

HENRY J. TAYLOR

# Warren Report: What Makes a Conspiracy?

On Dec. 4, 1963, on the heels of the Dallas horror, this column wrote: "Immediately after Oswald's identification, the State Department asked newsmen to play down the possibility that he was a Castro or Kremlin agent, suggesting that this could damage Soviet relations."

My statement was a fact, of course, and this quotation has been reprinted recently by several newspapers. Somehow I feel that the atmosphere surrounding the Warren Report, probably more than any new substance, is responsible for the outcry to reopen it.

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Another section of the public is disturbed by the necessary absenteeism of many of the commissioners (busy men) and their far-from-unanimous views, now revealed for the first time.

Millions remember Chief Justice Earl Warren's spontaneous and gratuitous assertion that the assassination was the product of "right wing hate." They feel he should not have made this assertion or any other advance assertion. And they remember still another remark Justice Warren made when chairman of the commission.

Although quickly dropped as an official reference line, it was to the effect that all facts would not be brought out in anybody's present lifetime. Millions asked, "Why?" And they still ask, "Why?"

The autopsy perplexes other millions. Autopsy procedures, photographs, reports and conclusions are required to abide by established regulations, step by step, and the result is normally free from debate.

The mere fact that there were multiple reports, some at least temporarily conflicting, subsequent discoveries, many changes and several amendments to an autopsy on the President of the United States unsettles a great many people. The confusions affect their convictions.

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Moreover, as everyone knows, all official autopsy photographs are official property. They are not the property of the family of a deceased. Millions question how the family of the deceased ever got a right to possess these exclusively and to exclude them from the Warren Commission as a whole.

The country only having lately learned what went on, and admittedly as a result of the facts being aired, the recent delivery of the photographs to the National Archives has further disturbed the public.

That episode has spurred people to ask how the family can still employ a restrictive control over the photographs, and the right even to impound them, when the whole right to exclusive possession remains mysterious. All this is what I mean by atmosphere.

Now take, if you wish, the question of a confederate. Millions seem satisfied (although many are not) that Oswald acted alone. But the word confederate is narrowly construed—a physical partner.

It's widely felt that this narrow construction is the crux of the case. In fact, a large body of the public feels that it distracts from the issue.

Our government had repeatedly urged the Cuban people to throw off Castro, including in broadcasts to Cuba. Castro found it politically convenient to interpret this as urging his assassination.

During that September he even threatened on Radio Havana, as monitored by the Associated Press: "The United States leaders would be in danger if they helped in any attempt to do away with the leaders of Cuba."

The weakest part of the Warren Report is how Oswald could get the Russians' permission to work in the Soviet Union as he did, move around, get married to a Russian, stay as long as he wished, etc.

But his bids for Castro's favor, his Cuban activities, his visit to the Cuban consulate in Mexico City eight



The Haunted  
Cartoon by Shoemaker

weeks before the assassination and his promotion of his rump (three people) Fair Play For Cuba Committee are a matter of public record. So is his determination to return to Cuba.

Surely, Oswald knew that, whether Castro directed it or not, if he killed the President of the United States (a secret the Reds would most certainly keep) he would be an inside hero in the Havana hierarchy, and a hero for the first time in his life.

Sen. Richard B. Russell (D-Ga.) contended within the Warren Commission that there were more facts to explore regarding Oswald's period in Russia and his Cuba-related activities. Millions think Russell was right. Thus, tragically, a Matterhorn of doubts remains in a public that wanted no doubts at all. *end*