



from Gen. Landis, Wx Post
why do they use only Ford? Why not
other
members
who disagrees with the single bullet theory?

Assassination Records Review Board
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**EXCERPTS OF SUGGESTED EDITS TO FINAL REPORT BY GERALD FORD:
FROM PAPERS OF J. LEE RANKIN, WARREN COMMISSION'S TOP ATTORNEY**

Attached are selected excerpts from the papers of J. Lee Rankin, General Counsel for the Warren Commission. These excerpts contain a sampling of handwritten suggested edits to the final report by Warren Commission member Gerald Ford. The following are brief descriptions of the subject matter of the attached excerpts:

1. Description of first shot that hit President Kennedy. (The page with the suggested edit is followed by the relevant page from the final report.)
2. Description of Oswald movement after the assassination. (The page with the suggested edit is followed by the relevant page from the final report.)
3. Description of Oswald activity in early 1963. (The page with the suggested edit is followed by the relevant pages from the final report.)
4. Description of Oswald movement on morning of the assassination. (The page with the suggested edit is followed by the relevant page from the final report.)
5. Discussion of fingerprints found on boxes in area of alleged sniper's nest in Texas School Book Depository. (The page with the suggested edit is followed by the relevant pages from the final report.)
6. Comment on Dallas Police plan to use an armored truck as decoy during the transfer of Oswald from the custody of the Dallas Police to the Sheriff's Department.
7. Comment on treatment of Dallas Police in the final report related to Jack Ruby shooting Oswald.

Highlighted excerpts are indicated by an arrow.

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Excerpt #1

5

there as he passed the building. Dealey Plaza - a landscaped area marking the western end of downtown Dallas - stretched out to the President's left. A Secret Service agent in the lead car radioed the Trade Mart that the motorcade would arrive in five minutes.

Seconds later shots were heard in rapid succession. The President's hands moved to his neck and he stiffened in his seat. A bullet had entered ^{the} ~~his~~ back ^{of his neck} at a point slightly ~~above the shoulder~~ ^{and} to the right of the spine. It traveled a downward path, and exited from the front of the neck, causing a nick in the left lower portion of the knot in the President's necktie. When the shooting started, Governor Connally, who had been facing toward the crowd on the right, started to turn toward the left, ~~in order to see the President.~~ Near the start of this turn the Governor suddenly felt a blow on his back. He had been hit by a bullet which entered at the extreme right side of his back at a point below his right armpit. The bullet traveled through his chest in a downward and forward direction, exited below his right nipple, passed through his right wrist which had been in his lap, and then caused a wound to his left thigh. The force of the bullet appeared to spin the Governor to his right and he then fell back into his wife's lap. President Kennedy was then hit by a second bullet which struck the right rear portion of his head and caused a massive and fatal wound. The President fell to the left into Mrs. Kennedy's lap.

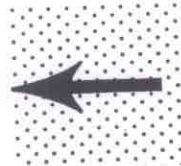
On the lefthand side of the President's "follow-up" car, Special Agent Clinton J. Hill jumped off and raced for the President's car when he heard a noise like a firecracker and saw the President

tumultuous. At the extreme west end of Main Street the motorcade turned right on Houston Street and proceeded north for one block in order to make a left turn on Elm Street, the most direct and convenient approach to the Stemmons Freeway and the Trade Mart. As the President's car approached the intersection of Houston and Elm Streets, there loomed directly ahead on the intersection's northwest corner a seven-story, orange brick warehouse and office building, the Texas School Book Depository. Riding in the Vice President's car, Agent Rufus W. Youngblood of the Secret Service noticed that the clock atop the building indicated 12:30 p.m., the scheduled arrival time at the Trade Mart.

The President's car which had been going north made a sharp turn toward the southwest onto Elm Street. At a speed of about 11 miles per hour, it started down the gradual descent toward a railroad overpass under which the motorcade would proceed before reaching the Stemmons Freeway. The front of the Texas School Book Depository was now on the President's right, and he waved to the crowd assembled there as he passed the building. Dealey Plaza—an open, landscaped area marking the western end of downtown Dallas—stretched out to the President's left. A Secret Service agent riding in the motorcade radioed the Trade Mart that the President would arrive in 5 minutes.

