POST MORTEM: SUPPRESSED KENNEDY AUTOPSY

(abridged version)

bу

Harold Weisberg

PREFACE

The government never intended really to investigate the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, and it never did. It never intended to tell us what really happened, and it didn't. In this book I shall show even more clearly the extent of governmental dishonesty in covering up the facts of John F. Kennedy's death.

This book is an abridged version of a much longer work. In four other works I have shown in elaborate detail the shoddy work, the half-truths, and the lies of the Warren Commission, only to have those who rule our nation look the other way. It is now time to present new evidence and do it in such simple fashion that even a new comer to the subject can see the fraud perpetrated on us all. Thus much detail, important to the scholar, will be omitted from this work. Should those in power in the United States continue to look the other way, their inaction, bordering on treason, will be apparent to all.

Volumes have been written by myself and others showing the foolishness of saying that Oswald was a lone assassin, indeed of saying he was the assassin at all. In chapter one a few of these arguments are recapitulated for the person who has read none of the earlier books (or has had the misfortune of reading only such vacuous books as Manchester's <u>Death of a President</u>). This chapter will also show the critical importance of the autopsy performed on the President. Only if all of the facts of the autopsy are as the Warren Commission claimed, can anyone even pretend to say there was a single assassin shooting in <u>Dealy Plaza</u> on November 22, 1963. The rest of the book will then be devoted to showing

how the facts of the autopsy were withheld from the public or were consciously altered. In thus studying the autopsy we shall show not only the impossibility of one assassin, but the duplicity of our government in hiding this fact from us all.

Some readers might be happier if I wrote with less emotion or wrapped all my statements in bland, academic prose. But I do the reader no service by hiding my outrage and bitter disappointment in what has happened (or failed to happen) in the eight years since Kennedy died.

If my writing were not tinged by fury, it would only show my own acquiescence in the whitewash of a national tragedy.

THE ASSASSINATION REVIEWED

This chapter is dry and factual. Too often we have read of the human quirks and ironies, only to avoid looking at the facts of John F. Kennedy's death. We read about the sun breaking through the rain to greet the President as he arrived in Dallas or of Mrs. Connally's final statement to him: "Mr. President, you can't say Dallas doesn't love you". Important as these human touches are, they only clutter our view of what happened in Dealy Plaza on November 22, 1963, at 12:30 P.M.

The evidence we have surrounding the President's death is vast, indeed overwhelming. Beyond the estimated 10,000,000 words in twenty-six volumes of evidence published by the Warren Commission, there is roughly twice this amount (much of it classified) stashed away in the National Archives. Included here are three movies and several still shots of the assassination itself, plus over one hundred eyewitness accounts. Most critical is the motion picture taken by Abraham Zapruder. Using the frames of this film we are able to locate the Presidential car as it moved down Elm Street where the assassination occurred. On pages are a photograph and a chart of Dealy Plaza, the latter with numbers (eg. Z 313) to mark the path of the President's car in terms of frames of the Zapruder film.

The Warren Report gives us a simple story of what happened. The motorcade bearing the President came down Main Street, turned right on Houston for one short block, and then turned left on Elm on its way to the Trade Mart where Kennedy was to speak. At a point on Elm Street

between Z 210 and Z 222, the first shot was fired. It went through the President's neck and then went through the chest and wrist of Governor Connally and embedded itself in his thigh. This bullet was recovered in Parkland Hospital and traced to Lee Harvey Oswald's rifle, found on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository.

The fatal wound to John F. Kennedy occurred at Z 313. Since the Zapruder film ran at 18.3 frames a second, this is roughly five to six seconds after the first wound. The bullet entered the back of the President's head and exited from the right side, causing a massive injury. Although some flicker of life was thought by some to be seen at Parkland Hospital five minutes later, for all intents and purposes, Mr. Kennedy died the moment he was struck by this bullet.

Less than two hours later Oswald was arrested in a Dallas movie theater and charged with the murder of both President Kennedy and Patrolman J. D. Tippit. He was held and questioned (without tape recorder or transcript) until the morning of November 24th, when he was to be transferred to another jail for safekeeping. In the process of this transfer he was shot and killed by Jack Ruby. Since a dead man cannot be put on trial, President Johnson appointed a commission of eminent men (Chief Justice Earl Warren, Senator Richard B. Russell, Senator John Sherman Cooper, Representative Hale Boggs, Representative Gerald R. Ford, Allen W. Dulles, John J. McCloy) to ascertain whether Oswald had indeed killed Kennedy and, if so, if he had acted alone.

