Roger Craig and 1984
By Edgar F. Tatro

In George Orwell's 1984, a bright, relatively young man named Winston Smith worked hard for his country, Oceania, and its enigmatic executive called Big Brother. Smith's occupation was somewhat odd and even Winston had deep seated roots of suspicion as to the ethics of his actions, but his naive faith, his foolish hope and his powerless ability to change what was happening, kept him in line.

Winston Smith toiled at the Ministry of Truth where he rewrote history to accommodate the wishes and needs of the Party, the power elite in control of virtually everything in Oceania. In essence, Big Brother was never wrong and anything which suggested differently was obliterated and anyone who questioned his veracity was discredited in such a way that only a person's memory reminded oneself of the original truth. In time, man's fleeting memory, a mediocre and amorphous asset was easily converted into mindless rust and dated insignificance. Truth became what Big Brother said was truth. Anything else was heresy or insanity.

One day Winston Smith confronted a crisis, a contradiction, which forced the hero in him to step forward. He held in his hand an actual photograph which "proved" that three men who had been convicted of treason by Big Brother's judicial regime were absolutely, positively, and without question... innocent. Jones, Aaronson, and Rutherford had been framed. Winston Smith made every attempt in his limited way to expose the ugliness of the crime and lost everything - his job, his woman, his faith, his will to live and subsequently, his life.

Orwell wrote his satirical masterpiece in 1949, but fiction became reality fourteen years later and Roger Dean Craig lived the role of Winston Smith from November 22, 1963, the day President John F. Kennedy was silenced forever by the guns of Big Brother until May 15, 1975, the day Roger Craig, former Dallas Deputy Sheriff, felt compelled to give up and silence himself.

Although Craig's story has been published many times, it has been accomplished in a fragmented manner over an extended period of years as the events occurred and as research developed further areas of concern. The following is a synopsis of Craig's primary allegations:

1) Craig claimed that Sheriff Bill Decker informed his unit, two hours prior to the assassination, not to take part in the security measures for the presidential visit.
2) Craig informed critics that Deputy Sheriff Harry Weatherford had been assigned with a rifle to the roof of the Records Building by Sheriff Bill Decker.
3) After the assassination Craig apprehended a woman in her early thirties who was attempting to leave the parking lot area behind the grassy knoll fence in a brown '62 or '63 Chevrolet. Craig turned this woman over to Officer C.L. Lewis. The woman somehow disappeared from custody to Craig's astonishment.

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4) Craig interrogated Arnold Rowland who had viewed two men in separate windows of the sixth floor of the T.S.B.D. fifteen minutes prior to the assassination. One man was white, possessed a scope-mounted rifle and was situated in the southeast "Oswald" window. A black man was observed in a southwest window. The Warren Commission discounted Rowland's testimony despite Craig's corroborative support that Rowland had detailed this story to Craig minutes after the shooting.

5) Craig and C.L. Lewis were looking for a possible bullet scar on the south curb of Elm Street based upon information from Deputy Sheriff Buddy Walthers. Various photos have been published of Walthers and Officer J.W. Foster who allowed an unidentified man, cited as an "R.R.I. agent" in Chief Jesse Curry's book, J.F.K. Assassination File, to pick up something and deposit the object into his pocket. Craig claims that Walthers told him that evening that the object in question was a 45 caliber slug imbedded in brain debris, but later Walthers recanted the story.

6) Craig witnessed a young man race down a grass embankment parallel to the T.S.B.D. south west corner and enter a light green station wagon driven by a Latin man. The car sped away while most people were converging upon the scene. The incident took place 16 to 15 minutes after the assassination. Craig later identified Lee Harvey Oswald as the running fugitive, an accusation, which, if accurate, would demolish the Warren Report by itself.

7) Craig gave his information of the fleeing car and its occupants to a self-proclaimed secret service agent located on the front steps of the T.S.B.D. The man recorded the car's description in his notebook, but appeared uninterested in the two individuals. Then in 1962, during the New Orleans investigation conducted by District Attorney Jim Garrison, Roger Craig identified Edgar Eugene Bradley, an individual with right wing connections from California, as the secret service imposter.

8) Craig claimed that Sheriff Decker overheard this conversation at the T.S.B.D. and informed Craig that the suspect had already left the scene. Craig wondered how Decker knew that to be true.

9) Craig entered the T.S.B.D. and helped to discover the three spent shell casings which he said were uniformly two inches apart, all facing the same direction which is quite different from the positions of the shells in the official photos.