Seconds later shots resounded in rapid succession. The President's hands moved to his neck. He appeared to stiffen momentarily and lurch slightly forward in his seat. A bullet had entered the base of the back of his neck slightly to the right of the spine. It traveled downward and exited from the front of the neck, causing a nick in the left lower portion of the knot in the President's necktie. Before the shooting started, Governor Connally had been facing toward the crowd on the right. He started to turn toward the left and suddenly felt a blow on his back. The Governor had been hit by a bullet which entered at the extreme right side of his back at a point below his right armpit. The bullet traveled through his chest in a downward and forward direction, exited below his right nipple, passed through his right wrist which had been in his lap, and then caused a wound to his left thigh. The force of the bullet's impact appeared to spin the Governor to his right, and Mrs. Connally pulled him down into her lap. Another bullet then struck President Kennedy in the rear portion of his head, causing a massive and fatal wound. The President fell to the left into Mrs. Kennedy's lap.

Secret Service Agent Clinton J. Hill, riding on the left running board of the "followup" car, heard a noise which sounded like a firecracker and saw the President suddenly lean forward and to the left. Hill jumped off the car and raced toward the President's limousine. In the front seat of the Vice-Presidential car, Agent Youngblood heard an explosion and noticed unusual movements in the crowd. He vaulted into the rear seat and sat on the Vice President in order to protect him. At the same time Agent Kellerman in the front seat of the Presidential limousine turned to observe the President. See-



An automobile repairman, Domingo Benavides, had stopped his pickup truck about fifteen feet away on the opposite side of the street when he heard the shots. He observed the gunman start back toward Patton Avenue, removing the empty cartridge cases from the gun. Benavides rushed to Tippit's side and noticed that the patrolman, though apparently dead, appeared to be holding his gun in his right hand. Benavides immediately reported the shooting to police headquarters over the radio in Tippit's car.

*Judge Benavides
did not
make it work*
As the gunman left the scene, he walked back toward Patton Avenue and turned left, heading south. Standing on the northwest corner of Tenth Street and Patton Avenue was Helen Markham, who had been walking south on Patton Avenue and had seen both the killer and Tippit pass in front of her as she waited on the curb for traffic to pass. She witnessed the shooting and then saw the man with a gun in his hand walk toward the corner and cut across the lawn of the corner house as he started south on Patton Avenue.

In the corner house itself, Mrs. Jeanette Davis heard the shots and rushed to the door in time to see the man walk across her lawn shaking a ^{pistol} ~~gun~~ as if he were emptying it of cartridge cases. She and her sister-in-law, who lived in the same house, later found two cartridge cases near the house. As the gunman turned the corner he passed alongside a taxicab which was parked on Patton Avenue, a few feet from Tenth Street. The driver, William W. Scoggins, had seen the shooting and was now crouched behind his cab on the street

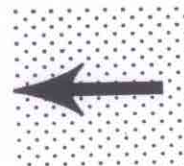
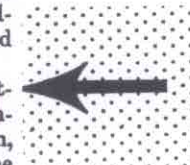
hand side of the car, and apparently exchanged words with Tippit through the window. Tippit opened the door on the left side and started to walk around the front of his car. As he reached the front wheel on the driver's side, the man on the sidewalk drew a revolver and fired several shots in rapid succession, hitting Tippit four times and killing him instantly. An automobile repairman, Domingo Benavides, heard the shots and stopped his pickup truck on the opposite side of the street about 25 feet in front of Tippit's car. He observed the gunman start back toward Patton Avenue, removing the empty cartridge cases from the gun as he went. Benavides rushed to Tippit's side. The patrolman, apparently dead, was lying on his revolver, which was out of its holster. Benavides promptly reported the shooting to police headquarters over the radio in Tippit's car. The message was received shortly after 1:16 p.m.

As the gunman left the scene, he walked hurriedly back toward Patton Avenue and turned left, heading south. Standing on the northwest corner of 10th Street and Patton Avenue was Helen Markham, who had been walking south on Patton Avenue and had seen both the killer and Tippit cross the intersection in front of her as she waited on the curb for traffic to pass. She witnessed the shooting and then saw the man with a gun in his hand walk back toward the corner and cut across the lawn of the corner house as he started south on Patton Avenue.

