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LOOSE ENDS 66
Some additional probing of the Warren Report and its unanswered questions.

Another article which attracted national attention was senior editor Gaeton Fonzi's report, "The Warren Commission: The Truth and Arlen Specter," which appeared in August and was shortly followed by a national deluge of published pieces critical of the work of the Warren Commission. One interesting sidelight was that the conclusions reached by our man Fonzi about what the Zapruder films of the assassination really showed were reached almost four months later by *Life* magazine, which had the films in its possession the whole time. (Incidentally, Mr. Fonzi takes another look at the subject in the current issue in an article which starts on page 66.)

150

LOOSE ENDS

How many did the Warren Commission leave? And do they lead anywhere?

By GAETON FONZI

LATE ON THE AFTERNOON of November 22nd, 1963, a Delaware County man was questioned by the FBI in Dallas. A tip had been received that he might have been involved in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. At the time of his questioning, however, Lee Harvey Oswald had already been captured and in a few hours would be officially charged with the President's murder. The Delaware County man told the FBI he had been in his apartment at the time of the assassination. His wife and the landlady of the apartment in which they were living corroborated his story. Therefore a subsequent report to the Warren Commission noted that the FBI "could establish no connection" between the Delaware County man and the death of President Kennedy.

"The threshold question for the Commission was: Was there more than one assassin? If Oswald acted alone, the investigation had no more to do than substantiate the case against him and explore his life history for possible motives. If, however, more than one person was involved in the assassination, the nature and scope of the investigation would have to be radically changed; new evidence and new hypotheses would have to be sought, new suspects found, new indictments rendered. Once across the threshold, the investigation would enter a new dimension of uncertainty; no one could know where it would lead, when it would end, or what would be its ramifications. . . ."

—Edward Jay Epstein, *Inquest*.

How many loose ends did the Warren Commission leave? How many would be worth looking into in more depth? How many, ignored or left unexamined by the Commission, might produce evidence that contradicted

the Commission's concluding contention that Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone assassin of President Kennedy?

Now the questions are being asked. Why should there be questions now? That is the worst part of it all.

"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. There has been no equal of this kind of inquiry, not only in Philadelphia, but anywhere, to my knowledge. . . ."

—Arlen Specter, former assistant counsel to the Warren Commission.

THIS IS THE STORY of a modest investigation conducted over a three-week period by far from professional investigators with limited resources. It involved a number of trips into Delaware County, a couple of dozen telephone calls and a three-day stay in Dallas. Its aim was not to produce the quality or quantity of evidence that might be presented in a court of law. But neither was that the aim of the Warren Commission.

However, the Warren Commission pronounced Oswald guilty "on the basis of evidence before the Commission." That thereby created the assumption that all evidence which did not point to Oswald's guilt was peripheral and of no consequence. And it implied that if there were loose ends they were dead ones—leads which a cursory examination would immediately discount as being unworthy of more intensive investigation.

But both the assumption and the implication are base-

less. As Oxford historian Hugh Trevor-Roper has pointed out, the Commission members "insensibly and progressively emphasized the evidence which seemed to support the conclusion of Oswald's sole guilt, and they insensibly and progressively attenuated the evidence which pointed away from it."

The Federal Bureau of Investigation alone submitted more than 25,000 preliminary reports to the Commission. Commission staff members then sifted through these reports and issued directives to the FBI for further investigation into those aspects of the case they thought would produce the results they sought to achieve. The Commission's staff, however, was initially divided into five "teams," each charged with looking into specific areas of evidence. Four out of the five teams were responsible for gathering information about Oswald, his background and his activities before and after the assassination. So it was inevitable that almost all the preliminary reports selected for more intensive investigation had something to do with Oswald. The other reports became the loose ends.

This is the story of what the Warren Commission might have found had it chosen to delve deeper into one of those loose ends. It was discovered accidentally and was of initial interest to *Greater Philadelphia Magazine* only because of its provincial aspects. Yet, because it turned out *not* to be a dead end, it raised a very disturbing possibility: How many other loose ends ignored by the Commission because they didn't obviously reveal some association with the prima facie case against Oswald would, under modest investigation, produce some significant information, perhaps even some "new" evidence or, in the very least, the disquieting conclusion that there remain areas of President Kennedy's assassination which yet require a thorough, professional investigation. That is saying something now, more than two years after an inquiry to which there is supposed to have been "no equal."

ACCORDING TO THE landlady of the Dallas apartment in which the man from Delaware County was living, the FBI agents approached the man's door with their hands on their guns. The evening before the man's wife had telephoned her sister who lived in nearby Conroe, Texas. She was crying and seemed hysterical and said that her husband was acting strangely and that she was afraid that he was "up to something terrible." The sister called her parents in Delaware County. As soon as her parents heard of President Kennedy's assassination the next day, they called the FBI.

