

PANEL UNANIMOUS

Theory of Conspiracy by Left or Right

Is Rejected

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The text of the report begins on the first page of the second section.

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The assassination of President Kennedy was the work of one man, Lee Harvey Oswald. There was no conspiracy, foreign or domestic.

That was the central finding in the Warren Commission report, made public this morning. Chief Justice Earl Warren and the six other members of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy were unanimous on this and all questions.

The commission found that Jack Ruby was on his own in killing Oswald. It rejected all theories and the two men were in some way connected. It said that neither Rightists nor Communists bore responsibility for the murder of the President in Dallas last Nov. 22.

Why did Oswald do it? To this most important and most mysterious question the commission had no certain answer. It suggested that Oswald had no purpose, no motive.

A Product of His Life

Rather, the commission saw Oswald's terrible act as the product of his entire life—life "characterized by isolation, frustration and failure." He was just 24 years old at the time of the assassination.

"Oswald was profoundly alienated from the world in which he lived," the report said. "He had very few, if any, close relationships with other people and he appeared to have great difficulty in finding a meaningful place in the world."

"He was never satisfied with anything."

"When he was in the United States, he resented the capital-

ist system. When he was in the Soviet Union, he apparently resented the Communist party members, who were accorded special privileges and who he thought were betraying Communism, and he spoke well of the United States."

Essentials Were Known

The commission found that Oswald shot at former Maj. Gen. Edwin A. Walker in Dallas on April 10, 1963, narrowly missing him. It cited this as evidence of his capacity for violence.

It listed as factors that might have led Oswald to the assassination "his deep-rooted resentment of all authority, which was expressed in a hostility toward every society in which he lived," his "urge to try to find a place in history" and his

...and Communism, as he understood the terms."

The report's findings on what happened in Dallas contained few surprises. The essential points had leaked out one way or another during the ten months since President Johnson appointed the commission last Nov. 29.

But the commission analyzed every issue in exhaustive, almost archeological detail. Experts traced the path of the bullets. Every critical event was re-enacted. Witnesses here and abroad testified to the most obscure points.

The question now is whether the report will satisfy those, especially abroad, who have insisted that there must have been a conspiracy in the assassination. The commission attempted to answer, specifically, every such theory and rumor.

The report did have surprises in its appraisal of the protection provided for the President by Federal agencies, and in its recommendations for improved methods of protection.

It was critical of the Secret Service for inadequate preventive measures, and of the Federal Bureau of Investigation for not giving the Secret Service the adverse information it had on Oswald. It called for higher-level Government attention to the problem of protecting the President, and possibly for reorganization.

The commission made public all the information it had bearing on the events in Dallas, whether agreeing with its findings are not. It withheld only a few names of sources, notably sources evidently within Communist embassies in Mexico, and

each of these omissions was indicated.

All the testimony taken by the commission and its staff from 552 witnesses will be published separately. It will fill 15 supplementary volumes, and there will be eight or nine more large volumes of exhibits. They are to be made public soon.

The report itself ran 838 pages with eight chapters and 18 appendices. The commission's thoroughness is indicated by the fact that it interviewed every known person who met Oswald during a brief trip he made to Mexico. Interviewing continued into this month.

Drafting of the report was done by the commission's legal staff under J. Lee Rankin, general counsel. But all seven members of the commission themselves went over, edited and substantially rewrote the entire work.

A staff lawyer remarked that this report was probably unlike any other in the history of commissions—"It really is a group product, the work of the commissioners."

The members, in addition to the chief justice, were Senators Richard B. Russell of Georgia and John Sherman Cooper of Kentucky, Representatives Hale Boggs of Louisiana and Gerald R. Ford of Michigan, Allen Dulles and John J. McCloy. All are Republicans save Mr. Russell and Mr. Boggs.

In a foreword, the commission says that it operated not as judge or jury—because Oswald could never have a trial—but as a dispassionate fact-finder. This is borne out by the report, which is neutral in tone and makes every effort to be fair in its discussions of Oswald.

Despite the group approach, the report often achieves a genuine literary style. The very detail of the narrative is fascinating, and there are many moving passages.

Few who loved John Kennedy, or this country, will be able to read it without emotion.

Cheering Crowds

As the President's motorcade drove through Dallas on Nov. 22, large crowds cheered. Gov. John Conally's wife, who was in the car, said to Mr. Kennedy, "Mr. President, you can't say Dallas doesn't love you." He answered, "That is very obvious."

A moment later the shots were fired.

