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# Executive Action

By Dalton Trumbo

Never before in American history...  
...has one family held such an enormous  
concentration of political power.  
The plan is perfectly plain.  
To return and perpetuate this power  
for decades.  
Two terms for JFK, two for Bobby  
and two for Ted.  
And in each administration,  
the brothers who are not president...  
...would take over  
the most powerful cabinet posts.  
They have several  
hundred million dollars...  
...and some of the best brains  
on Earth to carry it through.  
They have put together a powerful  
coalition of big-city machines-  
Labor, Negroes, Jews, liberals...  
...and the press.  
- that will make him  
unbeatable in 1964.  
Wait a minute, professor.  
He's appointed Republicans  
to the Treasury, to the Navy.  
Another's head of the CIA.  
Brother Bobby worked  
on Joe McCarthy's committee.  
The old man is farther to the right  
than I am.  
Ancient history, Harold.  
Man's come out for cuts  
in oil-depletion allowance.  
He's stopping mergers  
under the Antitrust Act.  
He promises to close down 52 domestic  
and 25 overseas military bases.  
Foster, since when do you believe  
the promises of politicians?  
- Especially in an election year?  
- Times have changed, Mr. Ferguson.  
And tactics along with them.  
In the next few months,  
you're going to see JFK do the following:

One, he is going to lead  
the black revolution...  
...instead of fighting it.  
Now we all know what that means.  
Damn right, a white backlash.  
Federal troops backing up the blacks.  
Blood in the streets.  
Two, he's going to try to put across  
a test-ban treaty with the Russians.  
Three, he's going  
to try to pull out of Vietnam...  
...and turn Asia  
over to the Communists.  
Ridiculous, the American public  
would never stand for that.  
Come on, Harold.  
The American public will stand  
for what it has to stand for.  
What it's told to stand for  
or what it's educated to stand for.  
Done effectively, the public would soon  
be disenchanted with the war.  
Which would make action imperative.  
- What kind of action?  
- Executive.  
I'll take it from here, Bob.  
- Let's all go in the other room.  
- Why in the other room?  
Just a short walk. Do you good.  
- Nothing wrong with my heart, James.  
- He's got you there, Jim.  
Tell me, sir, to what do you ascribe  
your great, good health?  
Hard liquor and soft women.  
Southern gentlemen.  
This country was not made...  
...by people who sat  
in their own community...  
...and followed  
their own private interests.  
Instead, it was made...  
...by the men who recognized  
that change means progress.  
And progress means

the welfare of our people.  
That's what makes this a great country.  
How are you?  
In Europe, heads of state always die  
at the hands of conspirators.  
Our presidents are killed by madmen.  
The pattern is remarkably consistent.  
Abraham Lincoln, April 14th, 1865.

**Target:**

**Range:**

James Garfield, July 2nd, 1881.

**Target:**

at two-and-a-half miles per hour.

**Range:**

William McKinley.  
September 6th, 1901.

**Target:**

**Range:**

Successful.  
Theodore Roosevelt,  
October 14th, 1912.

**Target:**

**Range:**

Wounded, survived.  
Franklin D. Roosevelt,  
February 15th, 1933.

**Target:**

**Range:**

Five shots, five misses.  
In no case was the killer  
an expert marksman.  
In every case,  
the Secret Service was unprepared.  
In every case,

the assassin was a political fanatic...

...willing to die to get the president.

No professional can be expected to lay his life on the line for such a cause.

So we've determined that our action can best be carried out...

- ... during a motorcade.

- How so?

Because they're scheduled well in advance.

They give you a chance to fire from cover...

...and get away in the confusion.

- How do you select your operatives?

- I can tell you, Harold.

Now, you used to have to train your own men from the ground up.

Keep them on your payroll the rest of their lives.

No more.

Do you know many men were fired by the CIA after the Bay of Pigs fiasco?

There's a small army of anti-Castro Cubans.

They're all ready. They're all available.

And they can do anything from picking a lock...

...and bugging an embassy to taking care of an ambassador.

So...

- How many of them do you need?

- A team of three men.

I've had two teams in the field for over a month.

- Why two?

- One team will be selected for action.

The other for backup and getaway.

These are all men

I've used before, Harold.

Trained, reliable, professional.

Now, one man firing from long range at a moving target is out of the question.

Even with two, we found

the percentages of failure are too high.

The only possible scenario  
is three rifles with triangulated fire.  
Two firing at a retreating target.  
And the third firing  
as the target advances.  
Three misses, three hits.  
Take the target back.  
Stand by to go again.  
Start the target.  
Stand by to fire.  
Fire.

While there's a climate of violence  
in the country now...  
...in which anything can happen,  
the people won't protest it...  
...or even fight it  
for fear of becoming involved.  
What about the Secret Service?  
They give the president less protection  
than any other head of state on Earth.  
De Gaulle travels  
surrounded by 47 motorcycles.  
Kennedy with eight, sometimes 10.  
And none between him  
and the crowds on the sidewalk.  
When a Soviet motorcade  
passes a 10-story building...  
...there's a separate agent  
to watch each floor.  
Now, in Jack's motorcades...  
...the agents often travel  
inside of closed cars.  
- They can't see a damn thing.  
- And they're paid less than the FBI.  
They only have target practice  
twice a year.  
And they're often used  
as White House errand boys.  
And most of their intelligence  
comes from other agencies.  
Which means they get very little.  
The FBI doesn't give much to anybody.  
And Hoover, he doesn't like Kennedys  
any more than we do.

