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U. S. News & World Report
2300 N Street N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20037

Dear Sirs:

I am obliged to comment on a number of statements in the story, "Truth About Kennedy Assassination," in the October 10, 1966 U. S. News & World Report and on errors in the accompanying interview with Arlen Specter.

In the first instance, the statement on page 44 that doubts about the Warren Report "find an especially receptive audience abroad" is contradicted by the results of a just-completed survey of opinion by Louis Harris. Harris states in the New York Post of October 3, 1966 (page 4) that by a margin of 3 to 2 the American people now reject the main thrust of the Warren Report; 66 percent of the national cross section reject the conclusion that the assassination was the work of one man.

On page 45 the story notes that the independent critics of the WR have relied almost entirely on the evidence developed by the Commission. Certainly that is true for most of the responsible critics, who, in their study of the evidence published by the Commission, found repeated instances of misrepresentation in the Report of the evidence and testimony in the Hearings and Exhibits. In many, if not most, instances, the discrepancies between the two were the immediate and compelling cause for the research and criticism undertaken and now under national debate. The very fact of grave conflict between the WR and the corresponding official evidence testifies to the need for the re-examination of the evidence, which all the critics, to my knowledge, advocate. (It is true that independent investigation has been undertaken by two or three critics, to supplement their study of the official evidence; in some instances, that independent investigation has turned up important new information--for example, the new witnesses to the Tippit shooting discovered without any difficulty by George and Patricia Nash.)

On the same page, the article rejects the concept of a conspiracy to cover up the truth, on the ground that such a conspiracy would involve large numbers of conspirators. How many individuals collaborated, actively or passively, in the framing of Dreyfus?

On page 46, the article refers to the opinion of two Marine experts that Oswald had the rifle capability to fire three shots, with two hits, within 4.8 to 5.6 seconds. Epstein has pointed out in Inquest that the two experts--Sgt. Zahm and Maj. Anderson--were invited to testify late in the investigation, when all other indications

had pointed to Oswald's lack of capability; and--more important-- they rendered their opinions in response to a "hypothetical question in which the distance of the shot, the trajectory, and even the street downgrade were given, but the time factor was conspicuously omitted" (italics added).

Finally, the article states on page 47 that according to official sources the x-rays and photographs taken at the autopsy remained under lock and key at Bethesda Naval Hospital until sometime in 1964. That is inconsistent with the Commission's documents. According to the Hearings and Exhibits, Secret Service agent Roy Kellerman took custody of the x-rays and photographs when he departed the autopsy chamber. He proceeded to the White House, where he placed the x-rays and undeveloped pictures into the custody of his superior in the Secret Service, Robert I. Bouck (Commission Exhibit 1024). The official record is silent on the fate of that evidence from this point onward.

Now I turn to the statements made by Arlen Specter during the interview published on pages 48-63. Because the errors and omissions in his replies are very numerous, I shall not attempt to cover each and every point, but will comment at least on those which appear the most serious or blatant misstatements. (I am numbering Specter's answers seriatim, to establish reference points which obviate the need to repeat the text of each reply.)

Answer 4

Nothing in the testimony confirms Specter's statement that during the autopsy the doctors "could probe between two large strap muscles." The four federal agents who were present throughout the autopsy (Kellerman and Greer of the Secret Service; and Sibert and O'Neill of the FBI) departed with the impression that what Specter calls the "very tentative theory" was the final and conclusive finding. That is apparent from the testimony of Kellerman and Greer, and from the report of Sibert and O'Neill.

Why were they all inaccurate in describing the inability to probe into the wound beyond 2 or 3 inches? Why were they all completely unaware of the subsequent discovery of a path through the large strap muscles, if such a path was indeed found? In other words, why did all four professional investigators make a mistake--and the same mistake?

By implication, Specter admits that it was not the discovery of a path that caused Dr. Humes to abandon the "very tentative theory" but his conversation, on Saturday morning (when the Federal agents were not present), with Dr. Perry of Parkland Hospital. In other words, the original autopsy findings were changed after the autopsy was over and the body inaccessible. New information might justify the doctors in inferring a bullet path which they had been unable to find--but how could new information move the wound from the back to the neck?

