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OCTOBER

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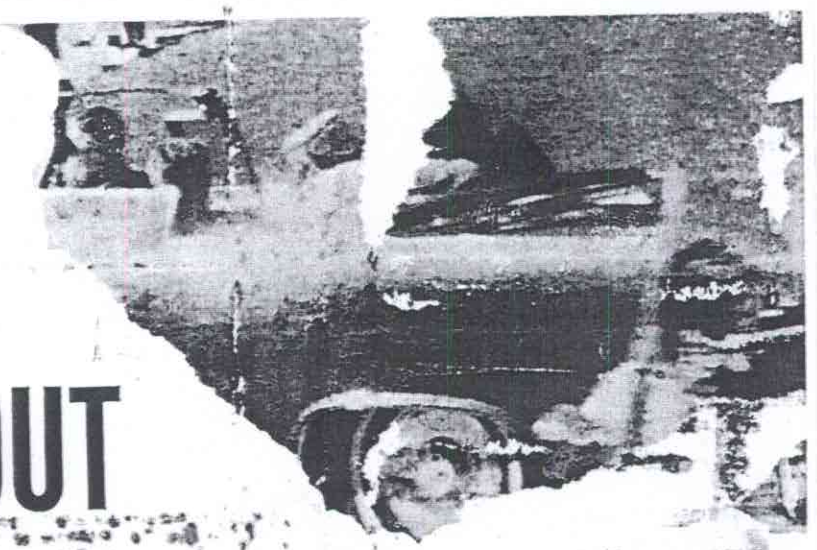
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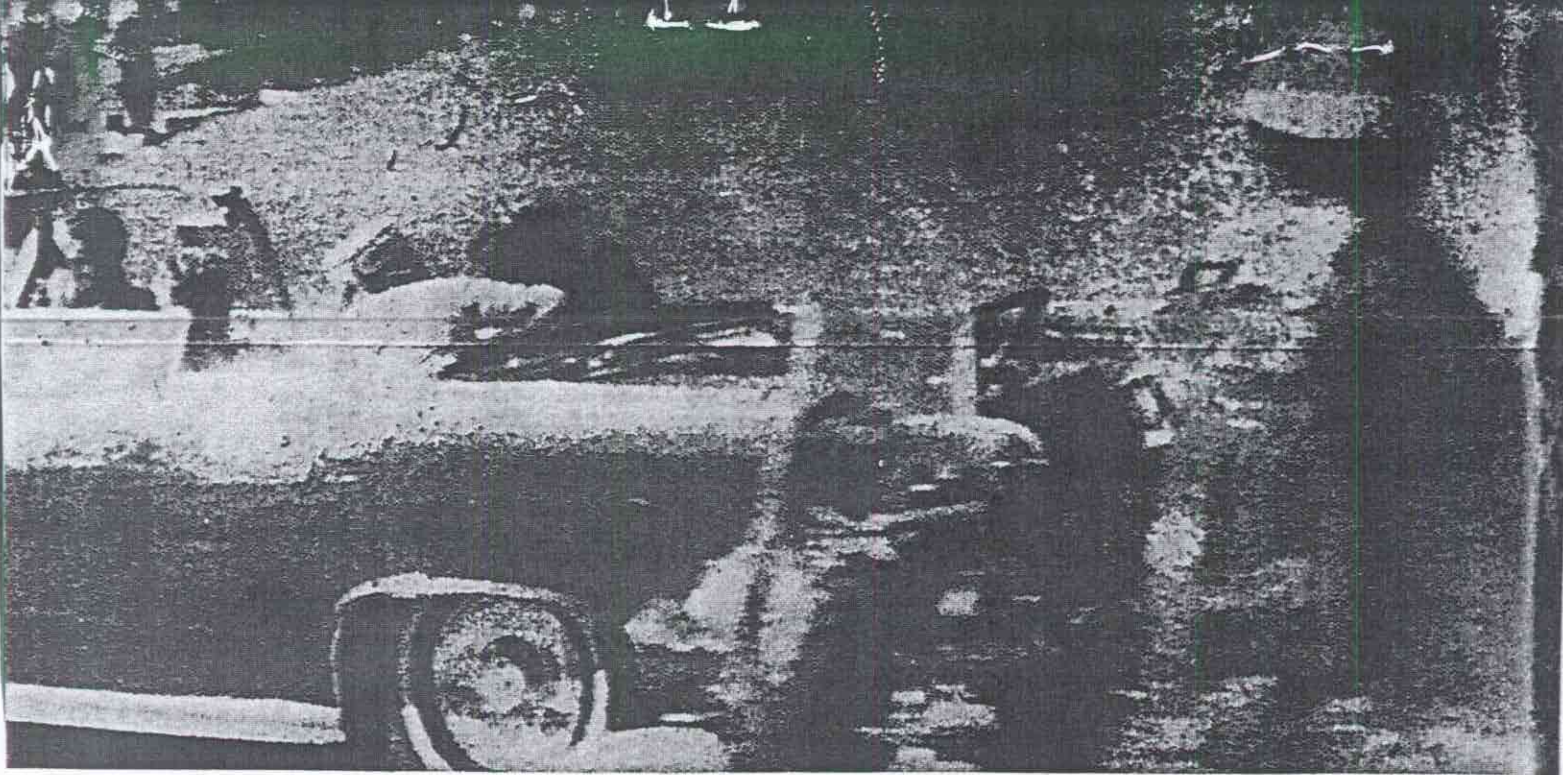
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PRIVATE PENSIC PLANS IN DANGER

TRUTH ABOUT KENNEDY ASSASSINATION

Questions Raised and Answered





—UPI Photo

Tragedy strikes in Dallas as a bullet fells President Kennedy

TRUTH ABOUT KENNEDY ASSASSINATION

Questions Raised and Answered

Suddenly, a rash of new questions has been raised about the Kennedy assassination.

Was there a conspiracy to kill the President and another to hide the truth? Was the Warren report written in haste to prove a theory?

Here are the answers, based on exhaustive research into the whole investigation.

Also, starting on page 48: an exclusive interview with a key investigator who tells what is—and is not—established by the evidence.

Is there any remaining mystery surrounding the assassination of former President John F. Kennedy on Nov. 22, 1963, at Dallas, Tex.?

Three years after the tragic event—and two years after the report on the Warren Commission investigation—questions still are being raised.

The disturbing questions are posed in a growing library of books published here and abroad, criticizing the work of the Commission, casting doubt on the identity of the assassin, and suggesting that some sort of “conspiracy” may have existed, either to do away with the President, or to “cover up” the circumstances after the deed.

Now there are reports of a new book

to be published—supposedly with the approval of the Kennedy family—that injects further controversy, with particular reference to events in the immediate aftermath of the assassination.

“The Times” of London has called on the Warren Commission to reopen its inquiry, to deal with various points of criticism. Some American commentators are urging the same course.

Congress to re-examine? A New York Republican—Representative Theodore R. Kupferman—proposes a joint congressional committee to review the work of the Warren Commission, and determine whether a legislative investigation is in order.

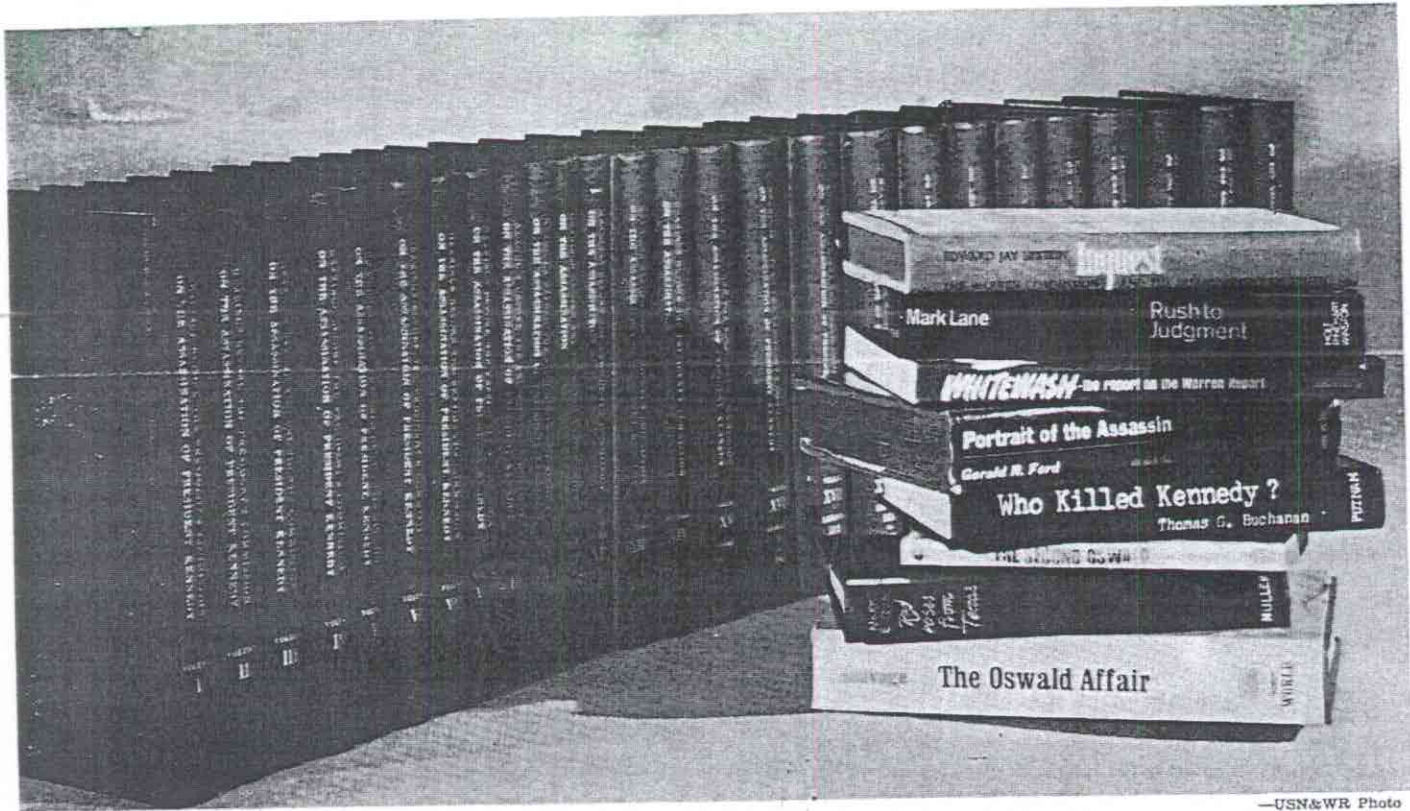
The nagging doubts raised by enter-

prising authors seem to find an especially receptive audience abroad. An international observer explained:

“In certain European countries, when there is a tragedy of this kind, there is an inclination to say, ‘Oh, it must have been a plot.’ There have been a good many assassinations of political leaders in some of these countries. Sometimes there were plots, sometimes not.