The CIA?

After the Bay of Pigs, its director and his deputy were forced to resign.

The mood of the agency may best be described as bitter.

Are you trying to tell me people in the CIA and FBI...

...are going to help with this project?

No. James, how many government intelligence agencies...

...do you have personal knowledge of?

Fifteen. Maybe 17.

And how many private companies act as fronts for American intelligence?

- Private? Maybe three or 400.

- Including six or seven of your own?

What one agency finds inconvenient to do...

...may be very simple for another one in the same area.

So you see, there aren't nearly as many secrets as an outsider might imagine.

I can see how that could happen.

Even after a man leaves the government service...

...he still has ongoing relationships...

...with the various intelligence outfits he's left behind.

Yes, I can see that too.

It's that ongoing relationship that gives him access to information.

He receives it because he's trusted.

And that's the way we receive ours.

Yes? Oh, Charlie.

Is that so?

I see.

Yes, of course that would have worked out.

- Yeah.

- Thanks very much, Charlie.

- Quite all right.

- Bye.

Bye.

A conspiracy will make us

look like a banana republic.  
We don't have them.  
That's what we pay  
our intelligence agencies to prevent.  
They'll deny a conspiracy  
down to the last man...  
...lay the whole thing off...  
...on some crazy damn fool  
who did it all on his own.  
- Who is the crazy damn fool?  
- He'll be provided.  
Charlie McCadden  
just called from El Paso.  
Governor Connally  
just left the president.  
And they made a private agreement...  
...that he will make a political pilgrimage  
to Texas to woo votes.  
Probably in the fall.  
There ought to be a better way  
of settling things like this.  
Have you researched the man's  
private history?  
- Thoroughly.  
- Letters from the State Department?  
Harold, if you'll forgive me...  
...we're way ahead of you.  
If we could find some way  
to discredit him...  
...believe me,  
we would have done it by now.  
Gentlemen, the hour is getting late.  
Well, I'm sorry, gentlemen,  
I'm still unconvinced.  
I agree with you  
that the welfare of this country...  
...is worth any man's life,  
even the president's.  
My advice,  
for what it's worth to you, is wait.  
I'll see you to your car.  
Harold.  
Harold.  
Oh, before I took over



Transjordanian oil...  
...my own intelligence men  
had to eliminate a little local opposition.  
I understand these things.  
I just don't like them.  
They're tolerable  
only if they're necessary...  
...and permissible only if they work.  
Good day.  
I was in charge  
of that Transjordanian operation.  
The hell.  
Arranged it through  
the German intelligence.  
My technician on that job  
is out there right now training Team B.  
Okay, Lee, take her up.  
Okay, Chris, take it up.  
Okay, Jess. Take it up to 15 feet.  
Hold it. That's good.  
Okay, hold it. That's good.  
Okay, that's good. Lock it off.  
Start the action.  
Fire.  
I got three hits on target.  
One hit on Number 2. A miss.  
Seven seconds and two misses.  
It's probably a kill,  
but we're two seconds over time...  
...so we'll have  
to slow the target down.  
With the most accurate rifle  
on Earth...  
...we've still got a two-inch spread  
on either side for every hundred yards.  
So at 20 miles an hour,  
it's too much.  
Yeah.  
Let's get a beer.  
Commencement exercises  
at American University...  
...gained world significance  
when President Kennedy reveals...  
...two major decisions

on Western relations with Russia.  
Addressing the graduates...  
...Mr. Kennedy makes a stirring plea  
for world peace and says:  
First, Chairman Khrushchev...  
...Prime Minister Macmillan  
and I have agreed...  
...that high-level discussions  
will shortly begin in Moscow...  
...looking towards early agreement  
on a comprehensive test-ban treaty.  
I now declare that the United States...  
...does not propose to conduct  
nuclear tests in the atmosphere...  
...so long as other states  
do not do so.  
This generation of Americans  
has already had enough-  
More than enough.  
- of war and hate and oppression.  
Jim, sit down.  
- Are you hungry?  
- Thanks, I've eaten.  
How's the team?  
Well, it can be done  
in five or six seconds...  
...but only if we slow the target down  
to 15 miles an hour.  
Otherwise, you take chances.  
All right, we'll work on that.  
- Any cover problems?  
- No. No problems.  
Supposed to be hunters and I take it  
that's what we actually are.  
Correct.  
Here's your expense money.  
Say, when you gonna throw  
a little light on this play?  
It's not quite a standard operation.  
I may run as tight as you are.  
You mean is that each of us  
knows only his own job?  
Put it in any words you like.  
The company must be running

other teams then. Are we number one?  
Two teams only...  
...and there's a good chance  
that you'll see action.  
Maybe before Thanksgiving.  
How soon will we find out  
what the options are?  
The probabilities for success  
are almost 100 percent.  
Yeah, like the Bay of Pigs.  
You're a high-risk man,  
you're on contract.  
Your men are all experienced  
in black operations.  
You take your chances  
and you get paid for it and damn well.  
Okay, Jim.  
I'll tell you this much.  
I've never seen a better cover plan  
in all my life.  
Every man jack will be  
out of the country within 36 hours.  
New passports, new identities...  
...plus \$25,000 each  
just for spending money.  
I like that. Tell me more.  
You'll stay out of the country  
for two years.  
You'll receive \$25,000 a year  
via Switzerland for the next five years.  
All of us?  
I said every man jack  
involved in the operation.  
And five years from now,  
on January 2nd, 1968...  
...provided no one  
has broken security...  
...each man will find \$ 100,000...  
...in his own personally numbered  
Swiss bank account.  
Jesus.  
You just told me who we're gonna hit.  
This nation was founded by men  
of many nations and backgrounds.

