

Because etched clearly on the stock of the gun were the manufacturer's words, "MADE ITALY" and "C/5."

PLAYBOY: So you believe the weapon originally found was a German Mauser and was later switched to an Italian carbine that would incriminate Oswald?

LANE: I'm not certain, but I think it's a more plausible explanation than that all those Dallas police officers examined a rifle that had "MADE ITALY" stamped on it and then mistakenly told the world it was a German Mauser. Remember, the Mauser description lasted for a full day, and it was only after it was decided that Oswald owned an Italian carbine that the story changed.

PLAYBOY: You've said why you don't believe that the Mannlicher-Carcano could have fired the shots in the required amount of time. Assuming these initial reports of a Mauser discovered on the sixth floor of the Depository are correct, could this gun have done the job?

LANE: Rifle experts agree that a Mauser is certainly a far more accurate weapon than the antique the Commission placed in Oswald's hands; in fact, almost any rifle is better than the Mannlicher-Carcano. But the main point, the crucial point, is the number of shots and their different points of origin. I'm not a rifle expert, but I don't believe any rifle—unless it's a remarkably advanced one—could simultaneously inflict wounds from opposite directions.

PLAYBOY: If, as you claim, there's no evidence confirming that Oswald was capable of committing the crime even with an accurate weapon, is there any evidence indicating that he was even involved in the assassination?

LANE: Well, the Warren Commission certainly produced a lot of it. I'm just saying it's not very convincing.

PLAYBOY: If Oswald wasn't involved, as you seem to feel is the case, then why did he leave the Depository and, according to the Commission, kill Tippit?

LANE: It's very difficult to find out exactly what Oswald did after the President was shot. You can hardly turn to the Warren Commission as a source of unerring, accurate information on this or any other subject, and Oswald himself was shot dead before he was able to make any public statement other than that he was innocent.

PLAYBOY: But the Commission did reconstruct his movements.

LANE: Yes, they did, but their reconstruction is doubtful at best. Don't take my word for it: read *Time*. In its essay of September 16, 1966, *Time* wrote: "In trying to reconstruct Oswald's flight from the sniper's nest in the Book Depository Building, the Commission allowed for a near-miraculous series of coincidences and split-second timing."

What the Commission says is that in the 43 minutes between the President's

assassination and the first report of Tippit's murder, Oswald raced down six flights of stairs, ran out of the Book Depository, walked seven blocks to a bus stop, got on a bus, got off after a few stops, hailed a taxi cab, left the taxi, walked back four blocks to his rooming house, changed his clothes and then walked nine tenths of a mile to the spot where he was supposed to have shot Tippit. Let's just stop and examine one point in this reconstruction—a vital one in determining whether or not Oswald really shot at Kennedy from the Depository. The Commission says: it took Oswald one minute and 20 seconds to get from the sixth floor of the building to the second-floor cafeteria. However, Roy Truly, an executive of the Book Depository, said in an early television interview that when the shots were fired he was standing in front of the building, and he immediately raced inside with a Dallas police officer and ran up the stairs to the second floor; according to him, this took only a matter of seconds. On the second floor both Truly and the policeman saw Oswald in the employee's cafeteria near a Coke machine. Remember, according to the Commission's own calculation, it took Oswald one minute and 20 seconds to get to the second floor. It would seem mathematically impossible for Oswald to fire a rifle from the sixth-floor window, hide the weapon and race four flights down to the lunchroom, all in the time it took Truly and the officer to run up one flight and confront him. How did the Warren Commission resolve this discrepancy in their time reconstruction? They did what they've done so many times before with other witnesses: They simply ignored Truly's original statement.

PLAYBOY: Did Truly subsequently change his story?

LANE: Yes, he later conformed to the Commission's version.

PLAYBOY: Why did Truly and the policeman rush into the building in the first place—unless they had heard shots coming from it?

LANE: Truly testified that he thought the shots came from the area of the railroad tracks or the grassy knoll. He said he ran into the Depository with the officer because he assumed the policeman wanted a rooftop view of this area. The policeman did go on up to the roof from the cafeteria.

Another interesting aspect of this question is the testimony of Vicki Adams, who worked for a publishing firm in the Depository. She was on the fourth floor when the shots were fired, and ran into the hallway and down the stairs at the very time that Oswald was supposed to be running down the stairs. He wasn't there, she testified.

PLAYBOY: What do you think Oswald actually did after he left the Depository?

LANE: As I said, his movements after the assassination are still shrouded in mystery. The Commission's reconstruction is a rather bad guess, I think. The sole witness who offered credible testimony about the schedule outlined by the Commission was Earlene Roberts, housekeeper of the rooming house where Oswald was staying. Mrs. Roberts is now dead. She testified that Oswald entered the house about one p.m., and immediately afterward a police car pulled up in front of the door, tooted its horn twice and drove off. Oswald then left the rooming house and a few minutes later allegedly shot Patrolman Tippit, who happened to have stopped his squad car almost a mile away.

PLAYBOY: Do you think the police-car horn was some kind of signal for Oswald?

LANE: I don't know. But this is another aspect of the case that deserved thorough investigation—and never got it.

PLAYBOY: Why did Patrolman Tippit stop Oswald in the first place?

LANE: We don't know that Tippit stopped Oswald; all we know is that Tippit stopped a man who then shot him. The Commission contradicts itself on this. At one point the Report states that the wanted bulletin on Oswald was not sent out until after he killed Tippit, based on eyewitness identification of Oswald as the killer. So Tippit certainly couldn't have stopped Oswald on the basis of a police radio all-points bulletin on Tippit's own murder. But the Commission also quotes a Dallas police officer who claimed that a roll call of Book Depository employees was taken right after the assassination and that Oswald was the only one missing, at which point a call for his arrest was broadcast over the police radio, and Tippit stopped him. But then it turned out—according to subsequent testimony—that there never was any such roll call, and that a number of employees left the Depository immediately after the assassination. Actually, however, there is evidence that a wanted bulletin for Oswald was transmitted—only 15 minutes after the assassination—well before Tippit was shot, and therefore well before any evidence could have linked Oswald to the assassination; on what information it was based we still don't know. One of the Commission's most perplexing moments must have come when it had to explain why the police wanted Oswald 15 minutes after the shots were fired—at a time, to quote Professor Trevor-Roper, when there was "no available evidence pointing toward him." On this crucial question the Commission could only speculate. They rely once again on our old friend Howard Brennan, their "star witness," to the effect that it was Oswald he had seen firing a rifle from the sixth-floor window of the Depository. "Most probably," the Commission concludes,