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Doubts May Remain Despite Exhaustive Examination

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The Warren Commission went to great lengths to examine the theories of those who saw a conspiracy in the assassination of President Kennedy.

The 26 volumes of commission data released yesterday include, for example, lengthy testimony by a member of the John Birch Society who said the President was a collaborator with Communists and was killed by them because he planned "to turn American."

This witness was Revilo P. Oliver, a professor at the University of Illinois. His testimony taken last Sept. 9, runs to 17,000 words.

Under intensive questioning by Albert E. Jenner of the commission staff, Professor Oliver said he had no first hand evidence for his statements. The commission also reprinted as an exhibit an article by him in the Birch Society magazine, American Opinion.

The Oliver testimony illustrates the lengths to which Chief Justice Earl Warren and his fellow commission members went in their search for all the truth about the assassination. It also illustrates the difficulty of settling doubts — both of those who saw a left-wing conspiracy and of those who firmly believed a rightist plot lay behind the murder.

The Buchanan Book

In the magazine article considered by the commission, Professor Oliver denounced the commission as one set up to "cover up for the Communist conspiracy." It is doubtful that the commission's long report and supporting volumes will change such views.

Prominent among those who have seen a right-wing conspiracy at work is Thomas B. Buchanan, the American expatriate who wrote in Europe the book "Who Killed Kennedy?" It was discussed before the committee by several witnesses.

With the completion of the Warren Commission's work there has been a renewed sales push for the book. Full-page newspaper advertisements have been published recently.

The advertisement as printed in The New York Times yesterday was headed: "The report is out. The question remains: Who killed Kennedy?"

The Warren Commission answered the question unequivocally in its report on Sept. 27: Lee Harvey Oswald, alone and unmoved by rational motives, committed the assassination. The volumes of testimony and exhibits released yesterday showed why it had reached that conclusion.



DETAIL CHECK BY COMMISSION: Picture shown to Mrs. Margurite Oswald, mother of Lee Harvey Oswald, on the night of Nov. 23, 1963, by an F.B.I. investigator. Later she said photo was of Jack Ruby, who killed Oswald. The Warren Commission found the picture was of an unidentified man who was thought to have known Oswald abroad.

One strong doubt in the minds of some concerns Oswald's capacity to fire his rifle as quickly and accurately as he would have had to. There were three shots, two of which hit President Kennedy within five to eight seconds.

The commission had numerous persons examine the rifle and Oswald's marksmanship record and concluded that he could have hit the target within the available time. One witness called it "a very easy shot."

One person who consistently questioned Oswald's guilt was his mother, Mrs. Marguerite Oswald. She also attempted to suggest that there was some conspiracy involving Jack L. Ruby, who killed Oswald as he was being moved from the Dallas police headquarters on Nov. 24, 1963.

Tells of Picture

The night before, Nov. 23, Mrs. Oswald said, an agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation showed her a picture of a man and asked if she knew him. She told the commission that she later knew the picture was of Jack Ruby. Why, she asked, did the F.B.I. have his picture the night before he killed her son?

The commission dealt with this exhaustively. It found that the picture was of an unidentified man in a foreign country with whom the Central Intelligence Agency thought Oswald might have been associated.

The volumes released yesterday included affidavits from the F.B.I. man who showed the picture to Mrs. Oswald, from his

superior and from the deputy director of the C.I.A., Richard Helms. Also printed was the picture which did not look like Jack Ruby.

Altogether, Mrs. Oswald's testimony is some 60,000 words. The commission rejected as unsupported her theories of a conspiracy.

Perhaps the most fascinating attempt of the commission to get at the reasoning behind a conspiracy theory was its examination of Mark Lane, a New York lawyer who has lectured to paying audiences about his view that Oswald could not have been the assassin.

Throughout his testimony, Mr. Lane declined to answer questions by the commission for various reasons, including what he termed the attorney-client privilege. He was briefly Marguerite Oswald's lawyer.

Clash With Commission

Mr. Lane's reluctance brought a clash with the commission over one matter. This was his statement that a reliable informant had told him of a meeting a week before the as-

sassination among Ruby, a right-winger named Bernard Weissman and the Dallas police officer later killed by Oswald, J. D. Tippitt.

When he first testified last March 4, Mr. Lane declined to disclose the name of his alleged informant but promised to reach him and try to get permission to disclose it.

On July 2, after some correspondence with the commission staff, Mr. Lane returned

from a European trip to testify, on the promise that the commission would pay his expenses. But the commission soon found that he had nothing further to say. Chief Justice Warren was angry.

"Mr. Lane," the Chief Justice said, "may I say to you that until you give us the corroboration that you say you have... we have every reason to doubt the truthfulness of what you have heretofore told us."

"And your refusal to testify at this lends further strength to that belief. If you can tell us, and if you will tell us, who gave you that information, so that we may test their veracity, then you have performed a service to this commission. But until you do you have done nothing but handicap us."

Mr. Lane said he had sought to cooperate with the commission by coming back from Europe.

"Here we pay your expenses from Europe," the Chief Justice replied, "bring you over here, and without telling us at all that you won't answer that question, you come before the commission and refuse to testify. Do you consider that cooperation?"