

9/22/93

Richard Gallen
260 Fifth Ave.,
New York, NY 10001

Dear Richard,

After packaging what I sent you this morning I thought a bit about how I might be able to give Herman ^Graf an understanding of the book and what it does. I enclose the hastily-done Preface.

If I did not mention it, I have Hoax in ~~my~~^{mind} as the title, with a descriptive subtitle.

Over the years I've developed a concept of what think of as intellectual judo. This is what I had in mind in writing you earlier about sending copies to those who provided those dust-jacket blurbs and were deceived, with their trust imposed upon.

I also enclose a partial copy of a story also in yesterday's mail.

It may suggest that Ambrose might welcome learning in advance what he had done ^{to him;} including to his professional reputation.

Best,

Harold

Jack Service
Tuesday 9/16/93

prove that Oswald had ample time to get off his three shots, Posner says.

The book already has gotten more attention than any recent JFK project save Oliver Stone's movie, "JFK," which suggested that a plot to kill Kennedy emanated from high levels of the United States Government.

Its appeal lies both in its thorough, apparently even-handed research, and the fact that, following the publication in recent years of a near-constant stream of conspiracy books, "Case Closed" may be the first by a respected author to argue persuasively for the Oswald-alone theory, a scenario most Americans dismissed years ago.

"We have forgotten the story," Posner said. "We have forgotten the details of it because we've lost Oswald. In all these thirty years, all the talk was about conspiracies."

Typical of the favorable treatment thus far was a cover story and 24-page special report on the book in U.S. News and World Report. The magazine's cover declared the book "brilliant" and concluded that of all the new books on the assassination, "Case Closed" had the "smell of truth." The others, U.S. News said, merely had a "smell."

"He sweeps away decades of polemical smoke, layer by layer, and builds an unshakable case against JFK's killer," U.S. News said of Posner.

"It's just a model of historical scholarship," said Stephen Ambrose, the Boyd Professor of History at the University of New Orleans, and noted student of assassination literature, who says the book has changed his mind. He said that until this book, he had entertained the possibility of a conspiracy because of doubts about the single-bullet theory. He says Posner has convinced him that a single bullet hit both Kennedy and Connally, and that Oswald acted alone.

But will "Case Closed" change the American mind? Critics — and there are many — say that Posner, a former Manhattan attorney, ignored important evidence in an effort to build a prosecutorial indictment of the realm of conspiracy theories.

Probably the most widely respected believer in the possibility of a JFK conspiracy — former House Select Committee on Assassinations counsel G. Robert Blakey — said Posner's book, rather than having a real impact, would end up as a mere "footnote" in a bibliography of assassination literature.

"What's troublesome for me in Posner's book is that he's a lawyer writing the brief for one side, and there's no reason for a person who's seen or heard all the evidence to credit his book as opposed to someone else's," said Blakey, a University of Notre Dame law professor.

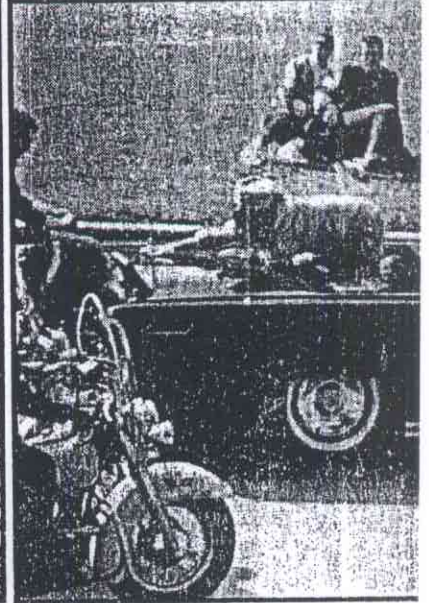
"I think Lee Harvey Oswald fired two shots from behind that killed the president of the United States beyond a reasonable doubt," Blakey said. "But I think there is substantial evidence to believe both the ear- and the eye-witnesses that there was another shot in the plaza."

"I think a reasonable person can agree with me," Blakey added. "I'm not so arrogant as to say, 'Case Closed.'"

"Case Closed" essentially is a straightforward narration of how Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone, came to kill Kennedy. The conclusion, though arrived at more artfully, is precisely that of the Warren Commission, which endured both contemporary and subsequent derision for not seeing a conspiracy.

But there are some new twists.

Posner produced one the old-fashioned way: By creating his own index of the Warren Commission report, he found what he says is information about Os-



Lee Harvey Oswald with Mannlicher-Carcano rifle, above, in a photo some contend was faked for a motorcade in Oliver Stone's film, 'JFK.'

The Plot's the T

BY FRED BRUNING
STAFF WRITER

THE ASSASSINATION of John F. Kennedy and attendant whodunit theories have done much to define the last quarter of this American century — the killing of a beloved president because his loss represented to millions the sudden snatching away of hope, and the conspiracy arguments because they revealed a powerful skepticism straining at the national psyche.

By the time the Warren Commission declared in 1964 that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in slaying Kennedy the previous year, polls showed that a third of Americans believed instead that Oswald was only a player in someone's diabolical game. The number hit 60 percent in 1966 and continued climbing. When pollsters questioned Americans following the controversial 1991 movie, "JFK," 77 percent said they had no doubt: Kennedy was the victim of a conspiracy.

It was as though Kennedy's death had inspired a new religion — an orthodoxy of disbelief. "The theories really ran around the country like wildfire," recalled Ramsey Clark, who served as U.S. attorney general from 1967-69. "It was hard to go to a college campus and not find a dozen or so young people who would come up very agitated, presenting all kinds of theories." Seeing that Clark wasn't buying, students seemed incredulous. "They would walk away shaking their heads," he said.

In his book, "Case Closed," Gerald Posner says

ment and beyond. As the debate churning for another "JFK" to young search for truth marches

Because the Warren centerpiece of the established argument, Stone likely "march" for truth will b

"What made us [American conspiracy theories was] report was woefully, worse than Vankin, author of 'Cover-ups and Crimes: Mind Control in America'

Vankin says the Warren safest, most politically you see that, you have to ing on," said the author. Oswald was merely one.

Though he rejects the Guthman, press secretary the president's brother says most Americans have reasonable "skepticism" assassination. "There has Guthman, now a journa

Others note that America brace conspiracy explanation whose history is replete some of it murderous. A eager for the outlandish the Super Bowl, or wor