

Meagher

July 1967

Transcript of tape interview on CBS News Inquiry on the Warren Report

at WBAI, for Bill O'Connell

Please return in due course to Sylvia Meagher: no copy made, attached  
is original and sole transcript.

Listener-supported  
Pacifica Radio  
for Southern California  
Studios at 3729 Cahuenga Boulevard  
North Hollywood, California  
Mail address:  
Los Angeles, California 90038  
877-5583 and 984-2420

*Dear Sylvia:*  
*Since you will be away most of this week perhaps we can talk about this on Sunday next, making changes or additions or deletions for a taping early next week.* Thanks & Best Wishes,  
*Bill*



**pacifica**  
kpfk-fm 90.7

① Q: Mrs. Meagher, would you give us a sort of "overview" of the CBS Documentary? Your general feeling on its thoroughness or superficiality, its objectivity or partisanship as the case may be.

② Q: An analysis of the Zapruder film by Wycoff and Alvarez/led CBS to conclude that the first shot that was fired may have been the "missed shot" postulated by the Warren Commission. Please comment upon this and the "early hit" position taken by a number of the critics of the Report.

③ Q: Can "blurs" on the Zapruder film be accepted as evidence of a reaction on Zapruder's part to the sound of gunshots? Dr. Alvarez seems to think so. Please give us your feeling on this with your evaluation generally of what we can know rather definitely from an analysis of this film and what we can infer with rather less assurance from its study.

Optional... ④ Q: Would you care to comment on Dr. Milton Halperin's article in Argosy magazine for July with regard to his contentions in re the Zapruder film as a "clock"?

⑤ Q: Please comment on the marksmanship or rifle tests conducted by CBS. Their differences with those conducted by the Warren Commission. Were the results markedly different? Why? Do they perhaps bring us to a new or different conclusions about the alleged firing from the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository?

⑥ Q: Would you share with us, Mrs. Meagher, your thoughts on the so-called "single bullet" theory. How did it originate. Did CBS accurately convey its history? Are you after viewing the documentary more or less inclined toward accepting this theory?

a) A discussion of CE 399 might be included in the above answer. If not, and you desire to treat it separately you might do so in response to the following query:

⑦ Q: CBS showed rather more of CE 399 than we have been able to view from photographs thus far. Did this assuage any doubts you might have about this bullet as a legitimate assassination bullet? Similar bullets were used in "wound penetration" tests conducted by CBS. What did they show? (The tests, that is)

Pacifica is an educational foundation organized to receive tax-deductible contributions for Pacifica Radio: KPFA-FM, 94.1 and KPFB-FM, 89.3, 2207 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, California 94704; KPFK-FM, 90.7, 3729 Cahuenga Boulevard, North Hollywood, California 91062; and WBAI-FM, 99.5, 30 East 39th Street, New York, New York 10016.

*Dale Minor*  
*WBAI* or *Traffic Control*  
*Ox 7-2288*

Listener-supported

Pacifica Radio

for Southern California

Studios at 3729 Cahuenga Boulevard

North Hollywood, California

Mail address:

Los Angeles, California 90038

877-5583 and 984-2420



**pacifica**  
kpfk-fm 90.7

-2-

8 Q: Captain James J. Humes, chief surgeon in charge of the autopsy on the late President, "broke a three year silence to appear on CBS' programme". Did you feel he answered questions in your mind with reference to the trajectory of the alleged "neck" or back wound bullet? Is that wound more accurately located as a result of his explanation? Does his "authentication" of the autopsy photographs and X-rays mean that the photos reveal the neck wound as the point of entry for a bullet path the exits below the Adam's Apple?

9 Q: What of interest did you find in watching and listening to the interview with Dr. Malcolm Perry of Parkland Hospital with reference to the throat wound?

10 Q: Would you comment on dispatcher Murray Jackson's appearance on the CBS Documentary. You have been a careful student of the various radio logs procured from the Dallas Police. What conclusions do you draw from his comments, Jackson's that is.

