

TENTATIVE MEMORANDUM

January 23, 1964

TO: Mr. J. Lee Rankin  
FROM: Mr. Joseph A. Ball and Mr. David W. Belin  
SUBJECT: Outline of objectives and problems of area of study of Messrs. Joseph A. Ball and David W. Belin; the determination of who was the assassin of President Kennedy

II. Who was the assassin of President Kennedy?

- A. The place from where the shots were fired.
1. Eyewitnesses to shooting.
    - a. Witness Howard Brennan saw at least one shot fired.
    - b. Witness Robert Jackson saw gun barrel withdrawn into building.
      - (1) Witness Dillard heard Jackson exclaim about gun.
      - (2) Witness Underwood heard Jackson exclaim about gun.
    - c. Witness Couch saw gun barrel being withdrawn.
    - d. Witness Woorell saw gun barrel being withdrawn.
    - e. Do all of foregoing witnesses place gun barrel in the south-east corner of the building on the corner window facing south on the next to the top story?
  2. Witnesses in building.
    - a. Witness Norman looking out of fifth floor window heard shot from above.
  3. Witnesses before assassination seeing figure with rifle in window.
    - a. Arnold Rowland
    - b. Mrs. Rowland
  4. Physical evidence in building.
    - a. Three rifle bullet shells found by south-east corner window on sixth floor.
    - b. Boxes stacked as shield by south-east corner window.
      - (1) Any finger prints on stacked boxes?
  5. Does the trajectory of each shot integrate with these physical facts?
  6. Is there any evidence to the contrary to rebut these physical facts?
    - a. Contrary witnesses
  7. Tentative conclusion to date: The shots were fired from the south-east corner window of the sixth floor of the south side Texas Book Depository Building.
- B. The weapon from which the shots were fired.
1. A weapon was found on the sixth floor of the book building.
  2. The rifle bullet shells were found on the sixth floor of the building.
  3. Were the rifle bullet shells fired by this particular gun?
    - a. How good and accurate is test?
  4. Were bullets wounding Connally and killing Kennedy fired from this gun?
    - a. Fragments from Connally - how good is test on fragment?
    - b. Fragments from Kennedy - how good is test?
    - c. The whole bullet found.
      - (1) Why is this bullet whole instead of shattered?
      - (2) What about the trajectory of the bullet in the angle of striking - point of exit appears higher than point of entry.

5. How accurate is this rifle at a distance?
    - a. Where was the car when each shot was fired?
    - b. Were there any obstructions in the line of vision?
    - c. What effect does sighting for a specific distance have?
  6. How fast can this gun be operated accurately?
    - a. What is the effect of a telescopic sight?
    - b. What is the effect of changing targets twice -- Kennedy, then Connally, then Kennedy?
    - c. Moving target.
  7. What do the films tend to show?
    - a. Determination of a time sequence.
    - b. Determination of speed of car.
  8. Tentative conclusion to date: The murder weapon was a 6.5 millimeter Mannlicher-Carcano bolt-action clip-fed rifle.
- C. Who owned the weapon from which the fatal shots were fired?
1. Identification of weapon as to manufacture and serial number.
  2. Source of purchase.
  3. Purchase.
    - a. Order
    - b. Payments
    - c. Shipment
  4. Identification of handwriting on purchase materials.
    - a. Basic sources
    - b. Other sources
    - c. How credible is evidence?
  5. Use of alias by owner.
    - a. Documents in billfold.
    - b. Other use of alias.
  6. Fingerprints on weapon - how complete and how accurate?
  7. Palm prints on weapon - how complete and how accurate?
  8. Purchase of telescopic sight.
  9. Picture of Oswald.
  10. Where weapon kept?
    - a. Marina Oswald's testimony.
    - b. Hairs found on blanket -- limitation of credibility.
    - c. Hairs from shirt found gun - matching - limitation on credibility.
  11. Tentative conclusion to date: The owner of the assassination weapon was Lee Harvey Oswald.
- D. The activities of Oswald, owner of the gun, prior to assassination.
1. Worked in building from which gun shots fired.
  2. On Thursday night went to Irving home for the first time on an evening other than Friday,
  3. The curtain rod story.
    - a. Marina
    - b. Paine
    - c. Any evidence of curtain rod in building?
  4. The brown sack and the return.
    - a. Discrepancies in color stories
      - (1) Why did police show replica sack first rather than original sack?
    - b. Length of sack and size.
  5. Walking into the Texas Book Depository Building with the brown sack.
  6. The clip board found on the sixth floor and the testimony of witness Kaiser.
    - a. Were there any prints on the clip board?

