

A day in the life, and death, of a Princess

by Jeffrey Steinberg

Aug. 31, 1997 is one of those dates, like Nov. 22, 1963, that every adult remembers for the rest of his or her life. Like the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, the death of Princess Diana shocked every person on this planet. Most people remember exactly where they were, what they were doing, and how they reacted to the news of the tragedy.

When JFK was shot, I was a junior in high school in New Jersey. The entire student body was in the school auditorium, when the announcement of the President's death was made.

When word reached the United States that Princess Diana had been killed, it was late Saturday night in Washington. I was attending the semi-annual conference of the Schiller Institute. The next morning, I spoke on a conference panel titled "Britain's Invisible Empire." I began my presentation with a reference to the tragic events in Paris: "We are at war. In the past 24 hours, we have probably seen the most recent high-level political assassination in that war; perhaps not the last, certainly, not the first. At stake is the very survival of the nation-state system and every achievement of modern civilization that we cherish."

One year later, the memory of the first shock of the news of the Paris crash is as vivid for me as it is for hundreds of millions of people all around the world.

But, for the vast majority of those people, the year of investigation is, at best a blur. The international media, led by the British and French press, have systematically covered up the most important evidence, beginning with the details of the events in Paris between approximately 3:20 p.m. on Aug. 30, 1997, when the private jet carrying Princess Diana and Dodi Fayed from Sardinia to Paris landed at Le Bourget Airport; and 4 a.m. on Aug. 31, when doctors at La Pitié Salpêtrière Hospital pronounced Princess Diana dead.

We begin our first anniversary investigative report by providing a detailed chronology of what happened in Paris, during that 12-hour period.

The stage is set

On Friday evening Aug. 29, 1997, Princess Diana and Dodi Fayed were enjoying the final hours of their weeklong vacation, on board the Al Fayed family yacht, the *Jonikal*, off the coast of Sardinia in the Mediterranean Sea. Taking the boat's launch to the shore, Diana and Dodi stopped at

the Cala di Volpi Hotel for a brief swim and a drink at the hotel bar. The couple was suddenly descended upon by a dozen Italian paparazzi photographers. The scene turned ugly, as the couple made a hasty retreat to the *Jonikal*, where a scuffle broke out between three of the paparazzi and the boat crew. Diana and Dodi decided at that point to abandon the ship the next day and travel, by the Harrods private jet, back to London, via Paris.

Saturday, Aug. 30, 1997

12:30 p.m.: Diana and Dodi dock the *Jonikal* at the Cala di Volpi Hotel jetty and get in a white Mercedes, driven by Tomas Muzza, for the short ride to Sardinia's Olbia Airport. The Mercedes is allowed onto the airport tarmac so the couple can avoid the crowded terminal and directly board the private jet. Several Sardinian paparazzi, disguised as workmen, are busy taking photographs of the couple as they board the plane. At about 1:30 p.m., the Gulfstream IV plane is cleared to take off for Le Bourget Airport, ten miles north of Paris.

3:20 p.m.: The Gulfstream lands at Le Bourget, and immediately, Diana and Dodi see a crowd of at least 20 paparazzi, lying in ambush for them. Two cars, a black Mercedes 600 and a green Range Rover, are waiting for the couple, to bring them into Paris. The driver of the Mercedes is Philippe Dourneau, Fayed's regular driver. The driver of the backup vehicle, intended for the couple's luggage and several staff who were travelling with them, is Henri Paul, the acting security director of the Ritz Hotel. Although Paul's duties at the Ritz Hotel are not principally those of a chauffeur, he had taken security driving courses at the Mercedes Benz school in Germany for a number of years, and always passed the grueling certification tests with flying colors. A licensed civilian pilot, Paul had also passed his annual physical exam to renew his pilot's license, the day before the airport rendezvous.

An airport customs vehicle escorts the two-car caravan to the exit, but from that point on, Diana and Dodi are on their own. At no point will any French police appear to provide security for the couple, who will be hounded, non-stop, by paparazzi—and still unidentified surveillance teams—right up to the instant of the crash.

