

Cooper Cover-Up Exposed

Embargoed Press Release: September 4, 2019



R to L: Director Comey, Andrew McCabe & Mike Kortan in a 3/3/17 photo; within a year, all 3 are ousted from the Bureau.

Washington, D.C./Seattle, WA/Los Angeles, CA: Newly recovered communication records from the Comey Administration appear to strongly implicate several of his most senior executives in a year-long action to conceal, suppress and fabricate evidence in a notorious case.

The provocative exchanges, involving four of the director's most trusted HQ staff (one at table) and two Seattle Division leaders, began between the launches of the Hillary Clinton email investigation and Trump's Russia probe. The subject matter involved a CIA black ops pilot who for decades used fake identities to earn 32 criminal titles.

Only one of his old felonies, however, was in FBI jurisdiction. Intel sources claim the feds decided in 1980 to let the flyer's top-secret missions go on and that sleeping dog lie. But in 2015, the 35-year-old arrangement came back to bite newly minted Comey and company.

That's when a volunteer cold case team alerted the FBI that it had determined this freelance aviator, 72-year-old Robert W. Rackstraw, was the missing 1971 outlaw "D.B. Cooper." Former Assistant Director Tom Fuentes was commissioned to study the team's evidence for three days, and he was impressed, asserting in a recorded transcript: *"This is just the most outstanding example that I've ever seen of a professional investigation... a tremendous circumstantial case... very probably is [Cooper]. Personally, I'd give it an 8 or 9 out of ten. Agents involved in this [should] sit with you and really start comparing notes."*

Fuentes' endorsement set off alarm bells on Comey's 7th floor. His exec staff voided its 5-year collaboration with the sleuths, canceled a 2016 meeting to accept their forensic materials (including DNA) and shipped off the Cooper file to a locked D.C. archive. Then the senior agents – including the retired AD Fuentes – proceeded to down-play, hide and lie about the "tremendous" Rackstraw evidence in the national media.

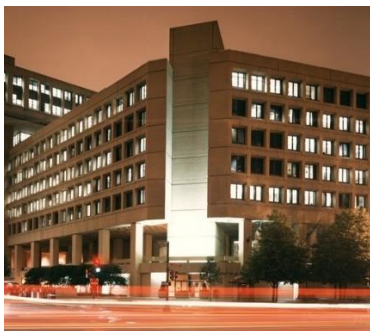
One of the team's 13 retired FBI agents – Behavioral Science Unit pioneer Jim Reese – summarized it best: *"Rule #1 was you don't embarrass the Bureau. This door-slam was politics, pure and simple."*

*The shunned sleuths won a half-year FOIA fight in federal court for access to the FBI's Cooper file secrets in 2017, then later to Rackstraw's "death file" (upon passing on 7/9/19). See the investigation's stunning updates in a bulleted time-line: <https://dbcooper.com/2019/07/press-release-smoking-gun-robert-w-rackstraw-sr/>

*The FBI email exchanges, interview transcripts, phone logs and names involved in the "door-slam" follow this release (For a fast read, just scan the **yellow highlights**)

FYI: For rights to FBI pic, contact TimesOfIsrael.com; more on team and award-winning book at DBCooper.com

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DOCUMENTING FBI'S RACKSTRAW COVER-UP

– See the Time-Lined Source Materials & Recorded Details –
(E.P. Thomas J. Colbert; Updated 11/1/19)

FBI's 3 Media Blackout Attempts (After Rackstraw became a suspect in 1978)

California suspect apparently ruled out as D.B. Cooper

Seattle Times, 2-3-79

by RICHARD ZAHLER
Times staff reporter

A California man who reportedly was investigated for possible ties to the D.B. Cooper airline hijacking, apparently was ruled out as a serious suspect in the 1971 case, according to law-enforcement sources contacted by The Times.

Reports arose yesterday in Fullerton, Calif., that Ralph Wesley Rackstraw, 35, being held on charges in California, had been linked to the unsolved hijacking. The Seattle office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which has led the Cooper investigation over the years, would not comment yesterday on whether Rackstraw was a suspect, or whether he had even been investigated.

Other sources, however, said Rackstraw's name was simply one of hundreds that had come to the F.B.I.'s attention in the case, and that he had been dismissed from serious consideration.

Rackstraw was arrested last week in Fullerton and transferred yesterday to Stockton, Calif., where he faces charges of aircraft theft, possession of explosives and fraud, according to Fullerton police.

Sources indicated Rackstraw had come to the F.B.I.'s attention in February, 1978, when he was arrested in New York on a warrant for interstate flight. He had been charged with killing his stepfather in Calaveras County, Calif., and was returned there by the F.B.I. for the trial. A jury acquitted him of the murder charge.



Ralph Wesley Rackstraw
Charged in plane theft

Calaveras County is east of Stockton.

An Associated Press report from Fullerton said a Stockton F.B.I. agent, Warren Little, had indicated during the murder investigation that he believed there was a link between Rackstraw and the 1971 hijacking.

Little, who now works in the F.B.I. office in Billings, Mont., refused to discuss the case yesterday.

"The F.B.I. won't let me say zip," he said.

2/3/79 (Six FBI Agents leak the Rackstraw truth):

Please read "**Cover-Up Blowback?**" box at left. FYI: Forty years after this forgotten G-man insurrection, three former brass from military intelligence (One with old docs) separately reached out to TJC's team. The tipsters revealed Cooper-Rackstraw got a 1980 FBI get-out-of-jail card for his return to CIA contract flying – just like he did before and after the 1971 Cooper jump (In Vietnam and Laos). More about these three military-intel vets is on page 13.

Rackstraw Still Suspect in Hijack

St Rec FEB 4 1979

Local FBI sources said Saturday they are still investigating the possibility that Robert Wesley Rackstraw could be the parachuting hijacker D.B. Cooper, although the Seattle Times said he has been ruled out as a suspect in the nation's only unsolved air piracy case.

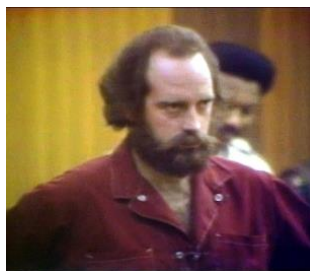
While declining to discuss details of the Rackstraw case, Tom Kinberg, the senior FBI resident agent in Stockton, told the Record that

he remains under investigation in the hijacking. Information developed by investigators here is still being forwarded to FBI agents in Seattle, he said.

Quoting unnamed law enforcement sources, the Seattle Times reports, however, that the 35-year-old Rackstraw was no more than one of more than 1,000 persons who have been considered – and rejected – as suspects since the infamous Cooper

vanished from a plane over southwest Washington state on Nov. 24, 1971, with \$200,000 in ransom strapped to his body.

The Seattle FBI office, which has directed the D.B. Cooper investigation, refused to comment Saturday on Rackstraw, a pilot and explosives expert.



