

THE TALE TOLD BY TWO TAPES

BY VINCENT SALANDRIA

On March 26, 2001, I was instructed by my personal computer that I had e-mail. I was bemused to learn that the e-mail was "a courtesy of the *Washington Post*." My confusion was compounded when I learned that the courtesy e-mail transmission was an article by a nemesis of mine, George Lardner, Jr.

Why is Lardner my nemesis? In a June 2, 1991 *Post* article attacking Oliver Stone's movie *JFK* Lardner described me as "an assassination critic full of far-out theories that Garrison regarded highly." I will write an article shortly in response. In this future piece I will show that the work I did for Jim Garrison, which Lardner describes as a "far-out theory," was neither a theory nor far out, and that Garrison used my work for a good purpose.

Let us examine the recent *Post* article forwarded to me "courtesy" of Lardner entitled: "Study Backs Theory of 'Grassy Knoll' New Report Says Second Gunman Fired at Kennedy." (See page 6 of this issue) In this article Lardner recounts how D. B. Thomas, a British scientist, examined the tape of a police dictabelt which had recorded the sounds in Dealey Plaza when the fusillade felled President John F. Kennedy. Thomas, the article tells us, believes that the shot from the knoll killed the president.

In his article Lardner quotes G. Robert Blakey, former chief counsel to the House Assassinations Committee, who headed the investigation, as stating that Thomas' work was an "honest, careful scientific examination that's beyond a reasonable doubt." Lardner adds that James Barger, Mark Weiss, and Eric Aschknese, House Committee experts, "have always held firm to their findings of a shot from the knoll."

What is the import of Lardner's article? It tells us that the House Assassination Committee's investigation of the Kennedy killing had arrived at scientific proof of a conspiracy. Lardner quotes Blakey as stating, "It shows that we made mistakes, too, but minor mistakes."

In the article, Lardner tells us that one of those House Committee "minor mistakes" was the conclusion that the shot from the picket fence had missed the President. Lardner tells us that the National Academy of Sciences, which after the House Committee had closed down had been assigned to do studies of the acoustic evidence, mistakenly disputed the evidence of a fourth shot.

What is the reason for Blakey calling the House Committee's failure to find that the shot from the picket fence had struck the President a "minor mistake?" The reason is that if the House Committee made a mistake in this regard, then the Warren Commission could also have "mistakenly" gotten this wrong. The plain fact is that neither governmental body made a mistake in that regard. In reality both the Warren Commission and the House Assassination Commit-

tee were government bodies which consciously produced fraudulent reports aimed at covering up the fact that the existence of the conspiracy was completely obvious. Both bodies were in this and many other regards plainly fraudulent in the manner in which they interpreted their own evidence, a manner which was not only irrational but was also fraudulent. The anthology of my work on the Kennedy assassination includes a series of articles, which make clear that a microanalysis of the Warren Commission's own evidence compels the conclusion that a shot had struck Kennedy from the right front. (*False Mystery, An Anthology of Essays on the Assassination of JFK**) There were no mistakes made by our governmental investigating bodies. There was no mystery. There was just fraud designed to conceal the fact that President Kennedy was killed by government agents acting on orders from the center of our warfare state.

With respect to the integrity of the House Committee, there was none. My friend Gaeton Fonzi who served on that Committee as a field investigator demonstrates this. He revealed its fraudulent nature in his fine book, *The Last Investigation*, (Thunder's Mouth Press, 1993.) Indeed, Fonzi reveals in this book how Blakey played a crucial role in undoing the work of the staff members of the Committee who were actually attempting to carry out an honest investigation.

So, the Lardner article seeks to depict Blakey as a truth hunter employing a scientifically correct interpretation on the microanalytic details of how Kennedy was killed. Lardner describes Blakey as successfully dispelling the supposedly legitimate mysteries which surrounded the killing of Kennedy. Lardner depicts Blakey, a representative of our government, as concluding that there was scientific proof that JFK was killed by a conspiracy.

Lardner tries to convey to the reader that the government and its operatives are now willing to confront the troubled past. Lardner would have us believe that because of its passion for truth our "democratic" government has honestly struggled to achieve historical precision on the Kennedy assassination. Lardner proudly proclaims that our government and its operatives are now willing to reveal and to confess having made honest mistakes, albeit minor, in interpreting data that remained mysterious until addressed with a scientific precision not previously available to our truth-seeking government.

I submit that Lardner's piece is false and is an opening salvo to a new series of lies by the U.S. government in its

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ongoing effort to obscure the Cold War nature of the President's assassination.

