JOHNSON GUNS, INC.
152 TEMPLE STREET
NEW HAVEN 10, CONNECTICUT

MELVIN M. JOHNSON, JR.
PRESIDENT

TELEPHO
865-451

Sunday
1 December 1963

Memo to whom it may concern from E. R. Johnson, company photographer, Johnson Guns, Inc., New Haven, Connecticut.

Subject: Assassination of President John F. Kennedy, November 22, 1963.

Purpose: To show that more than one assassin was in Dallas, Texas on November 22, 1963.

Gentlemen:

Most of the information which the FBI has collected seems to indicate it was Oswald alone who did all the shooting. Both my father, Colonel Melvin M. Johnson, Jr., president of Johnson Guns, Inc., and myself feel this is not the case. My father has already contacted the FBI; I write this memo in order to substantiate his views on the subject, in my capacity as photographer, in conjunction with his capacity as a small arms weapons and ammunition expert. Here are some facts already known to the case.

1. It has been reliably substantiated that three shots were fired.

2. The first shot hit President Kennedy in the neck-throat area; the second hit Governor Connally in the body; the third hit President Kennedy in the head.

3. After the first shot, the other two followed within a five-second period; in order to make the second and third shots both effective, Oswald would have had to take at least 2 1/2 seconds following the first and second shots, respectively; in order to make the second and third shots count. (It was unofficially demonstrated by the president of the National Rifle Association that three shots could be fired in this manner using a bolt-action rifle; however we didn't hear anything about accuracy from this demonstration.)

4. The Italian bolt action rifle with four-power telescopic sight, which apparently was Oswald's weapon, was found in the same area as three spent cartridges from that gun. close

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5. The bullets, or their remains, were all recovered, and were ascertained by the FBI lab at least as having come from the same type

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and model rifle as that which Oswald is presumed to have fired."

There is one other fact, well substantiated by news broadcasts and newspaper reports, particularly the early reports, while events were still fresh in people's minds: "At that moment two loud, sharp reports were heard and then another." (Quoted from LIFE, page 32H, November 29, 1963.)

This means, by common consent, that the time interval between the first and second shot was less than the time interval between the second and third shots. Now the question is, how much less? And just how fast can any man fire a shot, crank in a new cartridge, aim at a moving target 75 odd yards away, and fire? With a bolt acti rifle yet?

On pages 24 and 25 of the November 29, 1963 issue of LIFE magazine, there is a series sequence of the shooting. LIFE states that Kennedy's wave "turns into a clutching movement towards his throat" in the seventh picture. It is safe for us to assume, therefore, that he was probably reacting to a hit at about the fourth picture. This is logical, for we notice picture number five is blurred, as if the photographer might have been startled by something like a loud gunshot. The car travels about eight feet between pictures number four and number five. Assuming the car was going at least ten miles an hour, or therefore fifteen feet per second, and assuming the photographer himself was a maximum of 100 yards from Oswald's buildin (if we assume Oswald fired the first shot), then, considering the speed of sound as 3/8ths of a second, and reaction time of the photographer about 1/8th of a second, we get the following:

1. Speed of car equals 15 ft. per second.
2. Distance between pictures number 4 and number 5 equals 8 feet.
3. Therefore the time equals 1/2 second approximately.
   (a) Time of sound over 100 yards equals 3/8ths of second.
   (b) Time of reaction equals 1/8th of a second.
   (c) Therefore, time for this is also 1/2 second.

This really doesn't prove Oswald fired the first shot; but it does seem reasonable to use picture number 4 as a starting point of action

Governor Connally is quite obviously hit in the ninth picture; his body movement from number 8 to number 9 is considerable, and his mouth is open as if in pain. Then he slowly begins to slump to the floor.

The question is, how much time has elapsed between pictures number 4 and number 9? Notice the two figures, merged as if one, in the upper

7, 8, and finally number 9, in relation to the car. As the camera pans with the car with reasonable consistency, their position change, angles notwithstanding, amounts to approximately twenty-five feet. Putting it more bluntly, from picture number 4 to picture number 9 the car has travelled 25 feet!

Reports have varied somewhat concerning the actual speed the car was travelling at the time, but most reports concur it was about twelve miles an hour. To be on the safe side, let us be certain by saying the car was doing at least ten miles an hour. Don't forget agent Hill, who had to run forward from the car behind in order to protect President and Mrs. Kennedy; the car couldn't have been going over 15 miles an hour, or he might not have been able to catch it.