Mrs. Kennedy, according to the report, "saw the President's skull torn open" by the second bullet that hit him. She testified that she cried out, "Oh, my God. They've shot my husband. Love you, Jack."

A reader of the report

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struck again and again by series of events that had to take place to make the assassination possible. Over a period of years, so many men could have done so many things that would have changed history.

On Oct. 31, 1950, Oswald appeared at the United States Embassy in Moscow and stated that he wanted to renounce his citizenship. While he had a right to do so at once, consular officials did not want to let a young man take so final a step precipitously. They told him to come back the following week. He never came back. If Oswald had been allowed to expatriate himself at once, he would have found it difficult or impossible to return to the United States when he tired of the Soviet Union.

Similarly, American officials helped Oswald and his Russian wife Marina.

When Oswald shot at General Walker, he told Marina. She warned him not to do a thing like that again—but she did not tell the police or anyone else. When he returned from Mexico, he applied for a job with a printing company in Dallas. He was not hired because a previous employer told the company he was a "troublemaker." On Oct. 15, 1963, he got a job at the Texas School Book Depository. A month later a Brexidial route was chosen that went by that building.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation learned in early November, 1963, that Oswald, whom it knew as a defector and proclaimed friend of Castro, was in Dallas and worked at the depository. The agents neither interviewed Oswald nor reported the fact to the Secret Service when the Presidential motorcade route was published. At the time of the assassination, Oswald had a room in Dallas while his wife stayed with friends in nearby Irving. The evening of Nov. 21, he asked her to move to Dallas with him. She was angry with him, and she refused.

In the depository the next day, Bonnie Ray Williams ate a lunch of chicken on the sixth floor and then went down to the fifth floor to watch the motorcade with friends. That left Oswald alone on the sixth floor.

It rained in Dallas that morning, but the rain stopped and the sun came out.

At 12:30, Governor Connally was hit. But the commission said the probability was that the first bullet that struck the president went on through the governor's chest, then his head, and finally lodged in his back.

All of these points were demonstrated by the commission with elaborate re-enactments.

bulletproof off the President's car. That top was not bulletproof, but Oswald might not have known that and might in any event have had greater difficulty sighting through it.

Finally, there was the arrangement of the Presidential car.

Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy sat in the rear, Governor and Mrs. Connally on the jump seats. A Secret Service agent drove, and another sat next to him, but they were separated from the passenger compartment by the front seat and a metal bar 15 inches above it. And the President had asked that no agents ride on small running boards provided at the rear.

The second bullet that hit the President was the fatal one. The commission found that if a Secret Service man had been in a position to reach him quickly, it is possible that he could have protected the President from the second shot.

Confusion on Shots

The report clarified what had been considerable confusion about the bullets. Much of this stemmed from the necessarily hasty examination made by doctors at Parkland Memorial Hospital in Dallas in their desperate effort to save the President's life.

The commission found that in all probability three bullets were fired. Three empty cartridges were found inside the sixth floor window of the depository. Also recovered were one nearly whole bullet and fragments of one or two others.

One of the bullets missed, the report said. It was not certain whether this came before, between or after the two that hit.

The first of the two shots that did not miss hit the President in the lower back of the neck and emerged at the lower chest.

Mr. Kennedy grabbed at his throat and said "My God, it's me."

President Kennedy could not survive the neck injury. The commission found. But the time was calculated. An amateur movie film showed a bullet hit the back of the President's head.

Condition 'Hopeless'

The time was 12:30. When he arrived at the hospital five minutes later, the report said, Kennedy was alive "from a medical viewpoint"; there was a heart beat. But "his condition was hopeless." He was pronounced dead at 1 P.M.

Some uncertainty remained about how Governor Connally was hit. But the commission said the probability was that the first bullet that struck the president went on through the governor's chest, then his head, and finally lodged in his back. All of these points were demonstrated by the commission with elaborate re-enactments.

expert testimony and experiments on simulated skulls and bodies. The report contains many macabre pages of such detail.

"The cumulative evidence of eyewitnesses, firearms and ballistic experts and medical authorities," the report said, demonstrated that the shots were fired from the sixth floor of the depository building.

Experts said flatly that nearly whole bullet and two large fragments recovered could only have been fired by the 6.5 millimeter Mannlicher-Carcano rifle found inside the depository window.

No Bullet From Front

One apparent conflict dismissed by the report was the talk that a mark on the Presidential car's windshield had been made by a bullet coming from in front of it. Experts testified that the glass had been hit by a fragment from behind. The commission found that no shots had come from the front.

