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The Editor
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Dear Sir,

Although I believe my book WHITEWASH: THE REPORT ON THE WARREN REPORT, is by far the strongest criticism of the Report, I agree with much of the comment by Robert Pitman in your issue of September 25. My book has not been published in England but a copy is available to you through my Agent, Gordon Harbord, 83 St. Martin's Lane, London. I made a copy available to you in the country but presumably it did not reach London.

It is the first of the current books, is restricted entirely to the official information of the Commission, and alone addresses itself to the Report.

I believe you will not find in the book the defects about which Mr. Pitman writes, because it is entirely official information and because it does not depend upon eyewitness testimony. In fact, the very first thing in its analysis of the use and treatment of eyewitnesses is an exposition of the undependability of such evidence. It does not conjecture. It does not avoid the tracing of the movements attributed to Oswald after he left the depository, nor does it avoid the official evidence on the murder Tippit, especially those shells to which Mr. Pitman refers and the bullets to which he does not.

In the interest of precision, may I suggest that Mr. Pitman might have acknowledged the third murder, that of the alleged assassin. Without that there would have been no Report. Also in the ~~precise~~ interest of precision, may I refer you to my chapter entitled "The Number of Shots": Mr. Pitman says that the Commission "assumed that the first bullet hit the President" and then inflicted all the injuries on the Governor. This is what the Report would lead the hasty reader to believe but it is, alas, not the fact. It actually says in its "Summary and Conclusions" that "Although it is not essential to any findings of the Commission to determine just which shot hit Governor Connally, there is very persuasive evidence from the experts to indicate that the same bullet which pierced the President's throat also caused Governor Connally's wounds" (WHITEWASH 157; Report 19).

Both statements are entirely erroneous. It is a minimum basis of the Report that the first bullet alone have hit both the President and the Governor, for all other times are precluded by the existing photographic evidence and the absolute minimum reloading time for that rifle for the very best experts of not less than 2.3 seconds. It is also in opposition to fact to state, as the Report does, that the experts agreed that ^{this} one bullet could have caused all the non-fatal injuries to both men. In this chapter of my book and that which follows you will find the medical evidence.

To have had this carer of the most magical bullet in history the Commission's bullet, Exhibit 399 (photograph on page 208 of WHITEWASH), had to have caused seven injuries, smashing an undetermined number of bones in the Governor, including 10 cm. of his fifth rib, his wrist and an injury to his tibia, while also remaining ~~virtually~~ intact, undeformed and unutilated. The actual scientific evidence is that this could not have happened, and the precise language of these experts is in my book. What the FBI's expert said is that had this bullet hit coarse cloth or leather it would have been marked by them, but it remains entirely unmarked by the bones it hit: Undeformed (the word the Report avoids but the doctors did not) and unutilated?

It is not possible that the Commission "assumes (perhaps wrongly) that Oswald could not have started firing until the oak tree in front of his window was out of the line of fire", for even if this had not been an insurmountable obstruction, another remains: Prior to that moment (Frame 210 of the motion-picture film that records the tragic events), a bullet from that window could not have wounded the President and then have done this phenomenal damage to the Governor. Were any shot fired prior to the moment represented by Frame 210, at least one of the shots had to have been fired from another point, and even the remarkable powers attributed to Oswald are not that great. He could not have been in two places at a single moment. The truth is that no man in the world could have fired that rifle with such accuracy in that brief fragment of time, about 5 seconds according to the Report, and the best shots the Commission could muster, with the test rigged in their favor, could not do as well;

The great problem for responsible newspapers and journalists in assessing the Report (aside from its vast size and injudicious padding to further augment its volume) is the tremendous time required to trace the evidence the staff of the Commission excluded from the final document. For example, Mr. Pitman logically asks questions about the possibility of the planting of the three shells traced to that particular rifle and found on the sixth floor of the building near that window. What he has no way of knowing from the Report but will find in my book (page 28) that each of these shells bore multiple rifle markings. That is they bore markings, according to J. Edgar Hoover, head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, that proved each of the shells had been in this rifle on another occasion or had been in an entirely different rifle.

Mrs. Bledsoe, Oswald's former landlady whose dislike of him seems to have derived from his reluctance to chatter with her, is another such case. The Report does not include this excerpt from her testimony on her identification of the shirt Oswald allegedly was wearing (WHITEWASH 110):

"Mr. Ball (assistant counsel): It was brought out to you by the Secret Service man and shown to you?

"Mrs. Bledsoe. Yes.

"Mr. Ball. Had you ever seen the shirt before that?

"Mrs. Bledsoe. Well -

"Mr. Ball. Had you?

"Mrs. Bledsoe. No; he had it on though." (Source, Vol. 6, p. 412).

Most of Mrs. Bledsoe's testimony consisted of variants of "I don't know".

Mr. Pitman also referred to the death of the cab driver, Whaley. You might be interested in his testimony about how he identified Oswald in the police lineup: He swore to an affidavit of identification before attending the lineup, swore to a blank piece of paper, or did it as a favor to the district attorney, depending on which of the incredible versions credited (WHITEWASH 79).

Sincerely yours,
Harold Weisberg