At least four cars and four motorcycles, carrying paparazzi, speed after the couple as they leave the airport and enter the highway leading to Paris. Paparazzi motorcycles weave between lanes of traffic, trying to get ahead of the Mercedes 600 and snap photographs of the by-now distressed couple. At one point, a Peugeot 205 sedan, driven by paparazzo Fabrice Chassery, pulls up next to the Mercedes, speeds up, and cuts in front of the car carrying Diana and Dodi. The Peugeot driver then slams on his brakes, nearly causing a crack-up, in order to give the other paparazzi a chance to pull up alongside the Mercedes and snap away. Dourneau will later tell the police that he was nearly blinded by the camera flashes.

According to one member of the security team, later in the afternoon, when the same slate-gray Peugeot 205 appeared at another location where Diana and Dodi were stopping, the driver was confronted. He brazenly told the Fayed security guard, "You haven't seen anything yet."

At the edge of Paris, Dourneau is able to lose the paparazzi by cutting off the main highway, as the Range Rover continues into the city, to drop off the couple's belongings at Dodi's apartment on the Rue Arsene-Houssaye near the Arc de Triomphe.

3:50 p.m.: Diana and Dodi arrive at the Villa Windsor, the former home of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, which Mohamed Al Fayed purchased in 1986. The villa is located at 4 Rue du Champ d'Entraînement. The couple stays at the villa for 40 minutes, before leaving for the Ritz Hotel.

4:30 p.m.: The Mercedes 600 pulls up at the rear of the Ritz Hotel on the Rue Cambon. A hotel porter ushers them into the hotel, as a mob of paparazzi lie in wait for them at the front entrance of the hotel, on the Place Vendôme. The Ritz Hotel, it should be noted, is attached to the Palace of Justice, headquarters of the French Justice Ministry. The Place Vendôme is, at least hypothetically, one of the most secure and well-surveilled sites in Paris.

Diana and Dodi go up the main stairs to the second floor, where they enter the Imperial Suite, directly above the main lobby and the registration desk. A window of the suite directly overlooks the Place Vendôme, and Diana and Dodi can see a large gathering of paparazzi staked out at the hotel's revolving front door.

7 p.m.: Diana and Dodi leave the Ritz Hotel, again by the rear door. The Mercedes 600 and the Range Rover are waiting for them on the Rue Cambon, with Dourneau in the Mercedes and Trevor Rees-Jones and Kes Wingfield, Dodi's two regular bodyguards, in the Range Rover. Henri Paul escorts the couple to the car, and, at that point, he leaves the Ritz Hotel. Paul understands that Diana and Dodi will not be returning again to the Ritz, so he leaves work for the day, after a brief stop in his office. Since June 1997, Paul, the longtime deputy security director of the hotel, has been also the acting security director.

7:15 p.m.: Diana and Dodi arrive at Dodi's apartment and immediately have a run-in with half a dozen paparazzi who have been staked out at the apartment building since 3 p.m. A Ritz Hotel security staffer has been sent to secure the apartment, and remains there all afternoon, so Rees-Jones and Wingfield have been alerted in advance that there will be a paparazzi ambush upon their arrival. The security guards bring along two other Ritz Hotel security personnel, to help clear a path for the couple to enter the apartment building. A scuffle again ensues, between one of the Ritz security guards and Romuald Rat, one of the nine paparazzi who will later be arrested on possible manslaughter charges, as well as violation of France's strict "Good Samaritan" statutes, which re-

quire that passersby at an accident scene stop and help the victims.

9:30 p.m.: Diana and Dodi leave the apartment to dine at the Chez Benoit, on the Rue Saint-Martin. Claude Roulet, the deputy manager of the Ritz Hotel, has made a reservation for a party of five in his own name, hoping to throw off any paparazzi who might be trying to intercept the couple. As the couple leave Dodi's apartment, they are, once again, followed by a swarm of paparazzi on motorcycles and in cars. When they get within several blocks of the restaurant, they are alerted that the place is swarming with paparazzi. Dodi orders the driver to go, instead, to the Ritz Hotel. When they arrive at the Ritz, there are at least 20 paparazzi there at the front door, surrounded by at least 50 onlookers.

A review of Ritz Hotel and other Place Vendôme security camera footage will later reveal that, in the crowd of 50 onlookers were two men who did not fit the profile of paparazzi, chauffeurs, hotel guests, or tourists. The two men stood at the edge of the crowd, from the moment the couple arrived at the hotel, until moments after their departure. French police and Ritz Hotel security have failed to identify the two men. There is reason to believe that they were part of a larger surveillance team, of approximately seven men, who all showed up at the Ritz as the couple were arriving, and left only after Diana and Dodi departed.