“In Europe, many people are inclined to think this was a political assassination. That notion may be widespread in Latin America, too, where there is a long history of military coups.

“But in the United States, when you look at the assassinations of Presidents, one doesn’t find the conspiracy element,



—USN&WR Photo

New books, shown in front, raise questions on findings in voluminous Warren record

except in the case of Abraham Lincoln. All of the others—James Garfield, William McKinley, and John F. Kennedy—were done by 'loners,' the work of a single, disturbed individual."

Commission's rebuttal. Officials connected with the Warren Commission make these points about the recent outpouring of critical books:

- Basically, they represent the views of individuals—students, professors, lawyers, commercial writers—who relied almost entirely on evidence developed by the Commission in the course of its 10-month inquiry.

Arlen Specter, a key member of the Commission's legal staff and now the district attorney of Philadelphia, stresses this in an interview with "U. S. News & World Report" starting on page 48.

"There has not been a scintilla of new evidence disclosed in any of the books," Mr. Specter said. "What they are basically is a taking of the Commission evidence, which was set forth bountifully, and a reconstruction in accordance with what the authors or others may have formulated to be their views on the events."

- The suggestion made in some books of "collusion" on the part of "high officials" to "cover up" the facts surrounding the President's death is based on the assumption that many people—the 7 members of the Warren Commission, the 15 lawyers and 12 administrators who served on the staff, the scores of clerks and writers and technical experts, the doctors at Bethesda Naval Hospital and Parkland Hospital in Dallas, the hundreds of investigators for the FBI, CIA, Secret Service, Internal Revenue Service, armed-forces intelligence, and other

federal, State, and local agencies—could be acting together in some gigantic "conspiracy" to suppress the truth.

"It's impossible." One official commented: "That's not only monstrous—it's impossible."

President Johnson created the Commission headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren by Executive Order 11,130 on Nov. 29, 1963, to avoid multiple inquiries by federal, State, or local jurisdictions, concentrating the fact-finding in a body having the broadest mandate.

The official investigation—originally planned to last from three to six months—was stretched to eight and then 10 months, to provide enough time.

The Commission submitted its report on Sept. 27, 1964. The report included a summary document of more than 900 pages with findings and conclusions, plus 26 supporting volumes of testimony, exhibits, and investigative reports, totaling nearly 6 million words. All of the documents are now preserved in the National Archives.

What emerged in prolific detail was a factual account of one of the great tragedies of U. S. history—and a debunking of rumors and theories that circulated freely at the time of the assassination.

On several occasions, the Commission and its technical experts visited the scene in Dallas, to conduct scientific tests under simulated conditions, interview witnesses, and trace the movements of the assassin by stopwatch.

The FBI ordered 80 additional agents into the Dallas area alone. Hundreds more all over the country worked on various phases of the case.

Before it was over, the FBI had conducted approximately 25,000 interviews,

submitting 2,300 reports totaling 25,400 pages. The Secret Service conducted 1,550 interviews, submitting 800 reports totaling 4,600 pages.

Additional information was obtained from the CIA and military or diplomatic channels overseas, and from other federal, State or local agencies in the U. S., including the Dallas police and the attorney general of Texas.

The Commission said in its report:

"These conclusions represent the reasoned judgment of all members of the Commission, and are presented after an investigation which has satisfied the Commission that it has ascertained the truth concerning the assassination of President Kennedy to the extent that a prolonged and thorough search makes this possible."

The Assassin

The primary question of the inquiry was: Who killed President Kennedy?

The Commission found: "The shots which killed President Kennedy, and wounded Governor Connally [of Texas], were fired by Lee Harvey Oswald."

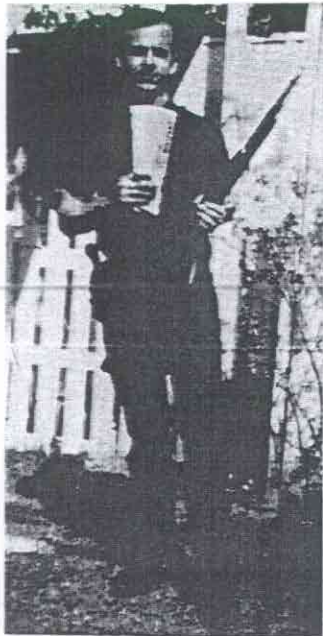
The next question was whether Oswald was the sole assassin. It is on this point that most doubt-creators focus.

The Warren Commission concluded that "Oswald acted alone." It said there was no connection between Oswald and Jack Ruby, a night-club operator, who shot Oswald fatally in the Dallas police station less than 48 hours after the assassination of President Kennedy.

The Commission said it could find "no evidence" of any conspiracy, "foreign or domestic," to assassinate the President.

Lee Harvey Oswald was identified as a 24-year-old, withdrawn, "emotionally dis-

(continued on next page)



—Wide World Photo

Lee Harvey Oswald, named as the "lone assassin," is shown with murder weapon

TRUTH ABOUT KENNEDY ASSASSINATION

[continued from preceding page]

turbed" man, who came from a broken home, had a poor education, and found it difficult to hold a job. He served in the U. S. Marines for nearly three years, where he learned to shoot a rifle, and was given an undesirable discharge.

A self-avowed "Marxist," he "defected" to the Soviet Union, where he lived for 2½ years, married a Russian girl, and tried to renounce his U. S. citizenship.

After returning to America, he organized a fictitious chapter of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, got arrested in New Orleans in a street fight while distributing pro-Castro leaflets, and tried to go back to Russia via Cuba.

"He showed disdain for democracy, capitalism, and American society in general," the Commission said.

The murder weapon was identified as an Italian 6.5-millimeter military rifle which Oswald bought from a Chicago mail-order house under an assumed name.

Oswald's wife, Marina, told the Commission that Oswald often used the alias of "A. Hidell" or "Alek Hidell." She said, "Hidell was merely an altered Fidel," and that "Alek" was Oswald's nickname in Russia.

"Lone assassin" evidence. The conclusion that Oswald was the "lone assassin" was based on findings that he:

1. Owned and possessed the rifle used to kill President Kennedy and wound Governor Connally;

2. Brought the rifle into the Texas School Book Depository Building on the morning of the assassination;

3. Was present, at the time of the assassination, at a sixth-floor window from which the shots were fired;

4. Killed Dallas police officer J. D. Tippett in an attempt to escape;

5. Resisted arrest by drawing a fully loaded pistol and attempting to shoot another police officer;

6. Lied to Dallas police, after his arrest, concerning important matters;

7. Attempted on April 10, 1963, to kill Maj. Gen. Edwin A. Walker (Resigned, U. S. Army);

8. Possessed the skill with a rifle to commit the assassination.

The Commission found that two bullets probably caused all the wounds suffered by both the President and the Governor, that a third shot probably missed the presidential car, and that all three shots were fired in a time period ranging from 4.8 to in excess of 7 seconds, over distances from 176.9 to 265.3 feet.

Two Marine experts "concurred in the opinion that Oswald had the capability to fire three shots, with two hits, within 4.8 to 5.6 seconds." Sergeant James A. Zahm testified: "With the equipment he had and with his ability, I consider it a very easy shot."

Two chief doubts. Critics of the Commission findings, in a dozen or more books, pursue two main lines of attack:

1. They question the evidence produced by the Commission, in an effort to create doubt that there was only one assassin. Some authors go on to suggest a "conspiracy" to murder the President, involving two or more persons.

2. They challenge the credibility of the Commission's work by pointing out that some members did not attend all the sessions, stating that the staff was "overworked," and alleging that a report was "written in haste" to make a "lawyer's brief" for what is called the "official theory" of the assassination.

More-specific questions raised by Commission critics turned on technical points, including these:

• Witnesses differed on identifying Oswald as the man firing a rifle from the Texas School Book Depository Building. The only one who claimed to have seen him did not identify Oswald later in a police lineup.

• Many witnesses—58 out of around 90—thought the first shot came from the railroad overpass, or a grassy knoll, ahead of the presidential car, instead of from "above and behind," as the Commission found.

• There was a wide difference among eye and ear witnesses as to how many shots actually were fired: Some thought they heard only two shots, others up to five or six.

• The murder weapon originally was identified by a deputy sheriff as a 7.6

Mauser, rather than a 6.5 Mannlicher-Carcano, indicating that there might have been more than one weapon, or a switch of weapons.

• Oswald was said to be a "poor marksman," using a second-hand rifle with a "defective" gunsight, who couldn't possibly have fired three shots with such accuracy.

• A paper bag the Commission concluded Oswald used to bring a rifle into the Book Depository Building showed no chemical or physical evidence of ever having contained a rifle, and was of a different size than witnesses remembered.

• The single bullet—exhibit No. 399—which the Commission said hit both President Kennedy and Governor Connally was so clean and undamaged it seemed impossible that it could have gone through two bodies.

• This same bullet, found on the floor of Parkland Hospital in Dallas, originally was thought to have come from the President's body during heart massage, but later was identified as having fallen from Governor Connally's stretcher—one of several apparent discrepancies in testimony that critics made much of.

• The weight of fragments found in Governor Connally's wrist, added to the weight of the bullet found at the hospital, was alleged to add up to more than the weight of a complete bullet—indicating that more shots were fired than the Commission report indicated.

• The bullet found on the hospital floor could have been "planted" there, and certain other evidence "faked," to implicate Oswald, while the real killer escaped.

• The Commission was accused of shutting off testimony from some witnesses and failing to call others who claimed to have pertinent information.

• The Dallas police failed to keep a record of their interrogations of Oswald while he was alive and in their custody.

Critics also made these assertions:

• The Commission failed to reckon with testimony of witnesses who claimed to have seen Oswald, or persons resembling him or giving his name, at times and places when the Commission found he was somewhere else.

• The Commission failed to get the X rays and photographs taken at the time of the autopsy at Bethesda Naval Hospital, which might have cleared up any doubt about the number and position of wounds in the President's body.

• Oswald's guilt was not established by due process of law under legal rules of evidence. Had he lived, and if there had been a trial, a good defense lawyer could have established such a case of "reasonable doubt" as to enable Oswald to go free.

