



# PENN JONES' THE CONTINUING INQUIRY

VOLUME VI, NUMBER 8

MARCH 22, 1982

*The ancient work will be accomplished from the roof;  
Evil rain shall fall on the great man.  
Being dead, they will accuse an innocent of the deed;  
The guilty one hidden in the misty woods.  
—Nostradamus, predicting the the Kennedy  
assassination and conspiracy in the  
16th century.*

## NAS PANEL STUCK ON CHANNEL 1, REPORT DELAYED

by Gary Mack

The NAS Report on the JFK acoustics evidence, just days from release on several occasions, has been delayed until at least May. Early in February the Panel was presented with evidence that completely shoots down the main point of the Barber-Vaughan analysis: that the BBN timing of Channel 1 was off by at least 62 seconds and the 'shot' impulses occurred about one minute after the assassination.

This 'new' evidence is on the Dictabelt, in the BBN Report to the HSCA and now before a very surprised NAS Panel. It is simple in concept yet devastating in its implications, for it now appears the Dictabelt given to the HSCA by former DPD officer Paul McCaghren is not the original, but a copy. And on that copy is extraneous audio—the 'Decker transmission.'

In 1980, Steve Barber, brother-in-law of researcher Larry Harris, discovered a transmission on Channel 2 by Dallas County Sheriff Bill Decker that is also on Channel 1. Even though it's just a portion of his full broadcast, the words '...hold everything secure until the homicide and other investigators can get there' were clear enough for Steve to conclude the two transmissions were the same broadcast. For the first time, then, the two channels could be synchronized to each other, something BBN and the HSCA hadn't done (BBN noted the voice on Channel 1 but didn't consider it important enough to identify who or what was said).

Then, using a stopwatch, Steve found an apparent timing discrepancy which, if confirmed, meant the BBN analysis and conclusions were totally wrong. Decker's Channel 2 broadcast came 62 seconds *after* Dallas Police Chief Jesse Curry's first order 'We're going to the hospital...'. But the same Decker order began on Channel 1 less than 1 second after the last BBN shot, thereby 'moving' Curry's order 62 seconds *before* any shots were fired. With the help of Todd Vaughan and Robert Cutler, further study began.

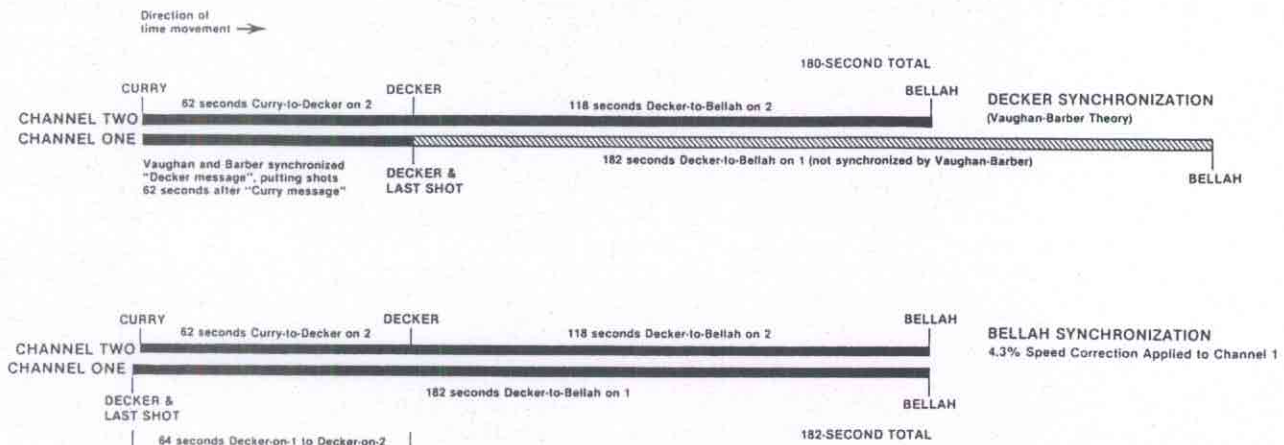
Eventually, three more Channel 2 transmissions were found on Channel 1, but the last two were in a different open mic sequence. Barber's information was then used as the basis for a high school English class report by Vaughan, with some graphics assistance by Cutler.