11 Q: After seeing the fourth programme in the series, could and should we believe the Warren Report?

Pacifica is an educational foundation organized to receive tax-deductible contributions for Pacifica Radio: KPFA-FM, 94.1 and KPFB-FM, 89.3, 2207 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, California 94704; KPFK-FM, 90.7, 3729 Cahuenga Boulevard, North Hollywood, California 91062; and WBAI-FM, 99.5, 30 East 39th Street, New York, New York 10016.

### Question One

Personally I feel certain that CBS conceived and executed its so-called documentary as a pure attempt to rehabilitate the disintegrating Warren Report, and as an effort to reverse the trend of public opinion--which is increasingly sceptical or scornful of the Warren Commission and its preposterous, discredited findings. The CBS news inquiry was a massive, expensive, and deliberate propaganda exercise. It was in no way a genuine fact-finding process, as CBS spokesmen have admitted privately or anonymously--for example, to the television editor of the Boston Traveler, who said as much in the April 19th issue. CBS knew that no informed person would fail to realize the ugly nature of its so-called news inquiry, but ~~did not care~~ because its lavish program was aimed at a mass audience which is ill-equipped to understand or resist manipulation by such opinion-makers as the TV networks. To sum up, I would say that the assassins of President Kennedy remain unidentified; but the assassins of the truth are known, and CBS is near the top of the list.

## Question Two

The CBS theory of an earlier first shot that missed is predicated on the single-bullet hypothesis, since CBS agrees with the Warren Commission's conclusion that a total of only three shots were fired.

But it is impossible to accept the single-bullet hypothesis. The evidence against it is conclusive and irrefutable. I can accept an earlier first shot that missed, or an earlier first shot that hit, but only on the basis of at least four shots, and perhaps five, fired from two or more different locations. The early-hit theory as put forward by the critics argues that there were more than three shots---some from the front and to the right of the car, and others from behind the car but not from the sixth-floor window of the Depository, where a tree blocked the Presidential car from view, but from another point or even another building behind the car.

### Question Three

The blurring of certain frames of the Zapruder film and their possible correlation with rifle shots was first suggested by Ray Marcus in 1965, in an unpublished paper. The same theory was published by Harold Weisberg in his book *Whitewash* in 1966, and this book was in the hands of CBS for a year before its so-called news inquiry presented this hypothesis, with much fanfare, as a new discovery for which CBS itself took the credit. This was not discovery, but plagiarism and quintessential hypocrisy.

As to the significance of the blurred frames, the conclusions which CBS drew are untenable. CBS cited only three frames that are blurred ---190, 227, and 318. That fitted neatly with the conclusion of the Warren Commission that only three shots were fired. But CBS dishonestly withheld from the audience the fact that there are many other frames which are just as blurred as the three frames CBS cited---frames 195, 197, 203, 210, and 311. If the correlation between blurred frames and rifle shots is argued by CBS, then by their own criteria there were eight shots, not three---a conclusion that CBS would scarcely advocate.

In any case, there is a serious problem inherent in the three frames that CBS named, even if those were the only blurred frames. The problem is that it takes 2.3 seconds to work the bolt on the Carcano rifle, without aiming time. And 2.3 seconds is equivalent to 42 frames of the Zapruder film. But the interval between frame 190 and frame 227 is only 37 frames. Therefore, even if we correlate the three CBS frames with rifle shots, the first two shots had to be fired by two different weapons---a small point which CBS seems to have overlooked.

#### Question Four

The trouble with Dr. Helpern's theory of a first shot as early as frame 166, before the car vanished behind the tree, is that he ignores the question of the trajectory of the shot. If a bullet hit the back of the President's neck and exited at the Adam's apple, it followed a trajectory of about 17 degrees, which correlates with a segment of the Zapruder film much later than frame 166—that is, frames 210-225. An earlier hit at frame 166 or before would increase the trajectory sharply, to about 55 degrees or more. At that angle of declination, the bullet could not possibly exit at the Adam's apple. Dr. Helpern's theory would therefore leave us exactly where we were on the day of the assassination—with an entrance wound at the Adam's apple, which is exactly what I personally believe was the case. Dr. Helpern has tried to extricate the Warren Commission from its terrible dilemma and to salvage the lone-assassin theory, but his argument only raises a whole complex of new problems which leave the fiction of the lone assassin in shambles.

