

12 February, 1992

Letters
The Economist Newspaper
25 St. James's Street
London SW1A 1HG

Sir:

Mr. Franklin Hunt writes that he "has read every page of the Warren Commission report" and found it "quite persuasive". (Letters Jan.25).

I, too, have read the Report and am persuaded of one thing: it is a whitewash. There are gross contradictions between the Commission's conclusions and the details of the evidence in the 26 volumes of Hearings and Exhibits. For instance, the Parkland Hospital physicians had originally observed massive damage to the right temple and failed to confirm the presence of an entry wound in the back of the President's head. Autopsy witnesses also failed to see this mysterious entry wound in the back of the head. This wound was not shown at all on an autopsy skull diagram on which it should have been a central feature. But yet this wound suddenly appears in the Warren Report. And the supporters of the Report say there is proof. Where is this proof? It's certainly not in the Zapruder film, which shows Kennedy's body forced backward and to the left immediately after the head shot. Anyone observing this with their eyes open knows that an object would have gone forward if acted upon by this kind of force coming from the back.

The Report is full of these kinds of contradictions, and the Commissioners had a difficult time trying to resolve them. One thing they did was not provide a subject index in the 26 volumes. This would have made it easy for the public to compare the findings of the Report to any individual item of evidence. The Warren Commissioners did not seem concerned with making the facts readily available to the public. Nowhere in their Report is there proof that Oswald fired anything on Nov.22, 1963. This was one of their problems which they tried to solve by concealing the evidence.

It is true that the movie, 'JFK', is also full of untruths and that Oliver Stone seems to have used the Kennedy assassination to air his views about Vietnam. He is justly criticized for mingling fact with fiction in a subject already muddled with gray areas. But many of these critics, while complaining that Oliver Stone is rewriting history, still cling to the myth that the Warren Report is the correct version.

Sincerely,

Peter M. Swindells

Peter M. Swindells
148 Oakwood Drive
Stafford, Virginia 22554

148 Oakwood Drive
Stafford, Va. 22554

The Economist Newspaper Ltd.
Letters to the Editor
25 St. James Street
London SW1A 1HG
England

December 5, 1988

Dear Sir:

Your Washington correspondent wrote that "Lee Harvey Oswald's bullet (for his it was, without a doubt) tore into President John Kennedy's brain...." (November 26 Remembering Dallas). He is wrong. There are many doubts, and he should know better.

There are doubts about whether Oswald fired any weapon the day of November 22, 1963. There were no prints on the assembled rifle. A negative paraffin test was taken on Oswald's cheek-- hardly the cheek of a man who fired an old (1940's) Italian bolt-action Army rifle. The telescopic sight was fitted for a left-handed marksman. Oswald was right-handed. The scope was misaligned so badly that the FBI had to adjust the mounting apparatus before it could test-fire the rifle. The feat attributed to Oswald was impossible for anyone but a world champion marksman using a high-precision semi-automatic rifle. Neither Oswald nor the Italian Mannlicher-Carcano fit those descriptions.

As to the bullet which "tore into Kennedy's brain", the well known Zapruder film shows Kennedy's body slamming backwards against the seat at the moment his head was hit-- hardly caused by a bullet coming from behind him (where Oswald reportedly was).

My concern here is whether or not your correspondent has studied this case. It appears that, given the choice of believing what he was told or examining the facts independently, he chose the former. If your correspondent will not help lead the search for the truth about Dallas, he will have to follow. So will The Economist.

Sincerely,

Peter M. Swindells

Peter M. Swindells