In addition to the two men in the Place Vendôme, two other English-speaking men enter the lobby bar and sit there for more than an hour, staring at the lobby. Two other men, apparently trying to pass themselves off as paparazzi, with camera bags over their shoulders, walk through the hotel lobby several times, use the men's room, and move around the hotel perimeter. A seventh "spotter" stands across the street from the Rue Cambon rear exit.

9:50 p.m.: Diana and Dodi walk through the front door of the Ritz Hotel, having pushed their way through the crowd of paparazzi (the hotel staff failed to clear a path for them, only learning moments earlier that the couple is returning to the hotel). The couple walk through the lobby of the Ritz and enter the hotel's restaurant, L'Espadon.

9:55 p.m.: Even the first-class restaurant proves to be far too public. Several English tourists at a nearby table are behaving suspiciously enough to attract the attention of hotel security. So, Diana and Dodi ask that their dinner be served to them in the Imperial Suite. The hotel's night security manager, François Tundil, has already informed Henri Paul that the couple is returning to the hotel, and he calls Paul, once again, at his apartment, just a few blocks away from the hotel, to confirm that they are safely in the suite. Paul has already showered and dressed, in preparation for making an unscheduled return to work.

10:07 p.m.: Paul parks his car in front of the hotel and walks through the revolving door into the lobby. Paul spots bodyguards Rees-Jones and Wingfield, seated at the lobby

bar, eating dinner, and sits down with them. Over the next two-hour period, Paul orders two drinks, pastis with water. Rees-Jones will later recount: "There was absolutely nothing untoward about his behavior. If there had been, Kes or I would have picked up on it straightaway. That's what we are trained to do. But he seemed perfectly normal to both of us. He sat at the bar drinking some yellow liquid that I assumed was non-alcoholic." Rees-Jones keeps a lookout for any sign of Diana or Dodi coming down the stairs from the floor above the lobby.

Approximately 11:35 p.m.: Dodi pokes his head out the door of the Imperial Suite and asks Rees-Jones and Wingfield how many paparazzi are out in front of the hotel. They reply that there are about 30. Dodi closes the door and returns to Diana inside the suite.

Approximately 11:50 p.m.: Dodi again opens the door of the suite to confer with Rees-Jones and Wingfield, who have now been joined by Paul. Dodi tells them that he wants a limousine called up from the hotel's service, Etoile Limousines. He is going to leave again by the rear of the hotel, but plans a decoy operation. Wingfield and Dodi's regular chauffeur, Dourneau, will pull the Mercedes 600 and the Range Rover up to the front door of the Ritz, giving the paparazzi the impression that he and Diana are about to come down from the Imperial Suite. They will, however, have already slipped out the back of the hotel, into the backup car, and will drive off, with Paul behind the wheel and with Rees-Jones as the only security guard. Both Rees-Jones and Wingfield object to the idea of the couple leaving without the second security car trailing behind. But this was not the first time, Rees-Jones later explained, that the couple had travelled with only one car and one bodyguard. Rees-Jones said he was confident in Paul's ability to maneuver through the Paris street that he had driven countless times.

Sunday, Aug. 31, 1997

12:01 a.m.: Dodi places a call to his father in London and explains to him what he planned to do. Mohamed Al Fayed later told reporters that he, too, had urged Dodi not to leave the hotel with just one car. First, Al Fayed suggests that the couple spend the night at the hotel, but Dodi explains that they were preparing to leave for London early the next morning, and all of their belongings are at his apartment. Next, the senior Al Fayed cautions his son, "Don't try any tricks when you leave the hotel." When he hung up the phone several minutes later, Al Fayed had the impression that his son had accepted his advice.

12:17 a.m.: Diana and Dodi, accompanied by Rees-Jones and Paul, leave the Imperial Suite and walk to the left. They take another left turn and walk down a long corridor that goes to the rear of the hotel. There, they enter a service elevator, which takes them down to the rear of the hotel, where there is an open-air alcove, the employees' time clock, and a security post.

12:19 a.m.: At curbside is a black Mercedes 280S, a smaller and slower car than the powerful Mercedes 600 which is Dodi's regular transportation when he is in Paris.

