

Powers, Angleton, Morley and Dallas

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Mainstream media journalists seldom take on the delicate subject of the assassination of President Kennedy to discuss it in a serious way. An example of this was Thomas Powers' recent review of *Ghost*,¹ Jefferson Morley's biography of James Jesus Angleton: Powers came close but doesn't know enough about the subject to do more than try – and fail – to discredit Morley and dismiss his work on the assassination as irrelevant.

Morley has a careful journalistic approach and has written biographies of two central figures in the assassination. The first was *Our Man in Mexico* about the CIA station chief in Mexico City, Winston Scott; more recently, as mentioned, he has produced *Ghost* about Angleton. Those are integral parts of the assassination story.

Morley writes from an historical distance and a different perspective than Powers, whose biography of CIA Director Richard Helms² was written with the cooperation of Helms and subject to his revisions. This is something Morley would not do.

Thomas Powers actually met James Angleton and recalls the conversation they had as a basic Angleton tutorial on counter-intelligence (CI) techniques. They talked about the collection of 'serials' on subjects and the opening of chronologies on people and events, along with two basic rules of research: no details are left out of a serial file and there's no quarreling with the evidence. The final product, when analysts writing a report attempt to 'properly interpret' the evidence, is where the quarreling comes in. But those 'counter-intelligence methods' are just the basic research techniques which assassination researchers have been doing for the last 50 years.³

¹ 'The Monster Plot' in the *London Review of Books* 10 May 2018. It is available on-line (to subscribers only) at <<https://www.lrb.co.uk/v40/n09/thomas-powers/the-monster-plot>>.

² *The Man Who Kept the Secrets* (1979). A review of it which appeared in the *New Republic* is at <<https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP88-01350R000200050008-1.pdf>>.

³ See for example Ira David Wood's *JFK Assassination Chronology* at <<http://dealeyplazauk.org.uk/chron/index.html>>.

And we can confidently say that the JFK assassination records, 'serials', chronology and the information from the latest documents do not support the allegation that one man alone was responsible for the murder, regardless of the role of the accused assassin. Anyone familiar with the basic evidence understands that Oswald was not the sixth floor sniper and was what he claimed to be – framed as a patsy.

Another tool of CI analysts is doing a 'name trace' on a suspect. Every intelligence analyst in the world did this with the name Lee Harvey Oswald on 22 November 1963, checking their files for what they had on the guy. If the first 'serial' was doing a name trace, the second was creating a chronology on the chief suspect and alleged assassin Lee Harvey Oswald.

Born in New Orleans, Oswald was a member of the Civil Air Patrol, attended high school in Fort Worth, Texas and New York city, but without graduating and followed his older brother into the US Marine Corps. He served at bases in San Diego, the Philippines and Atsugi, Japan, where he worked in radar and communications at a top secret U2 base. He was trained in the Russian language before being given an early discharge and then defected to the Soviet Union.

In the USSR he was interviewed by Priscilla Johnson – who, says Powers, wrote the best book on Oswald. But Powers neglects to tell us that when Johnson interviewed Oswald she was working for the North American Newspaper Alliance (NANA), owned and operated by former OSS officers Ernest Cuneo and Ivar Bryce and former Assistant to the director of British Naval Intelligence, Ian Fleming, of James Bond fame. NANA was a virtual intelligence network run by spies.⁴

Priscilla Johnson⁵ was a neighbour and friend of the CIA's Cord Meyer, Jr.. He encouraged her to apply for a job with the CIA. Which she did; but wasn't hired. However she was assigned a CIA case officer, whom she frequently reported to. Her contact reports have been released by the CIA under the JFK Act. Powers also neglects to inform the reader that the publishing house of which he is co-founder, Steerforth Press, is keeping Priscilla Johnson McMillan's book on Oswald, *Marina and Lee*, in print.⁶

Returning to Texas with his Soviet wife, Oswald resettled in Dallas among a community of right-wing oil men. At a party arranged for him to meet Michael Paine, Oswald was encouraged to kill General Edwin Walker, a crime he

⁴ <<http://jfkcountercoup2.blogspot.com/2012/06/bottlefed-by-oswalds-nana.html>>

⁵ She would later marry and become Priscilla Johnson McMillan/Priscilla McMillan.

⁶ <http://steerforth.com/?_page_id=94&book_isbn=9781586422165>

has also been accused of committing. After relocating back to New Orleans, he opened a one-man Fair Play for Cuba Committee (FPCC) chapter, got into a very public fight with the local anti-Castro Directorio Revolucionario Estudiantil (DRE), before visiting Mexico City where he tried to get a visa to Cuba and the Soviet Union. Oswald then returned to Dallas, obtained a job at the Texas School Book Depository (TSBD) through Ruth Paine, and was accused of shooting the President and a Dallas policeman. After requesting legal assistance and calling himself a patsy, he was shot and killed by Jack Ruby while in police custody.

