

Summary of Meeting

June 11, 1975

Present: Sylvia Meagher, Josiah Thompson, Al Lowenstein

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1. Central problems distinguished from ancillary ones. No one would worry about a mistake concerning ~~xxxxxx~~ the exact dates of Oswald's travels in Europe were it not for the larger issues casting doubt on Oswald's role.
 2. Specific questions generate proposals for tests which can be performed. Example: Question concerns the status and significance of exhibit C-399. Proposals:
 - a. Refire a bullet through ~~xxxxxxxx~~ matter which simulates the bodies through which this bullet is ~~xxx~~ supposed to have passed. Check damage to bullet
 - b. Reverse simulation. I.E. Determine what kind of firing conditions could yield a bullet which was damaged as little as the bullet C-399.
 - c. Additional work with bullet fragments in the front seat.
 - d. ~~the~~ Re-check the sequence through which the bullet was alleged to have passed in becoming evidence: Tomlinson to Wright to Johnson (Secret Service) to FBI lab.
 - e. Comparative check of precise movements ~~xxxxxxxx~~ and locations of bullet and gun during period following assassination. Were they ever in proximity? and at what times and under what circumstances?
 - f. Re-examine evidence of shells and cartridge cases.
 3. Evidence of shells and cartridge cases in 6th floor room. Three shells were found, two lined up near wall, other on floor five or six feet away. Dents on two cartridge cases near the wall were different from ~~xxxxxxxx~~ the one several feet away. Question: What accounts for this difference? Might it suggest that only two, and not three bullets were fired? Could the characteristics of the rifle have produced, under different circumstances, the two different kinds of marks? Proposal: Check issue with ballistics ~~xxxxx~~ experts.
 4. Issue of the scope and aim of the gun. Scope of the rifle was defective under normal circumstances, so that the aim would be distorted upwards and to the left. This could only be corrected by inserting shims (sp?) and re-mounting the scope on the

gun. There were no shims on the rifle when it was delivered to the FBI crime lab. The Warren Commission makes the claim that the inaccuracy of the rifle aim actually helped Oswald, because it corrected for the movement of the car. (Is this probable or possible? What about leftward distortion? Was not the rising of the target in the field due to car movement marginal?)
 Question: In order to get shims inserted would not the FBI have had to unscrew the whole fitting?

5. Issue of palm print on the rifle. (Survey of palm-print evidence in Accessories After the ~~Fact~~ Fact, pp. 120-127) If Oswald's print was on the rifle, that would not be too damaging to him, but if it was not, it would damage Warren Commission credibility. Any print would not necessarily have been made that day. Questions: What evidence exists that palm print was taken from rifle? What evidence exists that palm print may not have been taken from rifle? If a lift is taken can this be determined by the subsequent condition of the rifle? How different is the print left on a curved surface such as a rifle stock from one left on a flat surface? Role of mercator test in determining where the palm print alleged to have been ~~taken~~ taken from Oswald's rifle was actually taken from?
 Two potential lines of ~~examination~~ examination:
 a.) evidence on the rifle as to whether a lift was performed,
 b.) Mercator ~~evidence~~ evidence as to whether print was from Oswald hand on rifle. These are questions to pursue privately with Joling or others. If evidence can be shown to have been fabricated that is very important, obviously. (Additional issue raised by consideration of prints on the gun: If Oswald wiped off ~~prints~~ some prints from the gun, this would have added to the difficulty of getting, in one minute and seventeen seconds from the sixth to second floor. Gun was also wedged carefully between boxes. How long would all of this have taken?)

6. Issue of Replication Tests of circumstances of the shooting: ~~Meagher~~ (Meagher has material on CBS replication tests. References to this issue on pages 294-295 of XI Six Seconds in Dallas.)
 * CBS used 11 master riflemen. Their conditions were closer to the actual case than those of the Warren Commission. Only ~~around~~ around one in three shots hit, accuracy disappointing. Information on this test was suppressed. Names of 11 riflemen available. CBS is doing another special on assassinations - should they not be pressed to reveal true results of this important test? Chandler - CBS. Robert Richter - a producer in N.Y., Groden knows him, not a crank. Two questions: a.) What was CBS handling of this affair? b.) Why not offer to let people try to hit target under similar conditions? A public demonstration of fallacy of Warren ~~theory~~ theory.

7. Zapruder camera speed issue. As single bullet theory becomes more difficult to sustain ~~staring~~ given the time span during which it is thought that shots would have had to have been fired, one recourse for the official theory is to allege that the Zapruder camera was slow. Thus, the time available to make the shots is increased, the ~~framed~~ temporal "window" is expanded. Tests with ~~similar~~ of the same model camera were performed, and five cameras averaged out to almost precisely the alleged speed of the actual Zapruder camera. These results, however were distorted to suggest a Zapruder camera slowness on the basis of an infinitesimal difference between the Zapruder camera speed and the average of the other five of the same model. (Actual range of the five others: something between 15 and 20 frames per second, as opposed to ~~19x~~ 18.3) Work was done on camera speed issue by both the manufacturer and the FBI.

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8. If open day for rifleman fails to produce any who can ~~miss~~ duplicate Oswald's alleged ~~feat~~ feat under simulated conditions, this would be a dramatic refutation of current official theory. Understandable and powerful demonstration for the public. Result is predictable because of failure of CBS and FBI to duplicate Oswald. (Wesley Liebman says he did it? Lucky break? Unclear reference.) At this point, the officials are forced to fallback positions, in the attempt to salvage their theory. One is the "slow Zapruder camera" position. Another is an ~~early~~ "early shot theory."