10) Craig also helped to discover the rifle which he identified as a 7.65 Mauser, not an Italian Carcano.

11) Craig claimed that the rifle identification was at 1:05 P.M. at which time they learned of the murder of Officer J.D. Tippit in Oak Cliff. If accurate, this information would further corroborate the impossible time scenario developed for Oswald's action as outlined by the Warren Commission.

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12) Craig claimed that the long paper gun case, allegedly used by Oswald to transport the rifle to the T.S.B.D., was never there.

13) At 4:30 P.M. Craig visited Captain Will Fritz's office to view the suspect and identified Oswald as the fugitive who entered the green station wagon. The famous dialogue took place at this time when Fritz asked Oswald about the "car" and Oswald cited Mrs. Paine's "station wagon" and to leave her out of this. Craig claimed that Oswald then said, "Everybody will know who I am now." According to Craig, it was Oswald who first offered the specific phrase, "station wagon". Mrs. Paine did, in fact, own a green station wagon. Captain Fritz denied that any of this conversation ever took place and also denied that Craig ever visited his office.

14) Craig claimed that he read the results of Oswald's nitrate test while he was in Captain Fritz's office. According to Craig, the tests were negative, implying that no nitrates were found on Oswald's cheek or hands.

15) Craig claimed that he was briefly confronted by a man in March, 1968 in California after participating in a television talk show. Craig claimed that the man was the tall tramp photographed in Dealey Plaza with two other tramps during their arrest after the assassination.

16) Craig claimed that his testimony of April 1, 1964 before Warren Commission attorney, David Belin, as it appears in Volume Six of the Commission's twenty-six volumes, is incomplete and inaccurate. Craig accused Belin of turning off the tape recorder at crucial junctures of the interrogation. Craig also stated that his transcript contains 14 alterations of his actual testimony and various other omissions.

The simplest means to test the reliability of Craig's many accusations would be to compare his original testimony to those allegations, many of which were not known to the public until published in Penn Jones' *Forgive My Grief* series some four to five years later, but a serious roadblock prevents this easy method since Craig insisted that his official testimony is an example of rewritten history, Orwellian style.

Therefore the major barrier to the truth is not so much the integrity of Roger Craig as it is the credibility of David Belin. First, Belin's interrogation of Craig at crucial points in his testimony such as the positions of the shells and the identity of the rifle was very superficial. Secondly, documents written by Belin in January and February of 1964 make it explicitly clear that Belin was certain of Oswald's guilt as the lone assassin before the investigation had begun. Thirdly, Sylvia Meagher's excellent article, "The Curious Testimony of Charles Givens," finished what little credibility Belin ever had. Given who had placed Oswald on the first floor of the T.S.B.D. on November 22, 1963 replaced him eight months later on the inramous sixth floor, Belin allowed this perjury into the record without question.
Nevertheless Craig's testimony in Volume six does mention that the parking lot woman was turned over to another authority. The Howland and station wagon stories are well documented and there are brief references to the shells indicating that Craig saw them in a different location from the official pictures as well as Craig's recollection of the announcement of the Tippit murder at the time of the rifle recovery, but unfortunately, Belin did not pursue these matters. Craig also stated that no long paper bag was present on the premises.

The station wagon story is further supported by Marvin Robinson, a witness who outlined essentially the same rendition, but was unable to identify the running man. Also the sequential photographs published in Cover Up by J. Gary Shaw and Larry Harris do show Craig looking up Elm St. at 12:44 P.M. as a dark station wagon is in position behind a bus to pick up a man who may be the fugitive in question.

The Craig-Fritz controversy cannot be resolved except that photos do exist of Craig in Fritz's office which Fritz had denied and if a tape recorder and/or stenographer had been present during all Oswald interrogations, the issue would never be in doubt.

Every serious student of the assassination is aware that many questions still revolve around the legitimacy of the shells, particularly C543, and the paper gun case, which also lends credibility to Craig's accusations. Many of his other stories such as the nitrate test, the .45 caliber slug, and the identification of the tall tramp must be accepted or rejected on his credibility alone unless other reliable sources can be ascertained.

Perhaps the most dramatic indication that at least someone was displeased with Craig's testimony are the assorted threats, the four apparent attempts on his life and the constant invasions of his privacy by individuals who tailed him and his wife everywhere once he associated himself with the Garrison probe.

