

Klondike Drive
Dallas, Texas 75228
May 28, 1975

Mr. Alan Steelman
1100 Commerce St.
Dallas, Texas 75202

MAY 29 1975

Mr. Steelman:

I am 25 years old, married, and have one daughter. I am currently in the process of transferring from Eastfield College to the University of Texas at Dallas, and my major field of study is Philosophy. My grade point average at Eastfield as of May, 1975 was 3.82 from a possible 4.00. I am a member of the Naval Reserve, in inactive status, and during my two year tour of duty was assigned to the Naval Security Group, where I was granted five different types of security clearance, two of which were Top Secret (Codeword). I am a lifetime resident of Dallas.

I recently viewed the Abraham Zapruder film of the assassination of President Kennedy. The film raised some doubts in my mind as to the accuracy of the conclusions drawn by the Warren Commission, so I began some research on my own. I have read substantial portions of the Report of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy (commonly known as the Warren Report) and the 26 volumes of Hearings Before the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy (referred to herein as Hearings). It is my opinion that the Warren Commission could have been mistaken in some vital aspects of their conclusions. I think that it would be worth your time to consider the points which follow.

The distance from the sixth floor window to President Kennedy at the head shot (the only shot which can be accurately placed) was 265.3 feet. (Report, p. 110)

The speed of the limousine, while traveling an average speed of 11.2 m.p.h., actually slowed abruptly and then accelerated while the shots were being fired (Hearings, Vol. III, 220-221, 266; VI, 233; VII, 440, 487). Note, this is not after the shots were fired, but during the period of time between the first and last shots.

The rifle allegedly used by Oswald was a 6.5 millimeter Mannlicher Carcano Italian military rifle Model 91/38. As to this weapon, J. Edgar Hoover wrote to J. Lee Hankin, General Counsel to the Commission "...t accuracy of the rifle would depend upon the quality of ammunition used the condition of the weapon at the time of firing and the expertness of the shooter..." (XXVI, 103).

R. W. Botts, the District Manager of the Winchester-Western Division of Olin Mathieson, the company the Commission determined manufactured the cartridges, (Report, 646), said that his company made 6.5 ammunition "during World War II" (XXVI, 62), and an FBI firearms expert told the Commission that the 6.5 ammunition was "re-imported into this country and placed on sale" (III, 400). It would seem, then, from the testimony, that the ammunition used was 20 years old.

The October 1964 issue of Mechanix Illustration typifies the Mannlicher-Carcano as "...crudely made, poorly signed, dangerous and inaccurate...unhandy, crude, unreliable on repeat shots, has safety design fault". In addition, according to J. Edgar Hoover's testimony referring to FBI tests, the Mannlicher-Carcano's "telescopic sight could not be properly aligned with the target, since the sight reached the limit of its adjustment before reaching accurate alignment" (XXVI, 104). Metal shims had to be added to the sight before it could be tested for the Commission (III, 443-444).

While in the Marine Corps, Oswald was tested twice to determine his accuracy with a rifle (Report, 191). In December, 1956, he scored 212 (Report, 191), and in May, 1959, he scored 191, a single point over the minimum for ranking in the lowest Marine Corps category (Report, 191). The last score was described by the head of the Records Branch of the Marine Corps Personnel Department as a "rather poor shot" (Report, 191, 488).

The sequence of rifle fire as described by the Commission was as follows: the first shot hit Kennedy and Connally, the second shot went wild and did not strike in the limousine, and the third shot hit Kennedy (Report, 111-117). The minimum time Oswald had to fire all three shots was 4.8 seconds; witnesses estimated the time at 5 to 6 seconds. (Report, 117). The FBI determined that the absolute minimum time required to operate the rifle was 2.3 seconds, and this without aiming at a moving target (III, 407). When shooting at a moving target, it was estimated that 1 second should be added, giving a time of 3.3 seconds for each shot (III, 407). Therefore, the FBI tests put Oswald's firing time at 6.6 seconds. From this, the Commission alleges that Oswald had 2.3 seconds between each shot.

The Commission, then, would have us believe that Oswald shot 100 yards, at a decelerating and then accelerating target (actually two lines of motion are evident, the limousine and Kennedy within the limousine), firing an "inaccurate" rifle considered "unreliable on repeat shots"; using 20-year-old ammunition, Oswald himself a "rather poor shot", in a time interval of 4.6 seconds, (or 6.6 seconds, depending on whether you accept the Commission's or the FBI's figures) and accurately struck John Kennedy twice, killing him the second time. This, for me, is very hard to accept.

I have no personal theories as to what happened in Dallas on November 1963, but I do feel that the Warren Commission left far too many questions unanswered, and too many gaps in their conclusions.

I therefore urge you to support House Resolution 204. It is my opinion that it would be in the best interests of this country to have the questions surrounding the event resolved, whether the answer support or disagree with the findings of the Warren Commission.

Thank you for your time.

Kenneth D. Shaddock

Kenneth D. Shaddock