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UNANSWERED QUESTIONS ARISE ABOUT KENNEDY'S ASSASSINATION

Too Many Loose Ends About Warren Commission Compel New Investigation

BY HARRISON EDWARD LIVINGSTONE

What will the Select Committee on Assassinations do?

"I am convinced," said Committee Chairman Thomas Down- ing of Virginia, "that a conspiracy was involved in the death of President Kennedy."

"In my opinion," said Republican Whip Thorne of Nebraska, "a sinister conspiracy looms larger and larger."

Other House members expect

sed similar sentiments. Said Mr. Dickerson, Congressman from Alabama: "I too have some very real doubts as to some of the circumstances involved, particularly those surrounding the Kennedy assassination, and perhaps we can get at some of the cir- cumsstances that have been raised such as the unnatural deaths of certain of the people connected with the assassination, incidents that seem to be continuing right up to now."

The Committee's chief of staff

prosecutor Richard Sprague, was associated with Arlen Specter in Philadelphia's District Attorney's office. Many people would have immediate suspicions of Sprague because of the Specter connection. Mr. Specter was a lawyer on the staff of the Warren Commission, and authored the "single bullet theory."

The Warren Commission claimed that one bullet passed through Kennedy's back at the Michigan Hotel, exited his throat, entered John Connolly's back, exited his right nipple, passed through his wrist, and entered his leg. A bullet found on a stretcher was believed to be this bullet, although it was found in nearly perfect condition. To complete the Warren Commission's course through the bodies of Kennedy and Connolly, the bullet would have had to make a number of right and left turns. But more sinister is the compelling evidence revealing that in fact a bullet struck Kennedy six inches down his back and did not pass

through the body. Secret Service and FBI personnel present in the autopsy room stated that the wound was six inches lower, and photographs of Kennedy's clothes bear this out.

AUTOPSY QUESTIONS

Noteworthy are facts surrounding the autopsy; that it was overseen by Generals and Admirals in a military hospital and that the autopsy notes were de-

stroyed. The original descriptions of the wounds were changed, and there is a general feeling that the body was altered, evidence destroyed. The brain is missing. A shadow on the x-ray of Kennedy's head suggests that he may have been shot twice there.

Kennedy reportedly, upon being struck, uttered "Oh my God, I've been hit." Had he received the throat wound from the same bullet that struck him from behind and passed through his voice box, this would have been impossible. Furthermore, the Texas doctors uniformly believed that the throat wound was an entry wound, substantiating the testimony of those who said that Kennedy was shot from the front. Meanwhile, the body was forcefully stolen from the hospital, in violation of Texas law requiring the autopsy to be performed there, and spirited off to a military hospital in Washington.

WHICH RIFLE

Also disputed are the Warren Commission's findings on the weapon that purportedly propelled the single bullet.

Discovered on the sixth floor of the book depository building in Dallas, according to Dallas District Attorney Wade, Deputy Constable Seymour Weitzman and Deputy Sheriff Boone was a 7.65 German Mauser. In a filmed interview, Roger Craig, a Deputy Sheriff also present when the rifle was found, said, "We weren't any more than six or eight inches from the rifle, and stamped right on the barrel of the rifle was 7.65 Mauser." Officer Craig was murdered last year.

This description is incompatible with the Warren findings. According to the FBI, the weapon Lee Harvey Oswald purchased was a Mannlicher/Carcano 6.5 Italian carbine. This is the rifle the Warren Commission identified as the murder weapon. Available for examination in the National Archives, the weapon clearly has the words "Made Italy" and "6.5 Cal." stamped upon it.

Said acting committee chairman Thomas Downing: "It should be clear that the initial identification of the rifle as a 7.65 Mauser clearly was not, as the Commission maintained, because Deputy

Constable Weitzman thought it looked like a Mauser. Since the Commission's case against Oswald as the lone assassin is built almost exclusively on his ownership of the 6.5 Mannlicher/Carcano, the identification of the murder weapon as a 7.65 Mauser tends to discredit the entire case."

COVER-UP IN THE PRESS?

There was, as Downing presented his case before Congress September 17, very little debate and dissent that the Select Committee should be established to inquire whether there was, in his words, a "conspiracy" to kill Kennedy. The vote of 280-65 bears

this out. Yet amidst these highly sensational charges, and the powerful evidence that accompanied its presentation, the press was hushed. The New York Times dismissed the charges by carrying only a couple of sentences about the proceedings of the 17th sandwiched between a lengthy abortion article.