Answer 5

Mr. Specter's suggestion that the FBI continued to cite erroneous autopsy findings, even after receiving the autopsy report on December 23, 1963, suggests that the FBI was guilty of the most serious negligence and irresponsibility in perhaps the most important investigation it ever performed. Is it conceivable that J. Edgar Hoover signed and transmitted the Supplemental Report of January 13, 1964 without even reading the autopsy report, and without noticing the irreconcilable conflict between the FBI and autopsy surgeons' characterizations of the wound in the President's back?

Contrary to Mr. Specter's implication that the FBI place no substantial credence in the "preliminary thoughts as reflected in the early reports" and that the FBI has since retracted those reports or admitted error, J. Edgar Hoover said categorically in a letter dated September 12, 1966, that all FBI reports furnished to the Commission were accurate and that the occasion to retract any such reports had never arisen. (His letter replied to an explicit question concerning the retraction (alleged by Time magazine in July 1966) of the December 9 and January 13 reports of the autopsy findings.)

Since U. S. News & World Report did not obtain a categorical reply from Mr. Specter to Question 5, it is unfortunate that an authoritative answer from the FBI itself was not requested.

Answer 8

In a symposium on the Warren Report at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, held in February 1966 at Chicago (and earlier in the Journal of the American Medical Association and in the publication Current Medicine for Attorneys) the Presidential autopsy was severely criticized as inadequate and incomplete. The qualifications of two of the three autopsy surgeons were sharply challenged by Dr. Cyril Wecht (see Journal of Forensic Sciences, July 1966). It has been pointed out also that the autopsy report on Oswald (performed at Parkland Hospital by a Dallas medical examiner) was a model, while the Kennedy autopsy report contained serious deficiencies.

Answer 9

Dr. Humes testified that he had burned certain preliminary autopsy notes but he did not explain his reasons fully before the Commission, nor was he asked to make any explanation by Mr. Specter or by the members of the Commission in attendance during Humes' testimony. His "formal report" consisted of a terse sentence or two certifying that he had burned certain preliminary notes, but presented no explanation for the burning of the notes. (2H 373 and CE 397)

Answer 11

If the wound on the "back of the neck was visible for a protracted period of time" to the autopsy surgeons, it was visible below the neck to at least five observers, all of whom were trained federal investigative agents. If there was "no doubt but what those characteristics showed it to be a wound of entry" then why did Dr. Humes ask Dr. Perry when he called him on Saturday morning whether the Dallas doctors had made any hole in the President's back?
(6H 16-17)

Answer 12

Notes (according to the Warren Report)
It is true that the fibers on the front of the shirt were inconclusive as to the direction traveled by the object that inflicted the damage to the shirt. But it must be added that while copper residue was found at the holes in the back of the President's shirt and coat, no copper traces were found at the slit near the collar in the front of the shirt. (5H 62) The 6.5 mm. bullet (the "stretcher bullet") is a lead missile fully jacketed with a copper alloy. (3H 399) According to the official hypothesis, it emerged from the President's throat virtually intact, undiminished and undeformed, having shed no substance in his body. Why, then, did not the bullet deposit copper upon exit, as it had upon entrance?

The damage to the front of the shirt was inconclusive ~~as to the nature of the missile~~ as to the nature of the missile. FBI expert Robert Frazier testified that the damage could have been made by a fragment of bone as well as by a metal fragment or a whole bullet. The questions posed to Frazier did not elicit the relative likelihood in each case. (5H 72 ff.)

Specter states that the wound at the Adam's apple, by its physical characteristics alone, could have been either a wound of entry or a wound of exit. The fact is that on November 22, it was described as a "penetrating" (or entry) wound, not only to the press but in the written report of Dr. Carrico. (CE 392) The evidence taken as a whole makes it clear that it was the consensus of the Parkland doctors on November 22 that it was a wound of entry. It was only when they were later confronted with alleged autopsy findings inimical with their original finding, and with a hypothetical question posed by Specter, that they agreed (some with obvious reluctance and resistance) that the wound could have been either entry or exit.