Any decent intelligence analyst with access to that basic background information on the accused would have concluded that Oswald was an intelligence operative and that whatever happened at Dealey Plaza was not the work of one man alone, but was a covert intelligence operation. Morley's charge is that the assassination of JFK was thus a failure of counter-intelligence. Powers asks, if that is so, which intelligence agency was behind it? He only offers two choices – the Cubans and the Soviets – but there are other serious suspect intelligence networks in the loop, especially domestic agencies. There are some 21 US federal intelligence agencies, some well known and others you have never heard of, and the one I am interested in goes by the acronym ACSI – Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, US Army Reserves.

Approximately half of the Dallas Police Special Services Unit were ACSI officers in the US Army Reserves. The pilot car in the motorcade, driven by DPD SSU Captain Lumpkin, an ACSI officer, included an ACSI Army Reserve Colonel Whitmeyer in the back seat, who was not approved by the Secret Service. Another ACSI Colonel visited Ruth Paine and Marina Oswald at their Irving home a few days before the assassination, just to ask them questions. Yet another ACSI (488th Army Reserve Intelligence) Colonel, Jack Crichton, ran the Civil Defense Emergency Operations Center within Fair Park, Dallas, that had the ability to monitor the motorcade and Air Force One radio transmissions. It was Crichton who arranged for a Russian language translator to participate in the questioning of Oswald's wife Marina.

ACSI and 'The Sting'

I had never heard of ACSI before the assassination, but in his 2002 book *Intelligence Wars* Thomas Powers relates how he met former ACSI and National Security Agency (NSA) commander General William Odom at a party for retired CIA officer Haviland Smith. Over cocktails Powers asked General Odom what brought him together with Haviland Smith, a career CIA case officer and field operative. Odom said he went to Smith for advice, and asked

him what makes a good intelligence case officer? After thinking about it Haviland Smith replied, 'The Sting!' – referring to the popular Paul Newman/ Robert Redford film that was based on David Maurer's book *The Big Con*.⁷ From that response, it is apparent that, at one time, Smith had been a student of Paul Linebarger at the John Hopkins Center for International Studies, who had his students read Maurer's *The Big Con*. Linebarger said it gave good advice on how covert operations are successfully conducted.

Another former Linebarger student, Joseph Smith, quotes him as saying:

'That little book will teach you more about the art of covert operations than anything else I know . . . Maurer's book will give you a lot of ideas on how to recruit agents, how to handle them and how to get rid of them peacefully when they're no use to you any longer. Believe me, that last one is the toughest job of all.'⁸

The lexicon

Just as academic linguist David Maurer discovered the secrets of the Big Con by interviewing thieves, con-artists and confidence men while studying their language, former Army intelligence officer Dr. John Newman has been figuring out how the covert intelligence 'sting' works by learning the intelligence lexicon – the codes, ciphers and dialects of the intelligence officers who are the major players in the assassination story. Powers criticises Jeff Morley and John Newman for taking advantage of Jane Roman (who was chief assistant to James Angleton) by misquoting her and taking her comments out of context.⁹ Jane Roman signed off on a number of documents and CIA cables on Oswald before the assassination and she recognized, as did Newman and Morley, that those CIA cables and documents on Oswald were significant. The documents were misleading, possibly deliberately deceptive, and indicated - in her words - a keen 'operational interest' in Oswald before the assassination. The key word here is 'operational' as, according to the intelligence lexicon, that is distinctly different from keeping a standard military 201 file on a subject (which is more akin to the career history of a particular armed forces individual).

Regarding Jeff Morley's article that allegedly (mis)quoted her, Jane Roman did write a letter of complaint to Ben Bradlee, Morley's editor at the

⁷ Thomas Powers, *Intelligence Wars* (New York: New York Review of Books, 2002) p. xix

⁸ Joseph B Smith, *Portrait of a Cold Warrior* (New York: Ballentine Books, 1976) pp. 83-4

⁹ The interview transcript is at <<https://tinyurl.com/y8k9ulz9>> or <<https://www.history-matters.com/essays/frameup/WhatJaneRomanSaid/JaneRomanTranscript.htm>>.

Washington Post at the time. However, she said her letter was too long, couldn't see how to shorten it and didn't send it. Instead of then going to any of the other of the CIA's Operation Mockingbird assets at the *Washington Post*,¹⁰ she gave a copy of her letter to the Oswald-dunit theorist, Max Holland, who shared it with Powers. And that puts these birds in the same nest.¹¹

Some of those who still say Oswald was the lone assassin – Powers, Seymour Hersh and Max Holland for example – also claim President Kennedy ordered, approved or at least knew about the CIA's plans to kill Castro. That is now the fall-back position for some of those who still advocate the lone assassin theory: if JFK was killed as a result of a conspiracy, it was a Cuban or Soviet one, in retaliation for JFK's attempts to kill Castro. In an earlier brush with the assassination in his *Intelligence Wars*, Powers said there is a bushel of evidence of this, and berates JFK aide Arthur Schlesinger as a 'Kennedy loyalist' for denying JFK approved plans to kill Castro.

