

This is substantially improved over what Bud had originally written, but it still does not meet a number of objections that I voiced to Bud when he first drafted it. Some of the words or phrases I disagree with are underlined. Unfortunately, I had to leave town on the 24th and couldn't press the matter further, and Bud would do it wait until the following week. *RS*

November 24, 1971

The Editor
New York Times
New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Salisbury:

For selfish reasons of our own, we appreciate your publication on November 22nd of your article by Mr. David Belin of the Warren Commission staff, reminding those who might have forgotten that it was the 8th anniversary of President Kennedy's death.

Mr. Belin concludes as follows:

I also know that despite the success of the assassination sensationalists in deceiving a large body of world opinion, the Warren Commission Report will stand the test of history for one simple reason: The ultimate truth beyond a reasonable doubt is that Lee Harvey Oswald killed both John F. Kennedy and J. D. Tippit, on that tragic afternoon of Nov. 22, 1963.

In the body of the article, Mr. Belin makes use of the phrase "irrefutable scientific evidence" to bolster his thesis. As our Committee doubtless contains many of the "sensationalists" who, according to Mr. Belin, have duped world opinion, we would like to point out just a few "irrefutable scientific points" of which Mr. Belin may or may not be aware ... as a considerable amount of crucial evidence was withheld from the Warren Commission and its staff.

The Editor,
N.Y. Times
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*This is loaded
with errors, both
factual & inferential.*

1. One of the simplest scientific tests for ballistics evidence is spectrographic analysis, whereby minute samples of bullets and bullet fragments are tested to see if they are of identical composition and, hence, come from a common source. Such a test was made on the bullets and bullet fragments in the Dallas case but the scientific findings were withheld from the Warren Commission; they were never even placed in the National Archives but are still classified secret in the files of the Department of Justice. Just before the Warren Report was to be issued, an FBI agent finally admitted that the tests showed that the samples were only "similar," i.e., all were of a lead composition, but he declined either to say that they were identical or to produce for the Commission the scientific data derived from the tests. It is a fair inference that the bullets and fragments did not come from a common source, but that there were at least two batches of bullets involved.

2. A more exacting test, the neutron activation test, is used to determine if a person has or has not fired a gun. By neutron activation, one part in a million of a substance can be detected. If a person fires a pistol, a trace residue of antimony and/or bismuth will be left on the hand holding the gun; if a person fires a rifle, a trace residue of the same substance would remain on the cheek nearest the firing chamber. To test Oswald, the FBI made plaster molds of both hands and his right cheek. These molds were tested by the AEC at Oakridge, using neutron activation. Results: heavy trace residues on both hands and no significant amount on the cheek. This is the strongest possible scientific evidence that (a) Oswald either fired pistols with both hands or the residues on his hands came from fresh paint on the boxes he was moving that day; and (b) Oswald did not fire a rifle on November 22nd. This evidence was not given in testimony before the Commission until September, 1964, by the very last witness to appear before the Commission. The actual scientific test results were never given to the Commission and are not in the National Archives today.

There is quite a story to tell about these NAA tests, which I'll describe to you when I'm in New York. There are several errors in the above account and a lot of omissions, but it is hard to get Bud to consider details of the kind necessary to do a good job of presenting such information.