The FBI agents questioned the man thoroughly concerning his whereabouts at the time of the shooting on Dealey Plaza. They examined the rifle that he had, asked his wife a lot of questions, talked to the landlady and then left. That night the man from Delaware County left Dallas. He did not take his wife with him. He told her he had to "straighten a few things out" back in Pennsylvania. He left her five dollars for living expenses. After he left, his wife called her sister and said that she was leaving him and asked her to come pick her up.

IT IS DOUBTFUL that any member of the Warren Commission knew of the Delaware County man or was aware of the fact that he was questioned by the FBI. But someone on its staff must have made the decision to discount the preliminary FBI report which revealed it. Someone must have read the report — now stacked among the

25,000 in the National Archives — and come to the determination that further investigation would be fruitless. Yet, considering the brevity of the report and the lack of substantive information it contained — it revealed only that the man had been questioned and that the tip had come from his wife's parents — it was a determination without foundation.

What would the Commission have discovered if it had dug deeper? Certainly a lot that couldn't have been dismissed as easily as the initial report.

The man from Delaware County will here be called Brown. Sometimes he used as an alias a last name that began with a "B." He was 25 at the time, well over six feet tall, very thin, with blondish hair. He had attended a suburban Philadelphia high school for less than a semester, joined the Navy and was reportedly discharged for medical reasons related to an emotional problem. He had been born in Russia and came to the United States by way of Germany as a child. His father had been killed in the War, his mother is remarried. His wife's sister says he spoke to her of Nazism, talked about hating Jews and Negroes and that he had made a study of *Mein Kampf*. He arrived in Dallas on November 12th, 1963. No one knows why he went, not even his wife.

FUNNY THING about loose ends. Some of them hang limp and have no apparent significance or particular relationship with anything else. Yet others contain certain characteristics or details common to other loose ends. The Warren Commission left so many loose ends that perhaps it is only coincidental that one can find certain points of relationships here and there. Perhaps.

LEE BOWERS JR. WAS a railroad towerman for the Union Terminal Company. He worked in a 14-foot tower behind the Texas School Book Depository overlooking the parking area atop the grassy knoll west of Elm Street, where President Kennedy was shot.* The parking area was packed with cars, but Bowers said that the Dallas police had earlier cut off traffic entering the area "so that anyone moving around could actually be observed." Nevertheless, in the half-hour before the assassination Bowers saw three cars drive around the area. They came in one at a time, the last one "seven or nine minutes before the shooting," drove around as if they were "checking the area," Bowers said, and then drove out. He noticed that two of the cars had out-of-state license plates. He did not see the third car leave the area. "The last I saw of him he was pausing just about in — just above the assassination site." Bowers also noticed something unusual about the second car: It was equipped with a two-way radio. The man driving it had a microphone in his hand and was talking into it as he drove around.

J. C. Price watched the Presidential motorcade from the roof of the Terminal Annex Building on the corner across from the Depository. He later said that his eye was attracted to the area behind the picket fence on the grassy knoll. "I saw one man run towards the passenger cars on the railroad siding after the volley of shots," he said. He described the man as being about 25 years old and wearing khaki-colored trousers. He said the man

* "The Warren Commission, The Truth and Arlen Specter," a detailed examination of the Warren Commission's contentions concerning the actual moments of the President's assassination appeared in the August, 1966 issue of *Greater Philadelphia Magazine*.

had something in his right hand which appeared to be a radio head piece.

An indication of a man using a two-way radio appears in the films taken by Abraham Zapruder at the time of the assassination. The man is standing on the south side of Elm Street on the grass away from the curb. He appears well-dressed in a black suit and a black hat. He is holding something in his hand close to his mouth. As the Presidential motorcade goes by a little girl walks slowly past the man and appears so fascinated that she does not even turn to watch the President ride by, instead keeps her eyes glued on the man in the black suit as she walks by him.

THE MAN FROM Delaware County who is here called Brown used to hang around a drug store in Village Green, a small suburban community outside of Chester. The owner of the drug store is a "ham," an amateur radio operator who is active in a local club of ham operators and has his delivery trucks equipped with two-way radio sets. He got to know Brown pretty well because Brown said he, too, was interested in radios. He says that Brown had a red Thunderbird convertible equipped with a citizen's band ("CB") transceiver.

Brown had bought the 1962 Thunderbird from a Ford agency in Ardmore in August of 1963. On his credit application he said he was employed by the General Electric Credit Corporation as a credit manager and was earning \$6000 a year. He noted also that he was married and under "Number of Dependents" wrote "1." The car cost \$3485.84. The first payment was due September 20th, 1963. It came on October 15th. It turned out to be the last payment.