As soon as the Panel obtained the Dictabelt and DPD tape copy, voice prints were made of the Decker messages. The verdict (recently confirmed by an acoustic scientist I fully trust) was a very high probability they were identical, and by late summer or early fall 1981, a rough draft of the Report had been prepared. The unanimous conclusion: the BBN analysis was in error because the impulses thought to have been shots were unknown noises occurring about one minute after the assassination—total confirmation of the Barber-Vaughan theory *without any other supporting acoustic evidence.*

But there were some loose ends and unanswered questions which would have left the Panel vulnerable to legitimate criticism. Over the following months, in between vacations and work obligations, the rough draft was revised, sent to the NAS for comment and revised again. Also, consideration was given to the numerous questions submitted by Paul Hoch, myself and others. The most serious roadblock, though, was the work of Dr. James Barger and his associates. The *methodology* was never questioned, and rightfully so, since the physics and geometry of the approach had been accepted scientific fact for over 50 years; the specific *application* of those principles to the problem was questioned, though, because an error had to have been made somewhere. It was the lack of an acceptable, believable answer that has held up the Report for so long. No answer was found, until now.

Sergeant S. Q. Bellah, who had been one of the three advance motorcycle officers riding several blocks ahead of Chief Jesse Curry's car, radioed in to headquarters on Channel 2 'Do you still want me to hold....'. His call number, 190, the dispatcher's confirmation and Bellah's question are also heard on Channel 1. Both recor-





dings are very clear at this point—no one would question they are identical. Barber and Vaughan heard it, too, and mentioned Bellah's transmission in their Report as one of four broadcasts heard on both channels. If they had only put a stopwatch to Bellah and compared his transmission to the time of Decker's, there would never have been a Barber-Vaughan theory.

On Channel 2 Bellah's question begins about 118 seconds after Decker, while on Channel 1 it's about 182 seconds after Decker and the last shot. Since both channels are known to have been continuous from shortly before the assassination, it would seem that 64 seconds are missing from Channel 2. Not true! On Channel 2, the time from Bellah back to Curry is about 180 seconds. In other words, when both channels are synchronized to Bellah, Curry orders his men to Parkland about 2 seconds after the last shot.

There are apparently a few other transmissions or noises which synchronize with each other and Bellah, but I do not yet have the details. So the conclusion is obvious: the appearance of Decker on Channel 1 at the time of the last shot could only have happened if it was dubbed in at a later date. BBN accepted the HSCA's belief, based at least in part on McCaghen's testimony, that the Dictabelt in his possession was the original. Months ago the Panel learned from a microscopic examination that this same Dictabelt showed absolutely no physical evidence of rerecording. Such an action would have been unmistakably visible except for outright mutilation. Therefore, the 'original' Dictabelt must be a copy of another Dictabelt or tape recording.

And this is where evidence of editing becomes apparent. It's highly unlikely Curry ordered his men to Parkland Hospital as the echo of the final shot faded away. Some period of time must have elapsed and, as detailed in the September 1981 TCI, it could have been as long as 45 seconds. Curry had always maintained he didn't know who, if anyone, had been hit until Officer James Chaney rode up and told him. The bottom line, then, is that the elapsed time is the *minimum* amount of missing time from Channel 1. Is there scientific evidence of dubbing and possible deletion on Channel 1? Yes, and it's in the BBN Report to the HSCA and the Warren Commission volumes.

One of the BBN studies was a spectrum analysis of the carillon bell on Channel 1 by Edward C. Schmidt. It yielded a graphic representation of the sound frequencies. One component of regular AC current in the US is the frequency: 60 cycles per second (Hz). It sounds like a deep bass note, never significantly changes and, no matter how sophisticated the original equipment, is detectable in virtually every recording. Once found, it's a simple matter of speeding up or slowing down the playback so the power hum is exactly 60 Hz. The result is the real life speed if one is using the original recording.

Bear in mind that when a recorder is running too fast, playback on an accurate machine makes everything too slow; conversely, a slow recorder results in fast audio. The spectrum analysis revealed a power hum of nearly 57 Hz, indicating the Dictaphone recorder was operating about 5% *faster* than normal. The segment with the carillon bell was reproduced as part of the BBN Report (VIII HSCA 111) and also distributed in a blowup at the September 1978 public hearings. Both show the 57 Hz power hum and the corresponding 114 Hz overtone.