In painstaking detail, the report connected Oswald with the rifle and that position at the window.

It traced his purchase of the gun. It showed that he had taken the gun to work in a homemade paper bag that was opening.

His fingerprints were on the bag, and on some cartons in which the rifle apparently rested. A witness saw a man who looked like Oswald at the window with the gun.

And the commission found that he had the ability to hit the target readily. At a distance of 177 to 266 feet, with telescopic sight and the target moving off in a straight line from him.

It found that he killed a Dallas patrolman, J. D. Tippit, 45 minutes later. Numerous eyewitnesses saw him during or after this shooting. And the bullets came from the revolver he carried when he was arrested shortly afterward.

In discussing Oswald's possible motives, the report portrayed a man of strange contradictions. He said he was "a Marxist but not a Leninist-Marxist." One of his favorite books was George Orwell's "1984."

He wrote letters to American Communist party leaders volunteering his services. But some of these leaders testified that Oswald was never a member, and the commission so found.

The commission also rejected, after complete access to the files of the F.B.I. and the Central Intelligence Agency, the claim that Oswald may have been some kind of American undercover agent.

After his arrest, he told the

police that "My wife and I like the President's family. They are interesting people."

He said: "I am not a malcontent; nothing irritated me about the President."

All the frustrations in Lee Harvey Oswald seemed to come to a climax in the last weeks of his life. The report paints a sad, sensitive picture.

His dream of glory in the Soviet Union had collapsed. He had not been able to go to Cuba. He had a menial job, packing textbooks. His wife, the commission said, ridiculed his political views and complained about his sexual capacity.

Oswald ordinarily went from Dallas to the home of Mrs. Michael Paine, where his family was staying in Irving, Texas for weekends. Marina asked him not to come the weekend of Nov. 16-17, 1963, because the Paines were having a birthday party.

Then Marina discovered that he was using an alias, O. Lee, at his rooming house in Dallas. When he telephoned on Nov. 18, she was angry with him. When he went to the house on Nov. 21, she at first refused to talk to him and then refused to move the family to Dallas. "Oswald had an exaggerated sense of his own importance that he had failed at almost everything he had ever tried," the commission concluded.

"It must have appeared to him that he was unable to command even the attention of his family. His family lived with Mrs. Paine, ostensibly because Oswald could not afford to keep an apartment in Dallas, but was also, at least in part, because his wife did not want to live there with him."

The commission added that it did not believe that "the re-

lations between Oswald and his wife caused him to assassinate the President. It is unlikely that the motivation was that simple.

Discussing the two days of Oswald's detention before his murder, the report rejected claims that he was not allowed counsel or was mistreated by the police. He saw his family and was offered a lawyer, it said.

But the commission was highly critical of the way the press and cameramen were allowed the free run of the Dallas police station, crowding around Oswald and very likely making possible Ruby's entry in the confusion of the final moments.

Police Criticized

During the "confusion and disorder" of those two days, the commission said, the police said much to much—some of it erroneous—about the case. They effectively converted Oswald before he was tried, and the com-

mission said a fair trial would have been difficult after all the publicity.

All conspiracy theories were flatly rejected in the report.

"The commission found no evidence that the Soviet Union or Cuba were involved in the assassination of President Kennedy," the report said. "Nor did the commission's investigation of Jack Ruby produce any grounds for believing that Ruby's killing of Oswald was part of a conspiracy."

The report added that these

conclusions were also reached independently by Secretary of State Rusk, Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of the Treasury Douglas Dillon, the Central Intelligence Agency Director John A. McCone, the Secret Service Chief, James J. Rowley, the Federal Bureau of Investigation Director J. Edgar Hoover, and former Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, the fallen President's brother.

It said that "because of the difficulty of proving negatives to a certainty, the possibility of others' being involved with either Oswald or Ruby cannot be established categorically, even if there is any such evidence. It has been beyond the reach of all the investigative agencies and resources of the United States and has not come to the attention of this commission."

The commission reported that many steps had already been taken to tighten F.B.I. and Secret Service measures against potential assailants of the President. It called for further improvements.

On trips, the report said, the President's doctor should always be near him and much greater effort should be made to check buildings along motor routes.

A Cabinet-level committee should review and oversee the whole matter of protecting the President, the commission suggested. It said the question whether the job should remain with the Secret Service might be considered by such a committee.

Congress was urged to enact, at long last, legislation making assassination of the President a Federal crime. The report said such a law would divide authority and possibly prevent disorder and confusion such as prevailed in Dallas after Nov. 22, 1963.