

PLAYBOY: How?

LANE: Let's begin at the beginning. The Commission says, as you just quoted, that a telescopic sight is an aid to rapid, accurate firing. As far as rapidity is concerned—and this is the critical factor—that's nonsense. Any rifleman knows it requires more time to fire with the aid of a telescopic sight than with an ordinary iron sight. The Commission also states that the Mannlicher-Carcano was an accurate rifle. Nonsense again. Rifle experts and rifle manuals and encyclopedias agree that this Italian carbine is an extremely poor, cheap and inaccurate weapon. The price alone is an indication. Oswald was supposed to have bought it from a Chicago mail-order house for \$12.78, plus \$7.13 for a scope. In fact, that surplus Italian carbine presently sells for \$3 if you buy it in lots of 25 or more. I don't have to tell PLAYBOY readers how much a good, accurate rifle with a scope costs; you can't get one for less than \$60.

PLAYBOY: You wrote in your book that Oswald's ammunition was almost 20 years old, implying it was defective. Was it?

LANE: Let me quote from the Warren Commission this time. The Report states flatly that the ammunition for the rifle is currently being manufactured by the Olin-Mathieson Company. In other words, the bullets could have been in brand-new, tiptop shape. Being a suspicious type, one of my investigators wrote to Olin-Mathieson, and learned that the 6.5-mm Mannlicher-Carcano cartridge has not been manufactured since 1944. Since the Commission could discover no other sources for this bullet, and since the powder in a bullet deteriorates in time, we must conclude, as Olin-Mathieson did, that "the reliability of such ammunition would be questionable today."

PLAYBOY: Let's accept your argument that the rifle was poor and the ammunition antiquated. Couldn't Oswald still have managed to deliver three lucky shots?

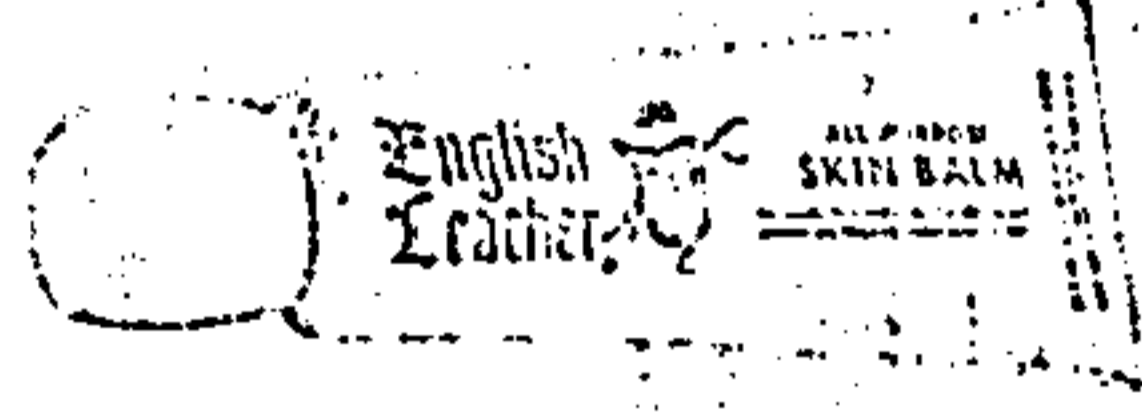
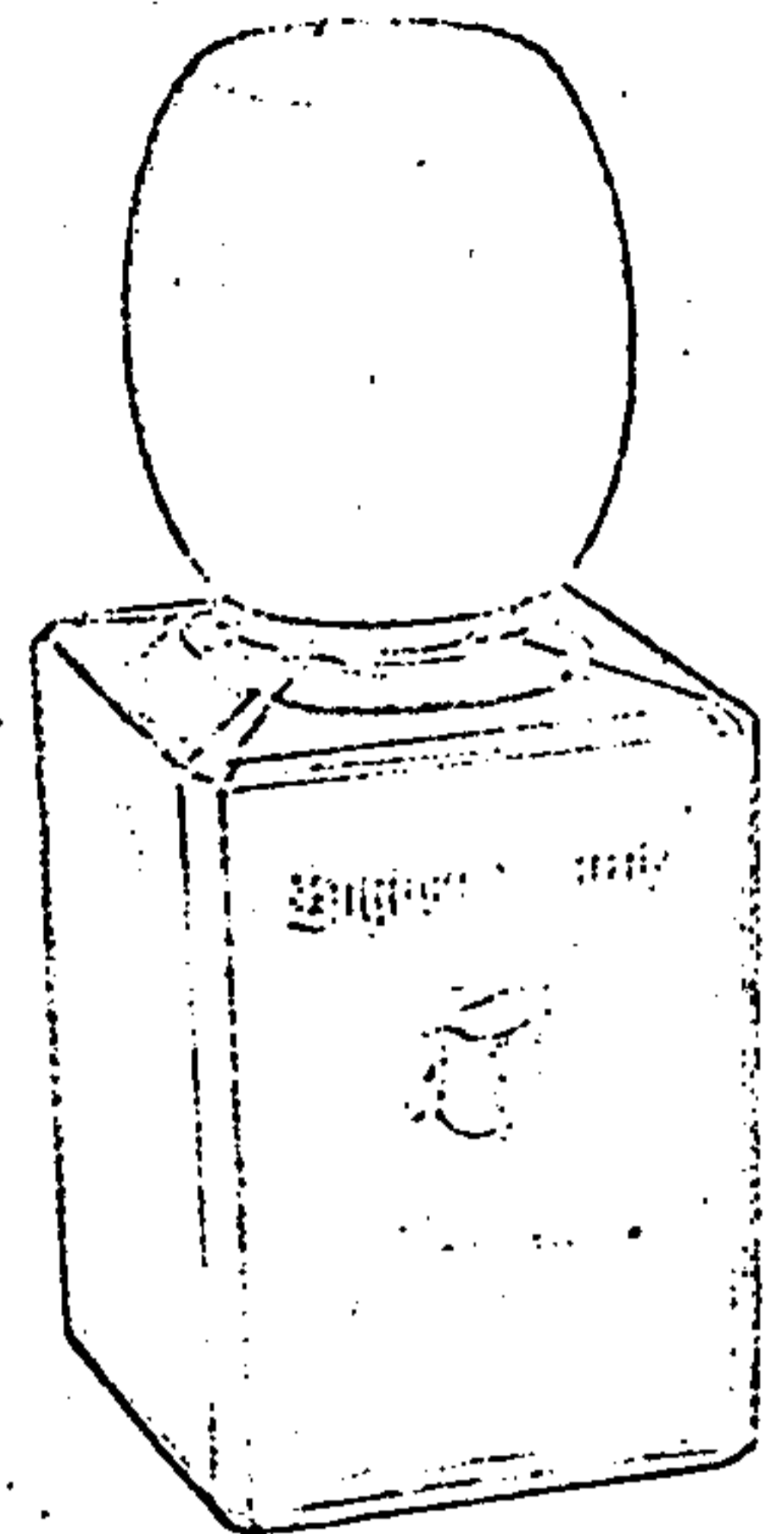
LANE: It's mathematically possible. If I leaned out of this window and squeezed off three shots with my eyes closed, it's mathematically possible that I could bring down a helicopter heading for the Pan Am Building. All I'm saying is it's not true, as the Commission states, that Oswald had everything going for him that day, from an "accurate" rifle to fresh ammunition. Any man using that rifle, and firing at a moving target with a telescopic sight from a sixth-floor window, was operating under a terrible handicap. And the facts show that five shots or more were fired. Since it takes 2.3 seconds just to work the bolt of the Mannlicher-Carcano—according to the testimony of FBI rifle expert Ronald Simmons—that is not mathematically possible in the 5.6 seconds that the Commission concedes is the maximum time Oswald would have had to fire from the