3/2/79 (FBI tries to stop 2 network news sit-downs):

With latest local charge, Rackstraw learns he may receive 10 years in state prison – a system where he fears for his life. When

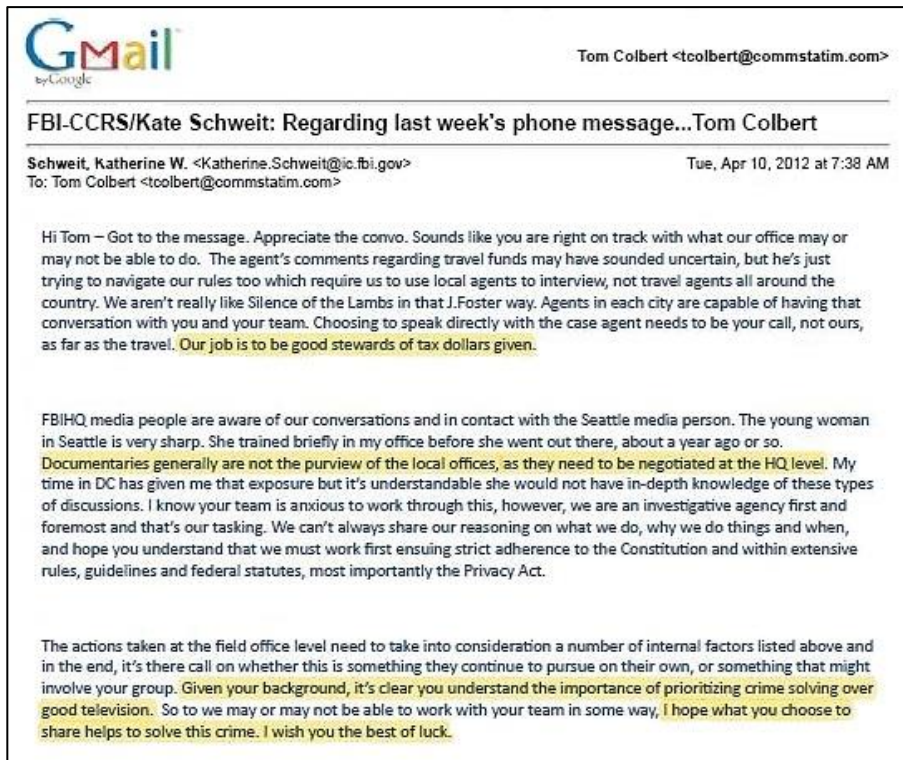
FBI refuses to transfer him to a plush "*federal pen*," Stockton suspect tries to apply pressure by going on national TV. But his phone call to NBC's Western News Bureau is forwarded to its Los Angeles local station editor, **Pete Noyes**, who hears his odd "*I'm Cooper*" claim. When newsman calls local FBI for its thoughts, **Agent Roger "Frenchy" LaJeunesse** tries

to convince NBC not to do Rackstraw interview: "*This guy's a con man, he's not D.B. Cooper.*" Noyes ignores FBI and heads to first of 2 sit-downs with prisoner. FYI: In book; '79 videos/transcripts are available.



11/3/79 (FBI tries to stop another network interview): Eight months after ignoring the agency's advice, Noyes is **again asked by FBI to kill an NBC exclusive** – this involving the (unrelated) breaking Iran Hostage Crisis. Through the LAPD, the local editor had learned the only civilian among the held embassy staff is a convicted drug dealer and counterfeiter, "visiting" from Los Angeles. FYI: Noyes's 3/5/19 email quote for background: "*The feds went crazy and put pressure on us not to run story. NBC Legal agreed, we didn't run [it].*"

2/28/12: 32 years later, documentarian **Thomas J. Colbert (TJC)** is quietly tipped to **new Rackstraw evidence** and he approaches the FBI through a D.C.-based lawyer. After studying his cold case proposal, **senior Bureau attorney Katherine Schweit** phones about a potential alliance: *"I feel positive about this."* Ten days later, Schweit emails (below) that such **evidentiary partnerships "need to be negotiated at the HQ (Headquarters) level."** She then refers TJC to Seattle **Cooper case agent Curtis Eng** with *"hope"* he can help *"solve this crime."*



8/15/12: A few months after TJC traveled to Seattle Division, he shared samples of new Rackstraw evidence – including a **requested DOD archive "Army photo,"** unknown to the FBI.



Experts see "9 points of match"

Then the exec offices in D.C. email TJC and wife Dawna a **collaboration understanding** (Email below).



The couple commences to discretely organize, fund and deploy a 40-member volunteer cold case team which is spear-headed by 13 former special agents.



5/21/13: When San Diegan Rackstraw ignores six months of TJC's phone calls and emails for an interview, the organizer dispatches an **armed surveillance team of former FBI agents and a camera crew to confront the suspect**. In a parking lot next to his Coronado Bay boat shop, they find him hiding **in a hot shipping container** for more than an hour.

The frustrated Rackstraw finally exits and goes toe to toe with the media crew while visiting a co-worker's boat assignments. At one point in the two-hour ordeal, TJC's reporter (Left) tells Rackstraw the world simply wants to hear his Cooper story.

Target smirks, "Sure they would. **So would the FBI and the secret [John Doe] indictment in Washington, D.C.**"



The exhausted ex-felon then heads to a car and prepares to drive off. But TJC's reporter request for "one last question" brought his window down: "Why are you so evasive about what should be a simple thing to say?"

"Because you guys would make such a big deal out of it."

FYI: Anonymous tipsters in Hollywood informed TJC in 2018 of **secret face-to-face negotiations ongoing for Rackstraw's Cooper rights** (Two quoted exchanges below). But the subject **called the talks off because of his decades-long fear** of the feds' aforementioned "secret indictment":

1) A moviemaker's attorney told him: "Don't worry about the John Doe indictment, nobody cares."

Rackstraw: "Well, then you go do some prison time! Do you think I haven't read everything about John Doe?"

2) Another producer's lawyer said there is "no deal" unless he can provide direct evidence he's the daredevil.

Rackstraw: "You really think I'd admit it, with a John Doe indictment with a death penalty attached?"



9/4/13: When 12-year **FBI Director Robert Mueller** retires, **James Comey** (Far-left) is chosen to take over. **POTUS Obama** is there for his pick's first day ceremony outside of Bureau Headquarters.

8/25/15: Director **Ted Skillman** (Next page), hired by History Channel to shepherd a documentary on TJC's cold case hunt, **sends TJC an email copy of his "FBI request letter."** It's **headed to Comey's 7th floor offices** with the confidence those "at the HQ level" would agree to participate in the show.

Skillman then asks TJC for his "itemized list" of all the new Rackstraw evidence, but the director says he isn't sharing it with the feds just yet.



FYI: Skillman's key letter request to Headquarters: "In order to make the best possible show with the greatest possible impact, **we're asking the FBI for cooperation and assistance in the following areas: 1. Approaching current and former agents about appearing in the program...**"

Skillman later told TJC that one of the first questions the agency asked him on the phone: "**Is Tom Colbert involved in this?**" FYI: It was a shrewd way for FBI to quickly ascertain if Rackstraw was a player in the coming History production.

10/17/15: After studying team's evidence for 3 days, former **FBI Asst. Dir. Tom Fuentes** – an agency liaison & hired TV analyst – gives TJC and cameras a **glowing review** (below). FYI: These **quotes are cut** from 2016 show.

