

THE SUMMARY FROM GERMAN

John F. Kennedy
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Page 21 - The Mystery of the Double Shot in Dallas - One Thousand Assassination Attempts Since 1900 - In the last few days the wanton forest of questions marks as to whether President Kennedy was assassinated by only one man has sprouted, in a manner of speaking, new branches. The Warren Commission, which was appointed by the successor of the assassinated President, came to the conclusion - in a 1,000-printed-page report - that Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone assassin. (The reliability of this finding began to be doubted throughout the world immediately after its publication.)

And now the Warren Commission and its world-renowned report are getting a new "going over" by an unknown young journalist. He has written a book, "Inquest," which bears the subtitle: "The Warren Commission and the Establishment of Truth."

The author of this five-dollar book, 31-year-old Edward Jay Epstein, originally delved into the subject in order to write a thesis for his doctorate. He chose the subject because he wanted to show how a Commission with an unusual assignment from the Government had discharged its duties. By necessity, he became involved with the tragic events in Dallas, particularly that earth-shaking event which occurred on November 22, 1963, when mankind received such a jolt that it almost forgot to breathe.

The more he studied the material about the Kennedy assassination, the less Epstein felt inclined to write a mere doctor's thesis about it. The poignancy of his chosen subject, but even more, the contradictions which he thought to have discovered turned him into a fanatic pursuer of an elusive truth and, ultimately, into a Sherlock Holmes. Perhaps he began to understand those people who before him had shaken their heads about the Warren Commission Report, particularly the main point concerning whether Oswald had actually assassinated the President single-handedly - a question, which, in their eyes, had not been answered satisfactorily. There is no doubt that the Highest Judge in America, Earl Warren, and his collaborators waded through

Research - Saltzman

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through a most unusual amount of material: over 500 depositions and the answers to 25,000 questions asked by FBI men. All this material had to be studied and yet it measured in excess of 90 cubic feet of written paper.

So it happened that in that cold winter a lot of perspiration was shed over a gigantic mountain of paper. As is known, President Johnson is a man who likes to have his wishes carried out expeditiously. He knows how to put spurs on his orders. No wonder, therefore, that the Warren Commission found itself in a "time squeeze." There is no question that Earl Warren, the Chairman of the Commission, felt sure that the assignment, however honored they might have been by it, was not going to bring him and his collaborators any laurels. And, thus far, events have proven him right in his analysis.

If the Commission, on the basis of its findings, had come to the conclusion that Oswald was not the lone assassin, the logical assumption would have been that there was a plot. Naturally, it would be a political plot. Under the circumstances, was it not possible that a "hot wire" might melt? Would it not bring about the unavoidable; that unavoidable which must be avoided at all cost and for which the world finds no price too high? Therefore, the truth was disguised and Oswald was labeled as the lone assassin. It was done in the interest of the country; or rather, in the interest of all of mankind! What better proof was needed to show that truth had been tampered with than the fact that the President's assassin had been dispatched, with a bullet, to the land of no return under the very eyes of the police? And was not there a second man looking out of the fatal window in the School Book Depository Building a few seconds after 12:30 P. M.? Were not there eyewitnesses who had seen this man? Or was imagination playing tricks on them - perhaps as they tried to reconstruct the crime?

With the appearance of the "Inquest" book, the question that has raised tempers to a new boiling point is as follows: According to the world-renowned explanation of the Commission, there were "probably" three shots, one of which is assumed to have missed. A second shot is believed to be the fatal shot. A third shot is supposed to have hit both the President and Governor Connally. (The sequence of the shots is not believed to be a determining factor. Editor's Note)

As far as the "shot with two hits" is concerned, there is - according to the FBI autopsy report - no exit wound in the body of the President! Therefore, the logical assumption is that there was a second rifleman on the job. There is no way to answer

these basic questions. The only way in which they can be answered so as to sweep all objections aside is by making public the photographs of the autopsy, which has not been done thus far. These photographs should provide evidence as to whether the wound in Kennedy's throat was an exit wound or was caused by a fragment.

A study of the motion picture which was shot by amateur photographer Zapruder during the assassination shows that the two shots must have been fired within 1.8 seconds from each other, whereas the rifle used by Oswald - on the basis of painstakingly accurate testing - would have required at least 2.3 seconds to be used again.

Be it as it may:

The consequences of Kennedy's assassination are hardly to be evaluated today, even though everybody (in the East and West) is convinced that the late President was in a position to change, in time, the face of the world in a fashion about which all of us - with a degree of probability which approaches certainty - would have had nothing to regret.

(The article goes on to discuss the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo on June 28, 1914. It is pointed out that since the turn of the century, 1,000 assassinations or attempted assassinations have taken place in the world. Needless to say, all these assassinations had far-reaching political consequences. Yet, they are always viewed as "individual occurrences even though they may very well be the links of a sinister chain of murders whose significance, more often than not, can only be evaluated with the benefit of hindsight.")

The article goes on to name and review some of the most famous assassinations and assassination attempts of this century, including bricklayer Zangara's attempt on Franklin Delano Roosevelt's life and the shooting in the House of Representatives by a group of Puerto Rican nationalists.

After a short list of kings, potentates and political figures who were the victims or intended victims of assassins, the article concludes:)

If we were to think a little longer, we would certainly come up with more names of people on whose lives attempts have been perpetrated in the last 60 odd years. However, most of these people

are either forgotten, or never mentioned, or there are good reasons to try to forget that they ever existed. By the same token, the names of the assassins and would-be assassins are like particles of dust in the wind. What remains is the shameful fact that there always are and always will be men and women who allow themselves to be used, or rather misused, as "tools of history." And history, in its contempt for human life, is as ruthless and vain as the fanatics and madmen that it makes use of from time to time.