

# Texas Editor on Assassination

By TOM JOHNSON

MIDLOTHIAN. (P) — A Texas newspaper editor predicts that "more killings are going to be necessary in order to keep this crime quiet."

He is Penn Jones Jr., and "this crime" is the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in Dallas Nov. 22, 1963.

Jones, editor and publisher of the Midlothian, Mirror since 1945, is the only Texas author to join the ranks of writers producing a spate of books this summer critical of the Warren Commission report on the assassination.

This revived interest, coming almost three years after the assassination, has also produced a flood of magazine articles on the subject.

BOOKS ALREADY published this summer are **FORGIVE MY GRIEF** by Jones; **INQUEST** by Edward Epstein of New York; and **WHITEWASH** by former Senate investigator Harold Weisberg of Washington.

Scheduled for United States publication in September are similarly critical works by New York attorney Mark Lane and French newspaperman Leo Sauvage, who works in this country.

Jones, Epstein and Weisberg do not indulge in spinning unprovable conspiracy theories about the assassination, as did some writers in 1964.

Rather, their efforts rely heavily on the official testimony released by the Warren Commission in September, 1964, and on personal investigation.

"It would be presumptuous," Jones writes, "for a weekly newspaper to think it could solve such a heinous crime. Our aim is to try to assist history, and to that end we shall continue to work."

Jones, whose newspaper is only 19 miles from Dallas, says he has spent thousands of hours "knocking on doors," asking questions about the murders of Kennedy, Dallas Policeman J. D. Tippit and alleged presidential assassin Lee Harvey Oswald.

HE ADDS THAT careful reading of the commission's 26 volumes of evidence and testimony leads him to conclude that "actions were taken by the commission" to obscure the evidence.

Jones' major conclusions are that:

—Oswald and Jack Ruby, his killer, very possibly were acquainted before the assassination;

—Kennedy was shot from the front, not from the back, and

—At least 13 persons connected innocently or otherwise with the "assassination principals" have been murdered or found dead under strange circumstances since the Nov. 22 weekend.

The Warren Commission, formed by

President Johnson to find the truth of the assassination, concluded that:

—Oswald, acting alone, killed Kennedy with rifle shots from behind;

Oswald and Ruby did not know each other, and

—There was no conspiracy, foreign or domestic, involved.

JONES, EPSTEIN and Weisberg all charge that the commission was unduly selective in its choice of evidence in order to make its single assassin conclusion plausible.

Jones' book, which he subtitles "Volume vi," has as a general format the juxtaposition of segments of official commission testimony in such a way as to imply internal contradiction.

Commission testimony also is juxtaposed with results of Jones' own legwork.

He presents a long list of coincidences, culled from the official testimony, which he says should have led commission lawyers time and again to ask "the next most obvious question" of witness.

AMONG THESE is the fact that Mrs. Earlene Roberts, Oswald's landlady at the time of the assassination, was the sister of a Dallas woman acquainted with Jack Ruby.

Mrs. Roberts, now dead, also testified that a police car pulled up and honked at her rooming house shortly after the assassination, and while Oswald was in his room allegedly changing clothes.

Perhaps the most intriguing of such coincidences put forth by Jones is the one involving two reporters who allegedly visited Ruby's apartment the night of Nov. 24, 1963, after Ruby had shot Oswald and was in police custody.

Jones says he has learned that Jim Koethe, Dallas Times Herald reporter, and Bill Hunter, a native of Dallas but working for a Long Beach, Calif., news-

paper at the time, went to the apartment after the visit was set up by a Dallas lawyer. Six persons are said to have been present that night.

What the two newsmen learned there, if anything, is not known. Both are now dead.

KOETHE WAS found in his Dallas apartment, the victim of a blow to the neck or head. His murder is unsolved.

Hunter's death was officially listed as an accident. He was shot by a policeman who said his pistol discharged while he was practicing "fast draw" at the Long Beach police station press room.

Koethe and Hunter died in 1964, some five months apart.

Jones also notes that the first attorney Ruby had after he shot Oswald is also dead, as is the cab driver who drove Oswald to his rooming house immediately after the assassination.

Jones refers to such events as "the string of amazing coincidences."

EPSTEIN'S BOOK was submitted as a master's thesis at Cornell University. He said its initial purpose was to investigate how the commission functioned to arrive at its conclusion, rather than to take issue with the conclusion itself.

But a recent review of the Epstein book in Look magazine took the author to task for making the same type of selective-evidence judgments that the commission is accused of having made.

Jones is more free-wheeling in his book, which consists of 25 chapters, most of which were carried previously in his newspaper.

He openly challenges the commission on a number of points and frequently uses the findings of his own investigations to spotlight alleged shortcomings of the Warren report.

Jones believes Oswald was involved in the assassination but is not sure to what extent. He is convinced that Kennedy was cut down in a cross-fire of at least two weapons.

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