Grouped Proxy Closing Arguments 10_17_15
LMNO/History Channel Transcript
00305295_295_299_300

21:15:41.4, Page 1 [Former FBI Asst. Director TOM FUENTES] Personally, I think that, um, what you have laid out in my opinion is a **tremendous circumstantial case.**

22:14:17.01, Page 18 [TOM FUENTES--CONCLUSION] I have never seen as well-investigated, as well-researched, a matter by non-law enforcement... compared to what you've done here. That this is just the **most outstanding example that I've ever seen** of a professional investigation.

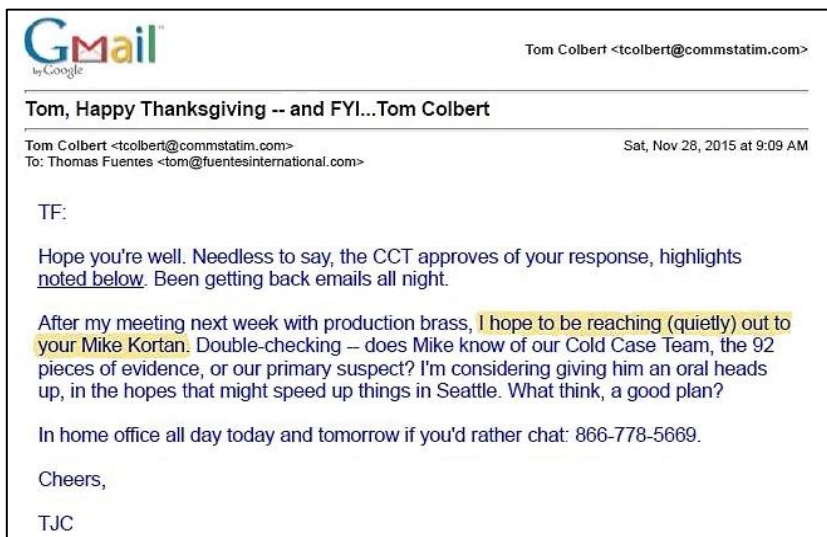
Everything that I have heard does not exclude Rackstraw as a suspect. He very well could have been and very probably is [Cooper] and as you've mentioned, means, opportunity, motive, proximity, the capabilities, all the things that we've heard about him, **nothing we've heard eliminates him, nothing we've heard gives him an alibi that he was somewhere else, and couldn't have been there, couldn't have done it on that particular night in November of '71.**

So very, very, very close, and I would say that, you know, it's this close to being able to say, okay, I believe it's him. What my recommendation would be to the FBI now, and if I was still an executive in the FBI. My point would be to **have the agents involved in this investigation sit with you and really start comparing notes. In hearing former agents [on Cold Case Team] say that they give this a ten, just personally, I would give it eight or nine out of the ten.**



A week later, D.C.-based Fuentes reports back on phone that **Director Comey's senior execs have stated: "Rackstraw will be looked at again."** For proof, the liaison refers TJC to **HQ's media chief, Asst. Director Mike Kortan** (TJC confirms Fuentes' referral in later email, below-left).

11/4/15: Fuentes emails TJC that History Channel Director "**Ted has been negotiating with Angela [Bell, the Department of Justice media chief]** and Seattle office regarding interviews with several agents" on camera.

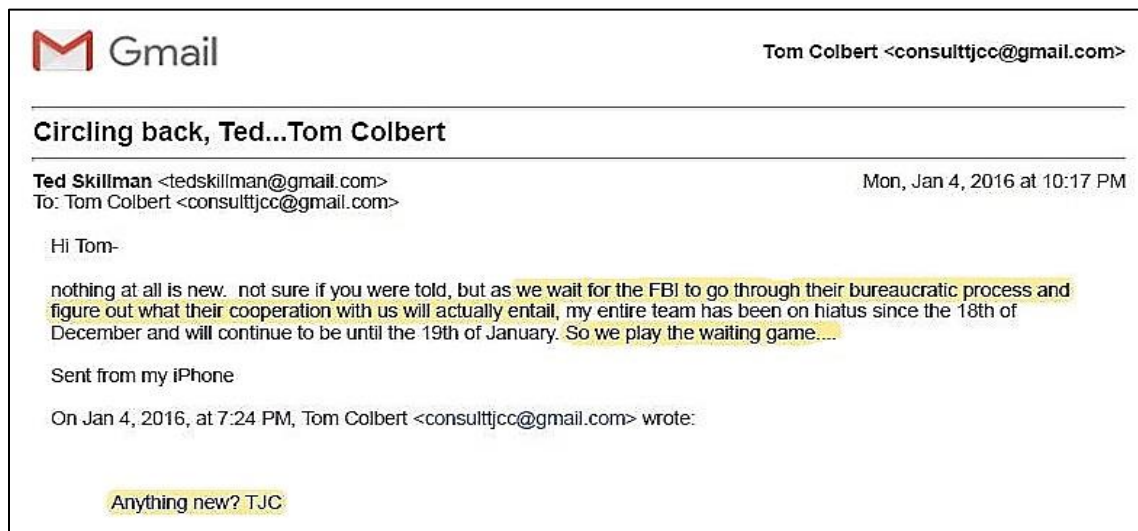


Then **Fuentes unexpectedly pulls back his personal offer to assist** TJC – ending note: "**I think it's best to let them try to work it out.**"

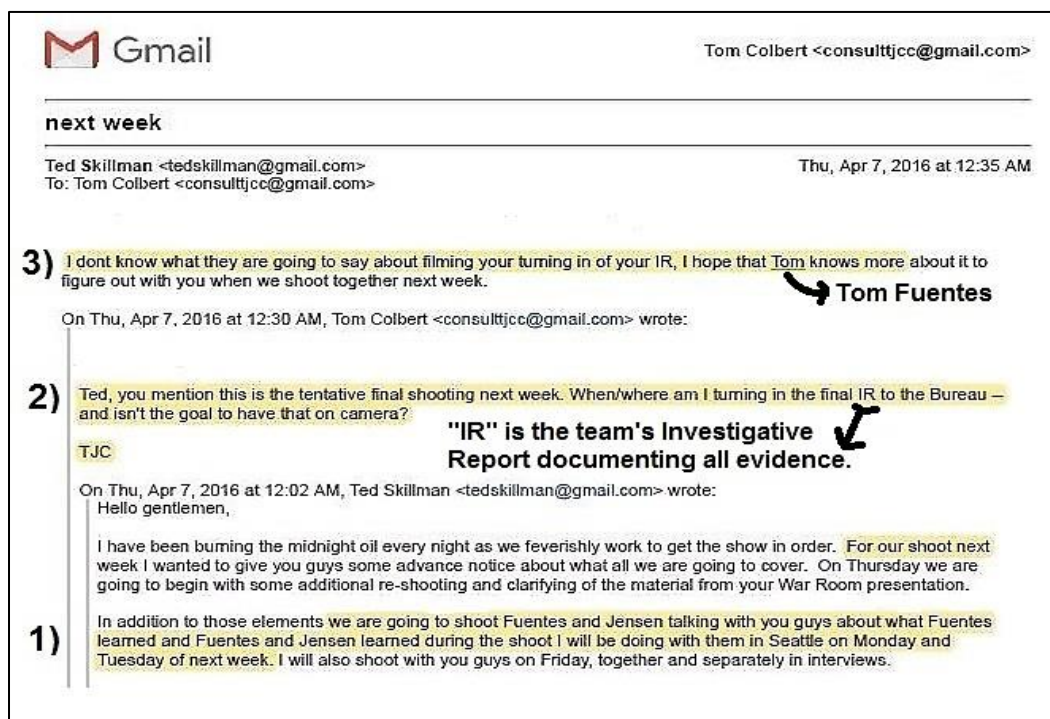
12/2/15: History Channel's show partner, LMNO EP **Eric Schotz**, made it clear he **was eager to break TJC's case.** For example, he emailed the idea of taking all the TJC's evidence directly to the FBI, in exchange for the TV "**exclusive rights to bust**" (7/21/14); later, he pushed the team for the latest "**proof**" of "**solid evidence**" (10/8/15).

