

CBS NEWS INQUIRY  
"The Warren Report"  
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With CBS NEWS Correspondents

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and

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CRONKITE: Last night, in the first of this series of four broadcasts about the Warren Report, CBS NEWS considered and tried to give reasonable answers to some major questions about the Report.

Did Lee Harvey Oswald take a rifle to the Book Depository Building? Our answer was yes.

Where was Oswald on the day President Kennedy was shot? In the building on the sixth floor.

Was Oswald's rifle fired from the building? Yes.

How many shots were fired? Most likely three.

How fast could Oswald's rifle be fired? Fast enough.

What was the time span of the shots? At least as large as the Warren Commission reported? Most likely the assassin had more time, not less.

These, CBS NEWS concluded, added up to the answer to last night's central question: Did Lee Harvey Oswald shoot President Kennedy? Our conclusion was that he did. Beyond reasonable doubt, the chronic misfit and malcontent was at least one of the men who fired on President Kennedy. But was he the killer or a killer? A lone madman or the agent to the monstrous and successful conspiracy? Tonight's central question: Was there a conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy?

ANNOUNCER: This is a CBS NEWS INQUIRY: "The Warren Report." Here is Walter Cronkite.

CRONKITE: In the 888 pages of the Warren Commission Report on the assassination, these are certainly among the most significant words: "The Commission has found no evidence that either Lee Harvey Oswald or Jack Ruby was part of any conspiracy, domestic or foreign, to assassinate President Kennedy." And the Report also states: "The Commission has found no evidence that anyone assisted Oswald in planning or carrying out the assassination."

Let's stop a moment to examine just what that says and, more important, what it does not say. Note that, contrary to the popular impression, the Commission, by these words, left the door open on the question of conspiracy just a crack. The words do not preclude the possibility of a conspiracy. They don't say that the Commission concluded that there was no conspiracy, or that Oswald was the sole assassin. They only say that the Commission could find no evidence that others were involved, no evidence that there was a conspiracy.

If there was a conspiracy, it could have taken one of two forms: either Oswald was a sole triggerman for behind-the-scenes manipulators, or there were one or more additional gunmen firing at the President. Most of the critics of the Report insist there were other gunmen.

Within the broad matter of conspiracy, our basic questions for tonight are: Where did the shots come from? If the shots did not all come from the Book Depository window, then there was most likely some form of conspiracy. Could a single bullet have wounded both President Kennedy and Governor Connally? The single bullet theory has become perhaps the most controversial aspect of the report. The Commission said it was not essential to its conclusions. But, to make those conclusions square with the facts, either three groups of wounds were caused by two bullets, which is the single bullet theory, or all three bullets from Oswald's rifle struck President Kennedy and Governor Connally, which the Commission rejected in the belief that one bullet missed completely.

The only other alternative is a second assassin. Let's look first at the scene of the assassination in Dealey Plaza, Dallas, Texas. Correspondent Dan Rather.

RATHER: First, Walter, here's the part of the story that is not in dispute, and that any theory of the assassination must explain. The Presidential motorcade entered the plaza in a sharp right turn off Main and onto Houston. It ran slowly along the eastern edge of Dealey Plaza. Then the motorcade slowed even more, for the extremely sharp left, more than 90 degrees, onto Elm Street, which runs directly under the windows of the Texas Schoolbook Depository. It's a perfect place for an ambush. And as the limousine drifted into the odd S curve, shots began to rain on it.

CRONKITE: Here is our first basic question for tonight: Where did the shots come from?

RATHER: We decided on last night's program that some of the shots came from up here, Lee Harvey Oswald's nest in the sixth floor window. But, there are persistent reports of other virtually simultaneous shots, which would admit more than one assassin and therefore a conspiracy. Most often the other shots are reported from over there, the famous grassy knoll, ahead of, to the right of, and slightly above the President's car. The witnesses for both sets of shots are generally positive and persuasive.

This photograph, taken only seconds after the assassination, shows one group of those witnesses, Oswald's co-workers, who perched themselves in fifth floor windows to watch a parade and instead saw a murder.

BONNIE RAY WILLIAMS: So, when the President came around, we remember seeing him standing up and waving. And as he's turning to go down Elm Street, we heard a shot, and we saw the President slump. Well, be--prior to that, though, we decided there was some fireworks and everything, you know? And then after we saw him slump, we said--I think one guy, I don't remember which one he was, say that I believe they're shooting at the President, and I believe it came from right up over us.

HAROLD D. NORMAN: Then I think, about that time, well, Jarman says, somebody's shooting at the President. And I told Jarman, I said, I said, I know it is because I could hear--they are above me, and I could hear the shots and everything, and I could even hear the empty cartridges hitting the floor. I mean, after the shots had been fired.

And so, after the shots were fired, well, all the officers and everyone else seemed to think they came from by the track over by the underpass, because that's where everyone ran, over that-a-way. But, I--just like I said, I've been hunting enough to know the sound of a rifle from--from a backfire or a firecracker or anything like--especially that close to me.