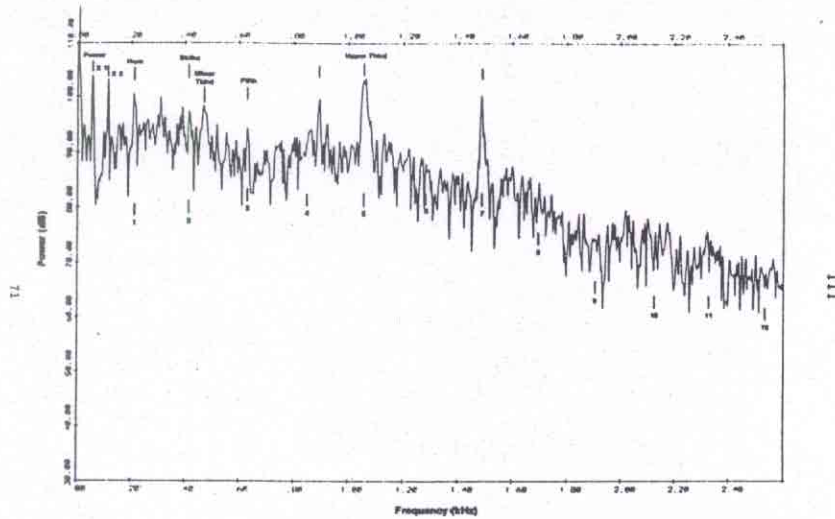


FIG. 23. ENERGY SPECTRUM OF TAPE SEGMENT CONTAINING THE SOUND OF A BELL.

Another BBN study was a check for continuity of Channel 1. Both before and after, but not during, the open mic sequence the dispatchers routinely noted the time. By measuring those intervals against a stopwatch they were found to conform almost exactly. The standard mathematical formula showed a 'fit' of about 95%, meaning the Dictaphone recorder was running about 5% slower than normal. The main purpose of this test was not to establish a precise measure of speed but determine whether or not it was a continuous recording. If the Dictaphone recorder had stopped operating at any point *during the time annotation periods*, the graph would have yielded a zig zag line instead of a straight one. Since no zig zag occurred, the missing seconds must have been replaced by other audio to maintain continuity.

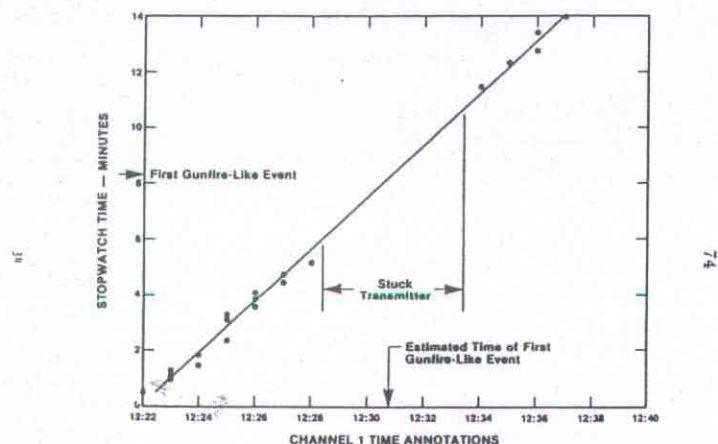


FIG. 9. LEAST-SQUARE ERROR FIT TO CHANNEL 1 DISPATCHER'S TIME ANNOTATIONS SHOWING TIME OF FIRST SET OF GUNFIRE-LIKE EVENTS.

The recorder was designed to operate when receiving any noise or voice transmissions louder than a preset level; in the absence of such, a delay system stopped the machine after 4 seconds. Because the mic was open continuously in the relevant period, BBN did not expect to find evidence of a break, and further study turned up no timing inconsistencies. Yet the BBN Report contains a curious footnote:

\*Frequency analysis of the power hum on the tape recording also indicated that the recorder had been about 5% slow. Since the hum could have been added when the tape was recorded from the dictabelt, this is not a reliable indication of the original recording speed.



