

Truth Was Their Only Client

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"...the Commission labored...with soul-searching thoroughness. Before agreement was reached by the Commission, each sentence had to measure up to the unofficially adopted motto of the Commission, 'Truth is our only client here.' To the best of the ability of seven dedicated public servants and a staff of valiant workers, that ideal was fulfilled."
---Gerald R. Ford (Portrait of the Assassin, Simon & Schuster, New York, 1965).

The Evidence in the Hearings & Exhibits

Instead of speeding up the car, the car came to a halt--Mary Woodward (2H 43)...From the time the first shot rang out, the car stopped completely...Mr. Truly was standing out there, he said it stopped. Several officers said it stopped completely --M. L. Baker (3H 266)...I first noted the car when it stopped... after it made the turn and when the shots were fired, it stopped--E.V. Brown (6H 233)...The motorcade slowed down to what seemed to me a complete stop--Senator Ralph Yarborough (7H 440)...The motorcade stopped dead still. There was no question about that--Mrs. Earle Cabell (7H 487).

The Evidence

There was a "small penetrating wound" of the anterior neck-- Dr. James Carrico (CE 392)... "A small hole in anterior midline of neck thought to be a bullet entrance wound"--Dr. R. C. Jones (R.C.Jones Exhibit No. 1)... "We speculated as to whether he had been shot once or twice, because we saw the wound of entry in the throat"--Dr. P.C. Peters (6H 71) ... "My opinion now would be colored by everything that I've heard about it and seen since...if I were simply looking at the wound again...I would probably initially think this were an entrance wound..."--Dr. R.N. McClelland (6H 37).

The Findings in the Warren Report

The Presidential car did not stop or almost come to a complete halt after the firing of the first shot or any other shots. (WR 641)

The Findings

Doctors at Parkland Hospital originally believed that the throat wound could have been either an entry or exit wound. (WR 641)

The Evidence

"...there was a hole in his shoulder"--Roy Kellerman (2H 103)... "That shot hit the President about four inches down from his right shoulder" --Glen Bennett (CE 1024, CE 2112)... The wound was in "the soft part of the shoulder" --William Greer (2H 127)... There was "an opening in the back, about six inches below the neckline..."--Clinton Hill (2H 143).

The Evidence

McCloy You have no firm opinion that all these three wounds were caused by one bullet?

Dr. Shaw I have no firm opinion ...It is a matter of whether the wrist wound could be caused by the same bullet, and we felt that it could but we had not seen the bullets until today, and we still do not know which bullet actually inflicted the wound on Governor Connally.

Dulles Or whether it was one or two wounds?

Shaw Yes.

Dulles Or two bullets?

Shaw Yes; or three. (4H 109)

The Evidence

"I feel that there would be some difficulty in explaining all of the wounds as being inflicted by the stretcher bullet without causing more in the way of loss of substance...or deformation"--Dr. R. Shaw (4H 114). "Could that missile have made the wound on Connally's right wrist?"--Arlen Specter. "I think that this is most unlikely..."--Dr. J.J. Humes (2H 374-75). "And could it have been the bullet which inflicted the wound on Connally's right wrist?"--Specter. "No; for the reason that there are too many fragments described in that wrist"--Dr. Pierre Finck (2H 382).

The Findings

During the autopsy at Bethesda Naval Hospital another bullet wound was observed near the base of the back of President Kennedy's neck slightly to the right of his spine... (WR 87)

The Findings

In their testimony the three doctors who attended Governor Connally at Parkland Hospital expressed independently their opinion that a single bullet had passed through his chest; tumbled through his wrist... punctured his left thigh ...and fallen out of the thigh wound. (WR 95)

The Findings

All the evidence indicated that the bullet found on the Governor's stretcher could have caused all his wounds. (WR 95)

The Evidence

"I saw the rifle, that appeared to be a 7.65 mm Mauser"--Deputy Sheriff Eugene Boone (Decker Exhibit No. 5323, page 508).

Ball Did you hear anybody refer to this rifle as a Mauser that day?

Boone Yes, I did...

Ball Who referred to it as a Mauser that day?

Boone I believe Captain Fritz...he said that is what it looks like...he said it looks like a 7.65 Mauser.
(3H 295)

The Evidence

"A cheap old weapon..."--S. Latona (4H 29). "A very cheap rifle and could have been purchased for \$3.00 each in lots of 25"--J. Brinegar, owner, The Gun Shop (CE 2694 p.11). "Real cheap, common, real flimsy looking...very easily knocked out of adjustment"--Dial Ryder (11H 230). "...the possibility of it being real accurate would be pretty small, I think..."--Charles Greener (11H 252-253). Edward Voebel "had an Italian rifle of the same type...it is so poorly constructed he decided that it was best not to shoot it any more for the reason he was afraid it would explode"--Secret Service report (CE3119).