RATHER: The witnesses in the fifth floor windows say they heard the shots right overhead. But other observers below thought they heard firing from other directions. This is the view of Elm Street from the grassy knoll, up behind the picket fence where some critics claim another gunman lay concealed. We're looking through the trees at the spot where the final shot took effect, the shot that killed the President.

At this point, the President would have presented as good a target from here as from the Schoolbook Depository. Some think that right here is where the fatal shot came from.

EDDIE BARKER: Now, railroad man, S. M. Holland, was up on this overpass when the firing started. From here, you can see the Book Depository and the grassy knoll. Mr. Holland came back up here with us a short while ago, and his is perhaps the most telling account in favor of the grassy knoll theory, not only because of what he saw and heard during the assassination, but what he says he found on that grassy knoll immediately afterward.

S. M. HOLLAND: Just about the time that the parade turned on Elm Street, about where that truck is--that bus is now, there was a shot came from up--the upper end of the street. I couldn't say then, at that time, that it came from the Book Depository book store. But I knew that it came from the other end of the street, and the President slumped over forward like that and tried to raise his hand up. And Governor Connally, sitting in front of him on the right side of the car, tried to turn to his right and he was sitting so close to the door that he couldn't make it that-a-way, and he turned back like that with his arm out to the left. And about that time, the second shot was fired and it knocked him over forward and he slumped to the right, and I guess his wife pulled him over in her lap because he fell over in her lap.

And about that time, there was a third report that wasn't nearly as loud as the two previous reports. It came from that picket fence, and then there was a fourth report. The third and the fourth reports was almost simultaneously. But, the third report wasn't nearly as loud as the two previous reports or the fourth report. And I glanced over underneath that green tree and you see a--a little puff of smoke. It looked like a puff of steam or cigarette smoke. And the smoke was about--oh, 8 or 10 feet off the ground, and about 15 feet this side of that tree.

And I immediately ran around to the spot that this shot came from. Of course, there was no one there because it took us quite a little while to thread our way through the cars--there's so many parked there--and they parked at every angle, that when I got over there I did find where a man had been standing and walking from one end of the bumper to the other, and I guess if you could have counted the footsteps there'd a been 200 or more on the muddy spots--footprints. And there were two mud spots on the bumper of this station wagon.

BARKER: Would you take me over there and show me this place you're talking about?

HOLLAND: Yes, I will.

BARKER: All right, let's go. Well now, Mr. Holland, where would the person have to be standing to have fired that shot that you heard that came from up here?

HOLLAND: From the footprints and all indications, he was standing right here.

BARKER: Were they fresh footprints?

HOLLAND: They were fresh. It had been raining that morning. There was footprints--mud on these two-by-fours--there was mud on the bumper of the station wagon, and they was only two sets of footprints that I could find that left this station wagon and they went behind a white Chevrolet car that was settin' over there.

BARKER: Abraham Zapruder, whose film of the assassination was studied at length on last night's program, was standing up on this little wall right at the edge of the grassy knoll. Now, shots from behind that picket fence over there would have almost had to whistle by his ear.

Mr. Zapruder, when we interviewed him here, tended to agree that the knoll was not involved.

ABRAHAM ZAPRUDER: I'm not a ballistics expert, but I believe that if there were shots that come from my right ear, I would hear a different sound. I heard shots coming from--I wouldn't know which direction to say--but they was driven from the Texas Book Depository and they all sounded alike. There was no difference in sound at all.

BARKER: Associated Press Photographer James Altgens was actually looking toward the Book Depository.

JAMES ALTGENS: As I was getting ready to make some pictures, why, I heard this noise. I thought it was a firecracker explosion. So, I just went ahead and made the picture, which shows the President right after he was struck by a bullet, struck in the neck, the first shot. And this was a picture that the Warren Report later fixed as being made two seconds after the shot was fired. And as they got in close to me, and I was prepared to make the picture, I had my camera almost at eye level; that's when the President was shot in the head. And I do know that the President was still in an upright position, tilted, favoring Mrs. Kennedy. And at the time that he was struck by this blow to the head, it was so obvious that it came from behind. It had to come from behind because it caused him to bolt forward, dislodging him from this depression in the seat cushion, and already favoring Mrs. Kennedy, he automatically fell in that direction.

The one thing that did seem to be a little bit strange, immediately after the car proceeded on to Parkland Hospital, men with drawn guns ran up the terrace of this plaza, up into what is considered to be and referred to as the knoll area. And, thinking that they had the assassin cornered up in this knoll area--and it seemed rather strange, as I say, because knowing that the shot came from behind, this fellow had to really move in order to get over into the knoll area.

BARKER: You had no thoughts about another assassin behind the fence or on the knoll?

ALTGENS: I've had a lot of people to contact me in that they felt there was another person involved, and trying to get me to verify either photographs they had or to work out some information they felt they had come across to substantiate the evidence of--substantiate the fact that there was another assassin. But at no time has any of this evidence proved to me beyond a shadow of a doubt that there was another assassin.