12:20 a.m.: With Diana and Dodi in the back seat, Paul behind the wheel and Rees-Jones in the front passenger seat, the Mercedes 280S pulls out from the rear of the Ritz Hotel, down the narrow one-way Rue Cambon. A few seconds after the Mercedes leaves, at least two other cars and one motorcycle pull out in pursuit. The spotter standing across the street from the rear of the Ritz Hotel places a cellular phone call immediately. Sources familiar with the French government probe say that it is by no means certain that the cellular phone call was placed to the paparazzi gathered at the front of the Ritz in the Place Vendôme. Ultimately, the paparazzi in front of the hotel are alerted, and a number of cars and motorcycles take off in pursuit of the Mercedes 280S, despite the fact that, by this point, the Mercedes 600 and Range Rover have pulled up to the front door of the hotel.

12:21 a.m.: The Mercedes 280S carrying Diana and Dodi takes a right turn onto the Rue de Rivoli, and a left turn at the Place de la Concorde. By now, the Mercedes is being pursued by both the cars and motorcycles at the rear of the Ritz Hotel, and several other paparazzi who had joined the chase from the Place Vendôme. Instead of turning right onto the Avenue des Champs-Élysées, driver Henri Paul continues straight until he reaches the riverfront highway, which is, at that point, called Cours la Reine. From the point Paul enters the highway along the right bank of the River Seine, the distance to the Place de l'Alma tunnel is exactly 1.2 kilometers, or three-quarters of a mile.

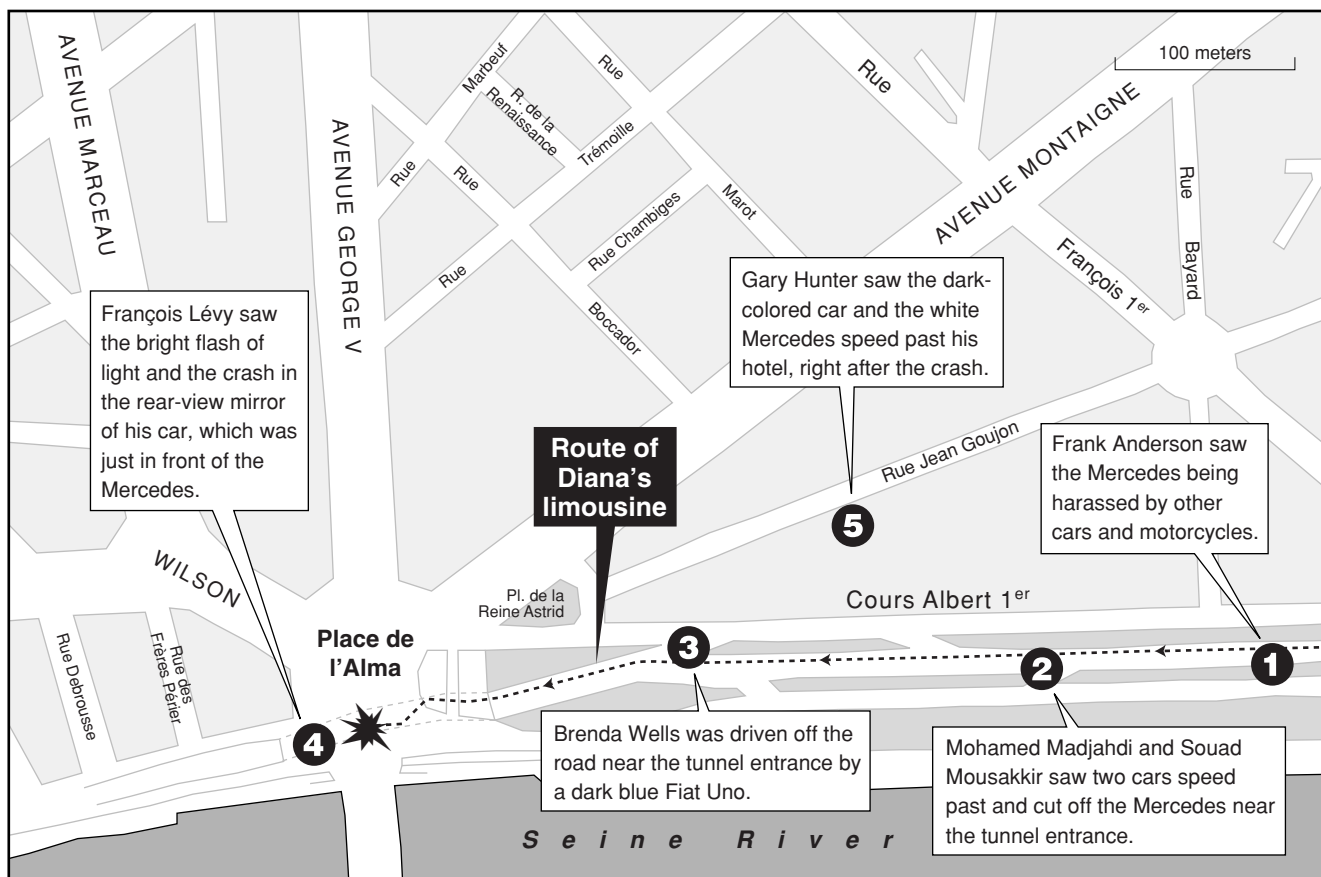
Although Paul accelerates as he enters the riverfront road, several eyewitnesses, including American businessman Brian Anderson, who was driving along the same route in a taxicab, said that the Mercedes at no point was going faster than 55-60 mph. And, while the paparazzi would later claim that Paul accelerated the Mercedes, leaving them more than 500 yards behind, as the fatal crash occurred, the testimony of almost all of the eyewitnesses indicates that several of the paparazzi cars and motorcycles were surrounding the Mercedes as they drove toward the Place de l'Alma tunnel. Anderson told CBS TV News that one of the paparazzi motorcycles headed "in a direction to get in front of the [Mercedes]. I felt that the one motorcycle, certainly without hesitation and any doubt whatsoever, was driving aggressively and dangerously."

