

WATCHMAN WAKETH BUT IN VAIN

By:

Thomas Katen
Vincent J. Salandria
Gary Schoener

Thomas Katen is a Professor at the Community College of Philadelphia. Vincent J. Salandria is a Philadelphia Attorney. Gary Schoener is a Graduate Assistant and Ph. D. candidate in clinical psychology at the Medical School, Department of Psychiatry and Neurology, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

THE WOUNDS CRY OUT CONSPIRACY

Of course the wounds inflicted on persons in Dealey Plaza did not inspire confidence in a lone-assassin killing. The President had been hit in the back at a point which caused Secret Service Agent Glen A. Bennett, who was stationed in the Presidential follow-up car, to say that he saw a shot "hit the President about four inches down from the right shoulder." (5) The President was further wounded in the anterior neck. Much of his head was shattered and great avulsive wounds had resulted when pieces of bone were driven out of his skull. Governor Connally suffered a wound in the back, right chest, right wrist and left femur. A third man, James T. Tague, a bystander, was wounded in Dealey Plaza. (W 116) Such carnage, added to damage to the Presidential limousine apparently resulting from the shooting, underscores the ominous and precipitous nature of the Pentagon's conclusion the very afternoon of the assassination that there was no conspiracy.

Let us for the moment consider the tiny neck wound in the front of the President and what should have been the natural action of an innocent government to that wound. The Commission made reference to the televised statement of Dr. Malcolm O.

THE NEW YORK TIMES of November 23, 1963
stated:

" . . . Dr. Malcolm Perry . . . gave . . . details . . . Mr. Kennedy was hit by a bullet in the throat. . . This wound had the appearance of a bullet's entry."

Let us give the Commission the benefit of all doubts and assume that it was right and THE NEW YORK TIMES was wrong and misquoted Dr. Perry. Suppose, therefore, that Dr. Perry merely said, as the Commission contended he had, that it was "possible that the neck wound was a wound of entrance." Remember, that at the time Dr. Perry made that statement the federal government had no evidence with which to contravene Dr. Perry's assessment of the neck wound as "possibly" one of entry. The dead President's body was in a casket for or on the Presidential plane in preparation for being flown back to Washington for pomp of an unprecedented military funeral. We know now, and the federal government had every reason to know then, that the Presidential limousine was photographed proceeding away from the Texas Book Depository Building when it was first fired upon.

On the basis of Dr. Perry's statement of a "possible" entry wound in the front of the President, and because at the time of the inception of the firing, and at all times during the firing, the President had not faced the officially-designated assassin who was in the rear of the President. An innocent government would be under obligation to act on this information. Certainly we should have anticipated that the Mexican border would have been shut off by the U. S. authorities. Transportation terminals would have been saturated with police officials in an effort to cut off escape of the assassins who "possibly" were positioned in the front of the President. We must bear in mind that the government did not have at this time the august and now largely discredited Warren Commission Report to hide behind. The job of the federal authorities flush up against the assassination proper was to explore

every "possibility" of apprehending any "possible" assassins. We are compelled to conclude that it was a guilty government that saw fit too early in the investigation to rely upon the Warren Commission's ultimate conclusions of a single assassin positioned in the rear of the President at a point where it had every reason to suspect that at least one assassin had fired from the front of the President.