

It's Time to Re-Open the Investigation of RFK and JFK Assassinations

by MICHAEL CARMICHAEL

Nov. 22, 2006—Planning to write a film script about the case, Shane O'Sullivan, an independent researcher, investigated the assassination of RFK. But, O'Sullivan found much more than he had hoped.

On Monday night, the BBC broadcast O'Sullivan's report on their high-profile programme, "Newsnight." O'Sullivan's findings shocked many people. Working through an exhaustive analysis of videotapes made at the Ambassador Hotel on the night of RFK's assassination, O'Sullivan identified three figures as former agents of the CIA. Two of the agents O'Sullivan identified could be seen moving away from the hotel pantry shortly after the shooting of RFK.

Following his preliminary identifications, O'Sullivan presented the video images to more authoritative sources, men who knew the three agents personally. While there was a slender degree of uncertainty (circa 5-10%) the men in the videos were positively identified as the former CIA agents:

- David Sanchez Morales;
- Gordon Campbell and
- George Joannides

Morales was known to be involved in *coups d'états* throughout Latin America and he had a reputation of a dangerous man with an explosive temper who was capable of violence. To entertain his friends, Morales would tell stories about his involvement in the killing and capture of Che Guevara, *coups* in Latin America and other nefarious covert activities.

Two of the CIA agents in the Ambassador Hotel: Morales and Joannides are now dead, while the whereabouts of the third, Campbell, are presently unknown.

O'Sullivan interviewed Bradley Ayers, U.S. Army Captain retired, who had been stationed at JM-Wave, the Miami base for the CIA. In 1963, David Morales was the Chief of Operations at JM-Wave. Ayers and Morales trained Cuban exiles in the arts of sabotage to be deployed in covert action against the regime of Fidel Castro. On camera, Ayers identified Morales and Campbell with what he described as 95% accuracy. Following that positive identification, Ayers introduced O'Sullivan to David Rabern, a freelance mercenary who had been contracted by the CIA to participate in the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961. Rabern had been in the ballroom of the Ambassador Hotel on the fateful night in 1968.

While Rabern did not know Morales and Campbell by name, he had noticed them talking to each other in the hotel lobby prior to the assassination. Earlier in the same year, Rabern had noticed Campbell in and around several police stations. If true, this report is rather odd, considering that the CIA has no jurisdiction on U.S. soil. Another bizarre fact: Morales was officially stationed in Laos in 1968.

O'Sullivan found video images of Campbell with another figure who has now been identified as George Joannides, a pivotal figure in the CIA and the re-investigation of the assassination of JFK.

Joannides had been the Chief of Psychological Warfare Operations at JM-Wave. He had retired from his CIA post, but in 1978 he returned to active duty, as it were, as the liaison between the House Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA) during its re-investigation of the assassinations of JFK and Martin Luther King.

Puzzling, perplexing and problematic, Joannides failed to inform his colleagues at the HSCA that he had ever worked at JM-Wave. This is a troubling enigma, for it suggests that he intended to maintain his covert identity—a fact that

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would compromise his involvement in the HSCA and jeopardize the entire congressional investigation.

A former researcher with the HSCA, Ed Lopez, identified Joannides as the person in the Ambassador Hotel video with what he described on camera as 99% accuracy. More: Lopez recalled Joannides' obstructive practice of denying the HSCA access to crucial documents in the re-investigation of the assassination of JFK.

O'Sullivan did not stop there. Moving to Washington, he met Wayne Smith, a veteran State Department official who worked with Morales at the US embassy in Havana in the final year of the Batista regime through the Cuban Revolution in 1959 and 1960. When O'Sullivan asked him to respond to the Ambassador Hotel video, Smith immediately stated, "That's him, that's Morales." From a conversation in 1975, Smith recalled that Morales stated that JFK deserved to be assassinated. From Smith's testimony, O'Sullivan learned that Morales "hated the Kennedys"—because of their cancelling the air support for the failed Bay of Pigs invasion of 1961.

In a hotel near the CIA headquarters (now named the George H. W. Bush Center for Central Intelligence) in Langley, Virginia, O'Sullivan met with a former agent, Tom Clines who said that all of the men in the Ambassador Hotel videos had been misidentified as former CIA agents. When O'Sullivan informed him that Ayers and Smith had positively identified the men as Morales, Campbell and Joannides, Clines became "disturbed," and he refused to go on camera for the interview.