That October, Brown started dating a girl here called Pat who worked at the soda fountain in the Village Green drugstore. She was 18 at the time, a tall, dark-haired pretty girl. He told her he had been married once before but that his wife and daughter had been killed in an automobile collision. Pat recalls that he was a very smooth talker and that she was impressed with him. On November 7th, 1963, she ran away with him to South Carolina where they were married.

Meanwhile, Brown had become friendly with the group of ham radio operators around Village Green (although he lived in Swarthmore at the time). One of the hams also happened to belong to the local sportsmen's club. He recalls taking Brown out on the club's firing range one day. "I fired at a target set at 100 yards," he said, "and I got within an inch of that bull. Then he fired. He fired four shots and you could cover all of them with a half dollar. He fired as if he had handled the gun all his life."

Brown had a number of times bragged to Pat's mother and father that he was a pretty good shot with a rifle. That was one of the reasons they had called the FBI. They knew he was in Dallas and that he had a rifle with him and that he was "a funny kind of guy" and that their daughter had made a hysterical call to her sister saying that he was going to do something terrible. They also couldn't figure out why he had left a good job with G.E. Credit to go suddenly to Texas. He himself had told them he was lining up a job with a company in the midwest which was going to pay him \$17,500 a month. That was hard to believe. Still, Pat's parents say today they probably wouldn't have called the FBI if they knew then what they know now: Brown's former wife was living in Garland, Texas, a small town north of Dallas. They figure he went down to Texas to see her.

Pat figures the same thing today, especially since she knows now that he went back to his first wife after she left him. "I was so young and stupid and naive," she says. "He asked me if I wanted to go to Texas and I said 'Why not?' because my sister lived down there. I should have known he was seeing his first wife. He would go out early in the morning, about seven o'clock, and he wouldn't come home until late. He said he was looking for a job but now I figure he was driving up to see her and spending his time with her."

Brown's first wife "Janet" is the daughter of a Navy career officer. Her divorce from him had become final in October, 1963. Now living with her family at a Naval base in South Carolina, she says she never saw Brown from that October until January of 1964. She did not see him at all in November of 1963.

If the Warren Commission had ordered a more intensive investigation into the background of this Delaware County man who was questioned on the afternoon of the assassination, it would have found that Janet could have provided some interesting insights into his character and activities. "I don't think he could have been involved in any way," she says. "Basically he was a coward. He was the type of guy who would only pick on people he knew he could beat up." Janet also says that Brown was "a great storyteller," and though he bragged often about being an expert rifle shot, he only casually mentioned being questioned at the time of the assassination by the FBI. She says she knows he had a rifle with a telescopic sight and that he pawned it later in California.

Brown's second wife, Pat, calls him "a regular nut" and says that she was frightened of him most of the time. She remembers once driving in the car with him outside of Dallas and him pulling out a .38 pistol, loading it with one bullet and placing it on the seat between them. "Just in case we see any deer," he said. Pat was frightened but didn't say anything. "Even I know you don't shoot deer with a pistol," she says.

On the way down to Texas, Pat recalls that they made two stops, one in Georgia and one in Alabama. Brown said he wanted to see some "old pals." They didn't stay long in either place and Pat says that in Alabama she waited in the car while Brown took his rifle in to show to his friend.

When they arrived in Dallas, Brown selected an apartment on Sunset Street in the Oak Cliff section of the city. It was on the second floor of a two-story garden-type complex called the Sunset Manor Apartments. It cost \$100 a month. He paid a month's rent and an additional deposit of \$30. Pat says he told her he had \$800 with him. The Republic National Bank of Texas, located in downtown Dallas, would only admit that he opened a checking account on November 15th, closed it on March 4th and that there was activity on January 9th.

Pat says that the FBI agents asked her what her husband's reaction was when he heard that President Kennedy had been assassinated. She says that she told them that he looked strangely happy, but now she says that he was the type of guy about whom you couldn't tell anything by the expression on his face. Yet she remembers that he wasn't upset about it. Then right after it happened he suddenly said he had to go out for a while. She asked where he was going. He said he had to go to the bank.

Brown returned to the apartment just before the FBI agents arrived. Pat says they knocked on the door and identified themselves. She recalls that she was frightened

and said, "The FBI is here!" She says he didn't seem surprised. "In fact," she said, "he acted real nonchalant. 'Let them in,' he said. He was real calm about it."

