

CHAPTER 18

Conclusions

The Secret Service was responsible for so much in this case, far more than most people know or suspect. To recap:

- 1) PROTECTION OF JFK;
- 2) PLANNING OF TEXAS TRIP;
- 3) INSIDE KNOWLEDGE OF JFK'S PERSONAL LIFE, NATIONAL SECURITY ISSUES;
- 4) PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE (INCLUDING WINDSHIELD);
- 5) JFK'S BODY AFTER DEATH---PRESENCE AT PARKLAND AND BETHESDA (AUTOPSY);
- 6) AIR FORCE 1 AND AIR FORCE 2;
- 7) C-130 TRANSPORT PLANE;
- 8) AUTOPSY X-RAYS/ PHOTOS;
- 9) AUTOPSY REPORTS;
- 10) JFK'S CLOTHING;
- 11) THREE PIECES OF SKULL;
- 12) CE399/ "MAGIC BULLET";
- 13) RECORDINGS OF DALLAS POLICE RADIO;
- 14) PRIME ASSASSINATION WITNESSES;
- 15) INTERVIEWS OF TSBD WITNESSES;
- 16) INTERVIEWS OF PARKLAND DOCTORS;
- 17) TV, RADIO RECORDINGS OF PARKLAND DOCTORS;
- 18) CAPTIVITY OF AND INTERVIEWS WITH MARINA OSWALD, INCLUDING TRANSLATION;
- 19) FIRST REENACTMENTS & SURVEYS: 11/25, 11/27, AND 12/5/63;
- 20) ASSASSINATION PHOTOS & FILMS.

As mentioned earlier, the original idea of presidential security tests may have been to cement the Secret Service's role as the protector of the President, having successfully stopped an assassination attempt. Conversely, the agency (and the tests) may have been compromised by those in the know who were partial to FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover (and, by extension, perhaps even the Vice President, LBJ). The test and the accompanying sinister behavior of some of the agents was covered up after-the-fact, reducing the agents' poor performances down to mere negligence, at worst.

The Secret Service had lost a President for the first time in history under their officially sanctioned watch. Fear and a need to survive were the motivating factors for the agency to cover up and outright lie about events in Dallas. However, the agency got lucky: with the rest of the government adamantly pronouncing the death of President Kennedy a fluke by an unaided lone assassin, the assassination was made to look like a quirk of fate, an inevitable joining of a determined sick mind (Oswald) with a convenient target right under his window (JFK). In these pre-Watergate times, before the Vietnam conflict became a war, America was a very naïve country, and the press were all too willing to view every government pronouncement as the divine word from above

with little or no real criticism. The Secret Service merely received a barely noticed slap on the wrist.

To borrow a phrase, it may be too late for justice in this case, but it's never too late for the truth. That being said, if it were at all possible at this late juncture, keeping in mind the attrition rate of people connected to the assassination, a searching inquiry into the conduct of the Secret Service would be highly appropriate. Every living former agent and official should be made to take an oath and be subjected to fierce cross-examination (not merely friendly direct examination) about the conduct of the agency before, during, and after Dallas. Even though old age and death have handicapped this notion to an extent, inroads could still be made with those who are still living and collecting a comfortable and protected pension.

Too long the public has wondered if Oswald did or did not "do it." The REAL question is: why did the Secret Service allow President Kennedy to be such an open target, against their fine traditions and typical security measures invoked merely days, if not hours, before his assassination?