The wound penetration experiments at Edgewood Arsenal were performed, as Epstein has demonstrated in Inquest, ineptly and inaccurately in so far as they attempted to extrapolate data to correspond with Connally's chest measurements. The results, at best, were

inconclusive, because of an elementary mathematical error and failure to approximate actual conditions which were the subject of the tests. Although the same type of bullets as the stretcher bullet was used, and although the test bullets did not penetrate corresponding thicknesses and multiple organic (flesh and bone) targets, Specter admitted in a tape-recorded interview with the Greater Philadelphia Magazine (in July 1966) that not one of the test bullets emerged in a condition comparable to the undeformed virtually-intact stretcher bullet. And the Edgewood testers had obtained over 200 rounds of this ammunition for purposes of the wound ballistics and penetration experiments!

Specter's version of just what Dr. Perry told the press on the afternoon of November 22 cannot be corroborated, because, according to the Archives' index of unpublished Commission documents, the tape of the press conference is "lost." But Specter's version does not correspond with the preponderant majority of news media reports on that day--see, for example, Seventy Hours and Thirty Minutes (Random House 1966), the edited log published by NBC, covering November 22-26 audio broadcasts, which quotes Dr. Perry as saying that "a bullet struck (the President) in front as he faced the assailant."

Answer 13

Dr. Humes' handwritten autopsy report describes the wound at the throat as a puncture wound, presumably on the basis of his conversation with Dr. Perry at Parkland; but then the word "puncture" is crossed out (though it remains legible) and the word "small" is substituted. (This evidence was brought to light by Harold Weisberg in his book Whitewash.)

Answer 14

Mr. Specter's statement that he was shown one picture of the back of a body, supposedly that of the President, is new and astonishing information. I have read the transcript (about 100 pages) of his taped interview some three months ago with Gaetano Fonzi of the Greater Philadelphia Magazine. (Excerpts from the transcript appear in the August 1966 issue.) Specter told Fonzi that he had never seen the photographs, not even one of them, authenticated or non-authenticated. His recall seems to have improved since the earlier interview.

Answer 18

Specter here suggests that the exact location of the entrance wound has been established conclusively, without the autopsy photographs, by virtue of the testimony and written reports of the

autopsy surgeons. In order to believe that the surgeons were correct, one must also believe that the following are in error:

- (1) Four federal agents who were present throughout the autopsy and described the wound as below the shoulders.
- (2) Secret Service agent Clinton Hill, who was called into the autopsy chamber expressly to view the wounds, and who testified that the wound in question was six inches below the neck.
- (3) Secret Service agent Glen A. Bennett, who described the wound as situated four inches below the shoulders. (The Commission relied on his report to establish the existence of the wound before the autopsy, and before even the arrival at Parkland Hospital; but the Commission ignored his statement as to its location. Although Bennett's observations are considered by the Commission itself as having considerable importance, he was not requested to testify under oath before the Commission or even its counsel.) (WR 111)
- (4) The autopsy diagram, which forms a part of the handwritten autopsy report, and which shows the wound well below the neck, in a position that corresponds with the reports of the eyewitnesses mentioned above and also with the holes in the back of the coat and shirt. Dr. Humes was not asked why he showed the wound to be inches below the neck on that diagram, if the wound was actually in the neck. (Although the wound is clearly placed in the back in the diagram, the accompanying notations repeat the measurements to which Dr. Humes testified (14 cm. below the right mastoid process, etc., presumably in the neck). Dr. Humes was not questioned about that internal contradiction in the diagram; nor was he asked why he inserted measurements indicating location in that one instance alone, no such data being present with respect to any other wound, scar, incision, or other physical characteristic shown in the selfsame diagram.) (CE 397)
- (5) The holes in the coat and shirt, which correspond with the eyewitness description of the wound four to six inches below the neck and with the autopsy diagram as well. It is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to relate those holes to a wound in the neck, produced by a missile that somehow failed to penetrate the collar of the shirt or the coat. (There was no discrepancy between the back wound and the holes in the back of the clothing in the case of Governor Connally. He, too, was waving to the crowd.)
- (6) Further evidence is supplied, perhaps inadvertently, by the Commission itself. On page 97 of the Report, describing

