

New JFK acoustical study funded

By EARL GOLZ

A new study of the acoustical evidence that led the House Assassinations Committee to conclude two persons were shooting at President John F. Kennedy in Dallas' Dealey Plaza is scheduled to be announced Monday.

The study was requested by the U.S. Department of Justice.

A National Science Foundation grant of \$23,360 for a 4-month study by the National Academy of Sciences is the "first preliminary step" toward the possibility of reopening the probe, a justice department spokesman said.

The study by the private organization will determine validity of the committee's finding that a recording of a Dallas police radio captured for posterity the sound of four shots fired during the assassination 17 years ago.

The house committee concluded shortly before the panel's expiration in 1978 that a conspiracy probably resulted in the assassination.

In 1964, the Warren Commission contended a lone assassin — Lee Harvey Oswald — fired three shots from a 6th-floor window of the Texas School Book Depository.

The 1978 committee's conclusions were based on a recording of a Dallas

police radio transmission made when the microphone on a police motorcycle apparently was left open while the shots were fired.

Committee acoustical experts determined nature and origin of the sound impulses. The 1963 recording was made on a Dictabelt which was inadvertently recovered in 1978 among the assassination keepsakes stored in the garage of former Dallas Police Capt. Paul McCaghen.

Experts concluded they were 95 percent certain the sound impulses were four shots. They said three came from behind the presidential limousine in the general area of Oswald's window in the book depository and one came from an unidentified individual on the grassy knoll to the side of the vehicle.

The house committee said it could not rule out the possibility of a conspiracy involving organized crime figures or anti-Castro Cubans.

The acoustical findings have drawn criticism from 3 dissenting members of the committee, Dallas police officers and former staff members of the Warren Commission.

FBI agents last month reviewed a sharply critical report written by Dallas Police Capt. James C. Bowles as a private citizen. Bowles, a police

communications supervisor at the time of the assassination, said he was asked to serve as a technical consultant in the justice department's study.

Bowles said his report "will destroy this canard they call" acoustical evidence. He claimed specifically that the high frequency of shots could not be transmitted through the "voice grade" low-frequency radio system used by police dispatch in 1963.

The justice department, under mounting public pressure to respond to the house committee's recommendations for further review of the panel's findings, did not consent to the new acoustics study until more than a year after the committee report.

The current study by the National Academy of Sciences does not respond to a second committee recommendation for a scientific analysis of a movie film showing Oswald's alleged sniper's window minutes before the assassination.

The film was taken by amateur photographer Charles Bronson and called to the attention of the committee by *The Dallas Morning News* about a month before its term expired. It appears to show more than one moving image in the window.

The National Science Foundation announcement Monday will state that an ad hoc committee will be formed to review the "methodology used in the evaluation of the acoustic data recorded on the Dictabelt tape and the rationale for the conclusions" presented by acoustics experts to the committee.

For the first phase of a proposed 2-part study, the ad hoc committee will hold a 3-day workshop. The panel will report its findings by the end of January to the speaker of the House of Representatives and to the justice department.

The justice department will then decide whether a follow-up study will be approved to prepare a report recommending "the kinds of tests, analyses and evaluations needed to get better information from the Dictabelt recording and to evaluate the evidence gleaned from it," a science foundation statement said.

"Among the things the committee will seek more information about is the background noise recorded on the tape," the foundation said. "It has been indicated the properties of that background noise are not consistent with the noise of a motorcycle."

The follow-up study would include a second, longer workshop.