'The assassination of John F. Kennedy was one of the great traumatic events in American history, and the possibility that he was guilty of intending what his killer was guilty of doing was more than Kennedy loyalists were willing to admit.'¹²

Powers says that, according to former DCIA Richard Helms, '. . . Robert Kennedy personally managed the operation on the assassination of Castro.'¹³ Jack Anderson also intimated this in his promotion of John Rosselli's story.¹⁴

While Powers hasn't kept up with the JFK story, he quoted Seymour Hersh and Max Holland, 'who are still on the case', and

'. . . learned recently the name of the CIA intelligence officer named to serve as liaison with the attorney general during the year in which he continually pressed the CIA for results in getting rid of Castro – a career

¹⁰ On Mockingbird see the declassified pages linked to <<http://www.theblackvault.com/documentarchive/operation-mockingbird/#http://ON>>. On the CIA and the American media see <www.carlberstein.com/magazine_cia_and_media.php>.

¹¹ Some of Holland's writing on the assassination has been published by the CIA. See <<https://tinyurl.com/ysx593>> or <https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/fall_winter_2001/article02.html>.

¹² Powers (see note 7) p. xvii.

¹³ Powers (see note 7) p. xii

¹⁴ Anderson's account of his relationship with Rosselli was described in his book *Peace, War and Politics: An Eyewitness Account* ((New York: Forge, 1999). The relevant pages, 105-118, can be read at <<https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/alt.conspiracy.jfk/Lk97AUj6Cug>>.

intelligence officer, now dead, named Charles Ford. According to Ford's office-mate Sam Halpern, a CIA officer also assigned to Task Force W in the agency's effort to get rid of Castro, Ford traveled hither and yon about the country on Robert Kennedy's business, but there the public knowledge comes to an end. Hersh's book *The Dark Side of Camelot*, published in 1998, includes some additional ancillary detail. Whether still-classified CIA files can fill out the story of Ford's work for Bobby remains unknown but it's likely, just as it is likely no one will be given free range of the files until many, many additional years have passed, if then.' ¹⁵

Thanks to the JFK Act we now have Charles Ford's official congressional testimony that was originally sealed for 50 years and it is telling. But you won't hear it from Hersh, Holland or Powers, as it doesn't fit their Castro, Cuban, RFK theories.

Born in Atlantic City, New Jersey, Charles Ford attended Princeton before working for the OSS during WWII. During his OSS service he was sent on a mission to China with J. Walton Moore, who was the CIA's Domestic Contacts Division officer in Dallas at the time of the assassination. After graduating from Princeton, Ford joined the CIA as a career agent assigned to the office of Training, except for the one year he was assigned to Task Force W to work with RFK on the covert actions against Cuba. He used an Italian alias and did meet with some shady characters, but it wasn't to plot the murder of Castro. (Ford was also the CIA officer responsible for securing their copy of the Zapruder Film.) But while the Congressional investigators from the Church Committee were interested in Sam Halpern's allegation that Ford was RFK's intermediary with the mob on the plots to kill Castro, Ford said that simply was not the case. In his 'Memorandum for the record' after the meeting with the investigators, Ford wrote:

'I said that I had never engaged in plotting with Cubans regarding assassination but that I had many conversations with Cubans regarding their desire to conduct paramilitary activities which, as a by-product, might well result in Castro's death. I pointed out emphatically that the Agency's policy prohibits political assassination.' ¹⁶

While JFK 'disapproved' CIA plans like Pathfinder to kill Castro, RFK was personally introduced to anti-Castro Cuban JMWAVE personnel and case

¹⁵ *New York Review of Books*, 4 February 1999 at <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/1999/02/04/the-black-arts/>

¹⁶ <https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=16067#relPageId=9&tab=page>.

officers and was even flown in to an Everglades training camp meet some of the anti-Castro Cubans who were infiltrated to Cuba.

When accused of being knowledgeable about and approving CIA plans to kill Castro, RFK replied that he tried to stop such plotting, not instigate it. But the trap had been set. So when JFK was killed, and Oswald and Castro were accused of orchestrating the crime, RFK was said to feel guilty for having perpetrated the plot to kill Castro, which blew back against the President at Dealey Plaza. Writing in 1967, Jack Anderson speculated that Kennedy's plan 'backfired against his late brother', and he was 'plagued by the terrible thought that he had helped pot [sic] into motion forces that indirectly may have brought about his brother's martyrdom? Some insiders think so.'¹⁷

Powers widened the scope of this:

' . . . behind these suspicions, never resolved, lay a still darker fear in the mind of Robert Kennedy: that he himself, if any of the four had been established as the guilty party, could not have escaped at least some measure of responsibility for arousing and stroking the anger that resulted in his brother's assassination.'¹⁸

Who ran and framed the patsy?