Okay.

It was founded on the principle  
that men are created equal...

...and that the rights  
of every man are diminished...  
...when the rights of one man  
are threatened.

My fellow Americans,  
this is a problem which faces us all...  
...in every city of the North  
as well as the South.

Today,  
there are Negroes unemployed...  
...two or three times as many  
compared to whites.

Inadequate education,  
moving into the large cities...  
...unable to find work,  
denied their equal rights.

We cannot say  
to 10 percent of the population...  
...that "You can't have that right.  
Your children can't have the chance  
to develop whatever talents they have.  
The only way that they'll get their rights  
is to go in the street and demonstrate. "

I think we owe them and we owe  
ourselves a better country than that.  
The computer threw out  
Or sponsors, as we like to call them.  
A young man named Lee Harvey Oswald  
seems the best.

Born in New Orleans, 1939.

Father dead.

Mother remarried and divorced.

Boy was in an orphanage for a while...  
...then shunted about with his mother  
till he was 17.

You can start now, Tim.

He has remarkably muddled  
political record...

...that can be steered  
strongly to the left.

On October 24, 1956,

seven days after his 17th birthday...  
...subject enlisted  
in the United States Marine Corps.  
Attended  
Aviation Fundamental School...  
...at Naval Air Station  
in Jacksonville, Florida...  
...studying basic radar theory,  
map reading...  
...and air-traffic-control procedures.  
Began studying Russian language  
and taking pro-Communist attitudes.  
Fellow Marines called him  
"Oswaldavitch" and "Russki. "  
In the Marine Corps?  
Not a chance.  
Preparing a cover for him.  
- Naval Intelligence?  
- Either that or CIA.  
Go ahead, Tim.  
Arrived in Yokosuka, Japan  
aboard the Bexar...  
...for assignment at Atsugi,  
Isn't that where we monitored  
the U-2s over China?  
And a lot of other stuff.  
Court-martialed on June 27th...  
...for pouring a drink over  
a non-commissioned officer's head...  
...and use of insulting language.  
Confined 28 days at hard labor.  
Only 28 days?  
Not only giving him a cover,  
they're fixing him a phony.  
On August 17, 1959,  
he requested a dependency discharge...  
...on the ground  
that his mother required his support.  
- Discharge was granted September 11.  
- Well, that was easy.  
Easier than you think. Watch this.  
To get the discharge,  
he needed a doctor's affidavit.  
Otolaryngologist Marvin Danvers

gave him one...  
...saying he started treating  
Oswald's mother on September 5...  
...even though his letter is dated  
September 3.  
Well, I'll be goddamned.  
On the same day, September 4...  
...Oswald applied for  
and received a passport.  
Quote, "In order to attend  
the Albert Schweitzer College," unquote.  
Passport granted.  
Good for European travel,  
including U.S.S.R.  
Arrived in Moscow, October 16.  
Ordered to leave U.S.S.R. by 8 p. m.,  
October 21.  
- The Russkies weren't buying.  
- Slashed his wrists same day.  
Taken to Botkinskaya Hospital,  
released a week later.  
Visited U.S. Embassy on October 31.  
Stated his determination  
to revoke American citizenship...  
...and turn classified data  
over to the Russians.  
Can find no record that embassy  
tried to dissuade him...  
...from handing over  
classified material.  
How much did he actually have?  
Location of all bases  
on the West Coast...  
...radio frequencies for all squadrons...  
...all tactical call signs,  
strength of squadrons...  
...number and type  
of aircraft in each...  
...names of commanding officers...  
...and the authentic code  
for entering and exiting...  
...the ADIZ radio and radar ranges.  
Jesus.  
On January 4, 1960...

...Oswald receives permission  
to remain in the U.S.S.R. for one year.  
They're beginning to buy.  
On January 5, he is given 5000 rubles  
and assigned to work...  
...at the Belorussian  
Radio and Television Factory in Minsk.  
They've bought.  
In 1961, he writes a series of letters  
to the embassy...  
...concerning possible return  
to the United States.  
When was Powers shot down  
in that U-2?  
May 1, 1960.  
He was there, all right.  
But I'm not sure  
there was any connection.  
They've been spotting our U-2s  
for a long time.  
- Thanks, Tim, I'll take it from here.  
- Right, Mr. Farrington.  
On March 17, he met a young lady,  
a graduate pharmacist.  
Six weeks later, they were married.  
As a result of Oswald's letters...  
...the State Department  
informed embassy...  
...that for security reasons,  
Oswald should be given a passport.  
There was a wrangle with the Russians  
about exit visas for his wife...  
...but everything on our side  
was as smooth as silk.  
The embassy issued a passport.  
They lent him \$435  
in traveling expenses.  
And he passed through Immigration  
June 13th, 1962 en route to Fort Worth.  
Did anyone meet them at Immigration?  
A representative  
of the Concerned Travelers' Society...  
...named Ralph P. Waterford.  
To help them through customs,

or so he said.