The speed source could not have been the power hum, despite the wording, because the 57 Hz hum was plotted in the carillon bell graph. The last paragraph of BBN's previous page has this explanation:

The tape-recording system was found to be about 5% slow, when the time annotations were measured with a stopwatch (see Fig. 9). Therefore, the apparent pitch of the tone would have a frequency of  $(1.05) (420) = 441$  Hz.

Apparently the pitch of the Channel 1 recording was not deemed too important. One reason was probably Mark Weiss' work with Ernest Aschkenasy on shot number 3. They determined, based on the impulse echoes compared with those of the test shots, that the original recording was 4.3% too slow, thus confirming the time annotation analysis. Exact timing of the events on Channel 1, regardless of the Dictaphone speed, was one of the expected results from the comparison with the test shots on a BBN recorder known to be running at the correct speed.

The point of this involved explanation is the Channel 1 Dictabelt, the source of all the data, could not have been too fast and too slow at the same time. The real life sounds indicate the recorder was almost 5% too slow, yet the electronic data not connected with the open mic says it was about 5% too fast. As BBN noted, the power hum may not have given an accurate determination of speed because it could have been added by the recorder making the copy from the Dictabelt. But in an earlier section, BBN stated the DPD tape copy was 'virtually identical' to the Dictabelt. I have recently learned the 57 Hz hum is present on the Dictabelt.

The key question, of course, is how Decker got on Channel 1. One simple explanation is that while Channel 1 was being copied using a microphone, another machine nearby was playing the Channel 2 recording. Then at one or more points the microphone 'picked up' the sounds on Channel 2 and put them on Channel 1.

Another explanation, one that is nothing less than sinister, is that some material on Channel 1 was edited out and replaced or covered over by extraneous audio that just happened to include Decker. If this is the case, closer study of the motorcycle noise could be beneficial. While the sound is obviously that of a cycle, its electronic representation is *not* that of a smoothly running engine. In fact, the cycles on Main Street were running very slowly, probably well under 10 mph, because the crowds were pushing out into the street. Those old air-cooled Harley-Davidsons would have run hot under those conditions, leading to spark plug fouling and backfires. DPD officers in the motorcade have confirmed this exact condition as they approached and entered Dealey Plaza.

There seems to be only one explanation for this development—the Dictabelt is a copy of the real original, probably an *edited* copy. Somewhere along the line someone played the real original on one machine and copied it on another running about 5% too fast. The gunshot impulses (relatively inaudible to the ear) were *not* tampered with, *but something was added and/or deleted*—so now the history of the Dictabelt needs study.

The earliest known interest in the recordings seems to have been by the Secret Service. Warren Commission Document 87 contains a report filed by Special Agent Roger C. Warner and SA Elmer W. Moore dated December 1, 1963. The Dallas Field Office number is CO-2-34,030 and the page number seems to be 324. Only the first page of this report is available. Warner described his meeting with DPD Chief George L. Lumpkin two days earlier. Lumpkin 'provided for transcription on our tape' the DPD recordings of Channels 1 and 2, which Warner recorded and sent to Washington for 'filtering, rerecording and transcription.' The term rerecording could well be significant, but Warner also stated that copies would be returned to the Dallas office. To this day, no copies of the SS tapes have been located, although researcher Mark Allen recently found the written transcript.

Form 1-0. 1248 (Revised)  
MEMORANDUM REPORT  
(7-1-50)

UNITED STATES SECRET SERVICE  
TREASURY DEPARTMENT

ORIGIN <b>Field</b>	OFFICE <b>Dallas</b>	FILE NO. <b>CO-2-34,030</b>
TYPE OF CASE <b>Assassination of the President</b>	STATUS <b>Continued</b>	TITLE OR CAPTION <b>Lee Harvey Oswald</b>
INVESTIGATION MADE AT <b>Dallas, Texas</b>	PERIOD COVERED <b>November 29 - 30, 1963</b>	



INVESTIGATION MADE BY  
**SA Roger C. Warner & SA Elmer W. Moore**

DETAILS

SYNOPSIS

Transcripts of Police Radio Dispatches following assassination of President Kennedy at Dallas, shooting of Police Officer Tippit and timing of flight of Lee Harvey Oswald from scene of assassination.