OFFICER JACKS: The car in which I was driving, which occupied the Vice President, was--had just completed its turn, and I felt a blast which appeared to be a rifle shot come from behind me. I turned and looked up to the School Book Depository.

BARKER: Well now, what about these people who say shots came from this fence area up here? Would you agree with that at all, or not?

JACKS: No, sir. I--I--I don't think there was. I heard three shots and I could feel the concussion from all three.

CRONKITE: Eddie Barker went to Austin to ask the same question of Governor and Mrs. Connally, who were in the best possible position to know the direction from which the shots came.

GOVERNOR CONNALLY: All of the shots came from the same place, from back over my right shoulder. They weren't in front of us, or they weren't at the side of us. There were no sounds like that emanating from those directions.

BARKER: Was there any doubt in your mind, the direction that those shots came from?

MRS. CONNALLY: No. They all came from the same direction.

BARKER: Which was?

MRS. CONNALLY: It was behind us, over my right shoulder. You see, the first one--the first sound, the first shot, I heard and turned and looked right into the President's face. So, the sound drew me to that direction and had a definite reaction.

(ANNOUNCEMENT)

ANNOUNCER: A CBS NEWS INQUIRY: "The Warren Report" continues. Here again is Walter Cronkite.

CRONKITE: In Abraham Zapruder's film of the assassination, the fatal shot appears to move the President's head back. The critics contend this can only mean the shot came not from the Book Depository, but from somewhere in front. Not for the first time, nor for the last in these reports, we find equally qualified experts in disagreement.

We put the question of the President's head movement to an experienced photo analyst and two expert pathologists.

RATHER: From a physicist's point of view, from a photographic analysis point of view, what can you tell about the direction of the bullet?

CHARLES WYCKOFF: Well, the--in frame 313, the--there was an apparent explosion at this point, which would be on the front side of--of- the head. Now, characteristically, this would indicate to me that the bullet came from behind, and this is what's called spalling. It's a minor explosion where pieces of material have--have left and go generally in the direction of the bullet.

RATHER: But now, the explosion, this minor explosion, occurs forward of the President. Now, wouldn't that indicate the bullet coming from the front?

WYCKOFF: No, quite contrary. It does indicate that the bullet was coming from behind.

RATHER: Well, you're aware that some critics say that by the very fact that in the picture you can clearly see the explosion of the bullet on the front side of the President, that that certainly indicates the bullet came from the front.

WYCKOFF: Well, I don't believe any physicist has ever said that. This picture might explain the principle that we've been talking about just a little bit more clearly. It's a picture taken in a millionth of a second, of a 30 calibre bullet being shot through an electric lightbulb. The bullet was traveling from this direction, entered the lightbulb here, passed through and caused a rather violent explosion to occur on the exiting side, and it's very similar to the situation in the Zapruder-Kennedy assassination films.

CRONKITE: That is one explanation from a physicist as to how a head could move backward after being struck from behind, which seems to many laymen not possible. Forensic pathologists are experts in the examination of victims of violent death, both medically and legally qualified. Dan Rather put the matter to one of them, Dr. Cyril W. Wecht, professor at Duquesne University.

CYRIL W. WECHT: I have seen too many biological and physical variations occur in forensic pathology to say that it would have been impossible. I say that it is quite unlikely. I say that it is difficult for me to accept, but I would have to admit that it is a possibility that his body could have moved in that direction after having been struck by a bullet that hit him in the back of the head.

CRONKITE: Eyewitnesses, and even film analysts often produce as many problems as they solve. In this case, the physical evidence would seem to be more reliable, and that evidence came first to the attention of the doctors at Parkland Hospital, who were the first to look closely at both the massive head wound and the less critical neck wound.

At Parkland, Dr. Malcolm Perry, attending surgeon, tried desperately to keep the President alive. But the very urgency of that problem prevented him from examining the two wounds, as he now explains in his first public statement since the Report was published.

DR. MALCOLM PERRY: I noted a wound when I came into the room, which was of the right posterior portion of the head. Of course, I did not examine it. Again, there was no time for cursory examination. And if a patent airway cannot be secured, and the bleeding cannot be controlled - it really made very little difference. Some things must take precedence and priority, and in this instance the airway and the bleeding must be controlled initially.



BARKER: What about this wound that you observed in the -- in the front of the President's neck? Would you tell me about that?

PERRY: Yes, of course. It was a very cursory examination. The emergency proceedings at hand necessitated immediate action. There was not time to do more than an extremely light examination.

BARKER: There's been a lot said and written about was this an exit wound, or an entry wound? Would you discuss that with me, sir?

PERRY: Well, this is a difficult problem. The determination of entrance or exit frequently requires the ascertainment of trajectory. And, of course, this I did not do. None of us did at the time. There was no time for such things.