In November, 1967, a bullet whisked by his ear. The incident was set up by a "friend," a restaurant owner in poor financial straits who had no business deficits from this day forth. In May, 1968 a truck driver aimed a pistol at him while Craig was coming home from work. In 1973 an explosion in his car caused puncture wounds in his chest and on another occasion he was driven off a mountain road and suffered multiple injuries. Unless Craig had become a pathological liar, it is difficult to accept all of these episodes as bad luck or inventions of Craig's imagination. 1973 was also the year Craig's wife left him. Visions of Orwell's Thought Police and Winston Smith's loss of Julia are inescapable.

The most important and most controversial allegation made by Roger Craig was his identification of Elgar Eugene Bradley as a
secret service imposter. Since several witnesses including three other Dallas law enforcement officers testified to meeting secret service agents in Dealey Plaza and the Secret Service adamantly insisted that all of their agents remained in the motorcade, Craig's discussion with a secret service imposter is not unreasonable. Fortunately Craig wrote about the incident in his deposition for the Sheriff's Department. Otherwise there would be no government record of it since Balin failed to bring the matter up in his session with Craig. Thus, there is no question that Craig is telling the truth about the situation occurring. However his positive identification of Bradley four years after the fact must be examined carefully.

It is safe to say that the Garrison investigation polarized the assassination critique into two camps, those who saw him as the second coming and those who saw him as an unmitigated fraud. One thing is certain, Garrison had boasted that there would be arrests and convictions and none materialized.

Aside from the Craig identification, the District Attorney's case against Bradley, from what little we know through research, was quite circumstantial and unconvincing. According to Peter Noyes, author of Legacy of Doubt, one witness, Dennis Mower, a leader of the Minutemen in California maintained that Bradley had offered him $10,000 to kill Kennedy in 1960 when JFK was a senator at which time Mower would have been fourteen years old.

Another witness, apparently a neighbor of Bradley's, claimed that he knew who had killed JFK. At another time she said she had overheard Bradley's son chastize his father during a domestic dispute over killing someone and that on another occasion Clay Shaw and Colonel William Gale, a leader of the right wing California Rangers, had visited Bradley's home.

Still another woman from Tulsa, Oklahoma claimed that Bradley while in her house opened a suitcase with weapons inside on the day of the assassination. It is hard to believe that an intelligent conspirator would be so careless.

Finally Ioran Hall implicated Bradley by attesting to his presence at a September, 1963 meeting at which alleged presidential assassination conversations took place. Hall's mercurial changes in testimony regarding the Sylvia Odio affair should quickly promote distrust in virtually anything he says pertaining to the JFK murder.

The known witnesses against Bradley are not an impressive lot. However Bradley did admit to being in Texas on November 22, 1963, but only in El Paso and Anthony, Texas. Whether his alibi was solid was never determined since Bradley's extradition from California to Louisiana to stand trial for conspiracy to kill the President was prevented by then Governor Ronald Reagan despite the extradition recommendation of Charles O'Brien, the Chief Deputy Attorney General of California, according to William Turner, author of The Assassination of Robert F. Kennedy.

Although Garrison's case against Bradley seemed shaky, such
a political maneuver plants seeds of suspicion on the whole situation. Conspiracy charges are very difficult to substantiate and Garrison's track record had proven fruitless thus far. The District Attorney should have been made to prove his allegations or twist slowly in the wind. An act of power politics without a reasonable explanation given to the public is like putting out the fire with gasoline.

Bradley had staunch supporters of his innocence such as Fred Newcomb, the noted JFK researcher and author of Murder From Within, whose pointing finger of blame at the Secret Service and their questionable handling of the physical evidence, particularly JFK's body, clearly led to the revelations published in David Lifton's Best Evidence. Newcomb's letters to me are vehement attacks of Garrison's case against Bradley.

Later Peter Noyes developed an interesting theory that Garrison had confused Edgar Eugene Bradley with Eugene Hale Bradin, the organized crime suspect nabbed in Dealey Plaza. Even the files of the Los Angeles Police Department had suggested such a possibility, not that the IAPD is a pillar of trust.

On the other hand William Turner's research linking Bradley to Reverend Jerry Owen, the prime suspect, although tenuous, in the conspiracy to murder Robert F. Kennedy, just fans the flames. Since no trial took place, nothing will ever be firmly resolved.