Thierry H., a 49-year-old Parisian engineer, told police that he was passed by the Mercedes. "The car was clearly being pursued by several motorcycles, I would say four to six of them. Some were mounted by two riders. These motorcycles were tailing the vehicle and some tried to pull up alongside it."

Mohammed Medjahdi and Souad Mousakkir were driving on the Voie Georges Pompidou, the name of the stretch of riverfront road leading into the Place de l'Alma underpass, in front of the Mercedes, and they told Fox TV that they saw

FIGURE 1

Six eyewitnesses provided remarkably consistent accounts of the assassination



two cars speed past the Mercedes, as others were speeding up to the rear of the Mercedes.

Brenda Wells, an English woman working as a secretary in Paris, told police that her car was run off the road near the entrance to the Place de l'Alma tunnel by a Fiat Uno that drove past her, just as the Mercedes was reaching the tunnel entrance.

Approximately 12:24 a.m.: David Laurent, an off-duty senior French police official, is driving the same route as the Mercedes, less than a minute ahead of Diana and Dodi. According to a French source who spoke to the London *Daily Mirror*, Laurent “was driving towards the Alma tunnel when a white car overtook him and raced past. As the officer approached the tunnel he again saw the car, which he recognized as a Fiat Uno. But this time the Uno appeared to be creeping along very, very slowly a few metres from the mouth of the tunnel. It had no reason to slow down or stop, but it had come to a virtual standstill just before the tunnel entrance. At that stage there was no Mercedes in sight and no evidence that there had been an accident ahead. The officer drove past, leaving the Uno at the tunnel entrance. As he neared the tunnel

exit, he heard a loud bang coming from somewhere behind him. He was unable to turn back and instead drove away. Later that night he heard about what had happened on the news. He now believes the Uno was waiting for another car, quite possibly the Mercedes carrying Princess Diana.”

12:25 a.m.: As the Mercedes enters the tunnel, a white Fiat Uno is ahead of it in the right lane of the tunnel. Several eyewitnesses later told police that the Fiat Uno slammed on its brakes, forcing Paul to swerve into the left lane, clipping the rear of the Fiat in the process.

Two eyewitnesses told the *Journal du Dimanche* what they saw, in the split second that the Fiat and the Mercedes intersected at the tunnel entrance. “The Mercedes was driving on the right hand, shortly before the entry of the tunnel, preceded by a dark-colored automobile, of which make I cannot say. This car clearly was attempting to force the Mercedes to brake. The driver of the Mercedes veered into the left-hand lane, and then entered the tunnel.” The witness was attracted to the scene by the loud noise of the Mercedes downshifting gears. The second witness was walking along the Seine and heard “the sound of a motor humming very loud.” He said he

saw the Mercedes travelling behind another automobile. “I believe the reason the Mercedes accelerated so suddenly, was to try to veer into the left lane, and pass that car.”