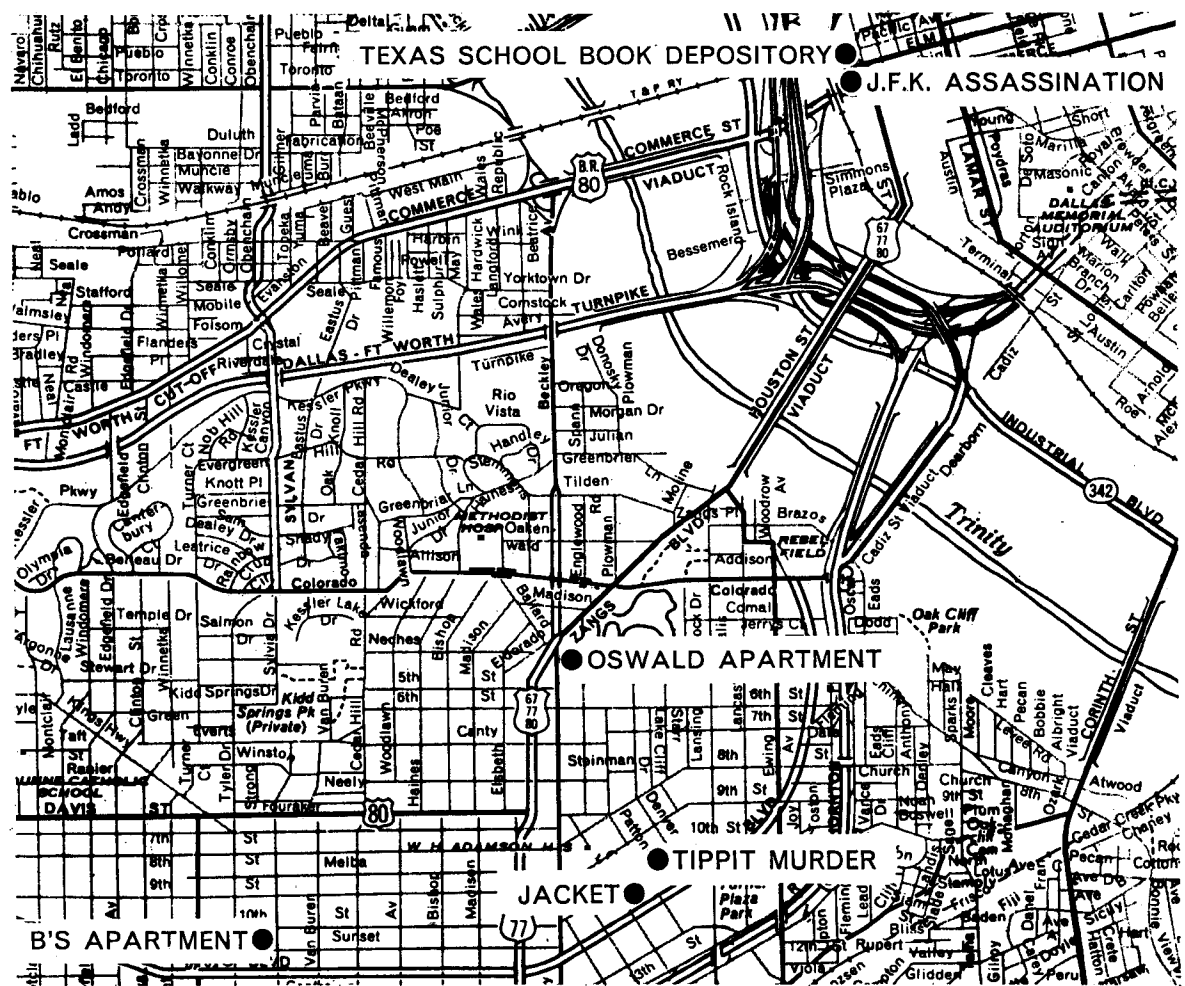
At the time of President Kennedy's assassination, Lee Harvey Oswald was renting a room in the Oak Cliff section of Dallas, on Beckley Avenue several blocks north of Sunset. According to the Warren Commission Report, Oswald left the Book Depository at 12:33 p.m., walked seven blocks east on Elm Street, boarded a bus heading west, rode it for a few blocks, got out, walked several blocks north to a taxi stand and took a taxi to Oak Cliff, which is southwest of downtown Dallas. His landlady saw him enter the house at 1 o'clock. The taxi driver initially said he had actually driven Oswald by his rooming house and let him out on the 500 block of N. Beckley, four-tenths of a mile south of it. That would not have permitted Oswald to arrive at the house in time to get a gun, change his jacket and walk back south a mile to 10th Street and Patton Avenue where he allegedly shot Dallas policeman J. D. Tippit at 1:15 p.m. Later the taxi

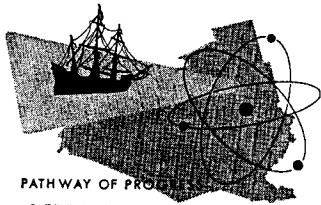
driver said that he had made a mistake and that Oswald had gotten out on the 700 block of N. Beckley, closer to his rooming house. That helped the timing.