Is that name familiar?

There's a Ralph P. Waterford known  
in Taiwan as the secretary-general...

...for the World Campaign

Against Communism, Inc.

- Now, who would have sent him?

- God knows.

You get into that,

there are so many triple-headers...

...you can't count them all. Tim.

All the intelligence agencies

have files on him.

He was interviewed twice last year

by the FBI that we know of.

And there's a report out

that the state attorney general...

...and the Dallas district attorney...

...have got him labeled

as FBI informant Number S-172.

He could be. Defecting, coming back,

running into no trouble at all...

...he could be anything.

CIA, Office of Naval Intelligence,

anything.

Lowest possible echelon, of course.

A few dollars here, a few there,

possibly a little doubling.

**Listen:**

On January 27th of this year...

...he bought a mail-order

Smith & Wesson. 38...

...under a phony name.

And in March he bought a mail-order

In May, he was distributing Fair Play

for Cuba literature in Dallas.

Can we rely on a character like this?

We're not relying on him.

We're using him.

I've got someone placed

very close to him.

Get a little air.

Go ahead. I wanna check



the stock market, of course.  
The real problem is this, James.  
In two decades...  
...there will be 7 billion  
human beings on this planet...  
...most of them brown,  
yellow or black.  
All of them hungry,  
all of them determined to love.  
They'll swarm out of their breeding  
grounds into Europe and North America.  
Hence Vietnam.  
An all-out effort there...  
...will give us control of South Asia  
for decades to come.  
And with proper planning, we can  
reduce the population to 550 million...  
...by the end of the century.  
I know.  
I've seen the data.  
We sound rather like gods reading  
the Doomsday Book, don't we?  
Well, someone has to do it.  
Not only will the nations affected  
be better off...  
...but the techniques  
developed there...  
...can be used to reduce  
our own excess population:  
Blacks, Puerto Ricans,  
Mexican-Americans...  
...poverty-prone whites and so forth.  
Raise your right hand, please.  
Do you swear that the statements  
in the application are true?  
I do.  
Do you swear your allegiance  
to the United States?  
I do.  
For 24-hour service, it's \$2.  
George Bernard Shaw  
speaking as Irishman...  
...summed up an approach to life:  
"Other people, " he said,

"see things and say, 'Why?'  
But I dream of things that never were  
and I say, 'Why not?'"  
The problems of the world  
cannot possibly be solved...  
...by skeptics or cynics...  
...whose horizons are limited  
by the obvious realities we need-  
Yes?  
- Twenty-four hours?  
- Not only that...  
...he stated on his application that  
his previous passport had been lifted...  
...and that he intended  
to travel to Russia.  
He can't be just crazy on his own.  
He defects, they lift his passport...  
...and on 24 hours' notice he gets  
another one to travel back to Russia?  
Somebody must be behind him.  
Oh, yes, indeed.  
Worth his weight in gold.  
We call this our Cubanization process.  
Here our sponsor distributes  
Fair Play for Cuba leaflets...  
...on Canal Street in New Orleans.  
Who's the other man?  
Picked him up in an employment office,  
\$2 an hour.  
We've repeated this process four times  
in the last 10 days.  
The address on the leaflets  
is 611 Karp Street.  
Howard Grimm's building.  
You remember him.  
Special agent  
in charge of the Chicago FBI office.  
We used him in '61 as equipment  
purchaser for our Cuban friends.  
Grimm has an office  
in that building himself.  
- Was that wise?  
- Well, no matter.  
Grimm's organization

is on LaFollete Street.

The Anti-Communist League  
of the Caribbean.

I like that.

They cancel each other out.

And no one's been able  
to put them together yet.

I don't like it, but it's done.

- When are you him getting into Dallas?

- Not for another month.

Our New Orleans scenario calls  
for a street corner fight and an arrest.

Possibly some radio interviews,  
TV if we're lucky.

He doesn't know he's being handled?

No.

That's being taken care of by someone  
who's known him for years.

- Heard anything from the old man?

- Not yet.

Go ahead without him?

Difficult to say. Very difficult.

In the meantime, we'll push on and hope  
that Kennedy makes up his mind for us.

Just a little water.

I still have a dream.

It is a dream deeply rooted  
in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day...

...this nation will rise up...

...live out the true meaning

**of its creed:**

We hold these truths  
to be self-evident...

...that all men are created equal.

I have a dream...

...that my four little children  
will one day live in a nation...

...where they will not be judged  
by the color of their skin...

...but by the content  
of their character.

I have a dream today.

Orders from God?  
What the hell would they be sending us  
to Montana for?  
Help fight American imperialism.  
Join the Fair Play for Cuba Committee.  
I know you, dirty bastard.  
You spy for Castro.  
You came to our office  
of Cuban Students in Exile.  
Took some material.  
And here you are handing out this crap.  
Why don't you go to Cuba  
and stay there?  
Take him away now.  
A full-scale nuclear exchange...  
...lasting less than 60 minutes...  
...with the weapons  
now in existence...  
...could wipe out  
more than 300 million Americans...  
...Europeans and Russians...  
...as well as untold millions elsewhere.  
That's why I support  
the test-ban treaty.  
Not because we're going to be easier  
in our lives...  
...but because we have a chance  
to avoid being burned.  
The reason that I'm worried  
about this treaty...  
...is because I believe  
that this treaty...  
...is a step away from safety...  
...possibly a step toward war.  
A pact, hailed by a hopeful majority  
as signaling peace in our time...  
...actually turns out to be a first step  
on the path to disaster.  
This treaty is not the millennium...  
...but it is an important first step.  
A step towards peace.  
Let history record that we,  
in this land...  
...at this time, took the first step.

