

THE EVENING SUN

BALTIMORE, MONDAY, MAY 9, 1977

WILLIAM F. SCHMICK, JR., *Publisher*

PHILIP S. HEISLER, *Managing Editor*

BRADFORD JACOBS, *Editorial Page Editor*

Accidental Death?

Howard Donahue's reconstruction of the scene at Dealey Plaza in Dallas, that day in 1963, leads him to the conclusion that Lee H. Oswald did indeed fire upon John F. Kennedy — and wound him. But the cause of the fatal head wound immediately afterward, which came from another direction than Oswald's and another kind of bullet, may well have been a shot fired by a member of the detail assigned to guard the President, as the sound of gunfire induced him hurriedly to stand and raise his weapon. If so, here is the grimmest example yet of what is sometimes called Murphy's Law: the tendency of the worst to happen, at the worst time and in the worst possible way.

Given the expertness and the plausibility of Mr. Donahue's reconstruction, as set forth by

Ralph Reppert these past two Sundays in *The Sun Magazine*, the Secret Service now owes the public more than just another no-comment reaction. Information should be forthcoming from or about the individual special agent in question.

Should there be no credible refutation of Mr. Donahue's startling hypothesis, an incidental consequence will be the deflation of one of our times' more curious psychological phenomena — the Dallas conspiracy nuts, or demonologists; that is, the persons who cannot believe that the killing was effected by anything less than a national or international plot. If Mr. Donahue is right, these theorists are left without even an assassination, just an accidental homicide.

But a new issue arises, of formidable solidity. Again if Mr. Donahue is right, then the true version of what happened that November noontime has been deliberately and skillfully and wrongly withheld from public knowledge. We would be faced, that is to say, with one more reprehensible example of cover-up.