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INSIDE STORY

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Solved: Mystery of the Missing Frames

The mystery of missing frames in the published movie record of President Kennedy's assassination has been solved, according to a lawyer who served on the staff of the Warren commission. Wesley J. Liebeler, now a UCLA law professor, says the frames (Nos. 208, 209, 210, 211), missing from Volume 18 of the commission report, were destroyed accidentally by Life magazine photo lab technicians working on the original film which Life bought from Dallas manufacturer and movie buff Abraham Zapruder. Some critics

accused the commission of deleting the frames because they supposedly suggested that Kennedy was hit earlier than the commission concluded—and, possibly, by someone other than Lee Harvey Oswald. But, Liebeler notes, commission staffers, the Secret Service and FBI had reached their conclusions already from studying complete copies of the film made by Zapruder before sale to the magazine. Then in its hurry to bring a report to the public, the commission put the pictures into Volume 18 without noticing that four panels were missing. As Liebeler explains: "Making up the volumes was viewed as a housekeeping function."