Did Roger Craig, the one known credible witness, make an error? Noyes wrote that Craig's description of the imposter included a large scar on his face and a height of 6'2", but Noyes alleges that Craig dropped the scar description and lowered the suspect's height to 5'10", more in line with Edgar Eugene Bradley. However all the accounts I've read state that Craig noticed a cleft on his chin, not a scar.

Another question concerned Garrison's possibly well-intentioned but naive tactic of obtaining employment for Craig as a personnel manager at a firm owned by Willard Robertson, a prime financier of the Garrison investigation, which instigated the innuendo that Craig had been bribed to make his identification. Craig, however, after only a month's employment, resigned his new job because he couldn't take money that he had not justly earned. Craig admitted that he was being paid for doing nothing and believed Garrison was trying to protect him by keeping him away from Dallas. Roger Craig's primary troubles resulted from his lack of steady employment. It is illogical to believe that a corrupt man would leave such a healthy job. Craig's resignation and privately written accounts resound with pride and although his burning pride probably resulted in his suicide, it also reinforces his credibility.

Did Roger Craig make an honest error since four years had elapsed between the assassination and the identification of Bradley? This is quite possible, but Craig's previous claim to fame as a deputy sheriff had been his apprehension of a fugitive,
Harry Day, based upon Craig's recollection of Day's face seen on a wanted poster two years prior to the time of the arrest. Amazingly, Craig had picked out the right man. Craig was no slouch as a lawman. An objective observer might as well ride a roller coaster of ups and downs forever as the maze of Roger Craig and Edgar Eugene Bradley twists and bends into question after question.

In the summer of 1974 I began corresponding with Representative Henry Gonzalez who had made it public that he desired new congressional investigations into the assassinations of President Kennedy, Senator Kennedy, Martin Luther King and the attempt on George Wallace's life. Around the same time I began helping a small group of young men from Cambridge, Massachusetts who had organized a formative group called the Assassination Information Bureau. By 1975, the AIB had become a force with which to be reckoned.

In February, 1975 the AIB sponsored a convention at Boston University and many of the major critics were there to present their viewpoints - Mark Lane, Peter Dale Scott, Richard Popkin, Mae Brussel, Sherman Skolnick, Donald Freed, Dick Gregory, Robert Cutler, Ted Charach, Robert Groden, and of course, Penn Jones, with whom I had corresponded for years.

Penn and I discussed many subjects and when I asked him about Roger Craig's situation, his answer saddened me. We both agreed that a letter from me might cheer him up. Craig had been wounded in the shoulder by a shotgun blast and was recuperating at the Dallas V.A. Hospital. I wrote the following letter to him on February 8, 1975:

"Dear Mr. Craig,

Let me briefly introduce myself. I am a high school English teacher here in Massachusetts and I teach a course on propaganda using the JFK assassination as a case study. I have studied the case for ten years. I have read all the books including the 26 volumes. I was at the trial of Clay Shaw for a week, (the February school vacation). You had already testified. I have corresponded with many of the researchers across the country including an associate of yours, Penn Jones. I met Penn for the first time at a convention regarding assassinations at Boston University. Penn told me how life has been a 'bummer' to you this past decade and I felt compelled to write to you about my feelings. What I'm about to say is not bullsh! It's the truth, my truth. The students who sit before me to learn the truth about the death of their President, learn about a courageous man who told the truth when it would have been better for him to shut up or lie. They learn about a great American who spit in the face of Hell and never gave up despite the consequences. They learn about you.

If someone asks me what man in America I most respect,
they probably would think I'd say Henry Kissinger or George Washington or some other equally famous name, but I say, 'Roger Craig'. When Penn Jones told me what has happened to you, I wanted to cry. The late Skinny Holland once said, 'When the day comes that an American can't tell the truth just because the government doesn't, it's time to sell the country back to the Indians... if they'll take it'. You represent for me the epitome of that quote.

Be assured that hundreds of young men and women in Massachusetts hear your story, see your picture, and admire what you tried to stop - the nightmares of domino theories, erased tapes, unelected presidents, fake energy shortages, in essence, 1984.

I know nothing I say can change what has happened to you. I know that talk is cheap, but it's the least I can do. I know that I can't change the world we live in, but I can put my dent in it. I can make some people aware of the crap we're mired in and I can praise the unknown, great men who sacrificed themselves that others might live in a free and just world. I will never forget you, Mr. Craig, and I'll make sure others know about you and what you stand for - integrity of the highest order under the most tragic of times. May God bless you and hold your head high. You are a rare breed. If John Kennedy were alive today, he'd have to add an extra chapter about you in his book, Profiles in Courage.