But after sensing a lull in Schotz' passion, TJC comes in today (12/2/15) for a tense meeting at the show-partner's Los Angeles office, with Dir. Skillman attending. TJC asks when his team is going to Seattle Division to begin "*comparing notes*" with Cooper case agent Eng, as Fuentes had advocated on video, 10 weeks earlier. Schotz and Skillman promise TJC his sleuths will get their Seattle evidentiary rendezvous, and it'll all unfold "on camera." But both firmly warn TJC not to approach the feds during their ongoing show negotiations.

12/31/15 to 1/4/16: When TJC asks for a status on the talks a month later, exasperated Dir. Skillman writes that they "keep getting dragged out with the FBI." A follow-up email (below) offers no New Year's relief.



4/7/16: At half-year mark, Comey's 7th floor execs and the DOJ finally secure a History show partnership, and very much to their advantage. Sadly, only two program staffers are invited to Seattle Division: the show's two co-hosts. Fuentes and Dir. Skillman, meanwhile, start backpedaling on their promises to TJC and team (Below).





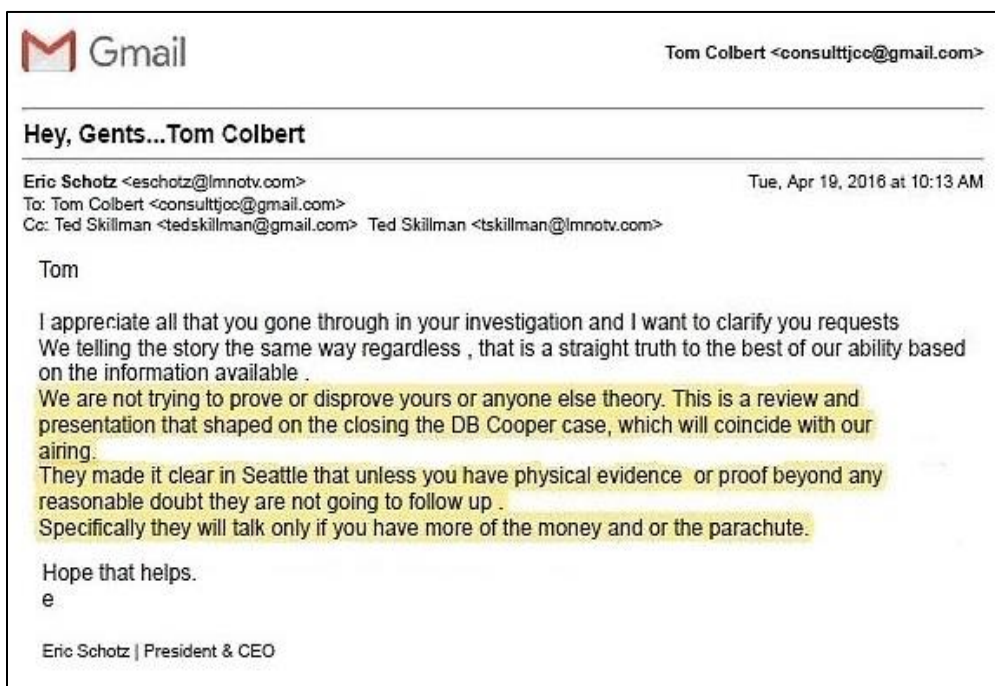
4/15/16: With L.A. cameras rolling again on LMNO's "war room" set, FBI liaison Fuentes (Left) – now stone-faced – and his co-host **Billy Jensen** return to brief TJC on their recorded Seattle Division interviews. Fuentes first reveals **he was given no access** to the FBI's Cooper case file; agents just handed him a one-page "**summary**" on Rackstraw and **nine others** on former suspects. **FYI:** During the six-month FBI negotiations, the program was quietly expanded to four hours to accommodate the other cleared men (Only one being alive).

Fuentes then stuns the notetaking TJC: **Comey's executives just voided their 5-year alliance** and officially **closed the 1971 Cooper investigation**. And because case agent Eng said the FBI was "**no longer accepting circumstantial evidence**," the Bureau **won't take custody of the team's Rackstraw materials**. **FYI:** Important to note that Headquarters' original collaboration **agreement (page 3)** states it would accept "**any**" evidence – the whole basis for this massive volunteer effort.

Fuentes also flip-flops: He now **claims Rackstraw isn't Cooper** because: **1)** Eng said there is a "**secret**" alibi (on next page); **2)** Rackstraw's prints weren't found on jet; **3)** attendant who sat next to Cooper, Tina Mucklow, looked at Rackstraw's photo and said "**I don't think so.**" **FYI:** **Team found Fuentes' three reasons to all be false** (Thoroughly documented in chapter 20 of team's award-winning book, **THE LAST MASTER OUTLAW**).



4/19/16: LMNO EP Schotz (left) sends TJC a **smoking-gun email** (below) that clarifies exactly what the FBI's behind-doors negotiations were about: Schotz admits that he and **History Channel** had quietly turned TJC's evidentiary hunt for Rackstraw into a simple "**review and presentation**" show about all the Cooper candidates over the decades. The reason for the about-face: **agents had "made it clear"** they wouldn't accept any of the team's hard work.



7/10 & 7/11/16: Three months later, Schotz' softball show unfolds over two nights on History Channel. And TJC's team notes that its **strongest 18 pieces of Rackstraw evidence were all edited out**, including these 7: A "**significant**" match of three alleles in the San Diegan's recovered DNA; a taunting "**D.B. Cooper**" letter trail, starting near his remote CA mountain hideaway; he gave **two earlier alibis (next page)** to his family (1971) and a cop (1978); two 1972 articles confirm personal accounts of 15 Oregon witnesses to a Rackstraw look-

alike grifter who happened to vanish **day before** hijack; his skydiving mentor, Uncle Ed Cooper; ex-lover on two unrelated crime escapes that **gave up his Cooper identity** – on tape transcript; and Rackstraw-Cooper hand-printing "**similarities.**" **FYI:** See all 18 items cut from the program: <https://dbcooper.com/evidence/>

Rackstraw's 3 Suspicious Hijacker Alibis (1978-79)

***Alibi #1:**
(Told by Sister Linda Loduca in 7/1971)

She realizes D. B. COOPER had a knowledge of navigation and of parachuting and ROBERT is highly skilled at both. She believed he received his commercial flying license some time in the fall of 1971, because at Christmas, 1971, [redacted]

She recalled that it was about this time that he worked for some real estate firm in the Los Angeles area and part of his work was the promotion of some land in Oregon, back in an area so remote that there were no roads and ROBERT had to fly prospects in there to see the land.