the on-site reenactment of May 24, 1964, the Commission states that the back of the stand-in for the President was marked with chalk at the point where the bullet entered the President's body. A photograph taken during the reenactment (and identified as such) appears on the inside cover of the Bantam edition of the Warren Report. The chalk mark--corresponding with the point of bullet entry-- is seen well below the stand-in's neck. It must be borne in mind that the on-site tests were supervised by and performed in the presence of J. Lee Rankin, general counsel, and Arlen Specter himself. Why did they permit the tests to go forward on the basis of incorrect positioning of the wound?

One or more eyewitnesses may have made inaccurate reports; one or more items of physical evidence (holes in clothes, diagram, photograph of stand-in) may be misleading. But it seems inconceivable that all should be mistaken, and mistaken in an identical or virtually identical manner.

Moreover, the FBI reports were not discussed or published by the Commission and came to light only some 20 months after the Report was issued--a Report neither mentioning, nor resolving, the conflict between the FBI reports and the autopsy findings, nor reflecting testimony from FBI agents Sibert and O'Neill, who were crucial eyewitnesses.

The Warren Commission must blame itself for creating the appearance of deliberate deception, even if such deception was neither intended nor committed. In the light of the aggregate evidence, one cannot readily agree with Mr. Specter's assurance that if the autopsy photographs were now made available (authentic photographs), "they would corroborate" the autopsy description of the wound, which is indispensable to the single-missile/lone-assassin hypothesis.

Answer 21

One must dispute Oswald's so-called "rapid exit." According to the Report, he lingered long enough to buy a coca-cola from a dispensing machine and then, instead of leaving immediately via the back stairs, only a stone's throw from the coke machine, walked very slowly the whole length of the floor to the front stairs, stopping to direct a reporter (whom he took to be a Secret Service agent, without any sign of panic or alarm) to a telephone. That scarcely sounds like a "rapid exit."

Other comments included in Answer 21 deserve comment and rebuttal but must be left aside, for reasons of space.

Answer 23

The Commission made no inquiries whatsoever about men who were

on the scene immediately after the shooting, behind the Depository and on the grassy knoll, who falsely identified themselves to the police as Secret Service agents. (No legitimate agent returned to the scene until considerably later.)

Additional clues to possible conspiracy which were ignored can be detailed but are omitted here, for reasons of brevity.

Answer 24

Surely it was more important to determine the truth than to publish promptly an incomplete report which has failed to satisfy two-thirds of the American people, and such responsible figures as Congressman Theodore Kipferman, Richard Goodwin, etc. Yet the Warren Report went to press while investigation into a crucial or potentially crucial question, suggestive of the existence of a conspiracy, was not yet completed (WR bottom of page 324).

Answer 26

Mr. Spester, although he speaks confidently of the Governor's wounds, seems not to have noticed that the report gives two different and contradictory descriptions (both "small" and "large") of the entrance wound in his back. (WR 92 and 109)

Evidence in conflict with shots from above and behind is found in the Zapruder film, which shows that the head shot (frame 313) threw the President violently back and to his left. Such a reaction to a bullet which came from the rear would be a violation of the laws of physics. (See diagram in the Greater Philadelphia Magazine, August 1966.)

Answer 30

Although photographic reenactments were utilized freely by the Commission, no attempt was made to photograph Billy Lovelady standing at the Depository entrance and wearing the same shirt he wore during the assassination. Nor was any attempt made to analyze the shirt worn by the man in the doorway--said by the Commission to be Lovelady--in comparison to the shirt Oswald wore when arrested, although the two shirts appear to be similar, if not identical.