(sic)

(sic-?)  
(sic)

7. The elevator conversation.
8. Any other movements or activities in morning prior to assassination?
9. Tentative conclusion to date: At the time of the assassination Oswald was in the Texas School Book Depository building and prior to the assassination was on the sixth floor; the assassination weapon was carried into the building by Oswald on the morning of the assassination.

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## E. Activities of Oswald in building after assassination.

1. Persons encountered in building.
  - a. Woman on second floor.
  - b. Truly and officer.
  - c. What route did Oswald take?
  - d. Statement by officer Baker.
  - e. Any package carried out - i.e. curtain rods?
2. Time between shots and leaving building.
3. Time and direction of Oswald in leaving building.
  - a. Police lines.
  - b. The white Rambler story.
  - c. Other facts.
4. Tentative conclusion to date: Oswald was the only building employee to leave the building shortly after the assassination and at no time after the assassination was he seen carrying a package such as curtain rods.

## F. Activities of Oswald after leaving building.

1. The boarding of the bus.
  - a. The time and place of boarding.
  - b. Extent and duration of ride.
  - c. The testimony of the bus driver.
  - d. The testimony of the former landlady.
  - e. The dress and appearance of Oswald.
  - f. Other relevant facts - i.e. no package of curtain rods.
2. Going from the bus to the taxi.
  - a. The distance and route from the bus to the taxi.
  - b. The time.
  - c. Distance and route of cab.
  - d. Time to destination.
  - e. Statement of cab driver.
  - f. Other witnesses or sources.
3. The route from the departure from the cab to the house.
  - a. Time of arrival at house.
  - b. Actions within house.
    - (1) Time
    - (2) Any washing of hands or face
  - c. Departure and direction.
4. Route until encounter with Officer Tippit.
  - a. Time
  - b. Distance
5. Tentative conclusion to date: Oswald was attempting to leave the scene of the crime.

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## H. Murder of Officer J. D. Tippit

1. Cab driver, W. W. Scroggins, sees murder and identified Oswald in police line-up.
  - a. Not exactly sure on later identification from picture.
2. Mrs. Helen Markham sees murder and identified Oswald in police line-up and from picture.
3. Dr. Ligouri states there were three bullet wounds (and fourth hitting button) - only one bullet given to FBI.