The Fiat sped off as Paul lost control of the Mercedes, steering hard to the right, and then to the left, slamming, head-on, into the 13th steel-reinforced pillar in the center median of the tunnel, which separates eastbound from westbound traffic.

There are also accounts of a blinding flash of light inside the tunnel a split second before the crash. Bernard Darteville, the attorney for the Ritz Hotel, told Associated Press’s Jocelyn Noveck that police had shown him copies of two photographs, apparently confiscated from one of the paparazzi. “One sees very distinctly the driver dazzled by a flash. One sees very distinctly the bodyguard at his side, who with a brisk gesture lowers the visor to protect himself from the flash, and one sees very distinctly Princess Diana turning to look behind the vehicle, and one sees very distinctly the yellow headlight of a motorcycle. The photo taken before the first photo of the accident shows the Mercedes taken from very close. . . . A driver who is maybe a photographer, and a motorcyclist, also perhaps a photographer, are very directly implicated in this accident.”

There are two possible explanations for the blinding flash of light. It could have been a high-powered flash, attached to one of the paparazzi cameras. Given that the paparazzi often attempt to take pictures through tinted glass, they are known to use extremely high-powered flashes. However, one eyewitness told Britain’s Independent Television (ITV) that the light was far brighter than even the most powerful paparazzi camera flash.

The intensity of light he described could have been from an anti-personnel laser device, which is readily available at spy shops in London and Paris for several hundred dollars. These are commercial versions of blinding weapons that have been used in the field by many armies around the world. The British and the French military widely use laser guns, which can permanently blind a target, and also cause excruciating pain, by hitting the optic nerves.

Three other eyewitnesses, who were driving in the opposite direction in the tunnel at the point of the collision with the Fiat and then the final crash, told police and *Time* magazine Paris bureau chief Thomas Sancton and Middle East correspondent Scott McLeod that they saw a motorcycle speed past the Mercedes a split second before the first collision, and then speed out of the tunnel, without stopping. The most detailed account was provided to Judge Hervé Stephan on Sept. 23, 1997 by Grogpro R. “Just as I was descending into the tunnel,” he told the judge, “I heard an enormous shock. The cars [in front] hit their brakes and I also slowed down and turned on my warning lights at that moment. I saw, in the opposite lane, a big car that had just been immobilized. I only saw the last split second of its movement. I saw a motorcycle moving in the same [west-bound] direction as the Mercedes. It was a rather large

motorcycle with a round, yellow headlight. I had an impression of something white, but I can’t say whether it was a helmet or the gas tank. . . . I am practically sure there was only one person on this motorcycle, but cannot be totally affirmed. This motorcycle took off very rapidly after passing [around the Mercedes] as I described.”

Approximately 12:26 a.m.: “François” and “Valérie” are driving onto the roadway that leads out of the Place de l’Alma tunnel, from a feeder road on the right, just seconds after the crash, when their car nearly collides with a white Fiat Uno that comes barreling out the tunnel, zig-zagging along the road. They speed past the Fiat; afterwards, they could not say whether the car continued along the same road behind them, or took a sharp right turn off of the highway.

Approximately 12:28 a.m.: British barrister Gary Hunter is drawn to the window of his third floor room in the Royal Alma Hotel at exactly 12:25 a.m., when he hears the sound of the terrible crash. His room looks down onto the Rue Jean Goujon, and he does not have a view of the tunnel, which is to the rear and to the left of the hotel. However, Hunter, who is in Paris with his wife, celebrating their anniversary, does see two cars speed past the hotel at more than 70 mph. “There was an almighty crash followed by the sound of skidding, then another crash. My initial thought was that there had been a head-on collision. I went to the window and saw people running towards the tunnel. I heard a screeching of tires. I saw a small dark car turning the corner at the top of the road. I would say it was racing at 60 to 70 mph. My own feeling is that these were people in a hurry not to be there. I am confident that car was getting off the scene. It was obvious they were getting away from something and that they were in a hurry. It looked quite sinister. I can’t recall the type of car, but it was a small dark vehicle. It could have been a Fiat Uno or a Renault.” The “dark” smaller car was followed, on its tail, by a white Mercedes.

