
Interview: Donald Gibson

New Light Cast on JFK Assassination

*In early April, Prof. Donald Gibson, author of two books on President John F. Kennedy, *Battling Wall Street and The Kennedy Assassination Cover-up*, spoke with Michele Steinberg about his research into Kennedy's policies, and the assassination of President Kennedy by circles high up in the "Establishment" of the United States. Excerpts are published here:*

EIR: You know more about John F. Kennedy's policies, and his policy fights, than almost anyone else who has written about JFK, and the JFK assassination. In reading this book, it seemed clear to me that it grew out of your first book on the Kennedy Presidency, *Battling Wall Street*.

Gibson: It sure did.

EIR: What led you to this subject, and how did you know what questions to pose?

Gibson: Well, in the mid-1970s, when I was a graduate student, like a lot of people, I was starting to become aware of the fact that the American economy was in trouble. For example, during the first oil crisis, I became interested in the development of multinational corporations, which I ultimately wrote my dissertation on.

And in the late 1970s, I ran into some people from the LaRouche movement, and became exposed to those ideas. By the early 1980s, I began to do some work on the emergence of the euthanasia debate, and the hospice movement, and linking that to developments in the economy. By that time, we had seen the second oil crisis, the Volcker high interest rates. . . . As I continued to work on looking at the roots of that, I kept moving back into the 1970s, and finally, by the end of the 1980s, I had gotten back into the 1960s, in terms of trying to learn more about what had happened to the economy, to find the roots, perhaps, of the changes in the American economy.

That led me to Kennedy, to his policies, and after I read a dozen or two books about him, it started to become obvious to me that nobody had really dealt with that in any serious way.

I set out reading through his proposals to Congress. As soon as I saw what he was sending to Congress, and I saw what he was trying to do, I knew there must have been opposition to it. So, that led me to start looking, first, in the media, to see if I could find any indicators of opposition to him—and I was surprised to find that it was *all over the place*. It wasn't at all difficult to find.

EIR: You go into this in the final chapter in *Assassination Cover-Up*—the *Wall Street Journal*, Time-Life, Luce, etc. Bitter opposition.

Gibson: When I was finishing the first book, and I was getting a sense that Kennedy was, in fact, in *deep* conflict with various Wall Street and other interests, I then looked at the cover-up process.

People involved in creating the Warren Commission were essentially agents of the same powers who opposed Kennedy. So, that really set me off again, in terms of a new round of investigation and research.

EIR: There's always some opposition. What do you think was so unique about what Kennedy represented, that would have made the Establishment take such drastic steps?

Gibson: What bothered them about Kennedy—Kennedy was aggressively threatening almost all of the broad strategies that the upper class was in the process of adopting, and in fact, he and, especially if his brother had followed him, would have gotten in the way of everything from post-industrialism to globalization.

JFK's nationally oriented, pro-development, pro-growth policies, not only for the United States, but also for other countries, would have been at odds with two of the central thrusts of the last 25 years: that is, the post-industrial society, and globalization.

EIR: I was especially struck in your latest book by the way you approached the ending. You called the last chapter, "The Beginning," and I was happy to see quotations that you chose from Popes John Paul II and Paul VI.

Gibson: Yes, those are stunning. I have a definite impression that Kennedy, somewhere along the line, acquired a commitment to exactly the same things that Pope Paul was discussing in *Populorum Progressio*, and that is, Kennedy saw the *purpose* of things to be our own development as people.

EIR: Was there specific legislation that he took up with Congress, or that he was working on, that you came across that addressed the development of Third World nations?

Gibson: There was, of course, the famous Alliance for Progress program, which was geared to Latin America, but reflected his general approach to other countries in the world, beyond Latin America. For example, he was one of the, I would guess, early proponents, of the idea that you could resolve conflicts with ideas like the Alliance for Progress program. But it was his overall approach.

EIR: These are the issues that what we're facing today, as Lyndon LaRouche has been discussing, with globalization. The United States is either being asked to protect imperial interests—to be the brawn for British "brains," or as some Anglo-Americans are advocating, to become the new sole superpower.



President Kennedy's funeral cortège, 1963. Kennedy's nationally oriented, pro-development policies "would have been at odds with two of the central thrusts of the last 25 years: that is, the post-industrial society, and globalization."

Gibson: I believe there was a *New York Times* Sunday magazine story some time ago, where that was said openly. That free trade was about dominating the world. And that does appear, a lot of this globalization, and the vocabulary that has developed around it, in universities, and in classrooms, in textbooks. It does look like a continuation of Anglo-American neo-colonial policy. And I think that globalization and free trade are new rhetoric for an old policy.

At least that's what I am coming to think about it. There may be some minor differences compared to the old neo-colonialism, but I don't think they're substantive.

EIR: You've broken some new ground on how the cover-up of the assassination was orchestrated, based on President Lyndon B. Johnson's Oval Office telephone tapes. I was interested to see the conversations pushing Johnson to create the Warren Commission, to *head off* Congressional and other investigations. It comes through clear as a bell, that Johnson was heavily lobbied. Is there more to be found in those records?

Gibson: I don't think there is much more to be found in the days immediately following the assassination. I have not gone through more than a few months' worth, and whatever was directly related to the assassination, I think I got everything in that time period.

EIR: Too bad they don't release the private telephone transcripts of the members of the Warren Commission.

Gibson: Unbelievable, they went off the record. . . . There's times that there was a such a heavy Establishment role in the cover-up, which is not explainable by any normal way, that is, *none of these people were even in government*, and here

they were injecting themselves into this affair, within hours of the assassination.