Furthermore, the Commission has withheld the report of spectrographic analysis of the bullet fragments, the stretcher bullet, and various items of metallic residue. Had neutron activation analysis been utilized (as it was, in an apparent attempt which did not succeed to overturn the negative results of the paraffin test of Oswald's face),

it might have been possible to determine conclusively (a) whether all the fragments and metallic residue came from the same, or the same kind of, bullet; and (b) whether the fragments removed from the Governor's wounds in fact originated in the stretcher bullet.

Answer 33

FBI agent Frazier testified that the stretcher bullet had not necessarily lost any of its pristine substance. (3H 430)

Answer 35

The discovery of the stretcher bullet was inadequately investigated. If the President's stretcher is disqualified as the source of the bullet because the sheets had been rolled up, exactly the same is true of the Governor's stretcher. (6H 121-123) Supposedly the engineer Tomlinson, who found the bullet, turned it over to the chief of personnel, O. P. Wright. Wright's written report on the events of that day contains no reference whatever to the stretcher bullet. The report of the head of nurses, Elizabeth Wright, indicates that hours after O. P. Wright supposedly received the stretcher bullet from Tomlinson, he was requesting information from her about the agent of the Governor's wounds, as if he had never heard of any stretcher bullet. None of the Parkland Hospital doctors learned anything about the discovery of a bullet until the information appeared in the press, much later.

Yet it is an unwritten law in hospitals that when gunshot-wound cases are admitted, their garments and stretchers are routinely searched for bullets and bullet fragments (see critique by Dr. Cyril Wecht in the Journal of Forensic Sciences, July 1966). If the Parkland personnel did not do so on their own initiative, the Secret Service, present in force, should at least have given attention to that elementary procedure.

Also, it should be noted that the bullet fragments in the Presidential car were not discovered at once; they were found many hours later in Washington, D. C., some during a first search of the car, and some during a second search (having been overlooked, apparently, the first time).

Answers 36, 37, 38

Mr. Specter apparently disagrees with his colleague, Norman Redlich, who said that to say that one bullet did not strike both men was equivalent to saying that there were two assassins (see Inquest). (He disagrees also with Lord Devlin, who recently wrote that he considers such an assertion as Specter's "the" defect in the Report which

he had earlier given his unreserved praise.)

Apparently Lord Devlin and others of his stature are more prepared than spokesmen for the Warren Commission to consider objectively and impartially the arguments put forward by the critics, most of whom have worked tirelessly and unselfishly rather than, by their silence, consenting to injustice (which I paraphrase from Leo Sauvage's book, The Oswald Affair).

The rifle bolt can be operated in 2.3 seconds, as Specter says; but that does not include aiming time, as he implies.

Answer 41

Although the stretcher bullet was clean, the two fragments found in the front of the car had visible traces of organic material. (3H 428-429, 437)

As mentioned already, the Edgewood tests failed to yield a single bullet (according to Specter himself) that resembled the stretcher bullet.

Answer 42

The critical literature makes it crystal-clear that Oswald was a poor marksman, Specter notwithstanding. Even his colleague Wesley J. Liebeler denounced that kind of slanting of the evidence (see Inquest, discussion of "the Liebeler Memorandum").

A boyhood friend of Oswald was interviewed in New Orleans shortly after the assassination and volunteered that he owned the same kind of Carcano rifle; but it was such a cheap crude weapon that he had ceased to use it, for fear that it would explode in his face! (CE 3119)

The testimony of Dean Adams Andrews, Jr., convincingly refutes the official pronouncements about Oswald's rifle capability. (11H 330)

Answer 43

According to the Commission's conclusions, the rifle was tossed around carelessly before the assassination, as well as afterwards, in Wesley Frazier's car.

Answer 44

At least two police officers identified the rifle as a Mauser in

writing, one in an affidavit signed the day after the assassination. (CE 2003 p. 63) The latter officer--who is charged with the sole responsibility for the "mistake" by the Commission--had once owned a sporting goods shop and should not have made such an error. (I have personally questioned several sports shop employees, who said that it was inconceivable that an experienced person could mistake a Carcano for a Mauser, or vice versa.)