Respectfully yours,

Ed Tatro"

I am still proud that I wrote that letter. Roger Craig replied on February 18, 1975.

"Dear Mr. Tatro,

I was somewhat surprised and very honored when I received your letter today. It is heartwarming to know there are people like you who are willing to stand up and be counted. As for my troubles - yes, I have suffered physically and mentally for the stand I have taken, but it is to me a small price to pay if I can help save or bring back the America we once knew.

I would like to say to your students - Please pursue this- They don't have to believe what I have said, but read - and make up their own mind. After all they are the future leaders of this country.

I have been asked to lie. I have been told to say nothing. My car was blown up, I was shot at and I was financially ruined and am now in the V.A. Hospital recovering from a shotgun wound. I have not changed nor will I change. I have to live with myself and this is most important to me.

I hope you will excuse this short letter. I hope the next time I will feel more up to par. If you write again, please address it to - (address deleted) - It's safer for me. I would like to leave this with your students - if you
pursue the assassination and its aftermath, be sure you are willing to pay the full price.

Sincerely yours,
Roger Craig"

On February 22, 1975 I responded to his letter. I told him that I would be willing to correspond with him and that I had a thousand questions to ask, but that I did not want to intrude upon his privacy. I informed him of my efforts to tell the Ervin Committee investigating President Nixon of possible links between suspects of the Kennedy Assassination and certain figures central to the Watergate burglary - and that two weeks later my income tax was audited.

I told him about my sending various kinds of information to Representative Gonzalez and my reservations of the congressman since he had possessed Governor John Connally's clothes which had been laundered which had prevented the possibility of comparing the metallic holes in JFK's clothes to Connally's clothes through spectrographic and neutron activation analyses. I informed him of some of the shabby, "pass the buck" treatment I had received from my own congressman in Massachusetts when I had asked him to co-sponsor the Gonzalez reinvestigation bill. I asked Roger Craig only one question - "Why don't you leave Texas?" His response of March 17, 1975 follows.

"Dear Mr. Tatro,

Please excuse me for the delay in answering your last letter. I have been back to the doctor several times since my release from the V.A. Hospital. I have to see him again on the 20th of March to discuss what, if anything, can restore the mobility to the left shoulder. But enough of these problems.

There has been many books written about the assassination. Some of the information was asked of me, which I gave freely, and will until such time as they get someone good enough to silence me. I have not read many of the books written as that day, November 22, 1963, has been burned in my mind as if with a branding iron.

There are many things left to be said, many questions unanswered. Penn has done extensive investigating and I admire him very much. But on that day I saw the physical evidence such as the paraffin test on Oswald and I also was in the room when Captain Fritz talked to Oswald and heard all the questions and answers. Deputy Luke Mooney and I found the empty shells on the sixth floor, Deputy Eugene Boone and I found the rifle which I might add was a .30 Mauser, so stamped on the barrel, and somewhere between the Book Depository it changed to another weapon (?) when it arrived at the police station. I would be happy to answer any questions you have concerning my role in the investigation, as I have always done.

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After all I was born here in the U.S. and served in Korea, and this is my country too.

As to my leaving Texas, I would love to. However, I have never asked for assistance nor will I. When and if these people down here allow me to earn enough money to leave, I would be more than happy to oblige them. I applied for a job and of course I was forced to give the Sheriff's Dept. for a reference. The letter they sent my prospective employer was as follows: 'Roger Craig is not desirable for re-employment due to his involvement in the Clay Shaw trial'. Now I suppose answering a summons could be called involvement, but I thought it was obeying the law of the land.

And when I do think I'm getting together someone blows my left shoulder off with a shotgun. However I will keep going one step at a time. But as I have said, I will be happy to answer any and all questions you wish to ask of me.

As for all the burglary of Watergate and the bugging, the first tapes disappeared during the Ruby trial when the courtroom was bugged and a van outside was taping the whole thing, and the second was when David Belin took my statement. He recorded it, and by his own admission those tapes are missing.

Again, thank you for writing and take care of yourself.
Hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely yours,
Roger Craig

P.S. Please excuse the bad writing. It's hard to hold paper, pen and write with the same hand. Maybe I'll get a secretary. Ha."