Yet shortly after 1 o'clock a Dallas resident named T. F. Bowley was driving through the Oak Cliff section and had just turned west on 10th Street:

I traveled about a block and noticed a Dallas police squad car stopped in the traffic lane headed east on 10th Street. I saw a police officer lying next to the left front wheel. I stopped my car and got out to go to the scene. I looked at my watch and it said 1:10 p.m. Several people were at the scene. When I got there the first thing I did was try to help the officer. He appeared beyond help to me. A man was trying to use the radio in the squad car but stated he didn't know how to operate it. I knew how and took the radio from him. I said, 'Hello, operator. A police officer has been shot here.' The dispatcher asked for the location. I found out the location and told the dispatcher what it was.

The Dallas police broadcast log for continued on page 88





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Loose Ends

continued from page 69

November 22nd corroborates Bowley's story. So did Domingo Benavides, another witness, the man who was trying to use the police radio. Benavides was in his pick-up truck across the street from the police car at the time of the shooting. He stopped the truck, ducked down and stayed there for a while. ("I didn't want to get out and rush right up. He might start shooting again.") Benavides was trying to use the police radio when Bowley arrived. The call was recorded at 1:16 p.m. The Warren Commission concluded that Tippit was killed only one minute before. That was the quickest Oswald could have reached the scene after leaving his rooming house at 1:04 p.m.

The Commission, in its contention that Oswald was the only one involved in the killing of Tippit, said it based its finding on the eyewitness account of 12 persons. Yet, of these, only two actually said they saw the shooting. One was Domingo Benavides. And although he was later to see Oswald's photograph on television and in the newspapers many times, he continually said he could not positively identify Oswald as Tippit's killer. The Dallas police never brought him to a lineup. They brought instead Helen Louise Markham, whom one young Commission lawyer was to later characterize as "an utter screwball."

Helen Louise Markham, a waitress in downtown Dallas, said she was on the northwest corner of 10th and Patton waiting to cross the street when she saw a police car heading east on 10th Street slowly approach the man she later identified as Oswald from the rear. The man turned, came back to the car, leaned in the window and spoke with the policeman. Then the policeman "calmly opened the car door" and walked to the front of the car. Mrs. Markham says she then heard three shots and saw the policeman fall to the ground. She screamed and raised her fingers to her eyes as the man walked back to Patton. Later, at a police lineup where a detective described her as "quite hysterical" and "crying and upset," she identified the man as Oswald.

The Commission termed Mrs. Markham a "reliable witness" despite certain inconsistencies in her testimony. She said, for instance, that Oswald had talked to Tippit through the car window, yet the police car was found with its window closed. ("Yes," she told the Commission, "the window was down, and I know it was down, I know, and he put his arms and leaned over . . .") Mrs. Markham also said that she remained with the dying policeman for about 20 minutes

before anyone else arrived and that he had tried to talk to her and that the last she "saw him alive" was when they put him in the ambulance. This contradicted not only the reports of Bowley and Benavides, but the accounts of a large crowd of spectators who had arrived just minutes after the shooting. It was also found that Tippit had four bullets in him and was dead before he hit the ground. (Later, a Commission lawyer questioned Mrs. Markham about her identification of Oswald at the police lineup: "Did you identify anybody in these four people?" he asked. "I didn't know nobody," said Mrs. Markham. "I know you didn't know anybody, but did anybody in that lineup look like anybody you had seen before?" "No. I had never seen none of them, none of these men." Confused, she then said, "Number two is the one I picked." "You recognized him from his appearance?" she was asked. She said: "I asked — I looked at him. When I saw this man I wasn't sure, but I had cold chills just run all over me.")

Since the Commission realized that its eyewitness case against Oswald was not exactly flawless, it weighted its Report on the Tippit murder towards the "hard" evidence, mainly the four bullets which killed Tippit and the four shells found nearby. Yet even these seemed to raise more questions than they answered. The FBI expert testified, for instance, that he couldn't connect the bullets to Oswald's gun because its oversized barrel was too big for them and produced "inconsistent individual characteristic marks." There was also some mystery about the four shells found around the scene of the killing. Three of the four bullets removed from Tippit's body were manufactured by Winchester-Western, yet only two of the shells found were made by that company. The other two shells found at the scene were manufactured by Remington-Peters, but there was only one Remington-Peters bullet in Tippit's body. And the FBI expert said they were not reloaded shells, but factory bullets and factory cases.