DETAILS OF INVESTIGATION

Reference is made to previous reports in this matter.

Other Investigations

On November 29, 1963, SA Warner conferred with Chief Lumpkin, Dallas Police Department, relative to reports of Police dispatches covering the arrival of President Kennedy in Dallas, Texas, the subsequent assassination and removal of President Kennedy to Parkland Memorial Hospital. These broadcasts were transmitted on Dallas Police Channel #2 which was an auxiliary channel used by the Police Department for special occasions. Also Chief Lumpkin provided for transcription on our tape the Police recordings of Channel #1, the standard Police band which on the date of the President's assassination contained the Police broadcasts relative to the capture of Lee Oswald and the shooting of Police Officer Tippit. Both channels were recorded by SA Warner and were sent to Washington Protective Research Section for filtering, re-recording and transcription. Copies will be returned to this office, and will be attached to this report when received.

There follows the sequence of events following the assassination as reconstructed with information available. These sequences are to be checked against the radio reports here. The timing seems to compare

DISTRIBUTION Chief Dallas	COPIES Orig. & 2 2	REPORT MADE BY <i>Roger C. Warner</i>	DATE 12-1-63
		SPECIAL AGENT 321	
		APPROVED <i>Elmer W. Moore</i>	DATE 12-1-63
		SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	

Warner seems to imply that he copied the DPD recordings at the police department, but Jim Bowles remembers differently. In a recent interview he told me the Secret Service 'took those blue belts' out of the building, but he had no idea whether they stayed in Dallas or went to Washington. Asked when they were returned, he said 'not for a few days, we were awfully busy then.' As for the possibility duplicate Dictabelts were returned, Bowles said 'anything's possible' but doubted that was the case.

The belts must have been returned the following week, for by December 5 DPD Sergeant Gerald Henslee, the Channel 2 dispatcher at the time of the assassination, had completed the first DPD transcript. His report, Sawyer Exhibit B before the Warren Commission, does not explain the circumstances of the transcript, but one can assume it was made at the DPD.

Then, according to the testimony of Paul McCaghen (II HSCA 108), the belts were in the possession of the DPD and the special investigative unit Chief Curry formed to study the Oswald murder and the killing of Of-



ficer Tippit. In fact, the Henslee transcript may well have been prepared for just that purpose, except for one problem: the Channel 1 transcripts relating to Tippit are inadequate and incomplete.

On March 6, 1964 the FBI requested a more thorough transcript from the Dallas Police and the job went to Sergeant Jim Bowles. His version became Warren Commission Exhibit 705 which, although more detailed than Henslee's, still lacked much important information. In interviews conducted August 27 and September 15, 1980, Bowles told the FBI of his experience with the Channel 1 Dictabelts and Channel 2 Audograph discs:

The original belts and discs, containing recordings of radio transmissions at or about the time of the assassination of President Kennedy were provided to the FBI within a few days of that event. Several days later an FBI Agent returned the belts and discs to Captain Bowles personally, with the explanation that the FBI was experiencing difficulty in preparing a transcript of those recordings due to a lack of familiarity with the Dallas Police Department radio parlance and terminology.

Captain Bowles meticulously reviewed the original belts and discs in order to prepare a transcript. It was necessary to stop and start the playback machine many times in order to prepare an accurate transcript. The stylus of the dictaphone playback machine was inserted into previously recorded track on many occasions and in many different locations. It is Captain Bowles' opinion that the playback process, including the numerous placings of the stylus on the previously recorded track, may have created degradations of the original recorded material, as well as actually adding new impulses to the track.

Captain Bowles stated that he made a reel-to-reel tape recording of the original dictaphone belts using a Wollensak recorder provided him by the FBI during the time he was transcribing the original belts in the early part of 1964. One original copy was provided to the FBI, and he personally retained another copy. The reel-to-reel recordings were made by playing the originals on the appropriate playback devices and placing the microphone of the tape recorder next to the playback speaker. There was no direct wire connection between the playback device and the tape recorder.

