

Introduction

[My letter to attorney Vincent Salandria, dated April 5, 1995](#), which serves as the center of this book, belongs to a process of investigation, study, and thought which now spans more than three decades. Part of this discussion has been carried on of late by an informal committee of correspondents of which I have had the good fortune to be a member, and of which Mr. Salandria is the clerk.[1]

Though the members of this committee vary greatly in occupation, ethnic background, political ideology, manners, temperament, and attitude toward the government, nevertheless they have been united by a common desire to confront the truth of President Kennedy's murder. The group came long ago to the conclusion that President Kennedy was the victim of a high level CIA conspiracy.[2] Thus the central focus of the April 5th letter was not an examination of the immediate conspiracy which took President Kennedy's life. Instead, the letter was an attempt to examine just how it was possible, in a supposedly open society like our own, for the CIA to murder the President and for "no one to know about it."

A few words on the unusual form of this book are in order. The book is organized as a letter supplemented by extensive annotation and numerous appendices. This structure is deliberate and flows from my concept of knowledge and my purpose in writing/editing this book.

The book is an invitation to the interested citizen to participate in the conversation of this committee and to assimilate knowledge developed by the group.[3] On entering this conversation, the ordinary reader will not be familiar with many of the issues and documents that the committee has submitted to discussion; thus, the need for extensive annotations, references, and appendices in order to provide an adequate context for understanding what is being discussed and what the conclusions are based on.

Knowledge is not something which everyone wants. It is difficult to acquire, and in order to know, one must have a desire to know. In turn, one's desire to know depends on social attitudes and social activity. To acquire knowledge one must go through the laborious process of digesting the work of others and make it one's own. One can be helped to acquire knowledge and be guided in the process, but one cannot be given it directly. The process of acquiring knowledge has no true beginning. As with life one enters in the middle of the process and must attempt to go back and pick up what has been worked out historically while at the same time carrying the process forward. That the structure of this book may be difficult for some readers to confront is not a problem in and of itself, because it is written expressly for people motivated by a desire to inform themselves through study so as to be capable of discharging their responsibilities as citizens of a true social, economic, and political democracy.

In our efforts to confront the truth of the assassination of President Kennedy we are at a very different point today than we were thirty years ago when the first critical analyses of the Warren Report were published. Dozens of books and thousands of magazine articles have been written about this case. Almost without exception, no matter what the author's view concerning who killed

President Kennedy or why, these works have directly or indirectly contributed to the public's conviction that the murder of the President is a mystery. As a result, although a vast majority of our public believes that there was a conspiracy, most people do not know this as a fact and are convinced that they can never know for sure what happened.

On both points the public is mistaken. The murder of the President is not a mystery. The nature of the conspiracy that took President Kennedy's life was from the outset quite obvious to anyone who knew how to look and was willing to do so. The same holds true today. Any citizen who is willing to look can see clearly who killed President Kennedy and why.

The fact that "no one knows this" is an example of a subtle process of Orwellian mind control which has enveloped our society and which our public has been more than willing to have foisted upon it. The process has been orchestrated by the CIA in defense of itself and the "powers that be," but it has also been critically aided by the entire spectrum of our society's intellectual and political establishments, right, center, and left.

The assertion that I and other ordinary citizens know, *know for a fact*, that there was a conspiracy and that it was organized at the highest levels of the CIA — such an assertion is likely to strike most citizens as the ravings of a fanatic, a person whose mind is closed to civilized discourse. The ordinary citizen, on reading a simple, honest, and critical analysis of the facts (see [Appendix III](#)) will typically experience an automatic psychological reaction of recoil because of the vast national process of cover-up which an honest analysis of the facts implies. "Something is wrong here. It can't be this obvious," is the natural response. It is a measure of the Orwellian mind set that pervades America today that to assert what is obvious and known (as in the tale *The Emperor's New Clothes*) triggers such a psychological reaction. In reality it is the ordinary citizen's mind which has been closed to the vast process of denial and cover-up which has pervaded our society.

Thus, my starting point is to awaken the reader to how, in an "open society" like our own, the CIA could murder the President and see to it that the crime is "covered up." Once this befuddling matter is laid bare, the reader will be freed to go back and assimilate in an unobstructed manner what has long been quite obvious and known about who killed President Kennedy and why.

As I edited [the April 5th letter](#) for publication, it seemed logical to break the letter into two parts. The reason behind the division is the transition that occurs in the course of the letter, a transition in the underlying political ideological assumptions of the analysis. [Part I](#) is an analysis of the assassination for the light it throws on the Orwellian nature of our society. This section of the letter requires of the reader no particular ideological orientation other than a commitment to truth and logic, and a willingness to confront the dictates of logical analysis of facts wherever it leads. In other words, it requires a person whose mind is not bounded by the terms of American "[Crimestop](#)." The first section deals with how our public, government, and media approached the available facts on the assassination and what this implies about the nature of our democracy.

[Part II](#) is directed toward exploring a broader issue of history, how we as a people came to be in such a state of affairs. Here a certain political ideological orientation is required of the reader, or at least a willingness to be open to a certain political ideological orientation. In my view the way in which our society reacted to the murder of its President by the CIA is part of a seamless web of historical development which has now been occurring for more than a century, ever since the destruction of the "Reconstruction" movement following the American Civil War. An awareness of this overall historical context is important if we are to appreciate the true dimensions of the political problems we face as a people.

The thirteen appendices which follow the April 5th letter provide a variety of documentary evidence as well as additional analyses. The reader will find amongst these appendices important analyses of both the “external” record as well as the “internal” record on four significant points: the development of President Kennedy’s thinking and activity with regard to the Cold War, the immediate reaction of the government of the United States to the assassination of its President, the work of the Warren Commission, and the role of *The Nation* magazine and the left/liberal establishment in the cover-up of the assassination.