Perhaps if the Commission hadn't been so single-minded in its assumption that only one person could have been involved in what happened around 10th and Patton that afternoon of November 22nd, it might have taken a number of other leads and tracked them down far more fastidiously. A number of witnesses just were not checked by the Commission or questioned by the FBI or the Dallas police. Among these were



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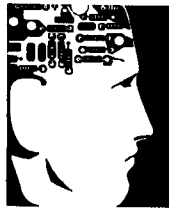
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the woman who called for an ambulance for Tippit, the couple who lived directly across the street from the killing and who heard the shots and could testify to events after the shooting, and the ambulance driver and his assistant who could have provided information about the time, Tippit's position and condition and other witnesses.

Yet there are other factors which indicate the Commission could have been mistaken in its basic assumption. One of these is another piece of "hard" evidence which the Commission uses to bolster its case against Oswald: The jacket which was found in an empty lot a few blocks from the murder.

Mrs. Earlene Roberts, the widow who managed the rooming house where Oswald lived, said that he rushed into his room "around 1 o'clock, or maybe a little after," stayed not more than 3 or 4 minutes, and walked out zipping on a light-weight jacket. (She also said that while he was in his room a police car pulled in front of the house, gave two quick horn honks and moved slowly off down the block. The Commission was never able to explain that.) The jacket found in the empty lot, Commission Exhibit 162, was a light-gray windbreaker type. Mrs. Roberts said, "I recall the jacket was a dark color."

Domingo Benavides said he saw a "light-beige" jacket on the man who shot Tippit, while Barbara Davis, who said she saw the killer run across her lawn, testified that he wore "a black coat." A car salesman who saw a man running down Patton Avenue after the shooting said the jacket he saw "had a little more tan to it" than Commission Exhibit 162, while another witness described the jacket that the running man wore as "blueish."

Not only wasn't the Commission able to get concurring statements from witnesses that Exhibit 162 was the jacket which Tippit's killer wore, but it wasn't even able to prove conclusively that the jacket belonged to Oswald. His wife, Marina, testified before the Commission that it was her husband's, but she described what she was shown as "an old shirt." However, she also said that she could not recall her husband ever sending his jackets "to any laundry or cleaners anywhere." That was a problem, because the jacket had been laundered professionally. It had laundry marks and a laundry tag on it.

Although it is standard police procedure to trace ownership of garments through laundry tags, the Warren Commission Report gives no indica-

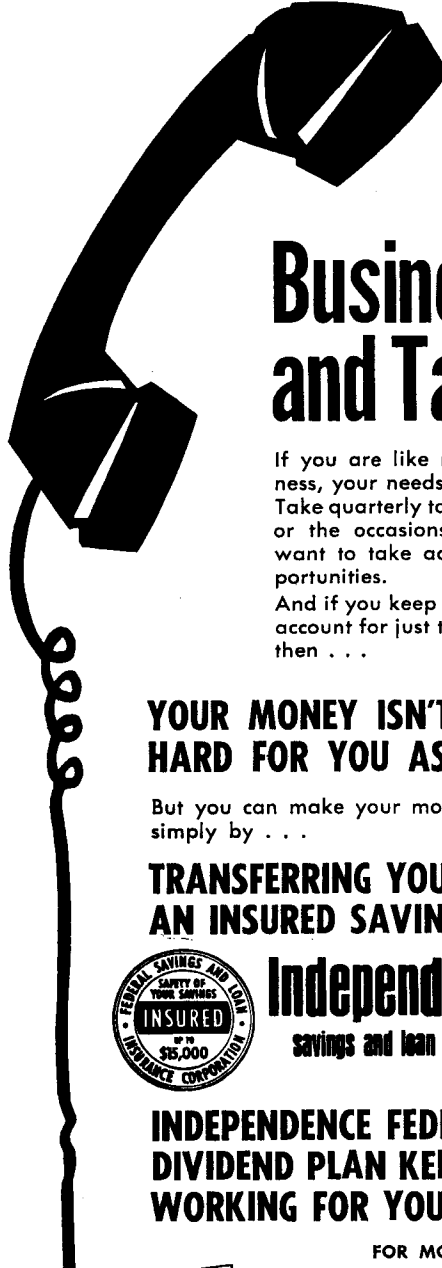
tion that this was done in the case of Exhibit 162. It seems unlikely that if a trace had been made and if Oswald had been found to be the owner of the garment, the Commission would have ignored mentioning it prominently in its Report. Perhaps it didn't even try. Perhaps it was aware that it is not an uncommon practice for cleaners to use the first initial of the owner's name in marking garment tags. That, of course, would have immediately eliminated Oswald. The tag at the bottom of the jacket was marked "B-9738."