Incidentally, Dr. Helpern's theory is not original. It is a variation of the theory offered earlier by Professor Alexander Bickel of Yale, who suggested last year that the first shot had been fired at frame 186, when the car came into view for one-eighteenth of a second because of a break in the tree foliage. Wesley Liebeler, who was one of the Commission lawyers, finding himself unable to defend the single-bullet theory, seized upon Professor Bickel's theory of a shot at frame 186, during a public debate last September. But in the course of trying to elaborate this theory, Liebeler got so tangled up in contradiction and absurdity that he ended up by saying heatedly that he was, after all, persuaded that a single bullet hit both men.

Question Five

The CBS rifle tests achieved better simulation than the tests used by the Warren Commission because CBS used moving targets instead of stationary ones. But like the Commission, CBS also used expert riflemen. Oswald was a poor marksman, that is a matter of record; he was in no way comparable with the riflemen who took part in either series of tests. Even so, the results of the CBS tests are significant, because they show how dismally unsuccessful were the results achieved by riflemen of high skill, and they show how unreliable and decrepit the antique Carcano rifle is. In 17 out of 37 attempts to fire three shots in 7 seconds, the rifle jammed and the series had to be scratched. In the instances where three shots were fired, there were only 27 hits out of a possible 60, or an average of 1.3 hits per 3 tries. The results of the CBS tests therefore prove exactly the opposite of what CBS wanted to prove. They show that it was out of the question ~~that~~ <sup>that</sup> a marksman like Oswald using a weapon as cheap and unreliable as the Carcano rifle ~~could~~ <sup>COULD HAVE BEEN</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>was</sup> the assassin.



## Question Six

I believe that the single-bullet theory originated in the Warren Commission's desperation to prove that Oswald was the lone assassin, even though the evidence it elicited came into conflict with that hypothesis and ultimately proved it to be absolutely fraudulent.

To put it as simply as possible, a lone assassin was impossible because the interval between the first shot that hit the President and the shot that hit the Governor was too short for both bullets to have come from the Carcano rifle. This posed a prima facie case for separate shots from two different rifles. If the interval was increased arbitrarily--by postulating an earlier hit on the President, or a later hit on the Governor--that would raise enormous new problems. An earlier shot at the President could not have come from the sixth-floor window of the Depository because the tree was in the way. A later shot at the Governor could not have come from the window, because he was not in position to be hit from there after frame 240. Even if those difficulties are put aside, there would still be the problem of explaining how a rifleman as maladroit as Oswald could get three hits in three tries, when rifle experts averaged only one in three. And then there would be the problem of trajectories, which I mentioned before in connection with Dr. Helpern's theory.

It was this impossible dilemma that ~~seems to have~~ produced the contrived and absurd singlebullet theory, which seems to have been formulated by the inventive Arlen Specter. All the evidence is against this preposterous invention. Even Wesley Liebeler has admitted publicly that the assertion in the Warren Report that all the evidence supports the single-bullet theory is, quote, simply not correct--the Report is wrong in that respect, and there is no doubt about it, end quote.

Question Six (continued)

CBS presented the single-bullet theory in the most favorable light which it could devise but so far as I am concerned CBS only succeeded in destroying what it was trying to salvage.

The CBS wound penetration tests proved that none of the tests bullets retained sufficient velocity to duplicate the feat of the Commission's single bullet---not one. Some did not even emerge from the simulated wrist.

What speaks even more thunderously against the whole thesis is the fact that CBS did not display or even describe the condition of a single one of the recovered test bullets. They did not dare. Obviously not one of the test bullets emerged in virtually pristine condition, like the stretcher bullet which the Warren Commission claims hit the President and then proceeded to inflict all of the Governor's wounds, including a shattered rib and a smashed wrist bone.