Because Newman and Morley conclude – from the CIA's own records – that Oswald was an intelligence operative of some kind, Morley asks the reasonable question: was Oswald 'run' by Angleton? At present the answer is 'we don't know'. But I say if not Angleton, who did 'run' Oswald, as someone clearly did. Even John McVicker, the State Department official in Moscow who encouraged Priscilla Johnson to interview the newly arrived 'defector' Oswald, and who is not a silly conspiracy theorist, said he believe Oswald appeared to be 'guided by others' who 'encouraged him in his actions'.

One of the basic rules of the intelligence game is that every operative, whether bona fide agent or unwitting asset, is controlled by only one case officer; and if he is 'run' by one agency, say the CIA, then the other agencies stay away. As Bill Simpich has extensively detailed in his *State Secret*,¹⁹ Oswald was controlled by a network of people who surrounded him, most of

¹⁷ The original typed text is at

<<https://auislandora.wrlc.org/islandora/object/pearson:57357/datastream/PDF> >.

¹⁸ Powers (see note 7) p. 189. The 'four' to which Powers refers to here are his possible suspects in JFK's assassination: 'organised crime and crooked labour unions', 'Cubans opposed to Fidel Castro' and 'Castro himself'.

¹⁹ <http://www.maryferrell.org/pages/state_secret.html>

whom were intelligence assets of some kind, and that Oswald himself was some kind of intelligence operative or asset, if not a fully fledged agent. John Newman describes Oswald in even more specific intelligence terms as a 'dangle' and false defector.

When Oswald and his family arrived in Texas from the Soviet Union, George deMohrenschildt took an unlikely interest in them, and then went out of his way for the Oswalds to meet Michael and Ruth Paine before he left for Haiti. After leaving Texas, deMohrenschildt first went to New York where he was to meet with CIA agent John Train and ACSI agent Dorothy Matlock. But when Matlock learned of the CIA's interest she pulled back and arranged to meet deMohrenschildt in Washington. Did deMohrenschildt tell them his most significant intelligence information: that Oswald had a rifle and may have taken a shot at Walker?

With deMohrenschildt out of the picture, the Paines became Oswald's babysitters. Then who 'ran' the Paines?

Michael Paine's mother, Ruth Forbes Paine Young, was a friend of Mary Bancroft, Allen Dulles' paramour. Michael's wife visited Ruth Forbes Paine Young before picking up Marina and the rifle and taking them to Texas while Oswald went to Mexico.

Although many people focus on the CIA, as Newman and Morley have done, there are other relevant intelligence networks in play here, including the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI), whose 'Defector File' has been illegally kept out of the JFK Collection. Then there are the FBI, ASCI, and Air Force Intelligence. Many said Frank Sturgis was CIA, but the assassination files reveal he was actually run by Air Force Intelligence out of the Havana embassy.

Anti-Castro Cuban terrorist Antonio Veciana says he met Oswald in Dallas with his own CIA case officer 'Maurice Bishop', (aka David Atlee Phillips). Now we read the newly released assassination records and it turns out that Veciana was run not by the CIA, but Army Intelligence – the ubiquitous ACSI. And the records show that Phillips at the time was running an authorized CIA operation against the Fair Play for Cuba Committee (FPCC), so that piece fits the part of the puzzle that includes Oswald. But what does the big picture show?

The big picture

Powers tells us that 'the vast universe of information' on the assassination prevents us from determining the truth about it. But we have the JFK Act that requires the government to open all of the official records on the assassination; we have a small but strong contingent of independent

researchers dedicated to reviewing and deciphering these records; we have the JFK Collection at the National Archives (NARA); we have the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to request even more relevant records; and we have the Mary Ferrell and Black Vault websites to funnel the relevant records to the analysts who can properly interpret them. So we can now investigate the assassination of the President Kennedy by narrowing the research to the relevant records, based on our knowledge of the evidence.

What cannot be quarreled over is the determination that the JFK chronology and serials do not support the Warren Commission conclusion that one man alone was responsible for the assassination: the *modus operandi* of the murder was that of a covert intelligence operation conducted by a domestic intelligence network, and not the Cubans, the Soviets, or the Mafia.

While normal criminal investigations attempt to collect evidence that can be used in a court of law, a counter-intelligence investigation, such as we are now conducting, attempts to determine the total truth, something that can be known in our lifetime. Justice however, will never be served.

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