The jacket also had a label in it, but there is no indication that the Commission tried to trace its ownership through the manufacturer. Admittedly, that would have been a far more difficult task than a laundry tag tracing, but then the Warren Commission was supposed to have unlimited resources. The jacket, according to the label, was "created in California by Maurice Holman." A spokesman for the manufacturer said last month that almost all the firm's distribution was through West Coast outlets. He also said, however, that a few years ago a large department store in the East used to carry his firm's clothing. The store was Strawbridge & Clothier.

The actual discovery of the jacket was another mysterious thing. The Commission Report claims that Dallas Police Captain W. R. Westbrook "walked through the parking lot behind the service station and found a light-colored jacket lying under the rear of one of the cars." But the first report of the jacket came over the police radio at 1:25 p.m. from a policeman with the identifying number 279. At that time Westbrook was still 15 minutes away from the scene. "Actually, I didn't find it," Westbrook admits. Now no one seems to know who found the jacket. The Dallas police could never identify number 279.

The location of the jacket was something else that was never explained. The Commission says Oswald ran south on Patton Avenue, then west on Jefferson, and then had him cutting back north into the parking lot and discarding his jacket. Yet Oswald was captured in a movie theater back on Jefferson. Actually, the lot where the jacket was found is between 10th and Jefferson. Between 10th and Jefferson is Sunset Street, which comes in at Beckley. The Sunset Manor Apartments are almost exactly the same distance to 10th & Patton as was Oswald's rooming house.

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Tippit killing whom the Warren Commission never called to testify was Acquilla Clemons. Mrs. Clemons worked as a domestic near 10th & Patton and told unofficial investigators that she saw two men not far from the police car just moments before Tippit was killed. She said she saw one of the men shoot Tippit, wave to the other man and then run away in a different direction. She described the gunman as "kind of short" and heavy-set. The other man, she said, had lighter hair, was tall and thin and wore khaki trousers.

The husband of the woman who manages the Sunset Manor Apartments works as a repair man for a nearby Ford agency and usually comes home for lunch. He did on November 22nd, 1963. He had finished eating and was watching television when he heard about the assassination. He listened to the bulletins for a few minutes and then figured he had better get back to work. As he was leaving he noticed Brown coming down the steps from the upstairs apartment. He remembers telling Brown about the assassination and that Brown looked at him "kind of funny." He also remembers that Brown was wearing khaki trousers and a light-colored jacket.

When he got to the Ford agency he remembers everybody listening to the radio. That's when he heard about the Tippit killing. Because it was so close to his apartment, he decided to call his wife and tell her to lock her doors. His wife says that when she got his call she decided to tell the other tenants. She went upstairs to Brown and Pat's apartment and told Pat not to let anybody in and to keep her door locked. She says Brown wasn't there at the time.

On the evening of November 22nd, after being questioned by the FBI, Brown suddenly left Dallas. He told Pat he had to return to Delaware County "to straighten things out." Pat, frightened by his strange behavior the evening before when she had called her sister, decided to leave him. Brown didn't return to Dallas until the 28th of November. He went to Conroe and talked Pat into coming back with him. He had also brought back with him a new car, a Chevrolet Stingray. He told Pat he had traded the Thunderbird for it. He hadn't. He had merely given a car agency in Springfield, Delaware County, a bad check for \$1400 as a down-payment for the new car.

Shortly after the assassination Brown's trail becomes spotty. After she came back to Dallas with him,

Pat remained only two days before she left him again, this time for good, and took a train back to her parents in Delaware County. His first wife Janet says she didn't see him until January of 1964, when he came and told her he was getting a divorce from his second wife and talked her into making plans to re-marry him. They lived for a while in Atlanta, Georgia, and while they were there she remembers him making strange trips back to Dallas and to El Paso and to San Diego, California. "All he would tell me," she says, "was that he was looking for an old pal of his named Mike." Mike turned out to be an ex-policeman from Chicago, a short, heavy-set guy with dark hair, in his late thirties. (Second wife Pat also recalls the landlady of the Sunset Manor apartment telling her a heavy-set guy with dark hair had come looking for Brown a few days before the assassination. They were both out at the time, but Brown never explained who he was. She thought he didn't know anyone in Dallas.)

Janet eventually quit Brown again, this time for good also. The last she heard was that he had been arrested in Texas on a charge of fraud out of California. She lost track of him after that. The bank which financed the Thunderbird had also lost track of him. But early in 1964 it received a letter from him postmarked from Abilene, Texas. "I regret to say that I find myself in a position whereby I can not see any way of paying," he wrote. He said he had left the car in a Sears parking lot down there. "I suggest you remove it right away as they may object to its presence," he cautioned, and then added a postscript: "If necessary I can be contacted by letter at General Delivery, Mexico City, Mexico." (The Warren Commission pointed out that Oswald had spent several days in Mexico City just a few weeks before the assassination.)