Then in interviews a few days ago, Bowles gave me considerably more detail. The DPD only possessed one Dictaphone machine, A2TC Model 5, which had two drive mechanisms run off the same motor; with this design, one fresh belt could always be in 'standby' to automatically start when the other ended. For Bowles to make a tape copy, the switching mechanism had to be disabled so he could play the belt on one side while routine transmissions could still be recorded on the other belt. Then, since there were no provisions for patch cords, the tape recorder's mic was placed near the Dictaphone speaker.

This setup could explain Decker's appearance on Channel 1. If Channel 2 were being played on a separate machine in the same room, it's quite possible the mic used for the Channel 1 copy picked it up. I put that hypothetical question to Bowles and he denied the possibility. As he remembers it, Channel 1 was copied first, then Channel 2.

One can imagine how cumbersome the copying process was, having to work off a playback machine tied into the main communications line. So Bowles went to his boss, Lumpkin, for permission to rent a second Dictaphone machine. That unit handled one belt at a time and was strictly a playback unit. Just a few of the belts were dubbed off the original machine, and Bowles has no memory of which they were. While on the subject of memory, Lumpkin told me briefly, yet courteously, that he couldn't remember anything about Dictabelts or agents or any of this.

Those familiar with the old Wollensak recorders know it was a very reliable, good quality machine by 1964 standards. Bowles remembers using some sort of filter to eliminate much of the noise and some of the scratches. With this setup and what he believed were the original Dictabelts, Bowles made two tape copies for the FBI, one filtered and one unfiltered. Before turning them over to the agent, Bowles made a tape copy of the unfiltered dub for himself. Recently, at Professor Ramsey's request, Bowles sent the NAS panel a professional dub of his tape (there's no word on whether the Panel has made a similar request of the Secret Service or National Archives).







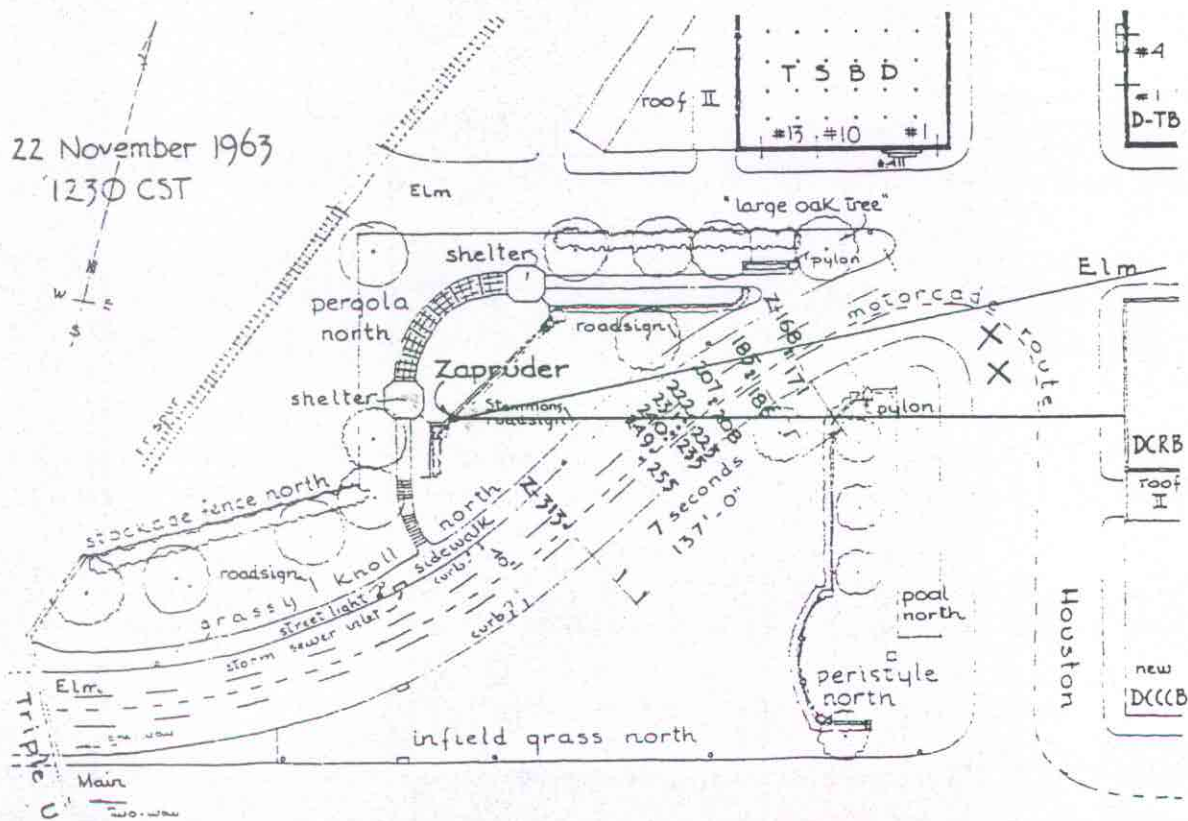
So the focus of the NAS Panel has shifted significantly, from questioning the conclusions of the HSCA scientists to questioning the authenticity of the Dictabelt itself. All of the belts need to be subjected to spectrum analysis to find, at the very least, whether the 57 Hz power hum appears elsewhere. Special attention should be focused on the belts relating to Officer Tippit, the tracking of the suspect(s) and finding of evidence, and the apprehension of Oswald. The questioning of evidence might best be handled by a grand jury.