The other police officer suggested that it was Captain Fritz himself who had called the rifle a Mauser when it was found. The Commission made no attempt to determine from District Attorney Henry Wade the source of his impression that the rifle was a Mauser (he had no known contacts with any of the officers concerned except Fritz and the Chief of the Dallas Police).

One of the two officers, Eugene Boone, was shown the Carcano rifle but was unable to identify it positively as the rifle he had discovered in the Depository.

The other officer, Seymour Weitzman--who received the entire blame--was not shown the rifle. He was not even shown a photograph of the weapon from which an identification could be made or denied.

Answer 46

The Commission did not question a Dallas Police secretary, said by witness Thayer Waldo, a reporter, to have told him early Friday afternoon that a rifle had been discovered on the roof of the Depository.

Answer 47

The paper bag is fully discussed in the Sauvage and Weisberg books, which throw grave doubt on the Commission's claims (which ignore the critical fact that the Depository tape is dispensed in wet condition).

Answer 48

The Dallas Police not only failed to make a record of the interrogation (although Oswald is quoted by Postal Inspector Harry Holmes as making a remark which suggests that at the least detailed notes were made by Captain Fritz)--they failed to give a full account of what transpired. Only a few days ago I obtained a document from the Archives which proves that Captain Fritz omitted entirely from his reports a statement made by Oswald at the first interrogation on Friday (and reported at that time to the head of the Secret Service office in Dallas).

Answer 49

When testimony is in conflict with a whole body of evidence, the possibility of error, or even perjury, must be considered, however

impeccable the credentials of the witness.

And it should be asked why Dr. Humes failed to prepare the autopsy report on Saturday, after his conversation with Dr. Perry in Dallas. (Was he out playing golf that afternoon? Surely not!) Was not the autopsy report needed by the police and federal investigators in their attempt to determine the source of the shots and the identity of the sniper(s)?

It was needed, on Saturday, when Oswald was still alive. Otherwise, how could it be assumed that the shots had come from behind? If they came from another direction, Oswald had a clear alibi, for he was seen on the second floor of the Depository less than two minutes after the shooting.

Answer 52

Commission assistant counsel David Belin reenacted Oswald's alleged walk from his boarding house to the Tippit scene, and was clocked at 17 minutes 45 seconds. Oswald left the boarding house a few minutes after 1 p.m., and next was seen waiting motionless at the bus stop. Even if he walked to the Tippit scene via a shorter route than Belin took, it seems doubtful that he could have arrived by 1:15 p.m., at a normal walking pace (according to witnesses at the scene, describing Tippit's assailant before the shooting). Tippit supposedly was shot at 1:15. (The only witness who actually checked his watch, T. F. Bowley, said that Tippit was already lying dead at 1:10 p.m.)

Answer 53

Mr. Specter is completely incorrect in suggesting that the source of the ammunition had been pinpointed. The real facts are different and shocking.

The Warren Report is strangely uncommunicative about the ammunition. It states merely that it is (1) manufactured by the Western Cartridge Company, East Alton, Illinois; (2) that it is "recent" and manufactured "currently," which is not true--production ceased soon after the end of the Second World War; and (3) that it is readily available by mail-order and in a few gun-shops.

When Oswald was apprehended in the Texas Theater, he had no rifle ammunition on his person. None was found among his possessions in Dallas or Irving. Marina Oswald's first statements were that Oswald had never possessed any rifle ammunition nor indicated any intention of purchasing any. She said that several times in interviews with federal agents; and it was only when she testified before the Commission that she made ambiguous statements for the first time

which appeared to establish her husband's possession of some kind of ammunition--which may or may not have been 6.5 mm. rifle cartridges.

The Commission does not claim that Oswald ever purchased rifle ammunition by mail-order. The Report is silent on his purchase of rifle ammunition from any source. It withholds the fact that the FBI conducted an extensive canvass of gun-shops in the Dallas/Irving area, but failed to establish Oswald's purchase of ammunition. Indeed, the WCC 6.5 Carcano ammunition was available only from 2 shops in that area, one of which relocated in Dallas from one of the outlying suburbs shortly before the assassination. The proprietors told the FBI that they had never sold ammunition to Oswald. Yet, According to the Commission's conclusions about the attack on General Walker, Oswald would have had to purchase the 6.5 WCC ammunition in Dallas or environs (rather than New Orleans, where no canvass seems to have been made).