Today, Brown remains as mysterious a character as ever. Finally tracked down to an apartment in Upper Darby near 69th Street, he would at first not admit his identity to investigators. Pressed, he became very hospitable, casual and seemingly cooperative. He said the whole thing was just a "coincidence." He admitted being questioned by the FBI and that he had a two-way radio, a rifle with a telescopic sight and a .38 police special with him in Dallas. He said he went to Texas because of "troubles" back home, but would not elaborate. He said he chose Dallas because his first wife lived nearby. Yes, he said, he did

see her while he was down there and went back to her the day after his first wife left him, which was late in November.

On the day of the assassination, Brown says he slept late. He says he was going down to get something out of his car when the landlord told him that the President had been killed. He said he went back to his apartment to tell his wife and listen to the news. He says he never left the apartment. He says he did not go out at all that day. He says he was in the bathroom shaving when the FBI agents came. "They questioned me for four hours about the assassination," he said. "That about killed the day." He said he had heard that Tippit had been shot somewhere in the neighborhood, but he said he didn't know where. No, he didn't know any ex-policemen from Chicago. No, he had never been in Mexico City.

Brown admitted he had been given a prison sentence in California for fraud, but was released after serving only a few months. His second wife, Pat, who finally filed a divorce suit against him in November, says he called her recently for the first time in two years. "How do you get away with everything?" she asked him. "I don't understand. You pull all this



stuff and seem to get away with it. You're supposed to be in jail for years and you're out in months. How do you do it?" She says that Brown said simply, "Well, between you and me, the government." She asked him what he meant by that. "The government can do a lot for you," he said. She says she didn't understand what he meant.

WHAT THE HELL is going on here? A loose end is picked up, examined a little bit and all sorts of wild and crazy things begin to emerge. Coincidences? An irrational abundance. Conclusive answers? Hardly any. This is the legacy of the Warren Commission Report. It is a legacy of basic doubt begetting wild speculation. That is what is so sadly scandalous.

Certainly *Greater Philadelphia Magazine* possesses neither the resources nor the investigative abilities to adequately Monday-morning-quarterback the job of the Warren Commission. Yet it is a sorry comment on the Commission's accomplishments that it should even have to be considered.

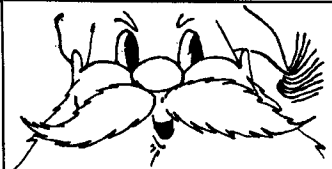


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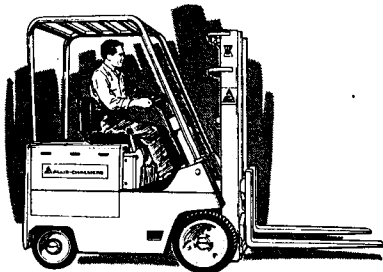
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Loose Ends

continued

And it does have to be considered. The Commission's Report is so obviously not a Sunday winner. Even a quick glance over the action reveals that the play was stacked against the evidence. Right from the start: Bullet 399 could not have done all that damage. There was evidence that it didn't. The President's fatal head hit might not have come from the rear. There was evidence that it didn't. Oswald could not have fired all the shots that day. There was evidence that he didn't.

Is it any wonder then, when the Commission's key contentions are in direct contradiction to basic hard-core evidence, that a speculative interest in other parts of its Report should arise? Why, for instance, couldn't the Commission explain Tippit's whereabouts just before his death? Why didn't it call to testify any witnesses who had seen Tippit and Jack Ruby together prior to the assassination? Why was the jacket that was found left untraced and why wasn't it shown to most of the witnesses at the scene?

That the Warren Commission has left loose ends is not the worst of it. The worst of it is that, more than two years after what is supposed to have been the most thorough and extensive and expensive investigation ever "devoted to the determination of truth," a closer examination of even one of those loose ends should lead to the conclusion that there remains an area which yet requires serious investigative efforts. Who knows what other loose ends would lead to? Certainly not the Warren Commission.

Now it is getting late. Today in Dallas an eerie fear pervades the attitudes of those witnesses who can still be located, especially those who know something about the Tippit killing. Most can't be found. They have moved without notice, left without forwarding addresses, even sold their homes and fled from the city. They have heard of the strange things that have been happening, the mysterious accidents and unsolved killings of other witnesses, and even those who can be tracked down do not seem to talk with an honest candor or easy naturalness and plead not to have their names mentioned as sources of information. Time, too, has dimmed recollections and the task of corroborating detail is becoming more difficult. Loose ends have a tendency to wither away and die. When they go, perhaps then will emerge the ultimate legacy of the Warren Commission: A festering presumption, debasing to the very concept of a democratic society, that the truth has died with them. ■ ■