Interviewed on 3/3/78 at [redacted] California File # SC 164-50 SE 164-81
by SA [redacted] Date dictated 3/3/78

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

DB Cooper-15962
164-81-745

Date 3/6/78

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (164-2111)
ATTN: IDENTIFICATION DIVISION, LATENT FINGERPRINT SECTION 933

SUBJECT: NORJAK (A)

RACKSTRAW's military record discloses he was forced to resign his first lieutenant's commission in June, 1971, and he was extremely bitter over his severance. His description and sketch of NORJAK subject are very similar. When arrested by the FBI in February, 1978, he admitted to the arresting agent that he would be fully capable of successfully effecting the NORJAK hijacking, but denied participation and claimed he was interviewed and eliminated as a suspect by a San Francisco FBI Agent in Fort Cronkite, California in 1971.

DB Cooper-15959
DB Cooper-15960

Alibi #2: Told to FBI & Stockton PD; he was never stationed at Fort Cronkite.

The cold case team dug up Rackstraw's two earlier cover stories (above) and easily discredited them. But when Cooper case agent Eng claimed in 2016 the FBI had later cleared him through a "secret" 3rd alibi (below), TJC's old G-men didn't buy it. As one put it, "No lawman would give a two-time liar a third chance at an alibi."

With the 2019 release of these three certified records, our retired agents' doubts about the 3rd one were validated. One of its five anomalies, however, appears to have come from the Bureau itself (below-left).

AIRTEL 2/6/79 **Alibi #3, Page 1 of 2**

TO: SAC, SEATTLE (164-81)
FROM: SAC, SAN FRANCISCO (164-220) (P) (SJRA)
RE: NORJAK (A)
OO: SE

ROBERT RACKSTRAW
On 2/5/79, [redacted] (PROTECT IDENTITY), telephone [redacted] telephonically contacted the FBI, San Jose, Calif., and advised that [redacted] ROBERT RACKSTRAW. Source stated [redacted] Source advised that he is providing this information to the FBI because he read in the newspaper that RACKSTRAW is possibly identical to D.B. COOPER, the man who hijacked an airliner in 1971 and thought that the FBI would possibly want to talk [redacted] concerning RACKSTRAW's activities.

The source requested that his identity be protected [redacted]

On 2/5/79, [redacted] California, telephone [redacted] appeared at the San Jose FBI Resident Agency and provided the following information: [redacted] met ROBERT RACKSTRAW during [redacted] Recently [redacted] saw a picture of RACKSTRAW in the paper and identified him [redacted]

The FBI told TJC's team that Rackstraw's 3rd alibi, from an ex-girlfriend in 1979, was real - but because she'd grown to fear him, agents "agreed" to keep her anonymous. This just-released official report, however, shows the only one asking for secrecy was the male "source" who revealed GF's name. Did case agent Curtis Eng switch facts to obstruct the team?

Sub 933-25
164-81-8069
SEARCHED INDEXED
SERIALIZED FILED
FEB 9 1979
FBI - SEATTLE

DB Cooper-16032

SF 164-220 WRS:zva **Page 2 of 2**

[redacted] met RACKSTRAW while [redacted] working in a restaurant named [redacted] California. RACKSTRAW came into the restaurant [redacted] a casual conversation occurred and [redacted] and RACKSTRAW became acquainted.

[redacted] knew RACKSTRAW by his true name. [redacted]

***Alibi #3**
(Told by his S.J. "GF" on 2/5/79)

Shortly after meeting [redacted] and RACKSTRAW moved to San Jose, California. [redacted] is certain that she and RACKSTRAW were in San Jose during November of 1971. During the period in question, November, 1971, to 1973, she saw RACKSTRAW on a daily basis. RACKSTRAW very rarely was gone overnight and [redacted] cannot remember that RACKSTRAW was gone overnight during November of 1971.

RACKSTRAW smoked occasionally, but [redacted] could not remember his brand of cigarettes.

Referring to RACKSTRAW's mannerisms, she described him as robust, but polite in speech, with no noticeable accent. He talked fast on occasion.

During November and December, 1971, RACKSTRAW had a full mustache, and she does not remember him shaving it off. At the time RACKSTRAW was about twenty-eight (28) years old and looked his age.

After [redacted] RACKSTRAW moved to San Jose in September or October of 1971, RACKSTRAW enrolled in and attended real estate school. About January of 1972, RACKSTRAW [redacted] later on [redacted] California, [redacted] California. The last four numbers of her telephone number are [redacted]

In 1972, RACKSTRAW got a second job working at the Radio Shack in Cupertino, California.

[redacted] advised that there was no indication whatsoever that RACKSTRAW obtained a sizeable amount of money during the time that she knew him, 1971-1973.

Rackstraw's sister, Linda, gave TJC a stamped Oct/71 photo of him with NO mustache. And as noted in Linda's 3/8/78 FBI statement, GF came "after 1971" and the San Jose affair only lasted "a short time."

164-81-8069



7/13/16: Seattle case agent Eng and Agent in Charge **Frank Montoya** (top-left) **lied on camera** about accepting the team's evidence and finding it had **"nothing new"** to offer (Truth is at 4/15/16 time-line). To counter the falsehood, the Colberts (center) hold an L.A. news conference today where they announce an FOIA request for full access to the Cooper file. When ignored, TJC and team members sue Comey's FBI on 9/8/16 (right) in D.C. FYI: This FBI deception wasn't aimed at the team, but History Channel's viewers and national news audiences.

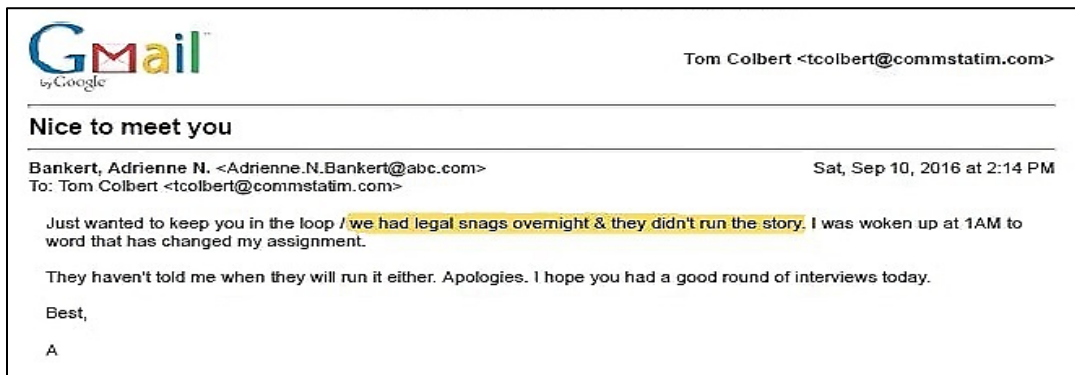


1/31/17: When TJC's team wins a half-year federal court fight for access to the Cooper case file, **Comey's senior executives** (left) **order a massive redaction** of key details in the file's 71,000 pages – including the names of old streets, towns, airstrips, landmarks, dead witnesses and field agents, even the hijacker's alias **"D.B. Cooper."**

FYI: These extreme monthly purges are costing taxpayers an estimated \$6 figures a year; at the present pace, it will take **11 years** (\$7 figures) to whiteout the full 1971 file. (FBI photo copyright: *TimesOfIsrael.com*).