Roger Craig's second letter to me contained a shocker, something I had never seen attributed to him in print before. He had written that the rifle was "a 7.65 Mauser so stamped on the barrel". If this was accurate, it was new information, to my knowledge, and crucial to a new investigation.

I wrote a response back to Craig on March 22, 1975. I updated him on the progress of the Gonzalez bill and instructed him to take extra care of himself if congress began to act favorably toward a reinvestigation which now seemed feasible. I informed him that even my own congressman who had earlier avoided me was now becoming responsive to my wishes since he had received hundreds of letters, similar to my own, in support of such a bill. (Obviously, I had initiated the letter-writing movement in my district). Also a Massachusetts rookie Congressman, Representative John Joseph Moakley, not only agreed with my sentiments, but also had co-sponsored the bill. (Eventually all Massachusetts representatives voted favorably for a reinvestigation, another proud moment for me since I had worked diligently to accomplish this).

I then wrote a detailed account to Craig of how his testimony was supported by other witnesses, documents and research. I discussed specific evidence which suggested that the Carcano rifle, the shell (G542), the miracle bullet (G599), the car fragments
(CE567) and CE 569), the long paper bag, the sniper's perch, may have all been examples of evidentiary fabrication.

I also informed him of Robert Cutler's architectural work suggesting a shooter from a TSBD southwest window which might support Rowland's testimony. I discussed my basic distrust of the nitrate test since Dr. Vincent Guinn's neutron activation analysis of Oswald's paraffin cheek cast had conveniently disappeared. I mentioned seeing a blow up of the 12:44 P.M. photograph showing a man apparently in a position to be the station wagon's running Fugitive. I also expressed my distrust in Captain Fritz since he had left Oswald's front flanks unprotected by walking away to open the car door during the shooting of Oswald by Ruby.

I then asked questions concerning the attempts on his life, the death of his friend, Deputy Sheriff Hiram Ingram, who had died of cancer three days after breaking his hip from a fall at his home, the tactics of David Belin, specifics about Bill Decker, Harry Weatherford, Will Fritz, Edgar Eugene Bradley, the Oswald interrogation, the middle tramp confrontation, and his evaluation of the Garrison probe.

I reiterated my concern that he remain extra careful considering the possibility of a new investigation and I promised to keep him informed about the bill's progress. I also told him not to worry about his penmanship which was far better than that of some of my students.

Craig's final written reply was dated April 9, 1975.

Dear Ed,

It seems I'm always saying I'm sorry but I am for the delay in writing this letter, but I have my lows and it would seem this is one of them. I would like to say for one time in my life I am not sorry for anything I did, to stand up and say take your best shot, I will not change. I suppose this is childish but I am tired, Ed and need a place to rest.

However, to get to the nitty-gritty, Weitzman is the one who classified the rifle but I did see the stamp 7.65 Mauser on the barrel so there was no question, and - Yes, it did have a scope mounted on it. And that was at 1:05 P.M. as I looked at my watch when the Dallas police officer told us an officer had been killed in Oak Cliff. So you see Tippit was dead at approximately 1:05 P.M., an impossible task for Oswald.

As to the photograph of shells, they were in uniform lying on the floor no more than two inches apart all facing the same direction when I found them, and there was no long bag to carry a rifle in, only the lunch sack and cold drink bottle and I searched with the gusto of a hound dog! As for the man running down the grassy knoll and the station wagon,
Dick Sprague has pictures of this as well as the clock showing what time 12:44 PM. I saw them in New York. Why he doesn't show them I will never understand. As for the attempts on my life I don't know who is behind it. I have been shot at in 1967, in 1968 my life was threatened and in 1970 my car was blown up. In 1971 I was run off a mountain road in West Texas and my back broken as well as my shoulder, my left elbow, my left foot and my right leg. So I have suffered somewhat and then to top all that, my wife left me in 1973 and took the children. So I say again, if you or your students pursue this, be sure you are willing to pay the full price.

As for what was on the tape of my testimony that is missing, Belin asked me to identify some clothing which I did and this is all changed. However it was correct on the tape, also the description of the suspect and the station wagon were correct on the tape, but not in my testimony. Also the time factor was changed somewhat and the people I talked to such as Officer Baker were omitted.

The tramp in the middle approached Penn and I in Los Angeles when we did a show there and before I could question him, he ran away. This was some 5 or 6 years later. There was no cigarette package found on the 6th floor.