• The Commission did not do an ade-

quate investigative job, did not weigh all of the evidence carefully, rushed through its work in order to get out a report, had no investigative staff of its own, and left it up to a few overworked lawyers to interview and check hundreds of witnesses.

• Governor Connally had the distinct impression that he was hit by a "second shot," rather than the "first bullet," which the Commission said probably penetrated both the President's and the Governor's bodies.

Officials familiar with the inner workings of the Warren Commission say that all of these points are covered in the official report, and that the investigating body was guided in all instances by the cumulative weight of credible evidence from witnesses or scientific tests. The answers, they say, are in the Commission documents, for anyone who wants to look for them.

X Rays and Pictures

Perhaps the major point of controversy, according to some of the critical writers, was an apparent discrepancy between FBI reports and the autopsy report as to the nature of wounds found in the President's body.

A 1,500-page FBI summary, dated Dec. 9, 1963, said in part: "Medical examination of the President's body had revealed that the bullet which entered his back penetrated to a distance of less than a finger length," and that "the bullet was not in the body."

The report of the autopsy performed by three surgeons at Bethesda Naval Hospital on the night of November 22, however, said the doctors were able to trace the course of the bullet through the body, and that the bullet which entered the President's back came out in the front of his neck.

This is the same bullet—exhibit No. 399—which is presumed to have caused all of Governor Connally's wounds, and is thought to have fallen from the Governor's stretcher on the floor at Parkland Hospital in Dallas.

A hasty conclusion? The Commission report indicates that, at a preliminary point in the examination, one of the Bethesda doctors observed that the President's back wound appeared to be shallow, and that he could not find a bullet in the body.

An FBI agent in the room immediately reported this to his superiors. The remark was incorporated in the FBI summary of December 9, and another report on January 13.

"U. S. News & World Report" has established from official sources that the FBI did not receive a copy of the autopsy report until December 23. The remark contained in the December 9 FBI

summary was picked up and repeated in a supplemental January 13 report, with particular reference to where bullet holes appeared in the President's clothing.

FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover subsequently appeared before the Commission, and said the FBI concurred with the official autopsy report. The Commission never relied on the preliminary viewer's report as the best medical evidence of what actually happened.

More important, according to legal experts, is the question of what happened to the X rays and pictures taken of the President's body at the time of the autopsy, which would indicate clearly the position of all wounds.

The Commission report states:

"The hospital received the President's body for autopsy at approximately 7:35 p.m. X rays and photographs were taken preliminarily, and the pathological examination began at about 8 p.m. . . . The cause of death was set forth as 'gun-shot wound, head.'"

Bobby took charge. Official sources have told "U. S. News & World Report" that the complete set of pictures and X rays was never made available to the Warren Commission, or its staff. Here is what these sources report:

Robert F. Kennedy, then U. S. Attorney General and now a U. S. Senator from New York, took charge immediately, and refused to let anyone else see the X rays and pictures.

The autopsy report was completed on November 24, and sent to the White House on November 25. The report was submitted to the Commission, and a copy furnished to the FBI December 23.

Official sources say the X rays and photographs remained under lock and key at Bethesda Naval Hospital until sometime in 1964. Then they were sent to the Secret Service, and turned over to Mrs. Evelyn Lincoln, the late President's longtime secretary.

Mrs. Lincoln, at the time, was working on the Kennedy archives. The X rays and pictures are said to be in this collection, located in the National Archives, but under direct control of the Kennedy family.

In the interview with "U. S. News & World Report," Mr. Specter, who was in charge of this phase of the Warren Commission investigation, says:

"The Commission decided it would not press for those photographs, as a matter of deference to the memory of the late President, because the Commission concluded that the photographs and X rays were not indispensable.

"The photographs and X rays would, in the thinking of the Commission, not have been crucial, because they would have served only to corroborate what

the autopsy surgeons had testified to under oath. . . ."

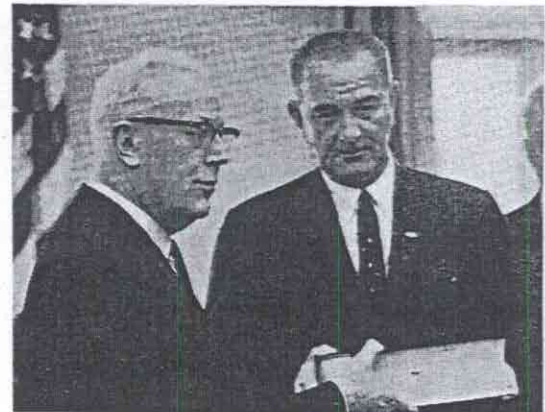
"X rays would be helpful." The Philadelphia district attorney also commented that, "even as corroborative information, the photographs and X rays would always be helpful," and that "any lawyer or any investigator likes to have every conceivable piece of information available to him."

Regarding methods and procedures of the Commission, the report stated:

"After . . . Oswald was shot by Jack Ruby, it was no longer possible to arrive at the complete story of the assassination through normal judicial procedures during a trial of the alleged assassin."

The Commission pointed out that there is no provision under the American system of jurisprudence for a "posthumous trial." Instead, the report said:

"The Commission has functioned neither as a court presiding over an adversary proceeding, nor as a prosecutor determined to prove a case, but as a



—USN&WR Photo

Chief Justice Warren giving President Johnson final report on assassination

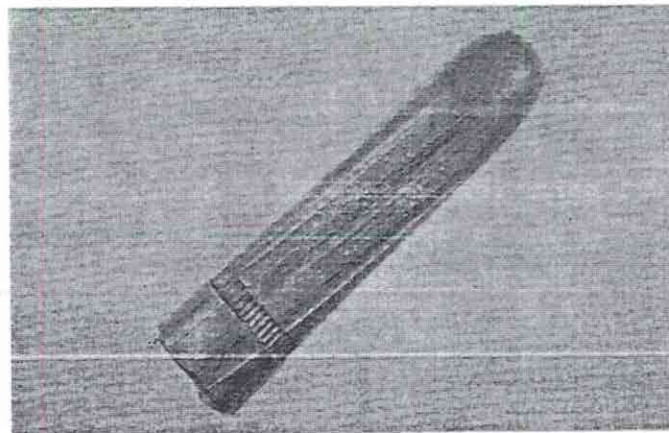
fact-finding agency committed to the ascertainment of the truth."

The lack of quorums. Washington officials familiar with the routine of congressional committees and presidential commissions are amused by the efforts of authors to compile a "box score" on attendance at Commission sessions.

They point out that it is customary for the legal and technical staff to carry the burden of routine investigation, and that a quorum of Commission members was not necessary at every meeting.

However, every member of the Commission received a full stenographic report of every meeting; the Commission passed on all staff work, and suggested lines of inquiry and re-examination. And the final report was approved by all seven members of the full Commission—as the document attests.

Truth About the Kennedy Assassination, Told by a Top Official Investigator



Commission exhibit: bullet found on stretcher at hospital

"OVERWHELMING EVIDENCE OSWALD WAS ASSASSIN"

Interview With Arlen Specter, Assistant Counsel, Warren Commission

Is there more to the assassination story than appears in the mass of testimony and findings made public by the Warren Commission? In this exclusive interview with the lawyer who investigated the physical facts, you get in precise detail what the evidence proves about that fateful day in Dallas three years ago.

Q Mr. Specter, were you the Warren Commission's chief investigator on the facts about the assassination of President John F. Kennedy—how many shots, where the shots came from, other facts?

A I would not describe my role at all beyond what appears in the work of the Warren Commission. It is possible from the notes of testimony to observe that I was responsible for taking the testimony of Governor Connally, Mrs. Connally, the autopsy surgeons, the doctors from Dallas, the wound-ballistics experts—so that it is apparent from that area what my role was. But I think, as an assistant counsel for the Commission, it would be presumptuous of me to characterize my role as that of "chief investigator" on a key part of the assassination investigation.

Q You indicated you were responsible for the evidence concerning the autopsy. Is it your understanding that the Federal Bureau of Investigation did get a copy of the final, official autopsy report?

A I would have no way of being able to state categorically what distribution there was on the autopsy report. I do know that the autopsy report from Dr. Humes and Dr. Boswell and Dr. Finck was in the hands of the Commission early in January when I joined the Commission, so that the Commission had it at that point. I would presume the FBI had it. [Comdr. James J. Humes, Comdr. J. Thornton Boswell, and Lieut. Col. Pierre A. Finck were the pathologists from the armed forces who performed the detailed autopsy of President Kennedy. Dr. Humes was chief autopsy surgeon.]

Q You have no certain knowledge that the FBI had it?

A Oh, absolutely not—I had no way of knowing precisely when the FBI got which documents which were not under their general investigative ken.

Q How do you explain the difference between the autopsy report and the FBI's report of December 9 on President Kennedy's wounds—the FBI having reported that one bullet went in only to a finger's length, whereas the autopsy report said it went through the President's neck?

A The FBI's report in early December reflected the doctors' comments overheard by FBI agents who were present at the autopsy. Those comments were based on factors which were originally thought to be true on the night of the autopsy, when there was relatively limited information available to the doctors actually performing the autopsy.

At that time, the autopsy surgeons did not know that there had been a bullet hole on the front of the President's neck. The bullet hole on the front of the President's neck had been obliterated by the tracheotomy performed by the Parkland [Hospital] doctors in Dallas. [Parkland doctors cut a hole in the President's windpipe in an effort to help him breathe.]

The autopsy surgeons, on the night of November 22, had very limited information. For example, when they started their autopsy, they knew that there was a hole at the base of the back of the neck and a finger could probe between two large strap muscles and penetrate to a very slight extent.

The autopsy surgeons in Washington also knew that there had been external heart massage applied at Dallas. They also had the fragment of information that a whole bullet had been found on a Dallas stretcher. So it was a preliminary observation, or very tentative theory, which was advanced in the early stage of the autopsy, that the bullet might have penetrated a short distance into the back of the President's neck and been forced out by external heart massage, and that the bullet might have been the whole bullet which was found on the stretcher in Dallas.

Alb. 372

Kennedy John F.

Date of Birth — 1917

Date of Death 11/22/63

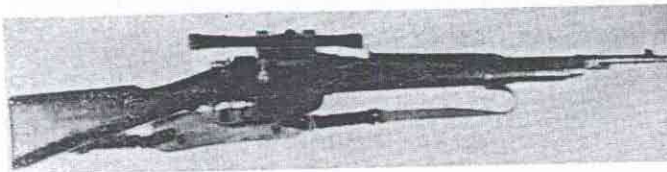
Place of Death 1925 CST Dallas, Tex.