Man's creating  
the perfect climate for his death.  
They sometimes do, you know.  
Caesar did.  
In that event, what do you hear  
from our elderly Brutus?  
Ferguson says in effect,  
"Don't call me, I'll call you. "  
- How's yours stand-in for Brutus doing?  
- Oh, he's doing fine.  
Heading up a Fair Play for Cuba  
Committee that doesn't exist.  
Writing letters to the Communist Party  
in New York.  
And after that street brawl...  
...he demanded that an FBI man  
come down to see him.  
When will he be in Dallas?  
Between the 3rd and 5th of October.  
His wife's there now,  
living outside of the city with a friend.  
Well, why wait so long?  
Well, he wants to go to Mexico City  
to try to get a visa to go to Cuba.  
- Was that your idea?  
- No.  
But there's no way to stop him without  
making him angry with our connection.  
I don't see any harm in it, do you?  
The man's a genius.  
He'll have the FBI watching the CIA  
and the CIA watching the Bureau.  
Before he's through,  
nobody will know whose man he is.  
Meanwhile, I'll schedule  
two live target rehearsals.  
- One for each team.  
- Good.  
And one more thing, Robert.  
When this operation is finished,  
it's my last.  
Why, of course.  
We all have our failures of nerve.  
If we didn't,

none of us would be worth a damn.

- George, in one, you shaded him a bit.

- Yeah, I know.

I only printed up the hits.

None of them were really far off.

Look at that. Right on target.

Beautiful.

- Front angle shot's wide open.

- It's gonna work.

Sure it is.

Okay. Now, we're supposed to be on the road before 9. Destroy these.

Tim, show them the pros and cons of that motorcade.

The most direct route from Love Field...

...to the Trade Mart, where the lunch will be...

...is either by Stemmons Freeway here...

...or Harry Hines Boulevard, which is here.

To get to the biggest crowds, however...

...the best route would be straight down to Main Street...

...down Main Street and through Dealey Plaza.

Where did you say you placed your sponsor? Texas School Book Depository.

Elm and Houston.

- I went to work there yesterday.

- Here's the depository.

In order for the motorcade to pass it, they'd have to make a jog.

Right on Houston Street and left on Elm here...

...and then through the underpass to Stemmons Freeway.

Isn't that a long way around to nowhere?

It's the perfect place for triangulated gunfire.

A man in the records building here.  
Another man in the depository.  
A third man here on the grassy knoll  
where he has excellent cover.  
They'll have to slow down  
to 10 to 12 miles an hour...  
...to make this turnoff.  
And when they've reached this point,  
they've walked right into the trap.  
And there's no way  
they can get out of it.  
If that's where you want the parade  
to go, why, that's where it will go.  
I can think of  
a dozen arguments now...  
...and a dozen people  
who'll listen to them.  
But let me handle it.  
Where will you start, in Washington?  
President's there  
to please people, isn't he?  
Businessmen, bankers,  
merchants, so forth.  
They do the deciding  
on where he goes.  
When it comes to those fellas, I know  
where the bear sits in the buckwheat.  
Dealey Plaza. I'll guarantee it.  
That leaves us with just one problem.  
Ferguson's got to be convinced  
in the next week or two.  
Tonight, the news from Saigon  
is grim indeed as riots sweep the city...  
...and the government  
of courageous President Diem...  
...hangs in the balance.  
Radical students and Buddhist activists  
are demonstrating in the streets...  
...while government troops  
battle desperately to subdue them.  
In protest, another Buddhist monk  
has burned himself to death.  
And what is our president doing  
to support Diem?

This from Washington:  
Is there any speedup  
in the withdrawal from Vietnam?  
You know, when Secretary McNamara  
and General Taylor came back...  
...they announced that we would expect  
to withdraw thousands of men...  
...from South Vietnam  
before the end of the year.  
Reliable sources inform us...  
...that Kennedy plans to withdraw  
all United States forces...  
...from Southeast Asia in 1965.  
A vital region which will inevitably  
fall to the Communists...  
...should our president's  
suicidal no-win policy prevail.  
Yes, Robert, I can see your point.  
I'm in complete agreement.  
By all means, go ahead.

Page 499, verse 10.

Job.

"He shall return no more  
to his house...  
...neither shall his place  
know him anymore. "

- Chris.

- What?

Open up for a minute.

Jesus, I got somebody in here.

Okay, you come out here.

It'll only take a minute.

I'll be back in a minute.

- What?

- Close the door.

You got something, huh?

It's our job.

For sure?

- Start packing. Tell the boys.

- Right.

We picked up this film

in New Orleans.

It's a TV interview

after he got in that hassle...



