring the Garrison investigation, and probably did

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

anything it could to impede it. I also believe that Clay Shaw had ties that would have been embarrassing to him and to the government.

I do not believe, however, that Clay Shaw was involved in the assassination.

WOMAN: Oh, I don't feel that either, necessarily. It's just that I was wondering if anything that came out during that investigation indicated that there was a conspiracy, or what basically came out of that?

BILLINGS: Very much so. The early part of the investigation established the link between Oswald and David Ferry, David Ferry and Carlos Marcello. A lot came out that was very valid in the early part of the Garrison investigation.

FINSTERWALD: Two interesting things about Clay Shaw that are probably not known. One is that he was a consistent CIA informant. They used him as one of their major souces of information in New Orleans. And second was he was the only U.S. member on the board of directors of an ultra-right-wing European group who financed the very French assassins that we suspected were in Dallas.

So, again you get these odd connections that you can't do anything with.

REHM: Gary Shaw?

SHAW: I would also point out that Clay Shaw has been definitely linked with David Ferry, who is definitely linked to Lee Oswald, who's definitely linked to Carlos Marcello. And whether Clay Shaw was a conspirator, I have no knowledge of. But there was a lot of smoke.

REHM: Good morning. You're on the air.

MAN: One aspect of this whole thing that I never heard talked about was the poor quality of rifle that he chose to use. We used to -- at about that same time, I was shooting one of those rifles just for fun, and we had trouble getting it to even go off. And we used to joke that it's no wonder the Italians lost. But I'm a competitive shooter, and I find it almost impossible to get three aimed shots in that period of time at a fixed target, let alone a moving target. I just never have understood why he picked such -- was absolutely the worst choice of a weapon.

Has anybody ever discussed that at all?

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

FINSTERWALD: There's been an enormous amount of discussion of the rifle and the ammunition. No one has ever been able to duplicate Oswald's alleged feat with that rifle at the range he was firing and the scope he was using. He was 11 inches off target. It's a single-bolt-action rifle. It takes between two and three seconds by the best rifleman to fire it again.

But even more interesting is the ammunition. The only ammunition for the rifle available either was World War II ammunition from the Italians, which was absolutely worthless, or ammunition which had been manufactured in this country for the exclusive use of the CIA. So, no one knows where the ammunition came from, if it were used.

But the rifle and the ammunition were certainly not those of a professional assassin.

REHM: Dick?

BILLINGS: The rifle is very troubling, even though the ballistics experts do link the fragments and there is the scientific evidence that linked the rifle to the killing.

However, one thing that happened in the acoustics study that is also more puzzling is that it shows that the first two shots were 1.6 seconds apart, which makes the use of that rifle even more baffling. It is a mystery.

REHM: The whole thing is a mystery. It is obvious from our listener questions this morning and from the information you've offered that a great many questions need to be answered before we do gt to any particular conclusion.

In your minds, is there one factor that provides the key to the whole mystery?

Bud?

FINSTERWALD: No, there is not any one single factor or any one single fact.

REHM: Dick?

BILLINGS: The murder of Oswald by Jack Ruby is the one single factor that convinces me that organized crime was very much involved in the assassination.

REHM: And Gary?

SHAW: I would agree with Dick that the key is Jack Ruby's actions, his complicity, and his connections to organized

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9

crime that the Warren Commission lied to us about.

REHM: Gary Shaw, I want to thank you so much for being with us.

And both of you here in the studios, Richard Billings, whose book "The Plot to Kill the President" was published in 1981. Mr. Shaw's book is called "Cover-up." And Bernard Finsterwald's book "Assassination of JFK: By Coincidence or Conspiracy?" was published in 1977.

Approved For Release 2008/07/25 : CIA-RDP88-01070R000200970003-9