In the corner house itself, Mrs. Barbara Jeanette Davis and her sister-in-law, Mrs. Virginia Davis, heard the shots and rushed to the door in time to see the man walk rapidly across the lawn shaking a revolver as if he were emptying it of cartridge cases. Later that day each woman found a cartridge case near the house. As the gunman turned the corner he passed alongside a taxicab which was parked on Patton Avenue, a few feet from 10th Street. The driver, William W. Scoggins, had seen the slaying and was now crouched behind his cab on the street side. As the gunman cut through the shrubbery on the lawn, Scoggins looked up and saw the man approximately 12 feet away. In his hand was a pistol and he muttered words which sounded to Scoggins like "poor dumb cop" or "poor damn cop."

After passing Scoggins, the gunman crossed to the west side of Patton Avenue and ran south toward Jefferson Boulevard, a main Oak Cliff thoroughfare. On the east side of Patton, between 10th Street and Jefferson Boulevard, Ted Callaway, a used car salesman, heard the shots and ran to the sidewalk. As the man with the gun rushed past, Callaway shouted "What's going on?" The man merely shrugged, ran on to Jefferson Boulevard and turned right. On the next corner was a gas station with a parking lot in the rear. The assailant ran into the lot, discarded his jacket and then continued his flight west on Jefferson.

In a shoe store a few blocks farther west on Jefferson, the manager, Johnny Calvin Brewer, heard the siren of a police car moments after the radio in his store announced the shooting of the police officer in Oak Cliff. Brewer saw a man step quickly into the entranceway of the



Lee worked for a while in Fort Worth and then moved to Dallas in October 1962, where he was employed as a trainee in a commercial photography shop.

During this period the Oswalds had been introduced to a group of Russian-speaking people in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Many of them assisted the Oswalds financially because of sympathy for Marina and the child. Lee Oswald was disliked by almost all this group. Despite the fact that he had left the Soviet Union, he adhered to a dogmatic belief in what he called Marxist-Leninism. He was disillusioned with the government of the Soviet Union but seemed more firmly committed than ever to his concepts of Marxism. He expressed disdain for American democracy, capitalism, and its society in general. He was highly critical of the Russian-speaking group because they seemed to have become imbued with the aim of improving themselves economically, a concept which Oswald regarded with contempt.

In February 1963, the Oswalds met Ruth Paine. Because of her interest in the Russian language and sympathy for Marina, who spoke no English and had little funds, Ruth Paine [had] assisted the Oswalds in many ways. When Lee Oswald lost his job in April, 1963, and decided to move the family to New Orleans, Ruth Paine offered to let Marina and the baby stay with her while Oswald looked for work. Early in May, Ruth Paine drove Marina and the baby to New Orleans to rejoin Oswald. In July Oswald was fired from his job, and Ruth Paine offered to bring the

Emphatically
feel we should
mention Walker
incident &
probably Nylon also.
This would
involve purchase
of rifle.
Reason he moved
to New Orleans was
Marina's insistence.
Not loss of job.

brought by car Marina &
Oswald family possessions back
to Dallas.

with the Soviet authorities for permission to leave together. Their formal application was made in July 1961, and on December 25, 1961, Marina Oswald was advised it would be granted.

A daughter was born to the Oswalds in February 1962. In the months that followed they prepared for their return to the United States. On May 9, 1962, the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, at the request of the Department of State, agreed to waive a restriction under the law which would have prevented the issuance of a United States visa to Oswald's Russian wife until she had left the Soviet Union. They finally left Moscow on June 1, 1962, and were assisted in meeting their travel expenses by a loan of \$435.71 from the U.S. Department of State. Two weeks later they arrived in Fort Worth, Tex.

For a few weeks Oswald, his wife and child lived with Oswald's brother Robert. After a similar stay with Oswald's mother, they moved into their own apartment in early August. Oswald obtained a job on July 16 as a sheet metal worker. During this period in Fort Worth, Oswald was interviewed twice by agents of the FBI. The report of the first interview, which occurred on June 26, described him as arrogant and unwilling to discuss the reasons why he had gone to the Soviet Union. Oswald denied that he was involved in Soviet intelligence activities and promised to advise the FBI if Soviet representatives ever communicated with him. He was interviewed again on August 16, when he displayed a less belligerent attitude and once again agreed to inform the FBI of any attempt to enlist him in intelligence activities.