Manufacturer 2425 EST Bethesda, Md.

Clinical Summary

According to available information the deceased, President John F. Kennedy, was riding in a motorcade car in a motorcade during an official visit to Dallas, Texas on 22 Nov. 1963. The president was sitting in the right rear seat with Mrs. Kennedy seated on the same seat to his left. Sitting directly in front of the president was Gen. John B. Conolly of Texas and directly in front of Mrs. Kennedy sat Mrs. Conolly. The vehicle was moving at approximately 100 mph on a highway when an individual fired a rifle from an elevated position that fired to a freeway route to the Dallas Trade Mart when the president was to give an address. Three shots were heard and the president fell forward to the floor of the vehicle.

Commission exhibit: handwritten autopsy report



Commission exhibit: rifle used to kill President Kennedy

When we first reviewed the FBI reports, we were very much concerned with that tentative autopsy conclusion which had been formulated. But, when we later took testimony from the autopsy surgeons and had the whole picture, knowing more—for example, the evidence of the path of the bullet through the President's neck, showing that it entered between two large strap muscles and then went over the top of the pleural cavity and sliced the trachea and exited in a hole in the front of the neck, or at least showing that there was a bullet path through the President's neck, without getting at this juncture into the question of whether the bullet entered or exited in the front of the neck—when this whole picture was presented later, it was apparent that the preliminary conversations reported in the FBI document were only very tentative.

In fact, Dr. Humes had formulated a different conclusion, tentative as it might have been, the very next day when he had a chance to talk to Dr. Perry by telephone in Dallas [Dr. Malcolm O. Perry of Parkland Hospital, one of the doctors attending President Kennedy]. That was when he found that there had been a bullet hole on the front of the neck, before the tracheotomy was performed.

As the autopsy had gone along, Dr. Humes had found the bullet path through the body, and that led to the phone call to Dr. Perry for more information.

Q If the FBI had received a copy of the final autopsy report, completed on November 24, why did it write into its December 9 report the tentative conclusion that a bullet entered the upper back for a short distance—and then repeat that same theory in a later report dated January 13?

A That is a question which would best be directed to the
(continued on next page)

... TO SHED LIGHT ...

In the following statement, Arlen Specter explains why he granted the interview on these pages:

"When I was asked if I would agree to talk to 'U. S. News and World Report' on the subject of the Warren Commission's investigation of the Kennedy assassination, I decided, after considerable thought, that my answer would be 'Yes'—in view of the public concern that has arisen in the wake of books on the Commission.

"I am willing to answer questions which may shed light on the subject and clear up areas of misunderstanding that may exist in the public mind as a result of what has been written and widely published.

"In this regard, I believe that the Commission Report itself, and certainly the 26 volumes of evidence, contain within their covers the comprehensive answers to all substantive questions. However, it is not easy for those answers to be available to the average person, who may have read the buckshot attacks which have been forthcoming against the Commission Report.

"To put some of the criticism into proper focus, I am willing to respond to questions and point out parts of the Report and areas of evidence which I consider complete answers to the so-called critics."



—USN&WR Photo

Arlen Specter, now district attorney of Philadelphia, is a prominent legal investigator who was chosen in 1964 to assist the Warren Commission in its investigation of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Mr. Specter, 36, is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and of the Yale Law School, where he was on "The Yale Law Journal." He was a special investigative agent of the U. S. Air Force from 1951 to 1953. As assistant district attorney of Philadelphia from 1959 to 1963, he prosecuted leaders of Local 107 of the Teamsters Union. In 1964-65, he conducted an investigation of Philadelphia magistrates as special assistant attorney general of Pennsylvania.

INTERVIEW: "OSWALD WAS ASSASSIN"

[continued from preceding page]

FBI. The only responses that I could give you would be my inferences. The Federal Bureau of Investigation may not have had the autopsy report when its report, dated December 9, was originally prepared. [An unimpeachable source told "U. S. News & World Report" the autopsy report was delivered to the FBI on December 23.] As to the January report containing the same information, some data from the earlier report may have been repeated without carefully focusing on it—as such later reports frequently are repetitious without any special reason, except perhaps to give the reader the information if he missed it earlier.

I do know that the FBI itself came to the same conclusions that the Commission did. Mr. Hoover testified to this, and nobody in the Bureau placed any substantial credence in the preliminary thoughts as reflected in the early reports.

THE AUTOPSY REPORT—

Q Mr. Specter, can we get a little more on the picture of the autopsy itself? How long did the autopsy surgeons have with the President's body? Did they have sufficient time to make a thorough autopsy, or were they being pressed to deliver his body to the undertaker?

A In response to a specific question like that, I would refer to the autopsy report. My general recollection is that they were not pressed at all, that they started on it in the early evening on November 22 and they worked on the body through the night, and the body was not prepared for burial until the morning of November 23, and that it was taken to the White House to lie in state somewhere in the 4-to-5 a.m. area on November 23.

Q So they had only a few hours in the night of the 22nd?

A That is correct, but, to the best of my information, that is an adequate opportunity to perform a comprehensive autopsy report subject to supplemental studies, as, for example, were done on the brain. There was a supplemental autopsy report on the President's brain.

Q Then is there any reason to believe that you did not get a thorough, competent medical-autopsy report?

A No. Beyond that, there is every reason to believe that we did get a comprehensive, thorough, professional autopsy report from trained, skilled experts.

Q Were there preliminary autopsy reports or memoranda of any kind that were destroyed?

A Yes, the record is plain that there had been a series of notes taken by Dr. Humes at the time of the actual performance of the autopsy [on the night of Friday, November 22] which had been destroyed when he made a written—handwritten—autopsy report on Sunday, November 24.

Bear in mind, on that point, that, when Dr. Humes was called upon to conduct an autopsy of the President and then retired to his home on Sunday to make a formal report which he knew was important, he did not quite have the perspective of a historian who is culling the premises with a fine-tooth comb.

He had never performed an autopsy on a President, and he was using his best judgment under the circumstances, never dreaming that loose, handwritten notes would become a subject of some concern.

That matter was of concern immediately to his superiors, and he was questioned on it. He made a formal report on it, and he explained his reasons fully before the Commission.

Q Is his testimony in the open record—for the public to read?

A It is—absolutely.

Q Mr. Specter—going now to the crucial point of whether the wound in the neck was caused by a bullet coming from the front or rear—can you say how it was determined that the exit point for the bullet was in the front, rather than the rear?

A Yes, I can tell you how the evidence was analyzed to determine which conclusion was accurate.

The President was found with a series of bullet wounds when examined both at Parkland Hospital and by the autopsy surgeons. At each place, they had only limited access.

First, at Parkland, the President's body was not turned over, for a number of reasons—most specifically because they dealt with the very grave problems of trying to restore his breathing, which was impaired by a hole in his throat, and, secondarily, to try to get circulation through his body, which was impaired by a massive head wound.

So he was gone before they could cope with the problems on his front side.

The autopsy surgeons were limited, to some extent, because they did not see the original hole in the front of the neck, to make observations on what it might have been.

The hole on the front of the neck was visible only for a relatively short period of time by the doctors at Dallas—from the time they removed his shirt and cut away his tie until the time Dr. Perry performed the tracheotomy.

The hole on the back of the President's neck was visible for a protracted period of time by the autopsy surgeons who worked on him at the Bethesda Naval Hospital.

The autopsy surgeons described, in detail, the characteristics of the wound on the back of the President's neck, and there was no doubt but what those characteristics showed it to be a wound of entry—a round, regular hole, which showed it to be a point of entry.

PATH OF THE BULLET—

Q Were pictures taken of these wounds?

A Yes, they were. But, before we get into that, I want to develop this business of exit and entry wounds. The question is a very complex one, so let me continue to tell you what the characteristics were which indicated what was on the back and what was on the front of the President.

Besides the characteristics of the wound on the back of the President's neck, as testified to under oath by the autopsy surgeons, indicating it to be a point of entry, the fibers of the shirt on the back of the President and the fibers of the suit jacket on the back of the President were both pushed inward, and both indicated that the hole in the back of the President's neck was an entry hole.

The fiber on the front of the shirt was inconclusive—it was a slit. You could not determine in which direction the fiber was pushed, nor could the nick on the tie be used to determine what was the direction of the shot.

The hole on the front of the President's neck was such that, by its physical characteristics alone, it could have been either a wound of entry or a wound of exit.

The reason that such a hole would be inconclusive turns on the consideration that the bullet which passed through the President's neck met virtually no resistance in the President's body—it struck no bone, it struck no substantial muscle. It passed, in fact, between two large strap muscles. It did cut the trachea, and it passed over the pleural cavity. It exited through the soft tissue—or it passed through, without showing whether it entered or exited—the soft tissue on the front of the throat.

Tests were performed by wound-ballistics experts at Edgewood, Md., where the composition of the President's neck was duplicated, through a gelatinous solution in one sample,

(continued on next news page)

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through a goat-meat mixture in another, and through a third of, I believe, horse-meat composition. And goatskin was placed on each side of the substance made to duplicate the President's neck.

The Manlicher-Carcano rifle, which was found on the sixth floor of the Texas Schoolbook Depository Building, was used in the experiments, as was the same type of bullet found on the stretcher in Parkland Hospital. The distance of approximately 180 feet was used, so as to set the stage as closely approximating the actual conditions as possible.

The characteristics of the entry and exit marks on the goatskin show that it is not possible to tell conclusively whether the point of exit on the goatskin, from a bullet that had traveled through the simulated neck, would be a wound of entry or a wound of exit, because of the factors involved in a high-powered missile which is stable when it passes through a relatively porous material.

Now, when Dr. Perry answered questions at a news conference called in Dallas on the afternoon of November 22, as reported in the Commission work and as referred to in a "New York Herald Tribune" report of the same day, he was asked a series of hypothetical questions based on what was known at that time—for example, the fact that there was a wound on the front of the throat and a big wound in the top of the head.

And Dr. Perry said that those wounds could have been accounted for by having a bullet come in through the neck, strike the vertebrae in back, and glance up through the top of the head—which would be an extraordinary combination, but one which was conceivable in the light of the limited information available to the Dallas doctors at that time.

But, when all the factors I have described were studied in the context of the "overlay"—that is, all the things we had good reason to believe occurred—when they were all put together, the Commission concluded that the wound in the front of the neck, whose characteristics were not determinative, was actually a wound of exit.

Q When Dr. Humes called from the Bethesda Naval Hospital to Parkland Hospital in Dallas, in connection with the autopsy, were the doctors in Dallas able to shed any light on the wound, in the front of the throat, that had been obscured by the tracheotomy?