Said Committee member Gonzalez of Texas, who has persevered in his effort to have the Committee established since the assassination: "I was ridiculed in some quarters and no one else was interested in joining the effort. The U.S. press was, generally speaking, disinterested. This began to change, as the result of revelations, especially about the John F. Kennedy assassination, which began to appear in print. The showing of the Zapruder film on national television also stimulated great interest."

FBI AND CIA COMPLICITY?

To be straight about the gravity of this matter, there is strong feeling that the FBI and CIA may be deeply implicated in the many murders and kidnappings which the country has suffered, including the death of the President and Martin Luther King.

Said Representative Patty Mink from Hawaii: "Mr. Speaker, many of us have been shocked in recent times to learn of the extent to which American intelligence and law enforcement agencies have engaged in illegal, improper, and unethical activities. The recent disclosure of J. Edgar Hoover's

infamous COINTELPRO memos outlines a nationwide program to expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralize the activities of organizations and leaders who did not share Mr. Hoover's political philosophy. And yet, the investigations of the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy, Senator Robert F. Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., were dependent upon information gathered under the direction of the very same J. Edgar Hoover.

Heightening the tone Representative McKinney of Connecticut (Republican) said, "I think the questions that have not been put to rest about the government have severely damaged the credibility of our nation's government

and of our system."

Pursuing this, Mr. Downing said: "The revelations of the last year or two have been both shocking and sobering. Committees of both the House and Senate have proven that much vital information was withheld from the Warren Commission. The CIA and its former director, Allen Dulles, pointedly withheld all information relating to the multiple plots, which the U.S. Government launched in an effort to assassinate Fidel Castro. To underline the importance of this conscious effort to deceive we have the recent violent and unexplained murders of San Giancana and John Roselli.

"A subcommittee of the House was shown how a threatening note sent by Lee Harvey Oswald to an FBI agent, shortly before President Kennedy's murder, was torn up and flushed down a toilet rather than delivered to the Warren Commission. We know that the original autopsy notes of the chief surgeon in President Kennedy's autopsy were burned in the doctor's recreation room fire place. We know that Jack Ruby had many ties to both the Mafia and to Cuba. The list of such items is almost endless. In light of all of this, there is little wonder that very few people any longer have faith in the Warren Commission's conclusions that Os-

wald and Oswald acting alone, was responsible for the death of Kennedy, or that Ruby, likewise, was a lone nut killer. Most of our leading newspapers and journals now have called for a reopening of the case."

Mr. Downing went on in the September 17th meeting to explain: "Lee Harvey Oswald was questioned by Dallas police and by seven FBI officials for approximately 12 hours. There are no stenographic records of his interrogation. No tape recorded record of the questioning was made. Captain Will Fritz, of homicide, 'kept no notes'... No transcripts were made of Oswald's arraignment for either of the two homicides with which he was charged... Throughout his detention, Oswald was without legal representation... Representatives from the Dallas Civil Liberties Union appeared and sought permission to meet with Oswald but were unable to meet with him.

OSWALD CONNECTIONS

Mr. Downing, among others, suggested that the 'single bullet theory' could be clarified by an analysis of the preliminary autopsy materials. The Warren Commission subscribed to this theory and thus Oswald was the lone assassin.

"According to Commission Document 1052 Jack Ruby worked for the FBI as an informant on organized crime in Dallas," Representative Downing asserted. "The two Commission lawyers in charge of investigating Ruby's background were not provided any information of his underworld or law enforcement affiliations. Thus the Warren Commission did not know and did not reveal the relation between Jack Ruby and the FBI."

There are, additionally, possible links between Oswald and the FBI. "The two highest law enforcement officials in Texas both had proof that Lee Harvey Oswald was an employee of the FBI," Mr. Downing added. Stating further, the "Commission decided not to call the relevant witnesses and not to subpoena the records of the FBI. Instead, the Warren Commission relied exclusively upon the testimony of Mr. Hoover regarding Oswald's association with the FBI."

"This question must be resolved if we are to know how and why John Kennedy was assassinated."