In early October 1962 Oswald quit his job at the sheet metal plant and moved to Dallas. While living in Fort Worth the Oswalds had been introduced to a group of Russian-speaking people in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Many of them assisted the Oswalds by providing small amounts of food, clothing, and household items. Oswald himself was disliked by almost all of this group whose help to the family was prompted primarily by sympathy for Marina Oswald and the child. Despite the fact that he had left the Soviet Union, disillusioned with its Government, Oswald seemed more firmly committed than ever to his concepts of Marxism. He showed disdain for democracy, capitalism, and American society in general. He was highly critical of the Russian-speaking group because they seemed devoted to American concepts of democracy and capitalism and were ambitious to improve themselves economically.

In February 1963 the Oswalds met Ruth Paine at a social gathering. Ruth Paine was temporarily separated from her husband and living with her two children in their home in Irving, Tex., a suburb of Dallas. Because of an interest in the Russian language and sympathy for Marina Oswald, who spoke no English and had little funds, Ruth Paine befriended Marina and, during the next 2 months, visited her on several occasions.

On April 6, 1963, Oswald lost his job with a photography firm. A few days later, on April 10, he attempted to kill Maj. Gen. Edwin

A. Walker (Resigned, U.S. Army), using a rifle which he had ordered by mail 1 month previously under an assumed name. Marina Oswald learned of her husband's act when she confronted him with a note which he had left, giving her instructions in the event he did not return. That incident and their general economic difficulties impelled Marina Oswald to suggest that her husband leave Dallas and go to New Orleans to look for work.

Oswald left for New Orleans on April 24, 1963. Ruth Paine, who knew nothing of the Walker shooting, invited Marina Oswald and the baby to stay with her in the Paines' modest home while Oswald sought work in New Orleans. Early in May, upon receiving word from Oswald that he had found a job, Ruth Paine drove Marina Oswald and the baby to New Orleans to rejoin Oswald.

During the stay in New Orleans, Oswald formed a fictitious New Orleans Chapter of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. He posed as secretary of this organization and represented that the president was A. J. Hidell. In reality, Hidell was a completely fictitious person created by Oswald, the organization's only member. Oswald was arrested on August 9 in connection with a scuffle which occurred while he was distributing pro-Castro leaflets. The next day, while at the police station, he was interviewed by an FBI agent after Oswald requested the police to arrange such an interview. Oswald gave the agent false information about his own background and was evasive in his replies concerning Fair Play for Cuba activities. During the next 2 weeks Oswald appeared on radio programs twice, claiming to be the spokesman for the Fair Play for Cuba Committee in New Orleans.

On July 19, 1963, Oswald lost his job as a greaser of coffee processing machinery. In September, after an exchange of correspondence with Marina Oswald, Ruth Paine drove to New Orleans and on September 23, transported Marina, the child, and the family belongings to Irving, Tex. Ruth Paine suggested that Marina Oswald, who was expecting her second child in October, live at the Paine house until after the baby was born. Oswald remained behind, ostensibly to find work either in Houston or some other city. Instead, he departed by bus for Mexico, arriving in Mexico City on September 27, where he promptly visited the Cuban and Russian Embassies. His stated objective was to obtain official permission to visit Cuba, on his way to the Soviet Union. The Cuban Government would not grant his visa unless the Soviet Government would also issue a visa permitting his entry into Russia. Oswald's efforts to secure these visas failed, and he left for Dallas, where he arrived on October 3, 1963.

When he saw his wife the next day, it was decided that Oswald would rent a room in Dallas and visit his family on weekends. For 1 week he rented a room from Mrs. Bledsoe, the woman who later saw him on the bus shortly after the assassination. On October 14, 1963, he rented the Beckley Avenue room and listed his name as O. H. Lee. On the same day, at the suggestion of a neighbor, Mrs. Paine phoned the Texas School Book Depository and was told that there was a job

on the bus shortly after the assassination. On October 14, he rented the Beckley Street room and listed his name as O. H. Lee. One day later, at the suggestion of a neighbor, Mrs. Paine phoned the Texas School Book Depository and was told that there was a job opening. Lee contacted the firm on the next day and started work on October 16.