Incidentally, I wrote to CBS immediately after the so-called news inquiry requesting photographs or detailed descriptions of the recovered test bullets. I was certain that CBS would refuse, and CBS did not disappoint me. They replied on July 13th that they had a so-called long-standing policy prohibiting the release of research material. To appreciate the hypocrisy and immorality of this refusal to divulge the condition of the test bullets, one should recall that the CBS news inquiry issued a santimonious reprimand to those who are suppressing the Zapruder film and the autopsy photographs and x-rays, and piously urged that these items of vital evidence should be made available. Yet CBS, just like those it lectured, refuses to divulge data which, I feel certain, would ~~prove~~ <sup>confirm</sup> that the stretcher bullet is planted or fabricated evidence and that the single-bullet and the lone-assassin theories are plain fraud.

### Question 7

I think that my previous remarks cover this question fully. As I said, I consider the stretcher bullet, Commission Exhibit 399, to be illegitimate and fraudulent. The same adjectives can be applied to the CBS presentation of its tests.

### Question 8

Dr. Humes is under wide suspicion of having falsified the autopsy report, or at least having blundered incredibly in conducting the post-mortem examination. I am more impressed by his three-year silence than by his condescension to speak, at long last, merely for purposes of self-vindication.

What is important is not that Dr. Humes has authenticated the autopsy photographs but that Congressman Kupferman's ~~request~~ <sup>permission</sup> has been denied <sup>to</sup> examine those photographs <sup>and x-rays</sup> accompanied by two outstanding experts, Dr. Milton Helpern, a vigorous advocate of the Warren Report, I might add, and Dr. Cyril H. Wecht.

The continued suppression of the autopsy photographs and x-rays, together with massive evidence that the wound was four to six inches below the neck, leaves the CBS interview of Dr. Humes a pathetic and ugly irrelevance.

### Question 9

I was interested in the interview with Dr. Perry and the admission by CBS that in fact Dr. Perry did tell reporters that the neck wound looked like an entrance wound, and that there was no doubt that Dr. Perry presented this as his firm opinion. CBS forgot to mention two things: first, that the critics have been saying this for three years; and second, that the Warren Report gives a false account of Dr. Perry's statements to the press.

Question 10

Jackson told CBS that at 12:45 he had instructed patrolmen Tippit and Nelson to proceed to central Oak Cliff because that area had been left unmanned when its regular patrols were redeployed to the scene of the assassination.

This explanation is in ~~the most serious~~ <sup>total</sup> conflict with the evidence on record. Central Oak Cliff is normally manned by seven patrolmen. At 12:45, five of those men were in position in their Oak Cliff districts. It was not central Oak Cliff that was without police on the spot when Jackson supposedly sent Tippit and Nelson there, although there was no disturbance and nothing happening---it was Tippit's district, and Nelson's, that were left unmanned.

Jackson also tried to explain why he had signalled Tippit the minute a citizen reported a shooting on 10th and Patton, which lies within district no. 91, in which the assigned officer, W. D. Mentzel, was present and performing his duties. Jackson told CBS, quote, knowing that J.D. Tippit was the only one that should have been in Oak Cliff, my reaction was to call 78, which was Tippit's code number on the police radio.

But Jackson supposedly had sent Nelson as well as Tippit to central Oak Cliff, as he himself had admitted earlier in the CBS interview. How could he have thought that Tippit was the only officer there? He should have expected Nelson to be there too, to say nothing about Mentzel---the man who normally should have been there, and who in fact was there.

Apparently Jackson did not think his story through very carefully before his CBS interview. And of course CBS did not notice, or did not choose to call attention to Jackson's blatant self-contradiction.

Question 11

Of course we cannot believe the Warren Report. The CBS news inquiry inadvertently provided new grounds for not accepting the Report---NOT, as CBS intended, fewer reasons for rejecting it. The CBS program has merely compounded a shame and scandal unprecedented in our lifetime. I do not think that the American people will prove to be the complacent village idiots that CBS thought it was addressing.