The differentiation between an entrance and exit wound is often made on a disparity in sizes, the exit wound generally being larger, in the case of an expanding bullet. If, however, the bullet does not expand -- if it is a full-jacketed bullet, for example, such as used commonly in the military, the caliber of the bullet on entrance and exit will frequently be the same. And without deformation of the bullet, and without tumbling, the wounds would be very similar - and in many instances, even a trained observer could not distinguish between the two.

BARKER: Did it occur to you at the time, or did you think, was this an entry wound, or was this an exit wound?

PERRY: Actually, I didn't really give it much thought. And I realize that perhaps it would have been better had I done so. But I actually applied my energies, and those of us there all did, to the problem at hand, and I didn't really concern myself too much with how it happened, or why. And for that reason, of course, I didn't think about cutting through the wound - which, of course, rendered it inviolate as regards further examination and inspection. But it didn't even occur to me. I did what was expedient and what was necessary, and I didn't think much about it.

BARKER: You did not turn the President over?

PERRY: No, there was no reason to. There was not time at that problem, and there was really no reason to. It made very little difference to me, since my immediate concern was with an attempted resuscitation.

CRONKITE: The nature of the throat wound can no longer be verified, for no records were made and no pictures taken before Dr. Perry cut through it in an attempt to relieve his patient's breathing. The doctors at Parkland were engaged in a desperate struggle to keep the President alive; all else was secondary. But their task was impossible. One of the shots had virtually destroyed the President's head. Even as the doctors worked, the President died.

At the hospital the scene was turbulent and disordered. The press and public were clamoring for news. Dr. Perry was rushed from the emergency room to a news conference, where he was badgered into giving a description of the wounds.

The neck wound, he told the press, looked like an entry wound, and he pointed to the front of his neck. In the transcript of that news conference there's no doubt that Dr. Perry made it sound as if he had a firm opinion. Well, the reporters flashed the news, and in that moment of confusion and misunderstanding established once and for all in the minds of a great many people a conviction that at least one bullet had been fired from the front to the motorcade.

Legally, the dead President was now just another part of the evidence in a Texas homicide case. The murder had been committed in that state, and there were no laws which gave the federal government jurisdiction.

In his book, "The Death of a President," William Manchester describes a scene of almost horrifying confusion, in which the Dallas County Medical Examiner tried to prevent the removal of the President, and Kennedy aides almost literally bulldozed his coffin out of Parkland Hospital.

During the flight to Washington it was agreed that an autopsy had to be performed, and Manchester writes Mrs. Kennedy chose Bethesda Naval Hospital because her husband had been a naval officer.

The autopsy was performed by the Chief of Pathology, Commander -- now Captain James J. Humes; Dr. J. Thornton Boswell; an Army Lt. Colonel, Pierre Finck, a forensic pathologist. They reported in a document reproduced in the supplementary volumes of the Warren Report that the President's wounds were inflicted from the rear. As part of standard procedure, they had photographs and X-rays taken as they proceeded.

Confusion continued at Bethesda, as it had reigned at Parkland. F.B.I. agents submitted a report, later disclosed in Edward J. Epstein's book, "Inquest," which said they had heard one pathologist state that he had found a wound in the President's back, and could not find an exit.

The Warren Report version was explicit, that there was no wound in the back, but one in the neck. However, details of these published sketches tended to indicate that there was a wound below what could be described as the neck.

The photographs and X-rays which might clear up the issue were in possession of the Kennedy family, and only officially turned over to the Archives on October 31st, 1966 - with the provision that they not be made public for five years. Now, there the matter has rested until now. But Captain Humes, the Senior Pathologist at the autopsy, has since gone to the Archives and re-examined the X-rays and photographs. His conclusions we will hear later in an exclusive interview, the only one he's granted since that fateful night.

But first, the observations of Dr. Wecht, whom we heard earlier.

WECHT: This sketch that was made by Dr. Boswell, Mr. Rather, is a very important sketch. It shows the bullet hole which he diagrammed in at a point approximately several inches below the collar level, although he does give other measurements to the side - which would place it at a higher level.

RATHER: Now, the Commission Report accepted that the bullet entered very near the neck, did it not?

WECHT: Yes. Take a look at this sketch, if you would, please. This was made by a medical illustrator at Bethesda Naval Hospital. This sketch shows the one that was accepted by the Warren Commission. It shows the point of entrance in the back at a much higher level, and it shows the point of exit again at approximately the level of the knot of the tie. You can then see why it was very important to accurately determine whether or not the bullet wound in the back was at this point, or whether it was five and a half inches below the collar level.

CRONKITE: Since the X-rays and films were turned over to the Archives, Captain Humes has re-examined them. And tonight, for the first time, he discusses with Dan Rather what is contained in them.

RATHER: Commander -- now Captain Humes, have you had a look at the pictures and X-rays from the autopsy since the time that you submitted them to the Warren Commission?

HUMES: Yes, Mr. Rather, we have.

RATHER: And do you have any different conclusion, any different ideas, any different thoughts now, after seeing them again, than you had at that time?