Please Ed, don't worry about asking me anything. I may be slow in answering, but I will always write. I have been ruined financially and my reputation has suffered. I have been totally disabled, but until they, whoever they are, silence me, I will continue to tell it like it was.

Sincerely yours,
Roger Craig

P.S. Enclosed is a copy of the Zapruder film. Maybe you have one, but if not, you are welcome to it and I hope it is good and it helps. Please write me at - (address deleted) - It's necessary for me to change addresses often.

Added P.S. If I am ever afforded the opportunity and honor of talking to you or your students, I would be more than happy to tell them what happened and what could happen should they decide to stand up and say - No, I want the truth.

Let the record show that Roger Craig's third and last letter to me came to my door ripped wide open at the top, (actually the bottom). Now it is possible that the little white box encompassing the Zapruder film had caused the damage, but during this time I was corresponding with various congressmen regarding the reinvestigation and many critics whose research was headed for book form or whose activities involved legal action suits against various federal agencies. One researcher, who was attempting to gain access to the identities of the owners of certain suspicious automobiles during the Dallas tragedy, had carefully attached blank, photographic microdots under postal stamps glued to envelopes mailed to me and other critics, but the microdots never reached their destinations. I can honestly say that during the mid-seventies
every package I received was torn severely along one side. I don't believe my mailman was Jack the Ripper either. Once an Air Force cadet stationed at a Texas base wrote to me, but it was opened prior to reaching me and it was stamped, "Opened by mistake by the Boston Gas Company." That's some mistake. Perhaps all of these instances are innocent, but the reader will have to forgive me if I hold on to my suspicions.

Meanwhile my major concern of the Craig allegations continued to be the Mauser stipulation, "A 7.65 Mauser so stamped on the barrel". Craig did not cite this information in his deposition, but of course that affidavit was a brief summary primarily concerned with the station wagon story. No reference to the Mauser is cited in Craig's testimony to Belin, but that transcript can not be trusted anyway considering Belin's unreliable performance married to his selected preference attitude. There is also no reference to the Mauser identification by Craig in the Forgive My Grief series which is difficult to ignore since almost every other allegation leveled by Craig was published by Penn Jones at one point or another.

I checked the Clay Shaw trial newspaper coverage of Craig's testimony, February 15, 1969 in the New Orleans Picayune. Craig was shown a Carcano and he is quoted as saying that the rifle in the courtroom was "similar with one exception - the one in the building had a strap". Craig obviously did not make any Mauser references at the trial or the New Orleans journalists would have jumped on it.

Even in Craig's own unpublished manuscript entitled When They Kill a President, Craig was not as precise as he was in his letter to me. Craig's manuscript details the scenario as follows - "It. Day inspected the rifle briefly then handed it to Capt. Fritz, who had a puzzled look on his face. Seymour Weitzman, a deputy constable, was standing beside me at the time. Weitzman was an expert on weapons. Being in the sporting goods business for many years, he was familiar with all domestic and foreign weapons. Capt. Fritz asked if anyone knew what kind of rifle it was. Weitzman asked to see it. After a close examination (much longer than Fritz or Day's examination), Weitzman declared that it was a 7.65 Mauser. Fritz agreed with him."

Therefore anyone who seriously questions Craig's allegation about a 7.65 Mauser identification is justified. The reader must keep in mind that by 1974 Craig was financially, physically, psychologically, and maritally a far cry from the man who witnessed the rewriting of history in 1963. Another reliable critic informed me after Craig's death that Craig knew the identity of his shotgun assailant of January, 1975 and that the incident was a personal matter. Craig had never informed me of this information and was not being totally honest with me, omission by silence as it were.
Hopefully the reader will realize that if the Mauser allegation to me is not accurate, the possible breakdown in integrity came near the end of a broken man’s nightmare and should not be utilized to undermine his other allegations consistently publicized through the years. In 1984 Winston Smith betrayed Julia only at death’s doorstep and there is still sufficient evidence to question the identity of the rifle discovered in the TSBD.

I was about to respond to Roger Craig with another letter. I knew the man was despondent and I was frustrated that there wasn’t much I could do about it. Words of praise can only take a man so far. I was intrigued by the fact that my questions about his identification of Edgar Eugene Bradley and his evaluation of Garrison and his investigation had not been answered in his third letter. Whether those omissions were significant or not is difficult to determine, but I did not want to push the man and making assumptions is tricky business.