A As I recollect it, the best information that could be provided by the Dallas doctors involved the location of the wound and its general characteristics, without any definite statement as to entry or exit.

You must bear in mind that as each individual, in many contexts in this investigation, saw the evidence, he saw only a limited amount of the evidence.

And the overlay, as the Commission saw it, with literally thousands of pieces of information, is something quite different from the way any individual saw one incident or parts of the evidence.

THE AUTOPSY PICTURES—

Q Could we get to this matter of the pictures of the President's body? Have you seen the pictures?

A The complete set of pictures taken at the autopsy was not made available to me or to the Commission. I was shown one picture of the back of a body which was represented to be the back of the President, although it was not technically authenticated. It showed a hole in the position identified in the autopsy report. To the best of my knowledge, the Commission did not see any photographs or X rays.

Q Why were all the pictures not shown?

A Because the Commission decided that it would not press for those photographs, as a matter of deference to the memory of the late President and because the Commission concluded that the photographs and X rays were not indispensable.

The photographs and X rays would, in the thinking of the Commission, not have been crucial, because they would have served only to corroborate what the autopsy surgeons had testified to under oath, as opposed to adding any new facts for the Commission.

Q Right now, in view of the fact that within the last couple of years many doubts have arisen, do you or do you not think that these photographs might allay some of those doubts?

A It is my view now, and it has always been my view as a general proposition, that the greater the quantity of relevant evidence on any subject, the better off the fact finder is in knowing all of the material factors.

So, from that generalization, it would follow that, even as corroborative information, photographs and X rays would always be helpful.

But that is a different question from passing on the propriety of the Commission's exercise of its discretion in deciding, as a matter of taste, not to insist upon the photographs and X rays at that time.

Q Who ordered these photographs to be sequestered?

A That is a question that I could not answer, because the limitation of my role as a Commission assistant counsel imposed upon me the obligation to search for evidence, including requests, and to sift for evidence that was obtained. An answer to the question you just posed is not one within my personal knowledge.

WHAT THE SURGEONS SAID—

Q Mr. Specter, would not those photographs, if they were available, clear up, beyond all doubt, the question of whether the hole in the back of the neck was higher or lower than the hole in the front of the throat?

A They would corroborate that which is already known, which, in my opinion, has cleared up that question once and for all.

To follow the theory propounded by E. J. Epstein, for example [that the hole in the back was lower than the hole in the front, thus indicating the President could have been shot from the front]—is to say that the autopsy surgeons were perjurers, because the autopsy surgeons placed their hands on the Bible and swore to the truth of an official report where they had measured to a minute extent the precise location of the hole in the back of the President's neck, as measured from other specific points of the body of the President. So I believe that those factors are well established on the basis of the existing record.

The photographs would, however, corroborate that which the autopsy surgeons testified to.

Let me add one thought at this point, and that is that at the time the autopsy surgeons testified, in March of 1964, they had no way of knowing whether the photographs and X rays would later be available to the Commission, to corroborate or to impeach their testimony.

As a matter of fact, Chief Justice Warren directed a question to Dr. Humes as to whether he would change any of his testimony if the photographs and X rays were available—and the record of hearings would speak on that—and Dr. Humes said that he would not.

Q Where are these photographs now?

A I do not know. I have only heard speculation on that subject. Since I never had possession of them and have not

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[continued from preceding page]

talked to anyone who has, I would not at all be able to answer that question.

Q Just to make certain that we understand: You feel the autopsy report itself, coupled with the sworn testimony of the surgeons, was adequate to establish the location of wounds and the probable exit and entry points of bullets, and that the photos and X rays would merely have been corroborative evidence?

A The statement which you have made I think is accurate, with the possible limitation of what may be conceived to be "adequate." Any lawyer or any investigator likes to have every conceivable piece of information available to him.

I do not think, as an assistant counsel on the Commission, that it is within any appropriate range of my authority to disagree with the exercise of discretion of the Commission in deciding not to press for some evidence which they felt was only corroborative and which they felt should be excluded for other reasons of taste.

Q Mr. Specter, is there any doubt in your mind now that the assassin of President Kennedy was Lee Harvey Oswald?

A The evidence is overwhelming that Lee Harvey Oswald was the assassin of President Kennedy.

There can be no real doubt on that subject, based on the factors of ownership of the weapon which was found on the sixth floor of the Texas Schoolbook Depository Building, the handwriting links to Oswald's having ordered that weapon, the fact that it is scientifically, ballistically proved beyond question that the whole bullet found on the stretcher in Parkland Hospital came from that weapon, that the two major fragments found in the front seat of the presidential limousine came from that weapon.

Further indications of Oswald's guilt are his rapid exit, fleeing from the site of the Texas Schoolbook Depository Building and the later killing of Officer [J. D.] Tippit, which was witnessed by several people, plus photographs showing Oswald holding a rifle identified as being the Manlicher-Carcano which was used.

In conjunction with a whole host of other evidence, those were just highlights which, I think, answer conclusively and far beyond that which we normally prove in criminal cases that Oswald was the assassin.

Q Do you recall any evidence that indicated or suggested that more than one assassin might have been involved? Are you just as certain that only one assassin was involved as you are that Oswald killed President Kennedy?

A The converse question is much more difficult because it involves the proof of a negative, and it is much more difficult to prove conclusively that something did not happen than it is to prove that something did happen.

To take the simplest illustration: If you wish to prove that John Jones was at Broad and Chestnut on January 1, you need only a witness or two who saw John Jones at Broad and Chestnut on January 1. If, on the other hand, you want to prove that John Jones was not at Broad and Chestnut on January 1, you must have, over a 24-hour period, sufficient witnesses who were looking for John Jones at that spot to prove that he was not there. So it is substantially more difficult to prove a negative.

The very most that can be said, and the most that was said by the Commission, was that no evidence came to its attention which in any way supported a conclusion that there was a conspirator with Oswald.

Q Could you tell us your own personal feeling about this, —having delved into it so deeply? What is your own hunch about it? Would you go beyond what the Commission said?

A I would certainly stand foursquare behind the Commission's conclusion that there was absolutely no evidence called to the Commission's attention which would indicate a co-conspirator on the case.

The Commission did an exhaustive job, in conjunction with using research facilities from the many federal agencies, to see if there was any connection, for example, between [Jack] Ruby and Oswald, since that was the thought that came first to mind in terms of the possibility of a coconspiracy.

The Commission left no stone unturned to track down Oswald's background to the maximum extent possible, to see if he had dealings with anyone else who might have been a co-conspirator.

And also the same thoroughness was used with Ruby's background, to make the same determination.

And I am confident that the Commission did the very best job that could have been done under the circumstances.

Q Did you have enough time, when you went to Dallas, to investigate thoroughly the evidence on such points as whether a shot could have come from the grassy knoll?

Commission exhibit:
schematic drawing of
bullet's path through
President Kennedy's
neck, based on sworn
testimony of three
doctors at autopsy

Drawing, showing bullet on downward path and striking no bone, bears on two vital questions: Was President shot from behind? Could the same bullet that hit him also hit Governor Connally, with little damage to the bullet itself?



A It is my view that the Commission used ample time in finishing its investigation and coming to its conclusion. The Commission was flexible in its timetable.

It started out with the thought that the investigation could be in the three-to-six-month range. When the investigation required more time, more time was taken.

It was hoped that preliminary reports and drafts would be submitted in early June. They were submitted in only a couple of cases in early June. And the completion date for the report moved back into early July, and then to mid-July and early August, and then mid-September, and then late September.

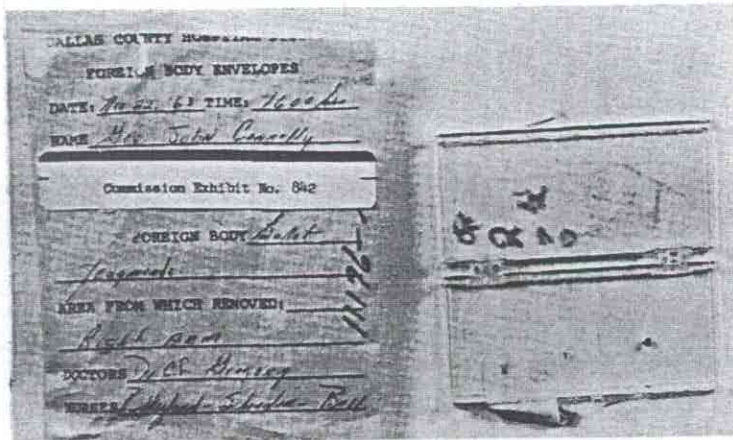
You must bear in mind, as we review the matter more than two years after the Commission's report has been published, that there was great concern all around the United States—and around the world, for that matter—on what were the facts in connection with the President's assassination.

Some doubting Thomases, who have evidenced themselves in prolific fashion in recent months, were also writing and talking before the Commission's report came out. Some of those men who are now authors were spokesmen at that time.

... "Officers saw no shooting from the grassy knoll"

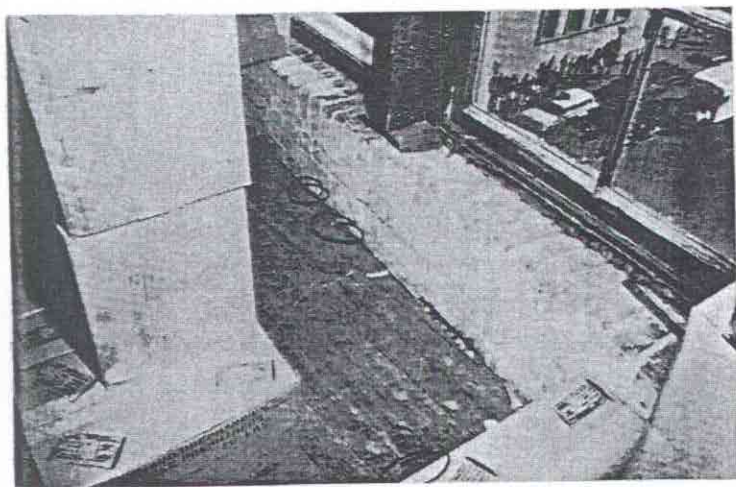
And the Commission felt under a duty to publish its report with reasonable promptness.

The area of responsibility which I worked on, as shown by the notes of testimony, was such that I was able to complete the drafts of reports and submit them by early June. The testimony of the autopsy surgeons and the Dallas doctors and the key participants around the scene of the incident had all been taken, and the on-site tests had been completed—and I was available in the months of June, July and August, as the reports show, to help in other areas.