HUMES: No, we think they bear up very well, and very closely, our testimony before the Warren Commission.

RATHER: How many wounds in the President's body?

HUMES: There were two wounds of entrance, and two of exit.

RATHER: And the two wounds of entry were where?

HUMES: Posteriorly, one low in the right posterior scalp, and one in the base of the neck, on the right.

RATHER: Let's talk about those two wounds, Captain. Both of these are blowups from the Warren Commission Report, these sets of drawings. Now, there are people who think they see discrepancies in these two drawings from the Warren Commission Report, in that this drawing shows the - what you called an entry wound at the base of the neck of the President - shows

it to be, or seems to show it to be, in the upper back, near the shoulder blade - considerably below the base of the neck. Whereas, this drawing does show the entry wound to be at the base of the neck. Now could you talk about these, and reconcile that?

HUMES: Yes, sir. This first drawing is a sketch that -- in which the outlines of the figure are already prepared. These are on sheets of paper present in the room in which the examination is conducted, and are routinely used to mark in general where certain marks or scars or wounds may be in conducting a post mortem examination. They are never meant to be accurate or precisely to scale.

RATHER: This is a routine in -- in preparing autopsy reports, to use this kind of drawing, and at this stage for them not to be prepared precisely?

HUMES: No. No precise measurements are made. They are used as an aide memoire, if you will, to the pathologist as he later writes his report.

More importantly, we feel, that the measurements which are noted here at the margins of the drawing are the precise measurements which we took. One states that -- we draw two lines, points of reference -- from bony points of reference. We note that there were -- the wound was fourteen centimeters from the tip of the right acromion, and fourteen centimeters below the tip of the right mastoid. Now the acromion is the extreme outermost portion of the shoulder. The tip of the mastoid is the bony prominence just behind the ear. And where these two lines intersect was, in actuality, where this wound was situated. And if we would try and draw that to scale, which we weren't trying to do as this mark was made, this, I think, would appear a little bit higher.

RATHER: Now, you examined this whole area of the back?

HUMES: Yes, sir.

RATHER: Were there any other wounds except one at the base of the neck, and one up in the skull?

HUMES: No, sir, there were not. Now the second drawing, which you mentioned, was prepared as we were preparing to testify before the Warren Commission, to rather schematically and as accurately as we possibly could depict the story for the members of the Warren Commission.

RATHER: In this drawing you were trying to be precise?

HUMES: Yes, sir, we were. We were trying to be precise, and refer back to our measurements that we had made and noted in the margins of the other drawing.

Also, of course, since this time we have had opportunity to review the photographs which we made at that time. And these photographs show very clearly that the wound was exactly where we stated it to be in our testimony before the Warren Commission, and as it is shown in this drawing.

RATHER: Your re-examination of the photographs verify that the wounds were as shown here?

HUMES: Yes, sir, they do.

RATHER: About the -- the head wound ...

HUMES: Yes, sir.

RATHER: ... there was only one?

HUMES: There was only one entrance wound in the head, yes, sir.

RATHER: And that was where?

HUMES: That was posterior, about two and a half centimeters to the right of the midline, posteriorly.

RATHER: And the exit wound?

HUMES: And the exit wound was a large irregular wound to the front and side -- right side of the President's head.

RATHER: Now, can you be absolutely certain that the wound you described as the entry wound was, in fact, that?

HUMES: Yes, indeed, we can - very precisely and incontrovertibly. The missile traversed the skin, and then traversed the bony skull. And as it passed through the skull it produced a characteristic coning, or beveling effect on the inner aspect of the skull - which is scientific evidence that the wound was made from behind and passed forward through the President's skull.

RATHER: This is very important. You say the scientific evidence -- is it conclusive scientific evidence?

HUMES: Yes, sir, it is.

RATHER: How many autopsies have you performed?

HUMES: I -- I would estimate approximately one thousand.

RATHER: Is there any doubt that the wound at the back of the President's head was the entry wound?

HUMES: There is absolutely no doubt, sir.

CRONKITE: So the Chief Pathologist at the Kennedy autopsy, after re-examining the X-rays and photographs, states without the slightest qualification that the shots which killed the President came from the rear.

(ANNOUNCEMENT)

ANNOUNCER: A CBS NEWS INQUIRY: "The Warren Report" continues. Here again is Walter Cronkite.

CRONKITE: In answer to our major question as to whether shots came from a direction other than the Book Depository Building, indicating other gunmen and a conspiracy, we have eye -- or ear witnesses inside the building saying the shots came from there. Now, Mr. Holland who was on the railroad overpass, here, insists that he heard a shot from here. And in Mark Lane's book, "Rush to Judgment," he writes that 58 out of 90 people who were asked about the shots thought they came from the grassy knoll.

Now, expert opinions differ. All the experts agree that the shots could have come from the rear. But where some experts, such as Dr. Humes, say bluntly that they did, others - such as Dr. Wecht - find it highly unlikely.

