QUESTIONS AND TESTS - II

A list of questions and proposals for scientific tests designed to clarify some of the confusion surrounding the Robert Kennedy assassination was submitted to Los Angeles law enforcement authorities in 1974. No reply has ever been received to the questions and proposals on this list, and only some of the questions have since been resolved.

The list that follows supplements the 1974 list but is not designed to be exhaustive. Answers to many of the questions raised may obviate the need to pursue others. The list is meant to suggest some of the prime areas of inquiry in any serious re-examination of this case.

I. UNRESOLVED MATTERS CONCERNING PHYSICAL EVIDENCE FROM THE PANTRY AREA

1. Center divider facing and south door frame:

   a. Is there any evidence that the splinter in the center divider wood or any of the reported bullets or bullet holes were present in the area before the shooting?

   b. Why did the upper left section of the center divider facing disappear prior to the removal of the facing?

   c. Did a police officer tell Martin Patrusky that two bullets had been removed from the pantry center divider? If so, who is this officer and what was the basis for this statement?

   d. Former FBI agent Bailey states unequivocally that at least two bullets were lodged in the center divider facing. Which police officers first took custody of the facing and what was its subsequent chain of possession? Who was involved in the tests performed on it? What examination was given to the center post behind? What objects were recovered from the center divider facing or post and what was done with them?

2. Mystery of the discovered nail: Mr. Kranz reports that the object examined in the Associated Press wirephoto was determined to have been a nail. (II.44) DeWayne Wolfer testified under oath, however, that it was a hole caused by a food cart (September 18, 1975). Is it to be assumed that a nail became lodged inside the food cart hole subsequent to the morning of the assassination?

3. Other locations of possible or reported bullets:

   a. What happened to the wall panel segment which, according to the FBI, "reportedly contained a bullet"? Why was it removed?

   b. What happened to the swinging door hinge photographed by the LAPD and FBI and described by the FBI as the "reported location of another bullet mark"? How and by whom was it examined, and with what conclusions?

   c. What accounts for the plaster dislodged above the pantry steam table after the shooting, from an area which officials say no bullets struck?

4. Is there any information that bullets were ever fired in or near the Ambassador pantry prior to the assassination of Robert Kennedy?

5. Specific documents of importance:

   a. Property reports for the booking of the "boards from door frame," ceiling tiles, and ninety-odd other items for which no property reports were made available in 1975.

   b. Records of chain of possession or destruction of this evidence subsequent to initial booking.

   c. Reported crime-scene records of the LAPD showing "the precise location of each suspected bullet hole."

6. Provide the names and reports of law enforcement officers who participated in:

   a. The original crime scene investigation.

   b. The post-booking analysis of physical evidence.

   c. The subsequent crime scene reconstructions and walk-throughs.

Provide an opportunity for the officers involved in these events to be questioned so that discrepancies and problems can be pursued impartially.

7. The circling and photographing of specific holes at the crime scene is now more in need of clarification than ever. Officials have stated that all holes at the crime scene were circled "as a matter of course," and DeWayne Wolfer has asserted that "negative types" (i.e. holes not caused by bullets) would not have been circled. These statements raise at least the following questions:

   a. What is the explanation for the holes from the crime scene which clearly were not circled? Which holes, if any, were circled apart from those identified as "bullet holes" by the FBI?

   b. Why, in view of Wolfer's statement, were at least five holes photographed by police?

   c. Who circled these holes? What is the significance of the numbers and letters written next to these circles?

8. Official procedures, identifications, and documentation:

   a. Identify the original location of the "two boards from door frame" removed and booked by police. Which of the conflicting official accounts (by Gates and Kranz) of the fate of these "two boards" is correct?

   b. Are there any documents from the official investigations which contradict the FBI findings of four bullet holes and two reported bullet holes at the west end of the pantry? What effort, if any, was made to resolve this discrepancy?

9. Photographs:

   a. Why are no captions available for the official photographs of the crime scene taken on June 5 and June 11? Who were the photographers and what information can they add?

   b. The photographs of the crime scene search released in 1975 are nonconsecutive in their numbering. Where are photographs A42-52, A61, A63, and others apparently missing?

   c. Provide access to photographic evidence of the crime reportedly collected by the police from news agencies and private individuals.

d. Resolve the contradictory evidence of the dates when Iver-Johnson revolver H18602 was both made available for testing and subsequently destroyed.

5. 1975 firearms examination:

a. According to testimony by Lowell Bradford, the CBS examiner on the 1975 firearms panel, the two gun possibility is "more open" now than before the firearms tests. In view of the unanimous finding that there is no evidence of significant deterioration in exhibit bullets, why could no examiners duplicate Wolfer's match of victim bullets with the Sirhan gun?

b. Why did no reference appear to the possible explanation for the barrel leading in the joint or individual reports of the examiners?

c. The examiners agreed that the two-gun possibility could not be excluded and agreed on the potential importance of evidence beyond the scope of their examinations. They disagreed, however, on the following issues, among others: 1.) numerous individual comparisons of bullets; 2.) the presence or locations of various "gouges" or "gross imperfections" reported by some examiners in some places; 3.) the capability of Wolfer's test bullets of being matched under comparison; 4.) the possible cause of leading in the Sirhan gun barrel; 5.) the possible effects of test firings on future comparisons. In view of the uncertainties these divergent findings have created, is there any way that any of them can be reconciled or resolved?

V. SPECIFIC TESTS THAT MIGHT CLARIFY UNRESOLVED ISSUES.

1. Determine the effects, hole-diameters and wood content of .22 mini-mags fired into wood, for expert comparison with photographic evidence from the crime scene.

2. Test exhibit 38 to determine the kind of wood embedded in it. Determine if there are traces of paint inside the wood or around the bullet. Determine what kinds of wood and paint were present at the locations where bullet holes were reported in June, 1968.

3. Simulate the conditions of the shot said to have struck Elizabeth Evans to determine if the official explanation of this shot is plausible.

VI. ISSUES INDEPENDENT OF CRIME SCENE PHYSICAL EVIDENCE.

1. Release the complete S.U.S. records on Ace Guard Service and on hotel security arrangements on the night of the shooting.

2. Sergeant Paul Sharaga established the initial LAPD "command post" outside the hotel following the shooting. How was his report about possible suspects determined to be a "false lead?" (Houghton, p. 32) Did his report twice disappear in the days after the shooting? Where is it now and what does it say?

3. Resolve the contradictions between Houghton's and Cesar's accounts of Cesar's locations during his guard duty and whether or not he ever observed Sirhan. Was an attempt ever made to eject Sirhan from the pantry?

4. Release transcripts and results of the interviews and polygraph tests of Sandra Serrano, Vincent DiPierro, and John Fahey. Are they in the ten-volume report?

5. Who was the girl observed with Sirhan during the period of the shooting? What is the evidence concerning her activities before the shooting and whether she was ever previously in contact with Sirhan? Why was an implausible theory of her identity advanced by the prosecution?

6. More than six years after the controversy over bullets arose, it is now asserted that Cesar's gun was examined by an "unnamed" police officer. (Kranz, II.7) Why can't this officer be named? What was the gun's serial number? Where is the report or description of this incident? Who determined that the gun should not be taken into police custody?