And for anybody who doesn't have any responsibility in government to do that—I knew right away that these were people associated with Kennedy's enemies. So that then led me to take a new look at the Warren Commission.

Once I had done that, I backed up, to look at what the media did with the assassination and in the hours right afterward, and then, lo and behold, I found that they had already laid out all of the major conclusions before the Warren Commission was even created!

EIR: Let me ask you about two other investigations. One, Jim Garrison? Second, you mentioned the House Assassination Committee. What's your take on that?

Gibson: I think Garrison's problem was that he didn't have a good sense of the bigger picture. And I gather that he had been, like many of us were probably, even more so in those days, perhaps, coming out of the 1940s, '50s, and '60s, where there was a lot more trust in the official structure, the government, and law of this country.

And I think maybe part of the reason, is that Garrison really had never educated himself about these things. When I say he's naive, I don't mean to say that I don't have respect: I certainly do. But I don't think he knew a great deal about power beyond the level that he himself dealt with directly, therefore the investigation, I think, often got scattered, and would be easily misled.

EIR: Do you mean the McGeorge Bundy theory? Kennedy's National Security Adviser, and brother of William Bundy, the future head of the New York Council on Foreign Relations?

Gibson: No, that, of course, would have been getting really close to the real circles of people. I'm referring more to his inclinations along the military lines, or, just his speculation at the end of *On the Trail of the Assassins*, where he never even gets close to upper-class, or Wall Street, or Establishment figures, or names or tags. He never gets there.

EIR: I guess that's what he never put into print.

Gibson: Okay.

EIR: What I understood from *EIR*'s discussions with Garrison, I think might only have appeared in his fictional renditions.

Gibson: Unfortunately, he didn't say that in the book. As far as I understand it, there is still a story there that still has got to be told, and I'm afraid that it's not going to be told, either. There was a lot of conflict within that group which made the movie [Oliver Stone's "JFK," about Garrison's investigation].

EIR: What about the House Assassination Committee? You cite a couple of the statements that they took—such as from John J. McCloy, which was just used to reinforce the cover-up that had been put in place earlier.

Gibson: I used that material in talking about how the Warren Commission was created, and they did, in fact, create their own cover story on that.

But, go back to Bertrand Russell, he's the key. That was one of the things that I just discovered, maybe two years ago. I was not familiar at all with this "British Who Killed Kennedy Committee," and I think one of the stunning things about that, was that that committee was created *before the Warren Commission report was even released!* In fact, months before it was released.

And so, it looked prophylactic almost. As if they knew there was going to be criticism, and they were going to get out in front of that criticism immediately and try and lead people around by the nose. And get them on this track.

I'm saying that Kennedy was almost certainly killed for his use of government power. What Lord Russell quickly came along to do, was to *blame the government* for the assassination. So, he was using the assassination to attack the government a second time.

They attacked government the first time, when they shot Kennedy, and then a second time, when they blamed the government for shooting Kennedy.

EIR: This is at the center of so much of this story.

Gibson: That's part of the reason that I got into the history of New Orleans and Huey Long, looking for the early private initiatives toward globalism, and . . . I eventually focussed in on 1925 as a critical year where things happened. . . . All of the forces associated with this had this agenda which went back decades, and the agenda of course, has been to increase

the power of private interests and decrease the power of nations.

Russell's role in that is particularly interesting because of his long-standing criticisms of state and government power. And also, his stated dislike of Kennedy. So, why is *he* showing up creating a committee to investigate the assassination of the President? There are many aspects of this that remain. Especially Russell's role in leading what became a vast industry of misdirection about the assassination. I believe it numbers close to 400 books. And though I have not read all 400, I have read way over 100. At any rate, it is pretty clear that almost all of those were either written for opportunistic reasons, or they were conscious efforts to misdirect people.

EIR: You said that "history has to be served," and that that is why you have to tell the story, even though the murderers may never be found. But there was a kind of surprising development this year in the Martin Luther King case: a jury found that James Earl Ray was not the "lone assassin," and was not a "nut case." Do you see any U.S. institution that is likely to take responsibility for getting to the truth in the JFK assassination?

Gibson: Not under any circumstances where you have Al Gore or George W. Bush as President, that's for sure!

It is hard to imagine. I don't think any government institution in the foreseeable future, is going to be asked to do that. . . .

So, I think it's just going to be left to us. Those other assassinations, I have spent some time on them, but not nearly the amount of time I've committed to the JFK assassination, but they all look suspicious. Even the Malcolm X one, especially if you look at what Malcolm X was becoming in the last year of his life. He was really becoming a very good—and therefore, a very dangerous—person.

But, that whole crew of people who were killed in the 1960s: If you look at them in retrospect, in relationship to what was coming, in the decade after they died, it really looks like they were people who had to be cleared out of the way.

EIR: Why did you call the last chapter, "The Beginning"?

Gibson: Because this is an ongoing thing, I think it's a "forever" thing. That is, at all times, there are always choices to be made about which direction we're going in, and if someone is making the *wrong* choices, then the rest of us—it's left up to us, if we can do anything to change that.

So, I don't see Kennedy as ended. I think Kennedy's essential idea was having a commitment to general development of nations, peoples, and ourselves, and that's something that never goes away. And so, the story of what he stood for, basically, forgetting some of the specific policies, his *essential concerns*, are *forever*. So, I thought that when I was ending the book, that I should make it clear that it was not the end of anything.