

Sale - Oswald in Sale @ Suspect

WHY WOULD TIPPIT HAVE STOPPED OSWALD?

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One of the most unlikely, implausible aspects of the Warren Commission's lone-gunman scenario is the assumption that Officer J. D. Tippit stopped Lee Harvey Oswald on the basis of the description of the alleged assassin that had been broadcast by the Dallas Police Department. It is doubtful that Oswald could have even reached the crime scene in time to shoot Tippit. It is equally doubtful that he could have arrived in time to have been casually walking along the street just before Tippit supposedly approached him and stopped him. But leaving aside these problems, one is struck by the implausible nature of the Commission's story of why Tippit would have stopped "Oswald" in the first place. Henry Hurt explains:

One of the oddest assumptions of the Warren Commission was that Officer Tippit stopped Oswald because he was able to identify him as the man described in the police broadcasts that started about 12:45 P.M. According to an FBI statement to the commission, the source of the original description was "an unidentified citizen." The description provided by this citizen (later assumed to be Howard Brennan) was for a man "running from the Texas School Book Depository immediately after the assassination."

The description itself was of a "white male, approximately thirty, slender build, height five feet, ten inches, weight one hundred sixty-five pounds" and believed to be armed with a .30-caliber rifle. This description missed Oswald by six years and about fifteen pounds, yet the Warren Commission reasoning accepted as fact that based on this description Officer Tippit stopped Oswald. (*Reasonable Doubt*, New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1985, p. 163)

Question: Where was Source of this Description?

The more one thinks about it, the more one realizes how extremely implausible and unlikely this scenario is. *Why would* Tippit have stopped Oswald? The police description could have fit a good quarter to a third of the male population of Dallas. "Oswald," or whoever it was, was some three miles from Dealey Plaza, walking in a quiet suburb when he was supposedly stopped by Tippit. None of the witnesses who saw Tippit's assailant just before Tippit stopped him said the man was walking unusually fast or in any way acting strange or suspicious. What's more, Tippit, though apparently well liked by his peers, was not exactly a zealous or above-average policeman. In fact, he hadn't been promoted in ten years. So *why would* Tippit have stopped Oswald?

Odder still is the fact that Tippit supposedly approached his assailant (allegedly Oswald) *from behind*. He reportedly drove up slowly behind the man, pulled up alongside him, and then asked him to come over to the driver's window for what was described as having the appearance of a "friendly chat"! Is this how policemen approach and try to apprehend a person whom they suspect might have just killed the President of the United States? So Tippit, based on a rather general, if not somewhat vague, description that could have fit a good portion of the male population of Dallas, identified Oswald, *from behind*, and then called him over to the window for what appeared to witnesses to be a friendly chat?! The whole story smacks of fabrication and brazen implausibility.

Consider some other oddities and irregularities about the Tippit slaying:

* Tippit was at least three miles from the patrol district to which he had been assigned that day. By "sheer coincidence," he was assigned to the Oak Cliff area, *where Oswald "just happened to live."* What on earth was Tippit doing in quiet, suburban Oak Cliff when he

should have been in Dealey Plaza or at Parkland Hospital (helping to provide security there)?

* There is evidence that strongly suggests that the DPD dispatch transcript and tape were altered to reflect Tippit being ordered to his unusual location.

* The other officer who was also supposedly ordered, for some strange reason, to patrol around quiet Oak Cliff at a time when the police were allegedly trying to catch the president's killer(s) in Dealey Plaza, never went to Oak Cliff, and his transmissions give the distinct impression that he never received any such order in the first place.

* The overwhelming weight of the evidence indicates that Tippit's assailant was walking *west*, or *toward* Tippit's car, not away from it, which makes it even more unlikely that the assailant was Oswald. For the killer to have even possibly been the pedestrian Oswald, he would have had to be walking east, not west (see Hurt, *Reasonable Doubt*, pp. 150-151).

* The offending firearm was initially--and firmly--identified as an automatic pistol, based on a shell that was found at the scene. It is very easy to distinguish between automatic casings and revolver casings (see, for example, Larry Ragle, *Crime Scene*, New York: Avon Books, 1995, pp. 156-157).

These are just some of the many problems with the case against Oswald in the Tippit slaying.

A few months ago I posted the above arguments to the JFK Debate section in CompuServe's Politics Forum. After reading them, one veteran WC supporter admitted he could not explain why Tippit would have stopped Oswald. Let us now consider Richard Popkin's equally cogent argument on this point:

It seems odd that Tippit would have stopped a suspect. He was unimaginative, and had shown no real initiative in all his years on the force, as evidenced by the his failure to get a promotion in thirteen years. It is hard to believe that, on the basis of a vague description which must have fitted at least several thousand males in Dallas that day, Tippit would have stopped Oswald far away from the scene of the crime. Few other suspects were stopped *in all of Dallas*, although the city contained thousands of white males aged thirty, five foot nine, weighing around 165 pounds, a description that doesn't fit Oswald, who was twenty-four and weighed much less. ("After the Shooting: The Tippit Affair," in Jay David, ed., *The Weight of the Evidence: The Warren Report and Its Critics*, New York: Meredith Press, 1968, pp. 163-164, original emphasis)

Why Would Tippit have stopped Oswald?

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