It is false when Lardner labors to paint for us a picture of the mainstream media reporting on a democratic government's honest efforts over decades to pursue truth regarding the Kennedy killing. It is false with respect to failing to confront the fact that the national security state killed Kennedy. It is false in seeking to conceal the aid that the mainstream media offered our warfare state in concealing the true nature of the Kennedy assassination. It is false when it seeks to verify the U.S. House Committee's work as aimed at attaining historical truth.

It is false when by sending that article to the critics as a courtesy, the *Post* was appearing to acknowledge that our democratic government and free press were aided in their joint search for the truth by the hard work of the assassination critics. It is false when it appears to be telling the critics that over the many years in which they have maintained their painstaking research into the many "legitimate mysteries" surrounding the Kennedy killing they have been nestled in the warmth of our free society. I submit that the truth is that ever since President Kennedy's murder we as citizens have experienced proof that the fearful warnings of President Dwight D. Eisenhower about the dangers of our military industrial complex have been realized, and civilian rule has succumbed to the perceived needs of our garrison and warfare state.

Where does this new torrent of lies spelled out in the Lardner article aim to drive us? To answer this question, let us turn our attention back to Lardner's hero of his piece, truth hunter G. Robert Blakey. As students of the assassination research know, Blakey coauthored with Richard N. Billings, a book which purports to explain who killed Kennedy and why. That book is entitled *The Plot to Kill the President-Organized Crime Assassinated J.F.K. the Definitive Story*. N.Y. Times Books (1981). That book ascribes the killing of President Kennedy to the Mafia, and tells us that the U.S. government was free from responsibility for the killing. Blakey in that book admits that the government, in interpreting the data of the assassination, made "mistakes." But he instructs the reader that there is no doubt that the U.S. government was not responsible for the killing nor for engaging in any systematic cover-up of the killing.

Lardner and Blakey seek to have our citizenry believe that the above-described Dealey Plaza dictabelt was the scientific evidence that the government was eagerly waiting for so as to be able to determine the truth about the assassination.

In my November 20, 1998 Dallas speech before the National Conference of the Coalition of Political Assassinations (included in *False Mystery*) I detailed how an innocent

U.S. government would have acted after the killing of Kennedy. I sharply contrasted that course with how our guilty national security government acted. I would urge those seriously interested in the question of how high into the institutional structure of our national security state the killing of Kennedy reaches to read that speech.

In that speech I espoused the thesis of a high-level national security state plot to kill President Kennedy. I explained why any concept of a renegade or Mafia conspiratorial killing was irrational. On November 23, 1998, I sent a copy of that speech to Professor Noam Chomsky, the world's leading linguistic scholar, who had long declared a high-level conspiracy to be irrational. I wrote him: "I have that kind of perverse nature that only benefits from negative criticism. Could you find time to provide some?" On February 16, 1999, Professor Chomsky replied: "It [the speech] is a lucid presentation of the conclusions that you and others have reached." Lucid in dictionaries and for linguists is defined as rational. Therefore, Professor Chomsky no longer shares the view that a high-level institutional conspiracy explanation of the assassination is irrational.

A high-level national security state crime to kill Kennedy for Cold War reasons is indeed rational. We will prove that Lardner and Blakey are involved in efforts to hoodwink the public in their efforts to dismiss a

high-level national security state plot to kill Kennedy. For proof, we now turn our attention to another audiotape that puts the lie to the conclusions at which they arrive from their analysis of the audiotape discussed above. This other audiotape convincingly proves that the most recent effort to explain the killing of President Kennedy as a Mafia crime is irrational and disingenuous. The purpose of the myth that Mafia and renegade elements killed Kennedy is simply an endeavor to exculpate the guilt of the U.S. national security state, which as a matter of simple ascertainable facts killed Kennedy for Cold War reasons. The audiotape which we will now discuss bears critically on the question of who killed Kennedy and why.

My 1998 Dallas speech contains many data that compel the conclusion of a high-level national security conspiracy to kill President Kennedy. I will excerpt one concept from that speech. It involves, like the Lardner article, an audiotape. I submit that this audiotape disproves the theory espoused by Blakey that the Mafia and/or renegade elements killed Kennedy.

Readers will no doubt recall the 18 - minute gap in the Watergate tapes which served to prove the guilt of and brought down President Richard M. Nixon and his cohorts. I will demonstrate how the U.S. national security state destroyed not 18 - minutes of tape, but about 5 - hours of three tapes, which proved their guilt in the killing of President

IT IS FALSE WHEN BY SENDING THAT ARTICLE TO THE CRITICS AS A COURTESY, THE *POST* WAS APPEARING TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT OUR DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT AND FREE PRESS WERE AIDED IN THEIR JOINT SEARCH FOR THE TRUTH BY THE HARD WORK OF THE ASSASSINATION CRITICS.