As most people know, sixty miles an hour is equal to 88 feet per second. Assuming the car travelled at a minimum of ten miles an hour at the time of the shooting, this means that it travelled at least 14.6, or 15 feet per second. The car travelled, at the most, 25 feet between shots one and two, and it was travelling at least 15 feet per second as an actual velocity.

So, as a result, Oswald fired his first and second shots not more than 1.6 seconds apart! This might be feasible with a semiautomatic rifle but certainly not with any bolt action rifle! From these pictures, it would appear that Oswald quite definitely had some help.

What about the three spent cartridges? It would have been easy for Oswald to deposit a previously fired case, probably used when he practiced for this tragic event. What about the bullets? They were pretty badly messed up, and it would be virtually impossible to determine they were not fired from an identical gun. Rifling marks on the remains of the bullets would be identical in every respect.

The best way to obtain these figures would be to obtain the actual movies from LIFE, and do the following:

1. Determine the speed with which these movies were taken. Since they were "home movies," or taken ostensibly for such a purpose, chances are the camera speed was the common 16 frames per second.
2. Determine, as accurately as possible, the actual frames in which President Kennedy and Governor Connally were hit, and mark these.
3. Measure the frames in between, and this will give you a very accurate time interval.
4. As a double check, run the film on a screen, and using a stop watch, start it on the marked Kamedy frame, and stop

— it on the marked Connally frame. Your reaction time will be about the same for both signals on the film. Be sure the projector is consistent with the speed of the camera.

One more thing, the first shot apparently hit President Kennedy in the throat. It is conceivable that he turned to wave at someone just before the first hit, but if it was Oswald, President Kennedy's head would have to be turned almost directly to the rear, and his body would have to be turned almost 90 degrees sideways, looking from Oswald's window. If the bullet went through President Kennedy's throat in the fashion described from the front, the bullet would have to be found in the upper left side of his body if Oswald shot him.

The film study should prove, beyond any doubt, what the pictures in LIFE already seem to show. This would be on the basis that your attitude towards the film is unbiased; do not assume anything until you have studied the film. Both my father in his capacity, and I in mine, feel quite certain that the people concerned will agree with us in what we feel to be the real truth of this sorrowful situation.

Sincerely yours,

Edward R. Johnson

Edward Rice Johnson
Johnson Guns, Inc.
New Haven, Connecticut

ERJ:maa

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO: Mr. Conrad

DATE: 12/4/63

FROM: R. H. Jevons

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT
JOHN F. KENNEDY

On 12/3/63, SAC Henry Sloan at Quantico received a telephone call from Melvin N. Johnson, President, Johnson Guns, Incorporated, 152 Tempo Street, New Haven 10, Connecticut, regarding the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

SAC Sloan advised by memorandum dated 12/4/63, that Johnson stated he believed no more than one second could have elapsed between the first and second shots. This estimate was based on his examination of the pictures in Life magazine of November 29, 1963, which were reprinted from a movie taken by an amateur photographer, considering the reported speed of the automobile in relation to the people and tree in the background of the movie. (Copy of SAC Sloan's memo attached.)

A careful study of the movie in question was made and it shows Mr. Johnson to be in error. It is pointed out that the photographs printed in Life magazine do not show the complete sequence of the movie and the write-up accompanying these photographs does not accurately indicate the time of the first shot.

From careful timing of the film, the most accurate estimate* possible gives seven seconds as the interval between the first and third shot with the second shot occurring approximately in the middle of the seven-second interval.

It should be noted that of the assassination sequence in Life magazine only 13 of the approximate 110 frames are represented.

ACTION: For information.

62-109060
Enclosure
1 - Mr. Tolson
1 - Mr. Belmont
1 - Mr. Mohr
1 - Mr. Rosen
1 - Mr. DeLoach
1 - Mr. Casper, Attention: Mr. Sloan
1 - Mr. Sullivan
1 - Mr. Bartlett, Room 845 RB
1 - Mr. Handley, Room 5710
1 - Mr. Turner, Room 649 RB

CBC:DLJ (15)

NOTE: *The above estimate is based on a normal speed of 16 frames per second. A check is being made to ascertain the actual speed of the amateur photographer's camera. Regardless of this speed, however, the second shot occurred in the middle of the time interval.