(Forensic experts later told *Time* magazine’s Sancton and McLeod that the lighting in the tunnel and along the Paris streets makes it difficult to differentiate colors. The light can make a white, or light colored car, appear to be dark colored. So the fact that Hunter and several other witnesses who saw a Fiat Uno around the time of the crash thought it was “dark colored,” is not reliable.)

The botched ‘rescue’ effort

12:26 a.m.: The first phone call is logged at the emergency center of the fire department special unit called upon to respond to traffic accidents. The unit is under the control of the French military. Seconds later, a similar call is logged in at the SAMU (Service d’Aide Médicale Urgente), the civilian emergency medical service, attached to the state-run hospital system.

Within seconds of the crash, the first half-dozen paparazzi, including Romauld Rat and Fabrice Chassery, are at the scene, snapping photographs of the still-smoking Mercedes.



A display honoring Princess Diana and Dodi Fayed, at Harrods in London.

Henri Paul and Dodi have both been killed instantly in the head-on crash with the tunnel pillar. Rees-Jones, in the front seat, and Princess Diana, behind him in the rear seat, are both still alive.

As other eyewitnesses arrive at the site, within a moment of the crash, they observe the paparazzi. Clifford G., a professional chauffeur, later told *Time*, “As soon as I arrived I noticed four or five men around the wrecked Mercedes taking photos with professional equipment. . . . None of these men did anything to help the wounded people in the Mercedes. It was obvious the four occupants were wounded. There was blood. Their bodies were sprawled every which way inside the Mercedes. Yet these men photographed the car and the wounded from every angle.”

Jack Firestone, an advertising executive from Hewlett Harbor, New York, was returning with his wife to their hotel, when he saw the wrecked car in the tunnel and stopped. Firestone told Associated Press that the paparazzi were “sharks after raw meat.” They were “clicking away like mad, running around the car, snapping from every position they could. . . . It was obvious these paparazzi knew they had struck gold.”

At that point, a fist fight breaks out between Rat and an unidentified man with a North American accent. A second brawl breaks out moments later between Rat and another one of the paparazzi.

12:28 a.m.: Emergency doctor Frédéric Mailliez and his companion Mark Butt arrive at the crash site, on their way home from a party. Mailliez works for the emergency rescue

service, S.O.S. Médecins. He formerly was with SAMU. Mailliez approaches the Mercedes, and, seeing that two of the passengers are still alive, runs back to his car and takes out his medicine bag. Already, a volunteer fireman, who is also a passerby, is administering aid to Rees-Jones, so Mailliez tends to Princess Diana in the back seat, ventilating her, after raising her head from her chest, to allow her to breathe. He later told the medical journal *Impact Quotidien*, “I helped her to breathe with a mask and I attempted to clear the upper respiratory passage by bending her head back slightly. I sought to unblock the trachea and prevent the tongue from blocking the oro-pharynx. She seemed to be a bit more agitated, thus more reactive, once she was able to breathe better.”

The first police officers arrive on the scene shortly after Mailliez and Butt. Officer Lino Gagliardone files an initial accident report, in which he describes the right rear door of the Mercedes being wide open, with paparazzi photographers shooting pictures inside the rear compartment.

12:32 a.m.: An ambulance and a technical support vehicle show up at the tunnel, dispatched from the fire station.

12:40 a.m.: Paris Police Chief Philippe Massoni receives a call at his home, informing him of the crash. Within moments, he is speeding to the Place de l’Alma tunnel. En route, he calls Interior Minister Jean-Pierre Chevènement. Chevènement initially says that he will join Massoni at the crash site, but Massoni convinces him, instead, to go directly to La Pitié Salpêtrière Hospital, where Diana and Rees-Jones were to be taken. By shortly after 1 a.m., already at the tunnel,

and in charge of the rescue effort and the first phase of the investigation, Massoni calls the Elysée Palace, to inform President Chirac, and the British embassy. Moments later, Massoni is joined in the tunnel by Patrick Riou, director of the Paris judiciary police; Martine Monteil, head of the criminal brigade (the unit that would conduct the first phase of the police probe); and Paris's assistant district attorney, Maud Coujard.

By now SAMU workers are treating Princess Diana on a stretcher next to the car.

1:20 a.m.: The SAMU ambulance finally leaves the tunnel, to bring Princess Diana to La Pitié Salpêtrière Hospital, 3.8 miles from the tunnel. The ambulance drives at less than 5 mph. At one point, less than 500 yards from the emergency entrance to the hospital, the ambulance pulls over to the side of the road and sits for ten minutes.