...passing out the pro-Castro leaflets.  
No matter what you say, Jim...  
...the point of it is  
you must be remembered.  
Ten days from now,  
if they hear you described...  
...they must say,  
"Oh, yes, I saw him. He was here. "  
- Do you understand?  
- I've got it.  
It's equally important  
that we set him up planning the event.  
He owns a rifle with a scope,  
but he's never used it.  
Give him visibility in a gun shop.  
We'll provide you a rifle similar to his.  
We also want to see him practicing.  
Can't you arrange to borrow his rifle?  
That's programmed for later  
when we're certain he won't miss it.  
Let's do some more homework.  
That does not mean, however,  
that I'm a Communist.  
What is the difference  
between the two?  
There is a great deal of difference,  
such as several American parties...  
...in several countries are based  
on Marxism, such as Ghana.  
Ghana. Certain countries have  
characteristics of a socialist system...  
...such as Great Britain  
with its socialized medicine.  
These, then, are the differences between  
an outright Communist country...  
...and countries which adhere  
to leftist or Marxist principles.  
In your work  
with the Fair Play for Cuba Committee...  
...what are you advocating?  
We advocate restoration  
of diplomatic trade...  
...and tourists relations with Cuba.  
Hi there.

Now, what can I do for you?

Well, could you drill this  
to mount a telescopic sight?

- Sure can.

- How soon?

I'm gonna need it any day now.

Well, be ready in a couple of days.

Fine.

What's the name?

Lee Harvey Oswald.

- Good.

- Thanks.

Garage.

Got it. I'll let you know.

Chris.

All yours.

It's a 6.5 Mannlicher-Carcano.

Jesus Christ, the Italians  
stopped making this in 1941.

That's 22 years ago.

Let's go.

She's a real fine piece of weaponry,  
isn't she?

The Italians in World War II called it...  
...the rifle that never hurt anybody  
on purpose.

The bolt sticks,

it's got a two-stage trigger...

...and the scope is off 0.02 to the left  
and it has a 9.5-inch drop.

- Well, can you adjust to it?

- Oh, sure.

I'm gonna need a hell of a lot more  
practice before countdown.

That's one hell of a buy, friend...

...in case you're looking  
for first-class transportation.

- Won't cost you an arm and a leg.

- How much?

Nineteen ninety-five.

Radio, heater, whitewalls included.

Well, if it's such a hell of a buy,  
why haven't you sold it?

Only been here

the last couple of days.

Bullshit.

I saw this car on the lot last Monday.

What you saw here last Monday  
was the same model...

...but it wasn't this car.

- What did you get for it?

- Hundred dollars more than I'm asking.

Jesus. You mean you'd do that  
to some poor dumb Texas burr picker?

What the hell are you  
talking about Texas like that for?

Because if I was a doctor...

...and I wanted  
to give the world an enema...

...I'd stick the nozzle  
right here in Dallas, Texas.

Before I kick you in the ass, can you  
tell me a better place than Texas?

Yeah, Russia. They make a car  
called the Volga that would-

You Communist bastard, get out of here.  
Get off my lot.

Who the hell do you think you are,  
anyway?

The name's Oswald. Lee Oswald.

If you ever learn how to spell, you can  
have a lot of fun trying to write it down.

It will come in handy at the right time,  
to leak to the press.

The face doesn't look enough like him  
to pass muster with me.

Get a picture of the sponsor himself  
and tip it in. Can do?

- Apple pie.

- Tim.

Give him a pistol with a holster.

And a telescopic sight  
for the rifle too.

- Everything in order?

- So far.

Hey, buddy, you're firing  
at the wrong target.

That's my target.

Hey, mister,  
you're firing at my target.  
Hey, would you mind?  
Just fire at your own.  
Why don't you take a flying screw  
at the moon and charge it to me?  
I'll be glad to, you son of a bitch.  
You just tell me your name.  
Lee Oswald.  
Hey, Ralph!  
Outside the Dallas municipal auditorium,  
a large number of pickets...  
...gave U.N. ambassador Adlai Stevenson  
a hot reception last night...  
...when he came to give a speech  
in honor of United Nations Day.  
And the audience inside  
wasn't a bit more friendly.  
Surely, my friend,  
I don't have to come from Illinois...  
...to teach Texas manners, do I?  
But I do hope all the pickets  
will come in and sit down-  
Go home.  
- because I believe in  
the forgiveness of sin...  
...and the redemption of ignorance.  
Stevenson told friends that he was  
going to advise President Kennedy...  
...not to make  
that forthcoming trip to Dallas...  
...because of the hostile atmosphere  
in that city.  
Do you see your position?  
Yeah, behind that fence on top.  
Okay, let's take her down.  
"On November 22nd, the only important  
officials remaining in Washington...  
...will be McNamara  
and Robert Kennedy.  
The secretaries of state, treasury,  
interior, commerce and labor...  
...will be in the air en route to Tokyo.  
The president and vice president

will be in Dallas. "

To confuse matters and give your men as much time as possible...

...a code will be removed from the Tokyo-bound cabinet plane...

...and the Washington telephone system will suffer a temporary blackout.

- That will help.

- Secret Service are under orders... ..to stay with the president no matter what happens.

Once they get him to the hospital, they'll probably filter back.

But for at least a half-hour, you should be entirely free of them.

I'll have six men with Secret Service credentials in Dealey Plaza.

Their insignia for this trip, incidentally, is double white bars on red.

