

UNCERTAINTIES REMAIN DESPITE POLICE VIEW OF KENNEDY DEATH

Position of Wound
Is Puzzling — Did As-
sailant Have an Ac-
complice?

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WASHINGTON, Nov. 30—The exact circumstances of President John F. Kennedy's assassination may never be explained, despite the several investigations into the case.

The multiplicity of investigations—by Dallas city police, the Secret Service, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and now, a Presidential commission headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren and including Senators and Representatives—may even impede rather than assist full public understanding of the killing.

Major uncertainties remain to be cleared up, in the view of this reporter, who covered the late President's Texas trip. This reporter was in a press bus a block from where the President was shot and witnessed the later fatal shooting of the alleged assassin in the basement of the Dallas City Hall and jail.

Doubtful aspects of the case include even the identification of Lee Harvey Oswald as the only killer. Officials here and in Dallas have said repeatedly they believed that Oswald alone shot the President, firing from a sixth-story window of the Texas School Book Depository building.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation, which is expected to supply most of the information on which the seven-man presidential commission will base its findings, has indicated repeatedly that it agrees with Dallas police that the case against Oswald as the sole killer was airtight.

Position of Wound

The strangest circumstance of the shooting, in this reporter's opinion, is the position of the throat wound, thought to have

been caused by the first of two shots that struck Mr. Kennedy.

Surgeons who attended him at Parkland Memorial Hospital described it as an entrance wound. They said it was in the center front, just below the Adam's apple, at about the necktie knot.

At the time of the shooting, the President's open automobile was moving almost directly away from the window from which the shots are thought to have been fired. It was on a curving stretch of Elm street that leads from Houston street down to a triple underpass, about 75 yards from the window and about the same distance from the underpass.

The question that suggests itself is: How could the President have been shot in the front from the back?

Some observers supposed that the first shot had been fired at the President when he was still on Houston street, moving toward the Book Depository building before he turned into Elm.

What Movies Show

Motion pictures of the President's car, made public after a few days' delay, made it clear that all the shots were fired after the President had made the turn and passed the building. If the shots came from the sixth-floor window they came from almost directly behind the President.

Dr. Robert N. McClelland, one of three surgeons who opened the President's throat in an effort to restore an air passage and start his breathing, said he and another doctor had arrived in the emergency room shortly after Dr. Malcolm Perry had begun cutting the air passage in the throat.

The incision was made through the bullet wound, since it was in the normal place for the

tion. Dr. Perry described the bullet hole as an entrance wound.

Dr. McClelland told the Post-Dispatch, "It certainly did look like an entrance wound."

He explained that a bullet from a low-velocity rifle, like the one thought to have been used, characteristically makes a small entry wound, sets up shock waves inside the body and tears a big opening when it passes out the other side.

Dr. McClelland conceded that it was possible that the throat wound marked the exit of a bullet fired into the back of the President's neck. He said there had been no time to examine whether there was a wound in the back of the neck.

"But we are familiar with

bullet wounds," he said. "We see them every day—sometimes several a day. This did appear to be an entrance wound."

He said the doctors afterward tried to explain how the shot in the neck could have been fired from the book warehouse.

"We postulated that if it was a wound of entry, as we thought it was, the President might have been turned in such a way that it could hit him there," he said. "He would have had to have been looking almost completely to the rear."

The motion pictures, however, showed the President looking forward. Mrs. John Connally, the wife of the Texas Governor, has said she had just told Mr. Kennedy, "You can't say Dallas isn't friendly to you today." Presumably he was about to reply when he was hit.

Hole in Windshield

Another unexplained circumstance is a small hole in the windshield of the presidential limousine. This correspondent and one other man saw the hole, which resembled a bullet hole, as the automobile stood at the hospital emergency entrance while the President was being treated inside the building.

The Secret Service kept possession of the automobile and flew it back to Washington. A spokesman for the agency rejected a request to inspect the vehicle here. He declined to discuss any hole there might be in the windshield.

There have been two other reports of injury to the President's head. One of the physicians who attended him in Dallas said afterward that he had noticed a small entry wound in the left temple.

Another person, who saw the President's body a few minutes after he died, told the Post-Dispatch he thought he had observed a wound in the President's forehead. He asked that his name not be used. Reports of the temple and forehead wounds could have referred to the same injury.

The Number of Shots

Uncertainty surrounds the number of shots that were fired. Most witnesses have said they heard three, within a space of about five seconds.

Investigators have accounted for them as the one that entered the President's throat, a second that struck Gov. Connally riding in the front seat, and a third that struck the back of the President's head and caused extensive brain damage.

The first bullet is said by the doctors in Dallas to have entered the throat, coursed downward and remained in the President's body.

The second was extracted from

Gov. Connally's thigh. It had lodged there after entering the right side of his back, passing through his body and through his wrist.

A third, which may be the one that struck the back of Mr. Kennedy's head, was recovered from the stretcher on which he was carried into the hospital.

A fourth was found in fragments in the car.

Still another bullet was found

by Dallas police officers after the shooting. It was in the grass opposite the point where the President was hit. They did not know whether it had anything to do with the shooting of the President and Governor.

Another question is the exact whereabouts at the time of Jack Ruby, who later shot Oswald fatally in the basement of the City Hall and jail and awaits trial on a charge of murder.

Employees of the Dallas Morning News say they saw Ruby in the News building five blocks from where the President was shot. He went there to help lay out an advertisement for his strip-tease establishment, the Carousel Club.

News employes expressed certainty that he was in the building until 12:15 p.m., and he was seen there again at 12:45 p.m. Some had a vague recollection of seeing him sitting at a desk between those times. The President was shot at 12:30 p.m.

If the President was shot from the front as well as from behind, or instead of from behind, the firing could have come from the railroad overpass his automobile was approaching.

The overpass has a gravel walkway between the tracks and a three-foot concrete balustrade that faced the President's approaching car. At each end is a length of wooden fencing about five feet high.

Silence of Officials

Officials of the Justice Department and the Secret Service declined to say what inspection was made of the overpass before and during the President's approach toward it.

If there were two snipers, and Mr. Kennedy's car was caught in the crossfire, the rapid-fire shooting would be more easily explained.

Tests have shown, however, that a single sniper, using the

bolt-action Italian rifle with telescopic sight found in the warehouse, could have fired three shots easily in five seconds. One shell would have been in the chamber, so that the bolt would have had to be moved only twice. The weapon could have been rested on a box, so that it would not have been necessary to aim again for the subsequent shots.

All questions about the evidence were answered with a request to wait until President Lyndon B. Johnson has received the report on the full-scale federal investigation he has ordered. He has said that all facts will be made public.