CBS NEWS concludes that the most reasonable answer is that the shots came from the Book Depository Building, behind the President and Governor Connally. But if the shots came from the rear, and if there were only three of them, can all the wounds be accounted for? The President was struck at least twice. Governor Connally was wounded in the chest, the wrist, and the thigh. One bullet was recovered intact, as well as two large fragments. The Warren Commission concluded that of the three bullets fired, one missed entirely, one struck the President's skull and fragmented, and the third - this one - passed through the President's neck and went on to inflict all the Governor's wounds. This is the single bullet theory. And so we must ask: Could a single bullet have wounded both President Kennedy and Governor Connally?

Now, this is what the Report says: "Although it is not necessary to any essential findings of the Commission to determine just which shot hit Governor Connally, there is very persuasive evidence from the experts to indicate that the same bullet which pierced the President's throat, also caused Governor Connally's wounds. However, Governor Connally's testimony and certain other factors have given rise to some difference of opinion as to this probability but there is no question in the minds of any member of the Commission that all the shots which caused the President's and Governor Connally's wounds were fired from the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository."

Well, through the tortured English of that paragraph, a sentence that begins with "however," and has "but" in the middle, we can make out the Commission's struggling to paper over internal dissension. It's unfruitful to try to puzzle out the meaning of the statement.

Instead, we asked Arlen Specter, Assistant Counsel to the Commission, and now District Attorney of Philadelphia, and the author of the single bullet theory.

SPECTER: The possibility of one bullet having inflicted the wounds on both the President's neck and the Governor's body came in a very gradual way. For example, the first insight was given when Dr. Humes testified, based on his autopsy findings. And at that time it was made clear for the first time that the bullet that went through the President's neck hit no bone, hit no solid muscle. And, according to Dr. Humes, came out with great velocity.

Now, it was at that juncture that we wondered for the first time what happened to the bullet. Where did the bullet go? The probability is that it went into Governor Connally, because it struck nothing else in the car. That is the single most convincing piece of evidence, that the one bullet hit both men, because looking down the trajectory, as I did through Oswald's own rifle, and others did too, the trajectory was such that it was almost certain that the bullet which came out of the President's neck with great velocity would have had to have hit either the car or someone in the car.

RATHER: It stated in the Warren Commission Report that belief in the single bullet theory is, quote, "not essential" - end of quotation - to support in the conclusion of the Warren Commission Report.

Now, can you describe for us any other theory, besides the single bullet theory, that would support the conclusions in the Report?

SPECTER: The Commission concluded that it was probable that one bullet inflicted the wound on the President's neck, and all of the wounds on Governor Connally. But you could have three separate bullets striking under the sequence as we know them. For example, the President could have been struck at frame 186 of the Zapruder film, which is a number given to the Zapruder film. Then Governor Connally could have been struck some 42 frames later, which would be a little over two and a quarter seconds at about frame 228 or 229; and then the third shot could have hit President Kennedy's head at frame 313, which was pretty clearly established. So that it is not indispensable to have the single bullet conclusion in order to come to the basic finding that Oswald was the sole assassin.

CRONKITE: The Commission's dilemma lay in the fact that it had to choose between two unpalatable alternatives in order to make its case stand up. Having decided that three shots were fired, and having three sets of wounds to explain, the Commission could only find either that all three shots hit their marks, or that one of the three bullets hit two men.

But, if all three shots hit, then one of them would have had to pass through the President's neck, emerge at 1800 feet per second, headed on a downward path toward the midst of the Presidential car and the six people in it, and vanish in mid air, hitting nothing and leaving no mark. Well, this was more than the Commission could stomach. Despite its own words, the single bullet theory is essential to its findings.

The bullet was found after it rolled off a stretcher at Parkland Hospital during the tumult that followed the arrival of the two wounded men. The man who found it was Darrell C. Tomlinson, senior engineer at Parkland.

DARRELL C. TOMLINSON: There was a doctor that went into the Doctors' Lounge and he had to pull this stretcher out, the one I'd taken off the elevator, and whenever he came out he failed to push it back up against the wall, so I just stepped over and gave it a little kick to get it back in line, and then I turned to walk away and I heard a rattle, and I turned around and looked. I didn't see anything at that time, but I walked back over to the stretcher and there was this bullet was layin' there. So, I picked it up, looked at it, put it in my pocket.

BARKER: Do you recall, was there any blood on the bullet, or was it--how did the bullet look?

TOMLINSON: Well, it was copper colored bullet and I couldn't tell whether it had blood on it or not. I--I really didn't look for it.

BARKER: It was a spent shell?

TOMLINSON: Yes.

BARKER: Well, now, as you think back, is there any doubt in your mind today that the stretcher on which you found that bullet was the stretcher that came off of the elevator?

TOMLINSON: Well, I know that. That I know. I just don't know who was on that stretcher.

BARKER: But, the stretcher was on the elevator?

TOMLINSON: Right.

BARKER: And this was the elevator that Governor Connally would have taken, or would have been placed on to go to the operating room, is that right?

