

Verbatim transcript: Excerpts from the Louis Lomax television program
Los Angeles, February 1967

Wesley J. Liebeler, guest:

There's one fellow who says that the shots were all fired--that the trees, there are four or five trees there on this grassy knoll, he says that those are actually phony trees, that they are camouflage devices, and that there are actually people in the top of those trees who were doing the shooting. Which is something very much like Thomson's theory. Sylvia Meagher, who has apparently written a book about this that will be published, I think this fall, in New York --she's one of the leading critics of the Commission--It's reported to me, now, I've been told this, she hasn't told me this herself--she doesn't talk to me very much (laughter)--but I've been told that she says that in fact Thomson, she suspects that Thomson's been planted into by the FBI-- 1/

Louis Lomax

This guy...?

Liebeler

Yeh, Thomson, because he's so far out, that she thinks the Government, the Establishment, somebody has planted this guy to make all the critics of the Commission look silly. Well, I think that that theory is about on a par with Mr. Thomson's theory, I mean, some people have a very strange notion of what, you know, the Establishment would do...

1/ Actual statement by Sylvia Meagher on December 3, 1966, was: "And there's some suspicion on the part of some of the other critics that he (Thomson) is a deliberate prop of, let's say the FBI, or some such agency, the sort of person who can be used to discredit or to ridicule all of the critics." This verbatim transcript was published by two associates of Mr. Liebeler's in a widely-despised "book" which utilizes selected excerpts from tape-recorded interviews. It is Mrs. Meagher's recollection that following the sentence quoted above, she explicitly repudiated the theory that Thomson was a "plant." In any case, it is implicit in the quotation that other critics have advanced the idea which Mr. Liebeler erroneously has attributed to her.

Lomax Let's come back to a man who has established some credits as a responsible critic, I guess you could call him responsible, and that's Mark Lane. I happened to see him on yet another television program last night, and he was walking away at the fact that he'd examined the pictures, that the President--that you guys say the shot came from the back, but in reality the pictures show that when the President was really hit his head snapped back and to the--

Liebeler Left.

Lomax To the left, that's correct. And therefore the bullet could not have come from the back--from behind.

Liebeler From behind, that's right. Yes. I debated Mr. Lane out at UCLA about three weeks ago, and we discussed this to some extent. He was not really very much aware of the fact that we have had a member of the faculty, of the Physics Department at UCLA, and, uh, go through these photographs. We had an arrangement with Life magazine for a while where they had first generation 4 x 6 blowups of every frame of the Zapruder film, the motion picture film that was taken of this, in the Beverly Hills office here, and, uh, we wanted to have somebody really check through this head movement thing. So I called the Chairman of the Physics Department, who I'd never met before, at UCLA, and asked him if he would send somebody from the faculty over to do this work for us. And he sent this young Englishman over--he's assistant professor in the English (sic) Department--and he went over there, and he made the most precise--actually, he did work with those frames that nobody's ever done before, I think, including the Commission, because we relied primarily at that point on the autopsy reports, on the other evidence showing the source of the shots, and really didn't pay that much attention to the precise details of the President's head movement, and it's only since the critics have raised this point, I think, that anybody's really looked at it closely. Well, he made some very precise measurements of this frame sequence, and he shows that between frames 312 and 313, which is the exact, the precise time the President was hit, that the President's head--it's turned like this, sort of, and it goes like that, for the first one or two frames, and then the President's body does seem to turn and move to the back, toward the back, and to the left, as Mr. Lane said. But the point is, that at the exact moment of the striking of the bullet--and they're talking about a physical reaction now, when you hit a pool ball, it just goes, right then--at that moment, the President's head moves downwards, sort of like this--and that's consistent with two things: It's consistent with the shot having hit the back of the head, as the Commission says; or it's consistent with a shot that hits very high, a very high angle shot from the front, that would drive the head down like that. The angle is so great that this physicist came to conclusions, and he hasn't worked this all up into

finished form yet, his tentative conclusions are that it is absolutely impossible for the shot that struck the President to have come from anywhere on the ground, to the front and the right. It would have had to be fired from a, uh--

Lomax So that eliminates the grassy knoll?

Liebeler Well, it eliminates the grassy knoll unless you want to adopt the theory that there was somebody shooting from the top of the trees--and there's very little evidence of that, to put it very mildly, it's perfectly clear. Or from a helicopter. As a matter of fact, Sylvia Meagher, before she got interested in the Warren Commission, was a very serious student of flying saucers, so it may be that the theory will be advanced that the shot was fired from a flying saucer --But it would have to be, if the shot was fired from the front, because it couldn't have been fired from the grassy knoll.