Within a year, Comey and these two senior staff – **Andrew McCabe** and **Mike Kortan** (Fuentes' 2015 referral to TJC) – **are ousted** by the Trump administration; **Seattle Division's Eng and Montoya** (top-left) **also quietly retire**. See FBI's alleged FOIA obstruction of evidence samples (pgs. 2-3) at: <https://dbcooper.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/DBC-Media-Release-FOIA-Results-Redacts-3-30-17.pdf>

9/9/16: GOOD MORNING AMERICA reporter **Adrienne Bankert** calls TJC on his flight home from Beltway FOIA news conference and requests he directly come to ABC News studios in Burbank, CA, for an evening interview on his filed Cooper suit. But before dawn, broadcast package is **inexplicably shelved**.



This is the **1st of 3** national stories on Rackstraw that were scheduled for air time – only to be, hours later, **abruptly killed**.

5/9/17: Three months after Comey's firing, **Christopher J. Wray** is sworn in as the **new FBI director**.

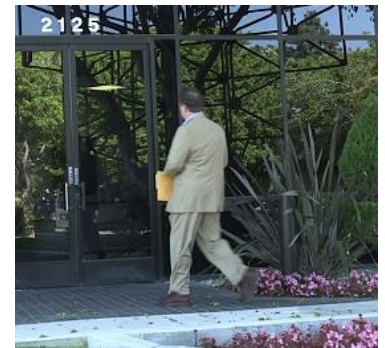


Found foam, and parachute's foam backpack pad -- like Cooper's.



Like Cooper's, NB-8 with center pin-cover flap; the 8-3-17 Dig Find

8/12/17: Doc EP Eric Schotz emailed that FBI would "*only talk*" if physical evidence is found – like this alleged parachute (Above). After being tipped to Cooper's suspected '71 burial site in remote Washington State (Ten miles from nearest home), the team gave the agency five dug-up materials, landowner's name to the remote CSI location, and contacts to jumper's three supposed getaway partners. After TJC brought the first buried evidence (Below-right) to his local FBI, an email arrives; it was the last the team heard from the agency.



Tom Colbert <tcolbert@commstatim.com>

FBI-Ventura, CA/Special Agent Eric J. Jensen: Status on NORJAK Dig Site

Jensen, Eric J. (LA) (FBI) <ejjensen@fbi.gov>
To: Tom Colbert <tcolbert@commstatim.com>

Sat, Aug 12, 2017 at 10:34 PM

Thank you. I will pass this info to our folks in Seattle.

Regards,

Eric Jensen



11/6/17: After three long months of FBI silence, the Colberts asked their attorney to send Director Wray a **no-bones letter**... which receives a canned response (On 2nd page).

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November 6, 2017

Christopher J. Wray
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20535-0001

Dear Director Wray:

Congratulations on recently assuming the leadership of the premier law enforcement agency in the United States.

I am writing to bring to your personal attention important news regarding the longest unsolved skyjacking case in the Bureau's history: the 1971 hijacking of North West Orient Flight 305 by "D.B. Cooper", or NORJAK as the case name was assigned. Unfortunately, I am also using this opportunity to alert you to the fact that the Bureau has failed to live up to its' Mission and has seemingly ignored crucial new evidence that could solve the case.

For the past six-years Thomas J. Colbert (a 30-year police trainer) and his partner-wife, Dawna, both of whom previously funded an FBI civilian cyber-counterintelligence asset, former Judge Shannen Rossmiller, for years in the War on Terror (out of the Helena, Montana Field Office), have led an investigative effort of more than forty renowned criminal-justice, legal and forensic volunteers, including more than a dozen former FBI Special Agents, to solve the NORJAK case. The full list of our Cold Case Team Members can be found at <https://dbcooper.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/DBC-Bio-Cold-Case-Team-List-for-Website-9-28-17.pdf>.

From 2012 – 2015, the team worked to gather more than 100 pieces of evidence including DNA, family member testimony, and letter trails, that led to the identification of Robert W. Rackstraw, a former Army Paratrooper and Vietnam veteran who currently lives in the San Diego, California, area, as the infamous "D.B. Cooper." The story received national attention. https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/how-the-hunt-for-db-cooper-made-an-aging-vietnam-veteran-the-target-of-tv-sleuths/2016/07/27/66b24736-492e-11e6-bdb9-701687974517_story.html?utm_term=.9ebbef20c61d.

Page 1

Notwithstanding our efforts, which can be reviewed in more detail at www.DBCooper.com, the Bureau, led by its Seattle Field Office, administratively closed the NORJAK investigation in July 2016. The FBI publicly announced that absent identifying direct evidence such as the parachute or missing ransom money the case was closed.

The FBI's decision aside, the Cold Case Team continued to move forward with its own investigation and it paid off. Credible sources revealed new details of the "Cooper" escape story, including, and most importantly, the ransom/parachute evidence burial location. This past August 2017, an excavation in the Oregon woods discovered remnants of what appeared to be a vintage parachute. We even learned the names of two living alleged co-conspirators who helped "Cooper" get away.

On August 12, 2017, I arranged for Mr. Colbert to personally turn over five unidentified fabric pieces believed to be that of "Cooper's" parachute, along with the names of the alleged co-conspirators, to agents in your Los Angeles Field Office. I understand that these items were sent to your Seattle Field Office for further review. As Sherlock Holmes famously said in *A Study in Scarlet*, "[t]here is nothing like first-hand evidence." We gave the FBI *exactly* the type of first-hand evidence it publicly claimed would generate the re-opening of the NORJAK investigation.

But after the passage of three months, the owners of the Oregon site has informed us that they have never been contacted by the FBI. Nor have we learned of any attempt to question the alleged co-conspirators or the results of the laboratory tests, assuming any were ever run, regarding the fabric. Needless to say, the lack of news is incredibly disappointing.

Of course, we are well aware that the FBI has far more important crimes to solve than an historic hijacking that resulted in no injuries other than financial. Nor do we necessarily expect the Bureau to go out of its way to update us on any progress. But while we have absolutely no desire to impede any Bureau efforts, we remain committed to continuing our own investigative efforts to solve this cold case.

