

Rumors Add Difficulty to Assassination Probe

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Warren Commission Checks Many Stories; Report on Slaying of President Due Soon

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Just before he was shot to death by Jack Ruby, Lee Harvey Oswald turned toward the Dallas nightclub owner as if he recognized him.

That split-second incident, and the wave of rumors that resulted from it, presented the Warren Commission with one of its most difficult tasks.

The commission, created by President Johnson to conduct a complete investigation and prepare an official report on events surrounding the assassination of the late President John F. Kennedy, is expected to issue its findings in a little more than a week.

Will Settle Rumors

Commission members say they believe the document will effectively answer all of the rumors and all unanswered questions in the mind of the public.

One of the most persistent rumors was that Ruby was ordered by Dallas police or some conspiratorial group to silence Oswald. Numerous others were associated with that same theme. One was an alleged report by a waiter that Oswald frequented Ruby's night club in the period just before the assassination.

Another was that Ruby and a wealthy Texas oilman met in the night club with Bernard Weissman, the person responsible for a full-page anti-Kennedy advertisement in a Dallas newspaper, shortly before the assassination.

Still another was that Oswald, Ruby and Dallas Policeman J. D. Tippit were part of a conspiracy. Speculation that Oswald was en route to Ruby's apartment when he shot and killed Tippit usually is used as a

basis for this rumor.

One rumor was that Oswald and Ruby planned to flee to Mexico together as soon as Oswald reached Ruby's apartment. This apparently grew out of the fact that Oswald made a trip to Mexico in an unsuccessful attempt to get a visa to go to Cuba.

Other Surmises

On this point alone, the commission investigated to determine such things as whether Oswald was tailed by U.S. agents during the Sept. 26-Oct. 3, 1963, trip to Mexico and why the loyalty oath he signed to get a passport was not questioned in view of his past record.

Another whole set of rumors revolved around the shots fired at Kennedy.

From Italy came a report that Oswald could not possibly have gotten off three shots during the time allotted with the Italian-made carbine he allegedly used to kill Kennedy.

This was quickly followed by a rumor that five shots, not three, had been fired at the Kennedy automobile caravan, and by reports that

some of the shots had been fired from an overpass ahead of the caravan, not from Oswald's vantage point behind it.

These rumors were based on the fact that a windshield in front of Kennedy was shattered by a fragment of one of the bullets and on the report that one of the bullets pierced his throat.

To check out these rumors, the commission had the FBI investigate how

much practice Oswald had had with the gun, how expert he had become, and whether the gun could have been fired with any accuracy as rapidly as the assassin fired.

In addition, autopsy reports were studied to determine the nature of Kennedy's wounds. The FBI laboratory also conducted various tests on the bullets and fragments found in Kennedy's body and in his car and on the empty cartridges found in the Texas Book Depository where the assassin supposedly hid out.

Gun Permit

There also was speculation that Oswald would not have been able to obtain a gun permit without some influential help because he had been court-martialed for carrying a gun without a permit while in military service.

Another group of rumors revolved around possible Oswald connections with various government agencies.

At times he was described as an agent or an informant for the FBI, the Secret Service, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Dallas police.

Even Oswald's mother, Mrs. Marguerite Oswald, told reporters after she appeared before the commission that she was convinced her son was an agent of either the FBI or the CIA. FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover quickly denied that Oswald had ever been employed in any capacity by any government agency.

Probe in Depth

But to gain even more concrete proof in this area, the commission questioned State Department officials about why Oswald's renunciation of citizenship was not accepted and how he was able to get back into this country after surrendering his passport in Russia.

Other rumors failed to gain much prominence. But, as each came up, the commission had its staff and the FBI check them out and find the answers. What they found will comprise a large portion of the report.