Commission exhibit: bullet fragments

Tiny bits of metal, shown here in plastic case, were in Governor Connally's wrist—the only metal found in his wounds



Commission exhibit: three cartridge cases

Photo shows three spent cartridge cases on floor near south-east-corner window of Texas Schoolbook Depository Building

I was asked to go to Dallas for the Ruby polygraph in mid-July and go to the West Coast to track down some matters relating to Ruby on some individuals we hadn't been able to locate earlier. So that, if I had wanted to perform any further investigation, there was ample time for me to do so.

Q Could we take up specific points that are raised by critics of the investigation? One is the statement that 58 of

90 witnesses at the scene of the assassination believe, or testified, that shots came from the grassy knoll in front of the President's car. Why did you reject their testimony?

A Because auditory response on the origin of shots is totally unreliable in so many situations, especially where you have the acoustical situation present at Dealey Plaza in Dallas, where tall buildings were present on three sides.

The witnesses in the vortex of the assassination event thought the contrary to what those farther away thought. They testified in terms of shots coming overhead and to the right and rear, as the witnesses in the presidential caravan itself said.

There were officers on the overpass who had a good view of the grassy knoll, and they saw no shooting from the knoll. Digesting the evidence as a whole, there simply was no credible evidence that any shot came from the grassy knoll.

Q Was there any evidence at all that conflicted with the theory that the President was shot from above and behind?

A There was no credible evidence, by which the Commission meant believable evidence. There were people who ran off in the direction of the grassy knoll, but there was no one who saw anyone on the grassy knoll with a weapon, as, for example, eyewitnesses did see a rifle protruding from the sixth floor of the Texas Schoolbook Depository Building.

There were no ballistic marks of any shot having come from the area of the grassy knoll, as there were indications that shots came above and to the rear—for example, the wound on Governor Connally's back and the wound on the back of the President's head, and the mark on the windshield of the presidential limousine, which indicated that at least a fragment of a bullet had struck the windshield from the rear.

Q Was that mark on the inside of the windshield?

A Yes.

Bear this in mind: While some may speculate on the characteristics of the President's wounds because of the absence of the pictures, none can speculate with any just cause on the wounds of Governor Connally. He took his shirt off in front of the Commission, and we took a look at his back in the presence of the thoracic surgeon who operated on him. And it was perfectly plain as to the fact that the bullet had struck the Governor in the back and had exited below the right nipple at a lower angle on the front of his body.

Q Yet the Governor is in opposition to the theory that that's the same bullet that went through the President—

A Not precisely. The Governor is of the opinion that he was struck by the second shot—by a shot subsequent to the first shot which he heard—which conclusion was based on the factors of the speed of sound from a shot, as opposed to the speed of a bullet.

But the Governor's testimony was weighed with great care, as was the testimony of every single witness, and the Commission concluded that the overlay of the evidence was such that the Governor's opinions were not followed. But every one of his opinions was fully published and set forth for every reading American to see.

Q And you talked to the Governor, as counsel for the Commission—is that correct?

A Better than talk; I questioned him in front of a court reporter, where every syllable that he uttered was taken down and preserved for everyone to read—after a very brief preliminary discussion as to Commission procedure and a brief session where the Governor witnessed the Zapruder films [a tourist's movie of the assassination]. But the details of his testimony were stenographically transcribed.

Q How did you determine how many shots there were?

A The best that can be said on the number of shots is

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what the evidence indicates. And here we're not dealing in terms of mathematics; we're dealing in terms of probabilities, to put it realistically.

As to the number of shots, the witnesses testified from two to six, so you could take a wide range of choice.

There were three spent cartridges found on the sixth floor of the Texas Schoolbook Depository Building. There were three young men on the fifth floor at the time the President was assassinated, and those young men testified that they heard a sound which was later concluded to have been the dropping of a bullet casing to the floor.

There is a record of a test, which was repeated for all seven Commissioners on three different occasions at the Texas Schoolbook Depository Building, where Chief Justice Warren and every other one of the Commissioners stood on the fifth floor where the three young men stood—and the location of those men was pinpointed by a photograph taken at the time of the assassination by a photographer in a car in the presidential motorcade. In that context, all the Commissioners heard a sound which they later concluded, and which the Commission as a whole later concluded, was the sound of a shell which had fallen to the floor.

Based on the presence of three spent shells on the sixth floor of the Texas Schoolbook Depository Building, the Commission concluded that most probably three shots were fired.

The metal recovered from the stretcher and the presidential car indicated one whole bullet and fragments of another bullet, which indicated that there would have to have been at least two bullets fired.

The conclusion that three shots were fired then led to the inference that one shot might have missed or that one shot might have disappeared totally. If there had been other shots, which is highly doubtful, in the light of all we know—there is no remnant or trace of evidence to indicate that there were such other shots.

Q No spectator was struck that day in Dallas?

A There were reports that objects did strike in other parts of Dealey Plaza, which would be consistent with a third shot missing or even with a fragment from the shot that hit the President's head striking in that area.

Q What about the mark on the curbstone, Mr. Specter? Was there not a mark on a Dallas curb that indicated either a bullet or a fragment of a bullet struck the curbstone?

A There was such an indication, and the best thinking was that it might well have been caused by a bullet.

But, there again, it could not be ascertained with precision that it was caused by an event at the specific time of the assassination.

As in so many things, the most that could be said about the tangible physical evidence was that it was consistent with consequences which the Commission found to have occurred.

Q What about the charge that the pieces found from one bullet add up to more than the bullet would have weighed originally?

A It is not correct that there were pieces which would be in excess of what the bullet weighed. If you are referring to fragments which were found of what probably was the bullet which hit the President's head—there were two substantial fragments found in the front seat of the car, one weighing 40-some grains and one weighing 20-some grains. A whole bullet weighed between 160 and 161 grains.

Q But what about the other bullet, the one that was found on the stretcher at Parkland Hospital, which presumably passed through the President's body and the Governor's

body? That bullet, plus the pieces found in Governor Connally, is said by critics of the Commission to add up to more than 160 or 161 grains—

A The mathematics does not support that criticism even though the whole bullet which was found on the stretcher had lost relatively little substance.

The substance which was deposited principally in the Governor's wrist was so light that it could not even be weighed. It was described by Dr. Gregory, the orthopedic surgeon, as being in the postage-stamp-weight category. So that by taking the best estimates of the weight of the metallic fragments deposited in the parts of the bodies, there was still a sufficient weight differential so that those small deposits would be consistent with having come from the bullet on the stretcher.

Q Where did the bullet that was found on the stretcher come from?

A There was a bullet found on a stretcher in Parkland Hospital on the day of the assassination, as the Warren Report points out and as testimony shows. The bullet was identified as most probably coming from Governor Connally's stretcher.

Here again, the hospital attendants were not cognizant of the fact that a bullet was about to drop off a stretcher, and they didn't maintain a chain of evidence such as would be highly desirable if we were to introduce matters in a Philadelphia criminal case.

But the bedclothes from President Kennedy's stretcher were wrapped up, and other definite evidence indicated that this bullet was not from President Kennedy's stretcher and that it was from a stretcher that was in an area where a stretcher was located which had been used for Governor Connally.

Q Is this the bullet, identified as exhibit 399, that is thought to have passed through President Kennedy's body and then through Governor Connally's body and subsequently dropped out of the Governor's body on the stretcher?

A The most probable conclusion is that it did just that. But I think it is important to note that the conclusion that one bullet went through the President's neck and inflicted all the wounds on the Governor was not a prerequisite to the Commission's conclusion that Oswald was the sole assassin.

The point is often made that such a conclusion is indispensable to a single-assassin finding, but that is not so.

As a matter of fact, the original thought, before the Commission conducted its extensive investigation, was—or the preliminary thinking was—that a single bullet passed through the President's neck, a second bullet struck the Governor, and a third bullet hit the President's head.

During the course of the investigation, the Commission concluded the probabilities were that the same bullet that passed through the President's neck also struck the Governor, but that finding is not a *sine qua non* for the conclusion that Oswald was the sole assassin.

Q Does it disturb the conclusion at all that Oswald—and Oswald alone—was the assassin?

A It does not, because there was sufficient time for three shots to have been fired even if one bullet did not strike both the President and the Governor.

Q You say there was time for three shots within the time sequence established by the Zapruder films of the shooting and the time required for working the bolt action of the rifle?

A That is correct. The time span ran between 4.8 and 5.6 seconds, from the instant of the neck wound, assuming the President responded immediately, to the impact of the head wound.

And it cannot be ascertained with any more precision, be-

... "There was no other bullet found anywhere in the car"

cause approximately .8 of a second was consumed while the President's car went behind the road sign and out of view of the Zapruder film.

The rifle could be fired as rapidly as 2.3 seconds between shots. But bear this in mind: When you fire three times, the first shot is not taken into account in the timing sequence. This point is missed repeatedly by the would-be critics of the Commission report.

For example, aim is taken: Bang!—at least 2.3 seconds must pass while the bolt action is worked and aim is taken again; bang!—2.3 seconds again for bolt action and aim; bang! So that three shots can be fired within a 4.6-second range of time.

Q But didn't the film show that the President was hit and then 1.8 seconds later Governor Connally showed signs of having been hit?

A The film, in my opinion, does not lend to such pre-

U. S. MARINE CORPS
SCORE BOOK
for U. S. RIFLE, CALIBER .30, M1
and U. S. CARBINE, CALIBER .30, M1A1

Issued to: Oswald, L.H. Rifle No. 4314215
Organization: 2060 2 ATV Date Issued: 2 Dec 56

RIFLE [10 target icons]
CARBINE [10 target icons]

MATMG 20 P-7 (Rev. 5-61)

Commission exhibit: Oswald scorecard

Marine Corps experts testified Oswald was a "reasonably good shot"—"very good" compared with civilian standards

cision as to pin down exactly in which frame of the film it was that Governor Connally was struck.

The film is two-dimensional, and it was viewed by many of us on hundreds of occasions, but you simply cannot be so precise as to tell exactly where it was that Governor Connally was struck. And if you think you can establish the frame—as the Governor himself indicated in his opinion—you still do not know precisely where President Kennedy was when President Kennedy was struck on the first occasion.

So that the events of the assassination just cannot be reduced to mathematical certainty by use of a stop watch and the Zapruder film, notwithstanding all of our efforts to recreate it with minute precision through the on-site tests which we made late in May.

Q What do you say to the critics who build an entire case of doubt in this area on these figures of time, indicating that the theory of a single shot hitting President Kennedy and Governor Connally is vital to the whole finding of the Commission?