If the Bureau has decided against re-opening its NORJAK investigation notwithstanding the evidence we have submitted, then we shall continue to excavate the site as well as directly contact the alleged co-conspirators. Therefore, unless we hear from a Bureau representative on or before November 13, 2017, that is our plan.

Director Wray, we have the utmost respect for the Bureau. Indeed, I have represented many of its agents and personnel over my twenty-five year legal career. And the Colberts are nothing but dedicated to law enforcement, as is our entire Cold Case Team. But justice delayed is justice denied. If the Bureau would like to contact us and ask that we refrain from disturbing the Oregon site due to FBI interest and planned activity, I can be best reached via e-mail or at (202) 454-2809. Thank you for your consideration

Sincerely,

Mark S. Zaid

UPDATE: Zaid's status-report deadline came and went. With the prodding of a congressional representative, Director Wray finally responded on 1/17/18 -- with an underling's form letter. One of the five sentences summed it all up:

"The FBI doesn't generally comment on status or existence of any potential investigative matter."

Page 2

12/6/17 to 4/3/18: Team cracks Army-coded messages in 6 taunting "Cooper" letters, which experts say could only have come from Rackstraw (3 decoded samples on p. 14). FYI: In Letter #2, the encrypted writer boasted to getaway partners about his CIA link (Before and after the hijacking). Retired intel brass approached in 2018 and confirmed his black-ops past, claiming it was the reason for FBI's hijack cover-up. Their quotes follow.

QUOTES ON RACKSTRAW'S CIA BACKGROUND

(Contacts for three photographed sources are available)

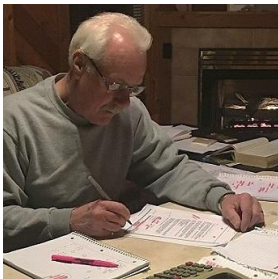


LTC Ken Overturf (Ret.; CO) is Rackstraw's former Vietnam commander in the top-secret intelligence group, Project Left Bank. But after "Rack" was booted from the elite Army helicopter unit in 1970, he discreetly approached the CIA. From team's award-winning book:

"The CIA guy used to come into the [Army 1st Cavalry] company area every now and then," Warrant Officer Wayne Olmstead (Ret.) said, "and Rack used to hang out with him in

our Officers' Club."

"Rack started going out with the guy for days at a time," added Overturf, who saw two of their jungle departures in a [stolen commander's] Jeep, "loaded with weapons, ammo and explosives."



Army ASA / Project Left Bank Code-breaker Rick Sherwood (NCO Ret.; IN): His Quote: *"My veteran source read TJC's January 4th, 2018 press release to a high-intel military friend who had a job to know details about all this. The military friend stated, 'Everything you read to me is true' regarding Rackstraw's Cooper*

identity, along with his CIA freelance work during Vietnam and into the 1980s. But the military friend also warned he couldn't talk about 'all I have and know about it.'" FYI: The referenced Press Release:

<https://dbcooper.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/DBC-Media-Release-2-Cooper-Letter-5-Code-Cracked-1-4-18.pdf>



Jim Christy (Ret.; WA, D.C.) was the Director of Cyber Crime Investigation & Information Warfare for the U.S. Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI); prior to that, the Operations Director of the Defense Computer Forensics Lab (DC3).

His quote: *"A source with long history in the intelligence community told me Rackstraw was a contracted CIA pilot for years during the Iran-Contra Affair, and they knew he was D.B. Cooper."*

##

Thank you for your attention.

ASA (Army Security Agency) 371st (ASA's 371 Radio Research Unit, AKA "Project Left Bank")

Top Secret

Hash Post - 717171684*

New York Times - TBA

Seattle Times - TBA

Los Angeles Times - 7698QA2753

11th GS (The 11th General Support Co.)

164-B1-1304

SEARCHED INDEXED

SERIALIZED FILED

DEC 07 1971

FBI - SEATTLE

DB Cooper

ICE EVIDENCE

LETTER #5

His former commander said Rackstraw was the only Vietnam soldier in whole war who served in these 3 unique units (Encrypted at typed '71 note's bottom). Two of them were secret until the 1980s.

Letter #6

March 28, 1972

The Portland Oregonian Newspaper
Portland, Oregon

Gentlemen:

This letter is to let you know I am not dead but really alive and just back from the Bahamas, so your silly troopers up there can stop looking for me. That is just how dumb this government is. I like your articles about me but you can stop them now. B. B. Cooper is not real.

I had to do something with the experience Uncle taught me, so here I am, a very rich man. Uncle gave too much of it to world idiots and no work for me. I had to do it to relieve myself of frustration. I want out of the system and saw a way through good ole Unk. Now you know. I am going around the world and they will never find me because I am smarter than the system's lackey cops and lame duck leaders. Now it is Uncle's turn to weep and pay one of it's own come cash for a change. (And please tell the lackey cops B. B. Cooper is not my real name).

Sincerely, A Rich Man

Code-Breaker Rick Sherwood spotted 4 phrases or words that repeat: 1) "D.B. Cooper is not real"; 2) "Uncle" or "Unk" (AKA Uncle Sam); 3) "the system"; and 4) "lackey cops."

#1 & #4 are in this highlighted sentence:

"And please tell the lackey cops D.B. Cooper is not my real name."

"I'm LT Robert W. Rackstraw, D.B. Cooper is not my real name."
(Concealed message decoded)

"And(19+) please(58+) tell(49+) the(33+) lackey(57+) cops(53)" = 269

"I'm(22+) LT(32+) Robert(78+) W.(23+) Rackstraw(114)" = 269

#2 & #3 are in this highlighted sentence:

"I want out of the system and saw a way through good ole Unk."

"I want out of the system and saw a way by hijacking one jet plane."
(Hidden message decoded)

"...through(97+) good(41+) ole(32+) Unk(46)." = 216

"...by(27+) hijacking(72+) one(34+) jet(35+) plane(48)." = 216

CHIEF EDITOR
THE PROVINCE
ON PAGE 3 AS SUSPECTED
13.1 DOES NOT REPRESENT
THE TRUTH.
I ENJOYED THE GREY CUP
GAME. AM LEAVING VANCOUVER
THANKS FOR YOUR HOSPITALITY
D. B. COOPER

LETTER #2

Code A: "I Enjoyed The Grey Cup Game. Am Leaving Vancouver" =
9+5+20+7+3+7+1+12+22 = 86;

Decoded: "If Catch I Am CIA" = 15+35+9+14+13 = 86

Code B: "Thanks For Your Hospitality" = 20+6+25+8 = 59;

Decoded: RWR = 18+23+18 = 59 (Robert W. Rackstraw)



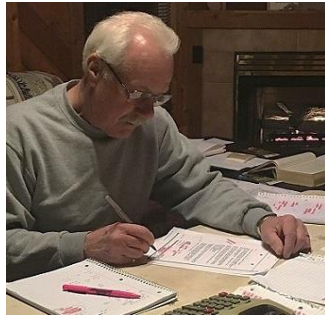
2/1/18: Outside FBI HQ, TJC and several cold case members proclaim to news media that the seven-year hunt is over and the team is being disbanded. The organizer reveals the Army-coded messages firmly point at Rackstraw, adding: "The FBI has been covering up, stone-walling and flat-out lying" about why he got a get-out-of-jail card: for a return to his freelance CIA work (during the Iran-Contra Affair). NBC News (Cameraman is in cap at right) joined the TV affiliates, but network's story died (2nd of the 3 Rackstraw packages killed).