"When Oswald visited Mexico City in September, 1963, someone made several visits and phone calls to the Soviet and Cuban Embassies using the Oswald identity. There is some doubt that the person visiting and phoning the embassies was in fact Lee Harvey Oswald is evidenced by the many photographs of 'Oswald' that were taken by CIA cameras outside both embassies. The pictures are obviously not of Oswald, though so identified by the CIA."

"At the same time, the CIA tapped and taped the phone calls of 'Oswald' to the Soviet and/or Cuban Embassies. These recorded conversations were withheld from the Warren Commission." Voice prints can verify this matter.

Moreover, Mr. Downing noted that 'fruits' of other wiretaps were withheld from the Warren Commission by the FBI.

A DIFFERENT SLANT

Representative Downing noted that "Allen Dulles, as the head of the CIA, must have been privy to the fact that the CIA had been actively engaged in many attempts to murder Fidel Castro. The grimy details of the CIA excesses—especially the use made by the CIA of the Mafia in its murder plots—have been recently documented by the Church Committee. Allen Dulles never said one word to the other members of the Commission about the attempts of the life of Castro. Had Allen Dulles been more forthcoming, the whole direction of the Warren investigation might have been radically different and its conclusions radically altered. We need to see if John Kennedy's death was directly or indirectly caused by his administration's attempts on the life of Fidel Castro."

MASSIVE LIES

There is no longer any doubt that the Warren Commission was a massive lie and cover-up, and that an innocent man went to his grave a patsy, tormented and murdered. President of the United States Lyndon Johnson did not accept the findings of the Warren Commission to the day he died, and said that the murder of JFK was a conspiracy. "Why, we're running a damned murder incorporated down there," he said.

Said Congressman Downing, who will leave the Select Committee as his legacy upon his retirement: "The members all know that I do not go in for the sensational or the bizarre. That is not my lifestyle. I asked myself, 'Why do you want to do this?' And the answer came back, 'the truth.' The American people want to know the truth."

"Mr. Speaker, I do not want to go home and face my people unless I can assure them that I have done my utmost to provide them with the knowledge of what really happened to John F. Kennedy, their President. I want them to know what happened to Dr. King. I want to be able to tell them that no one has stood in their way of learning the truth. I want to help restore in them the credibility of their government. That they need." □

Congressional Committee Meets in Re-opening Kennedy Assassination

BY KEY KIDDER and
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Thirteen years of confusion, intrigue and innuendo pointing to the Warren Commission and Federal Police agencies may be purged as the Congress moves towards a historic homicide investigation—the events of Dallas in November of 1962—the first in a decade of political assassinations.

The third session of the Select Committee on Assassinations in the House of Representatives was held November 15th pursuant to the objectives of the House resolution September 17, 1969. On September 20th, the committee was established to investigate the murders of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr. and of any others the select committee shall determine.

The unusual circumstances surrounding the investigation—it is unprecedented for Congress to inquire into a homicide and equally novel for a committee to be created at the close of Congress—suggests the importance attached to the Select Committee.

The Committee's groundwork will be laid by three researchers and a staff of nine, initially. Coordinating the offensive is staff director Richard Sprague, the former District Attorney for Philadelphia. Sprague's credentials include the conviction of Tony Boyle in the murder of United Mine Worker official Jake Yablonsky and family, one of more than sixty convictions Sprague has obtained in the face of a single defeat.

The inclusion of Martin Luther King in the inquiry was mandated by the Congressional black caucus, four of whom are among the 12 members of Congress on the Committee. The party apportionment is eight Democrats and four Republicans.

It is assumed that the Committee chairman will be Representative Henry Gonzalez from Texas, replacing the retiring Thomas Downing from Virginia. Both have compelling reasons for wishing the investigation. Gonzalez was in Kennedy's motorcade when the President was murdered, and has pressed for an investigation since that time, citing the speculated press censorship and the complicity of the CIA and FBI in the assassinations, as stated on the House Floor September 17. Pertinent is the demise, over the 13 year hiatus, of investigators and witnesses, as well as the alleged participation of White House personnel in the cover-up and apparent untruths.

Mr. Downing's motives surfaced during the September 17 House Floor discussion, when he stated that the murder of President Kennedy was a conspiracy.

The Committee's subject matter is discussed in muted tones by Congressional aides fearful of electronic bugging devices and wiretaps, who also suggest that the phones of members of Congress may be tapped.

Reliable sources close to the Committee intimate that the hearings will be televised early next year.