TOMLINSON: Yes, sir, that's--that's the one he went up on.



CRONKITE: Critics have claimed that in fact the bullet came from the President's stretcher, which would rule out the single bullet theory. But the President's stretcher was never in that elevator and consequently Mr. Tomlinson's recollection disposes of that particular dispute. It does not dispose of another claim, however, the claim that the bullet was planted on the Governor's stretcher as part of a plot to link Oswald to the assassination. And that claim can never be disproved.

The bullet is almost intact, only slightly flattened, with a little cone of lead missing from the rear end. Could such a bullet have penetrated successively, a human neck, a human torso, a wrist and a thigh, and emerged in this condition? The Commission used animal carcasses and blocks of gelatin to test the bullet's penetrating power, firing repeated shots from Oswald's rifle. Now, this is standard technique. But, because of the difficulty of lining up such a shot, the Commission experts fired their bullets separately through the various simulators. Each time they measured how much speed the bullet had lost from its initial 2,000 feet per second, and in the end, concluded that the bullet would have retained enough velocity to penetrate the Governor's thigh.

But, it seemed to us that the only completely valid test would be a single shot directly through a series of objects with the same thickness and density as the two bodies. We decided to make that shot.

RATHER: Dr. Alfred G. Olivier, Chief of Wound Ballistics at Edgewood Arsenal, who conducted the tests for the Warren Commission, served as consultant to CBS News in these experiments at the H. P. White Ballistics Laboratory, Dr. Olivier suggested using gelatin blocks to simulate human tissue. The main object was to line up targets simulating the President's neck and the Governor's chest, wrist and thigh, spaced as far apart as Mr. Zapruder's film indicated they were in the limousine, and then to see how far a 6.5 Mannlicher-Carcano bullet would penetrate.

Extensive research at Edgewood Arsenal has shown that gelatin, in a 20 percent concentration, gives a good simulation of human tissue. The first gelatin block was made five and a half inches thick to simulate the President's neck, with cloth added to represent his coat and shirt. Set two feet or so away was a 12 inch block representing the Governor's chest, also with appropriate clothing. This high speed sequence, taken at 22,000 frames a second, shows the chest simulation block and how the bullet, slightly unstable after passing through neck simulation, begins to turn off course as it tears through the gelatin, exiting in an attitude pointing down.

The wrist block was two and a half inches thick, inset with masonite to represent bone. Beyond was a fourth gelatin target representing the Governor's thigh. Dr. Olivier told reporter Walter Lister about the tests.

OLIVIER: When the bullet struck the simulated neck, it was perfectly stable, passed through making a small track in the gelatin. This--this very closely simulates the wound received by the President. It was a small entrance and a small exit, as described on the autopsy report.

WALTER LISTER: This is about the way it would look through human muscle tissue?

OLIVIER: Yes. After the bullet left this simulated neck, and passed from this dense medium into air, which is less dense, then it had a chance to start to tip and by the time it struck this block it was tipped, and you can see the difference: a much larger track in the gelatin block, which represents a more serious wound, as the Governor received. In his case, the bullet passed along the rib, fractured the rib, throwing fragments into the lung. Of course, we have no rib here, but it still simulates passing through the flesh.

By the time it had passed through here, it had lost considerable velocity, and entered the simulated wrist. In some cases, it passed through the wrist; in other cases, it lodged in the wrist. Behind this wrist, we had another gelatin block, representing the Governor's thigh. In none of the cases did this thing actually penetrate that, but it would have taken very little more velocity to have caused a similar wound.

LISTER: What do you think that these tests have indicated here?

OLIVIER: Well, that they--I think they very strongly show that this one bullet could have caused all the wounds.

LISTER: Did someone outline these experiments..for you?

OLIVIER: No, I'm afraid I'm guilty of the whole business.

CRONKITE: Our tests confirm that a single bullet could indeed have wounded both men. But conceding that it is possible, we must also ask if it is probable. We asked two distinguished pathologists, both experienced in the study of wounds, to give us their best judgment. They are Dr. William F. Enos of Northern Virginia Doctors Hospital, who has studied wounds both as a military and civilian pathologist; and Dr. Cyril Wecht, from whom we heard earlier. First, Dr. Enos with Dan Rather:

ENOS: I have had cases in which the missiles have gone through relatively heavy bone and very little deformity. The fact that it went through two men is perfectly acceptable because of its velocity.

RATHER: Now, most of us have an idea that the minute a bullet hits a bone that it shatters that bullet.

ENOS: No, not necessarily. Again, it depends on the construction of the missile, of the bullet. If it's a full-jacketed bullet it can remain intact with very little or no deformity.

RATHER: Is it impossible that the bullet would have gone through President Kennedy, gone through Governor Connolly and not suffered any more damage than is shown in this photograph?