FYI: For two years, the "bombshell" historical updates on Rackstraw-Cooper saturated local news markets (70 stories), along with 15 features in Canada, Asia and Europe. But NOT ONE of the 10 breaking releases appeared on America's TV networks, in 3 Newspapers of Record or on the AP wire.

FYI (contd.): In addition, eight “excited” TV documentary companies approached about doing a second Cooper special with TJC. But after initial collaboration meetings, sharing the mounds of new evidence and hearing various oral commitments, each of these likely show partners strangely backed out.

Did the Comey Administration’s Rackstraw cover-up actions – at play in the 2016 Cooper History Channel show and the ongoing FOIA redactions (Pages 4-9) – also include a suppression of U.S. national coverage?

8/8/18: To road-test this blackout theory, TJC gives the secret to all the letter codes to one local reporter at Chicago’s CBS (O&O) station, WBBM. The team organizer knew from his CBS news and Paramount days that hungry networks often monitor rivals’ satellite/internet feeds for exclusives just like this in flyover country.



NBC News is first to bite; a Peacock editor verifies the Chicago story’s details and approves a guest travel budget. Two weeks later, TJC’s briefed Army code-breaker, Rick Sherwood (Near-left), receives a TODAY SHOW call on behalf of its star, Craig Melvin. The anchor wants the veteran in New York, ASAP.

Sherwood hadn’t been on a jet since Vietnam, but seven days later, he leaves his Indiana cornfields for a limo and plane ride *“for the team.”* Fifty years after his three top secret tours of duty, the renowned NSA analyst still retains 11 of his old cryptography codes. And Rick’s memory and word-per-word recall of this two-day NBC media mission is both crystal clear and eye-opening.

The Manhattan news studio he walked into on 8/29/18 had three cameras set up, surrounding two face-to-face chairs. Craig Melvin was standing, holding out a hand. *“So, you’re the infamous Rick Sherwood. I’ve seen you on the TV. That [Local Chicago CBS code] story was good, but this one is going to be better.”*

1st hour on camera is about Sherwood’s history, Rackstraw and encryptions. For 2nd hour, they set up a table to reveal the unmasking of the Cooper letters. Sherwood intros his old calculator, “Fred” – chuckling Melvin took it, saying he’d like to do the math. Cameras zoom in for the Rackstraw revelations. But at one point, the host gets serious: *“I know they closed the case. Unless you guys come up with the money or parachute...”*

The codebreaker raises his hand to stop Melvin. *“Craig, we dug [the parachute] up a year ago, this month.”*

The host freezes. *“Whaaat?”*

“We gave it to the FBI,” Sherwood said.

Melvin leans forward. *“Well, what’d they say?”*

“Absolutely nothing.”

“Whaaaaaat?” said the excited host. “I’m having an ‘a-hah!’ moment!”

The departing Sherwood is left with the impression that NBC’s next questions were for the FBI – and at the network level, that’s required. But as TJC feared, this became the third Rackstraw story inexplicitly shelved.

FYI: *“Our story made local and national news around the globe,”* TJC noted, *“but the only major media market we couldn’t crack was here, in the FBI’s jurisdiction? None of us can think of a rational explanation for that.”*

So, to review: When you consider...

- Six frustrated FBI special agents told newspapers in 1979 that the clearing of new suspect Rackstraw was wrong
- The FBI accepted a suspicious third alibi from Rackstraw, in that same month
- The FBI tried to stop two network stories on Rackstraw from airing, in that same month

That could explain...

- Why, when told in a 2013 video ambush that the public still wanted to hear his Cooper story, he stated: "Sure, they would. So would the FBI and the secret [John Doe] indictment in Washington, D.C."
- Why Rackstraw rejected a 2015 five-figure fee from a TV doc & 2018 seven-figure deals from moviemakers
- Why three new network stories on Rackstraw (In 2016 & 2018) were shot, edited and scheduled, but then all quietly killed
- Why not one of the ten 2017-18 press releases requested by the USA's five broadcast networks, cable outlets, Newspapers of Record and AP Wire made it to national news
- Why millennial agents in 2017 oddly redacted the typed "DB Cooper" prefixes in 45-year-old FBI case memos, including five (below-left) in Bureau Founder J. Edgar Hoover's own office letter

NR017 WA PLAIN
326PM URGENT 12-29-71 MRF
TO SEATTLE (164-81)
FROM DIRECTOR (164-2111)

**FBI's 5 "DBC" Whiteouts
in memo about Letter #5**

NORJAK.

IT WAS DETERMINED THAT THE TYPEWRITING ON THE LETTER SIGNED [Airline Pilot Name] ADDRESSED TO THE AIR LINE PILOTS ASSOCIATION, WASHINGTON, D. C., HAS THE SAME STYLE OF TYPEWRITING AS THAT ON THE [] TYPEWRITTEN LETTERS RECEIVED IN THIS CASE.

THE TYPEWRITING ON THE LETTER SIGNED [Airline Pilot Name] COULD NOT BE ADEQUATELY COMPARED WITH THE [] LETTERS SINCE THE [] LETTERS ARE CARBON COPIES.

THE PRESENCE OF THE SAME STYLE OF TYPEWRITING AND CERTAIN LIMITED SIMILAR CHARACTERISTICS INDICATE THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE TYPEWRITER USED TO PREPARE THE LETTER SIGNED [Airline Pilot Name] WAS USED TO PREPARE THE TYPEWRITING ON THE [] LETTERS.

SINCE THE MAJORITY OF THE QUESTIONED TYPEWRITING ON THE [] LETTERS CONSISTS OF CARBON COPY IMPRESSIONS, FUTURE EXAMINATION MAY NOT RESULT IN AN IDENTIFICATION OF THE QUESTIONED WRITING.

In this court-forwarded lab memo from the office of J. Edgar Hoover, 2017 special agents cut out all 5 references to "Cooper" in the typed DBC letter #5. Question: Was it to protect the founding director's legacy, hide the truth, or both?

SAC, SEATTLE (164-81) 12/29/71

ASAC PAUL R. BIBLER **"Excited" FBI's False Lead
with a "DB Cooper" Whiteout**

NORJAK

RE: []
SUSPECT

Supervisor MATHEISON called from the Bureau.

He said that this [] had the Bureau somewhat excited since the Laboratory had just compared a letter which they got from the files of the Airlines Pilots Association with the typing on the [] letters which were sent to the WASHINGTON POST and several other newspapers.

The Lab report says that this is the same style of type and certain limited characteristics suggest the possibility that they may have been prepared on the same typewriter. For this reason they want us to check him out today, if possible, and advise the Bureau by telephone or teletype.

I advised SA [] to call Spokane and Everett and to check with [] and get all investigation done today. It appears he is still an airline company employee and company records may show where he was on the day in question.