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Expert lambastes panel's examination of JFK slaying data

By Earl Golz
Staff Writer of The News

The chief architect of the U.S. House committee report that concluded the assassination of President John F. Kennedy was probably the result of a conspiracy says a panel of scientists has come up with a "serious challenge" to the committee findings.

However, Notre Dame law professor G. Robert Blakey, counsel for the now-defunct House Assassinations Committee, criticized a panel of the National Academy of Sciences for "doing just an analysis of our (committee) findings only to refute us." Blakey was in Dallas Thursday to speak at the second annual National Legislative Conference on Arson.

A preliminary copy of the panel's report, not yet publicly released, is being circulated among interested members of the scientific community. All 13 panel members unconditionally reject the House committee's contention that a Dallas police radio Dictabelt in 1963 recorded the sound of four shots at the time of the assassination in Dealey Plaza, Blakey said.

The committee's conclusions that four shots were fired — not three as found by the Warren Commission in 1964 — made it impossible for accused assassin Lee Harvey Oswald to have been the only person shooting in Dealey Plaza. The

committee's scientists determined that a second gunman on the grassy knoll to the left of the presidential limousine probably fired a single shot that missed Kennedy.

Blakey agrees with the National Academy of Sciences panel that voice prints have identified Dallas County Sheriff Bill Decker as already reacting to the shooting at the same time the 4-shot sequence allegedly is being heard on the same Dallas police radio tape. A second police radio recording on another channel clearly shows Decker did not issue the same word-for-word post-assassination command to his deputies until about a minute after the last shot.

Blakey criticized the panel for not making a microscopic examination of the police recording to determine if it is a "re-recording" that somehow resulted in the splicing of Decker's voice into the background of the sound of the shots. He also asserted the panel scientists did not check the timing of the shots through the recorded sound of speed of the engine on the motorcycle from which the House committee said the recording was made or through the blurs in movie film being taken at the time of the shots.

The panel made no attempt to determine the exact origin of the three shots that apparently did not come from the grassy knoll area, Blakey said.

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