ENOS: No, without hedging. In medicine we always fall back upon the trite expression; we never like to say that something is impossible. I--I would say that it is highly improbable. I--I--I would hesitate, really, to say that it's absolutely 100 percent impossible, but it is highly improbable. Another one, you see, another one of the very many highly improbables that we are asked to accept by the Warren Commission, if we are to accept the validity of their full Report.

(ANNOUNCEMENT)

ANNOUNCER: This is a CBS NEWS INQUIRY: "The Warren Report." Here again is Walter Cronkite.

CRONKITE: The most persuasive critic of the single bullet theory is the man who might be expected to know best, the victim himself, Texas Governor John Connally. Although he accepts the Warren Report's conclusion, that Oswald did all the shooting, he has never believed that the first bullet could have hit both the President and himself.

CONNALLY: The only way that I could ever reconcile my memory of what happened and what occurred, with respect to the one bullet theory, is that it had to be the second bullet that might have hit us both.

BARKER: Do you believe, Governor Connally, that the first bullet could have missed, the second one hit both of you, and the third one hit President Kennedy?

CONNALLY: That's possible. That's possible. Now, the best witness I know doesn't believe that.

BARKER: Who is the best witness you know?

CONNALLY: Nellie was there, and she saw it. She believes the first bullet hit him, because she saw him after he was hit. She thinks the second bullet hit me, and the third bullet hit him.

MRS. CONNALLY: The first sound, the first shot, I heard, and turned and looked right into the President's face. He was clutching his throat, and just slumped down. He just had a -- a look of nothingness on his face. He -- he didn't say anything. But that was the first shot.

The second shot, that hit John -- well, of course, I could see him covered with -- with blood, and his -- his reaction to a second shot. The third shot, even though I didn't see the President, I felt the matter all over me, and I could see it all over the car.

So I'll just have to say that I think there were three shots, and that I had a reaction to three shots. And -- that's just what I believe.

CONNALLY: Beyond any question, and I'll never change my opinion, the first bullet did not hit me. The second bullet did hit me. The third bullet did not hit me.

Now, so far as I'm concerned, all I can say with any finality is that if there is -- if the single bullet theory is correct, then it had to be the second bullet that hit President Kennedy and me.

CRONKITE: The Governor insists that he heard a shot before he was struck, and that therefore he could not have been struck by the first bullet, as the Warren Commission supposes.

Those of you who were with us last night remember that we cited indications in the Zapruder film that it was Oswald's first shot, fired earlier than the Commission believed, which missed. Now if that is so, then the Governor could indeed have heard a shot and begun reacting to it before he himself was hit. We have, in fact, three theories to explain the same facts - the single bullet theory, the second assassin theory, the theory that all three bullets that were fired found their targets.

Our own view, on the evidence, is that it is difficult to believe the single bullet theory. But, to believe the other theories is even more difficult. If the Governor's wounds were caused by a separate bullet, then we must believe that a bullet passed through the President's neck, emerged at high velocity on a course that was taking it directly into the middle of the automobile, and then vanished without a trace.

Or, we can complicate matters even further, as some do, by adding a second assassin, who fires almost simultaneously with Oswald, and whose bullet travels miraculously a trajectory identical with Oswald's, and that second assassin, too, vanishes without a trace. Difficult to believe as the single bullet theory may be, it seems to be the least difficult of all those that are available. In the end, like the Commission, we are persuaded that a single bullet wounded both President Kennedy and Governor Connally.

The Warren Report's contention that there was only one assassin rests on the conviction that all the wounds suffered by both men were inflicted by no more than three shots, fired from behind and above them. We have heard Captain Humes, as well as other doctors and experts. We have looked hard at the single bullet theory. The case is a strong one.

There is not a single item of hard evidence for a second assassin. No wound that can be attributed to him. No one who saw him, although he would have been firing in full view of a crowded plaza. No bullets. No cartridge cases. Nothing tangible.

If the demands for certainty that are made upon the Commission were applied to its critics, the theory of a second assassin would vanish before it was spoken.

As for the Governor, he now concedes he might have been struck by the bullet that pierced the President's throat. And our own investigation makes it likely that the bullet was the second, and not the first, that Oswald fired. The Governor's objections, which were the most troubling of all, now disappear. CBS NEWS concludes, therefore, that Oswald was the sole assassin.

But was he truly alone? Or were there others in dark shadows behind him, co-authors of a plot in which Oswald was cast as a triggerman? Tomorrow we will look into those charges, and concern ourselves with Officer Tippit, with Jack Ruby, and the murky accounts and strange personages introduced into the case by District Attorney Jim Garrison in New Orleans.

GARRISON: He did not touch a gun on that day. He was a decoy at first, and then he was a patsy, and then he was a victim.

CRONKITE: We will hear Garrison, and some of those whom he has involved. And we will try to answer the third of our major questions: Was Lee Harvey Oswald part of a conspiracy?

This is Walter Cronkite. Good night.

ANNOUNCER: This has been the second of a series, a CBS NEWS INQUIRY: "The Warren Report." The third part will appear tomorrow night at this same time.

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