

Editor's Preface / Ira David Wood III

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James H. Fetzer

[Editor's Note: *When Ira David Wood III initially contacted me about his chronology of the assassination of JFK, I was elated. He had created a document of extraordinary interest, from which experts and novices alike have much to learn. In its totality, his work begins in 4 BC and illuminates the role of assassinations throughout history. I was delighted to publish his research on 22 November 1963 in Murder in Dealey Plaza (2002) Here it is extended backward in time to the inauguration of John Kennedy.*]

Among the most gratifying responses to the publication of *Murder in Dealey Plaza* (2000) was the enthusiastic appreciation that was extended to Ira David Wood III's "JFK Assassination Chronology", which spans the 100+ pages from page 17 to page 117. Experts and amateurs alike have much to learn from this masterful compilation of details of events that transpired on the day of the assassination, which appears here in an update form together with an additional chronology of significant events that began in January 1961. He thus offers an historical perspective from the inauguration of the 35th President of the United States, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, to the retirement after a long night by the 36th President of the United States, Lyndon Baines Johnson. What transpired in between has absorbed and fascinated historians and scholars for four decades now and shows no signs of abating. This landmark contribution should help dispel the mystery surrounding this event as it succumbs to the analytical abilities of scientists, physicians, and scholars.

There are nuggets of gold distributed throughout Wood's chronology. As an illustration, David Mantik's research on the medical evidence supports the conclusion that JFK was hit at least four times—once in the back from behind, once in the throat from in front, and twice in the head, once from behind and once from in front—while John Connally was hit from one to three times. Homer McMahon reported about his study of the film of the assassination brought to the NPIC the weekend of the assassination that Jack had been hit between six and eight times from at least three different directions. Assuming McMahon was describing the number of times occupants were hit, then four in Jack plus three in Big John equals seven, a number between six and eight. In *Murder*, on page 38, we learn that Roy Kellerman will tell the Warren Commission, "*If President Kennedy had from all reports four wounds, Governor Connally three, there have got to be more than three shots, gentlemen,*" a remarkable convergence of evidence from different lines of inquiry.

The hypocrisy of the Department of Justice is nowhere more evident than in the final entry of this remarkable record of the history of the case. As though to confirm the most cynical impressions of the cavalier attitude of the United States government in relation to

the investigation of the assassination, a rather mysterious document has appeared in the “official” records of the case, which does not identify its authors or the evidence on which it is based. This cowardly document serves as a fitting epithet to this sordid history of non-investigation. It appears as the final entry of Wood’s complete chronology, which deserves emphasis, even though it is not included in this special issue. Specifically,

EPILOGUE

In March 1979 the Assassinations Committee asked the Department of Justice, formally, to arrange specialist examination of some films shot in Dealey Plaza, to study the acoustics evidence, to review the Committee’s findings, and to report whether further investigation was justified.

It took the Department *nearly a decade* – till March 1988 – to send its five-page conclusion to Congress.

The Department concluded that “*no persuasive evidence can be identified to support the theory of a conspiracy*” in the assassinations of either President Kennedy or Martin Luther King. “*No further investigation appears to be warranted,*” said the Department, “*unless new information ... sufficient to support additional investigative activity, becomes available.*”

What is persuasive to one person may or may not be persuasive to another, which means this “conclusion” has no objective foundation. When the fabrication of the autopsy X-rays and the substitution of someone else’s brain for that of JFK was discovered—by David W. Mantik, M.D., Ph.D., and by Robert B. Livingston, M.D.—I wrote to Janet Reno, Attorney General, at the Department of Justice in the naïve belief that words like these meant something. My correspondence with Ms. Mary C. Spearing, Chief, General Litigation and Legal Advice Section of the Criminal Division, in which she maintains (as though it could be written with a straight face) that these issues had been considered by previous governmental inquiries, when it pulls the rug out from under *The Warren Report* (1964) and *The HSCA Report* (1979), has now appeared in *Assassination Science* (1998).

When Jack White, David Mantik, and I learned that the Department of Justice was in the process of negotiating with the heirs of Abraham Zapruder for appropriate compensation after the ARRB had declared the film that bears the family’s name as an “assassination document”, we attempted to convince the government that any package should include a clause stipulating that, if the film were discovered to have been edited and could not properly qualify as the “out of camera” original, then that compensation ought to be returned to the people of the United States. Ms. Leslie Batchelor, Assistant Deputy Attorney General, was designated to handle the negotiations. Copies of letters from David and me may be found in *Murder in Dealey Plaza* (2000), p. 359 and Appendix B.

Our entreaties fell on deaf ears and the government paid the family \$16,000,000 for the right to claim the film as an “official record”. Recent work has now been published that undermines the government’s belated dismissal of the acoustical evidence, which was the keystone for the HSCA’s conclusion that JFK was probably killed as the result of a

conspiracy. Donald Thomas, "Echo Correlation Analysis and the Acoustic Evidence in the Kennedy Assassination Revisited", *Science & Justice* **41** (2001), pp. 21-32, shows that there are no good reasons to dismiss that evidence, which reinstates the conclusion of the HSCA that JFK was probably killed as the result of a conspiracy. But don't hold your breath in the expectation that the Department of Justice is about to undertake any activity.

Thomas presented a summary of his findings at the JFK Lancer Conference of November 2001, which I co-chaired with Debra Conway. During the course of discussion of his work, I asked if the methods employed by the HSCA had been sufficient to discriminate between shots that may or may not have been fired from the 6th floor of the Texas School Book Depository and shots that may or may not have been fired from the 2nd floor of the Dal-Tex Building. It is my opinion that no shots were fired from the alleged "assassin's lair" but that three were fired from the Dal-Tex. I was not surprised to discover that they were not. Students who would like to read Thomas' presentation from the conference are currently able to read it at the site, <http://pages.prodigy.net/whiskey00/hearnoevil.htm>.

The history of the investigation of the death of JFK provides a case study in corruption and malfeasance at the highest levels of the American government. As students who are familiar with the evidence are well aware, there are ample indications that Lyndon Baines Johnson and his close personal friend, J. Edgar Hoover, were both deeply involved in planning and covering up the assassination of John F. Kennedy. No serious investigation of this case has ever been conducted by the United States. It should therefore be a cause of great concern to everyone who cares about their government that high officials continue to discount and disregard even new scientific evidence that provides conclusive proof of conspiracy and cover-up in the death of the 35th President of the United States.

This is a legacy of shame that deserves to be corrected. For that purpose, Assassination Research, Inc., a non-profit foundation created to promote publications, initiate litigation, and support symposia to enhance public understanding of the assassination of JFK is now undertaking the project of bringing lawsuits or appropriate alternative actions against the Boards of Education or other designated officials of all 50 states and the District of Columbia to insure that the history texts used in the public schools of those jurisdictions provide accurate accounts of what actually happened to this nation on 22 November 1963. (For more, go to <http://www.assassinationsscience.com>.) The American people are entitled to their own history. We intend to do whatever we can to make sure they have it.