The Evidence

"...the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle was manufactured in Italy from 1891 until 1941; however in the 1930s Mussolini ordered all arms factories to manufacture the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle. Since many concerns were manufacturing the same weapon, the same serial number appears on weapons manufactured by more than one concern. Some bear a letter prefix and some do not."--FBI report (CE 2562).

The Findings

Seymour Weitzman, the original source of the speculation that the rifle was a Mauser...did not handle the rifle and did not examine it at close range. He had little more than a glimpse of it and thought it was a Mauser...Police laboratory technicians subsequently arrived and correctly identified the weapon as a 6.5 Italian rifle. (WR 645-646)

The Findings

"...the assassination rifle was an accurate weapon...in fact, as accurate as current military rifles..." (WR 194-195)

The Findings

"...this particular rifle was the only rifle of its type bearing serial number C2766." (WR 119)

The Evidence

"The Western Cartridge Company...East Alton, Illinois, manufactured a quantity of 6.5 M/M Mannlicher-Carcano ammunition for the Italian Government during World Ware II..."--FBI report (CE 2694, page 12).

The Evidence

Dougherty...I didn't see anything in his hands at the time.

Ball In other words, your memory is definite on that, is it?

Dougherty Yes, sir.

Ball In other words, you would say positively he had nothing in his hands?

Dougherty I would say that--yes, sir. (6H 377)

The Evidence

"...the extractor and ejector marks ...did not possess sufficient characteristics for identifying the weapon which produced them. There are also three sets of marks on the base of this cartridge which were not found on (the other cartridges) or any of the numerous tests obtained from the (Carcano) rifle. It was not possible to determine what produced these marks ...Another set of follower marks were found...these marks were not identified with the (Carcano) rifle..."--FBI report (CE 2968).

The Evidence

Stombaugh...the object itself would have had to have been approximately 10 inches long to have caused this hump. Eisenberg It couldn't have been any longer than 10 inches?
Stombaugh Not at this point; no, sir. (4H 58)

The Findings

"The ammunition used in the rifle was American ammunition recently made by the Western Cartridge Co., which manufactures such ammunition currently." (WR 646)

The Findings

"One employee, Jack Dougherty, believed that he saw Oswald coming to work, but he does not remember that Oswald had anything in his hands as he entered the door." (WR 133)

The Findings

"Examination of the cartridge cases found on the sixth floor of the Depository Building established that they had been previously loaded and ejected from the assassination rifle, which would indicate that Oswald practiced operating the bolt." (WR 192-193)

The Findings

"Paul M. Stombaugh, of the FBI Laboratory, examined the blanket and discovered a bulge approximately 10 inches long...This bulge was apparently caused by a hard protruding object which had stretched the blanket's fibers. It could have been caused by the telescopic sight of the rifle, which was approximately 11 inches long." (WR 128-129)

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The Evidence

Brown...I answered the phone. It was Captain Fritz. He was still at the scene on the sixth floor of the School Book Depository, and I told him that the officers had just brought in a suspect that had shot the police officer...this boy that was identified as Lee Harvey Oswald ...also an employee there (at the Depository). He said, "I will be right up in a few minutes."

Belin Where was Captain Fritz at this time?

Brown He was still at the scene of the shooting...he called from there. (7H 248)

"...Captain Fritz of the DPD Homicide Division arrived and he went on up into the...Depository Building... Shortly thereafter Captain Fritz came to my office where he contacted his department by telephone and advised me that the suspect, Lee Harvey Oswald, had been apprehended in the Texas Theatre in Oak Cliff. Also he advised me that Oswald had been employed in the...Depository."
--Sheriff Bill Decker (Decker Exhibit No. 5323).

The Evidence

"The first time he had come...he had parked down the street...My best judgment is that the license plate was not visible...not visible from my house"--Ruth Paine (3H 100).

Jenner It is impossible...impossible to see any license plate on either of the two automobiles parked at the curb... Howlett Yes; that's correct ...you cannot even see the license plate, much less any of the numbers. (9H 398)

The Evidence

"Also found was a set of metal file cabinets containing records that appeared to be names and activities of Cuban sympathizers"--Deputy Sheriff E.R. Walthers (Decker Exhibit No. 5323, page 520).