I forgot to mention that the chief of the White House detail... ..has decided to stay in Washington.

Good.

Now to the intelligence agencies.

In going through Oswald's address book... ..our contact man came across the name and telephone number... ..of somebody called Fred Hastings.

Now, Hastings is an FBI man working out of the Dallas office.

You know him?

Oswald has his telephone number?

I was about to mention Mr. Hastings.

He's visited Mrs. Oswald once and her landlady twice... ..since the first of the month.

He knows that Oswald works in the book depository.

And we must assume he also knows... ..that the president's motorcade will pass the book depository.

Yet neither the local nor the Washington office of the FBI...

...has reported that  
to the Secret Service.  
What about other Oswald files?  
The Office of Naval Intelligence  
is watching him.  
The CIA regularly monitors his mail.  
No one has reported anything  
to the Secret Service.  
They don't even know  
that Lee Harvey Oswald exists.  
His name appears nowhere  
in their files.  
Let's have a drink.  
Dallas has one of the highest  
murder rates.  
In two years, the Secret Service  
has established 149 threats...  
...against Kennedy's life  
from Texas alone.  
Yet they send him into hostile territory  
with no more protection...  
...than you and I would arrange  
for a favorite dog.  
What would you say if I told you  
that as of November 8...  
...Secret Service files  
find not one individual...  
...in the entire  
Fort Worth-Dallas territory...  
...who represents a threat  
to the president's security?  
I'd believe it.  
Also there will be no search  
of the buildings in Dealey Plaza.  
And there will be no Secret Service men  
stationed in Dealey Plaza.  
Not one.  
Good.  
The lead car will carry  
the chief of police, the county sheriff...  
...and the two top-ranking  
Secret Service agents.  
It'll be a closed car.  
- They won't be able to see a thing.

- Oh, well.  
Soon be over.  
Then there'll be...  
...nothing we can call our own  
but death.  
That small model of the barren earth...  
...which serves as paste  
and cover to our bones.  
For God's sake,  
let us sit upon the ground...  
...and tell sad stories  
of the death of kings.  
The president John F. Kennedy is getting  
a warm welcome here in Fort Worth...  
...the third stop in his whirlwind trip  
through our state.  
After this meeting with the Fort Worth  
Chamber of Commerce...  
...the president and first lady  
will fly to Dallas.  
This is from one of our people  
in Fort Worth.  
"Last night in Fort Worth,  
nine Secret Service agents...  
...went to the Fort Worth Press Club  
for drinks.  
Seven of the nine remained  
till 2 in the morning.  
All three night guards left the hotel  
and went to the Cellar House.  
Secret Service rules state  
that use of intoxicating liquor...  
...is strictly prohibited  
while agents are on travel status"...  
...as these agents were.  
Four of the nine  
who violated rules last night...  
...have key responsibilities  
in the Dallas motorcade.  
Air Force Number 1,  
ladies and gentlemen...  
...carrying the president  
of the United States.  
With the seal on the side.

Beautiful sight. Beautiful sight.

Did you hear those shots?

- What are you doing here?

- It's all right.

- What happened?

- Secret Service.

Hey, you. Come here.

- Who are you?

- Hell, I work here.

- He work here too?

- Yeah.

Okay.

We have just arrived

here at Parkland Hospital.

It's hard to tell what's really going on.

People here with dazed looks

on their faces.

Police are keeping everybody out.

Very difficult to believe

this has happened.

We understand they're giving

the president blood transfusions...

...and fighting very hard

to save his life.

Word just came through

on Secretary Rusk's news ticker.

The president's been shot.

Get me Defense.

Something's happened

to my codebook.

Hello? Hello?

Defense Department? Is this the...?

Hello?

- Hello?

- Have you called him yet?

There's no answer, senator.

The line went dead.

I'm sorry, our lines

are temporarily out of order.

I'm sorry, our lines are out of order.

Sorry, sir, our lines

are temporarily out of order.

Ladies and gentlemen,

the president is dead.



We've just been given word  
that President John Kennedy is dead.  
They've administered the last rites  
of the Catholic Church...  
...to President John F. Kennedy.  
Nothing about Oswald.  
Dallas police have arrested a man  
whom they suspect of being involved...  
...in the assassination  
of President Kennedy.  
He was apprehended  
in the Oak Cliff area...  
...after allegedly killing a policeman.  
This side.  
- Did you shoot the president?  
- I didn't shoot anybody, no, sir.  
I'm just a patsy.  
I'm just a patsy.  
Oh, knock it off, bub.  
This wasn't in the scenario,  
was it, Mr. Farrington?  
No scenario's perfect, Tim.  
Probably realized  
the position he'd been placed in...  
...slipped out of the depository,  
stopped by his room for the gun...  
...and then ran into the policeman  
and panicked.  
- Find out what's happened to him.  
- Okay, Mr. Farrington.  
Identified as Lee Harvey Oswald,  
an employee...  
I'll have to leave Dallas.  
...of the Texas Book Depository  
overlooking Dealey Plaza...  
...where the president was shot.  
So far, the police are releasing no...  
It's terrible, Hymie, terrible.  
No, you don't understand.  
I gotta get out of this town.  
I'm thinking of coming back to Chicago.  
One thing I can tell you:  
This case is cinched.  
That this man killed the president.