- a. No ballistics identification from pistol.
- b. Where are other bullets?
- c. Any cartridge shells?
- 4. Time and location of murder.
  - a. Had there been any broadcast yet for apprehension of Oswald?
- 5. The murder weapon.
  - a. Ballistics reports inconclusive.
    - (1) Report says one bullet would be identifiable.
  - b. Paraffin tests.
    - (1) Would pistol firing result in positive paraffin test on both hands?
      - (a) Where was Oswald's left hand when he fired the pistol shot?
      - (b) Would reloading weapon put nitrate on left hand?
    - (2) What problems of duplication on positive results of paraffin tests between rifle shot and pistol shot?
    - (3) Why no positive paraffin tests from cheek?
- 6. Other evidence - shipment and order of pistol to "A. J. Hidell, P. O. Box 2195."
- 7. Tentative conclusion to date: Oswald murdered Officer Tippit in an attempt to avoid arrest.
- I. Flight and Apprehension in Texas Theater.
  - 1. Movement until entry into theater.
    - a. Time
    - b. Eye witnesses
    - c. Actions - e.g. reloading weapon after carrying it in public view.
    - d. Other relevant facts - e.g. directness of route, recovery of jacket.
  - 2. Entry into the theater.
    - a. Purchase of ticket?
  - 3. Apprehension in theater.
    - a. Movements of Oswald in theater.
    - b. Notification and arrival of police.
    - c. Resistance to arrest of Oswald.
      - (1) Pulling trigger - indentation of shell.
    - d. Removal to station.
  - 4. Tentative conclusion to date: Oswald went to the Texas Theater to hide out after the shooting of Officer Tippit.
- J. Interrogation of Oswald at Dallas Police Station.
  - 1. Interrogation
    - a. Time, manner and number of interrogation sessions.
    - b. Persons present.
    - c. Persons responsible.
  - 2. Other investigation by Dallas Police
    - a. Line-ups and eye-witness identification
    - b. Seizure of Oswald's papers
    - c. Other
    - d. Paraffin test
      - (1) Why cheek negative?
  - 3. Comparison of statements of Oswald in interrogation with other evidence - i.e. curtain rod story, ownership of gun, claimed 5-minute conversation with foreman before going home, route taken to theater, etc.
  - 4. Tentative conclusion to date: Oswald repeatedly lied in interrogation.
- K. Miscellaneous Evidence and Inconsistencies

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1. Source of shots.
  2. Question of feasibility of shots within time span.
    - a. Laboratory report re FBI analysis of motion picture films of assassination.
      - (1) Speed of car by comparing movement of known length or portion of car with fixed point.
      - (2) Time sequence between second and third shots through comparison of frames per second.
  3. Prior similar acts.
    - a. General Walker attack.
      - (1) The letter
      - (2) Statements by Marina Oswald
    - b. General Eisenhower threat?
  4. The clothing.
    - a. Inconsistencies in statements of witnesses in color of shirt.
    - b. T-shirt versus regular shirt.
    - c. Jacket.
  - 9- 5. Permissible inference from Oswald being only employee leaving building.
    - a. Permissible inferences from flight and route taken.
    - b. Statements on bus - inconsistencies.
    - c. Murder of Tippit.
    - d. Indirect route to theater.
  6. Accuracy of telescope and lens.
    - a. Claimed sighting of lens at 100 yards. What effect did this have at 50 yards?
    - b. Shifting of targets.
  7. Refutation of allegations.
  8. Additional statements which should be obtained.
  9. Tentative conclusion to date: Whatever inconsistencies seen thus far are not sufficient to rebut conclusions heretofore reached beyond reasonable doubt.
  - L. Tentative Conclusions (The following tentative conclusions are made beyond a reasonable doubt).
    1. The shots were fired from the Texas School Book Depository Building and in particular from the south-east corner window of the south side of the building on the sixth floor.
    2. The weapon used to fire the bullets was a rifle determined to be a 6.5 millimeter Mannlicher-Carcano bolt-action clip-fed rifle, Serial No. C2766, equipped with a telescopic sight of Japanese manufacturer.
    3. The assassination weapon was owned by Lee Harvey Oswald and his fingerprints appear on the weapon.
    4. At the time of the assassination Lee Harvey Oswald was in the Texas School Book Depository building and prior to the assassination was on the sixth floor.
    5. The fingerprints and palm prints of Lee Harvey Oswald appear on the assassination weapon and are proper means of identification.
    - 10- 6. Lee Harvey Oswald is the only building employee who left the building after the assassination.
    7. Lee Harvey Oswald murdered Patrolman J. D. Tippit.
    8. Lee Harvey Oswald is the assassin of President John F. Kennedy.
  - M. Limitations of analysis of area of inquiry of Messrs. Joseph A. Ball and David W. Belin.
    1. In this particular section we are not analyzing motive.
    2. In this particular section we are not analyzing whether or not there were any other persons, groups, or any group outside of the country involved in the assassination.

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