On May 1, 1975 Roger Craig called my home. It was like talking to an old friend. I told him that I had received his last letter and was about to write again. I informed him that his last envelope was torn open in transit and that the Zapruder film box probably caused the rip, but this information gave him cause for concern. He apologized for not answering all of my questions even though I had not brought up the subject and he promised to answer the rest of them very soon. I thanked him and told him that his answers should be in writing as a means of preserving an historical record and we both agreed that the phone might not be the safest form of communication for either of us.

On May 20, 1975 I was teaching my students the story of Roger Craig complete with slide presentation showing them the photographic and documentary evidence which supported his allegations. Halfway through the class, one of my students, Michael Rota, became visibly upset and raised his hand frantically trying to get my attention. Michael said, “I read about that man in a magazine this morning. Mr. Tatro, that guy just killed himself!”

The class groaned and my heart sunk. I was stunned. I sent the youngster to the library to get the magazine and sure enough the worst was confirmed. At age 39, Roger Craig had written one last note to his father which stated, “I am tired of this pain” and had shot himself five days earlier on May 15, 1975 and ten days after his phone call to me.

In case his death was not a suicide, I made copies of his letters to protect myself and sent them to researchers throughout America and to some foreign countries also.

In retrospect, I now realize that his phone call to me was probably a last ditch, desperate, but disguised cry for help. Unfortunately, I was a thousand miles away and unaware of the severity of his depression.

CONTINUED
Later Penn Jones humbly wrote to me that he, Penn, had wished that he had been richer and smarter when it came to helping Roger Craig and I share Penn's remorse and regret.

In 1984 Big Brother eliminated Winston Smith, the man, and simultaneously disintegrated Winston Smith's story. In 1975 the totalitarians who rule America forced a little hero to silence himself, but Roger Craig's story will never completely expire and I am proud to be part of that story. END
WE ARE EXTREMELY PROUD TO HAVE THE PRECEDING ARTICLE BY EDGAR TATRO. IT IS A FINE, WELL-WRITTEN ARTICLE AND DOES HONOR TO THE MEMORY OF ROGER CRAIG. WE APPRECIATE THE WORK OF EDGAR TATRO AND HIS DETERMINATION TO DEFEAT THE LIES THE GOVERNMENT ISSUED ON THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY. THANK YOU EDGAR TATRO FOR A GREAT ARTICLE.

THE PRECEDING PHOTO IS OF EDGAR EUGENE BRADLEY, ONE OF THE KEY CHARACTERS IN THE ROGER CRAIG STORY. THIS PHOTO MIGHT HELP THE READER TO HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING WHILE STUDYING THE KENNEDY ASSASSINATION.

THE SECOND PHOTO IS OF "BUDDY" WALThERS,(BENDING OVER). AND THE THIRD IS ROGER CRAIG IN THE DALLAS POLICE STATION WHERE LEE HARVEY OSWALD WAS QUESTIONED ON THE NIGHT OF NOV. 22, 1963. THIS PHOTO PROVES THAT INDEED ROGER CRAIG WAS PRESENT, BUT CHIEF CURRY DENIED CRAIG WAS THERE.

BUDDY WALThERS WAS DEPUTY SHERIFF AT THE TIME OF THE ASSASSINATION. WHATEVER IT WAS THAT WALThERS PICKED UP THAT DAY WAS NEVER PRESENTED AS EVIDENCE.

IN 1969, BUDDY WALThERS WAS AMONG A GROUP OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS CALLED IN TO ARREST A JAMES WALTER CHERRY (BROTHER OF DAVE CHERRY, SEE WARREN COMMISSION TESTIMONY). IN THE SHOOT-OUT THAT FOLLOWED, WALThERS WAS SHOT THROUGH THE HEART.

CHERRY WAS DENIED A LIE DETECTOR TEST TO PROVE HE DID NOT KILL WALThERS. CHERRY WAS GIVEN THE DEATH PENALTY.

WALThERS WAS AT THE KILL SIGHT OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY AND AT THE TEXAS THEATER WHEN OSWALD WAS ARRESTED.

THIS ISN'T ALFRED HITCHCOCK, BUT VERY SIMPLY THE TRUE STORY OF HOW DEMOCRACY DIED ON A BLEAK DAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1963.

1. SEE FORGIVE MY GRIEVE IV, pp.123-131 2. FORGIVE MY GRIEVE IV pp. 172, 188-193