And now, just hours before setting this in type, the *coup de grace*: A motorcycle officer in the exact position predicted by BBN is visible in the Zapruder film at the time of the first two shots. Late in 1978, HSCA Deputy Chief Counsel Gary Cornwell and Photographic Consultant Robert Groden were again studying the film in an optical device that stabilized and enlarged selected areas. Cornwell spotted what seemed to be a moving motorcycle helmet in the west lane of Houston and moving faster than the motorcade to its right. Groden agreed with Cornwell's observation, but the matter ended there—no time, money or photo panel remained.

Two years later during a visit to Robert's house while working on the still-unreleased Taft documentary, he showed me a moving, stabilized blowup of Howard Brennan. Just to his left was the motorcycle helmet, but the image was so vague and the movement so subtle, that I soon forgot about it. Like many of the intriguing photographs, such obscure images may not be totally convincing.

In trying to make sense of the 'Decker transmission' and its implications, I suddenly remembered the officer in the Zapruder film. By diagramming Zapruder's field of view in the frames between 160 and 200 it was quite obvious that McLain had to be visible on Houston if BBN was correct (presuming he wasn't blocked out by spectators). I then called Robert to learn the exact frame numbers and, while he needed several days to get the information and strike some prints, I informed Professor Ramsey of the discovery with a blowup of Z-183 and diagrams by the HSCA and Robert Cutler.

Early this morning Robert called with the pleasant news: the moving helmet can be seen in Z-188 and Z-194. In 188 it is just to the right of the spectator dressed in yellow and about shoulder-level; by 194 the helmet has moved to that person's left and sunlight reflects of the helmet. The next issue of TCI will include the Groden blowups and an attempt to learn whether McLain's position is, as many suspect, supportive of the head shot coming from the grassy knoll.