The Report fails to indicate that an attempt was made to trace the ammunition to Oswald, with negative results. Apparently the Commission was not troubled by the fact that Oswald had only four cartridges for a Carcano rifle which held seven when a clip was used. Cartridges are not sold singly but in boxes of 20 or more (for this brand). Where is the balance of Oswald's supply? The FBI examined some 1300 rifle shells collected from commercial rifle ranges and deserted areas where rifle practice took place, without locating one single shell that came from the Carcano.

When I raised these points a few days ago with two of the Commission's lawyers, in the course of a debate on the Report, they brushed aside the question of purchase and possession of the ammunition said to have killed the President as though it was of no importance whatever. "Maybe someone gave it to Oswald," one of the lawyers said, as though that would not in itself pose the possibility of an accomplice. Although the FBI took infinite pains in some instances, at the Commission's request (for example, tracing every female birth on the same date as the Oswald infant, in the Dallas/Irving area), no attempt seems to have been made to trace all sales of the WCC 6.5 ammunition, at least sales made by mail-order, to see if the names of purchasers corresponded with any of Oswald's known intimates or acquaintances, or with other witnesses involved in the investigation.

Added to all that is the peculiar fact that the three shells found on the floor of the Depository near the sixth-floor window bore multiple markings, some of which were not made by the Carcano rifle. Again, inquiry into this anomaly was inadequate; and the Commission merely asserted inaccurately that all the markings were made by Oswald's rifle and concluded that these were the same cartridges that Oswald had used many months earlier in dry-run rifle practice. Apparently the Commission accepts the idea that Oswald never had more than four or five rifle cartridges, although they are sold in much larger quantities.

The question of where--and whether--Oswald obtained the ammunition

said to have been used in the assassination is a complete mystery, to this day. One must be surprised that a Commission investigating the crime of the century, with unlimited manpower and money (ours!) at its disposal, did not consider it necessary to pursue the question of the murder ammunition. There is absolutely no direct evidence to connect it with the accused.

The Commission, whose findings are so frequently qualified with "probably" and "most probably" might at least have qualified its verdict, and said that Oswald was "probably" guilty, acting alone-- a contention which is highly dubious, the more so after Mr. Specter's two interviews.

Answer 55

It is curious that the Commission, which considers the FBI Summary and Supplemental Reports to be erroneous with respect to the wound in the "neck," has readily accepted FBI denials that Oswald was on the payroll--without taking testimony from Alonzo Hudkins or Deputy Sheriff Allan Sweatt, the primary sources of the allegations (see Inquest).

Answer 59

The contents of the FBI Reports disclosed by Epstein (and by Vincent J. Salandria somewhat earlier) may not be "new" to the Commission; they certainly are new to the public and to influential persons who had second thoughts about the Report only after those FBI Reports were revealed for the first time by the critics.

The Commission's silence about those documents does not encourage confidence in its candor or its willingness to confront evidence inconsistent with the lone-assassin hypothesis.

Answer 63

Specter did not interview O. P. Wright (mentioned earlier in connection with the finding of the stretcher bullet) nor many other witnesses directly concerned--for example, the orderly, David Sanders, who is perhaps the only source of authoritative information about the fate of the President's stretcher after it was removed from the emergency room.

This does not exhaust my comments, but it does exhaust me. I have a premonition that I may be speaking into a vast deafness. Yet

I would like to feel that you devoted a considerable segment of the magazine to the Warren Report with the objective of informing your readers, and not so that a spokesman for the Commission might influence them with inaccurate or incomplete assertions. I hope that I am correct, and that you will reflect some of the comments and corrections contained in this letter in a future issue.

Yours sincerely,

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cc: Arlen Specter