The Findings

"After Truly provided Oswald's name, address, and general description, Fritz left for police headquarters. He arrived at headquarters shortly after 2 p.m. (WR 9)

"When he entered the homicide and robbery bureau office, he saw two detectives standing there with Sgt. Gerald L. Hill, who had driven from the theatre with Oswald. Hill testified that Fritz told the detective to get a search warrant, go to an address on Fifth Street in Irving, and pick up a man named Lee Oswald. When Hill asked why Oswald was wanted, Fritz replied, 'Well, he was employed down at the Book Depository and he had not been present for a roll call of the employees.' Hill said, 'Captain, we will save you a trip...there he sits.' " (WR 180)

The Findings

"Marina Oswald had taken down the license number of Hosty's car on one of his visits and had given it to her husband." (WR 660)

The Findings

"A number of small file boxes listed in the inventory as having been taken from the Paine residence in Irving contained letters, pictures, books and literature, most of which belonged to Ruth Paine, not to Oswald. No lists of names of Castro sympathizers were found among these effects." (WR 666)

The Evidence

"She recalled the person now recognized as Oswald was...in the restaurant at about 10 a.m. Wednesday, November 20, at which time he was 'nasty' and used curse words in connection with his order. She went on to relate that Officer J. D. Tippit was in the restaurant, as was his habit at about that time each morning, and 'shot a glance at Oswald' "--FBI report (CE 3001).

The Evidence

(1:25 p.m.) No. 279 (Unknown)...We believe we've got that suspect on shooting this officer...Got his white jacket. Believe he dumped it on this parking lot...

(1:39 p.m.) No. 550 (Captain Westbrook)...We got a witness that saw him go up North Jefferson and he shed his jacket--let's check that vicinity. --FBI transcript, police radio log (CE 1974 pp. 62-77).

The Evidence

"I found two negatives first that showed Lee Oswald holding a rifle in his hand..."--Detective Guy Rose (7H 231).

The Evidence

"Our investigation has revealed that Oswald did not indicate on his application that others, including an 'A.Hidell,' would receive mail through the box... 2915 in Dallas..."--FBI report (CE 2585, Question 12).

The Findings

"Investigation has revealed no evidence that Oswald and Tippit were acquainted, had ever seen each other, or had any mutual acquaintances." (WR 651)

The Findings

"Police Capt. W. R. Westbrook... walked through the parking lot behind the service station and found a light-colored jacket lying under the rear of one of the cars." (WR 175)

The Findings

"Shaneyfelt...concluded that the negative of Exhibit No. 133-B was exposed in Oswald's Imperial Reflex Camera to the exclusion of all other cameras. He could not test Exhibit No. 133-A in the same way because the negative was never recovered." (WR 127)

The Findings

"It is not known whether the application for post office box 2915 listed 'A. Hidell' as a person entitled to receive mail at this box ...the portion of the application which lists names of persons, other than the applicant, entitled to receive mail, was thrown away after the box was closed on May 14, 1963." (WR 121)

The Evidence

"...Georgia Tarrant, Cashier, Atlantic and Pacific Store Number 72...Irving, Texas, viewed check ...payable to L. H. Oswald in the amount of \$33.00...Mrs. Tarrant stated as best she recalls, on Thursday night, October 31, 1963 Lee Harvey Oswald appeared at the cashier's cage and presented the above check to her and requested that it be cashed..."--FBI Report (CE 1165).

The Evidence

Ball Were you present when Oswald was arraigned in the identification bureau? Hicks No, sir; I left just a few minutes before that, I understand...shortly after 2... maybe 2:15. Ball You think he was arraigned after you left? Hicks I am rather certain that he was because I believe I would have known about it had he been arraigned before I left because there is only one door in our office to go out and had any other group been there, I would have noticed it, I believe. (7H 289)

The Evidence

Eric Rogers stated that "...Mrs. Oswald and her child left in a light brown Ford or Chevrolet station wagon with a man and woman. He said the man was about in his 40s and was short and stocky. In reply to questioning, Mr. Rogers stated that he is certain there was a man present on this occasion."--Secret Service report (CE 1154).

The Evidence

"While in the Marine Corps, I was often referred to as 'Hidell'... This was a nickname and not merely an inadvertent mispronunciation. It is possible that Oswald might have heard me being called by this name; indeed he may himself have called me Hidell"--John Rene Heindel, New Orleans (8H 318).

The Findings

"...it appears that Oswald never returned to Irving in midweek prior to November 21, 1963, except on Monday, October 21, when he visited his wife...after the birth of their second child." (WR 129)

"On Friday, November 1, Oswald did cash a Texas Unemployment Commission check for \$33 at a...supermarket in Irving..." (WR 331)

The Findings

"Shortly after 1:30 a.m. Oswald was brought to the identification bureau on the fourth floor and arraigned ...for the murder of President Kennedy." (WR 198)

The Findings

"Marina and June departed with Mrs. Ruth Paine for Irving on the morning of September 23." (WR 730)

The Findings

"Hidell was a favorite alias used by Oswald on a number of occasions. Diligent search has failed to reveal any person in Dallas or New Orleans by that name. It was merely a creation for his own purposes." (WR 644-645)