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MORE ON JFK

POSNER AND GERLICH NO SKEPTICS

I'm not sure what angers me more—that Posner is so often disingenuous, if not dishonest, about the facts of the JFK assassination, or that SKEPTIC so credulously parrots his misrepresentations.

Nick Gerlich, in "Tragedy on Elm Street," refers to Posner to say Oswald's alleged shots were "a quite manageable feat" (Vol. 6, No. 4, 41). Posner even claims that HSCA tests "reduced the time necessary for three effective shots to 3.3 seconds" (*Case Closed*, 318). Gerlich swallows this, but Posner didn't reveal that the "tests resulted in firings of 1.65, 1.75 and over 2 seconds. The target was hit on the two fastest times...but no one came close to hitting the target on the second shot" (Fonzi, *The Last Investigation*, 219). Posner just doubled the fastest time, turning one hit into three effective shots.

Posner describes Connally's back wound as "one and a quarter inches long, the exact length of the bullet—indicating the bullet was tumbling end over end" (Gerlich, 43; Posner, 479). The Warren Commission found that Connally's clothing "contained holes which matched his wounds" (Warren Report, 96). The hole in the back of his jacket was "five eighths of an inch in length" (96) and the back of his shirt had a "very ragged tear five-eighths of an inch long" (97). Dr. Robert Shaw has said that he "cut away the edges of the wound, and so the scar did not reflect its original appearance, enlarging it from 1.5 to 3 centimeters [approximately five-eighths to one and a quarter inches]" (Livingstone, *Killing the Truth*, 80). Posner used the longer scar measurement to prove that the bullet was tumbling.

Skeptics have suffered a hypocritical failure of logic by treating Posner's Warren makeover as a given. The burden of proof weighs just as heavily on the Warren Commission and its apologists as on the conspiracy theorists, and when premises are shown to be false, then the conclusion which follows must be called into question. The lone gunman/single bullet theory has simply not been proven.

—Scott Pearson, St. Paul, MN,
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LONE GUNMAN? MAYBE SO!

I'm writing in response to "Case Still Open" by Arthur and Margaret Snyder, and also in response to Roger Leonardis' comments in Skeptics' Forum. Both articles argue against the theory that Oswald was the only gunman to open fire during the assassination of JFK. Apparently, "experts" have repeatedly failed to duplicate Oswald's mediocre shooting. Today I attempted a similar experiment at the shooting range, and came away convinced that Oswald could have pulled it off.

Now, I'm no expert marksman. I wasn't trained by the Marine Corps or anyone else. I'm just a guy who likes to plink now and then. Recently I inherited my granddad's deer gun, a venerable Remington model 700, 30-06. Hmmm, I thought, it's a bolt action, high power rifle with a scope. Maybe it has a better reputation than Oswald's, but it works about the same. So, I asked myself, just what kind of trick shooting was Oswald accused of?

From the map on page 50, SKEPTIC Vol.6, No.4, the horizontal distance was between 40 yards (first shot) and 75 yards (third shot). In military terms this is point blank range. In Oswald's scope, JFK would have been larger than life. Oswald fired three shots in under 6 seconds. The target was moving almost directly away. In his scope it appeared to travel upward while drifting to the right. But this wasn't all bad because it meant his target was rising in time to his rifle's recoil—shortening the time it took to reacquire the target after each shot. Furthermore, as the target moved away, the targetting angle flattened, slowing the target's apparent movement in Oswald's sights. So by the time the fatal shot was fired, a car moving 11 mph would have an apparent speed of just 3 mph in Oswald's scope. Face it, JFK was a sitting duck. With all the above in mind, and considering the lamentable absence of live, moving (and legal!) targets, I chose the 100 yard range at a local shooting club. I felt this provided a reasonable compromise with a stationary target at double the starting distance.

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