A I think that some critics have chosen to seize on the single-shot theory as a way of charging that there was a rationale of the assassination constructed for ulterior purposes. Actually, the single-shot theory is not an indispensable factor for the Commission's conclusion.

In fact, it was a theory reached after exhaustive study and analysis, largely because of the factor that when the car was

lined up, as we lined it up in Dallas, and you looked through the Oswald rifle, as the assassin must have stood, based on all the other independent evidence, the bullet which went through the President's neck would most certainly—or perhaps I should say only most probably—have had to strike either some occupant in the car or something else in the car.

And the car was subjected to a minute examination hours after the assassination and nothing was struck in the car which would account for a major impact caused by a high-velocity bullet having lost so little impact by going through the President's neck.

Q In this same general area of questions, what about the clean bullet? How could this bullet—exhibit 399—pass through two bodies, hitting at least some bones in Governor Connally, without being distorted or dirtied?

A The Commission had an extensive series of tests conducted by the wound-ballistics experts, at Edgewood, Md., of the United States Army. In these tests, an anesthetized goat was shot to simulate—to the greatest extent possible—the impact of a bullet on a rib with a glancing blow such as was given to Governor Connally, as shown by the X ray.

Quite a number of tests were made until one was achieved with just the sort of a glancing blow on a rib that was given to the Governor. Naturally we couldn't reproduce a human body of the same girth, but the difference in dimension was taken into account.

Then cadaver wrists were used to test the wound of the Governor's wrist. And, as a matter of fact, reconstructed skulls were used to test the head shot on the President.

All of this, when put together, showed that it was entirely possible for a bullet to have gone through the President's neck, lost little velocity, then to have gone through the Governor's chest, grazing a rib, but again not striking anything in a smashing fashion.

It would have come out wobbling, as indicated by the large wound on the front of the Governor, and then it would have tumbled through the Governor's wrist.

And there was much independent evidence as to why the wrist wound was caused by a tumbling bullet—for example, the damage done to a nerve and the taking of the clothing into the wound, and a whole host of factors were analyzed by the orthopedic surgeon to indicate that it was not a pristine bullet—which means a bullet which had struck nothing else—that went through the wrist.

And the tumbling bullet would have explained the wound on the volar aspect of the Governor's wrist, and the bullet, which would have lost so much velocity, would account for the slight wound on the Governor's thigh.

The Governor himself thought it likely that the same bullet inflicted all of his wounds, and all of the doctors who attended the Governor thought so.

All of the experts from Edgewood, Md.—the Army wound ballistics people—came to the same conclusion.

Also, there was no other bullet that was found anywhere in the car, which would have accounted for the bullet which inflicted the Governor's wounds. And we do know that his leg, to say nothing of his wrist, was substantially lower than the level of the top of the doors; that, if a bullet had hit his leg, it would have been a curious twist of physics for it to have ended up outside of the car completely.

Q How do you explain the apparent conflict between Oswald's record as a poor marksman and the extraordinarily excellent marksmanship that he displayed on the day of Mr. Kennedy's assassination?

A It is not true that Oswald was a poor marksman. The Commission examined the details of his record as a

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marksman with the Marine Corps, going over the original documents of his training, which I believe were published as part of the Commission's report.

The experts in Marine training appeared before the Commission—it was a deposition, but it was available to the Commission—who characterized his ability as a marksman, and they said that he was a reasonably good shot and, compared to civilian standards, would be classified as a very good shot, perhaps even better.

What must be borne in mind on that subject is the nature of the shot which was presented by the situation. Bear in mind that as the assassin stood in the sixth-floor window, with the rifle pointing out, as described by several eye-witnesses at the scene—the angle of pointing—that it was practically a straight line with Elm Street, as Elm Street proceeds on a slight decline, so that there was no necessity for any abrupt shifting of the line of aim of the marksman as he fired multiple shots.

It was only a matter of working the bolt action and keeping it in the same line. And, at a shot under 100 yards with a extra-power scope, the experts concluded that it was not an extraordinarily difficult shot.

Q Was the rifle's telescopic sight accurate or inaccurate, under examination by the experts? It has been alleged that he had a defective sight—

A Yes.

But, here again, what we are dealing with is the evidence after the fact. The weapon was found a good distance from the point of the place where the assassin stood, and it was, in fact, found over near the stairs leading down and out of the building.

This leads to a very reasonable inference that, when the shooting was completed, the man took the rifle with him to see what he encountered, and, as he got near the steps to exit from the building, he most assuredly didn't place it on the ground with great care to preserve it for its next use; he gave it a pretty good toss, by all standards which are reasonable, that could have damaged the sight.

It would be hard to think otherwise, under the circumstances—which goes to point up the great difficulty of examining evidence, even after one event has transpired, and drawing finite conclusions about its condition before that event.

Q Much is also made, Mr. Specter, of the report that the first police officer identified a different rifle—a Mauser—

A Well, the Manlicher-Carcano, which it was identified as being, apparently had a re-boring of the hole, and you're dealing with a rifle which had many characteristics of the Mauser.

That is the type of error which could have easily been made.

That type of error in identification on a fast glance is relatively unimpressive in the light of the more detailed evidence which ballistically proved that the Manlicher-Carcano fired the bullet found on Connally's stretcher, and the fragments in the front seat of the presidential limousine—and in that area we deal with a precise science—or with the evidence showing the purchase of that weapon from Klein's mail-order house, or with the photographs which show Oswald holding a weapon like that one and with the identification by Oswald's widow—all of which ought to be reviewed by the critical reader at the same time they hear that a police officer made a contrary tentative identification.

Q There is no doubt in your mind that this was the murder weapon—the Manlicher-Carcano rifle that Oswald had at the time on the sixth floor of the Schoolbook Depository—

A None whatsoever.

Q Is it possible that there were any other weapons or that there could have been any switch of weapons?

A All that can be said on the subject of whether there were any other weapons or any switch of weapons is that the painstaking investigation showed no evidence of any other weapon, or any switch.

Q What about the discrepancies in witnesses' testimony with respect to the length of the paper bag that was said to have been used by Oswald to bring the rifle into the building?

A The Commission concluded that the general description of the paper bag was such that it fitted the weapon which Oswald used.

The background on that situation was that Oswald had said that he was bringing in curtain rods for his room. Later it was determined that his room had curtains and rods. The weapon was placed at the house that Oswald came from on the Friday morning.

So all of the evidence tied together to indicate that Oswald in fact brought the weapon into the Texas Schoolbook Depository Building under the pretext of having curtain rods.

Q Were you at all disappointed or handicapped by the fact that the Dallas police did not keep a record of their interrogation of Oswald?

A Well, there again, I believe that the more comprehensive the evidence is, the better it would have been. But I do not believe that the absence was a major obstacle or hindrance.

Q There have been charges that there is a plot afoot to conceal evidence. If some high officials, say, had been in the business of deliberately concealing evidence, do you think it would have been possible to do it?

A I think it would have been absolutely impossible for the autopsy surgeons to perjure themselves. They would have to be in league with numerous other people who were present in the room where the autopsy was conducted, including Secret Service agents and FBI agents and a whole host of people.

When the Commission was formed, President Johnson took great pains to select Commissioners who had high standing and who were independent of the Government or the so-called bureaucracy in Washington. When the Commission then went out to organize its staff, it did not select people who had ties or allegiances to Government who might have been beholden to some department or another for their jobs, but, instead, chose men of outstanding reputation, like Joe Ball from California, a leader of the California bar for many years and a professor there noted for his work in criminal defense.

Similar selections were made on an independent basis from New York and Chicago and Des Moines and New Orleans and Philadelphia and in Washington—so that every conceivable pain was taken to select people who were totally independent, which is hardly the way you set out to organize a truth-concealing commission.

Q Oswald did some pretty fast traveling the first 45 or 46 minutes after the assassination. Are you completely satisfied that he would have been physically able to get to all these places at the times he is said to have appeared?

A Yes. By way of elaboration, Chief Justice Warren himself carried a stop watch from the window of the sixth floor in the Texas Schoolbook Depository building and made the long walk down one corridor and up another and over to the dimly lighted steps where he descended four flights to the second floor to see if he could get to the Coke machine

... "There has not been a scintilla of new evidence"

within the time allotted to Oswald. I saw him click the second hand off, and he made it.

Q Did he go the whole route, to the bus, to the taxicab, over to the Oak Cliff section of Dallas?

A He didn't take the whole route, but I think the toughest lap was from the window to the Coke room.

Q Was the rest of it timed by somebody else?

A Oh, absolutely.

Q Did you ever find where Oswald got his ammunition for that rifle?

A That is not squarely within my area of investigation. But to the best of my knowledge the source was pinpointed, because we did obtain other ammunition for the tests which were made by the wound-ballistics experts.

Q Did the Commission ever have anyone except Oswald under suspicion as the possible perpetrator of this crime?

A The evidence at no time indicated that there was any other perpetrator of the offense. But I think it should be noted that the Commission, contrary to some assertions, did not start with the preconceived notion that Oswald was the assassin. The Commission, I think, did its utmost, and in fact, did maintain an open mind on that subject and surveyed the evidence before coming to its conclusion.

Q Did Oswald have any connection with the FBI or any other Government agency?

A To the best of my knowledge, no.

Q Mr. Specter, here is a specific statement from one of the books about the Warren Commission that has attracted wide attention: "The fact that the autopsy surgeons were not able to find a path for the bullet is further evidence that the bullet did not pass completely through the President's body." What is your answer?

A Dr. Humes traced the path of the bullet through the President's body, and I can give you a citation to his testimony on the point.

Q Is that statement from the book false?

A *Inter alia*—among others. I don't know the word for "many" in Latin, or I would say: "Among many others."

Q What do you think of the "two Oswalds" theory—the presumption that Oswald might have had accomplices, that persons resembling Oswald or giving his name were seen at times and places when Oswald was somewhere else?

A Oh, well, why not make it three Oswalds? Why stop with two?

I believe that that is the type of speculation which will be engaged in for centuries where there is an event of such magnitude and of such interest as the assassination of a great President like John F. Kennedy.

Within the past few years, there have been books appearing on the Lincoln assassination, advancing new theories as to who the criminals were. And I think that there will be this type of speculation on the Kennedy assassination during my lifetime, and beyond.

Q Have you seen, in any of the critical comments on the investigation, any new evidence, beyond what was developed by the Commission?

A There has not been a scintilla of new evidence disclosed in any of the books, to the best of my knowledge—certainly nothing that I have read, although I have not read every line of each of the books which have been written.