The general pattern of weekend visits to Irving was maintained during October and November. Lee would drive between Irving and Dallas on Friday afternoon and Monday morning with a fellow employee who lived near the Paines'. On Thursday, November 21, Oswald told his friend that he would like to drive to Irving to pick up some curtain rods for his room in Dallas. His wife and Mrs. Paine were quite surprised to see him since it was a Thursday night.

Later that evening when Mrs. Paine had finished cleaning the kitchen, she went to the garage and noticed that the light was on. She was certain that she had not left it on, although it appeared unimportant at the time. In the garage were most of the Oswalds' personal possessions. The following morning Oswald left while his wife was still in bed feeding the baby. On the dresser in their room he left his wedding ring, the first such incident that Marina could recall. The man who drove him to work recalled that he carried a long package which he said contained curtain rods and that he took that package into The Dealey Building.

Check dates

Should be added?
1. Argument
2. The Paines

Are there two sentences missing in summary?

Wasn't she asleep?

opening. She informed Oswald who was interviewed the following day at the Depository and started to work there on October 16, 1963.

On October 20 the Oswalds' second daughter was born. During October and November Oswald established a general pattern of weekend visits to Irving, arriving on Friday afternoon and returning to Dallas Monday morning with a fellow employee, Buell Wesley Frazier, who lived near the Paines. On Friday, November 15, Oswald remained in Dallas at the suggestion of his wife who told him that the house would be crowded because of a birthday party for Ruth Paine's daughter. On Monday, November 18, Oswald and his wife quarreled bitterly during a telephone conversation, because she learned for the first time that he was living at the roominghouse under an assumed name. On Thursday, November 21, Oswald told Frazier that he would like to drive to Irving to pick up some curtain rods for an apartment in Dallas. His wife and Mrs. Paine were quite surprised to see him since it was a Thursday night. They thought he had returned to make up after Monday's quarrel. He was conciliatory, but Marina Oswald was still angry.

Later that evening, when Mrs. Paine had finished cleaning the kitchen, she went into the garage and noticed that the light was burning. She was certain that she had not left it on, although the incident appeared unimportant at the time. In the garage were most of the Oswalds' personal possessions. The following morning Oswald left while his wife was still in bed feeding the baby. She did not see him leave the house, nor did Ruth Paine. On the dresser in their room he left his wedding ring which he had never done before. His wallet containing \$170 was left intact in a dresser-drawer.

Oswald walked to Frazier's house about half a block away and placed a long bulky package, made out of wrapping paper and tape, into the rear seat of the car. He told Frazier that the package contained curtain rods. When they reached the Depository parking lot, Oswald walked quickly ahead. Frazier followed and saw Oswald enter the Depository Building carrying the long bulky package with him.

During the morning of November 22, Marina Oswald followed President Kennedy's activities on television. She and Ruth Paine cried when they heard that the President had been shot. Ruth Paine translated the news of the shooting to Marina Oswald as it came over television, including the report that the shots were probably fired from the building where Oswald worked. When Marina Oswald heard this, she recalled the Walker episode and the fact that her husband still owned the rifle. She went quietly to the Paine's garage where the rifle had been concealed in a blanket among their other belongings. It appeared to her that the rifle was still there, although she did not actually open the blanket.

At about 3 p.m. the police arrived at the Paine house and asked Marina Oswald whether her husband owned a rifle. She said that he did and then led them into the garage and pointed to the rolled up blanket. As a police officer lifted it, the blanket hung limply over either side of his arm. The rifle was not there.

- 16 -

The position of this palmprint on the carton was described by Latona as "parallel with long axis of the box and at right angles with the short axis;" the bottom of the palm rested on the box. Someone sitting on the box facing the window would have his palm in this position if he placed his hand behind his right hip.

The independent investigation of Mr. Arthur Mandella of the New York City Police Department reached the same conclusion that the prints found on the cartons were those of Lee Oswald. In addition, Mandella was of the opinion that the print taken from the carton on the floor was probably made within a day or a day and a half of the examination. Moreover, another expert with the Bureau laboratory, Ronald G. Wittmus, conducted a separate examination and agreed with the findings of Mr. Latona and Mr. Mandella as to the identification of the prints.