The Warren Commission (as popularly called) labored from January until September, 1964, when the 900 page "Warren Report" appeared. Its conclusion was that Oswald was the lone assassin. This was clear in light of his presence on the sixth floor of the Book Depository at the time of

the assassination, in light of the finding of his rifle on the sixth floor, in light of the bullet found at Parkland Hospital and traced to his rifle, and in light of his desperate killing of Officer Tippit when the latter stopped him while fleeing. His motive lay in his disaffection with American society (he had defected to the Soviet Union in 1959, returning in 1961) and his alienation from men in general. It was the act of a lone man with a twisted mind.

What more could one want than such a simple explanation backed by vast documentation? That this was false at almost every step should not worry us. After all, what is more important—keeping the nation quiet and docile, or the truth? Like a doctor who has worked for years to understand the nature of a plague, I feel a combination of weariness and reluctance at having to describe in a few simple words the nature of a vast illness. The necessity of the task, however, must overcome my feelings.

(See outline for remainder of chapter.)

PROPOSED OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

Remainder of Chapter 1

UITAL

I. "First Shot" The Commission's case seems so obvious, why question it? B. The bullet itself a. its condition: too much metal lost and not flattened or scratched (WWII p. 96; PM pp. 75, 90, 105) b. where found and chain of possession (PM p. 53, 103) c. no blood found on it (PM p. 103, 107) d. no spectrographic analysis released (PM pp. 21-4; PMIII p. 74) C. The single bullet theory a. Why this necessary for WC b. Connally's testimony (WW p. 4) c. Zapruder film NOT SIMPLE i. Supports Connally's testimony ii. The wrist position and holding of hat d. Original reporting of incident (PM pp. 60,62,73,79,82) D. Why the autopsy critical a. If front neck wound an entry, then SBT impossible b. If back entry too low, then SBT impossible (PM p. 79) c. If there is metal in the neck, then #399 impossible (<u>PM</u> III p. 69) d. This we shall explore in Chapter __. II. "Second Shot" A. The weight of the evidence clearly points to a shot from the front. B. The physical evidence a. Head snap in Zapruder and Nix films (<u>WW Photo</u> p. 24; <u>WW II p. 39</u>) b. The two skull fragments found (<u>PM p. 88, 99</u>) Other eyewitness testimony (WW Photo p. 70) C. Evidence of someone behind fence a. S. M. Holland, Lee Bowers, J. M. Smith b. Failure of police and WC to investigate D. Why the autopsy critical a. A really definitive autopsy could make WC case possible. although highly improbable b. The autopsy was anything but this, as we shall see in following chapters. i. It was poorly done and a cover-up involved

ii. The facts of autopsy will logically preclude Oswald

as lone assassin

THE AUTOPSY AND THE WARREN COMMISSION

This chapter should review the history of the autopsy itself and the relationship between the doctors and the Commission.

- 1. Failure to have autopsy done at Parkland
- 2. The autopsy at Bethesda

 - a. Sibert and O'Niell
 b. Probing the back wound
 c. Discovering the neck wound and tracheotomy
 d. Etc.
- 3. The autopsy report itself
 - a. Notes burned in fireplace
 - b. No date on report
 - c. The changes made
 - d. The original FBI reports
 - e. Etc.
- 4. The X-rays and photographs
 - a. What the doctors saw and said they saw
 - b. What the WC saw and said they saw
 - c. Etc.

THE COVER-UP: 1964 to 1969

In this chapter we should cover at least the following information and perhaps more.

- 1. The history of the X-rays and photos
- 2. The 1968 panel review
 - A. How this came about and was released
 - B. The discrepancies
 - a. The metal in neck
 - b. The grey-brown rectangular object
 c. The location of rear entry wound
 d. Etc.
 - C. The fraudulent conclusion
- 3. Finck's testimony in New Orleans

 - A. Ordered not to probe back wound
 B. Room filled with Admirals and Generals
- 4. Review of court cases
 - A. For spectrographic analysis
 B. For pictures and clothing
 C. Etc.

ENDURING SHAME: THE NEW EVIDENCE

Present here the new evidence from the new PM II.

Conclude with a section noting the very narrow range of material covered in this book. Although this proves beyond doubt that Oswald was not the lone assassin, we have only covered one narrow aspect of this sorry case.