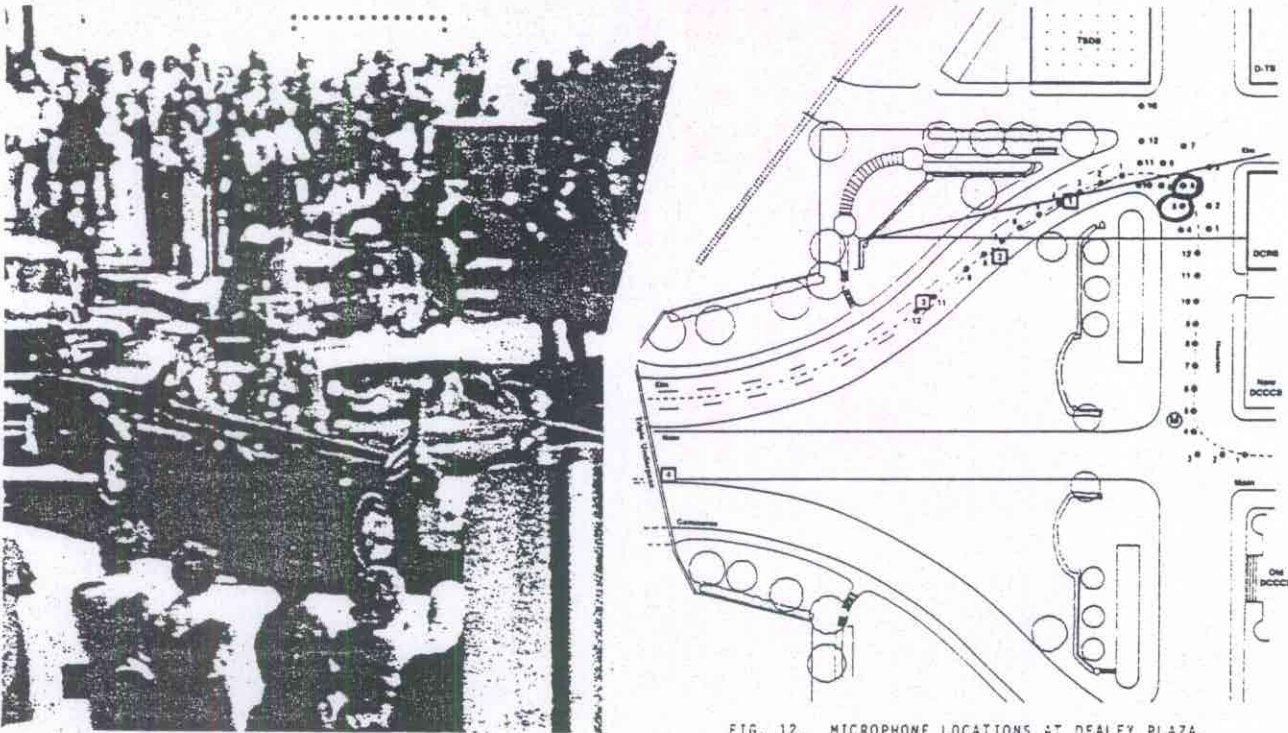


FIG. 12. MICROPHONE LOCATIONS AT DEALEY PLAZA.

## BRIEFS....

The ghost of J. Edgar Hoover haunted pages 7 and 8 in the last TCI, causing a 'printing error'; the edited commentaries of LA newsman Baxter Ward were reversed (renumber your copy with page 7 as 8 and 8 as 7 and it'll make more sense)....Dr. Linda Norton's Birmingham office says the official LHO autopsy report will be completed within 60 days, then published in the *Journal of Forensic Science*; several medical observers at the gravesite saw an apparent discrepancy which may be part of the delay (more in a future TCI, we hope)....We now have 1960 and 1968 photos of Charles (the tall tramp?) Harrelson, but a possible indirect link between the JFK and Judge Wood assassinations has surfaced, delaying their publication—we're hoping for April....TSBD employee Charles Givens died recently and neither Dallas paper noted his connection with the events of 11-22-63; unknown to any researcher, Givens had been living in Dallas with his married sister....The latest from the scientists studying the Bronson film is their final report will be in the hands of attorney Sigalos by the end of March....Reader's Digest is active in the JFK case again—it has talked a one-time LHO co-worker into hypnosis to jog his memory....There's been a rumor that Digest advanced Edward J. Epstein more money for his *Legend* book than it could ever earn in sales—anyone have more info or documentation?....David Lifton will appear locally on *Layman & Company*, a weekly interview show on KXAS-TV plugging the paperback issue of *Best Evidence*....Watch your listings for *Encore News*, a syndicated program hosted by Floyd Kalber; one show is titled '11-22-63' and contains nearly 15 minutes of JFK assassination-related film in a mostly Warren Commission presentation....*The Man Who Saw Tomorrow*, a 1981 feature film about Nostradamus, is currently being shown on cable and subscription tv; his predictions about the Kennedy brothers, made in the 16th century, are absolutely chilling....The ABC Closeup on J. Edgar Hoover and the JFK assassination has still not been scheduled, despite what producer Tom Bywaters told TV Guide a month ago....Researcher Frank W. Hoffman, Jr. tells us the National Archives has upped its copy charge from 20 to 25¢ per page—but don't expect the reproduction quality to go up, too....On March 30 President Reagan is scheduled to speak at the Washington Hilton, exactly one year after the assassination attempt—we thought it was the criminal who returned to the scene of the crime!