9. Early Shot Theory. Important buttresses for an early shot theory would include a.) the idea of a ~~slightly~~ delayed reaction, and b.) the assertion that Kennedy was hit while the Zapruder camera view of him was blocked. (Neurological evidence would be important on issue of a delayed reaction.) The earlier the ~~shot~~ shot which hit Kennedy, the ~~more~~ sharper would be the downward angle of the bullet which ~~hitting~~ hit him, ~~beginning~~ given the accepted entry hole in the back. If he were hit earlier through this hole, a.) what organs would have been hit, and what chance is there that there was a delayed reaction?, b.) where would the bullet have exited or lodged in the body? On this ~~is~~ issue the X-rays become important. The sharp downward angle necessitated by an earlier shot, ~~and/or~~ and/or the neurological difficulties about a delayed reaction in this case may account for the fact that the officials were forced into the single bullet theory. Otherwise, it might have been asserted that Connally could have been hit by ~~another~~ another shot.

10. ~~Issue of report and other evidence~~ Issue of report and other evidence of gun being fired from sixth floor. (Unclear reference made to whether Oswald was using a silencer.) Three people, blacks, on the third floor. One claims to have heard cartridge case dropping on floor from above? One says debris or plaster from ceiling above fell and hit them on the head, dislodged by sound of gun blast above? (See references: page 11, Accessories After the Fact.)

14. Possibilities of trajectory study based on timing of Connally hit and bullet path through him. Origination point of such a shot would apparently not have been located in School Book Depository; perhaps from Record Building. Best indication of timing of Connally hit: at frames 237-238 he drops his wrist, though still holding his hat. This happened when ~~wrist~~ wrist nerve was cut, is the most definitive indication of timing of Connally hit. Other indications from same period: shoulder drops, cheeks puff, hair mussed. This line of inquiry requires: a.) expert on ~~internal~~ internal medicine (presumably for bullet path through Connally) b.) expert on ~~trajectory~~ rifle trajectories (for tracing to point of origin of shot in physical surroundings). If this line can demonstrate that an Oswald bullet could not have hit Connally, that is a potent public argument. Best photos to ~~use~~ pursue this with are ~~XXXXXX~~ Croden's.

15. Inventory of parts of the case covered in this ~~section~~ meeting: only part of the evidence of the immediate circumstances of the shooting. Areas not considered include Oswald and Ruby and their associations and attempts to plant evidence about Oswald.

16. Issue of a possible shot from the front, accounting for ~~the~~ the marked backward jerk of Kennedy's head. This issue should be checked with people like Joling or Wecht, should not be used so long as there is any ambivalence about it. (Two possible issues exist: a.) head velocities forward and backward seem ~~constant~~ constant with little acceleration. Is this consistent with the possibility of a neuro-muscular reaction to a shot from behind? b. Intuitively, the photos suggest a movement which is guided by the top of the head, rather than by a reaction (presumably neuro-muscular) beginning with upper back muscles. Is there any way to quantify ~~the~~ any photographic differences in movement which might obtain between the two different ~~hypotheses~~ hypotheses?)

17. Issue ~~is~~ raised with respect to bullet that hit the curb. Lead with bits of antimony. More work advisable on this? Also: smear of lead on inside of windshield. Also: reference to "alleged Secret Service man" and a witness named Roger Craig. Additional questions for future study: travel date question ~~in~~ in Europe. Ruby's underworld connections. Oswald's intelligence connections.

18. Tippit questions. Belin presumably wants to tie JFK murder to Tippit murder because if people believe Oswald killed ~~Kennedy~~ Tippit they will find it inconceivable that he did not kill Kennedy. Key evidence: laundry slip found on coat at scene, never since identified. Oswald's laundry was said to have been done at home. Suggested procedure: Attempt to determine what might have happened when Tippit was killed, what alternative might exist to Oswald shooting him. (If laundry slip were traced, it would result in a new lead.) Tippit case is potentially the strongest

argument for the opposition in terms of public appeal. In addition, plausible explanations might exist for this incident which might be sufficiently fortuitous or coincidental that the public might not find them persuasive. We know very little about Tippit. "Who was Tippit?" Rumors: involved in the narcotics trade, shot two suspects in back.

19. Question: When did Oswald get his job at depository? Explained.

20. J. Edgar Hoover quote about approaching motorcade occurs at volume five of the Warren report, page ~~106~~ 105.

21. Earlier points: What stretcher was bullet taken from which was later matched to Oswald rifle? If bullet substitution occurred, the substituted bullet (C-399) may not have been ~~mangled to a~~ mangled to a plausible extent because ~~the mangled bullet~~ a sufficiently mangled bullet might have prevented the identification of Oswald's gun as the source. Question: To what extent should alternative explanations (to current defective official theories) be explored? Importance of probing ~~possible~~ potential opposition claims and fallback positions. Distinction: The demonstration that the Warren Commission ~~was~~ ~~work~~ was inept or dishonest or both does not in itself invalidate its conclusions. It is necessary, beyond discrediting the Warren Commission, also to discredit its conclusions. Evidence: Two photos of Oswald, one with apparent substitution of face section beginning with the chin. Also a possible difference on neck, and suspicious dissimilarity of chins in two pictures. Silvia Meagher has slides.