In evaluating the significance of these fingerprint and palmprint identifications, the Commission considered the fact that Oswald might have handled these cartons in the performance of his normal duties as an order filler. In this respect the Commission noted that other identifiable prints were developed on the cartons. The Commission, therefore, requested that these other prints be compared with the prints of the twelve warehouse employees who, like Oswald, might have handled the cartons. Although it is very possible for a

person to handle a carton and not leave identifiable prints, it

was considered significant that none of the prints on the cartons

↓
Whose prints were these? Should we have these prints checked against FBI fingerprint records etc?

May not show anything but of this suspicion is correct, it should be mentioned in report.

which had been cut out of the box was also forwarded to the FBI and Latona identified it as Oswald's right palmprint.²²⁴ In Latona's opinion "not too long" a time had elapsed between the time that the print was placed on the carton and the time that it had been developed by the Dallas police.²²⁵ Although Bureau experiments had shown that 24 hours was a likely maximum time, Latona stated that he could only testify with certainty that the print was less than 3 days old.²²⁶

The print, therefore, could have been placed on the carton at any time within this period. The freshness of this print could be estimated only because the Dallas police developed it through the use of powder. Since cartons absorb perspiration, powder can successfully develop a print on such material²²⁷ only within a limited time. When the FBI in Washington received the cartons, the remaining prints, including Oswald's on the Rolling Readers carton, were developed by chemical processes. The freshness of prints developed in this manner²²⁸ cannot be estimated, so no conclusions can be drawn as to whether these remaining prints preceded or followed the print developed in Dallas by powder. Most of the prints were found to have been placed on the cartons by an FBI clerk and a Dallas police officer after the cartons had been processed with powder by the Dallas Police.²²⁹ (See ch. VI, p. 249; app. X, p. 566.)

In his independent investigation, Arthur Mandella of the New York City Police Department reached the same conclusion as Latona that the prints found on the cartons were those of Lee Harvey Oswald.²³⁰ In addition, Mandella was of the opinion that the print taken from the carton on the floor was probably made within a day or a day and a half of the examination on November 22.²³⁰ Moreover, another expert with the FBI, Ronald G. Wittmus, conducted a separate examination and also agreed with Latona that the prints were Oswald's.²³¹

In evaluating the significance of these fingerprint and palmprint identifications, the Commission considered the possibility that Oswald handled these cartons as part of his normal duties. Since other identifiable prints were developed on the cartons, the Commission requested that they be compared with the prints of the 12 warehouse employees who, like Oswald, might have handled the cartons. They were also compared with the prints of those law enforcement officials who might have handled the cartons. The results of this investigation are fully discussed in chapter VI, page 249. Although a person could handle a carton and not leave identifiable prints, none of these employees except Oswald left identifiable prints on the cartons.²³² This finding, in addition to the freshness of one of the prints and the presence of Oswald's prints on two of the four cartons and the paper bag led the Commission to attach some probative value to the fingerprint and palmprint identifications in reaching the conclusion that Oswald was at the window from which the shots were fired, although the prints do not establish the exact time he was there.



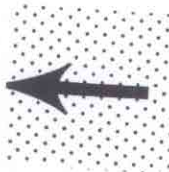
The arrangement of the three boxes in the window and the one on which the assassin may have sat has been described previously.³⁷ Two of these four boxes, weighing approximately 55 pounds each, had been moved by the floor-laying crew from the west side of the floor to the area near the southwest corner.³⁸ The carton on which the assassin may have sat might not even have been moved by the assassin at all. A photograph of the scene depicts this carton on the floor alongside other similar cartons. (See Commission Exhibit No. 1301, p. 138.) Oswald's right palmprint on this carton may have been placed there as he was sitting on the carton rather than while carrying it. In any event both of these 55-pound cartons could have been carried by one man. The remaining two cartons contained light block-like reading aids called "Rolling Readers" weighing only about 8 pounds each.³⁹ Although they had been moved approximately 40 feet⁴⁰ from their normal locations at the southeast corner window, it would appear that one man could have done this in a matter of seconds.

