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A/A

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Hearings Set

By Jeremiah O'Leary
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The House Assassinations Committee will hold public hearings next week to deal with new physical evidence that a second gunman was involved in the murder of John F. Kennedy.

The chief counsel to the committee, Robert G. Blakey, said today the panel will reopen hearings to consider new acoustical tests which indicate that a fourth shot was fired from

the grassy knoll at the Kennedy motorcade in Dallas.

Blakey said the tests, which acoustical experts say are 95 percent accurate, have "turned the whole thing inside out" and will cause the committee to reconsider the possibility of a conspiracy in the 1963 assassination.

"It could be a coincidence that two people fired shots at President Kennedy from opposite directions, but this stretches credulity," Blakey said. "There always was testimony

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on New JFK

Sound Tests Point to a Second Gunman

that one of the four shots fired during the assassination had come from the grassy knoll (an area in front of Kennedy). Now, we have physical evidence."

THE COMMITTEE, now in its final days, will meet tomorrow in closed session to decide what it will say in its final report Dec. 31 about

the assassinations of both Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

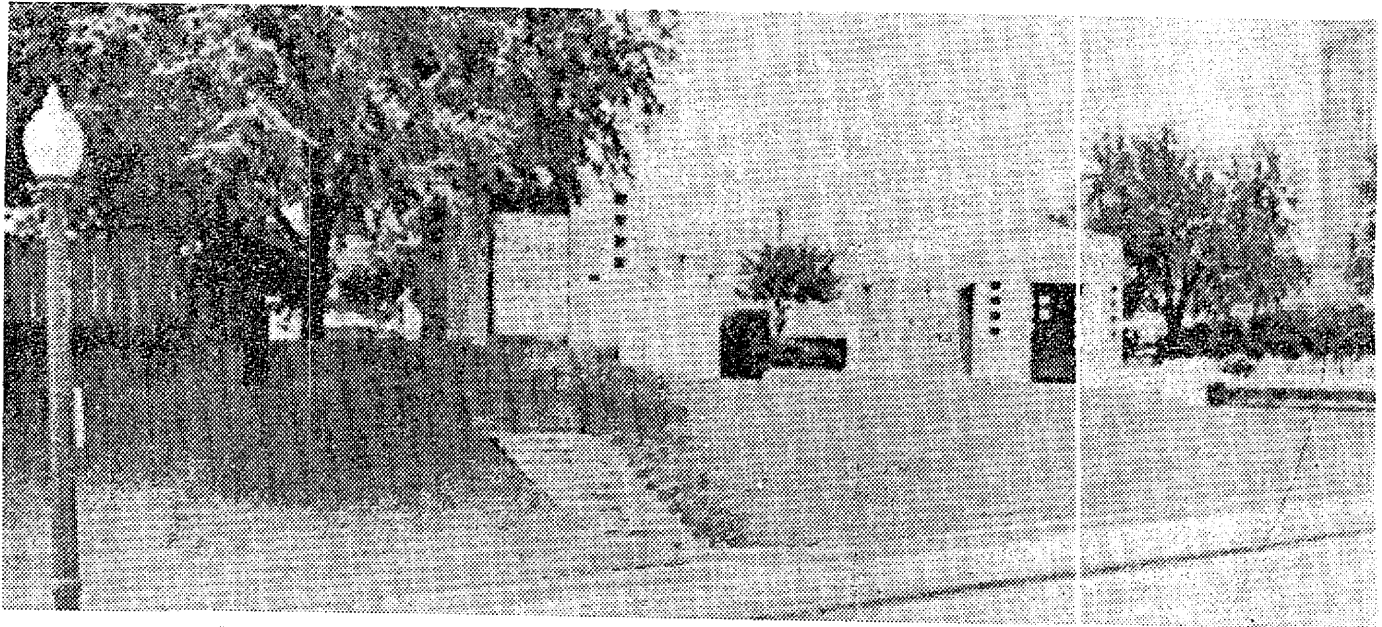
The committee had already completed a 600-page report on the premise that there was only a single assassin who fired three shots from an upper floor of the Texas School Book Depository, where the rifle with Oswald's fingerprints was found. That report apparently will have to be re-

done in light of the evidence that was presented to the panel at a closed-door meeting Monday night.

Rep. Harold Sawyer, R-Mich., disclosed the new finding yesterday in an interview over a radio station in Grand Rapids. He said the committee was told by three acoustical experts that there were four shots, with the third fired from the grassy knoll in the opposite direction from Oswald's vantage point, above and behind the president's car.

