

Correspondence

JFK Assassination

To the Editor:

This regards David R. Wrone's letter rudely rebuking Dean Kermit Hall in your last issue. Besides its incivilities, Mr. Wrone's letter contained misleading inferences and distortions of the "facts," as he labels them, regarding the assassination of President Kennedy and investigations of the crime.

Mr. Wrone adamantly asserts (a) that no "credible fact" links Oswald to the murder of JFK and (b) that it was "absolutely false" to state, as Mr. Hall did in the February *OAH Newsletter*, that the "latest" investigatory techniques tend to corroborate the Warren Report conclusions.

According to expert testimony before the House Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA), neutron-activation analysis (a technique not available to the Warren Commission) demonstrates that the bullets that wounded Governor Connally and killed the president came from Oswald's rifle, to the exclusion of all others (HSCA, *Report* Vol. I, 492-95). Physical evidence and witnesses, moreover, place Oswald (and no one else) in the position from which the fatal shot was fired.

As all students of the assassination know, the Warren Commission imprecisely estimated the timing of the shots. But later, investigators, contrary to another of Mr. Wrone's assertions, established that Oswald easily had time to fire three shots, twice operate the bolt, and hit his target, a feat replicated in 1977 by eleven marksmen unfamiliar with Oswald's Mannlicher-Carcano rifle (HSCA, *Report*, 83).

Further, Oswald's hours of dry practice with his rifle, combined with his prior completion of Marine Corps rifle training, and his successful qualification, first as a sharpshooter (the second highest rating) and later as a marksman, hardly merits Mr. Wrone's derisive epithet of "duffer."

More to the point, computer enhancement, reverse projections, and sonic digitalization of the Zapruder film and the stereo photogrammetric analysis of the dozens of still photos taken at the scene fail to *disprove* the Warren Report. (My copy, by the way, contains 888 numbered pages, as Mr. Hall stated, with 24 pages of front matter. Mr. Wrone peevishly implies that experts in the field know the "actual" number of pages was 912.)

The HSCA, staffed with several critics of the Warren Report, criticized the FBI and CIA for failing to "investigate adequately" the possibility of a conspiracy in weeks and months after the murder, but the HSCA confirmed the basic conclusions of the Warren Commission, including the single bullet theory, which Mr. Wrone stoutly labels a "baseless invention." (HSCA, *Report*, 1-2, 44).

The Warren Commission's procedures are justly criticized. But what purpose is served by overstating those flaws, by misrepresenting what has been learned since the Warren Report was published, and by maligning our profession's representative on a government board charged with freeing additional information for historical research? □

James W. Hilty
Temple University

is not the only area where poorly compared with stu-
The gaps on performance in language acquisition are particularly, we are encountering a magnitude than the failure to al facts. Many educators be-
re rooted in the savage ine-
portunity offered in the United
ism, sexism, and ethnic bias,
the rich and the poor in our
echnology, the nature of work,
merican youth culture. A cam-
t of secondary school social
ation from these complex phe-
context of school curricula is
t important problem facing

ilentz writes that "Fortunate-
s National History Standards
g endorsements even from
of the earlier proposals." But
not examine the reasons why
cepted: The initial proposals
at attempted to translate broad
o actual classroom practice.
ne a lightning rod for conser-
public education, multicultural-
entity movements, a declining
g "family values." A Senate
e standards failed to provide
spect for the contributions of
e development of the United
ed the teaching ideas dropped
se they invited students to
ents" (2). Under the circum-
g that the revised standards,
ching ideas, are supported by
such as Governor George Allen
former undersecretary of edu-
inistration, and the Bradley
ed and funded the National
tion).

r, Nash *et al.* evidently believe
le who have political power
influence public education and
g of history. However, they
Benjamin Franklin's comment
in this type of coalition. Fran-
en in public affairs act from a
their country, whatever they
their activity may bring real
do not act from a spirit of be-

ory in my high school social
oyed debating the rights and
in a democratic society, and
ures, insights from the social
ry national and global issues.
social studies is the integrated
s and humanities to promote
imary purpose of social stud-
to develop the ability to make
cisions for the public good as
erse, democratic society if an