In considering the possibility of accomplices at the window, the Commission evaluated the significance of the presence of fingerprints other than Oswald's on the four cartons found in and near the window. Three of Oswald's prints were developed on two of the cartons.⁴¹ In addition a total of 25 identifiable prints were found on the 4 cartons.⁴² Moreover, prints were developed which were considered as not identifiable, i.e., the quality of the print was too fragmentary to be of value for identification purposes.⁴³

As has been explained in chapter IV, the Commission determined that none of the warehouse employees who might have customarily handled these cartons left prints which could be identified.⁴⁴ This was considered of some probative value in determining whether Oswald moved the cartons to the window. All but 1 of the 25 definitely identifiable prints were the prints of 2 persons—an FBI employee and a member of the Dallas Police Department who had handled the cartons during the course of the investigation.⁴⁵ One identifiable palmprint was not identified.⁴⁶

The presence on these cartons of unidentified prints, whether or not identifiable, does not appear to be unusual since these cartons contained commercial products which had been handled by many people throughout the normal course of manufacturing, warehousing, and shipping. Unlike other items of evidence such as, for example, a ransom note in a kidnaping, these cartons could contain the prints of many people having nothing to do with the assassination. Moreover, the FBI does not maintain a filing system for palmprints because, according to the supervisor of the Bureau's latent fingerprint section, Sebastian F. Latona, the problems of classification make such a system impracticable.⁴⁷ Finally, in considering the significance of the unidentified prints, the Commission gave weight to the opinion of Latona to the effect that people could handle these cartons without leaving prints which were capable of being developed.⁴⁸

Though the fingerprints other than Oswald's on the boxes thus provide no indication of the presence of an accomplice at the win-



he had been undergoing interrogation since 9:30 a.m. As 11:00 a.m. approached, the armored car arrived, Chief Curry visited Fritz's office to learn how long the questioning would continue, and a number of detectives left their third floor offices and reported to the basement to help in controlling the press. When the interrogation ceased, reporters could see Oswald putting on a sweater in Fritz's office. About that time, one television crew, which had been on the third floor, moved their equipment downstairs, arriving in the basement about four minutes before Oswald was shot.

When the armored truck arrived, Chief Batchelor met the driver on the Commerce Street side of the auto ramp, and the truck began to back down the ramp in order to be headed toward Commerce Street. The driver told Batchelor, however, that he believed that the weight of the truck would not permit a speedy start up the ramp; consequently, the truck was backed only part way down the ramp. Thereupon, Batchelor began to inspect the inside of the truck. When Captain Fritz was informed that the armored truck had arrived and was told of the plans established by Curry in conjunction with Batchelor and Stevenson, Fritz suggested to Curry that an unmarked police car would be better from the standpoint of both speed and deception. Fritz proposed and Curry agreed that such car, bearing Oswald, should follow the armored truck along the originally planned route

↓
Just this
plan a bit
humorous?
who were they
going to "fool"?

40

*I believe we
let the Dallas Police Dept.
off too easily. Somebody,
or the Dept. itself,
was nervous.*

It is possible to speculate that Ruby should have been seen by police officers on both the Main and Commerce Street sides as he edged forward to the area in which Oswald was to walk. TV films depict Ruby standing momentarily behind Detective Harrison, seconds before the shooting. Harrison immediately shouted "Jack, don't" as Ruby moved forward from Harrison's side and rear. However, Harrison's prompt recognition may simply have been the result of years of acquaintanceship with Ruby, and Ruby's own recognition of Harrison may have caused him to stand near Harrison in order to seize an advantage of which Harrison was unaware. Finally, the fact that Ruby had moved freely at the Police Department during the two previous days, the presence of authoritative superior officers in the basement, and a mistaken faith in the system of identifying news representatives may have created a sense of acceptance among junior officers who might have recognized Ruby among the newsmen.

5. Appraisal of Security Precautions.

Despite the fact that there is no evidence that any police official knowingly helped Ruby gain access to the basement, the Dallas Police Department must bear major responsibility for Ruby's slaying of Oswald. Inadequate ~~planning~~ planning and lack of close supervision by the responsible officials were predominant factors in the police

*Pages 38, 39
* 40 could
be better
drafted.
are drawn
incidentally into
argument.*

the transfer plans throughout the morning, obviating the need for Ruby to obtain information surreptitiously.

ADEQUACY OF SECURITY PRECAUTIONS

The shooting of Lee Harvey Oswald obviously resulted from the failure of the security precautions which the Dallas Police Department had taken to protect their prisoner. In assessing the causes of the security failure, the Commission has not overlooked the extraordinary circumstances which prevailed during the days that the attention of the world was turned on Dallas. Confronted with a unique situation, the Dallas police took special security measures to insure Oswald's safety. Unfortunately these did not include adequate control of the great crowd of newsmen that inundated the police department building.

