

Kennedy stood in his way to domination of the world petroleum market. The "Cuba-Framed Theory," proposed by Fidel Castro, holds that Oswald's activities in Fair Play for Cuba groups were faked so that, assuming he escaped, Washington would figure he had fled to Cuba, and would thus have an excuse to invade. The "Red Execution Theory," pushed by Right-Wing Intellectual Revilo P. Oliver, has it that Oswald was ordered by Moscow to shoot Kennedy because the President had been a Communist but was threatening to "turn American." The "Evil-Forces Theory," favored by Mali Foreign Minister Ousman Ba, links the death of Kennedy, Patrice Lumumba and Dag Hammarskjöld with "forces behind the U.S.-Belgian rescue operation in the Congo."

"Persuasive" Compromise. Tenuous and documentably erroneous as much of the anti-Warren Report literature is, even responsible commentators share the rising feeling that the Administration should reopen the case and clear up—once and for all—the nagging discrepancies. Their contention is simply that so many questions are being raised about certain details in the report that now there is reasonable doubt cast over nearly everything in it.

One of the thorniest points of specific controversy is the commission's "Single Bullet Theory"—the belief that one bullet from Oswald's rifle struck Kennedy in the neck, exited through his throat, then plowed on through Governor Connally's torso, smashed his right wrist and finally lodged in his left thigh.

This hypothesis was originated by a commission assistant counsel, Arlen Specter, now district attorney of Philadelphia, after Warren investigators became puzzled over the timing of Oswald's shots. After a frame-by-frame analysis of a movie film taken by a tourist named Abraham Zapruder, commissioners decided that 1.8 seconds—at most—had elapsed between Kennedy's first visible response to being hit in the neck and John Connally's first measurable reaction to a bullet striking him. The early assumption had been that the two were hit by separate shots. But since Oswald's bolt-action rifle could not be operated any faster than once every 2.3 seconds, the commission finally adopted Specter's theory that one bullet had struck both men—even though the bullet that was supposed to have done the damage was all but unmarked.

The decision to accept the hypothesis was by no means unanimous, and there ensued what has since been described in Author Edward Jay Epstein's book *Inquest* as the "battle of the adjectives." Some commissioners wanted to say that "compelling" evidence supported the single-bullet thesis; others thought "credible" evidence was strong enough, and a compromise was reached with the word "persuasive."

Split-Second Specifics. Even the commission's conclusion collided head-on with the testimony of a primary witness to the shooting—Governor Connally

himself. From the start, he insisted that he did not feel any impact until an instant after he heard a shot, presumably the one that struck Kennedy first, and thus could not have been wounded by the same bullet. The commission decided that he was mistaken; that he had experienced a delayed reaction to his wounds. The Governor said no more about it publicly until early this month, when LIFE prevailed upon him to review the Zapruder films to see if he might have been wrong. The commission had merely shown the Governor screenings of the Zapruder assassination film, but LIFE gave him enlargements of 168 consecutive frames covering the whole shooting episode. As Connally examined them through a magnifying glass, he spotted details he had missed



CONNALLY (WITH WIFE) RE-ENACTING SHOT
By no means unanimous.

before and recalled the specific split seconds of those shattering moments.

There is no doubt in his mind that he was right. "I know every single second of what happened in that car until I lost consciousness," he says in the current LIFE. "I recall I heard that first shot and was starting to turn to my right to see what had happened. [Then] I started to look around over my left shoulder, and somewhere in that revolution I was hit. My recollection of that time gap, the distinct separation between the shot that hit the President and the impact of the one that hit me, is as clear today as it was then."

"It's a Certainty." Connally says he has never read the Warren Report, and he refuses to join the dispute over it. "History is bigger than any individual's feelings," he explains. "I don't want to discuss any other facets of the controversy except my wounds as related to the first shot that hit the President. They talk about the one-bullet or the two-bullet theory, but as far as I'm concerned there is no 'theory.' There is my absolute knowledge, and Nellie's [Mrs. Connally] too, that one bullet caused

the President's first wound, and that an entirely separate shot struck me. It's a certainty; I'll never change my mind."

Of course, nothing Connally said added an iota of new evidence. From the start, the Warren Report pointed out that its single-bullet thesis was "not necessary to any essential findings of the commission." The critics have disagreed, contending that the thesis is the cornerstone on which the commission based its single-assassin conclusion. On the contrary, reasons Arlen Specter. Though the Zapruder film was a key to the commission's confusion about the timing of shots, Specter points out that the film is two-dimensional, and it is impossible to know—"precisely"—when Kennedy was first hit. The President, too, may have had a delayed reaction, and since scant fractions of a second are involved, there is a possibility that there was time for Oswald to shoot twice. Nevertheless, Specter argues that an even more convincing point was the fact that no bullet was found in Kennedy's body or in the limousine. "Where, if it didn't hit Connally, did that bullet go?" asks Specter. "This is the single most compelling reason why I concluded that one bullet hit both men."

The discussion and the doubts are not likely to abate, for nearly every significant incident of that tragic day is fraught with controversy and coincidence. Even a new investigation would be committed to making its own judgments and offering its best reasoned opinions—just as the Warren Commission did—in crucial areas where no firm facts exist. Thus, lacking any new evidence, there seems little valid excuse for so dramatic a development as another full-scale inquiry.

THE ADMINISTRATION

Durable Crocodile

The cast read like one of Frank Sullivan's Christmas paeans in *The New Yorker*. Many of the 80 guests' costumes—each supposed to represent some stage of the guest of honor's life—looked as if they had been assembled for an underground movie. Host Robert Kennedy greeted arrivals in an ankle-length ambassadorial cutaway. Actress Melina Mercouri, in black velvet pants, did her best to impersonate "a little boy"—and was never less convincing. Charles Addams disguised himself as a locomotive engineer. For reasons best known to herself, Eunice Kennedy Shriver was decked out as a bunny. West Virginia Democrat John D. Rockefeller IV came holding hands with Sharon Percy, daughter of Illinois' new Republican Senator-elect.

The party, held at Bobby's Hickory Hill estate outside Washington last week, was a felicitous tribute to Elder Statesman W. (for William) Averell Harriman, whose 75th birthday it was. In an era mesmerized by youth, Harriman—himself youthfully lean and in extraordinary physical fettle—is formidable proof of his own favorite formula