UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : Mr. Callahan

DATE: 4-15-64

FROM : L. J. Gauthier

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY
EXAMINATION OF VISUAL AIDS BY
PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION

Reference memo Gauthier to Callahan 4-7-64.

Staff members of the President's Commission and specialists of the armed services, Drs. Humes, Heany, Fink, Light and Olivia (ph.) attended a conference on 4-14-64 for the purpose of reviewing motion pictures and slides of the assassination site. Representatives of the Secret Service and the FBI were present to assist in projecting the film and the use of the scale model.

Dr. Humes, U. S. Navy Commander, who performed the autopsy on the President, appeared to lead the discussion throughout the 4-hour session. All of his associates were generally in agreement with previous findings of the Commission as to where Shots 1, 2 and 3 approximately occurred.

The most revealing information brought out by the doctors is as follows:

1. That Shot 1 struck the President high in the right shoulder area, penetrating the torso near the base of the neck damaging the flesh of the throat but not tearing the throat wall. This bullet, according to the doctors, continued and entered Governor Connally's right shoulder, emerging below the right nipple. The velocity of the missile, according to the doctors apparently was snagged in the coat and shirt, eventually falling out on Connally's stretcher.

2. That Shot 2 struck the wrist of the Governor, continuing on into his thigh

3. That Shot 3 struck the right side of the President's head, carrying much bone and brain tissue away, leaving a large cavity. There is nothing controversial about where Shot 3 occurred inasmuch as the Zapruder movie indicates with much clarity when this happened.

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Heretofore it was the opinion of the Commission that Shot 1 had only hit the President, that Shot 2 had entered the Governor's right shoulder area penetrating his torso through the chest area emerging and again entering the wrist and on into his leg.

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Staff attorneys of the Commission extensively questioned the doctors concerning their conclusions and their views were made a matter of record by Attorney Melvin Eisenberg.

Mr. Eisenberg advised that Governor Connally would be in Washington on Tuesday, April 21, 1964, to assist the Commission in describing as to where the three shots occurred and that he, Eisenberg, would request that Shaneyfelt and Gauthier be available to assist them in handling visual aids while the Governor's views are obtained.

Mr. Eisenberg also inquired whether Special Agent Shaneyfelt of the FBI Laboratory, Special Agent John Howlett of Secret Service and Gauthier would be able to arrange for a re-enactment of the shooting scene in Dallas using the data collected by the Commission, to make movies of the areas where each shot occurred using Zapruder's camera to have people simulate the positions of the occupants of the President's car in a car similar to the one used by the President which would be furnished by Secret Service, to take ground measurements between the Texas Schoolbook Depository from each point where shots occurred to determine the distances between gun muzzle and target, etc.

Mr. Eisenberg inquired as to whether I had any suggestions concerning his request. He was advised that of course the FBI would do whatever possible to assist in this matter; however, it was felt that inasmuch as he, Eisenberg, had a good working knowledge of what the Commission desired it would appear to me to be to the advantage of the Commission if he, Eisenberg, would be present in Dallas to insure the development of the desired technical data. He and his immediate superior, Attorney Norman Redlich, agreed to this suggestion. Without saying as much, it was felt that considerable publicity will definitely stem from this type of operation in Dallas and a representative of the Commission should be present to handle the inquiries of the press concerning the fact that this was a Commission field operation and not an operation of the FBI or Secret Service.

Mr. Eisenberg stated he would make his proposal for this field trip known to the members of the Commission recommending that the FBI and Secret Service assist the Commission's legal staff in gathering on-site data relating to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

RECOMMENDATION: None - for information only.

SEE ADDENDUM PAGE THREE...

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ADDENDUM: AHB:hw 4-15-64

It is questionable what the Commission expects to gain by an additional re-enactment of the scene of the assassination, bearing in mind that Secret Service has already gone through this exercise at least once, and Inspector Gauthier made actual models of the assassination area. It is inevitable that there will be considerable publicity attendant to the proposed re-enactment of the scene.

It is our opinion that it would be undesirable for the FBI to become involved as the speed of the car, protection measures, etc., were the basic responsibilities of Secret Service at the time. We would prefer not to become identified with the actual scene and happenings at the assassination in the minds of the public.

It is recommended that Inspector Malley advise Mr. Rankin that this proposal appears to be without merit; that the FBI has done its utmost to be of assistance by providing models of the area, technical data and technical advice in assisting the Commission to interpret events as they occurred. Mr. Malley should advise Rankin that we suggest that if such a re-enactment of the scene is considered desirable by the Commission, it should be carried out by Secret Service which has already gone through this exercise at least once.