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Still Another Book Questions Report Of Warren Findings on Assassination

NEW YORK (AP)—To many persons, the assassination of President John F. Kennedy still remains an absorbing mystery, an incredibly complex—and potentially lucrative — detective story in which the last chapter is yet to be written.

The ghost walks despite the fact that the commission headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren investigated the case for 10 months, examined mountains of subjective and objective evidence, then issued a report containing these principal conclusions:

1. Lee Harvey Oswald fired the rifle that killed Kennedy and wounded Texas Gov. John B. Connally, shooting from a window position behind the car in which they were riding.

2. Oswald acted alone from motives unknown; no foreign or domestic conspiracy brought about the assassination.

3. Oswald was not acquainted with Jack Ruby, the Dallas nightclub operator who shot him to death two days later outside the Dallas Police and Courts Building.

Why? He states the core of his contention in the words, "I believe that the report of the President's commission is less a report than a brief for the prosecution. Oswald was the accused; the evidence against him was magnified, while that in his favor was depreciated, misrepresented or ignored."

Of the many points raised in Lane's book, these are some of the major ones:

—Direction of the shots that

The Warren Commission issued its report Sept. 24, 1964, officially closing the case.

Since then, however, doubts have been expressed by lawyers, writers and at least one historian. Books challenging the commission's over-all conclusions, and questioning the subsidiary findings on which they were based, regularly come off the presses. The latest, "Rush to Judgment," by attorney Mark Lane, is to be issued Aug. 15.

Lane writes that he interviewed numerous persons who, in his judgment, had important information about the assassination but were not called to testify before the commission.

struck Kennedy and Connally:

The Warren Commission concluded that Oswald fired at the President's car from the sixth floor of the Texas Book Depository Building. The car was moving away from the window.

Lane points a finger at a grassy knoll toward which the car was approaching. He writes, "Witnesses heard shots come from the knoll. Witnesses saw smoke on the knoll. One witness even smelled gunpowder behind the fence."

This would suggest that Kennedy was caught in a cross-fire, with bullets striking him from behind and in front.

—Oswald as a marksman:

The commission reported that Oswald qualified as a "sharpshooter" in the Marine Corps in 1956, and quoted a Marine sergeant who reviewed Oswald's scores, "I would say in the Marine Corps, he is a good shot, slightly above average."

—Accuracy of the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle:

Lane quotes from a magazine article dated October, 1964, which calls this rifle "crudely made, poorly designed, dangerous and inaccurate, unhandy, unreliable on repeat shots, has safety design fault."

The Warren report said, "The various tests showed that the Mannlicher-Carcano was an accurate rifle and that the use of a four-power scope was a substantial aid to rapid, accurate firing."

—The number of shots fired and the speed of firing:

In a prepublication statement, Lane wrote, "In the face of irrefutable testimony showing that at least four shots were fired, the commission held that just three had been fired. Clearly, if Oswald was the lone assassin and if he employed the rifle the commission claimed he had, it would have been impossible for him to have fired more than three shots in less than six seconds."

—The question of fingerprints on the rifle:

Lane wrote, "Asked specifically about the existence of a palm print on the weapon (Se-

bastian) Latona (an FBI expert) replied that when he conducted his examination of the weapon at the FBI laboratory he found no trace of one."

The Warren report said, "The Dallas police developed by powder some faint ridge formations on the metal magazine. The faint ridge formations were insufficient for purposes of effecting an identification, but the latent palm print was identified as the right palm of Lee Harvey Oswald."

Was the bullet wound in Kennedy's throat an exit—or an entrance wound? If it was an entrance wound, it could not have come from the window of the building where the commission said Oswald stationed himself. If it was an exit wound, caused by a bullet fired from behind the President, would it not have been a wider, stellate gash?

Did the same bullet strike Kennedy and Connally, as the commission concluded, or were they hit by separate shots?

Referring to Connally's shirt, Lane wrote, "Although it was torn in several places and was therefore useful only as evidence, before it could be examined by the commission or the FBI, it was 'cleaned and pressed' as were the governor's jacket and trousers. Who cleaned the shirt and thereby mutilated the evidence?"

Concluding his summation of the Warren report, Lane wrote,

"Hearsay evidence was freely admitted, while crucial eyewitness testimony was excluded. Opinions were sought and solemnly published while important facts were rejected, distorted or ignored. Dubious scientific tests were said to have proved that which no authentic test could do. Those few (witnesses) who challenged the government's case were often harassed and transformed for the time being into defendants. The secrecy which prevailed at the hearings was extended, in respect to many important details, for another 75 years." p