Kennedy.

In November of 1966, I read Theodore H. White's *The Making of the President*, 1964. On page 9 of the book I came across the following:

There is a tape recording in the archives of the government which best recaptures the sound of the hours as it waited for leadership. It is a recording of all the conversations in the air, monitored by the Signal Corps Midwestern center "Liberty," between Air Force One in Dallas, The Cabinet plane over the Pacific, and the Joint Chiefs Communications Center in Washington.

Then on page 33 I read the following about the flight back to Washington, D.C. from Dallas:

On the flight the party learned that there was no conspiracy, learned of the identity of Oswald and his arrest; and the President's mind turned to the duties of consoling the stricken and guiding the quick.

I knew that on November 23, 1963, *The Dallas Morning News* had informed its readers that the Dallas District Attorney, Henry Wade, stated: "Preliminary reports indicated more than one person was involved in the shooting the electric chair is too good for the killers."

Despite the evidence of conspiracy of which Dealey Plaza reeked, the White House Situation Room had informed President Johnson and the other occupants of Air Force One that, notwithstanding what they may have smelled, seen and felt in Dealey Plaza which spoke of a conspiratorial crossfire, Oswald was to be designated as the lone assassin.

I wrote to Mr. White. Mr. White replied by letter that the communications to Air Force One and to the Cabinet Plane were "By government radio-all relays go through a big Signal Corps center In the Midwest-and the White House was in constant communications with the plane."

I then wrote to Dr. Robert Bahmer, Archivist of the United States, requesting access to the tape. Dr. Bahmer replied:

We have no knowledge of the existence or location of the tape recording mentioned by Mr. White, despite having made some efforts since the receipt of your letter to obtain some information about it.

I then noted that Pierre Salinger in his book, *With Kennedy*, (Avon Books, New York, New York 10019 (1969) reported what the party on the Cabinet Plane heard:

The message kept coming off the wire service machine and finally one started grinding out the story of Lee Harvey Oswald and his previous life in Russia (pp. 27-28)

So, I wrote to Pierre Salinger on December 3, 1966:

In your fine work, *With Kennedy*, you make mention of radio communications between the White House and the cabinet plane over the Pacific on November 22, 1953 (p. 10) You identify "Stranger" as Major Harold R. Patterson. Theodore H. White, *The Making of the President*, 1964, also refers to taped conversations but particularly those related to dialogues with the Presidential plane, Air Force One.

I have asked the National Archives for a copy of this tape. Dr. Bahmer, the excellent Archivist of the United States, cannot locate it, although Mr. White states on page 9 of his book:

"There is a tape recording in the archives of the government." I enclose Dr. Bahmer's letter; Mr. White will not provide any further information.

Specifically what I am about is

the verification of what Mr. White states was on the tape, to wit: "On the flight the party learned that there was no conspiracy, learned of the identity of Oswald and his arrest; and the President's mind turned to the duties of consoling the stricken and guiding the quick." If such was said, before there was any evidence against Lee Harvey Oswald as the assassin, and while there was overwhelming evidence of a conspiracy, then the White House is in the interesting position of being the first to designate Oswald as the assassin and the first to have ruled out in the face of impressive evidence to the contrary, that there could have been a conspiracy.

Now, Mr. Salinger, that tape is being denied only to the American public Will you render this service to civilian rule and democracy for which President Kennedy gave his life?

Respectfully yours,
signed) Vincent J. Salandria

Mr. Salinger replied on December 26. He was most willing to serve civilian rule and democracy:

The section of my book dealing with the conversations between the White House and the

Cabinet plane were taken from a transcript of the tape of those conversations made by the White House Communication Agency. I have never either read or heard the tape to which Mr. White refers, i.e. the conversations with Air Force One. Since the tape with which I worked was provided by the White House Communication Agency, it would seem to me that the tape of the conversation to which you refer would emanate from the same source, if such a tape, in fact, exists.

As to the conversation with the cabinet plane, the transcript of that conversation is in my personal files, which have been turned over to the National Archives for placement in the Kennedy Library. I certainly have no objection to your seeing that transcript.

I again wrote to Dr. Bahmer, who replied:

After receipt of your letter of December 28, a careful examination was made of the papers that Mr. Salinger has sent to us for storage. We have not, however, been able to find anything in the nature of a transcript of the tape recording that you are searching for.