Following his interview of Clines, senior journalists in Washington advised O'Sullivan to take his testimony with a grain of salt as he was known to "blow smoke" deliberately as a routine function to dissemble facts for the press and public.

Gaeton Fonzi was the lead investigator of the HSCA investigation of the assassination of JFK. In his book, *The Last Investigation*, Fonzi reported the testimony of Bob Walton, a man who met Morales and discussed JFK with him. According to Fonzi's account, Morales asserted his direct involvement in the assassination of JFK as revenge for the Bay of Pigs.

On the Watergate tapes, Richard Nixon always referred to the assassination of JFK as "the Bay of Pigs thing." During Eisenhower's presidency, Nixon served as the White House liaison with the CIA. As Vice-President, Nixon worked directly with Allen Dulles and other senior staff at the CIA on the planning of the Bay of Pigs operation. It should be noted that George H. W. Bush has been known to have been integral to the Bay of Pigs operation since the publication of the enormously popular bestselling book of 1991, *Plausible Denial*, by Mark Lane.

During his campaign for the presidency in 1960, Nixon was shocked that JFK made public the contents of his top-secret intelligence briefings—and had moved to Nixon's right to advocate overt military intervention against Cuba. The CIA planned to overthrow Castro in an invasion manned with exiled Cubans trained by the staff at JM-Wave. From our perspective today, it is perfectly understandable why JFK would have been compelled to make this policy position public in his presidential campaign. Had he not done so, JFK could have been tarnished with a charge of being "weak on communism," by Nixon, who had been one of the leading witch-hunters of the disgraceful McCarthy Era.

Upon his inauguration as president, JFK continued to support the plans to attack Cuba with the force of exiled Cubans—a project that Nixon had nurtured, supported and managed for the Eisenhower White House. However, JFK decided to withhold U.S. air support in order to maintain an arm's length separation from the Cuban invasion.

The Bay of Pigs became a fiasco. JFK accepted the blame, and he immediately ordered a thorough-going reorganization of the CIA. A few months later, Allen Dulles, who had been a free-wheeling manufacturer of *coups d'états* while serving as Director of Central Intelligence (DCI), 'retired' after a formal conversation with JFK. JFK promptly named a new director, and John McCone, who had been the director of the Atomic Energy Commission, soon took Dulles's place as DCI.

JFK's reorientation of the CIA did not stop there. Recognizing that the agency's mission to wage a covert Cold War was dangerously counterproductive, JFK ordered the CIA to make nuclear non-proliferation its top priority. Eventually, JFK would successfully negotiate the Test Ban Treaty with Nikita Khrushchev in the aftermath of the Cuban Missile Crisis—by far the most significant strategic confrontation of the entire Cold War.

While rogue elements in the U.S. intelligence community have long been suspected of

Shane O'Sullivan's

meddling in his assassination and those of his brother and Martin Luther King, Jr., Shane O'Sullivan's identification of three CIA agents in the Ambassador Hotel on the night of the assassination of RFK suggests strongly that the case should be reopened. The third agent in the Ambassador Hotel, George Joannides, now appears to have been engaged in a sabotage mission during the HSCA investigation of JFK's assassination.

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While O'Sullivan is calling for a re-opening of the case of RFK, it is only reasonable to re-open JFK's case, as well.

In 1968, I was in my final year at the University of North Carolina. From my meeting with a close associate of RFK, I worked as a college and university organizer in his presidential campaign. At the time of his assassination, RFK was the leading candidate for the presidency—far ahead of his nearest rival in the polls and definitely on track to win the November election.

Seeing the BBC broadcast of videotape evidence of three unassigned CIA agents in the Ambassador Hotel Ballroom at the time of RFK's assassination shocked me. The federal government, Congress and the criminal justice system of the United States failed to protect the president of the United States and its leading presidential candidates. Worse. They have failed to tell the truth to the American people.

Today, on the anniversary of one of the most tragic dates in American history—I propose that the cases of RFK and JFK should be re-opened in either the 110th or the 111th Congress.

We must follow the evidence exhaustively and relentlessly, leaving no stone unturned and no document unexamined regardless of its current status: Sensitive; Secret, Top Secret or Above Top Secret. To do any less would be to become complicit in the lies and cover-ups that have denied the American people of the truth.

Michael Carmichael is a historian and author based in Oxford, England, UK. He is the founder and chief executive officer of planetarymovement.org. This article is republished in the Baltimore Chronicle with permission of the author. The complete illustrated and referenced article "Death of a Presidency" by Michael Carmichael [is online here](#).

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