The appendices begin with [the text of President Kennedy’s June, 1963 speech at American University](#). This speech provides the context of the assassination and helps to clarify Castro’s view of Kennedy, which appears in Appendix II. [Appendix II](#), a speech by Fidel Castro, constitutes a highly sophisticated analysis of the external record of the immediate reaction of the United States government and its media sources. This can be correlated with [Appendix IV](#), where one will find an analysis of important internal data on this question. Three articles by Vincent Salandria appear in [Appendix III](#). These articles, taken together, show the progress of his analysis of the work of the Warren Commission. He at first used only the Warren Report as a basis (the external record), and subsequently used an “internal record” of the Commission’s work, the twenty-six volumes of Commission exhibits which were released in early 1965. [Appendix V](#) provides data which identifies Lee Harvey Oswald as the CIA agent he was. [Appendix VI](#) presents a novel form of analysis which casts light on how the assassination of the President was covered up.

In [Appendix VII](#) the reader will find both an analysis of the “external record” of *The Nation*’s activity as well as a detailed memoir which represents an “internal record” of *The Nation*’s attitude toward the assassination. Finally, by correlating President Kennedy’s June, 1963 speech at American University ([Appendix I](#)) with Nikita Khrushchev’s January 31, 1963 letter to Fidel Castro ([Appendix X](#)), the McCloy-Zorin Agreement ([Appendix IX](#)), and [Castro’s speech](#) ([Appendix II](#)), one is able to correlate external as well as internal data on the significance of President Kennedy’s activity with regard to the Cold War as the motivating factor for his assassination. [Appendix VIII](#), “The Work of Ray Marcus,” provides additional external as well as internal data on many questions concerning the nature of our society and its response to the assassination.

Appendices [XI](#) and [XII](#) provide psycho-social and philosophical analyses of the society’s response to the assassination. [Appendix XIII](#) is a speech by Fidel Castro to a recent United Nations-sponsored meeting. It provides a context for the continuing significance of the President’s assassination.

As citizens who have turned away for thirty years from the truth of the murder of our elected head of state, we should not be surprised that today we find our nation in intellectual, political, and moral chaos.[4] Confronting the truth of President Kennedy’s assassination and its coverup is but one small step on a long path out of that chaos and toward healing, a path along which we must confront the true nature of our democracy and the reality of what our nation has become for its own citizens and for people throughout the world. Such a process of healing is not pleasant. It is a difficult and painful path, but it is a necessary one. History will not absolve us.

Notes

1. The committee has amongst its principal members Vincent J. Salandria, Ray Marcus, Christopher Sharrett, Michael Morrissey, Gaeton Fonzi, and Robert C. Dean, but there have been others.

Vincent J. Salandria is a former high school history teacher and currently counsel with the Philadelphia Board of Education. On November 2, 1964, following the release of the Warren Report, but prior to the release of the twenty-six volumes of exhibits of the Warren Commission, there appeared in *The Legal Intelligencer* (the daily newspaper of the Philadelphia Bar Association, the oldest law journal in the United States) an article by Salandria entitled "[The Warren Report: Analysis of Shots, Trajectories, and Wounds — A Lawyer's Dissenting View](#)" (see [Appendix III](#)). This article was the first public challenge in writing to the Warren Report. Based on Salandria's analysis of evidence in the Report, combined with statements by Commission Counsel Arlen Specter, Salandria concluded that there had been a conspiracy to murder the President. Early the following year Salandria followed up this ground breaking work with two articles which appeared in the [January](#) and [March](#), 1965 issues of *Liberation* (see [Appendix III](#)). The March article was based on the by then available 26 volumes of Commission exhibits.

Ray Marcus, a businessman, authored and self-published *The Bastard Bullet*, a minutely detailed analysis of all the Warren Commission evidence concerning Commission exhibit #399, the "magic bullet." Equivalent in its implications to the articles by Salandria, *The Bastard Bullet* also proved that there had been a conspiracy.

Christopher Sharrett, an [Associate Professor of Communication at Seton Hall University](#), investigated the assassination during the 1970s and participated in early work of the House Select Committee on Assassinations. He has published on aspects of the assassination and the media.

[Michael Morrissey](#), an expatriate American living and teaching in Germany since the Vietnam War, authored and self-published [Looking for the Enemy](#) (1993), a major portion of which deals with the assassination.

[Gaeton Fonzi](#), a journalist and former editor for *Philadelphia* magazine, also worked as an investigator for the House Select Committee on Assassinations, and authored [The Last Investigation](#) (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1993), in which he details his years of pursuit of President Kennedy's killers, a pursuit which ultimately led to the identification of certain CIA officials involved in the assassination plot.

Robert C. Dean is a businessman and entrepreneur, a combat veteran of the Vietnam war, and a supporter of the Committee on Political Assassinations.

2. The term "CIA" as used here signifies the entire web of U.S. military intelligence agencies, including but not limited to the [Central Intelligence Agency](#) proper, the [Office of Naval Intelligence](#), [Army Intelligence](#), the [National Security Agency](#), and so on.
3. While I am indebted to various members of the committee for the discovery and development of much of the material presented in this book, the organization and the overall interpretation of this material are my own and do not necessarily have the complete agreement of every member of the committee.
4. This is not to minimize the significance of the assassinations of others, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert F. Kennedy, to mention only the most prominent. On the contrary, although these other murders are by no means the focus of this study, it nevertheless casts light on them as well.