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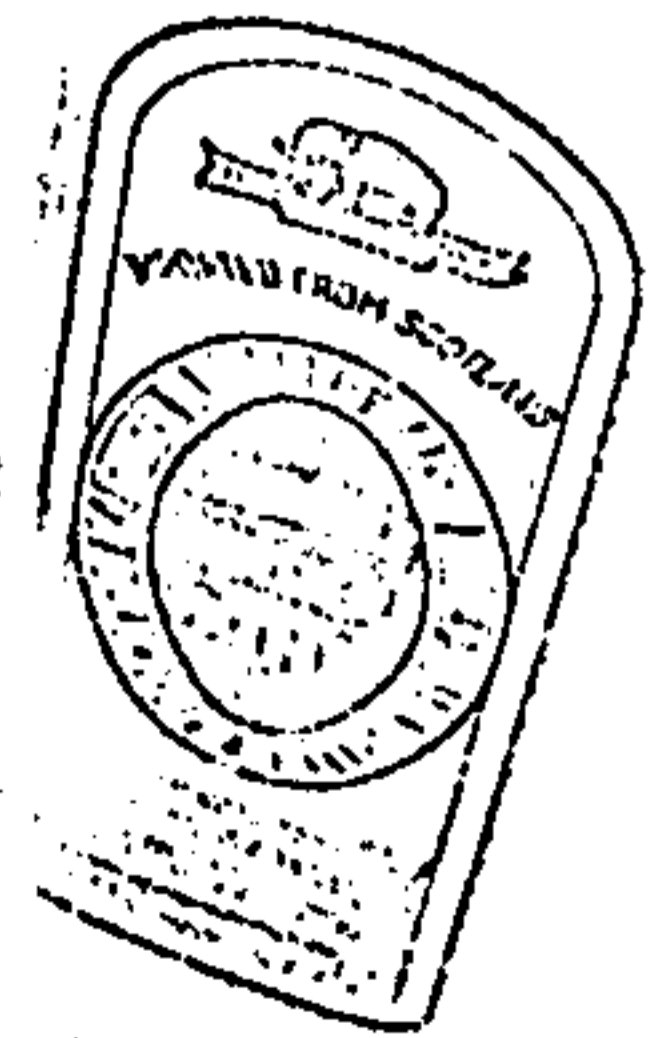
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