2 a.m.: Commissioner Monteil files her first report on the crash, noting: "According to the first witnesses, the Mercedes, proceeding down this portion of the road at high speed, appears to have swerved [because] the chauffeur was being pursued and interfered with by the vehicles of the journalists who had given chase. The driver must have lost control of his vehicle and failed to recover. Again, according to the first witnesses, the 'paparazzi' who were pursuing the Mercedes hastened to take photos after the accident, neglecting the elementary acts of assistance to people in danger. Based on these observations, the first policemen on the scene proceeded to take the photographers in for questioning."

2:05 a.m.: The ambulance finally arrives at La Pitié Salpêtrière. The chief duty physician, Dr. Bruno Riou, was first alerted to the crash, and the fact that the operating room should be prepared, at 1 a.m. Several sources have told *EIR* that medical workers at the tunnel crash site had quickly diagnosed Princess Diana as suffering from internal bleeding. The only appropriate emergency medical response to internal bleeding is to rush the victim into surgery, where the damaged blood vessels can be closed and blood transfusions administered. Yet, a total of 1 hour and 43 minutes passes from the point that the first emergency rescue workers arrive at the tunnel, to the point that Diana is wheeled into the operating room. As she is being brought into surgery, Paris Police Chief Philippe Massoni, who arrived at the hospital before Diana's ambulance, is told by Dr. Riou that she has suffered from thoracic hemorrhaging, further confirmation that doctors at the tunnel crash site had correctly diagnosed her injuries.

Efforts to revive the Princess continue for nearly two hours.

3:30 a.m.: Mohamed Al Fayed arrives, by Sikorsky helicopter, at Le Bourget Airport. He is met by chauffeur Philippe Dourneau and Kes Wingfield, and brought immediately to La Pitié Salpêtrière. Upon arrival at the hospital, he is informed by Chevènement, Massoni, and British Ambassador Sir Michael Jay, that Princess Diana has just died.

4 a.m.: Princess Diana is officially pronounced dead.

Diana, Dodi murders: year of the cover-up

by Jeffrey Steinberg

One year after the Aug. 31, 1997 crash in Paris, the chief French investigator, Judge Hervé Stephan, remains on the job, probing for answers to a number of vital questions. The answers to those questions, if they are to ever be found, will determine whether the judge presses criminal charges against nine paparazzi who were arrested within hours of the crash, or against other, yet unnamed persons. In August, Stephan issued an official statement on the status of his investigation, confirming that he will not be finished with his report until sometime in early 1999. The final forensic tests on the Mercedes 280S that carried Princess Diana, her lover Dodi Fayed, and driver Henri Paul to their deaths, are not expected to be handed over to Stephan until sometime in September.

Despite the fact that Judge Stephan is still deep into his investigation one year after the crash, the vast majority of people around the world believe that the case is closed, and that the death of the "people's princess" was the result of drunk and reckless driving by Paul, the Ritz Hotel's acting security director.

The reason that the facts of the investigation are at such odds with the popular impression is that the international media, led by segments of the French and British press, in particular, have conducted a vicious cover-up, including a smear job against anyone who dares to raise the unanswered questions, or suggest that a murder conspiracy caused the death of Diana.

In June, the smear campaign escalated, when the monarchy-allied Hollinger Corp.'s *Daily Telegraph* launched an all-out effort to trash *EIR*, its Founder Lyndon LaRouche, and this author, as a pack of conspiracy-peddlers, for daring to say that it cannot be ruled out that the Royal Consort, Prince Philip, ordered the assassination of Diana and Dodi. The *Daily Telegraph* and Britain's Channel 4 TV similarly lashed out at Mohamed Al Fayed, the father of Dodi Fayed and the owner of Harrods department store and the Paris Ritz Hotel, for also refusing to accept the media "verdict" that the crash was the fault of Paul alone.

This, despite the fact that everything published in *EIR*, and all of the published statements by Al Fayed, have been based on detailed evidence, generally available in the public domain. The media defenders of the British monarchy and the French government have resorted to wartime propaganda techniques to keep the general public misinformed.

The fact that the Hollinger Corp., owner of the Telegraph plc, is playing a leading role in the black propaganda drive, is