In the books I have seen, they are basically a taking of the Commission evidence, which was set forth bountifully, and a reconstruction in accordance with what the authors or others may have formulated to be their views on the events.

It's important to emphasize that point: that the Commission

(continued on next news page)



—Wide World Photo

RUBY SLAYS OSWALD—When Jack Ruby shot Lee Harvey Oswald in the Dallas police station, he ended the chance to get the Kennedy assassin's own story—and set the stage for endless speculation about a conspiracy. No evidence has been found to show any prior connection between the two.

INTERVIEW: "OSWALD WAS ASSASSIN"

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sion made available all this evidence because it welcomed the free rein of inquiry and expression on this point. It's a free country, and people may formulate their own conclusions. But the evidence—sifted carefully and taken as a whole—I think, forcefully supports the Warren Commission's findings and conclusions.

Q As the district attorney of a big city, do you feel you could have successfully prosecuted the case against Oswald on the basis of evidence dug up by the Warren Commission?

A That would have been a hard one to lose.

Q If you had been on a jury hearing the case, would you have voted for hanging?

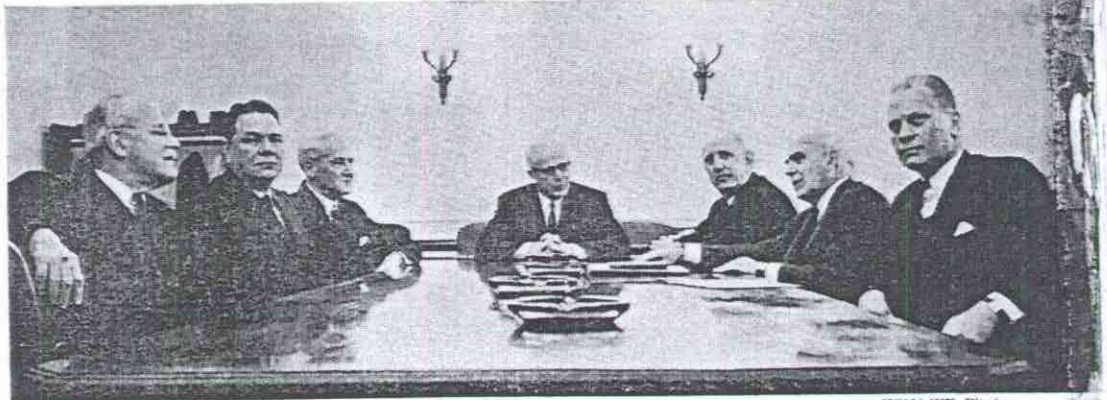
A Well, now, you ask a question about penalty. I think that, on the question of innocence or guilt, realistically viewed, there was no area of doubt as to Oswald's being the assassin.

When you move beyond that into the proofs of negatives, you involve the complex matters we have already discussed.

I would say that, in my years of experience as an assistant district attorney and as district attorney of Philadelphia, I have never seen a case presented in a courtroom that is as convincing as is the case against Oswald where there are not numerous eyewitnesses to the crime.

WARREN COMMISSION—

From left to right, Allen W. Dulles, Representative Hale Boggs, Senator John Sherman Cooper, Chief Justice Earl Warren, Senator Richard Russell, John J. McCloy, Representative Gerald Ford



—USN&WR Photo

I should add that I have never seen the resources devoted to the determination of the truth as were the resources of the United States of America devoted in this case. We simply cannot investigate a matter which arises from a killing in Philadelphia County with the kind of thoroughness that was used on the Kennedy-assassination investigation. There has been no equal of this kind of inquiry, not only in Philadelphia, but anywhere, to my knowledge.

Q To put it another way: If Oswald had lived and had a good criminal lawyer working vigorously with all the elements in this case, could reasonable doubt have been created in the minds of a judge or a jury?

A On the basis of the evidence which I have reviewed, I think that it is as certain as the presentation of any case can be in court that Oswald would have been convicted.

Q Here is another statement from a book on this subject: "The case of the stretcher bullet illustrates the limits of the investigation. In 10 days or even in 10 weeks, a single lawyer could not exhaust all the facts and possibilities in such a broad area as the basic facts of the assassination. Arlen Specter spent only about 10 days on his investigation in Dallas. Quite obviously, he had to concentrate on major problems and neglect some of the more minor ones."

A The author is sweeping in his criticism, but not specific

at all in pointing up what "minor problems," as he theorizes them to be, were overlooked.

The fact of the matter is that I spent more than 10 days in Dallas, that the actual time I was in Dallas accounted for only a minor part of the investigative work which was done for my areas of inquiry—most of which was performed, obviously, by federal investigative agencies, since the Commission lawyers could not do all of the investigation.

On the quotation you just read relating to the bullet on the stretcher, there are other references to a preconceived notion which, says the author, the Commission lawyer had. But what he is not experienced enough to have understood, when he read my questioning of those witnesses where the timing was set forth, is this:

I went to Parkland Hospital in Dallas, for example, and I interviewed everybody at Parkland Hospital in the course of a relatively few hours, some 20-odd witnesses. But I did not go there with a *tabula rasa* to work on, to start gathering names and information likely to be needed.

I appeared at Parkland Hospital having reviewed files of materials as to what preliminary investigation had shown.

So I sent ahead a list of witnesses whom I wanted to see, so I could get to the heart of the matter and question under oath and in more detail perhaps than the previous interviews had been conducted and for the public to read at a later date.

The preliminary information had already been given to me, and I could move in a relatively straight line to the information I sought, because there had already been extensive investigations conducted.

This is virtually always done in any matter where an attorney comes in to look over the evidence—this spade work has been done. Otherwise, he would have to sift through hundreds of witnesses to come to the point where we began that line of questioning on those specific witnesses at Parkland Hospital.

Q Did the Commission deny any witnesses the right to be heard or refuse to hear anyone claiming to have pertinent information?

A Absolutely not. In fact, the converse was true. The Commission went far and wide to solicit information from every conceivable source whatsoever.

Q It has been reported that some members of the Commission did not attend all the meetings. And the presumption is that this affects the credibility, or reliability, of the Commission report. Was it, in fact, necessary for every member of the Commission to be present at all times?

A It certainly could not be categorized as a necessity. Obviously, the more everyone knows, the better would be the position for making judgments and conclusions. But, even

... "We did have time to do a responsible and thorough job"

though a commissioner was not present at a hearing, the transcript, or notes of testimony, was available and was circulated for all the commissioners.

But, as a preliminary to evaluating a matter of that sort, it must be remembered that, when the President asked Chief Justice Earl Warren to serve as chairman of this Commission, he did so with the full knowledge that the Chief Justice had very heavy responsibilities on the Supreme Court.

The same applied to Senator Russell, who had very heavy duties in his senatorial committees, and as well as Senator Cooper. And, in selecting Representatives Ford and Boggs, the President picked two of the busiest members on the Hill.

The same would apply to Allen Dulles and John McCloy, who had other responsibilities. So it had to be known in advance that a great deal of work would have to be performed by staff, with the commissioners themselves exercising the normal executive functions of supervision, review and decision-making.

Q One critic has written this: "The Commission did not do an adequate investigative job, did not weigh all the data carefully, rushed through its work, had no investigative staff of its own, and a few overworked lawyers, who, in a very short time, had to interview and check hundreds of wit-

Arlen Specter on Commission's Work:

"I have never seen the resources devoted to the determination of the truth as were the resources of the United States of America devoted in this case"

nesses. And the report was written and rewritten in haste to make a lawyer's brief for the official theory." What is your answer?

A The sweeping generalization of that statement is notable only for its melodramatic conclusion that nothing was done right at all. I think that the earmark of that kind of generalization indicates the motivation of the author.

The facts are quite the contrary.

Taken in individual steps: The lawyers for the Commission worked hard, but, in my opinion, were not overworked. We were under pressure, as is any man who does any responsible job in this country. But we did have sufficient time to do a responsible and thorough job. Where necessary, the times were extended. The commissioners themselves paid close attention to the work of the Commission. The Chief Justice was a dominant figure moving throughout the entire investigation, and so were the other commissioners in terms of knowing and understanding and participating in the scope and depth of the Commission's work.

I believe the Commission's work was exhaustive; it was painstaking, and it compiled the most complete report that was possible under the circumstances—and, I think, clearly an adequate report.

Q Does the fact that you used the Federal Government's

own investigative agencies impair the impartiality or effectiveness of the investigation?

A In choosing the ideal tools available, it would have been highly desirable to have a totally independent investigative force from some other land, coupled with commissioners who could work full time on the project at hand, coupled further with unlimited lawyers to do every conceivable job possible.

But, even with the might of the United States Government at one's disposal, it is not possible to organize an investigative team from thin air. So it was a very reasonable choice to have basic material sifted by federal agencies of one sort or another.

Where the Commission chose not to rely upon a particular federal agency, it had many others to choose from. When that work was done, there was a substantial staff left to cull through the material and make an independent analysis.

I think the independence of the Commission is demonstrated by its candid criticism of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Secret Service.

Where criticism was appropriate, the Chief Justice and the other commissioners did not shirk their responsibility to set it forth.

Q Did you also use any private and independent means of investigation?

A Absolutely. When it came to the question of double-check on ballistic material, there were independent experts brought in who had no Federal Government connections. When it came to the question of the depth of some of the tests—such as those made by the wound-ballistics people—they were from the Army, but they were the best experts available. So there was a wide scope of federal talent used, and substantial nonfederal talent used as well.

Q If you had this to do over again, are there any changes in methods or procedure that you would recommend?

A Inevitably in the course of a lengthy investigation, there are procedures which would be improved upon. But I do not believe that the ultimate conclusions of the Commission would be affected in any way by any change in methods or procedures.

Q Would you say that any cover-up of evidence in this case would mean, in effect, that a large number of reputable people were in collusion?

A Well, I think that is the precise thrust of some of the material which has been written—that a conspiracy of deceit goes into the upper echelons of the Commission itself, permeates its ranks, and is widespread throughout everything the Commission has done.

I think it is preposterous to suggest that the Chief Justice or any other commissioner would conceal the truth from the American people, or that reputable federal officers would perjure themselves.

IF INQUIRY WERE REOPENED—

Q Do you think anything new could be brought out by a reopening of this investigation?

A I do not believe that a reopening of the investigation would disclose any additional evidence, based on all that which is known at the present time.

But I would not make any statement which would be in opposition to any such reopening of an investigation, just as I would not make any statement that would suggest a limitation on any scholar's work in reviewing, analyzing or disagreeing with anything the Commission has said. It's a free country.