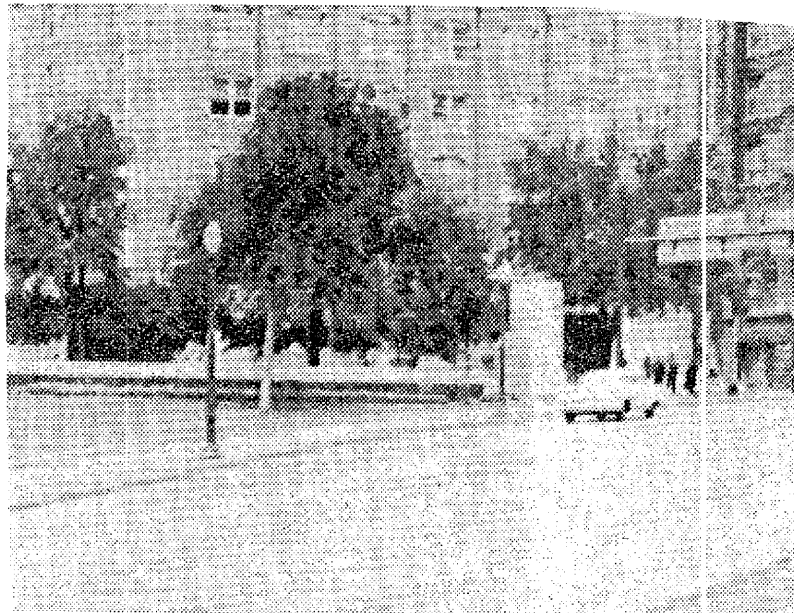
The evidence was not planned for

Evidence



The Knoll and Texas Book Depository at the

New acoustical evidence points to the possibility that a fourth shot was fired during the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in 1963 and it came from the tree-shaded knoll at the left. In the right background is the Texas School Book Deposi-



—Associated Press

Kennedy Slaying Site

tory from which Lee Harvey Oswald fired three shots as the Kennedy motorcade sped by on the roadway in the foreground.

The Knoll and Texas Book Depository at the Kennedy Slaying Site

presentation at the Monday meeting. But Sawyer said that when Blakey informed the committee of new and refined acoustical tests indicating a shot had been fired from the grassy knoll, committee members asked to hear it immediately.

THE EXPERTS were Mark Weiss and Ernie Oskenski of Queens College in New York and James Barger of the Massachusetts company of Bolt, Bernek and Newman.

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SLAYING

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Barger had made complex acoustical tests earlier of the sounds of shots picked up by the open radio of a Dallas motorcycle policeman during the assassination.

But Barger testified on Sept. 11 that his acoustical work with the tapes and a series of re-enactment test shots indicated that there was only a 50-50 possibility that a fourth shot had come from the grassy knoll.

Sawyer said that at Monday's session Barger joined with the two other acoustical engineers in agreeing that the third of the four shots had come from the grassy knoll beyond any reasonable doubt. The two other engineers were brought in to make further tests and they concluded that the probability of the third shot coming from the knoll was 95 percent.

ACCORDING to Sawyer, the acoustical experts took a film made by a spectator watching the Kennedy motorcade pass, Abraham Zapruder, and dubbed the shots onto the film.

"I've seen that Zapruder film 198 times," Sawyer said from his Grand Rapids home today. "This sound tract added a grisly new dimension. The witnesses told us that the third of the four shots came from the grassy knoll beyond any reasonable doubt."

Sawyer said he does not think committee members have reached any consensus about the meaning of the tests and added, "I'm not buying this yet and I never said I was. It was the experts who said that there was a 95 percent probability of a shot coming from the other direction."

(In Vernon, Conn., another committee member, Rep. Christopher J. Dodd, D-Conn., called the information significant but added: "I'm not suggesting the evidence can be or should be discredited. We need to make sure it's thoroughly examined in light of other evidence to corroborate it.")

SAWYER SAID all four shots were described by the experts as supersonic and explained that this ruled out any possibility that one of the shots might have been fired from a pistol. He said almost any rifle fires bullets at supersonic speed and that the experts say they can detect this.

The process used by the acoustical experts was described as being an effort to duplicate the sounds picked up by the motorcycle radio at the time Kennedy was killed, using test shots and then matching the tests against the real echoes carried over the po-

liceman's open transmitter. The experts then took the electronic "fingerprints" of both the actual shots heard in Dallas and of the tests and found that they matched identically.

Sawyer said that he watched closely when the sound of the shots was synchronized with the Zapruder film and said, "I thought that at the third shot you could see a head reaction by President Kennedy. We can't ignore it and we can't explain it."

Blakey said that the new evidence will perpetuate conspiracy theories but that 15 years after the shooting, the committee is not likely to be able to identify the second gunman.

THE NEW EVIDENCE, according to committee sources, throws all the work that has been done by the House panel for the last two years into confusion because until this week, the panel was clearly preparing to report essentially the same findings made by the Warren Commission in 1964. About seven members of the committee were present when the new evidence was produced Monday night.

The \$5 million investigation comes to an end on Dec. 31.

The new evidence was especially startling because studies made by Barger, about which he testified in September, were considered highly inconclusive. Weiss and his colleagues were commissioned to try to come to a more definite conclusion.

Weiss, who had worked on the Watergate tapes of President Richard Nixon, proceeded by plotting the echo patterns of the shots heard on the police tape and tracing every building and object that could have affected the echo pattern. The work was described as exceedingly precise to the point of being able to identify the location of the police motorcycle, a box car on some railroad tracks and even the press bus that was turning the corner when Kennedy was fatally wounded.

The experts even procured an old microphone and motorcycle and conducted test firings that were virtually a replica of the sounds recorded in Dallas police headquarters over the policeman's open microphone.

The committee has the three cartridge cases found near the window of the building where Oswald's rifle was located, but there is no such evidence to support the grassy knoll shot.

An indistinct photo of an individual behind a fence with a linear object near him, has been considered inconclusive by all investigators because neither the man nor the object could be identified further.