The Dallas police had in custody a man whose alleged act had brought upon him immediate and universal opprobrium. There were many possible reasons why people might have attempted to kill him, if given the opportunity. Concerned that there might be an attempt on Oswald's life, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover sent a message to Chief Curry on November 22 through Special Agent Manning C. Clements of the FBI's Dallas office, urging that Oswald be afforded the utmost security. Curry does not recall receiving the message.¹⁷⁹

Although the presence of a great mass of press representatives created an extraordinary security problem in the building, the police department pursued its normal policy of admitting the press. That policy, set forth in General Order No. 81 of the Dallas Police Department, provided—

“ . . . that members of this Department render every assistance, except such as obviously may seriously hinder or delay the proper functioning of the Department, to the accredited members of the official news-gathering agencies and this includes newspaper, television cameramen and news-reel photographers.”¹⁸⁰

In a letter to all members of the police department, dated February 7, 1962, Chief Curry explained the general order, in part, as follows:

The General Order covering this subject is not merely permissive. It does not state that the Officer may, if he so chooses, assist the press. It rather places on him a responsibility to lend active assistance.

“ . . . as a Department we deal with public affairs. It is the right of the public to know about these affairs, and one of the most accurate and useful avenues we have of supplying this information is through the newspapers and radio and television stations.

Implied in the General Order is a prohibition for the Officer to improperly attempt to interfere with the news media representa-

The Dallas Police Department, concerned at the failure of its security measures, conducted an extensive investigation that revealed no information indicating complicity between any police officer and Jack Ruby.¹⁶⁷ Ruby denied to the Commission that he received any form of assistance.¹⁶⁸ The FBI interviewed every member of the police department who was on duty in the basement on November 28, and Commission staff members took sworn depositions from many. With few exceptions, newsmen who were present in the basement at the time also gave statements and/or depositions. As the record before the Commission indicated, Ruby had had rather free access to the Dallas police quarters during the period subsequent to the assassination, but there was no evidence that implicated the police or newsmen in Ruby's actions on that day.¹⁶⁹

Ruby was known to have a wide acquaintanceship with Dallas policemen and to seek their favor. According to testimony from many sources, he gave free coffee at his clubs to many policemen while they were on duty and free admittance and discounts on beverages when they were off duty.¹⁷⁰ Although Chief Curry's estimate that approximately 25 to 50 of the 1,175 men in the Dallas Police Department knew Ruby¹⁷¹ may be too conservative, the Commission found no evidence of any suspicious relationships between Ruby and any police officer.

The Commission found no substantial evidence that any member of the Dallas Police Department recognized Jack Ruby as an unauthorized person in the basement prior to the time Sgt. P. T. Dean, according to his testimony, saw Ruby dart forward toward Oswald. But Dean was then part way up the Commerce Street ramp, too far removed to act.¹⁷² Patrolman W. J. Harrison, Capt. Glen King, and reserve officers Capt. C. O. Arnett and Patrolman W. M. Groy were among those in front of Ruby at the time Dean saw him. They all faced away from Ruby, toward the jail office.¹⁷³ Video tapes show that Harrison turned in the direction of the ramp at the time Lieutenant Pierce's car passed, and once again 25 seconds later, but there is no indication that he observed or recognized Ruby.¹⁷⁴ The policemen standing on the south side of the passageway from the jail office, who might have been looking in Ruby's direction, had the glare of television and photographer's lights in their eyes.¹⁷⁵

The Commission also considered the possibility that a member of the police department called Ruby at his apartment and informed him, either intentionally or unintentionally, of the time of the planned transfer. From at least 10:19 a.m., until close to 11 a.m., on Sunday, Ruby was at his apartment,¹⁷⁶ where he could have received a call that the transfer was imminent. He apparently left his apartment between 10:45 and 11 a.m.¹⁷⁷ However, the drive from Ruby's apartment to the Western Union office takes approximately 15 minutes.¹⁷⁸ Since the time of the contemplated transfer could not have been known to anyone until a few minutes before 11:15 a.m., a precise time could not have been conveyed to Ruby while he was at his apartment. Moreover, the television and radio publicized