There is no question in my mind about it.  
Chief, can you tell us in summary...  
...what directly links Oswald  
to the killing of the president?  
Well, he was on the floor  
where the shots were fired from...  
...immediately before  
the shots were fired.  
He was seen carrying a package  
to the building.  
Ballistic tests,  
we haven't had a final report.  
But it is-  
I understand will be favorable.  
If we can put his prints on the rifle...  
...I am certain  
that we can connect him.  
Are there any other suspects  
linked with Oswald?  
No.  
Thank you.  
Is there any indication  
that this was an organized plot...  
- ... or was it one man?  
- There's no one else but him.  
Stuttgart, Gate 12.  
Thank you. Let's go.  
Jack. Where is everybody?  
The joint's closed.  
Didn't you see the sign?  
No, I came through the back way.  
What's wrong?  
What's wrong? You stupid bitch,  
don't you read the newspapers?  
They killed Kennedy this afternoon.  
Sure, I know that, Jack,  
but why are we closing down?  
Because it looks good, that's why.  
Now get out of here.  
Go on home.  
Okay.  
Hey, wait a minute.  
I gave your number to a guy.  
A guy named Burger. Henry Burger.

He's a new cop.  
He may get lonesome,  
give you a call tonight.  
If he does, you fix him up, huh?  
Sure, I'll fix him up.  
May I bring you a drink, sir?  
Drink, sir?  
Yeah, vodka rocks.  
I really don't know  
what this situation is about.  
Nobody has told me anything  
except that I'm accused...  
...of murdering a policeman.  
I know nothing more than that.  
I do request  
someone to come forward...  
...to give me legal assistance.  
Did you kill the president?  
No. I have not been charged  
with that.  
In fact,  
nobody has said that to me yet.  
The first thing I heard about it...  
...was when the newspaper reporters  
in the hall asked me that question.  
How did you hurt your eye,  
Mr. Oswald?  
A policeman hit me.  
- You okay?  
- Considering I hit the wrong guy, yes.  
- Here he comes.  
- Here he comes.  
Here comes Oswald  
down the hall again.  
Did you buy that rifle?  
Dispatches you people have been given,  
but I emphatically deny these charges.  
- What will he tell them?  
- Very little.  
Police revealed no further information  
since their first statement.  
Sergeant Nelson, you say he was  
interrogated yesterday at 4:30, right?  
- And again at 6:20, right?

- Yes.

And once more at 7:40.

How many hours of interrogation  
did that come to?

I don't rightly know, because I'm not sure  
when the last interrogation ended.

Was the interrogation  
taped or recorded?

No, sir.

Was it taken down by a stenotypist?

No, sir.

Was it taken down by a secretary  
in shorthand?

No, sir.

Well, has Captain Fritz  
had any of his notes transcribed?

- No, sir.

- Well, why not?

No, sir, didn't keep any notes.

How do you know what he said  
in those three interrogations?

Oh, we got a pretty good idea  
what he said, all right.

What time are you transferring him  
to the county jail tomorrow?

We haven't decided  
on what time yet...

...but when we do,  
you boys will get a break on it.

You always have. Haven't you, now?

- Wait, wait.

- Just one more question.

In Washington, a silent crowd  
has gathered outside the White House...

...on this grim and somber Saturday,  
maintaining a patient vigil...

...while high government officials  
and ambassadors of many nations...

Stan? Jack Ruby.

Have you gotten any word when they're  
gonna transfer him to the county jail?

Yeah? Okay.

Why do you think  
he would want to kill the president?

Was it...?

The only thing I do is take the evidence,  
present it to jury...

...and I don't pass on why he did it  
or anything else.

We're just asked to prove that he did it,  
which I think we have.

How many cases

have you been involved in...

...where the death penalty is involved?

Since I've been district attorney...

...I've asked the death penalty  
in 24 cases.

- How many times have you attained it?

- Twenty-three.

There is Lee Oswald.

There is the prisoner  
being led out by Captain Fritz.

He's been shot. He's been shot.

Lee Oswald has been shot.

There's the man with a-

It's absolute panic.

Absolute panic here in the basement  
of Dallas Police Headquarters.

Detectives have their guns drawn.

Oswald has been shot.

- Did you see it?

- No.

Get them out of the way.

Try to keep the press off.

Please clear the way.

- Stand back.

- All right.

As for what kind of charges,

I can't tell you that.

Would you be willing to say it was,  
with all this evidence-

That it is now beyond  
a reasonable doubt at all...

...that Oswald was the killer  
of President Kennedy?

I would say that, without any doubt,  
he's the killer.

The law says, beyond a reasonable

doubt and to a moral certainty.  
Which there's no question that he was  
the killer of President Kennedy.  
- That case is closed in your mind.  
- As far as Oswald's concerned, yes.  
It's so unlikely, I don't see  
how anyone can believe it.  
Everyone will believe it.  
They wanna believe it.  
They have to.  
People, the government, everyone.  
Even his brother?  
He's the attorney general,  
for God's sake.  
True.  
But he's not thinking  
as attorney general tonight.  
He's grieving for a murdered brother.  
By the time his grief subsides,  
all the power will have passed.  
It'll be too late.  
Yes?  
That's right.  
Hold the body there.  
Make arrangements in the morning.  
That's right. Thank you. Good night.  
That was Tim.  
James Farrington...  
...heart attack.  
Parkland Hospital.