So I wrote directly to the White House Communication Agency requesting access to the tape recording. James U. Cross, Armed Forces Aide to the President, replied:

I have been asked to respond to your letter, addressed to the White House Communication Agency, concerning a tape recording to Air Force One, November 22, 1963.

Logs and tapes of the radio transmission of military aircraft, including those of Air Force One, are kept for official use only. These tapes are not releasable, nor are they obtainable.

I am sorry my response cannot be more favorable.

Of course, Cross lied. They were obtainable by Theodore H. White and Pierre Salinger for non-official use.

Robert Manning, Kennedy's Assistant Secretary of State, who on November 22, 1963 was on the Cabinet plane over the Pacific, confirmed the content of these messages in 1993 for Public Affairs. He reported having heard the same account of Oswald being designated as the presumed assassin. (Gerald S. and Deborah H. Strober, *Let Us Begin Anew, An Oral History of the Kennedy Presidency*, Harper Collins Publisher, 1993)

Mr. Douglas P. Horne, a staff member of the Assassination Records Review Board, spoke at the Lancer conference in Dallas in November, 1999. He spoke at length of the Review Board's fruitless attempt to locate the audio taped communications to Air Force One. He informed the audi-

ence that it was a shame that the 6 or 7 hours of three separate tapes appears to be gone from this world. 18 - minutes of missing tapes was a fatal matter which caused the Nixon Presidency to unravel. A 90-minute, edited tape of Air Force One communications is extant and can be purchased commercially. The disappearance of some 5 -hours of this vital tape which was made to disappear by the U.S. military leaves our national security state, the force behind the assassination of a peace-seeking President John F. Kennedy, undisturbed and still the preeminent power extending U.S. military hegemony throughout the globe.

We know from the three sources (which we have supplied) what is contained on those three tapes and what is proven by those tapes with respect to the institutional involvement of our national security state in the killing of President Kennedy.

What else do we know from the U.S. military's criminal withholding of tapes which I early advised them was direct evidence that the national security state had planned and carried out the execution of President Kennedy?

* Oswald was framed by the U.S. military as the lone assassin.

* The Situation Room of the White House first fingered Oswald as the lone assassin when an innocent government, with so much evidence in Dealey Plaza of conspiracy, would have been keeping all options open. Therefore this premature birth of the single-assassin myth points to the highest institutional structure of our warfare state as guilty of the crime of killing Kennedy. Such a source does not take orders from the Mafia nor from renegade elements. But such a source is routinely given to using the Mafia and supposedly out-of-control renegade sources to do its bidding.

* McGeorge Bundy was in charge of the Situation Room and was spending that fateful afternoon receiving phone calls from President Johnson, who was calling from Air Force One when the lone-assassin myth was prematurely given birth. (Bishop, Jim, *The Day Kennedy Was Shot*, New York & Funk Wagnalls, 1968), p. 154) McGeorge Bundy as the quintessential WASP establishmentarian did not take his orders from the Mafia and/or renegade elements.

* The U.S. military, in causing the Air Force One and Cabinet Plane audiotapes to disappear, demonstrated that it could involve itself without fear of punishment in obstruction of justice because Kennedy's assassination was a high state crime and the warfare state institutions which committed the crime were above punishment.

* A crime was committed in taking of the transcript of the Cabinet plane from the possessions of Pierre Salinger who had assigned those documents to the National Archives

for transmittal to the Kennedy Library, and a lack of respect in committing this crime was shown to the Kennedy Library and the Kennedy family. But we state again that successful state crimes which effectively transfer and/or reorganize governmental power are crimes without punishment, and the criminals have no need to show respect to the deposed leader and his family.

- * James U. Cross, Armed Forces Aide to the President, lied to me, and in so doing obstructed justice. But I understand that he was doing so under orders from higher military authority. I understand well that in the killing of Kennedy there will be no successful prosecution of the killers. There never are in state crimes committed by the world's superpower while it continues to maintain its hegemony over the globe.

What can we expect to follow from Lardner's tale of the Dealey Plaza tape? Let us make some predictions:

- * The Mafia and/or renegade C.I.A. myth will be pushed by Blakey and others.
- * The shop-worn and indefensible Warren Report single-assassin myth will be at least partially retired as no longer fit for prime time. It will be viewed by our media as "honestly mistaken," which it was not, rather than "clearly fraudulent," which it certainly was.
- * The United States news media, while parading as a free press, will continue to work closely with U.S. military intelligence to pretend that there are mysteries surrounding the killing of President John F. Kennedy when the identity of the killers and their motives could not be clearer.
This is what we learn from an analysis of the tapes.

Note: Vince Salandira and E. Martin Schotz can be read online at "Up front" <http://jfk.lancer.com/upfront>