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# Oddity

Something odd is going on in this country. The other day I wrote about the book "Inquest," by Edward Jay Epstein, which challenges the Warren Commission Report on President Kennedy's assassination.

Since reading the book I have been talking to some people who have studied this matter, and the more I learn about the murder of John F. Kennedy, the more convinced I am that something odd is going on in this country.

As I said the other day, Epstein's book is impressive. It raises questions about the Warren Commission which cry for an explanation. The commission contends that one man, the late Lee Harvey Oswald, killed President Kennedy. But the evidence presented by Epstein indicates a far greater likelihood that it was the work of more than one party.

EPSTEIN DOES not know who helped Oswald. All he knows is that if this were a normal murder case, with normal police methods of investigation, the conclusion would not have been reached that it was a one-man job. And he wonders why.

What the Warren Commission did was take a series of improbabilities — among them the ability of Oswald to snap off three shots so quickly and hit his mark with two of them, and the possibility of one bullet going through both President Kennedy and Gov. John Connally (even though the angle shown in photographs makes such an occurrence almost impossible) — and concludes that this is the way it must have happened.

Epstein's book is frightening, and I understand the forthcoming book by attorney Mark Lane is even more frightening.

WHAT SEEMS odd to me is that even though Epstein's book is still hot on the bookshelves, two widely circulated articles already have questioned the author's methods of investigation. One was a news agency wire service piece and the other is a piece in LOOK magazine.

Both articles admit Epstein's book is impressive, but they go on to nitpick it to death, concluding that the author has done exactly what he accuses the Warren Commission of doing: namely, accepting only that evidence which supports his thesis.

I find both articles highly disturbing. True, Epstein could have made mistakes. How do you write such a book without some mistakes, especially when witnesses seem to be changing their stories all over the place?

But the mistakes he is accused of seem to me minor when balanced against the evidence he presents.

THE LOOK article is particularly puzzling. A

key factor in Epstein's case against the Warren Commission is that the original FBI autopsy, which indicated a wound in President Kennedy's back was caused by a bullet which didn't emerge, later was changed in the official autopsy. The point is key because the bullet is claimed to be the same one that came out of Kennedy's neck and then wounded Connally.

If the bullet never emerged from the President's back, then it couldn't have hit Connally. Giving Oswald credit for two other shots (the one that hit Kennedy's head and another which missed), Oswald could not have had time to fire another bullet. Ergo, somebody else fired.

The author of the Look article challenges this thesis by claiming that spokesmen for the autopsy team told the FBI say the report was never changed and that the original FBI autopsy was mistaken. Now what that quaint? The FBI, making the most important autopsy it ever made, makes a mistake. What's going on here?

This is the first time in my life I have ever been seriously suspicious of the United States government. A man writes a startlingly impressive book about an event of enormous importance and almost immediately two major pieces are published attempting to brand it as irresponsible and nullify its impact on the public.

I don't know the reputations of the men who wrote the articles about "Inquest." But I do know that their reaction to this book differs sharply from mine. They brush over very convincing arguments lightly and nitpick minor points. I wonder why? Something odd is going on in this country. E.J.